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CPEC projects to create 1.2m jobs by 2030: Study

ISLAMABAD - China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has a potential to create a total of 1.2 million direct jobs through its currently 42 agreed projects by 2030. With the inclusion of new projects under the CPEC long term plan in sectors like agriculture, tourism, mineral processing, oil and gas and services, the job portfolio is likely to be enhanced many fold, a study conducted by Center of Excellence for CPEC said. The study revealed that out of actual jobs created under CPEC projects so far, 29,674 jobs have been created in three road projects, while 1,294 employees were engaged in the 820 long optical fiber project. Similarly, 22,900 direct jobs have been created in five energy projects and 1100 jobs were created in one project of Gwadar. Further, according to estimation projected by the study, 1800 jobs are expected to be created in two road projects. While 14,400 direct jobs would be generated in upgradation of railways Mainline-1 project. According to the estimation of the study, 11 new projects in Gwadar city to be initiated soon would produce 76000 direct jobs.

The 11 new project include development of free zone, new Gwadar International Airport, Gwadar East-Bay Expressway, dredging of berthing areas and channels, construction of breakwater, Pak-China friendship hospital, technical and vocational institute, Gwadar smart port city master plan, Bao steel park, petrochemicals, stainless steel and other industries in the city, development of Gwadar University, and upgradation and development of fishing, boat making and maintenance services to protect and promote livelihoods of local population. The 16 energy projects would also produce 5,0828 jobs while nine Special Economic Zones (SEZs) to be constructed in various parts of the country would produce 1,021,396 direct jobs in the country. The study said that among the total direct jobs to be generated, a huge chunk of share would go to Pakistani individuals, however it suggested that Pakistani individuals would need more technical training to fulfil their job requirements. "The crux of the matter for any economy is the mismatch of skills. In which, the work force exists, the positions in the job market are vacant, but, the unemployment rate remains unaffected," the study said adding "the expertise acquired by the workers are not consistent with the job market. As a result, there exists a gap between the practitioners and the academics, while the students of today cannot take firm decisions for their career path."

Korea invests in power projects: envoy

ISLAMABAD (Staff Reporter): Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Pakistan, Kwak Sung-Kyu has said that his country had invested in hydropower projects of Pakistan, as hydropower projects are blessing for the country in term of clean energy. The CPEC is advantageous for
Pakistan, the ambassador said while talking to media at pre-departure orientation session for participants from Pakistan selected for Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Scholarship Programmes. Addressing at the occasion, the ambassador welcomed the participants and said that these scholarship programmes will strengthen respective areas such as local government system, urban development, and energy policy and improves industry and trade between both countries. This will be unique experience for all the participants while studying Korean language and culture. Ms Tehniat Shafique working as assistant director in Local Government Department AJK will participate in Yonsei University programme of "KOICA-Yonsei Master's Degree Programme in Community Development (Pakistan).

Muhammad Salman Jamil working as Deputy Director in Ministry of Commerce and Textile Pakistan will participate in Chung-Ang University programme of "KOICA-CAU Master's Degree Programme in Urban Development Policy" in Korea from August 19, 2018 - December 21, 2019. Muhammad Farhan Ullah Khan working as Section Officer in Ministry of Power will participate in Ajou University programme of "2018 KOICA-AJOU University Master's Degree Programme in Energy Science and Policy" in Korea from August 12, 2018-January 12, 2020. Khurram Ikram working as Deputy Director in Trade Development Authority Pakistan will participate in Kyung Hee University programme of "2018 KOICA-GSP Master's Degree Programme in Industry and Trade Policy "in Korea from August 9, 2018- December 17, 2018.

The scholarship programme aims at developing expertise and enhancing knowledge in respective courses. It also gives opportunity to learn Korean language and Culture and bring more harmony among two nations. The participants assured their support for strengthening ties between Pakistan and South Korea and paid their gratitude to the Korean government for offering this much needed scholarship programmes. Adnan Wadood Programme Manager of KOICA introduced the course.

