



For Better Understanding on China-Pakistan and CPEC

Gleanings from the National Press

September 1-15, 2019

A pilot project of PICS

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September 01, 2019

Business Recorder

Language helps promote people-to-people contacts: Chinese official

ISLAMABAD: Ms Pang Chunxue Deputy Chief of Mission of Embassy of China said on Saturday that the language plays a pivotal role in knowing a nation and its culture, as language promote people to people contacts and strengthen cultural bonds between the two countries. She was addressing the Chinese Proficiency Competition organized by Roots Millennium Education in collaboration with China Radio International-CRI and Embassy of the People's Republic of China for Secondary School Students (Chinese Bridge) at TMUC Auditorium, Sector H-11/4.

Speaking to the Millennials Ms Pang Chunxue appreciated the efforts put in by the students and faculty on the Chinese Bridge Competition. She also emphasized that China and Pakistan are very good friends and neighbours. She said that CRI-Millennium Confucius Classroom has made an exceptional attempt and the initiatives will produce tangible results in future.

The "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency competition is a large scale international competition sponsored by Hanban Confucius Institute, China. Chinese Bridge Competition is the most famous International Chinese proficiency language competition for non-native speakers. In order to provide a stage for the secondary school students to show their Chinese language capacity and meanwhile enhance Chinese enthusiasms understanding of Chinese Language and culture, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan jointly organized the event with CRI-Millennium Confucius Classroom.

Students from different schools participated in the event. The 12th Chinese Bridge Competition had three parts Speech, Knowledge Quiz and Talent Show. DCM & Minister Counselor from Embassy of Peoples Republic of China Ms Pang Chunxue attended this auspicious occasion as a Chief Guest who was accompanied by the Chinese Cultural Counselor Zhang Heqing and First Secretary cultural office from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China. Deputy Director China Cultural Centre Li Yan Xuan, Chief Representative China Shipbuilding & Offshore International Co Ltd Pakistan Sun Yang, Deputy Chief Executive Office Huawei Technologies Pakistan Ma Liming, Correspondent Economic Daily Ms Zhu Dan and Chief correspondent Phoenix TV Zhang TingFeng were the jury members of the Chinese Bridge Competition. The Director China Radio International Confucius Classroom Chen Xiang along with Director from Confucius Institute Zhang Daojian attended the event and expressed their appreciation on the Chinese language command of students.

The Chinese Bridge Competition started with a welcome note by the Chief Executive The Millennium Education Chaudhary Faisal Mushtaq who said that Cultural exchange programmes has not only strengthened the relationship between Pakistan and China, but it has also enabled the youth to inherit, sustain and transmit the legacy of Pakistan China Friendship. He further said that CRI-Millennium Confucius Classroom is a step forward to China Pakistan Education

Corridor in the larger prospect of CPEC. Ms Mona Kanwal Head of Chinese Language Department at The Millennium Education, Pakistan formally greeted the Deputy Chief of Mission Ms Pang Chunxue and the Cultural Counselor Zhang Heqing by sharing their extensive diplomatic profile with the parental community, faculty and students.

Director Communications and Outreach Mrs Sabina Zakir on the occasion said, that the economy of the world has certainly drifted towards the east hence foreign language has become a necessity in the competitive world of education. Founder CRI-Millennium Confucius Classroom Faisal Mushtaq said that people to people affinity is the salient feature of Pak-China bilateral ties and CRI-Millennium Classroom has immensely contributed to it through different cultural activities and competitions.

Out of nine participants from different schools Abeeha Shoaib from Flagship Millennium Campus I-9/3 clinched first position in the Chinese Bridge Competition. Dewa Wajid from Millennium Campus and Sukhen Fatima from Millennium Schools One World Campus clinched second position. Wania Naveed, Vaneze Ahmed and Muhammad Wali from Future World School (FWS) Lahore and Due-e- Zahra, Alynah, Naveed and Emaan Khalil from Science School Clinched third position in the Chinese Bridge Competition. CRI-Millennium Confucius Classroom, under the leadership of Founder Millennium Chinese Language Initiative Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq TI offers Chinese language classes across the Roots Millennium Education, Pakistan in the private sector, with the aim of allowing the students to get linguistically literate and culturally competent. Millennium Chinese Language Department has now 18 Full Time Teachers and nearly 9500 students learning Chinese Language. This has promoted cultural, social, business and educational opportunities among China and Pakistan for the benefit of our future generations.

DAWN

CPEC 2.0: THE PROMISE AND THE PERIL

As Pakistan navigates changing power equations in the world, and the crisis in Kashmir, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) stands out as the one possible silver lining for Pakistan. However, while CPEC is still one of the largest bilateral investment projects underway anywhere in the world, today its momentum in Pakistan is being regularly questioned. The scale of the promise is so large that it invites anxiety as well as awe in its sweep. With early harvest projects worth 18.9 billion dollars already underway in Pakistan in its first leg, the planning by Islamabad should bring much higher inflows than time lined right now. Yet it simultaneously tests the Pakistan government's capacity to use the opportunity to its advantage.

China's ability to pull 800 million people out of poverty in four decades through economic reforms has presented a compelling model for Pakistan to follow. However, given a tough series of IMF-induced measures for stabilization, economic growth in Pakistan seems to have slowed down even more. Even though the centre is adamant that there has been no slowdown on CPEC goals, the sense in the provincial capitals is different.

Among the big signature projects, infrastructure and energy top the wishlist. While Thar coal has generated power that now feeds into the national energy grid, officials claim that Islamabad's full-throttle drive on CPEC has been eased up and work on the projects pushed down the priority list. Yet at the same time, the economic impact of CPEC is seen as potentially so game-changing, that it cannot be ignored. With the precipitous slide of an overvalued rupee, and public finances straining at crippling deficits, the prospect of Chinese-led investment growth is the only rainbow on a horizon clouded by high economic stresses for a fast-growing population. In best-case estimates, in fact, it is believed that Chinese investment can potentially stimulate an eight to 10 percent increase in Pakistan's GDP by 2030. In worst-case futures, that number may well be unreachable, given Islamabad's current inability to operationalized promised reform.

Furthermore, even though Pakistan's new economic policy focus seems to be geared towards operationalizing these promised reforms, the goals that it has espoused have remained blurry and do not align with parliamentary and public reporting. Separating myth from reality and setting clear goals for inclusive planning at the federal, provincial and grass root levels should be a top priority for the government. As a democratic country with multiple languages and ethnicities that find expression in a huge traditional and social media, even small confusions or communication gaps can create severe cascades of backlash at all tiers of governance. For example, community level politics is critical to navigating trade union tensions. In Gwadar, the lack of consultations with the local fishermen in the building process of terminals and jetties that displace their livelihoods and boats has been a major cause for tensions. It is precisely this ambivalence that has hampered the transfer of knowledge and caused the failure in connecting nodes at the downstream institutional level.

The scale of Chinese investment in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor is so large that it invites global awe. But as CPEC moves into its second phase, there is also anxiety that the project is deliberately being slowed down and that its promise may not be fulfilled. What needs to be done to put it back on track?

Moreover, while some of the Pakistani concerns pivot around transparency, repayment terms and capacities, most of them do not question the intent of the embrace. Provinces within Pakistan that voice complaints either do so because of Islamabad's growing institutional opacity or simply because they want more of the pie.

As with all such big platforms, the challenges to CPEC 2.0 are legion. Understanding that the real challenges to realizing the maximum potential from CPEC are internal is a crucial step towards successfully benefitting from it. These are embedded in three Cs' of capacity, coordination and consensus. Pakistan, undeniably, has to scale up its capacity and coordination while building consensus in identifying policy frameworks for the opportunity this platform offers.

Consensus

One of the foremost roadblocks in effective consensus building on CPEC has been the divergence in processes between a centralized Chinese communist party government and Pakistan's nascent democratic parties and governance structures.

With CPEC envisioned as a cross-Pakistan project that involves all of four provinces, navigating Pakistan's multi-party provincial structures and building bridges with all political parties has been a challenge. However, China has sought to overcome the Pakistani government's own inability to build consensus and manage the political centre-field by engaging directly with several political parties at the provincial and federal level, to cultivate a better understanding of CPEC's vision and priorities. This process has culminated in the establishment of a CPEC Political Parties Joint Consultation Mechanism, which has seen the Communist Party of China engage with a broad spectrum of Pakistan's political parties.

Since CPEC is not a parochial one-party or one-province ambition, it requires strategic levels of consensus-building to ensure each province's stake in the project is protected and that Pakistan's government moves forward collaboratively. Given the clear multi-party buy-in and commitment to CPEC, building consensus between Pakistan's political parties should not be as arduous of a project as it seems. However, the federal government's attempts for building political consensus between political parties have been poor because of the lack of transparency about CPEC between the different wings of government. The parliament is not brought into the fold by the federal government and has also consistently lacked an appreciation of the need to build stakes in parliamentary leadership at the highest level. This failure has led to political instability hampering the path to consensus and in ensuring that CPEC is implemented at optimum capacity. The federal government is often seen as absent or dismissive of this crucial process of political coalition-building.

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Capacity

Another major challenge to Pakistan has been the government's capacity deficit to absorb concessionary loans and grants which has been only worsened by their inability to plan how these will be absorbed in the future. Given the multiplicity of project designs under CPEC, both in the government and the private sector, it is clear that the Planning Commission, in which CPEC is nested, is both under-resourced and under-powered.

In terms of doing business reforms, most of the improvements have come at the provincial level from Punjab and Sindh, limiting the development only to Karachi and Lahore. Even though these efforts are commendable, they are insufficient for the country in the longer run as they give the impression that the government is only fixing what can be measured. It is the responsibility of the federal government to effectively disseminate information about the economic impact of CPEC that provides a blueprint to the rest of the provinces to implement business reforms that can equip them with the right tools to benefit from CPEC.

Furthermore, Pakistan's current Special Economic Zone (SEZ) law, instead of decentralizing and curbing bureaucratic controls to create elbow room for private enterprises, adds impediments such as approvals, areas of overlapping jurisdiction and poorly allocated regulatory authority. Recent reports suggest that while authorities are still busy with evaluations and land acquisition, work on any of the nine special economic zones is yet to begin.

The Chinese ambassador to Pakistan, Yao Jing, has repeatedly asserted that Pakistan has the potential to attract huge Chinese investments only if they can develop better trade policies, offer tax incentives and foster an investment-friendly climate. Currently, investors are required to get multiple No Objection Certificates (NOCs) before investments can begin. Hence, while SEZs in other countries such as China, UAE, Thailand and Georgia offer a one-stop-service for all regulatory matters, in Pakistan, the Board of Investment (BOI) serves that purpose which, due to the lack of a tailor-made framework for SEZs, leads to bureaucratic red tape. Reforms should be aimed at empowering the provincial governments to process the application of SEZs to save time and money instead of being dependent on Islamabad.

Industrial Cooperation

Another significant hurdle in Pakistan's ability to generate employability under CPEC initiatives has been the capacity of our human resources. While Pakistan boasts the ninth-largest labour force, lack of investments in technical and vocational training have seriously affected labour skills. As a result, while infrastructure projects under CPEC continue to employ over 90 percent domestic labour, the percentages shrink dramatically in technical projects such as energy and digital connectivity. Presently, several Chinese companies are undertaking specific on-the-job training programmes for semi-skilled workers, both in China and in collaboration with universities in Pakistan that are partnering in dedicated short training courses.

CPEC has so far created nearly 68,382 direct jobs, according to the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Committee Meeting on June 13, 2019, discussed that CPEC has the potential to further generate anywhere from 800,000 to 1,500,000 jobs till 2030. For Pakistan, investments such as CPEC are valuable for their spillover impact on local firms and labour in terms of transferring technology, boosting skills and improving the quality and quantity of employment. The availability of productive, skilled and reasonably priced labour is an important determinant of the location for foreign investment. For Pakistan's demographic structure, with a burgeoning young labour force, the opportunity to generate high-value jobs from CPEC investments is not one that Pakistan can afford to miss.

Coordination

Coordination and communication is critical to connecting institutional dots. Effective communication is the overarching element of power in the 21st century, and CPEC's scale and ambition must best be addressed with clarity. Provinces have to be given the confidence that CPEC will be transparent and equitable. Unfortunately, to this day, little is known about the government contracts signed under CPEC.

When it comes to a discussion of provincial stakes, it is fair to start with Balochistan — the home of Gwadar, which is the centrepiece of the CPEC maritime Silk Road linkage. It goes without saying that the province has several deprived regions that need development and connectivity. The people of Balochistan and their public representatives have their hopes pinned on CPEC as much as the rest of Pakistan, if not more. For years, the mineral-rich province has provided resources like natural gas. But, at home, it has witnessed scarcity of resource and even gas at multiple levels. Its only consolation has come in the form of the 18th Amendment which ensures them ownership of their own resources through the National Finance Commission award.

It has already been indicated that the Balochistan government has repeatedly displayed confusion about the lack of progress on the Western Route. They have also raised questions about the province's share in the multibillion projects remaining at a meagre two to three percent. In the absence of transparency and provincial coordination, several voices suggest that the provinces aligning with the Eastern Route will be the larger beneficiaries of CPEC investments. In parliamentary committee meetings, members from both Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have protested against the lack of groundwork on CPEC in their respective provinces. Additionally, lack of water infrastructure is a major roadblock to development in Gwadar as well as other parts. These are areas that beg the government's attention but little of substance has been communicated during the Senate Special Committee meetings to date.

Nonetheless, the main political parties of Balochistan have been on the record to offer their full support to the central government — as have other political and opposition parties from Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab — on all CPEC projects.

Now, as CPEC drives into the next phase, the flow of substantive informational exchanges between various provincial and central departments as well as the private and public sector should not remain ambiguous anymore. There are obvious fault lines in communication as various members of the Senate CPEC Committee, who are also representatives of their provinces, have raised questions about timelines and priorities. Most recently, the increasing scrutiny of CPEC projects by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has stalled the process of approval for the ML-1 railway line — a project of immense strategic importance to CPEC. The federal government will have to demystify these details and, for that, it needs to make use of the parliament.

It is clear that in order to be functional, the most effective means of communicating across the federation would be to use parliamentary committees (CPEC committees are fully functional in the Senate) to ensure transparency and build a narrative that has a buy-in from all parties and provinces. The fact remains that, as representatives of their communities, all parliamentarians and political parties do see the benefits of CPEC and the potential for their own communities, once clear timelines and execution of projects becomes visible.

The Way Forward

Going forward, here is what the government needs to do urgently in order not to miss this opportunity. Future development may be less arduous if a one-window autonomous CPEC Authority is set up, which may already be on its way as recommended by the Senate Special Committee on CPEC. This would manage the internal challenges of planning, financing and coordinating between institutions, provinces and agencies to build momentum on speedy outcomes. Furthermore, tax regimes would have to be rationalized, infrastructure and energy provisions need to be ensured, transparency of contracts have to be addressed to avoid controversy and sovereign guarantees to provinces where needed made available. Flexible financing for private joint ventures and structural reforms also need to be planned and undertaken if any of the promised gains are to materialize.

Additionally, tax incentives can be conditioned on training labour and tax breaks can be conditioned on sourcing components from local firms, which also translates, albeit more indirectly, into local employment gains. In a bizarre and rather sharp contrast to this, the current service sales tax regime imposes a tax on business trainings, thereby increasing the costs of private training. Business friendly measures can directly address the market failure that plagues the labour market; by compensating firms that invest in labour, the government can plug in the gap between private and social benefits.

Finally, amendments to the SEZs Act of 2012, which are currently being debated in parliament, must ensure that SEZs provide Chinese and other companies, at a minimum, the same incentives that other South East Asian and African SEZs are currently providing. In addition, to deter rent seeking and to guarantee that industries are market-driven, SEZs must ensure devolved decision making that takes the private sector on board. With the majority of SEZ companies expected to be from the private sector, ensuring that market dynamics determine SEZ policies will be essential for long-term viability of SEZ companies. A clear ‘rules of engagement’ agreed upon by both China and Pakistan would also prove beneficial in terms of expected outcomes.

Ultimately then, the ball is squarely in Islamabad’s court. The Chinese have done what they mostly need to. If urgent reforms are not undertaken for coordination and planning, there is a clear danger of the big CPEC opportunity shrinking to a much smaller platform than its initially conceived big-scale and transformational potential. History will judge all actors poorly — particularly the current PTI government — if they don’t seize the moment and the options for what they are

Debt Diplomacy

Riding a global trend, a symptom of Western anxiety is the new narrative of CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) being bloated, unplanned and predatory initiatives. The specter of swamping Chinese indebtedness is cited by Western powers as a critical neo-imperial gambit that cannibalizes developing, weaker economies, while ignoring their own debt profiles and structural lending to countries like Pakistan. This public conversation naturally stokes real fears

in Pakistan, where the opacity of Chinese contracts with government is cited as troubling for good governance and debt-ratio metrics.

The fact is that 90 percent of developing country debt, including Pakistan's, is owed to Western countries or institutions. Servicing this debt consumes about 30 percent of hard currency outflows from these developing countries, notwithstanding examples of Sri Lanka or Malaysia. At the Second BRI Summit in April 2019, China has sought to realign its investments in large-scale projects by addressing concerns of exclusivity, sustainability and standards. The launch of the new Debt Sustainability Framework under the Chinese Ministry of Finance, coupled with the Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Financing are meant to address concerns of debt sustainability, and build multilateral cooperation mechanisms to help share financing for infrastructure projects, largely restricted to policy banks such as the China Development Bank, EXIM Bank of China and other state-owned banks.

As Pakistan enters the second phase of CPEC, it is important to understand the measures and projections surrounding the arguments over debt risk to inform policy behaviour. One of the main concerns is that CPEC is adding on to Pakistan's already ballooning public debt. This is not entirely true.

According to the official Chinese statement, the early harvest projects are worth 18.9 billion dollars in investments which is made up of six billion dollars in government loans with a two percent interest rate and private investments in the form of equity worth three billion dollars, and 9.8 billion dollars in commercial loans with a five percent interest rate. So far, the government of Pakistan only needs to repay six billion dollars over the span of 20-25 years. It is important to note that, although commercial loans figure in the country's total external debt and liabilities, it is in fact not guaranteed by the government. This is proven by the State Bank's official figures that do not show any guaranteed private sector external debt. CPEC makes up for six percent of Pakistan's total external debt worth 105.84 billion dollars whereas other multilateral loans run about four to five times more, dwarfing CPEC loans in comparison.

Aside from the debt question, some worry about the risk of asset seizure in case Pakistan fails to repay its Chinese loans. Sri Lanka is often cited as a cautionary tale in this regard. However, the circumstances that led Sri Lanka to lease its port to China point to a much more pervasive balance of payment crisis that goes well and beyond its Chinese loans. The Rhodium Group, in a recent study, looked at 40 cases of Chinese debt renegotiations. Their findings reveal that asset seizure is indeed a very rare occurrence. In fact, deferment, change of loan terms and deadlines, refinancing or even write-offs or debt forgiveness are more common outcomes. The refinancing and renegotiation given to Angola, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Mongolia and Ukraine support this claim. Altogether, China has renegotiated around 50 billion dollars worth of debt.

With its ballooning external debt, questions surrounding the country's capability to repay its loans without risking its assets are not unfounded. The real risk lies in Pakistan's ability to stabilize its balance of payments. Pakistan must, therefore, focus on building cooperation frameworks and reducing the opacity of CPEC finances.

The Nation

Chinese company offers free display of Pak commodities

ISLAMABAD - A delegation of M/s. Zhejiang Eman Supply Chain Management Co. Ltd from Yiwu International Trade City of Zhejiang Province of China visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) on Saturday and offered to arrange free display of Pakistani commodities in Pakistan Pavilion in China. The delegation led by Mr Anderson comprised Mr Kim, Mrs Eman, Mrs Judy and others.

Anderson stressed that Pakistan entrepreneurs should provide samples of their products so that his Company could arrange their free display in China.

Highlighting the business potential of Yiwu City, he said that Yiwu was one number city of China in terms of exports/imports with 70,000 shops and 3 million daily trades of items. He said that every year in October an international commodities fair was held in Yiwu that was attended by buyers and consumers from around the world. He stressed that Pakistani traders should participate in that fair with their commodities to promote their business. Anderson said that Zhejiang Eman Supply Chain Management Co Ltd was established in 2005 in China and was a first-level international integrated transport companies transporting goods through ocean, air and road around the world.