The Nation
August 5, 2018

Plastic products expo gets $100m orders

KARACHI (NNI): The exhibitors at the 16th Plasti Pack & IFTECH-2018, have received over $100 million on the third and last day of Pakistan’s largest exhibition of plastic and food technology sector. The exhibitors from 32 countries were given an overwhelming response from trade visitors who took keen interest in plastic, packaging and food processing machinery and technology along with the food ingredients and chemicals, displayed at the exhibition. The foreign experts have narrated the salient features of latest global trends in the related industries. The exhibitors have seen lots of potential for their machinery and technology in the fast growing processing and packaging market in Pakistan, saying that they are having good business at the PLASTI PACK & IFTECH. "Pakistan has productive market for food processing machinery, but there is a need to create awareness among our buyers about the benefits of value addition “said a Chinese exhibitor. “We see lots of future potential in Pakistani market for the technology our company is offering”, he added.
On the second day of the exhibition there was a professional B2B activity at the expo center, a high profile global food technology conference was held. The theme of the conference was, “Pakistan Beverage Industry The Way Forward”, prominent local and international speakers from Germany, Pakistan and Middle East had presented their papers and highlighted the role of the latest trends and practices in beverage industry. They particularly discussed the topics on: Juices and Concentrates - Future Generation Drinks, Drinking Water in Portion Packs + HPP Technology for Fresh Juices & Smoothies. Rapid detection of food-borne pathogens by real-time PCR, Aseptic packed Juices, compulsory to quench and replenish body drains, Hyperbaric Storage of Food and Beverages at Mild Pressure: A Possible New Preservation Concept. The unique skill showcasing activities and competition by the culinary arts students from college of tourism and hotel management, (COTHM), and professional chefs of the hotel and restaurant industry was held at the expo center, which include knife skill, fruit, vegetable and ice carving skills, cake making and decorations and other exotic culinary preparations. All preparations are based on live demonstration in concurrence with the 2nd days of PLASTI & PACK-IFTECH.

The 2nd day of Plastic & Pack, received overwhelming response from trade visitors who took keen interest in plastic, packaging and food processing machinery & technology along with the food ingredients & chemicals, displayed at the exhibition.

More than 8,000 visitors from China, Afghanistan, Iran, UAE and from the various other cities of Pakistan including Faisalabad, Karachi, Lahore, Hyderabad, Sahiwal, Sialkot, Attock, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Muzaffarabad, Kasur, Gujranwala, Shekupura, Multan, Harpur, Abotabad, Khaipur, and Azad Kasmir have visited, 1st and 2nd day of the exhibition and appreciated the state-of-the-art technologies displayed at the expo centre. A larger number of visitors are expected to visit on the last day of the Exhibition. Over 400 companies from 30 countries have participated in the B2B event. The countries includes exhibitors from Austria, China, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Malaysia Netherland, Philippines, Poland, Pakistan, Portugal, Serbia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Singapore, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Taiwan, UAE, UK and USA.

The Nation
August 7, 2018

Gems show attracts foreign investors

ISLAMABAD - Three-day All Pakistan Gems and Mineral Show concluded here Monday, receiving an overwhelming response from local and foreign visitors as the event had showcased the hidden Pakistan's potential in gems and stones. Over 4,000 visitors including representatives of foreign companies operating in gems and stones business and locals visited different stalls and showed their keen interest in the precious and semi-precious stones find in different areas of the country. The event was organized by All Pakistan Commercial Exporters Association (APCEA) in collaboration with Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), which was aiming at to promote the exports of gem stones and capture the international markets to fetch foreign exchange reserves for the country. The other objective of the event was also to find out the international as well as local match makings for the introduction of modern machinery for extrication of these
precious gems and stones to produce standard and quality products of world class, said Patron-in-Chief APCEA and chairman organizing committee Haji Mamoor Khan.

He informed that the potential buyers from China, Germany, European Union, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Africa had taken their keen interest in different types of gems and stones displayed in the show and they expressed their keen interest in the import. The companies from China, Thailand, Belgium and Sri Lanka were also keen for initiating the joint ventures with local produces to set up the modern technology to promote the exports of Pakistani gems and stones in international markets. He said that 70 stalls of different gems and stones were installed in the show, which had showcased precious and semi-precious stones by the gems and stones traders haling across different cities of the country including Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Gilgit. Many precious stones including sapphire, tourmaline, rubies, peridot and emerald were put on the stalls, which attracted the visitors particularly women as they shown keen interest in different stones and jewelery, he added. Besides, he said that semi-precious stones like tourmaline, turquoise, aquamarine and topaz and other stones find locally were put on display. Head of PCEA said that local exports of gems and stones were stood $ 3.7 million, adding that if the government provide facilities to local exporters it could be enhance manifold. Haji Mamoor Khan said that local exporters were facing multi-pull challenges including the visa issues with different countries and urged the government for addressing these on priority basis to promote exports. Pakistan was blessed with natural resources and it required little attention of the concerned quarters to utilize theses resources, by removing the structural bottlenecks, he added.

DAWN
August 8, 2018

US, stakeholders working to increase mango exports

ISLAMABAD: United States Agency for International Development (USAID) held a mango gala on Tuesday to ensure that Pakistani exports especially vegetables and fruits are competitive in the international market. USAID is helping local mango sector exports in new markets while ensuring compliance with international grading standards and export protocols. Addressing the mango sector stakeholders at the annual gala here on Tuesday, USAID Mission Director, Jerry Bisson was confident that by facilitating infrastructure upgrades, introducing new technologies and promoting market opportunities, ‘we will increase exports to high-end markets, improving revenue for Pakistani mango farmers and exporters’.

The mango gala brought together stakeholders from the public and private sectors to investigate trends and opportunities, recognize local farmers’ innovations in, and reaffirm USAID’s commitment towards uplifting Pakistan’s mango production sector. Under the project’s grant programme, USAID has provided 13 state-of-the-art mango graders which became operational in 2017 and will be utilized during the 2018 production season to grade export quality mangoes. USAID launched the US-Pakistan Partnership for Agricultural Market Development in February 2015 to improve the marketing capacity of four Pakistani value chains; meat, high value and off-season vegetables, mangoes, and citrus. – Reporter
UK firm exploring logistics market

SIALKOT: A UK-based logistics and e-commerce solution company on Tuesday offered Pakistani exporters easy access to as many as 500 million UK and EU consumers. Addressing a seminar at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), senior officials of FMC Logistics Group said the company was intending to launch a project of ‘EZEE Selling’ to facilitate Pakistani exporters for bonded and non-bonded warehousing and distribution in an efficient manner. On the occasion, FMC Logistics consultants Asim Yousaf, Jehanzaib Anis, Waqas Afzaal and Maria Saroya gave detailed presentations about the project. The firm is aiming for complete shipping from Pakistan, customs clearance upon arrival into UK and warehousing/distribution of Pakistani goods to the UK and European markets.

Pak-US ties have bright future: Envoy

LAHORE - US Consul General Elizabeth Kennedy Trudeau has said that future of Pakistan and United States relationship very bright. In this regard, private sector especially business communities of both sides can play a vital role. She was speaking at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. LCCI President Malik Tahir Javaid, Senior Vice President Khawaja Khawar Rasheed, Vice President Zesman Khalil, former Senior Vice President Amjad Ali Jawaid and Executive Committee Members also spoke on the occasion. She said that exchange of trade delegations and close contacts between the private sectors of the two countries and awareness session can help boost mutual trade. Malik Tahir expressed satisfaction over growing trade between Pakistan and US. Quoting a report, he said that volume of bilateral trade reached a record level of $6 billion in 2017 which is an ample proof of immense trade and economic potential exist in the two countries.