The delegation's head said that China was exporting products all over the world, but now was open for imports. He said that Pakistani exporters should be more proactive to penetrate Chinese market for exports, otherwise other countries would capture market share in China. Anderson said that prices of Pakistani products were quite affordable for China and Pakistani exporters should take benefit of this advantage. He said that China has implemented a preferential tariff on 313 Pakistani products and Pakistani exporters should fully capitalize on this concession.

Addressing the delegation, President ICCI Ahmed Hassan Moughal said that Chinese companies should bring technology and set up manufacturing plants through JVs in Pakistan to produce various products.

Express News

حکومت کا چین سے تمام تجارت اور معاہدے مقامی کرنسی میں کرنے کا فیصلہ

اسلام آباد: حکومت نے ڈالر کے مقابلے میں روپے کی قدر کو مستحکم کرنے کے لیے چین سے تمام تجارت اور معاہدے مقامی کرنسی میں کرنے کا فیصلہ کیا ہے۔

ایکسپریس نیوز کے مطابق گزشتہ مالی سال کے دوران پاکستان اور چین کے درمیان تجارت کا حجم 14 ارب 60 کروڑ ڈالر رہا۔ پاکستان نے چین سے 12 ارب 70 کروڑ ڈالر کی ایشیا

درآمد کیں جب کہ برآمدات کا حجم صرف ایک ارب 86 کروڑ ڈالر رہا، اس طرح پاکستان اور چین کے درمیان تجارتی خسارہ 10 ارب ڈالر سے زائد رہا۔

اسی طرح مالی سال 2016-17 میں پاکستان کا چین سے تجارتی خسارہ 12 ارب 67 کروڑ ڈالر سے زائد جب کہ 2017-18 میں 14 ارب ڈالر تھا۔

پاکستان سے چین کے تجارتی خسارے اور امریکی ڈالر کے مقابلے میں روپے کی قدر ایک خاص سطح پر برقرار رکھنے کے لیے حکومت نے پاک چین تجارت مقامی امریکی ڈالر کے بجائے مقامی کرنسی میں کرنے کا فیصلہ کیا ہے، اس حوالے سے تمام وزارتوں، ڈویژنوں اور ان کے ماتحت اداروں اور منسلک محکموں کو مراسلہ جاری کر دیا گیا ہے۔ مراسلے میں ہدایت کی گئی ہے کہ آئندہ چائنیز کمپنیوں و برآمد کنندگان کے ساتھ تمام لین دین اور معاہدے چائنیز کرنسی یو آن میں کئے جائیں گے۔

دوسری جانب اسٹیٹ بینک نے کلیئرنگ اینڈ سیٹلمنٹ میکنزم متعارف کروادیا ہے جب کہ مارکیٹ میں چائنیز کرنسی یو آن کی دستیابی کا بھی انتظام کر دیا ہے۔

September 02, 2019

The Nation

Planning Ministry reluctant to streamline ML-1 project

Islamabad - The Ministry of Planning Development and Reform (MoPDR) can go away with the demand of third party cost validation for the ML-I project only if the government amends the rule and exempt G to G agreements from NAB scrutiny.

The planning ministry has told the government to amend the existing accountability rules to remove G to G agreement from the NAB radar and then they can withdraw their demand for the cost validation of ML-I, official sources told The Nation here Sunday.

The total estimated cost of the ML-I project is \$9 billion and it will be completed in three phases.

The Planning Commission proposed to get the third party cost verification of first phase of the project which is worth \$2.4 billion.

However the federal minister for railway asserts that the cost validation will further delay the project.

If the government is in hurry for the execution of ML-I project, it should change the rule or wait till the completion of cost validation of the project, the source said.

The bureaucracy is not ready to take any risk when it comes to following the rule and regulations in the execution of G to G agreement mainly because of the fear of the accountability watchdog, sources said.

The sources said that we have the example of how negative propaganda was launched by the then opposition (PTI and its allies) against the LNG deal signed between Pakistan and Qatar, during PML N government, which was also a G to G agreement.

The source said that the sitting Railway minister, who blames the Planning commission for creating hurdles in Railway ML-I project, was the one who had criticized G to G LNG contract with Qatar and had claimed to have obtained proofs of corruption in LNG deal with Qatar.

So who can guarantee that tomorrow another Shaikh Rasheed will not challenge today's G to G deal for ML-I with China, the source questioned. The planning commission wants a legal cover beyond the tenure of the incumbent government, the source added.

It is pertinent to mention here that last week in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on CPEC, Federal Minister for Railway, Shaikh Rasheed, was angry over the indecisiveness of the government and slow progress in the finalization of the ML-I project.

He said that planning ministry is creating hurdles in the finalization of ML-I agreement with China.

You are not sincere with the project and have slowed down work on the project after IMF deal, alleged minister, the source said. He said that in case the government failed to start work on the project, it will prove the biggest scandal of the present government.

The minister was extremely angry over the planning ministry indifference towards the most important project of Pakistan railway and demand of cost validation.

The minister said that the planning ministry has not yet decided about its framework and still wants to do the third party cost validation, which will further delay the project.

The Nation

1st Pakistani gets 5 year working visa for China

BEIJING - A Pakistani businessman, along with three other foreigners, has been issued first class working visa valid for five years by the administration of the city of Yiwu, located in the central part of east China's Zhejiang province. Muhammad Arif and three nationals of Afghanistan, Jordan and Iraq are the first batch which received the first class work permit by the Exit-Entry Administration of Bureau of Yiwu Municipal Public Security Bureau under the new policies. The issuance of the permit for five years is the first time after the implementation of the new policies. Prior to this policy, the businessmen were issued visa for only one year. Muhammad Arif told APP that he and his family are settled in Yiwu and import various goods from Pakistan. He said the local government had promised to issue the five-year permit to 200 businessmen, and he was part of the first batch which was issued the permit.

“It has brought great convenience to his work and life.” He said.

Yiwu is the world's largest consumer good purchasing center having an area of 4.7 million square meters, accommodates 70,000 booths and sells 1.7 million kinds of goods.

Over 400,000 overseas businessmen come to Yiwu each year, and over 13,000 overseas businessmen from more than 100 countries and regions reside in Yiwu.

September 03, 2019

The Express Tribune

CPEC: what's stopping Pakistan Railways?

The world's second-longest train route connects Yiwu, a trading centre near Shanghai, to London. The 12,000-plus kilometer-long railway track which opened in 2017 has made possible hauling millions of tons of goods within 18 days, which once took 30 to 45 days of sailing to reach the shores of Great Britain. The China-Europe rail now connects 108 cities across 16 countries, ushering in new opportunities for trade and prosperity and unfolding a new economic world order.

In Pakistan however, we have yet to initiate the up-gradation and doubling of ML-1 from Karachi to Peshawar. The track will ultimately extend to Kashghar, providing access to the BRI railway grid.

For now, the ML-1 up-gradation project remains limited to neatly ribboned blue files, prominently displaying the Government of Pakistan's emblem, slowly moving from one ministry to another. Ministers and their ministries are bickering over approval processes; feasibility studies are taking forever to complete; while the intimidating \$8 billion price tag keeps on haunting those who dare to touch these files.

Irrespective of these political scuffles, turf wars and blame games that characterize the usual business of government, there are three fundamental reasons behind this inaction.

First is the prevailing economic crisis and the ongoing IMF programme. Not only has the IMF raised serious concerns about Pakistan's debt sustainability, but it has also placed a tight limit on the number of government guarantees. In the absence of any government guarantees the ML-1 financing may have to be undertaken by the Pakistan Railways itself, which would need other guarantee mechanisms.

Moreover, the fiscal constraints leave little room for any significant co-contribution. The total cost of the project is \$8.2 billion, with 85% financing coming from China with a grace period of 8 to 10 years. Although this would mean no immediate outflows on account of repayment, the remaining 15% which translates into a whopping Rs193 billion would have to be contributed by Pakistan. Even for the first phase of \$2.3 billion, we would need to pitch in Rs54 billion. If the government is serious about ML-1 upgradation, now is the time to figure out these issues and find workable solutions.

Secondly, the newly formed debt commission is looking into past mega projects, while NAB and provincial anti-corruption authorities are actively sniffing for corruption everywhere. A suspect is treated as a convict and before he could prove his innocence (or be proven guilty) he would have served years in prison already. In this situation, it is not easy to find a bureaucrat who is willing to sign on this multibillion dollar framework agreement.

Thirdly comes the pricing of the project. The project is likely to follow the CPEC procurement modality, with limited competition amongst Chinese contractors. This should be fine as long as the pricing remains competitive. But international benchmarks suggest that this price is probably on the higher side. The 1,214kilometre long Chinese Geku Railway due to be completed in 2019, for instance, costs \$5.4 billion to build from scratch. Considering that ML-1 is an upgrade the price tag of \$8.2 billion for 1,872 kilometers looks a little steep.

But such comparison could also be misleading, as project specificities could sometimes cause large cost variations. An alternative approach could be to limit the CPEC framework agreement to two of the three project components and undertake one component through international competitive bidding. This could help the government in real price discovery and can support in price negotiations with the Chinese.

If handled right, the ML-1 could become Prime Minister Imran Khan's legacy that could get him political dividends for years, like the Motorway did for Mian Nawaz Sharif, or else it could easily turn into political baggage.

The Nation

Chinese investors to invest in SME sector of Pakistan

LAHORE/BEIJING - Prime Minister Imran Khan met a delegation of Chinese investors from around 100 Chinese investment companies, mostly from the Shandong province, China, led by Mr. Javed Afridi at Governor House Lahore today.

Governor Punjab Chaudhary Muhammad Sarwar, Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar, Advisor on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood, Chairman BOI Syed Zubair Haider Gilani, SAPM Information & Broadcasting Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan and SAPM NaeemulHaq were present during the meeting.

The investors expressed their eagerness to explore the possibility of investment in diverse sectors of Pakistan saying the country has huge investment potential in various sectors and the CPEC has further opened new avenues of growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME). They expressed their willingness to invest with Small and Medium Enterprises of Gujranwala, Gujrat and Sialkot Triangle.

Prime Minister Imran Khan welcomed the Chinese investors and appreciated their willingness to invest in the SME sector of Pakistan. The Prime Minister said that the present government is committed to ease of doing business for foreign investors, and streamlining the existing regulatory framework for investment to avoid wastage of time and resources for the prospective investors.

The Prime Minister while assuring the visiting Chinese investors maximum facilitation said that the country has embarked on the path of economic stability, the present Government is especially focusing on SMEz as it leads to employment generation and poverty alleviation.

The Prime Minister reiterated that the Government will make it easier for Chinese companies to capitalize huge investment potential of Pakistan. China is our close ally and friend, and it has always been there to support us, the Prime Minister stated.

Meanwhile, China will provide market access to 90% of Pakistani commodities at zero duty to help the latter correct trade imbalances. This is estimated to increase Pakistan's exports to China by \$500 million, under the free trade agreement phase-II between two countries.

According to a China Economic Net's report, China will invest \$1 billion in 27 projects in education, health, agriculture, irrigation, and human resource development and poverty alleviation sectors.

Official statistics show that the CPEC initiative has created 70,000 direct jobs for the locals in the past five years, and per capita income has increased by 23%. Based on incomplete statistics, 17 projects under CPEC paid taxes of \$930 million to the Pakistan government.

Pakistan's GDP growth in the 2013-2014 fiscal years after the start of the construction under CPEC increased from 3.7% in the previous fiscal year to 4.14%, and has since then maintained growth, hitting 5.79% in the fiscal year 2017-2018.

According to a recent report by the Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office of the Chinese Embassy to Pakistan, under second phase of CPEC, promotion of industrial cooperation on the basis of special economic zones will be a priority area, and investment in private sector and establishment of joint ventures will be encouraged.

Recently, while meeting with Yao Jing, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Muhammad Hammad Azhar, the newly appointed Federal Minister for Economic Affairs of Pakistan, has reaffirmed his support for China and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The envoy stated that Minister Azhar has rich experience in financial and economic work, and believed that he will lead the Economic Affairs Ministry to play an important role in the economic and social advancement of Pakistan.

China-Pakistan cooperation in energy has progressed rapidly in the past five years, seeing the completion and roll out of seven energy projects which meet the electricity demand of 8.6 million households. In 2018, the Port Qasim Power Station and the Sahiwal Power Station combined to generate more than 16 billion kWh of electricity, accounting for a quarter of Pakistan's generating capacity.

The Sahiwal Power Station was dubbed by the Pakistan government as a miracle in the country's history of electric power.

In the field of infrastructure, the Pakistani "Orange Line" rail transit project undertaken by the Chinese enterprise was put into operation in 2018, and it reduces travel time from two and a half hours to 45 minutes, thus saving about 70% of the time for locals.

The News

India wants to sabotage CPEC: Dr Alvi

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi said on Sunday India wanted to damage the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) but all its designs would be thwarted. He said this while inaugurating the opening session of Pakistan Navy war game Shamsheer-e-Bahr VII and logistic exercise Tarseel-e-Bahr II in Karachi. He said that Pakistan is facing multitude of internal and external challenges which necessitate a 'Whole of Nation Approach'. The chief guest also underlined the significance of war games in military planning process and expressed his desire to see valuable lessons and recommendations at the end of War Game. The president appreciated the realistic stocktaking and thought provoking presentations by force commanders, which would help in crystallizing plans for maritime security and seaward defence of Pakistan. The chief guest particularly emphasised Pakistan's increasing relevance in the backdrop of CPEC and operationalization of Gwadar port. While underscoring the fact that economic wellbeing of Pakistan is linked with the freedom of navigation through seas, the chief guest said that prosperity of our people is intrinsically linked to the security of our Sea Lines of Communication, which would add to the responsibilities of Pakistan Navy in ensuring unhindered flow of traffic in our waters.

The chief guest highlighted that the illegitimate revocation of articles 370 and 35-A from Indian constitution by BJP government has engendered massive unrest in Indian Held Kashmir and raised serious concerns in Pakistan.

Indian attempt to enforced fascist control over IHK has serious implications towards internal security situation in IHK and resultantly on the security in South Asia and the world at large. Pakistan will continue to fiercely contest and expose Indian atrocities in IHK politically and diplomatically at all possible levels till resolution of Kashmir issue in the light of UNSC resolutions.

President Dr Arif Alvi was received by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi.

Later, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (Operations), Rear Admiral Faisal RasulLodhi, presented an overview of the war game outlining objectives set forth and concepts to be tried. He highlighted that being a tri-service event with representation of relevant ministries Shamsheer-e-Bahr VII is the Flagship war game of Pakistan Navy that is held biennially to try various concepts which are then validated in subsequent Navy-wide field exercises before being incorporated into naval strategy.

The event was attended by large number of high ranking Armed Forces officers besides bureaucrats and reps of Federal Ministries.

Jang News

پاک چین تجارت، پاکستان کے تجارتی خسارے میں کمی کارجمان

کراچی (اسٹاف رپورٹر) گزشتہ مالی سال 2018-19 کے دوران پاک چین تجارت میں پاکستان کے تجارتی خسارہ میں 3.04 فیصد کمی واقع ہوئی ہے اور دوران سال تجارتی خسارہ کی شرح 34.22 فیصد تک کم ہو گئی۔ ادارہ برائے شماریات پاکستان کے اعداد و شمار کے مطابق مالی سال 2017-18 کے دوران تجارتی خسارہ کی شرح 37.26 فیصد تھی جو گزشتہ مالی سال کے دوران 3.04 فیصد کمی سے 34.22 فیصد تک کم ہو گئی۔ رپورٹ کے مطابق گزشتہ چار سال کے دوران پاک چین باہمی تجارت کے حوالے سے پاکستان کے تجارتی خسارہ میں مسلسل کمی کارجمان رہا ہے اور چار سال کے دوران تجارتی خسارہ کی شرح میں 9.45 فیصد کمی نمایاں کی ریکارڈ کی گئی ہے۔ اعداد و شمار کے مطابق مالی سال 2015-16 کے دوران پاکستان کا تجارتی خسارہ 43.67 فیصد تھا جو مالی سال 2016-17 کیلئے 38.89 فیصد تک کم ہو گیا۔ اسی طرح مالی سال 2017-18 کے دوران پاک چین باہمی تجارت میں پاکستان کے تجارتی خسارہ کی شرح 37.26 فیصد تک کم ہو گئی جو گزشتہ مالی سال 2018-19 کیلئے 34.22 فیصد تک کم ہو گیا۔ جون 2019 کے دوران پٹ سن کی قومی درآمدات میں 66.7 فیصد کمی واقع ہوئی ہے

September 04, 2019

Business Recorder

Govt. releases Rs360mn for CPEC ML-1 railway project

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has released Rs. 360 million for preliminary design for up-gradation and rehabilitation of main line (ML-1) railway project and establishment of dry-port, near Havelian under Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2019-20.

The railway project is an important strategic part of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the government had allocated Rs. 1.8 billion for its preliminary design during the year 2019-20, according to latest data issued by the Planning Ministry.

In total, the railway ministry has so far received Rs. 1.34 billion for various development projects under the PSDP programme, out of total allocation of Rs. 13.5 billion.

According to details, an amount of Rs. 288 million has been released for reconstruction and rehabilitation of assets damaged during the floods, 2010 for which Rs. 1.4 billion have been allocated.

Similarly, the government has released Rs. 114 million for up-gradation of terminal facilities and dry-ports while Rs. 100 million has been released for up-gradation and renovation of railway stations.

For rehabilitation and procurement of re-manufactured of 300 traction motors, an amount of Rs. 80 million has been released out of total allocation of Rs. 400 million, whereas for acquisition of land for railway corridor from sea port Km: 5.25 to Km: 9.00 and railway operational land from 12.00 to Km: 14.00 at Gwadar, an amount of Rs. 160 million has been released out of total allocation of Rs. 800 million.

Pakistan Observer

China's cultural diplomacy in Pakistan

SINCE the beginning of bilateral ties in 1950, the China–Pakistan relationship has grown significantly. Known as Pakistan's "all-weather friend," bilateral economic cooperation has been advanced by the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) agreement, worth \$62 billion of Chinese investment in Pakistan. While there is no shortage of literature on the geo-economics and geopolitical implications of the CPEC—considered a "game changer" by Beijing and Islamabad, negligible attention has been devoted to understanding its linkages with China's cultural diplomacy in Pakistan.

Cultural diplomacy, as an organized project, has been part of human lives for centuries. With the advent of nation states, however, its mode and reach have expanded. It now transcends informal mechanisms to formal arrangements between states through which countries promote their arts, culture, music, education and language. Relevant to this article is the place of public diplomacy in China's foreign policy through which Beijing has recently been very active in promoting its soft power. China has invested heavily to promote its cultural soft power, which has lifted its status in the Soft Power 30 index from rank 28 in 2015 to rank 27 in 2018. This shows that China understands the value of cultural diplomacy, but it is important to understand if the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has any influence on China's approach to soft power.

As the CPEC is considered a flagship project of the BRI, China's cultural diplomacy provides a right opportunity to investigate the link between the BRI and China's cultural diplomacy. China has been promoting its cultural influence in Pakistan, for example, through numerous and regular social interactions between people of both countries working in the fields of culture, arts, science and technology since the 1960s. Growing up in the 1980s and 1990s when Pakistan Television (PTV) used to be the only TV channel in Pakistan, I remember vividly how Chinese programs were translated and broadcast in Pakistan. Since the start of the CPEC, PTV now has a program, "CPEC Time," in which one Chinese and one Pakistani host talk about various aspects of the CPEC with a greater emphasis on the friendship between China and Pakistan. Also, media cooperation has reached new heights through collaboration between both countries' film industries. There is also the example of a Chinese actor, Kent S. Leung, who plays a role in a Pakistani movie, *Chalay Thay Saath*.