He said that business community wants of the US President to consider allowing duty free access to Pakistani merchandise. Economic stability of Pakistan through prompt direct market access to US is a must. He said that aid or grant is undoubtedly a remedy but has never been a substitute to trade. He said that United States would be achieving two goals through this gesture. First, it would be winning the hearts of Pakistanis and secondly, the United States would be able to fulfill the promise of economic revival of Pakistan. The LCCI chief said that there is vast scope for US investors to make investment in several sectors including power, textile, auto, health, education, food, livestock and dairy etc. He said that US administration must convince the potential investors to put their money in joint ventures with Pakistanis besides ensuring transfer of latest technology to Pakistan. Malik Tahir said that shortage of energy is the biggest impediment of economic growth of Pakistan. He said that United States should facilitate Pakistan regarding the usage of civil nuclear technology for power generation.
Mango festival in Gilgit planned

ISLAMABAD (APP): Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) would organize Mango festival in Gilgit by first week of September and will invite international organizations for promotion and value addition of these products. "We are committed to promote and branding of local fruits from Gilgit Baltistan, Swat and Azad Jammu and Kashmir and value addition for the facilitation of growers and traders," senior official of the ministry told APP here on Thursday. The priorities of TDAP were the value addition and enhancement of value supply chain for the promotion of agriculture trade and exports of the country, he said. "We would initiate the project of establishing cold storage in Gilgit Baltistan for prolong preservation and to enhance the shelf life of apricot, peaches and persimmon," he said. Replying to a question, he said the ministry has a plan to create international level institute for innovation and value addition of leather and gems and jewelry in the country. "We are working to explore new trade avenues and markets in different regions," he added.

The government was committed in providing direction and diversification to internal trade for improving supply chains vital for enhancing the country's exports. He said that the ministry was contributing to the national economy through trade facilitation and liberalization, improved export competitiveness and by reducing the cost of doing business. The official said that TDAP was working with international organizations including Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Center for the Promotion of Imports (CPI) in developing countries for branding and enhancing the value addition in agro-trade in these areas. Replying to another question, he said that the ministry was going to set up a research center in collaboration with UNIDO for training and enhancing the capacity of staff. The government was committed for enhancing foreign trade; the government was committed to improve the standards according to the international market.

PTDC packages attracting tourists

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) summer packages is attracting a large number of tourists as PTDC announced its packages with the start of the summer season in which upto 30 percent discount were being offered on accommodations in its motels at different northern areas. An official of PTDC told APP that a large number of families visited various areas including Ayubia and Naran Balakot, Saidu Sharif, Kalam, Miandam, Chitral, Booni, Bamburet (Kalash Valley), Mastuj, Phandar, Gupis, Gilgit, Hunza, Rama Lake, Skardu, Khaplu and Besham under PTDC summer packages.
Business community pins high hopes on PTI govt

KARACHI: The business community has high hopes from Prime Minister Imran Khan and is confident that he will bail the country out of the economic crisis besides paying special attention to the plight of people and industries of Karachi. Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Senior Vice President Syed Mazhar Ali Nasir said that the new premier’s resolve to ensure strict accountability across the board is highly appreciated by the business community in particular and the masses in general. Siraj Kassam Teli, Chairman Businessmen Group (BMG), and Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) President Muffasar Atta Malik hoped that Imran Khan will focus on addressing key economic issues on an urgent basis and pay special attention to problems of business and industrial community of Karachi, which is the economic nerve centre of the country.

They shared their optimism that the incumbent premier will fulfil his commitments made to the business community of KCCI during a meeting held on July 22 and particularly his pledge to improve the city’s infrastructure. They highlighted that Karachi contributes more than 65 per cent revenue to the national exchequer. They urged the prime minister to include reliable and honest businessmen having adequate know-how of prevalent crisis in his economic team. They said that only a dedicated team can prudently guide the government in formulating policies which have direct and indirect impact on trade and industry. This step would certainly be a win-win situation and will be warmly welcomed by entire business community of Pakistan, they added.