Beijing has also been promoting its ideological and cultural influence through Confucius Institutes (CIs) in Pakistan that promote the Chinese culture and language. Since the start of this century, CIs have opened on 500 university campuses and are teaching Mandarin to more than

two million people across the world. Since 2000, both countries have agreed on many projects for the promotion of the Chinese language in Pakistan. While the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) in Islamabad has been teaching the Chinese language since 1971, a CI at the university was established in 2005, and its opening ceremony was held in 2007. This particular CI was named the best CI for 2007 and 2008. This CI, just like others in Pakistan, has been working closely with Chinese diplomatic missions to organize cultural festivals, for instance the Chinese Lantern Festival in 2016 when the Rector of NUML linked promotion of Chinese culture with the CPEC: “Confucius Institute at NUML stood up in promoting Chinese culture in the world...NUML is proud to be the part of [CPEC].”

The impact of the BRI/CPEC on the success of this relationship is also clear from the enrolment of Pakistani students in Mandarin programs. At NUML, the enrolment in Chinese language programs has increased from 200 before the CPEC to 2,000 now. Overall, there are 25,000 Pakistanis learning Chinese in Pakistan. This is mainly because many Pakistani people are hoping to not just do business with Chinese people, but also to find jobs under various CPEC programs.

While there are different points of view on the exact timing of the first discussions between China and Pakistan regarding the CPEC, initial discussions were held during the presidency of Asif Ali Zardari. It was then in 2013 that a memo of understanding (MOU) was signed between the Sichuan Normal University of China and the University of Karachi of Pakistan to establish a CI in Karachi. It was also in the same year that the cultural section at the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad developed various programs to promote Chinese culture through classes on Chinese Gong Fu, Chinese dancing, calligraphy and the Chinese language. In 2015, CIs were established at the University of the Punjab in Lahore and the University of Agriculture Faisalabad. Both are the two prominent and large public sector universities in Pakistan’s most populated province of Punjab.

The joint production of feature films and numerous other joint cultural activities play a key role in promoting China’s goodwill in Pakistan. This goodwill will be further enhanced through the expansion of CIs and language programs in Pakistan. Prior to the CPEC, there were only two CIs: one in Islamabad and one in Lahore. Since initial discussions on the CPEC, the network of CIs has been broadened to Karachi and Faisalabad. China also plans to open CIs in Peshawar and Gilgit. This demonstrates Beijing’s intention to expand the scope of its soft power across Pakistan, where its network of CIs is reaching people beyond the federal and provincial capitals to regions, especially Gilgit, that are central to the CPEC. There has been a manifold increase in China’s cultural diplomacy in Pakistan since the CPEC’s inception. With this scale of cultural diplomacy, especially through language programs, it is obvious that there will be a deeper cultural impact from China on Pakistan. But more time and empirical evidence are needed for further discussion.

CPEC a blessing for both Pakistan and China

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has emerged as a boon both for Pakistan and China. And not surprisingly, the peoples of the two countries have great expectations from the CPEC in terms of economic growth and regional development. Gwadar can help boost Balochistan economy

Balochistan, which has a population of more than 12 million, is a crucial factor for the CPEC because the Gwadar port is situated there. The province covers 347,190 square kilometers, comprising about 44 percent of the total area of Pakistan. It may be a dry and arid region, but in terms of natural resources, it is Pakistan's richest province. Still, more than 53% of the people in Balochistan live below the poverty line, and the province has a poor literacy rate of about 29% and an unemployment rate of almost 33%.

Despite being rich in natural resources, Balochistan lacks both skilled and unskilled workers, as well as the necessary capital to build an industrial base to achieve the much wanted economic breakthrough to lift the poor out of poverty and improve their living standards. So what measures should be taken to turn around the fortunes of Balochistan?

To begin with, the CPEC has the potential to change the situation thanks to the eagerness of the Chinese government and enterprises to invest in Balochistan, especially in Gwadar port, road connectivity projects and industrial zones. Within a few years, the CPEC's projects would facilitate massive economic activities, which would create jobs and help proliferates businesses that in turn would improve the living standards to the local people.

Gateway to Central Asia and the Persian Gulf

Gwadar is situated on an isthmus in the Arabian Sea on the southwestern coast of Pakistan. As such, it is a gateway to both the Persian Gulf and Central Asian Republics, which would eventually connect 64 countries in Asia and Europe. No wonder it has been called the "standalone pillar" of the CPEC and the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative.

With its perfect geographical location, economic and geostrategic importance, Gwadar has all the features to transform into a regional hub of trade and transport and an international seaport. According to the Pakistani government's plans, Gwadar port will further flourish with the "blue economy" through committed spending of more than \$824 million on 12 projects. As for road connectivity, some roads have already been built while others are in the pipeline. China has also vowed to build a 1,320-megawatt coal power plant in Gwadar by 2020 at a cost of \$1.9 billion, and proposed to build a 300-megawatt coal-fired plant.

Potential of becoming a world tourist site

Balochistan has an unexplored seacoast with the potential of emerging as a global tourist attraction, which would attract bulk foreign direct investment. Balochistan's mineral resources are lying untapped for want of capital while some exposed mineral deposits are wasted because of "rat-hole" mining.

According to primary geological surveys, the region could have deposits of rare earth, precious and semi-precious metals, industrial minerals and a variety of stones including onyx, which can provide a huge base for setting up processing and manufacturing plants to produce export-quality value-added products.

Despite some grievances of the people of Balochistan, the construction of Gwadar port and infrastructure facilities such as road networks would boost the local economy and thus improve the living standards of the people not only in the province but also elsewhere in Pakistan. It is important here to emphasize that there is a consensus among all the stakeholders of the CPEC on the construction of the Gwadar port.

CPEC and BRI face external opposition

The CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative face opposition also because some external forces are misleading some people into believing the projects won't do them any good, because they don't want to see the Gwadar project completed. But the governments of Pakistan and China, media outlets, civil society, think tanks and academics have been quashing such misleading narratives.

The Pakistani government is also keen to provide a level playing field for the local business community by implementing necessary reforms in taxation to develop the region. Still, immediate intervention by the government would help a great deal to dispel the fears of local businesses. Also, timely reforms in different sectors coupled with the acceleration in CPEC projects would assuage the fears of local businesses and attract more international investment.

At the training centers, the local workers can hone their respective skills, acquire management skills, learn to take capacity building measures, and explore agricultural and remedial measures to overcome the local challenges so as to ensure "all-inclusive" and "all-around" economic development.

Many countries eager to invest in Gwadar

Five years on the CPEC has given Pakistan so much leverage on the economic front that countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are eager to invest in Gwadar and elsewhere in Pakistan. And countries such as Malaysia, Turkey, Russia, and Central Asian and European states are looking forward to investing in the CPEC.

People in Balochistan should realize that economic projects take time to bear fruits, so they must be patient and stay united. They should also know that the CPEC umbrella, which covers the Gwadar project, alone has the potential to turn Balochistan into an economic success story for Pakistan.

It is also important to emphasize that the malicious propaganda of some external forces that are using Balochistan's "depravity" to prompt some local people to question the CPEC's positive effects must be foiled both by the Pakistani and Chinese governments. The Pakistani government must also strategize a mass media campaign to educate the people by highlighting the eventual

benefits of the CPEC and emphasizing the need for a peaceful and prosperous Balochistan without which the CPEC's "all-inclusive" slogan may lose its substance.

The Nation

Pak-China Business Forum-Industrial Expo to end today

LAHORE - 7th Pak-China Business Forum Industrial Expo, being held at the Lahore Expo Centre, is attracting a large number of businessmen, industrialists and general public as the footfall during first two days was recorded at 50,000 people.

Governor Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar is expected to address the concluding ceremony of this three-day annual feature on Wednesday (September 04).

The exhibition, which was inaugurated by the Federal Minister for Science & Technology Fawad Chaudhry, is being participated by 100 plus Chinese and around same number of Pakistani companies. China Chamber of Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products is the main host in collaboration with the Qingdao Overseas Investment Services Centre (QOISC) COMSATS University and the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI).

Punjab Minister for Energy Dr. Akhtar Malik visited the exhibition on second day and appreciated the efforts of the organizers for putting up a superb show in which, companies of both the countries have showcased their potential. He said that China can help a lot in resolving the energy issues being faced by Pakistan and especially Chinese expertise in renewable energy can provide the much desired relief to the Industrial, commercial and domestic sector of Pakistan.

He said that the government is paying full attention towards utilizing all available resources to meet the energy requirement of the country and it is open for Chinese collaboration in this regard.

Speakers at a ceremony on this occasion appreciated the holding of this joint expo and said that besides providing B2B contacts, it also promoted soft image of Pakistan among the foreigners attending this event. They urged the government to promote small and cottage industry by providing interest free loans and encouraging their participation in such events.

Meanwhile, a delegation of participating Chinese companies led by Wang ZiHai, CEO Everest International Expo also called on the Prime Minister Imran Khan and the Governor Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar at the Governor's House on Monday evening.

September 05, 2019

The Nation

SC allayed China's objections against litigation

ISLAMABAD: Growing denunciation has led to retraction of the Gas Infrastructure Development Cess (GIDC) ordinance just after nine days of its issuance by President Dr Arif Alvi.

The piece of legislation, now annulled, had waived Rs208 billion worth of liabilities of a few industrialists in addition to writing off late payment surcharge for the past seven years.

Widespread criticism was being showered on the government for giving this concession. Simultaneously, there were strong indications that the ordinance is going to be disapproved through a resolution by the opposition-dominated Senate, which staged a walkout on Tuesday against its promulgation.

Prime Minister Imran Khan did not take much time to revoke the ordinance. He was apparently conscious of the escalating criticism when it was stated in the official statement that “in view of the recent controversy, the prime minister, in the interest of transparency and good governance, has decided to withdraw the ordinance and direct the attorney general to move an application for urgent bearing in the Supreme Court so that the matter is decided at the earliest in accordance with the law and the Constitution.”

While the federal ministers were stoutly defending the GIDC ordinance with one of them saying that the government has not offered a “free lunch” to the beneficiaries and the impact of increase in gas price is being offset by reduction in GIDC rate on fertilizer, the opposition parties kept condemning the instant legislation, which offered a lucrative amnesty to fertilizer and power plants and other businesses before audit. During the incumbency of Mian Saqib Nisar as the chief justice, the issue was massive litigation relating to projects undertaken by China had emerged and Beijing was extremely uneasy about it. When he had visited China, Beijing brought it to his notice. On his return to Pakistan, the top judge had concretely acted which discouraged such litigation, removing China's objections.

In the present case, the government before issuing the now withdrawn ordinance may have taken up the issue involving multiple billions with the judiciary with the request to expedite the cases after bunching them together. This becomes all the more important when the government needs much more money at a time of revenue collection shortfall.

Before its issuance, the ordinance was discussed in a meeting of the federal cabinet, which, it is believed, reviewed it from all aspects. However, its withdrawal shows that no meaningful deliberations were done prior to its promulgation.

After the controversy intensified and the government was put under pressure, Energy Minister Omar Ayub stated that the federal cabinet has detailed discussions on the GIDC issue and noted

that even though forensic audit was not mentioned in the ordinance because it was a sector specific issue, the cabinet linked the settlement of GIDC with fertilizer industry to forensic audit of accounts of the fertilizer companies.

The ordinance had reduced GIDC rates by up to 75%, which was going to push down prices of gas and fertilizer for the end consumers. According to official statistics, as of the end of December 2018, the total principal liabilities of beneficiary sectors stood at Rs416.3 billion and half of those were written off by the government. Cumulative GIDC collection since 2012 stood at Rs701.5 billion till the end of December 2018, of which only Rs285 billion had been deposited. However, the ordinance had not addressed the issue of how to refund 50% GIDC to those companies that timely discharged their legal obligations and paid the entire amount of GIDC.

While taking back the ordinance, the prime minister expressed a mixed feeling of fear and optimism about the outcome of the litigation.

Over the past one year, the government has issued twelve ordinances. It was impelled to do so for not being able to do legislation in the Senate, which is controlled by the opposition parties, which do not agree with its legislative agenda.

Express News

سکھر ملتان موٹروے کی تکمیل؛ 6 گھنٹوں کا سفر 3 گھنٹوں میں سمٹ آیا

لاہور: پاک چائنا اقتصادی راہداری کے تحت کراچی لاہور موٹروے کا ایک بڑا اور اہم حصہ سکھر، ملتان موٹروے جسے ایم فائیو کا نام دیا گیا ہے مکمل ہو گیا ہے، جس کے بعد 6 گھنٹے کا سفر ساڑھے 3 گھنٹوں میں طے ہوا کرے گا۔

ایم فائیو کے دونوں جانب حدنگاہ تک پھیلے سرسبز باغات کے مناظر سفر کو خوبصورت بنا دیتے ہیں۔ چین کے تعاون سے 392 کلو میٹر کا ٹریک تعمیر کر لیا گیا ہے، 2 ارب 89 کروڑ ڈالر کا منصوبہ مقررہ مدت سے دو ماہ قبل مکمل کیا گیا ہے۔ چائنا اسٹیٹ کنسٹرکشن انجینئرنگ کارپوریشن کا تعمیر کردہ جنوبی پنجاب اور اندرون سندھ کو ملانے والا یہ سب سے بڑا منصوبہ ہے۔

موٹروے ایم 5 پر بہاولپور کے قریب دریائے ستلج کے ایک بڑے برج سمیت مجموعی طور پر 54 پل، 12 سروس ایریاز، 10 ریسٹ ایریا، 11 انٹر چینج، 10 فلائی اوورز اور 426 انڈر پاسز تعمیر کیے گئے ہیں۔ ہر 65 کلو میٹر کے فاصلے پر سروس ایریاز بنائے گئے ہیں، تاہم این ایچ اے کی جانب سے یہ ابھی فعال نہیں ہوئے اور نہ ہی فیول اسٹیشنز قائم کئے گئے ہیں، ایم فائیو پہلی موٹروے ہے جس کے دونوں اطراف میں سروس لائن بنائی گئی ہے تاکہ کاشتکار جلد اپنی فصلوں کو منڈی تک پہنچا سکیں، جنوبی پنجاب کی تعمیر و ترقی میں اہم کردار ادا کرنے والے اس منصوبے کا افتتاح سابق وزیر اعظم نواز شریف نے کیا تھا۔

سکھر، ملتان موٹروے پر حد درجہ رفتار 120 کلومیٹر فی گھنٹہ ہوگی، جس سے 392 کلومیٹر کا سفر 3 سے ساڑھے 3 گھنٹے میں مکمل ہو سکے گا جبکہ نیشنل ہائی وے پر یہ سفر 6 گھنٹوں میں طے ہوتا ہے۔ اس منصوبے کی تعمیر میں 97 فیصد پاکستانی اور 3 فیصد چینی افرادی قوت نے حصہ لیا، چینی کمپنی کے ڈپٹی جنرل مینجر مسٹر ڈنگ ژاؤ جی نے ایکسپریس نیوز اور چینی وفد کے ہمراہ ملتان سے سکھر تک موٹروے کا مکمل دورہ کیا، انہوں نے مختلف سیکشنز اور کنٹرول رومز کا معائنہ بھی کیا۔ ایکسپریس سے بات کرتے ہوئے مسٹر ڈنگ ژاؤ جی نے کہا کہ یہ پہلا منصوبہ ہے جو مقررہ مدت سے پہلے مکمل کر لیا گیا ہے، ہماری طرف سے تیاری مکمل ہے اور ہم اسے حکومت کے سپرد کرنے کو تیار ہیں۔

انہوں نے بتایا کہ ان کی کمپنی نے دن رات محنت کر کے منصوبے کو پایہ تکمیل تک پہنچایا ہے، ایک سوال کے جواب میں مسٹر ڈنگ ژاؤ جی نے کہا منصوبے کی تکمیل کے دوران انہیں سیکیورٹی کے مسائل کا سامنا ہوتا تھا وہ حکومت پاکستان کے شکر گزار ہیں کہ انہوں نے پاکستان آرمی، ریجنل زور پولیس کی اسپیشل سیکیورٹی مہیا کی ہے۔ ان کا یہ بھی کہنا تھا پہلی بار موٹروے ایم فائیو کے دونوں جانب سروس لائن بنائی گئی ہے تاکہ کاشتکار اپنے کھیتوں سے اجناس کم سے کم وقت میں منڈیوں تک پہنچا سکیں۔

سکھر کے قریب روہڑی کینال کے قریب ایم فائیو کا زیرو پوائنٹ ہے، یہاں ایک انٹر چینج بنایا جا رہا ہے، سکھر سے اس انٹر چینج کے ذریعے ایم فائیو پر داخل ہوا جاسکے۔ مستقبل میں روہڑی کینال سے حیدرآباد تک ایم 6 موٹروے کو مکمل کیا جائیگا۔ سکھر سے واپسی پر پنوں مائل انٹر چینج کے قریب کھجور اور کیلے کے باغات ہیں، یہاں کے مقامی کاشتکاروں نے بتایا کہ موٹروے کے تعمیر کے لئے انہیں زمینوں کا اچھا معاوضہ دیا گیا ہے جبکہ کنسٹرکشن کمپنی نے یہاں ڈسپنسریاں اور اسکول بھی بنائے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ پہلے انہیں اپنی اجناس جن میں کھجور، کیلا اور دیگر فصلیں شامل ہیں بڑے شہروں کی منڈیوں تک پہنچانے میں کئی دن لگ جاتے تھے تاہم اب ان کا یہ سفر چند گھنٹوں کا رہ جائیگا، جس سے تازہ پھل اور سبزیاں منڈیوں تک پہنچ سکیں گی۔

ایم فائیو کے ہر سیکشن پر ایک کنٹرول روم جبکہ سیکشن فائیو کے قریب مرکزی کنٹرول روم ہے جہاں ایم فائیو کے تمام سیکشنز کو جدید ترین کیمروں کی مدد سے مانیٹر کیا جائیگا۔ ترمذہ محمد پناہ سیکشن میں بنائے گئے مرکزی کنٹرول روم میں تعینات آئی ٹی کنسلٹنٹ محمد حماد نے بتایا کہ ایم فائیو پر 400 سے زائد جدید ترین کیمرے نصب ہیں۔ کوئی بھی گاڑی کسی بھی انٹر چینج سے جب ایم فائیو پر داخل ہوگی تو اس کے آؤٹ ہونے تک اس پر نظر رکھی جاسکے گی۔ یہاں پہلی بار ایسے اسکیئرز استعمال کیے جا رہے ہیں جن کی باعث اوور لوڈ گاڑی ایم فائیو پر داخل نہیں ہو سکتی، خود کار طریقے سے یہ معلوم ہو سکے گا کہ کون سی قسم کی گاڑی کس پوائنٹ سے انٹر ہوئی ہے۔

محمد حماد نے بتایا یہ ایم فائیو پر سفر سب سے مہنگا ہوگا، موٹروے پر سفر کے دوران مختلف قوانین کی خلاف ورزیوں پر 11 اقسام کے جرمانے ہو سکیں گے تاہم ان کو نیشنل ہائی ویز اتھارٹی کی مشاورت سے فائنل کیا جائیگا۔ انہوں نے بتایا کہ پہلی بار ایسا ہوگا کہ ایم فائیو پر سفر کرتے ہوئے بلاوجہ گاڑی روکنے، موٹروے پر کچرا پھینکنے، ہوائی فائرنگ کرنے اور ریٹ ایریا کے علاوہ کسی مقام پر گاڑی پارک کر نیو لائنوں کو ایم فائیو سے باہر لٹکتے ہوئے جرمانہ ادا کرنے پڑے گا جو ٹال ٹیکس میں شامل ہوگا۔

ایم فائیو کے سیکشن ٹو کے سیکورٹی انچارج کرنل (ر) ممتاز نے بتایا کہ خدانخواستہ ایم فائیو پر کوئی حادثہ ہوتا ہے تو ہمارا خود کار سسٹم الرٹ جاری کریگا اور متعلقہ محکمہ جس میں ریکسیو، موٹروے پولیس شامل ہیں ان کی امدادی ٹیمیں چند منٹوں میں پہنچ جائیں گی۔ اس تمام کارروائی کا خود کار طریقے سے ڈیٹا بھی مرتب ہوتا رہیگا۔