Chairman Association of Builders and Developers of Pakistan (ABAD) Arif Yousuf Jeewa said Imran Khan is a man of his word and will deliver on his promises for the betterment of country. Despite a lot of challenges, the PTI government will deliver what they have promised, he said adding that the people will have to be patient and there will be a visible change within one year. He said that PTI’s plan to build five million affordable low-cost housing units is achievable; however, even if the target is half met, it would have a significant impact on the national economy besides creating thousands of jobs and boosting over 70 allied industries. He hoped the PTI government will change Pakistan’s destiny by bolstering economic activities. He was of the view that the new government would continue with the Fixed Tax Regime (FTR) for builders and developers. He also supported restructuring of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) as highlighted by Imran Khan in his first-ever speech after victory in the elections. Arif Jeewa said reduction in tax rates is needed to expand the tax net and increase tax collection. Korangi Association of Trade and Industry Patron-in-Chief S.M. Muneer and President Tariq Malik hoped that the newly elected prime minister will make proactive economic policies to put the country on the path of rapid growth and development.
Pak-China coop beneficial for giving boost to agri sector

BEIJING - China-Pakistan's growing socio-economic cooperation will be equally beneficial for giving boost to the agriculture sector, enhancing per acre yield of wheat crop. Farmers in Pakistan are expecting improved crop yields as field trials conducted by a Chinese State-owned enterprise involving hybrid wheat has yielded impressive results. China's Sinochem Group Co, which has interests in chemicals and other agriculture-related services, has conducted field trials of hybrid wheat varieties and realized on average 24.4 percent increase in crop yields, according to company officials. It is also playing an important role in boosting trade ties under the country's innovative Belt and Road Initiative. "The tests on the hybrid varieties were implemented in 230 sites, spread over 2,000 hectares of land, mostly in experimental bases or local farms," said Chen Zhaobo, general manager of CNSGC Hybrid Wheat Seed (Beijing) Company. "The good results from the experiments offer bright prospects for large-scale cultivation of hybrid varieties in Pakistan." The project's local partners said that yields from hybrid wheat varieties rose as much as 50.1 percent from 2017 to 2018 in the northern wheat growing areas and by 45 percent in the central areas. Wide cultivation of such high-yielding hybrid wheat varieties will provide more options for Pakistan to secure food supply, said Zhang Shengquan, manager of the scientific research department with CNSGC Hybrid Wheat Seed (Beijing) Co.

To develop hybrids that are distinct to Pakistani crop conditions, the company has established a research center in China's Yunnan province, Zhang said. Compared with China, wheat cultivating areas in Pakistan often suffer from drought and high temperatures. The company has so far deployed 150 technicians in Pakistan to solve project-related problems and they have traveled nearly 10,000 kilometers and to more than 20 cities, Chen said. Song Weibo, vice-president of the agriculture business unit at Sinochem and general manager of China National Seed Group Co, said the former will continue its efforts to promote hybrid wheat in Belt and Road-related countries and regions.

China grants status of ‘guest of honour’ to Pakistan

BEIJING - The Chinese government has granted the status of "Guest of Honor" to Pakistan at the China International Import Expo (CIIE) to be held from November 5 to 10. This will ensure the provision of all possible facilities and benefits to the Pakistani pavilion. The gesture also shows the level of commitment in China to make Pakistan part of a shared future, according to an article published by Global Times here on Monday. The expo offers a chance for global manufacturers and producers to showcase their products in order to gain access to China's market. The expo is also an opening for countries participating in the Belt and Road (B&R) initiative to boost their
infrastructure upgrading and reach wider markets. Pakistan is one such country, which is undergoing massive infrastructure development to align itself with global transportation and communication networks. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will create an advanced network of roads, railways and a deep-sea port that will boost trade with China, Central Asia and Europe. China’s demand for imported food has been growing steadily, creating a market worth $58.28 billion last year, a 25 percent increase year-on-year.