ایم فائیو موٹروے منصوبہ ملتان سے شروع ہو کر شجاع آباد، جلال پور، بیروالہ، اوج شریف، احمد پور شرقیہ اور لیاقت پور کے قریب سے ہوتا ہوا سندھ میں اوبازو، گھوٹکی، بنوعاقل اور سکھر میں روہڑی کے قریب اختتام پذیر ہو رہا ہے۔ ملتان سکھر موٹروے جنوبی پنجاب اور اندرون سندھ کے پسماندہ علاقوں کو بہتر سفری سہولتوں کی فراہمی کے ساتھ ان علاقوں کے کسانوں کی زرعی منڈیوں تک رسائی میں بھی آسانی پیدا کرے گا۔ ملتان سے سکھر کی طرف سفر شروع کریں تو آپ کو حدنگاہ تک پھیلے آم کے باغات نظر آتے ہیں، جیسے جیسے سکھر کی طرف بڑھتے جائیں آم کے ساتھ ساتھ کھجور اور کیلے کے باغات دکھائی دیتے ہیں جبکہ کپاس اور گنے کے کھیت بھی ہریالی بکھیرتے نظر آتے ہیں، موٹروے ایم فائیو کو اگست میں ٹریفک کے لئے کھولا جانا تھا تاہم اب رواں ماہ کے دوران اسے عام ٹریفک کے لئے کھولے جانے کا امکان ہے۔

Express News

مسئلہ کشمیر پر چین کے وزیر خارجہ نے احتجاجاً دورہ بھارت منسوخ کر دیا

چین کے وزیر خارجہ نے مقبوضہ کشمیر میں انسانی حقوق کی سنگین خلاف ورزیوں پر بھارت کا سرکاری دورہ منسوخ کر دیا تاہم وہ ہفتے کے روز پاکستان آئیں گے۔

بین الاقوامی خبر رساں ادارے کے مطابق چین کے وزیر خارجہ وانگ ای کو بھارتی قومی سلامتی کے مشیر اجیت دوول سے ملاقات کے لیے نئی دہلی آنا تھا تاہم مقبوضہ کشمیر کی موجودہ صورت حال پر احتجاجاً اپنا دورہ منسوخ کر دیا ہے۔ وزیر خارجہ وانگ ای اور قومی سلامتی کے مشیر اجیت دوول چین اور بھارت کی سرحدی تنازع کے حل کے لیے تشکیل دی گئی کمیٹی کے خصوصی نمائندے بھی ہیں اور یہ دورہ بھی سرحدی تنازعات کے لیے ایک اجلاس میں شرکت کے لیے تھا۔ دوسری جانب چینی وزیر خارجہ بھارتی دورے پر پاکستان کے دورے کو ترجیح دیتے ہوئے ہفتے کو اسلام آباد پہنچ رہے ہیں جہاں چین، افغانستان اور پاکستان کے درمیان سہ فریقی اجلاس میں شرکت کریں گے۔ واضح رہے کہ 5 اگست کو مقبوضہ کشمیر کے خصوصی حیثیت کے خاتمے اور دو حصوں پر تقسیم کے غیر آئینی فیصلے پر چین نے شدید احتجاج کرتے ہوئے بھارت سے اپنے فیصلے کو واپس لینے کا مطالبہ کیا تھا اور مقبوضہ کشمیر میں قابض بھارتی فوج کے مظالم پر تشویش کا اظہار بھی کیا تھا

September 06, 2019

The Express Tribune

Build cities along CPEC: CUI experts

The grand architecture and open spaces need to be made a hallmark of educational institutions, which inspire creative thinking and create a healthy atmosphere for young minds said Minister for Climate Change Zartaj Gul, while inaugurating the Urban Design Thinkers Conference at

COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) on Wednesday. She said that the CPEC projects are being carefully evaluated for a benefit before any further action is initiated in order to preserve the natural heritage that may possibly be affected due to development activity. CUI Rector Raheel Qamar said urban design thinking is a critical subject as the future of humanity lies in making sustainable cities. Speakers highlighted the importance of modern urban design and called for developing new cities, towards the west of the Indus along with the development projects of the CPEC.

The News

MPs committee rejects setting up CPEC Authority

ISLAMABAD: The Parliamentary Committee on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has unanimously rejected establishment of CPEC Authority, giving a big jolt to the government plan to bring the whole CPEC related work under one umbrella. The Parliamentary Panel on CPEC met under chairmanship of PTI MNA Sher Ali Arbab here at the Parliament House on Thursday. The members expressed their concerns that the CPEC Authority having chairman with power of Principle Accounting Officer would have direct conflict with Secretary Planning. The CPEC Authority with five to six members would have strength just like Planning Commission so there is no need of duplication of institutions and ministries. It was also told by the Planning Commission that the CPEC Authority would identify projects to bring them under the umbrella of CPEC but it was pointed out that it was domain of the ministry concerned to identify and then brought it at joint working group with Chinese side.

“The Planning Commission high ups could not convince the parliamentarians why this CPEC Authority is necessary to run the CPEC related projects,” said one member of the committee on Thursday night. He said that the Planning Commission argued that the CPEC would now move towards business to business contacts with Chinese side so they were asked to strengthen the ministries concerned.

After long debate, the chairman of parliamentary panel put up the issue for voting before the committee members and they unanimously rejected establishment of CPEC Authority.

Jang News

سی پیک پارلیمانی کمیٹی کا آئندہ اجلاس گوادر میں ہوگا

اسلام آباد (نمائندہ جنگ) سی پیک سے متعلق پارلیمانی کمیٹی جلد گوادر کا دورہ کرے گی اور کمیٹی کے گوادر کے اجلاس میں مقامی لوگوں بھی ملاقاتیں کی جائیں گی اور گوادر میں

سی پیک کے تحت شروع کیے گئے منصوبوں کا بھی جائزہ لیا جائے گا۔ سی پیک سے متعلق پارلیمانی کمیٹی کا ان کیمرہ اجلاس چیئرمین شیر علی ارباب کی زیر صدارت پارلیمنٹ ہاؤس

میں ہوا۔ اجلاس میں کمیٹی کی سفارشات پر عملدرآمد کا جائزہ لیا گیا۔ اس کے علاوہ متعلقہ حکام نے سی پیک کے تحت آنے والی مختلف منصوبوں اور خاص طور پر خصوصی اقتصادی

زونز کی فوڈ سیلٹیٹی سٹڈی اور اب تک کی پیشرفت پر تفصیلی رپورٹنگ دی جبکہ ارکان کمیٹی کے سوالوں کے جوابات بھی دیئے گئے

September 07, 2019

Pakistan Observer

Zong 4G first to launch prepaid, post roaming bundles for China

Zong 4G, the leading telecommunication operator of Pakistan, has become the first Pakistani telecom operator to offer both prepaid and postpaid roaming bundles for China as part of its strategy of offering seamless services for its customers. Keeping customers' convenience in mind these roaming bundles for China is being offered to ensure that the customers are enjoying Zong 4G's seamless services while traveling.

Both Zong 4G's prepaid and postpaid customers can avail the relevant roaming bundles for their travels to China. Postpaid customers can avail the package by dialing 310 helpline, which includes 60 voice minutes, 60 SMS and 3GB of data at an affordable rate of PKR 3000 plus taxes. Keeping in mind flexibility, Zong 4G is offering two convenient roaming bundles for its prepaid customers.

The prepaid customers can subscribe to the roaming bundles by dialing *4255# to consume 300 Voice minutes, 300 SMS for PKR 2000 plus taxes or dialing *4255# to consume 150 Voice minutes, 150 SMS for just PKR 1000 plus taxes.

Commenting on the launch of these industry-first roaming bundles, Zong 4G's Spokesperson said, "As a customer-centric company, Zong 4G has always aimed at offering our customers with the best in class services and solutions.

The launch of these two exciting bundles ensures that our customers can now make and receive calls, send and receive messages and stream the web hassle-free." As a company that believes in innovation and world-class customer experience, Zong 4G is geared to meet to the needs of its customers who travel for both business and leisure.

Pace of work on projects under CPEC satisfactory: Chinese envoy

Ambassador of China to Pakistan Mr. Yao Jing has said that pace of work on projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is satisfactory.

He said that Phase II of China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA) will be finalized in the coming month after which ninety percent of Pakistani exports including agricultural products and seafood will attract zero percent duty. Mr Yao Jing said that the market access will increase Pakistan's exports by \$500 million which will reduce the disparity between bilateral trades.

Talking to a delegation of Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI) led by its founder President Samina Fazil, he said that China has planned to invest more and more in development projects in sectors like education, health, agriculture, irrigation, human resource development and poverty alleviation etc.

The Ambassador said that he appreciates the suggestions forwarded by IWCCI to boost bilateral trade and he would try to establish a close liaison between women's associations of China with women entrepreneurs of Pakistan.

He said that Chinese businesswomen would be invited to participate in the fifth Islamabad Expo scheduled in November to explore the market and promote networking while the women entrepreneurs of Pakistan would be sent to China to participate in the expos and explore business opportunities.

Chinese are buying handicrafts from Balochistan and a high powered Chinese textile delegation is due shortly in Pakistan to explore vistas of cooperation, he added. At the occasion, Samina Fazil said that CPEC, one of the largest bilateral investment projects in the world has created seventy thousand direct jobs, reduced poverty, and triggered development for which we are thankful.

The Express Tribune

Govt to waive off Rs40.2m visa fees of Chinese workers

ISLAMABAD: The government is all set to waive off Rs40.2 million visa fees of 2,511 Chinese nationals working on development projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Pakistan.

The waiver would be a one-time dispensation to Chinese nationals to change their visit visas into work visas in Pakistan free of charge.

Sources told The Express Tribune that Prime Minister Imran Khan had given a go-ahead to table the matter in the upcoming meeting of the federal cabinet for approval.

The cabinet had considered a summary submitted by the Interior Division on May 16, 2019 and granted approval in principle as a one-time dispensation to Chinese nationals to change their visit visas into work visas.

Now, the government wants to waive off multimillion-rupee fees.

Thousands of Chinese nationals are working on the CPEC and non-CPEC projects in Pakistan.

According to the policy, visas issued by missions could not be changed for any reason in Pakistan. Under the policy, Chinese nationals would get extension in their visas here instead of going back after the expiry of their visas and returning on work visas.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government had granted a one-time dispensation to 2,511 Chinese nationals in May this year.

The Chinese Embassy in Islamabad had informed that if they went back to China to get their visas changed, the construction work would get delayed.

The Chinese Embassy had requested the government of Pakistan to grant permission in principle as a one-time dispensation to Chinese nationals to change their visit visas into work visas in Pakistan free of charge. The government granted the request.

The processing fee for work visa of \$25 approved by the prime minister was increased to \$100 during the fifth Board of Investment (BoI) meeting held on September 1, 2016. However, as per the recent cabinet decision, the visas to 2,511 Chinese citizens are to be issued free of charge.

The BoI's processing fee for issuance of work visas is \$251,000, which is equivalent to Rs40.2 million.

As per the revised visa policy shared by the Ministry of Interior, the Pakistani missions abroad were authorised to grant one year entry work visa with multiple entries to foreign expatriates on the recommendations of the BoI which was extendable on yearly basis in Pakistan.

Mandatory security clearance was to be done by the security agencies within four weeks.

The Chinese mission in Islamabad requested for early issuance of work visas to 2,511 of its citizens.

Sources told that the BoI had taken up the matter with the PM Office. The prime minister in his capacity as minister in-charge of the BoI had seen the proposal and was pleased to approve it, which was duly endorsed by the Interior Division with directions to place the matter for consideration of the cabinet in its upcoming meeting.

The cabinet would approve waiver of processing fee amounting to \$251,100 in favour of 2,511 Chinese citizens as a one-time dispensation to them for working on CPEC projects in Pakistan.

The Nation

CPEC manifestation of Pak-China economic relations: Hafeez

ISLAMABAD - Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh on Friday said the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was the main focus of government as it was manifestation of the country's close economic relations with its great neighbor China.

He was talking to Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing, who called on him, according to a ministry press release. Dr Hafeez Shaikh told the Chinese envoy that the CPEC projects were bringing a transformation in Pakistan's economy and all its projects were being implemented on top priority. "We value the Chinese assistance and support in building infrastructure, road networks and energy projects, and we look forward to explore more avenues for further enhancing our bilateral cooperation for regional connectivity and stability," he added. The adviser said the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet had recently approved several proposals and measures to fast-track rollout of various projects as part of the Gwadar Port and Gwadar Free Zone, and relevant authorities had been instructed to implement the ECC decisions.

He thanked the Chinese government in providing technical assistance in the implementation of Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) recommendations, and highlighted the steps and measures, particularly increased coordination between various government agencies acting under a multi-agency coordination body headed by the Minister of Economic Affairs, taken by Pakistan to demonstrate seriousness in complying with the FATF regime.

The News

With Kulbhushan down, India's anti-CPEC actions not over

One can argue whether the timing of giving consular access to Kulbhushan Jadhav — the ringleader of Indian Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)'s Balochistan network — is bad optics when Pakistan and India are eyeball to eyeball on IH Kashmir.

But Kulbhushan is a living testimony to India's clandestine proxy war being waged against Islamabad. Pakistani security agencies have more than once uncovered networks by the RAW to fan violence and lawlessness in the country. The Jadhav network was focused on Balochistan supporting separatists and staged spectacular attacks on Pakistan's armed forces.

As time passes by new details are emerging of how Pakistan is facing a non-conventional warfare being waged by the intelligence duo — RAW-NDS in Afghanistan.

Their modus operandi is becoming clearer and the main vulnerable transit route for their allied "assets" into Pakistan is the Pak-Afghan border region in Balochistan.

Recent reports suggest the RAW is very much in charge of running terror networks in Balochistan. It (RAW) has circulated a menu-like open price list to all groups including TTP, LeJ Al Alami, militant factions of TTA, whereby prices have been fixed for any terrorist activity they undertake in Pakistan. "If you do IED this much will be paid, if you attack a school, kill children, so and so amount", and the list goes on. "Only proof you need to produce for claiming bounty is a video evidence to prove".

One estimate suggests that a suicide attack likely cost in the region of around Rs4 million. The more casualties, the high profile is the hard target, the more is the amount being paid.

Now they have started using more sophisticated time bombs as latest terrorist incidents in the province were caused by remote devices. Up to two million rupees are paid by the RAW handlers for such operations.

Interestingly, some terror groups use ransom money as seed investment in terrorist's activities: kidnapping for ransom in Balochistan is being operated by these terror outfits from across the border and after video evidence they get their bounty in Kandahar.

The RAW is in cohort with NDS and operates out of Spin Boldak, Afghanistan's border Town, near Chaman border. Such is the closed coordination and level of cooperation between the two agencies that the RAW officers shadowing Afghan NDS officers on every desk of NDS office.

Local vulnerabilities perfectly play into the hands of the RAW operatives: interestingly of late, the militant groups are united and using the Balochistan border region to get to the province and then transit to the rest of the country; there are groups in the region of 5 to 9 as sleeper cells operating in Balochistan in transit: they include the left over TTP, LEJ, LEJ Alami, and ISIS-linked elements. "Recently we have smashed one network in Loralai region of Balochistan, but they are increasingly exploring our vulnerabilities," said an intelligence source.

The vulnerability is the porous Pak-Afghan border where it is almost impossible to plug gaps in short amount of time and without proper technological use, men guarded posts are susceptible to corruption and breach by these groups to get into Pakistan; though, border fencing may help reduce the gaps. Then the invisibility of plans of the incidents is another challenge.

This is why the RAW has been recruiting and running the separatist outfits like the BLA and BLA out of Afghanistan providing money, weapons and sanctuary both in Kabul and Delhi. Just across the border from the Pakistani town of Chaman, local sources confirm that militants are trained in seven camps in sabotage activities and targeted killings. They get up to \$1000 paid for various activities, ranging from firing rockets to targeting installations and projects. Cash is paid via the illegal currency exchangers, called "Hundi mechanism" to militants and pro-RAW tribal chieftains.

With the impending Taliban-US talks, the RAW is trying to move the top leadership of BLF and Chinese-focused BLA Acho groups out of Afghanistan to India, UAE and European countries and help settle down providing those fake passports and travel documents.

The RAW is systematically spreading propaganda against the government, the army and the ISI. It organizes Balochi language courses in India for their agents via Baloch teachers. It is also involved in psy-ops and leveraging social media such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs. Via fake social media accounts, RAW is disseminating massive propaganda and disinformation to malign Pakistan. Thousands fake blogs and websites, Facebook and Twitter accounts were being run by the RAW to supports its operations against Pakistan in the cyber world, focusing on Balochistan.

India's proxy war has a strategic objective: as the prospects for the development of Gwadar port in Balochistan has moved from the mere concept to reality, Delhi is hell bent upon subverting the project equally enjoying plausible deniability. Gwadar is the centerpiece of a link between Pakistan and China through CPEC—flagship project of BRI.

The port, which will make the people of Balochistan prosperous by creating economic opportunities, will also likely be pitted against Chabahar port of Iran which currently India is working on. India is not happy with the Chinese presence at Gwadar as it works against the Indian aim of being the sole Indian Ocean regional power, with its alarmingly expanding vast naval capacity.

For India, to prevent the development of Gwadar, the best tool is to keep the temperature boiling in the province by supporting groups opposed to the CPEC.

Interestingly, the chattering classes in Pakistan are still harping on the narrative that terrorism is home-grown phenomenon in Balochistan for which credit goes to the smartness of the enemy. "This is such a sophisticated warfare that we should give credit to enemy for dividing us on identifying the real motive behind terrorism, and failing not to explain to people their modus operandi using criminal terrorists groups for destabilizing the country", beautifully summed up by a terrorism expert.

Jan Achakzai is a geopolitical analyst, a politician from Balochistan, and ex-adviser to the Balochistan Government on media and strategic communication. He remained associated with BBC World Service. He is also Chairman of Centre for Geo-Politics & Balochistan.

September 08, 2019

Business Recorder

Wang says Pak-China ties unbreakable

ISLAMABAD: On the heels of heightened tension between Pakistan and India, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Sunday assured Prime Minister Imran Khan that the China-Pakistan relationship was “rock-solid and unbreakable” and reiterated China’s opposition to any “unilateral action as well as the measures, by India, that could further complicate the situation.”

According to an official statement from Prime Minister’s Office following a meeting between the PM and Chinese foreign minister, who is also China’s State Councilor, the Chinese dignitary, “conveying best wishes of President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang to the Prime Minister, stated that the China-Pakistan relationship was rock-solid and unbreakable.”

It quoted the PM as having said during the meeting that “All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between the two countries is deeply rooted in mutual trust and respect and is an anchor of peace and stability in the region and beyond.”Recalling the depth and breadth of Pakistan-China ties, the PM “underscored that friendship with China is the corner stone of Pakistan’s foreign policy,” the statement added.

Moreover, the PM briefed the Chinese side on the evolving situation in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) following India’s unilateral and illegal actions of August 5, the press release said. He stressed that the ongoing curfew for 35 days, the continued lockdown and communications blockade, and the massive human rights violations had created a dire humanitarian situation in IOK which needed to be urgently addressed, it added. The PM underscored that the curfew and other restrictions needed to be immediately lifted.

Khan, according to PM Office, also stressed that, in order to deepen strategic co-operation, Pakistan and China should continue their close coordination and consultation to ensure that peace and stability in the region is maintained.

He highlighted that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a project of great national significance that contributes immensely to the revitalization of Pakistan’s economy. The PM

reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the timely completion of CPEC projects and highlighted the importance of CPEC Authority for speedy execution of CPEC projects. Prime Minister hoped that, as CPEC's benefits expanded, more Chinese companies will invest in Pakistan and help support Pakistan's process of industrialization as well its policies of greater agricultural productivity and innovation.

Both leaders agreed that more high-level exchanges should continue to take place between the two countries to further promote bilateral ties as well as the shared goals of economic development, peace, and security across the region, the PM Office said.

Meanwhile, a joint statement issued after the Chinese foreign minister's two-day visit (September 7-8) to Pakistan said, the Chinese side reaffirmed its support for Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and national dignity, in choosing its development path in light of its national conditions, in working for a better external security environment, and in playing a more constructive role in regional and international issues.

During the visit, the Chinese foreign minister called on President Arif Alvi, PM Khan, held talks with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and met with Chief of Army Staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

During the meetings, both sides had an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest, the joint statement said. "Both sides reiterated that the time-tested All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between China and Pakistan is an anchor of peace and stability in the region and beyond. This partnership remains unaffected by any adverse regional and international development and continues to move from strength to strength. Both sides reaffirmed that China-Pakistan relationship is a priority in their foreign policies, and committed to build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era," it added.

On IOK, the joint statement said, the two sides further exchanged views on the situation in Jammu & Kashmir. "The Pakistani side briefed the Chinese side on the situation, including its concerns, position, and urgent humanitarian issues. The Chinese side responded that it was paying close attention to the current situation in Jammu and Kashmir and reiterated that the Kashmir issue is a dispute left from history, and should be properly and peacefully resolved based on the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements. China opposes any unilateral actions that complicate the situation."

On CPEC, the joint presser said, both sides believed that the CPEC, as a pioneering project of the Belt and Road Initiative, has entered a new phase of high-quality development. The two sides agreed to continue to "firmly push forward the construction of CPEC, complete its on-going projects in a timely manner, and realize its full potential by focusing on socio-economic development, job creation and better livelihood and accelerating cooperation in industrial parks and agriculture."

In addition, both sides, as per the joint press release, agreed to maintain frequent mutual visits and meetings at the leadership level and continue to hold bilateral meetings between their leaders on multilateral occasions. “China and Pakistan have enjoyed mutual understanding and support on issues concerning each other’s core interests. They reiterated the resolve to implement consensus reached by the leadership of both countries to enhance strategic mutual trust and improve all-round cooperation so as to jointly promote regional peace, stability and prosperity.”

Pakistan and China also agreed to strengthen cooperation on the Afghanistan issue and support the ‘Afghan-led, Afghan-owned’ peace and reconciliation process. “Both sides welcomed the positive progress achieved in the negotiations between the Afghan Taliban and the US, and called on all Afghan political stakeholders, including the Afghan Taliban, to start intra-Afghan negotiations to form a future political structure acceptable to all parties and achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan at an early date,” reads the joint presser.

Pakistan and China expressed satisfaction over the close cooperation between the two countries at multilateral fora and resolved to deepen strategic coordination and consultation. They also reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and support for multilateralism, free trade and win-win cooperation. Both sides agreed to strengthen coordination and cooperation on regional and international affairs. The two sides underlined that a peaceful, stable, cooperative and prosperous South Asia is in the common interest of all parties. Parties need to settle disputes and issues in the region through dialogue on the basis of mutual respect and equality, the joint statement said.

Dawn

Pak-China trade expansion discussed

QUETTA: The chairman of a Chinese company has described Pakistan as a suitable country for foreign investment. During a meeting with members of the Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI) here on Saturday, Chairman of Aman Logistic Company of China, Mr Anderson said promotion of trade between Pakistan and Chinese business communities would bring about economic revolution in the two countries as there were ample opportunities for increasing bilateral trade.

“Our company seeks to expand its business across Pakistan and it is willing to provide warehouses and other facilities to the Pakistani business community in China,” Mr Anderson said: QCCI president Jumma Khan Badezai briefed the meeting on business opportunities in Balochistan and said: “We want to enhance business activities with China and other countries.”

The News

Pakistan, Afghanistan, China to boost counter-terrorism efforts

ISLAMABAD: China, Afghanistan and Pakistan Saturday reiterated their strong resolve to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and without any distinction.

These views came forth during a trilateral press conference at the Foreign Office at the conclusion of Third Session of Afghanistan Pakistan China Dialogue.

The dialogue was led by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Salahuddin Rabbani, and State Councilor and Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi. The three countries reaffirmed their commitment of not letting any terrorist organization, element or individual use their soils against any country.

Meanwhile, Pakistan and China once again stressed the need for an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led political peace process and called for future Intra Afghan dialogue between the Afghan government and the Taliban. They expressed hope that the intra-Afghan negotiations, including direct negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban, will begin soon leading to full cessation of violence in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan says there is a new momentum in relations with Pakistan and accepts there are challenges that it faces together with Pakistan and looks forward to positive steps from Islamabad which will end violence on its land. The three countries decided to hold the next round of Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue in Beijing in 2020.

In a joint statement issued later, the three foreign ministers reiterated their resolve to further deepen various strands of trilateral cooperation.

They agreed to continue their joint efforts for building political mutual trust and supporting reconciliation, regional peace and stability, development cooperation and connectivity, security cooperation and counter-terrorism as key areas of the trilateral cooperation.

Pointing to the new momentum in ties with Afghanistan, Qureshi pointed to the “smiling face of the Afghan foreign minister”.

“Pakistan and Afghanistan need each other to live in peace. Cooperation is in our mutual interest. Pakistan has undertaken a series of operations to clear our terrorists and we have succeeded to a large extent. Strengthening our borders will safeguard Afghanistan and other countries”, said Qureshi.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said, “People of Afghanistan are hearing the footsteps of peace,” adding that the trilateral cooperation will focus on peace and stability in the region.

“The situation inside Afghanistan is at a critical stage. Withdrawal of troops should be phased out in a responsible manner. There should be a political framework for dialogue in the meeting between the Afghan government and the Taliban,” he added.

Salahuddin Rabbani said Saturday's dialogue was successful and he welcomed the strong support for peace by Pakistan and China.

He said in this talk of dialogue it was clear that the Taliban were not sincere in this process, as their daily killings of Afghan people showed.

“Bilateral relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have to be improved. We are a frontline state against terrorism and regional security needs a collective will against all terrorist groups”, he said.

The joint statement condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Kabul, Konduz, Baghlan and Farah, which have taken many innocent civilian lives, including women and children.

“China, Afghanistan and Pakistan, while are closely following recent developments in the regional situation, reiterate their support for a politically negotiated settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan.

In this regard, they took note of talks between the US and the Taliban. They particularly underlined the need for an inclusive, Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process leading to a comprehensive agreement for durable peace and stability in Afghanistan”, added the statement.

Based on respect for the will of Afghan people, while appreciating the efforts made by the Government of Afghanistan, China and Pakistan expressed their continued support for Afghanistan’s peace and reconciliation process as well as for the efforts towards reconstruction and economic development in the country.

The three sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening their relations, exploring new ways of deepening cooperation, including advancing connectivity under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) and other regional economic initiatives.

The three sides agreed to explore ‘China-Afghanistan-Pakistan plus’ cooperation, as well as working towards promoting trade and connectivity projects between Afghanistan and Pakistan, such as Kabul-Peshawar Motorway.

The three sides welcomed the progress made on implementation of projects agreed under the China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Practical Cooperation Dialogue (CAPPD). They agreed to continue cooperation in the fields of economic development, capacity building, improving livelihood and people-to-people exchanges.

China expressed its readiness to support construction of refrigeration storages, clinic centers, drinking water supply schemes and immigration reception centers at crossing points between Afghanistan and Pakistan to facilitate the movement of people and trade activities among the two countries.

The three sides welcomed the plans to hold a trilateral friendly cricket tournament among junior cricket teams of the three countries in Beijing in October 2019. They also agreed to arrange a capacity building workshop of young diplomats from the three countries under the Junior Diplomats Exchange Program to be held in Pakistan in October 2019.

The three foreign ministers agreed to organize an archaeologists’ exchange programme, explore cooperation among the Red Crescent Societies of the three countries, besides regularly undertaking exchange projects in the areas of media, think-tanks, sports, joint training etc.

They also decided to work towards effectively implementing the trilateral MoU on cooperation in counter-terrorism, signed at the 2nd round of Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue held in Kabul, and agreed on a list of initial projects of enhancing counter-terrorism cooperation in this regard.

They recognized the need to continue their joint fight against ETIM and its supporters and facilitators.

The three sides committed to promote measures to counter terrorist's logistical capabilities including terror-financing, recruitment and training.

The three sides agreed to take advantage of the trilateral Vice-Ministerial Strategic Dialogue, the Vice-Ministerial Consultation on Counter-Terrorism and Security, and the Director General Level Practical Cooperation Dialogue to implement the consensus of the 3rd Foreign Ministers' Dialogue.

September 09, 2019

Business Recorder

CPEC Authority to be established thru Ordinance on 12th

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet is all set to approve the establishment of a CPEC Authority on September 12, 2019 through an Ordinance already cleared by Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases (CCLC).

According to the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform, CPEC is now entering its next phase with the incorporation of additional areas, including trade and market access, industrial cooperation, socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, agriculture, Gwadar development and blue economy, regional connectivity and third country participation. Hence, a new management entity is needed.

In a meeting held on held on May 20, 2019 chaired by the Prime Minister it was decided to establish the CPEC Authority. On August 26, 2019, during a meeting of Cabinet Committee on CPEC (CCoCPEC), Advisor to the Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms and Austerity, Dr Ishrat Hussain supported the idea of setting up an Authority; however, he expressed concerns over the massive size of the Authority and suggested that a smaller Authority can be more effective and manageable. And services of thorough professionals, well experienced and qualified personnel may be acquired for smooth functioning of the Authority.

The Advisor to the Prime Minister on Commerce, Textile, Industry and Production and Investment, Abdul Razak Dawood also suggested a leaner set up for the Authority. The Authority will consist of a Chairman, two Executive Directors and six members for a period of four years to be appointed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The entire top team of the proposed Authority shall be eligible for re-appointment for similar term.

The powers and functions of the Authority are as follows: (i) in addition to such other powers and functions as may be assigned under this Ordinance and rules, the Authority shall be primarily responsible for coordination, monitoring, evaluation and ensuring implementation of CPEC related activities. The Authority shall exercise its powers and perform its functions in line with the framework and MOU signed between Pakistan and China, provided that the federal government may, from time to time, assign more functions and issue guidelines; (ii) the Authority will interface with China for identifying new areas of cooperation projects and organize meetings with Joint Cooperation Committee and Joint Working Groups (JWGs); and (iii) it will ensure inter-provincial and inter-ministerial coordination for CPEC activities, in addition to narrative building and communication about CPEC related activities and conduct sectoral research for informal decision making and long-term planning.

The Chairman, and Executive Director and a Member may resign from his office by writing under his hand addressed to the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister may remove the Chairman, Executive Directors or Members from office, if on an inquiry conducted under the order of the Prime Minister, he is found inefficient or unable to perform the functions of his office due to mental or physical disability or to have committee misconduct.—MUSHTAQ GHUMMAN

Dawn

PM Imran assures China of CPEC projects' speedy execution

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Sunday Pakistan was committed to timely completion of projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and hoped that more Chinese companies would make investments in the country.

During his meeting with visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, the prime minister highlighted the importance of the proposed CPEC authority for speedy execution of the projects.

Mr Khan also briefed the Chinese FM on the situation in Indian-occupied Kashmir (IoK) and both agreed on more high-level exchanges between Pakistan and China to further promote bilateral ties and shared goals.

During his two day official visit, the Chinese FM also held meetings with President Dr Arif Alvi, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and Army Chief Gen Qamar Bajwa. During the meetings bilateral, regional and international issues were discussed and both sides agreed to jointly promote regional peace, stability and prosperity.

The prime minister hoped that as the CPEC's benefits expanded, more Chinese companies would invest in Pakistan and help support Pakistan's process of industrialisation and its policies of greater agricultural productivity and innovation. He highlighted that CPEC was a project of great national significance that contributed immensely to revitalization of Pakistan's economy.

Visiting foreign minister reaffirms support on Kashmir issue.

Mr Khan underscored that friendship with China was cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy. He briefed the Chinese side on the evolving situation in IoK following India's Aug 5 unilateral and illegal action to strip the region of autonomy.

He stressed that the ongoing curfew for 35 days and continued lockdown and communications blockade coupled with massive human rights violations had created a dire humanitarian situation in IoK which needed to be urgently addressed. Prime Minister Khan said that the curfew and other restrictions needed to be immediately lifted. To deepen strategic cooperation, Pakistan and China should continue their close coordination and consultation to ensure that peace and stability in the region was maintained, he said.

Wang Yi said that Pakistan-China relationship was based on mutual respect, trust and strong bonds of friendship. He appreciated Pakistan's efforts to achieve goals of national development under Prime Minister Khan's leadership, and extended China's utmost support in this regard.

He noted that with the policies of the government, Pakistan's economic and financial condition was improving. Wang Yi emphasized that the CPEC, which was being jointly implemented by Pakistan and China, was a demonstration project of high quality Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects.

The Chinese foreign minister conveyed best wishes of President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang to Mr Khan and said China-Pakistan relationship was rock-solid and unbreakable.

Wang Yi reaffirmed China's support and reiterated opposition to any Indian unilateral action (regarding held Kashmir) as well as the measures by Delhi that could further complicate the situation. Both leaders agreed that more high-level exchanges should continue to take place between Pakistan and China to further promote bilateral ties and shared goals of economic development, peace, and security across the region.

Joint statement

Earlier, the Foreign Office issued a joint statement at the conclusion of the two-day official visit of the Chinese foreign minister.

According to the statement, Wang Yi also called on President Dr Arif Alvi and Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and met Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

During the meetings, both sides had an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Both sides reiterated that the time-tested all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between China and Pakistan remained unaffected by any adverse regional and international development and continued to move from strength to strength.

Both sides reaffirmed that China-Pakistan relationship was a priority in their foreign policies, and committed to build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era.

Both sides agreed to maintain frequent mutual visits and meetings at the leadership level and continue to hold bilateral meetings between their leaders on multilateral occasions.

They noted that China and Pakistan had enjoyed mutual understanding and support on issues concerning each other's core interests. They reiterated the resolve to implement consensus reached by the leadership of both countries to enhance strategic mutual trust and improve all-round cooperation to jointly promote regional peace, stability and prosperity.

The Chinese side reaffirmed its support for Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and national dignity, in choosing its development path in light of its national conditions, in working for a better external security environment, and in playing a more constructive role in regional and international issues.

Both sides believed that the CPEC, as a pioneering project of the BRI, had entered a new phase of high-quality development. They agreed to continue to firmly push forward the construction of CPEC, complete its ongoing projects in a timely manner, and realize its full potential by focusing on socio-economic development, job creation and better livelihood and accelerating cooperation in industrial parks and agriculture.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the close cooperation between the two countries at multilateral fora and resolved to deepen strategic coordination and consultation. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and support for multilateralism, free trade and win-win cooperation. Both sides agreed to strengthen coordination and cooperation on regional and international affairs.

Both sides underlined that a peaceful, stable, cooperative and prosperous South Asia was in common interest of all parties and agreed that parties needed to settle disputes and issues in the region through dialogue on the basis of mutual respect and equality.

Both sides also exchanged views on the situation in India-held Kashmir.

The Pakistani side briefed the Chinese side on the situation, including its concerns, position and urgent humanitarian issues.

The Chinese side responded that it was paying close attention to the current situation in Jammu and Kashmir and reiterated that the Kashmir issue was a dispute left from history, and should be properly and peacefully resolved based on the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements. China opposes any unilateral actions that complicate the situation.

Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation on the Afghan issue and support Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process. Both sides welcomed the positive progress achieved in the negotiations between the Afghan Taliban and the US, and called on all Afghan political stakeholders, including the Taliban, to start intra-Afghan negotiations to form a future political structure acceptable to all parties so that peace and stability might be achieved in Afghanistan at an early date.

The Express Tribune

CPEC's second phase can put Pakistan's economy back on track

ISLAMABAD: With the completion of major infrastructure and energy projects, the first phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which has helped Pakistan manage huge deficits in the energy sector and transportation infrastructure, is coming to an end.

Before CPEC, Pakistan was going through the worst load on power management and according to the government of Pakistan, the country was losing \$4-5 billion every year due to energy shortages, while the estimated cost did not include social costs to society.

On the other hand, the National Highway Authority (NHA) estimated that Pakistan needed \$1.2 billion to rehabilitate the transportation infrastructure, which along with the energy shortage, was hindering the country's fast economic growth.

Pakistan managed to address these major issues with the help of the first phase of CPEC, which is now entering the second phase. Once again, the time is critical as all economic indicators are painting a miserable picture – inflation is on the rise, the rupee has depreciated against the US dollar – and new opportunities are few.

The government is striving to reverse the order and is aggressively pursuing any available opportunity for investment and job creation. The second phase of the economic corridor can be the answer to that, but the question is what strategies and tools are required by Pakistan to benefit from the next phase. Moving forward, there are three points which need to be taken into consideration.

First, the initial phase of CPEC was dominated by infrastructure development. All these interventions needed the lead role of the government, although, with certain reservations, the government managed to play a good role. Secondly, Pakistan should keep in mind the economic and development status of the country before designing any intervention. The first point to recognise here is that Pakistan lies between the primary and secondary phase of economic development, which means the country has started to graduate from commodities or natural resource stage and is trying to enter the second phase.

Although the process is slow, the country is still making progress. Therefore, the future plan should be developed keeping in mind the current status of development.

The second phase is all about industrial cooperation, development of agriculture and trade, therefore, its needs and demands are entirely different from the first phase. The first required the leading role of the government, while the second phase requires a 180-degree change in management and roles of actors. It demands the leading role of industrialist, the private sector and the business community, while the government's role would be only of a facilitator.

The government needs to start future planning and phasing of implementation for the second part of CPEC, accordingly. In this regard, the government has started to engage the business community of Pakistan by creating a ‘business council’ under the chairmanship of Abdul Razak Dawood. However, the direction of the business council is not clear yet and the terms of reference (ToRs) are not depicting the required changes and instruments for practical interventions.

Business council

It is feared that the council will prove to be just another talk shop without much delivery. For meaningful engagement of the business community, Pakistan will have to adopt a more practical approach and well-thought strategy for engagement.

First of all, the business council should be made an independent body and should have direct linkages with the Prime Minister’s Office and National Development Council. The main work of the council should be to design a comprehensive plan for intervention by the business community and propose a role for the government to accomplish it. Moreover, the council must have the power to monitor the implementation of proposed interventions and lastly, it should not be confused with other government bodies like the CPEC Authority, etc.

Promoting SMEs

Apart from the business council, the government should also design a pathway for the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), trade and job creation. This pathway should be developed by engaging the real actors of these sectors and should not be limited to the work of some consultants or bureaucrats.

Inclusion of SMEs would play a prominent role in reversing the economic downfall. Presently, Pakistan’s major exportable products, except textile products, come from SMEs. In the textile sector, Pakistan has already achieved the maximum level of exports, especially in the context of sheer competition from other countries, while the SMEs have a huge potential to exploit. Pakistan can prioritize its joint venture with Chinese or European counterparts. It will help the country attract good investment and give impetus to exports.

Tapping the food industry

In addition, the agriculture-based industry has the potential to immediately provide relief. Urgent steps can be taken to strengthen the supply chain of agriculture and livestock products. It is predicted that the halal food markets will reach the figure of \$3 trillion in the coming years. Unfortunately, Pakistan’s share in the halal food market is very low or negligible. Recently, a report predicted that Pakistan can easily capture the \$5-6 billion market with relevant strategies.

Moreover, China is also emerging as one of the major importers of food products. Pakistan can also benefit from the Chinese market. To exploit the market, the country needs the best supply chain, certification of products and maintenance of hygiene standards. Owing to limited

resources and lack of capacity, the government cannot provide the required facilities except the legal cover.

Therefore, it is advisable that the government has assign private sector a leading role and facilitate them. The private sector has resources and a will to invest if the government provides them with a good playing field. The second phase of CPEC provides a good opportunity to engage the private sector and business community to develop joint ventures in this sector.

Some companies from China want to work with Pakistani companies to build supply lines for halal food and export of food to China. These Chinese companies have good experience in maintaining hygiene and quarantine standards, but they need acceptable halal food certification. They also need to venture in new markets in order to build reliable international markets to meet the ever-increasing demand for food in China.

These companies are interested in working with the private sector and are looking to work in an atmosphere that encourages the private sector's growth. Therefore, it is advisable for Pakistan to create an environment which encourages the lead role of the private sector.

The Nation

Pak-China partnership key to regional peace

ISLAMABAD: The Pak-China partnership is key to the regional peace and stability, the all-weather friends said in a joint statement yesterday after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's two-day visit.

The joint statement said: "Both sides reiterated that the time-tested All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between China and Pakistan is an anchor of peace and stability in the region and beyond."

This partnership, it said, "remains unaffected by any adverse regional and international development and continues to move from strength to strength. Both sides reaffirmed that China-Pakistan relationship is a priority in their foreign policies, and committed to build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era."

State Councillor and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, Wang Yi, paid an official visit Pakistan on September 7-8.

During the visit, Wang Yi called on President Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Imran Khan, held talks with Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, and met with Chief of Army Staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa. During the meetings, both sides had an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

The 'iron brothers' as they call themselves, agreed to maintain frequent mutual visits and meetings at the leadership level and continue to hold bilateral meetings between their leaders on multilateral occasions.

“China and Pakistan have enjoyed mutual understanding and support on issues concerning each other’s core interests. They reiterated the resolve to implement consensus reached by the leadership of both countries to enhance strategic mutual trust and improve all-round cooperation so as to jointly promote regional peace, stability and prosperity,” the statement said.

The Chinese side reaffirmed its support for Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and national dignity, in choosing its development path in light of its national conditions, in working for a better external security environment, and in playing a more constructive role in regional and international issues.

Both the sides believed that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, as a pioneering project of the Belt and Road Initiative, has entered a new phase of high quality development.

The two sides agreed to continue to firmly push forward the construction of CPEC, complete its on-going projects in a timely manner, and realize its full potential by focusing on socio-economic development, job creation and better livelihood and accelerating cooperation in industrial parks and agriculture.

Both the sides expressed satisfaction over the close cooperation between the two countries at multilateral fora and resolved to deepen strategic coordination and consultation.

They reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and support for multilateralism, free trade and win-win cooperation.

They agreed to strengthen coordination and cooperation on regional and international affairs. The two sides underlined that a peaceful, stable, cooperative and prosperous South Asia is in the common interest of all parties. Parties need to settle disputes and issues in the region through dialogue on the basis of mutual respect and equality. Both sides further exchanged views on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Pakistani side briefed the Chinese side on the situation, including its concerns, position, and urgent humanitarian issues. The Chinese side responded that it was paying close attention to the current situation in Jammu and Kashmir and reiterated that the Kashmir issue is a dispute left from history, and should be properly and peacefully resolved based on the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements. China opposes any unilateral actions that complicate the situation.

“Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation on the Afghanistan issue and support the ‘Afghan-led, Afghan-owned’ peace and reconciliation process,” the statement said.

The two allies, it said, welcomed the positive progress achieved in the negotiations between the Afghan Taliban and the US, and called on all Afghan political stakeholders, including the Afghan Taliban, to start intra-Afghan negotiations to form a future political structure acceptable to all parties and achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan at an early date.

The News

Pakistani documentary on friendship with China released in Beijing

BEIJING: A Pakistani documentary dedicated to China-Pakistan friendship titled “The Pledge of Iron Brothers” has been released in Beijing. The documentary, produced by The Daily Mail, an Islamabad based English language newspaper, and the Pakistan-China Media Friendship Association, dates back to the ancient Silk Road when trade and people-to-people exchanges between China and Pakistan started and lasted until today. It records the crucial moments of visits between leaders of the two countries since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1951. It shows how the major projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Belt and Road Initiative have benefited Pakistan’s economy and society and consolidated the friendship between the people of the two countries. Makhdoom Babar, president and editor-in-chief of The Daily Mail, said in the opening speech Thursday that the documentary is a tribute to those who have been working for the promotion of Pakistan-China relation over the decades.

The News

China opposes unilateral actions in IHK

ISLAMABAD: Reiterating that Kashmir issue is a dispute left from history, China Sunday said it opposed any unilateral actions that complicated the situation in the Indian Held Kashmir (IHK).

Beijing’s views were articulated in a joint press statement issued after the recent visit of Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Pakistan.

Wang Yi said Beijing was paying close attention to the current situation in the IHK and emphasised that the issue should be properly and peacefully resolved based on the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements.

The two sides underlined that a peaceful, cooperative and prosperous South Asia was in the common interest of all parties and they need to settle disputes in the region through dialogue based on mutual respect and equality.

The Chinese dignitary held bilateral discussions with Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and also participated in the Trilateral Conference on Afghanistan with his Pakistani and Afghan counterparts.

“Both sides further exchanged views on the situation in Jammu & Kashmir. The Pakistani side briefed the Chinese side on the situation, including its concerns, position, and urgent humanitarian issues,” said a statement released simultaneously by the foreign offices in Islamabad and Beijing.

Both countries pointed out that their partnership remained unaffected by any adverse regional and international development and continued to move from strength to strength.

China sent out a crystal clear message that it reaffirmed its support for Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and national dignity, in choosing its development path in light of its national conditions, in working for a better external security environment, and in playing a more constructive role in regional and international issues.

Wang Yi called on President Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Imran Khan, held talks with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and met Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

During the meetings, both sides had an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Both sides reiterated that the Strategic Cooperative Partnership between China and Pakistan was anchor of peace and stability in the region and beyond.

Both sides reaffirmed that China-Pakistan relationship is a priority in their foreign policies, and committed to build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era.

They also agreed to maintain frequent mutual visits and meetings at the leadership level and continue to hold bilateral meetings between their leaders on multilateral occasions.

China and Pakistan have enjoyed mutual understanding and support on issues concerning each other's core interests. They reiterated the resolve to implement consensus reached by the leadership of both countries to enhance strategic mutual trust and improve all-round cooperation so as to jointly promote regional peace, stability and prosperity.

Both sides believed that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, as a pioneering project of the Belt and Road Initiative, had entered a new phase of high-quality development.

The two sides agreed to continue to firmly push forward the construction of CPEC, complete its ongoing projects in a timely manner, and realize its full potential by focusing on socio-economic development, job creation and better livelihood and accelerating cooperation in industrial parks and agriculture.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the close cooperation between the two countries at multilateral fora and resolved to deepen strategic coordination and consultation.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and support for multilateralism, free trade and win-win cooperation.

They agreed to strengthen coordination and cooperation on regional and international affairs.

Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation on the Afghanistan issue and support the 'Afghan-led, Afghan-owned' peace and reconciliation process.

Both sides welcomed the positive progress achieved in the negotiations between the Afghan Taliban and the US, and called on all Afghan political stakeholders, including the Afghan Taliban, to start intra-Afghan negotiations to form a future political structure acceptable to all parties and achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan at an early date.

Express News

سی پیک: چین نے 1.7 ارب ڈالر کے بجلی آلات پاکستان پہنچادیے

اسلام آباد: چین پاک اقتصادی راہداری منصوبہ (سی پیک) کے تحت بجلی کے ترسیلی نظام کی اپ گریڈیشن کے پہلے منصوبے پر چین نے 1.7 ارب ڈالر مالیت کے آلات پاکستان پہنچادیے ہیں۔

فوشون الیکٹریک پورسلین مینوفیکچرنگ کمپنی چائینہ کی جانب سے 30 ڈائریکٹ کرنٹ (ڈی سی) 660 کلواٹ آف زنک آکسائیڈ لائٹنگ کولر پاکستان بھیجے گئے ہیں۔ منصوبے پر لاگت کا تخمینہ 1.658 ارب ڈالر ہے اور 2021 تک مکمل کر لیا جائے گا۔

پارٹی ورک کمیٹی آف شین نو کے رکن وانگ ژو کئی نے کہا ہے کہ کمپنی ایک سڑک اور ایک خطے کے وژن پر کام کر رہی ہے۔ انھوں نے کہا کہ منصوبے کی تکمیل سے پاکستان میں بجلی کے ترسیلی نظام کی بہتری میں مدد ملے گی اور بجلی کے کمرشل و گھریلو صارفین کو بجلی کی بلا تعطل فراہمی کو یقینی بنایا جاسکے گا

September 10, 2019

The Nation

China expedites work on Matiari-Lahore transmission line

BEIJING - China has expedited its initial work on \$1.7 billion worth Matiari-Lahore high-voltage direct current transmission line project.

To kick off the project, a Chinese company has shipped power equipment to Pakistan for the country's first transmission project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework. Fushun Electric Porcelain Manufacturing Company shipped 30 tons of direct current (DC) 660 kilovolts of Zinc Oxide Lightning Cooler to Pakistan for its grid project.

Wang Youxue, member of the Party Work Committee of the Shen Fu New District of China's Liaoning province said that the Fushun Electric Porcelain Manufacturing Company participated in the project as it was one of the key cooperation projects of the belt and road Initiative.

Youxue said the DC transmission project is also the first landing project for Pakistan to open foreign investment in the field of power transmission and transformation.

Based on the technical advantages of its own ultra-high voltage products for many years, Shen Fu New District Fushun Electric Porcelain Manufacturing Company successfully won the bid for the alternating current and DC pillar insulators and metal zinc oxide surge arresters of the project, with a total contract value of more than 57 million yuan. Shen Fu New District has been paying attention to and supporting the transformation and upgrading of traditional enterprises in the new district.

Youxue said Fushun Electric Porcelain Manufacturing Company is actively responding to the belt and road initiative and went abroad. “Shen Fu New District will serve the enterprise and help the rapid development of the enterprise.”

The enterprising spirit of struggle marked a significant progress in the belt and road national grid project of Fushun Electric Porcelain Manufacturing Company. The total investment of the project is \$1.658 billion and it will be officially put into operation in 2021.

The Matiari-Lahore high-voltage direct current transmission line project has already secured financing. This is the country’s first private sector transmission project under CPEC and will transmit more than 4,000 megawatts of coal-based electricity from projects in Sindh to the Punjab’s main grid. Besides the transmission project, the Private Power Infrastructure Board is currently facilitating implementation of power projects having cumulative capacity of 10,934 megawatts under CPEC, which include various hydel and coal-fired projects.

The News

Chinese, Pakistani air forces wrap up Shaheen VIII joint drill

BEIJING: Chinese and Pakistani air forces wrapped up the half month long Shaheen VIII joint exercises in northwestern China, during which systematic mock battles were conducted for the first time.

Multiple types of warplanes, surface-to-air missiles and radar installations from the two air forces took part in the mock battles, according to a statement issued by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Air Force. The red team was from China's air force, and the blue team was a combination of Chinese and Pakistani troops. About 50 warplanes, including fighter jets and early warning aircraft took part in the mock battles consisting of seizing air superiority and ground attack.

This marked an unprecedented joint exercise between China and a foreign country with the most number of personnel, types of weapons and combat units involved, the statement said. During the exercises, pilots from both countries also boarded each other's warplanes and discussed combat techniques. Chinese warplanes including J-10, J-11, J-16, Su-30 fighter jets, JH-7 fighter bombers and KJ-500 early warning aircraft participated in the exercises.

The Shaheen series joint exercises started as a one-on-one dogfight, but now it has evolved into systematic mock battles featuring more warplanes, multiple military branches which include ground forces that deploy missiles and electronic countermeasures, XinXin, commander of the red team air formation said.

From Shaheen I to Shaheen VIII, both air forces have improved combat capabilities in learning from each other, and the Chinese air force will continue to boost friendship, exchanges and cooperation between the two to higher levels, the statement said.

It may be mentioned that the joint training between the air forces of all-weather friends was held in Pakistan last year. It was attended by a contingent of the Chinese air force, comprising combat pilots, air defence controllers and technical ground crew along with fighter jets, bombers and early warning AWACS planes. The joint exercise is conducted each year in both countries on alternate basis.

September 11, 2019

Express News

چین کو کشمیر میں انسانی حقوق کی پامالیوں پر تشویش ہے ، چینی سفیر
جامعہ پشاور میں بلٹ اینڈ روڈ اینٹی شیڈیو سی پیک کانفرنس سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے چینی سفیر کا کہنا تھا کہ علاقائی روابط کیلئے یہ کانفرنس انتہائی اہم ہے، سنٹرل ایشیا ممالک کی سنجیدگی
دیکھ کر انتہائی خوشی ہوئی، سی پیک منصوبے کے تحت سنٹرل ایشیا ممالک قریب آئیں گے۔

چینی سفیر نے کہا کہ امریکہ اور طالبان کے درمیان مذاکرات کی ناکامی پر دکھ ہوا، پاکستان اور افغانستان میں امن انتہائی ضروری ہے، طورخم بارڈر 24 گھنٹے کھلا رکھنے کا فیصلہ خوش
آئندہ ہے، کشمیر کے مسئلہ پر چین کا موقف بالکل واضح ہے، چین بھارت کی یکطرفہ اقدامات کی مخالفت کرتا ہے

September 12, 2019

The Express Tribune

New Delhi calls for end to CPEC-related activities in Azad Kashmir

New Delhi has taken exception to the mention of Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) in a joint statement issued recently by Pakistan and China, according to a report published in The Hindu.

Released on Sunday after Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi's September 7-8 visit to Islamabad, the joint statement conveyed Beijing's opposition to "unilateral actions that complicate the situation" in the disputed Kashmir region.

On Tuesday, India's Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said New Delhi rejects the reference to IOK and continues to oppose China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) activities in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

"We reject the reference to Jammu and Kashmir in the joint statement issued by China and Pakistan after the recent visit of Chinese Foreign Minister. J&K is an integral part of India," he said.

He said New Delhi has "consistently expressed concerns to both China and Pakistan" on CPEC projects in AJK, which he claimed were on "territory of India that has been illegally occupied by Pakistan since 1947".

Kumar added that India is “resolutely opposed to any actions by other countries to change the status quo” in AJK. “We call on the parties concerned to cease such actions,” said the spokesperson.

In the Pak-China joint statement, Beijing had reaffirmed its support for Islamabad’s efforts towards “safeguarding its sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and national dignity”.

On Kashmir, China said it was paying close attention to the current situation and reiterated that the issue “is a dispute left from history, and should be properly and peacefully resolved based on the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements”.

“China opposes any unilateral actions that complicate the situation,” read the statement.

Regarding CPEC, both sides said the “pioneering project of the Belt and Road Initiative has entered a new phase of high quality development” and agreed to continue to “firmly push forward the construction of CPEC, complete its ongoing projects in a timely manner, and realize its full potential”.

India’s illegal August 5 move to change the status of occupied Kashmir has garnered fierce opposition from China, with Beijing saying it undermined the country’s territorial sovereignty.

“India’s action is unacceptable and would not have any legal effect,” Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in a statement after Narendra Modi’s government announced the illegal changes.

The two countries have a longstanding dispute over their Kashmir border, including the mainly Buddhist and strategically important region of Ladakh located between Tibet and Pakistan.

India and China went to war in 1962 over their disputed Kashmir border and their armed forces were also involved in a weeks-long standoff in Bhutan in 2017.

China claims around 90,000 square kilometers (35,000 square miles) of territory in India’s northeast, while India accuses China of occupying 38,000 square kilometers (15,000 square miles) of its territory in the Aksai Chin plateau in the western Himalayas.

This area includes the Ladakh region which New Delhi has now made a territory separate from the rest of IOK.

Warning that India needed to be cautious on border issues, China urged New Delhi to strictly abide by the agreements reached by both countries in order to avoid any actions that would further complicate boundary issues.

“Beijing has always opposed India’s inclusion of Chinese territory in the western section of the China-India border. China is seriously concerned about the current situation in [occupied] Kashmir,” Hua said.

“We call on India and Pakistan to peacefully resolve relevant disputes through dialogue,” she said, noting China had urged India to “avoid any move that further complicates the border issue”.

The Chinese foreign minister had also met his Indian counterpart, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, in Beijing just days after India's Kashmir move.

According to China's Xinhua News Agency, Wang Yi told the Indian foreign minister that Beijing hoped India would "play a constructive role in regional peace and stability".

The Express Tribune

Cabinet poised to approve CPEC Authority ordinance

ISLAMABAD: Amid opposition from the parliamentary panel on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the cabinet is set to give the go-ahead for promulgating an ordinance for setting up the CPEC Authority that will oversee work on projects in which a third country is involved besides Islamabad and Beijing.

The government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) argues that CPEC is going to enter a new phase where a third party like Saudi Arabia will also take part in the gigantic economic corridor.

Saudi Arabia has pledged to invest billions of dollars in setting up an oil refinery in Gwadar. It is also interested in pouring capital into other industrial projects in the port city of Balochistan.

Sources told The Express Tribune that the Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases had considered a draft CPEC Authority ordinance and recommended the cabinet to notify and promulgate the ordinance. The cabinet, in its meeting scheduled to be held on September 17 and chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan, would consider the recommendation for promulgating the CPEC Authority ordinance.

However, the parliamentary committee on CPEC, in a meeting held on Thursday last week, rejected the government's proposal of establishing the CPEC Authority, arguing that it would create more confusion about billions of dollars' worth of projects being executed under the CPEC programme.

Work on CPEC began in 2015 after the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the governments of Pakistan and China. Focal ministries of Pakistan and China were the Ministry of Planning and Development and the National Development and Reform Commission respectively.

In a summary sent to the cabinet, it was highlighted that CPEC was now going to enter the next phase with the incorporation of additional areas such as trade and market access, industrial cooperation, socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, agriculture, Gwadar development and regional connectivity. At the same time, third country would also be allowed to invest in CPEC projects.

Earlier in a meeting chaired by PM Imran on May 20, 2019, it was decided to establish the CPEC Authority. The National Development Council (NDC) has already approved, in principle, the constitution of the authority to ensure fast-track implementation of CPEC projects.

The NDC meeting, held in the second week of August 2019, was informed that past neglect of Balochistan, lack of connectivity and economic integration, security challenges and under-utilization and mismanagement of resources contributed to poverty in the province. The connectivity of Balochistan through CPEC projects was expected to bring social development and ensure security in the province, the meeting was told.

The Nation

Razak urges investors to invest in SEZs

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Commerce, Abdul Razak Dawood, on Wednesday has urged the investors to invest in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the priority areas which include Textile, Food Processing, IT and IT equipment, Logistics and Automobiles in order to get high returns on their investment.

A delegation of domestic investors of Bin Qasim Industrial Park and Korangi Creek Industrial Park called on Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood. They discussed various issues pertaining to taxation anomalies regarding Special Economic Zones (SEZs). The meeting was also attended by Chairman FBR Syed Shabbar Zaidi, and BOI Chairman Mr. Zubair Gilani.

The Adviser to PM highlighted the tax incentives provided to SEZs. These incentives include onetime exemption from customs duties and taxes on import of plant and machinery into SEZs for installation in these zones. Moreover, he added that government has also given tax holidays for 10 years to all enterprises which will commence commercial production by 30th June 2020 in SEZs. The Adviser emphasised that, beside tax incentives, incumbent government has taken strategic decision to facilitate investors by providing state of the art infrastructure in SEZs so that they can contribute in the national economy by kick starting commercial production at earliest.

During the meeting investors raised issues relating to timely issuance of tax exemption certificates from FBR which are causing inconvenience and delays in taking investment decisions by the new investors. In order to address this issue Chairman FBR apprised the participants that he will nominate a dedicated focal officer in FBR who will coordinate with the investors to resolve any issue being faced in their investment ventures.

The Adviser also assured facilitation to the investors from BOI, as the lead coordination agency of Government of Pakistan. He stated that all the issues pertaining to taxation of various projects would be resolved and BOI would act as a single bridge between the investor and the Government Departments including FBR.

Express News

ملتان، سکھر موٹروے آج ٹریفک کے لئے کھول دیا جائے گا

ملتان سے سکھر موٹروے (ایم فائیو) کو ابتدائی طور پر ہلکی ٹریفک کے لئے آج کھول دیا جائے گا۔

ایکسپریس نیوز کے مطابق حکومت نے ملتان سکھر موٹروے ٹریفک کے لئے کھولنے کا فیصلہ کیا اور سی پیک کے تحت 392 کلو میٹر طویل ملتان، سکھر موٹروے (ایم فائیو) کو ابتدائی طور پر ہلکی ٹریفک کے لئے آج کھول دیا جائے گا۔ سکھر ملتان موٹروے سے 6 گھنٹے کا سفر کم ہو کر 3 سے ساڑھے 3 گھنٹے رہ جائے گا، اور جی ٹی روڈ کے مقابلے میں اگر موٹروے ایم 5 پر ملتان سے سکھر تک کا سفر کیا جائے تو فاصلہ 75 کلو میٹر کم ہو گا۔

چین کے تعاون سے 392 کلو میٹر کے اس منصوبے پر 2 ارب 89 کروڑ ڈالر لاگت آئی ہے اور اسے مقررہ مدت سے دو ماہ قبل مکمل کیا گیا ہے، اور یہ چائنا اسٹیٹ کنسٹرکشن انجینئرنگ کارپوریشن کا تعمیر کردہ جنوبی پنجاب اور اندرون سندھ کو ملانے والا یہ سب سے بڑا منصوبہ ہے۔ موٹروے پر بہاولپور کے قریب دریائے ستلج کے ایک بڑے برج سمیت مجموعی طور پر 54 پل، 12 سروس ایریا ہیں، ایم فائیو پر 10 ریست ایریا، 11 انٹر چینج، 10 فلائی اوورز اور 1426 انڈر پاسز تعمیر کیے گئے۔

Nawaiwaqt

سی پیک منصوبے کے تحت توانائی کے مختلف منصوبوں پر کام کی رفتار تیز کر دی گئی: حکام

اسلام آباد (اے پی پی) چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری (سی پیک) منصوبے کے تحت ملک میں توانائی کے بحران کے قابو پانے کے لئے مختلف منصوبوں پر کام کی رفتار تیز کر دی گئی ہے جس سے سستی بجلی سسٹم میں شامل کرنے کے ساتھ ساتھ لوڈ شیڈنگ سے مستقل طور پر نجات مل جائے گی۔ سی پیک اتھارٹی کے حکام کے مطابق ساہیوال کول پاور پلانٹ 1320 میگا واٹ، پورٹ قاسم پاور پلانٹ 1320 میگا واٹ، حب پاور پلانٹ 1320 میگا واٹ منصوبے مکمل ہو چکے ہیں جبکہ سکھی کناری ہائیڈرو پاور پراجیکٹ، قائد اعظم سولر پارک، کوبالہ ہائیڈرو پاور پراجیکٹ، تھرمان ماٹو تھ پاور پلانٹ سمیت دیگر کئی منصوبوں پر تیزی سے کام جاری ہے۔ سی پیک کے تحت ان منصوبوں کی تکمیل پاکستان میں توانائی کے شعبہ کی بہتری اور عوام کو سستی بجلی کی فراہمی کے لئے بہت اہم ہے اور ان منصوبوں کو بروقت مکمل کرنے کے لئے حکام کے تعاون سے نگرانی کا بھی ایک جامع نظام وضع کیا گیا ہے

September 13, 2019

Daily Times

Pakistani and Chinese establishments

The Communist Party of China (CPC) is China's real establishment. It works with the military discipline but thinks the civilian way. It is the engine that has kept the ship i.e China afloat, steered by self-less leaders of immaculate integrity – from Chairman Mao to Deng Xiaoping to President Xi Jinping.

An abiding commitment to the ideals of socialism and an acute focus on people's welfare – who can literally protect or rock the boat – is the spirit that has held the ship together. China's journey in the last 41 years has been breath-taking.

In 1952, China's GDP was 30 billion U.S. dollars, while in 2018, its GDP reached 13.61 trillion U.S. dollars, an increase of 452.6 times, China's National Bureau of Statistics said in a 2018 report.

From 2013 to 2018, the average annual figure climbed to 28.1 percent, ranking first place globally, this underlines the unflinching focus on economics as a means to national salvation.

Guided by intellectual, self-less giants like Mao, Deng and Xi, the CPC has served as a unifying force, as the lynchpin of modern China's development as a global economic power.

The establishment in Pakistan, on the contrary, offers a contract to CPC; surrounded by India and Afghanistan, it has remained mired in a sense of insecurity – driven by an existential threat – and thus given to a national security paradigm because of a state of perennial conflict with India over Kashmir.

Its problems also originated because of its preoccupation with domestic politics.

Over the years, this turned out to be a deadly combination; the army – as the guardian of the frontiers – always believed itself to be the best and the most committed defender of Pakistan's interests. However, this self-conceived bloated sense hardly drew on the wisdom from the grass-roots. This sense took birth in the garrison and relied on the vested interest for endorsement – the aristocrats, landlords, and pliant businessmen – as junior partners after the coups it staged to protect the country. In fact they acted as the social crutches for the establishment.

This stood out in sharp contrast to the CPC, which draws its strength from the grass-roots, and is raised on structures that throw up future leaders. President Xi Jinping for instance, served 7 years in a remote village of Shanxi province as a volunteer to help the locals in water, sanitation and energy projects. He arrived there at 15 and left after having created friendships in the village. Almost all CPC leaders have gone that route and thus acceptable to the core.

Pakistan army, on the other hand, follows its own discipline which originates and thrives in the garrison and has thus little to do with the pulse of the people. Chairman Mao, son of a local farmer, himself spent his early youth serving the village he grew up in.

The establishment in Pakistan is the army – the General Headquarters (GHQ) that embodies the most organised force in the country. But its mindset is anchored in the garrison. It believes to always act in the supreme national interest – be it support for a political party or personality or systemic opposition to it. Critics call it social engineering, something that sticks deep to the current ruling party. Often, direct or indirect interventions – however well-intended – have entailed a legacy of unintended consequences, compromising principles of merit, transparency, accountability and political correctness.

China achieved this because of a relentless belief in One System, One Party, One Language and One Nation. All leaders pursued this without fail.

Pakistan, on the contrary is a mixed bag, a functional democracy with a dysfunctional governance regime that is made worse by vision less, selfish leaders, and a pliant bureaucracy still glued to the British raj era of governance.

Here, the establishment always tried to create a balance between its predominance and the need for a facade to mask this predominance. MQM, Muslim Leagues, PML-N, PML-Q , BAP (Balochistan) are some of the manifestations of this balancing act, not to state the tools it supported for securing its eastern and western borders.

The consequences have been almost opposite; China, guided by the CPC, looms large over the horizon as the second mightiest economy. Pakistan, guided by the GHQ's security paradigm, is struggling to transition from a security to normal state against heavy odds at international and regional fronts. These odds largely resulted from security-centric policies. The CPC led China into the economic miracle with a strict governance regime enforced by people-centric committed cadres. The party had nobody else to suspect or blame but its own cadres, and hence has been brute in judging performance of those at key positions.

No wonder, this prompted the New York Times columnist, Tom Friedman, into admitting that "one-party autocracy certainly has its drawbacks ...but when it is led by a reasonably enlightened group of people, as China is today, it can also have great advantages. That one party can just impose the politically difficult but critically important policies needed to move a society forward in the 21st century."

The party has pursued a relentless and continuous process of accountability within its ranks. In Pakistan, the army watched in impatiently as self-centered politicians took turns, abused authority and amassed wealth, and hardly focused on reforming the dated governance regime. The cost of doing governance therefore ran high and always prompted the army to interfere "to save the country." But, when in control, the Generals – Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, Ziaul Haq and Musharraf – mostly never found the real cure for the country's multiple economic ailments. The establishment always justified its direct or indirect intervention on the pretext of corruption and vowed accountability. But this process, as has happened with the current anti-graft campaign, never gained the currency that it should because of the questionable strategies and the flawed legal systems that constitute the accountability process.

The paradox is quite visible; the establishment desires to clean the stables but uses the existing civilian legal framework for that. But, the vested interest – the networks comprising politicians, businesses and lawyers – weigh down the process. Also, those responsible for carrying through the accountability process, lack apparently lack both capacity and the iron will to do so.

Pakistan Observer

China, Pakistan join hands developing cotton industry

The third Sino-Pak International Conference on Innovations in Cotton Breeding & Biotechnology just concluded in China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, reports China Economic Net. The conference attracted over 100 experts and scholars on cotton field. They made communication and discussions on related aspects, such as, cotton germplasm, transgenic cotton against insect and herbicide, transformation technology as well as the mechanized planting and picking of cotton.

The experts of both countries agreed the China-Pak Joint Laboratory for Cotton has made plentiful achievements after three years' construction. They hope to further deepen cooperation field and will strive to promote the development of the two countries' cotton industries.

The success holding of the third Sino-Pak International Conference on Innovations in Cotton Breeding & Biotechnology not only pushes ahead the sci-tech communication and cooperation in agriculture between the two nations, but also injects new vitality for the Belt and Road Initiative.

The third Sino-Pak International Conference was jointly sponsored by the Biotechnology Research Institute of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, MNS-University of Agriculture and Bahauddin Zakariya University.

The China-Pak Joint Laboratory for Cotton is under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Now the first stage of CPEC has almost been completed. For the second phase of CPEC, the agriculture will be one of the focuses among others.

The Express Tribune

Yasinzai sees CPEC as beacon of hope for Pakistan

BEIJING: Governor of Balochistan Amanullah Khan Yasinzai has said that all political parties in Pakistan are full of expectations for the joint construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a pilot project of Belt and Road Initiative.

“In recent years, the important pilot project of the Belt and Road Initiative has been put into practice in the Gwadar Port of Balochistan, which has provided assistance to improve the living conditions of local people,” he told Chinese news agency Xinhuanet.com.

Yasinzai led a delegation of Balochistan Tribal Elders Group for visits to Kashgar region of Xinjiang and the Chinese capital on the invitation of China Association for the Promotion of International Organization this week.

He reaffirmed that Balochistan is rich in resources for agriculture and mining activities and hoped to make good use of them and expand its mutually beneficial cooperation.

Xinjiang was the starting point of the Chinese side of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the first stop of the delegation's visit. Visiting local high-tech enterprises,

agricultural development projects, and inspecting residents' communities, the compact arrangement has repeatedly refreshed the Pakistani local officials' understanding of China.

“I used to know very little about Xinjiang. I thought it was not very developed here. I didn't expect to see many development achievements on the ground. The Chinese government has made great efforts to eradicate poverty and ensure law and order and it achieved tangible results,” Yasinzai said.

The governor felt the common aspirations of the people for peace and stability. He acknowledged seeing housing conditions of the local residents improved in Kashgar; the educational conditions were also better.

In a garment processing factory, women workers on the assembly line caught the attention of Yasinzai.

“There are almost all women workers in the factory. I am very curious about how they look after their children. I didn't expect the local government to provide child care services and even provide free lunches. I have to introduce them to my country one by one,” he said.

“Only by improving people's lives can we achieve long-term stability in a place.”

During his visit to Xinjiang, Yasinzai also witnessed the smooth start of the ‘Silu family’ action of China and Pakistan. He said that as a non-governmental exchange brand initiated by the China Association for the Promotion of International Organizations, the ‘Silk Road Family’ has informed people that the ‘One Belt and One Road’ was not only focused on trade, but also on the win-win situation in all areas of people's livelihood.

The initiative will improve the lives of people along the line, he added.

Speaking about the current international trade protectionism and unilateralism, Yasinzai insisted that countries face common challenges such as poverty alleviation and counter-terrorism and they must cope up through joint cooperation.

“All parties should strengthen exchanges and oppose unilateralism,” he added.

The Nation

Kashmir-CPEC nexus

In a new geostrategic scenario, situation has tied up Kashmir and CPEC with each other forever. Their correlation has opened up a new window to resolve Kashmir dispute believed to be unfinished agenda of past or leftover from history.

As Kashmir and CPEC are going to be heavily interdependent on each other influencing regional peace and development, their fate and future will depend on how new strategies to be outlined by India, Pakistan and China. Before CPEC, Kashmir was bilateral dispute between Pakistan and India. With the inception of CPEC, China is now billed as third stakeholder.

Kashmir-CPEC relation has grabbed world attention on serious manner when India triggered volatility by scrapping the special status of Kashmir. India did it forcibly when it got angered over the situation that CPEC route passing through Gilgit-Biltistan, about which India claims a disputed area between Pakistan and India, has finally transformed into a hard reality and come what may China is never going to change path of CPEC.

Indian got panicked on CPEC after Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) government released over Rs 183 million for the construction of the first phase of the mega Special Economic Zone approved under the gigantic China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects. Mirpur would have the giant 9th Special Economic Zone (SEZ), over an area of 9500 kanals of land under CPEC.

Meanwhile, Indian's frenzy to end Kashmir autonomy and impose month-long lockdown reflects how much BJP government are afraid of insides voices in Indian-Held Kashmir (IHK) that has been advocating CPEC's benefits in terms of economic prosperity and peace in the region.

Ms. Mehbooba Mufti, former Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir and President, J&K People's Democratic Party (PDP), now under house arrest, remained vocal for CPEC connection with Indian Held Kashmir

Delivering a talk on "Kashmir: The Way Forward" at Observer Research Foundation, Mumbai, on 14 December last year, she said "It is important for Kashmir's future to be included in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), arguing that Kashmir's inclusion in the corridor will be an opportunity for the State and not a security threat as perceived by the security experts and policy makers."

The prominent pro-freedom leader of Hurriyat Conference, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, who is also house arrest now, strongly asked Indian government to welcome CPEC terming it gateway to India. During his interview to media, he said that in order to get integrated with larger economic activity, J&K should join CPEC, part of the old Silk Route, once again. He advised to connect with CPEC which is part of central Asian discourse rather than south Asian discourse. Kashmir can be gateway for India as well, he added.

India always worries about CPEC global value believing that internationalization of CPEC would directly and indirectly impair its control on IHK. According to a report released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute - a Swedish-based think-tank - India's opposition to CPEC reflects a concern over the internationalization of the Kashmir dispute. It says that there is considerable concern within India that China, which has been neutral on Kashmir since 1963, can no longer be so now that its economic and security interests in these territories are growing. Suchitra Vijayan, a New York-based lawyer who has worked on India's borderlands including Kashmir, said "India doesn't want to internationalize the Kashmir issue, but with Pakistan, China, and CPEC coming in, it happens."

According to research journal published by Punjab University titled CPEC: crafting a rational way towards Kashmir dispute, geo-economics dimension of CPEC has become a catalyst to resolve Kashmir conflict.

“The disputed territory of Kashmir is the key point along the One Belt one road (OBOR) as the road passes from the Gilgit-Baltistan which is part of Azad Kashmir with little opposition from the locals. Indian resistance on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is predominantly based on its stance to Gilgit-Baltistan region. Conversely, Beijing position on the matter was neutral to date but simultaneously, India has asked to become a part of CPEC and resolved the Kashmir dispute through negotiation with Pakistan. Before it “China has always adhered to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, but that doesn’t mean Beijing can turn a deaf ear to the demands of Chinese enterprises in protecting their overseas investments. Given the massive investment that China has made in countries along the One Belt, One Road, China now has a vested interest in helping resolve regional conflicts including the dispute over Kashmir between India and Pakistan. By playing the role of a mediator between Myanmar and Bangladesh¹, China can gather experience, which could perhaps serve as a prelude to future efforts by China to engage in regional affairs in South Asia and Southeast Asia,” research journal debated.

The report reveals that In 1963 Sino-Pakistan Frontier Agreement and Sino- Pak Boundary Agreement made China as a third party of Kashmir dispute. Additionally, making complex its capability to remain neutral mentioned in Article 6 of the Sino-Pak Boundary Agreement that “after the settlement of Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan the sovereign authority concerned will reopen negotiations with the Government of the People’s Republic of China.

Experts opine that CPEC project may inversely work as a bridge between Pakistan administered Kashmir and India administered Kashmir and may have a spillover results on the weak economies of India and Pakistan.

It is fortunate that India broke the status quo on IHK by striping Kashmir autonomy violating its own constitution and as a result Kashmir dispute, languishing over the last 72 years, has all of sudden taken a center stage in the backdrop of CPEC’s growing international impacts.

India believes that it did not take the first step rather it was Pakistan which did so by partnering with China and allowing CPEC route to pass through GB which it calls as disputed area. However honestly speaking, truth is that Pakistan has been exercising restraints even there was opportunity to break the status quo on the status of GB. Yasin Malik of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front emerged as first leader who resisted any change in the status of Gilgit-Baltistan. He wrote a letter to then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, making him realize that any change in the status of the region would provide a plea to India to do the same in a bid to consolidate its hold on the held Kashmir.

Now new situation that has come into view after Indian step to repeal section 370 A, Pakistan has strong logical plea and legal foundation to declare GB its provisional province. PTI GB

president Syed Jaffar Shah, who is a former judge of the GB Supreme Appellate Court, also argued that making GB a provisional province till settlement of Kashmir dispute has no legal hitch.

Considering Kashmir dispute a disadvantage to CPEC, many think tanks in China have been convincing to India to settle the issue and join the mega project to share the dividends of developments.

Chinese diplomat LuoZhaohui also officially asked India to join its One-Belt-One-Road project and assured New Delhi that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would not impinge on anyone's sovereign rights. "Some people in the West misread China and tend to think that the 'Dragon' and the 'Elephant' are inevitable rivals, and that China would not like to see India developing. This conception is wrong. We hope to see India develop well and we are more than happy to help India develop to achieve common development," he said in an address at the United Services Institute.

September 14, 2019

Pakistan Observer

**58th progress review meeting of CPEC projects CPEC to harbinger
development, prosperity for Pakistan: Khusro Ambassador Yao Jing says
CPEC going in right direction, at right pace**

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Mukhdum Khusro Bakhtyar has said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as stated by Prime Minister Imran Khan, is a project of great national significance for Pakistan and will be a harbinger of development and prosperity for Pakistan and the region.

The Minister was chairing the 58th Progress Review Meeting of CPEC projects here in Islamabad on Friday. Chinese ambassador Yao Jing, DCPC Dr. Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, Secretary Planning Zafar Hasan, representatives from Chinese enterprises and senior officials from relevant ministries also attended the meeting.

The Minister said that the incumbent government, in consultation with the Government of China, has succeeded in expanding its scope to include other priority areas under its framework including socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, agricultural and industrial cooperation.

The second phase, as envisioned by Prime Minister Imran Khan, will focus, among others, on welfare projects for the betterment of the people of Pakistan and we are thankful to the Government of China for broadening its framework which will contribute to the sustained development of Pakistan, stated the Minister. The Minister reiterated that the Government remains fully committed to realize the potential and opportunities under CPEC framework. Speaking on the occasion, Chinese ambassador Yao Jing said that CPEC is heading in the right

direction adding that CPEC is quite different from other Belt and Road initiatives as this flagship project manifests the longstanding friendship between the two friendly countries and will bring prosperity and progress for Pakistan.

CPEC is a product of vision of two brotherly countries that goes beyond traditional business dealings reflecting decade old strong bonds of bilateral cooperation and shared goals with win-win situation for all. He stressed that the project will continue to progress on expedited pace, as reiterated by PM Imran Khan in his recent meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister, for timely completion of all projects.

During the meeting, various projects of CPEC were discussed in detail one by one. Secretary Power informed that the synchronized demand-supply study of CPEC energy projects will be firmed up by October 2019. NEPRA said that all pending tariff issues including Port Qasim and Gwadar 300 MW coal project will be resolved soon. Talking about Kohala Hydro power project, Minister for Planning said that it is an important project and expressed gratitude to the Government of China and Three Gorges for extending cooperation in this regard. It was decided that process for establishing appellate tribunal will be expedited to resolve future tariff issues of energy projects.

It was informed that the Gwadar development Authority, headed by Chief Minister Balochistan, has approved the Gwadar city master plan with some minor modifications. Secretary Communications informed that Multan-Sukkur motorway will be opened soon for general traffic as the work was almost complete.

Planning Minister and the Chinese ambassador appreciated the pace of work on the East Bay Expressway project. Orange Line Train project and ongoing projects in Gwadar were also deliberated upon in detail. The Minister said that SEZs would help in boosting Pakistan's exports and achieving sustainable economic growth.

The meeting deliberated upon issues confronting different projects and it was decided to fast track their resolution for timely completion of all projects. Minister for Planning underlined the need for meeting the projects' timelines and called for further gearing up the momentum in CPEC projects.

The News

CPEC progress review meeting: Nepra to resolve pending tariff issues of CPEC projects soon

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) on Friday assured the progress review meeting of CPEC projects that all pending tariff issues including Port Qasim and Gwadar 300MW coal project will be resolved soon.

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Mukhdum Khusro Bakhtyar while chairing the meeting said CPEC is a project of great significance for Pakistan, which will be a harbinger of development and prosperity for the country and the region.

Power Division secretary informed that the synchronised demand-supply study of CPEC energy projects will be firmed up by October 2019. Various projects of CPEC were discussed in detail one by one during the meeting.

The minister said that Kohala Hydro Power Project is an important and expressed gratitude to the government of China and Three Gorges for extending cooperation in this regard. It was decided that process for establishing appellate tribunal will be expedited to resolve future tariff issues of energy projects. Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing, on this occasion, said that CPEC is heading in the right direction and added that CPEC is quite different from other Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) as this flagship project manifests the longstanding friendship between the two friendly countries and will bring prosperity and progress for Pakistan. CPEC is a product of vision of two brotherly countries that goes beyond traditional business dealings reflecting decades' old strong bonds of bilateral cooperation and shared goals with win-win situation for all.

He stressed that the project will continue to progress on expedited pace, as reiterated by PM Imran Khan in his recent meeting with Chinese foreign minister, for timely completion of all projects.

It was informed that the Gwadar Development Authority, headed by Balochistan chief minister, has approved the Gwadar city master plan with some minor modifications. Secretary Communications informed that Multan-Sukkur motorway will be opened soon for general traffic as the work was almost complete. Planning Minister and the Chinese ambassador appreciated the pace of work on the East Bay Expressway project.

Orange Line Train project and ongoing projects in Gwadar were also deliberated upon in detail. The minister said that Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would help in boosting Pakistan's exports and achieving sustainable economic growth.

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The minister said that the incumbent government, in consultation with the government of China, has succeeded in expanding its scope to include other priority areas under its framework including socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, agricultural and industrial cooperation. The second phase, as envisioned by Prime Minister Imran Khan, will focus, among others, on welfare projects for the betterment of the people of Pakistan and we are thankful to the government of China for broadening its framework, which will contribute to the sustained

development of Pakistan, stated the minister. He reiterated that the government remains fully committed to realize the potential and opportunities under CPEC framework.

Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Dr Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan, Secretary Planning Zafar Hasan, representatives from Chinese enterprises and senior officials from relevant ministries also attended the meeting.

The News

SEZs to give exports \$1.5bln push

LAHORE: Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would help country enhance export by \$1 billion to \$ 1.5 billion per annum in the short-run by ensuring effective and comprehensive planning, an industry official said on Friday.

“Investors from China, Turkey, Korea, and Britain have pumped \$1.10 billion in SEZs, while more and more investors from these countries are eyeing to invest in Pakistan,” said Mian Kashif, chief Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC), in a meeting with officials from Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI).

Kashif said these investors expressed their eagerness to explore the possibility of investment in diverse sectors of Pakistan especially in ceramics, chemicals, steel, food processing and automobiles.

He said FIEDMC, which was a successful example of public-private partnership and first-ever state of the art SEZ, would ultimately prove to be an economic engine of country through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor initiatives (CPEC).

The Nation

CPEC projects: China complains about red-tapism, delays

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani and Chinese authorities were on the odd side in the CPEC review meeting as the later has complained about the red-tapism and delays of several of the corridor’s projects. “We have been exhausted in the meetings and paper work and a matter which usually could be resolved in one month almost takes four months for its finalization,” official sources told The Nation while quoting the Chinese officials during the 58th CPEC review meeting here.

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms Mukhdum Khusro Bakhtyar chaired the 58th Progress Review Meeting of CPEC projects. Chinese ambassador Yao Jing, DCPC Dr Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, Secretary Planning Zafar Hasan, representatives from Chinese enterprises and senior officials from relevant ministries also attended the meeting.

Official sources said that during the meeting Pakistani side was pushing Chinese for the early inauguration of Sukkur-Multan Motorway, Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and Gwadar International airport. The National Highway Authority officials have asked the representative of the Chinese company that they want the inauguration of Sukkur Multan Motorway within next

few days, said the source. However, Chinese side was of the view that they have their machinery on the site and it is not possible for them to do the inauguration within next couple of days as demanded by NHA, said the source. However, later Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms asked both the sides to sit together and resolve the issue, said the source. Similarly, the issue of the ground breaking of Rashakai SEZ was also discussed and the Chinese have complained that neither water nor electricity were provided to the site, therefore it cannot be inaugurated without the provision of basic amenities. The Chinese side was also upset over the delay in issuing of exemption to the import of machinery by FBR which is causing delay in projects.

Meanwhile, a press statement issued here stated that Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Mukhdum Khusro Bakhtyar has said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, as stated by Prime Minister Imran Khan, is a project of great national significance for Pakistan which will be a harbinger of development and prosperity for Pakistan and the region.

The minister said that the incumbent government, in consultation with the Government of China, has succeeded in expanding its scope to include other priority areas under its framework including socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, agricultural and industrial cooperation. “The second phase, as envisioned by Prime Minister Imran Khan, will focus, among others, on welfare projects for the betterment of the people of Pakistan and we are thankful to the Government of China for broadening its framework which will contribute to the sustained development of Pakistan,” stated the minister. The minister reiterated that the government remains fully committed to realize the potential and opportunities under CPEC framework.

Speaking on the occasion, Chinese ambassador Yao Jing said that CPEC is heading in the right direction, adding that CPEC is quite different from other Belt and Road initiatives as this flagship project manifests the longstanding friendship between the two friendly countries and will bring prosperity and progress for Pakistan. CPEC is a product of vision of two brotherly countries that goes beyond traditional business dealings reflecting decade old strong bonds of bilateral cooperation and shared goals with win-win situation for all. He stressed that the project will continue to progress on expedited pace, as reiterated by PM Imran Khan in his recent meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister, for timely completion of all projects.

During the meeting, various projects of CPEC were discussed in detail one by one. Secretary Power informed that the synchronized demand-supply study of CPEC energy projects will be firmed up by October 2019. NEPRA said that all pending tariff issues including of Port Qasim and Gwadar’s 300MW coal project will be resolved soon. Talking about Kohala Hydro Power project, minister for planning said that it is an important project and expressed gratitude to the Government of China and Three Gorges for extending cooperation in this regard. It was decided that process for establishing appellate tribunal will be expedited to resolve future tariff issues of energy projects. It was informed that the Gwadar development Authority, headed by Chief Minister Balochistan, has approved the Gwadar city master plan with some minor modifications.

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The meeting deliberated upon issues confronting different projects and it was decided to fast track their resolution for timely completion of all projects. Minister for Planning underlined the need for meeting the projects' timelines and called for further gearing up the momentum in CPEC projects.

September 15, 2019

Pakistan Observer

Chinese ambassador visits Saif Group head office

Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Yao Jing visited the Offices of the Saif Group here the other day. While welcoming the Ambassador, Mr. Salim Saifullah Khan appreciated his efforts to promote Pakistan China relations in the Business Sector. He briefed him about various projects of the Saif Group in Textile, Cement, Telecommunication, Real Estate, and Energy Sectors of Pakistan and informed that Saifullah Family has been in business for the last around 100 Years. He said that Saif Group was the first one that imported the cement plant from China for its Lucky Cement joint venture project back in nineties.

It is located in their native town, Lakki Marwat. He informed that another cement plant with a cost of about US\$ 173 Million is at advanced planning stage. We will welcome if any Chinese company joins hands in this project as our first preference has always been China, he added.

Chief Executive Officer of the Real Estate Project, "Eighteen" Mr Tarek Hamdy, briefed the Ambassador about the salient features of this around US\$ 2 Billion project and sought Chinese collaboration for this state of the art project that has been envisioned to provide all the modern day living facilities to the residents of this Residential and Commercial hub, very close to the Federal Capital, Islamabad.

H.E. Mr. Yao Jing thanked for inviting him to visit the Saif Group and appreciated Group's contribution in all the sectors of the national economy. He said both the countries enjoy time tested friendship and it has been strengthening day by day. He said that there was a need to enhance the manufacturing capacity of Pakistan and many Chinese companies were willing to come to Pakistan. Under the CPEC the focus of cooperation between China and Pakistan is mainly in Power, Transportation and Industry sectors. Assistance has also been being extended to the social sector of Pakistan mainly in the field of Education and Healthcare, he added.

The News

India is changing game for China & Pakistan in IHK

RAWALPINDI: The US-China trade war has provided Indian Prime Minister Modi with an opportunity he couldn't refuse: to change the game in Kashmir for China and Pakistan.

Back in August New Delhi terminated Article 370 of the Constitution, asserting its power in the disputed Kashmir region. This week, India called on China and Pakistan to suspend activities related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Azad Kashmir. "We reject the reference to Jammu and Kashmir in the joint statement issued by China and Pakistan after the recent visit of Chinese Foreign Minister," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar is quoted as saying in Hindu. "India has consistently expressed concerns to both China and Pakistan on the projects in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in Kashmir." Pakistan and China desperately need CPEC. For Pakistan, CPEC is the express ticket to building its infrastructure, and sustain economic growth. For China, CPEC is the express link between Western China, the Middle East, and Africa, where China has growing interests. That can explain why Beijing has committed \$46 billion to the project.

The problem is that CPEC passes through Pakistani regions claimed by India. That makes it a bumpy road, to say the least -- Pakistan and India continue to fight for control of these regions. That's why CPEC activities are moving slowly in the region. "So far CPEC activity in Pakistan occupied Kashmir has been limited to reconstruction and maintenance of the Karakoram Highway, which was built in the 60s," says Ted Bauman, Senior Research Analyst and Economist at Banyan Hill Publishing. "But India has objected strenuously to new construction projects, including railways and pipelines. The problem for China is that the only other feasible route for road, rail and pipeline connections to Pakistan and its ports would be through Afghanistan's Badakhshan pedicle. Afghanistan's political instability and diplomatic alliance with India and the United States currently make that impossible." But India's recent moves in Kashmir could spoil the plans of both countries, especially for China, which has multiple border disputes with India.

"China is probably testing the waters with its recent reference to Jammu and Kashmir in the context of its CPEC project with Pakistan," says Bauman. "It's notable that China is taking a gradual approach here. China has been quite aggressive in the South China Sea, but the Himalayas is a different story." Why? "Because in addition to the dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir, India also disputes Chinese sovereignty in several parcels on their mutual border, including the Aksai Chin region adjacent to Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh on the Tibetan border. Consequently, the Chinese and Indian governments have a respectful relationship, but they are keenly aware of the risk of any escalation." Besides, China cannot "bully" India, the way it bullies smaller nations in southeast Asia. "In this case, whereas China has been able to bully the smaller nations of south East Asia, it is unlikely to succeed in intimidating India," explains Bauman. "Not only is India a large nuclear power, it is an economic competitor, especially as Western manufacturers shift supply chains out of China as a result of US trade

sanctions.” That’s why China should appease rather than confront India. “The Chinese government knows that proceeding with significant infrastructural developments in the Pakistan controlled part of Kashmir would lead to significant conflict with India, possibly even including a suspension of diplomatic relations,” Bauman concludes. “An escalation of conflict in the region would also lead to blowback effects on China via its impact on the global economy. That leads me to believe that China is unlikely to press the matter at this point.”

Jang News

چین سے آتی ہوئی روشنی

کچھ عرصہ پہلے بھی میں نے اپنے بزنس مین دوست امجد چوہدری کا ذکر کیا تھا جو چین سے برطانیہ میں مختلف چیزیں امپورٹ کرتا ہے۔ وہ ایک بار جب کاشغر سے آیا تو کہنے لگا۔ میں وہاں جس چینی کا مہمان تھا۔ وہ مجھے کچھ دکھانے کے لئے شہر سے باہر تقریباً تیس کلومیٹر دور لے گیا۔ جہاں کام جاری تھا۔ چار دیواری تعمیر ہو رہی تھی۔ بتانے لگا کہ بہت بڑا ویڑ ہائوس بنا رہا ہوں۔ یہاں سے بیک وقت سوٹرالروں پر سامان لوڈ کیا جاسکے گا۔ میں نے حیرت سے پوچھا ”شہر سے اتنی دور۔ یہاں کس نے آنا ہے۔ یہ جگہ کاروبار کیلئے قطعاً مناسب نہیں لگتی۔“ وہ بازو سے پکڑ کر مجھے روڈ پر لے آیا اور جاتی ہوئی سڑک کی طرف اشارہ کر کے بولا ”یہ سڑک سیدھی گوا در جا رہی ہے۔“ میرے دوست کو کاشغر بہت پسند آیا تھا۔ اب تو اس نے کاشغر کے پرانے شہر میں اپنے رہنے کے لئے ایک مستقل فلیٹ لے رکھا ہے۔ بقول اس کے کاشغر کا پرانا شہر اسلامی تہذیب و تمدن کا عکاس ہے۔ طرز تعمیر سے لے کر لوگوں کے رویوں تک میں اسلامی ادوار کی جھلکیاں ملتی ہیں۔ کاشغر آج پھر اس لئے یاد آیا کہ رات بائزید کانسٹیبل سے ملاقات ہوئی۔ وہ چین کی کمیونسٹ پارٹی کا پاکستان میں نمائندہ ہے۔ ابھی دو دن پہلے کاشغر سے واپس آیا ہے۔ کاشغر کے بارے میں اس کی گفتگو میرے لئے عجیب تھی۔ بات یہاں سے شروع ہوئی جب اس نے کہا کہ چینی حکومت مسلمانوں کے لئے مساجد اور مدارس کی تعمیر میں اہم کردار ادا کر رہی ہے۔ دراصل گزشتہ ہفتے بائزید کانسٹیبل کے ساتھ حکومت چین اور چینی سفارت خانے کی دعوت پر گورنر بلوچستان امان اللہ خان کی سربراہی میں بلوچستان کے اہم قبائلی عمائدین کا ایک وفد چین کے دورے پر گیا تھا۔ ان میں وہ قبائل بھی موجود تھے جنہوں نے ماضی میں سی پیک کی مخالفت کی تھی۔ حکومت چین نے بلوچستان کے اس وفد کو چین کے صوبے سنکیانگ کے دارالحکومت اُرچی اور کاشغر شہر میں پانچ دنوں کے لئے مہمان ٹھہرایا۔ صوبہ سنکیانگ جغرافیائی لحاظ سے صوبہ بلوچستان سے ملتا جلتا علاقہ ہے۔ رقبے کے لحاظ سے جس طرح بلوچستان پاکستان کا سب سے بڑا صوبہ ہے بالکل اسی طرح سنکیانگ چین کا سب سے بڑا صوبہ ہے۔ جیسے مسائل بلوچستان میں ہیں بالکل ویسے ہی چین کو سنکیانگ میں درپیش ہیں۔ دہشت گردی، غربت اور تعلیمی پسماندگی جیسے مسائل وہاں بھی خاصے ہیں۔ اس وفد نے وہاں ہوتی ترقی کے مناظر بڑی حیرت سے دیکھے۔ کاشغر وہ شہر ہے جہاں سے پاک چین راہداری کا آغاز ہو رہا ہے اور یہ وفد وہاں سے تھا جہاں اس راہداری نے مکمل ہو جانا ہے۔

بقول اُس کے صوبہ سکیناگ میں جو کام چینی حکومت نے غربت کے خاتمے کے لئے شروع کئے ہوئے ہیں وہ واقعی قابل داد ہیں۔ وہاں عورتوں کو جس طرح کام پر لگایا ہے۔ اس کی مثال نہیں ملتی۔ تعلیم کے حوالے سے بھی وہاں حیران کن ترقی ہو رہی ہے۔ مسلمانوں کے حوالے سے بھی چینی حکومت کا کردار و فنڈ کے لئے تعجب خیز رہا۔ وہاں ہر مذہب کے لوگوں کو پوری مذہبی آزادی دی گئی ہے انہیں ان کی ثقافت کے مطابق زندگی گزارنے کا موقع فراہم کیا گیا ہے۔ کاشغر کو دوبارہ کاشغر بنایا جا رہا ہے۔ کاش کا مطلب ہوتا ہے۔ ”رنگین“ اور ”غر“ گھر کو کہتے ہیں۔ یعنی چینی حکومت کاشغر کو دوبارہ ”رنگین گھر“ میں بدل رہی ہے۔ چین اپنے صوبے سکیناگ پر ہر سال ساٹھ بلین ڈالر خرچ کرتا ہے۔ بلوچستان کے قبائلی رہنماؤں نے کہا کہ جس طرح صوبے سکیناگ نے ترقی کی ہے اسی طرح ہم بھی بلوچستان میں ترقی دیکھنا چاہتے ہیں اور جس طرح چین کی مرکزی حکومت نے وہاں دہشت گردی کا خاتمہ کیا ہے ہم بھی چاہتے ہیں کہ پاکستان کی مرکزی حکومت اسی طرح بلوچستان میں دہشت گردی کا خاتمہ کرے۔ آج سکیناگ امن کا گوارہ ہے اگرچہ بلوچستان میں بھی آج حالات پہلے سے بہت بہتر ہیں مگر انہیں اور بہتر کرنے کی ضرورت ہے صوبہ سکیناگ کے حوالے سے مغرب نے ہمیشہ منفی پروپیگنڈا کیا ہے جو سراسر غلط ہے۔ چین کے ساتھ پاکستان کی دوستی مغرب کے لئے ہمیشہ تکلیف دہ رہی ہے مگر دنیا میں صرف چین نے یہ ثابت کیا ہے کہ وہ پاکستان کا سچا دوست ہے۔ اس وقت کشمیر کے مسئلے پر بھی صرف چین ہے جو مکمل طور پر پاکستان کے ساتھ کھڑا ہے جیسے کھڑے ہونے کا حق ہوتا ہے۔

سی پیک پر کام تیزی سے جاری ہے۔ گوادرا سارٹ پورٹ سٹی کے ماسٹر پلان کی منظوری دی جا چکی ہے۔ یہ بین الاقوامی معیار کا ایک تجارتی شہر ہو گا۔ بندرگاہ تیار ہو چکی ہے اس بندرگاہ کی گہرائی 14.5 میٹر ہے یہ ایک وسیع اور محفوظ بندرگاہ ہے۔ بندرگاہ چلانے کے لیے تمام بنیادی سامان اور آلات بھی لگ چکے ہیں۔ گزشتہ برس سے بندرگاہ فعال ہے۔ کئی بحری جہاز وہاں سے سامان لے کر مختلف ممالک کو روانہ ہو چکے ہیں۔ گوادرا فری اکنامک زون کے پائلٹ فیڈرل کام مکمل ہو چکا ہے۔ گوادرا بندرگاہ اور فری اکنامک زون کو مکمل طور پر فری ٹیکس قرار دے دیا گیا ہے۔ گوادرا انٹرنیشنل ٹرمینلز لمیٹڈ نے ویب بیڈون کسٹمز سسٹم کا آغاز کر دیا ہے۔ گوادرا بندرگاہ کے تمام شعبے اگلے تین سے چار سال میں مکمل طور پر آپریشنل ہو جائیں گے۔ معاملہ صرف گوادرا تک محدود نہیں رہا۔ حکومت نے تو بلوچستان میں سبیلہ کے ساحلی علاقے گڈانی میں بھی بندرگاہ کی تعمیر کی اصولی منظوری دے دی ہے۔ یقیناً یہ بھی چین کے تعاون سے تیار کی جائے گی۔ چین اور پاکستان دونوں سی پیک کو جلد سے جلد مکمل کرنا چاہتے ہیں۔ گزشتہ ماہ عمران خان نے پاک چین اقتصادی راہداری کے منصوبوں کی بروقت تکمیل کے لیے سی پیک اتھارٹی تشکیل دینے کا حکم بھی دیا ہے۔ لیکن اس میں بھی کوئی ٹشک نہیں کہ دنیا کے کئی ممالک ”سی پیک“ کے خلاف مسلسل مصروف عمل ہیں۔ بھارت اور امریکہ دونوں تکلیف میں ہیں۔ کئی علاقائی ممالک کو بھی خاصے تحفظات ہیں۔ باقاعدہ پلاننگ سے سی پیک کے خلاف افواہیں پھیلائی جاتی ہیں۔ بلوچستان میں دہشت گردی کے واقعات بھی اسی کا تسلسل ہیں۔ بھارت، افغانستان کی خفیہ ایجنسیاں پوری طرح اسے ناکام بنانے کی کوشش میں ہیں۔ آئی ایم ایف نے تو مذاکرات کے وقت باقاعدہ سی پیک کی تفصیلات مانگ لی تھیں۔ وہ تو چین کی شدید ناراضی کے اظہار پر خاموش ہوا۔ میرے خیال میں عمران خان کے نئے پاکستان کے لئے سی پیک ریڑھ کی ہڈی کی حیثیت رکھتا ہے۔ انہیں اس طرف زیادہ توجہ دینا چاہئے۔ چین سے آتی ہوئی علم و عمل کی روشنیاں ہی پاکستان کو مکمل طور پر منور کر سکتی ہیں