Pakistan, on the other hand, has a largely agrarian economy. With the help of Chinese scientists, local agriculture specialists have successfully introduced modern farming techniques. Hybrid rice and hybrid wheat have been the most successful products, seeing a marked increase in yield. Meanwhile, Pakistani mangoes are also doing well; 10,000 tons of them are expected to be exported to China by the end of this year. To take advantage of China's food market, Pakistani producers at the CIIE can offer their own unique and cost-effective products. A bigger share of the market in China would translate into higher revenues, improved quality and a wider product range. Apart from food, there are other Pakistani products with immense potential for export to China, including onyx stones, minerals and surgical items. The expo organizers were initially expecting around 150,000 purchasing agents, but they have so far registered over 160,000. This massive participation will present Pakistan with access to markets in other countries as well. As foreign buyers experience the previously unexplored Pakistani prospects, new windows of trade will open. Thus, Pakistani businesses will expand not just into China, but also internationally. Starting from the port of Shanghai, China is rolling out assistance for B&R countries to bring down their trade costs.

The cargo clearance process has been simplified and a new filing mechanism is being built for the CIIE pavilions of these countries. China is also adjusting tariffs on certain products, such as nuts from Pakistan, in order to meet the demand among domestic consumers. As a follow-up step to the import expo, Pakistani manufacturers can take advantage of China's booming e-commerce sector. They can utilize this highly developed industry to reach out to more customers than would be possible only with physical stores in China. Alibaba Group has acquired Pakistan's largest e-commerce portal and its payment arm Alipay is planning to enter the Pakistani market this year. These ventures will help local manufacturers export goods to China while letting the supply chain infrastructure, which is already maturing under the CPEC and B&R initiative, do its job. Pakistan and China are developing stronger ties in the rapidly evolving global order. Their geopolitical interests are aligned more than ever and bilateral trade has increased significantly since the CPEC was initiated. In this situation, people-to-people interaction is extremely important, as it enables them to understand each other's trade practices.

August 31, 2018

Pakistan, EFTA eye trade deal

ISLAMABAD: The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) has agreed to initiate process for a preferential trade agreement with Pakistan to double the volume of trade with the bloc, a senior official in the commerce ministry told Dawn. This was a culmination of a year-long effort with
EFTA countries Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein to formally initiate dialogue on the preferential treaty. We have received a formal intimation from the EFTA secretariat that ministers of the bloc agreed to continue discussion with Pakistan with the possibility of future free trade agreement (FTA), the official said. The bloc has suggested engaging in a scoping exercise instead of feasibility study. Therefore, the exercise will result in a paper for possible negotiations on FTA. The EFTA has also sent a template that outlines topics to become part of the paper.

The EFTA can only offer tariff concessions on industrial goods under the proposed preferential treaty. The value of EFTA-Pakistan merchandise trade (imports plus exports) amounted to $573 million in 2017. Those member states imported Pakistan goods worth $218m while their exports hit $355m. Pakistan’s exports consisted mainly of textiles and apparel articles whereas top imports from them included pharmaceutical products, machinery and watches. Pakistan and EFTA held their first meeting of the joint committee in October 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland. The agreement to continue discussion for a preferential agreement was the result of EFTA Pakistan’s Joint Declaration on Cooperation which was signed on Nov 12, 2012.

Merchandise trade between the EFTA and Pakistan has grown at a steady pace during the last decade with Pakistan’s exports rising at an average of 10.4pc over the last five years. Major exportable products are woven apparel or clothing accessories, knitted apparel or clothing accessories, other made-up textile articles; sets; worn clothing and worn textile articles; rags, articles of leather; saddlery and harness; travel goods, handbags and similar containers; articles of animal gut (other than silkworm gut), toys, games and sports requisites; parts and accessories thereof, others. Imports from EFTA recorded an equal increase at 10.4pc over the last five years with major products including pharmaceutical products, machinery, mechanical appliances, optical, medical, surgical instruments, electrical machinery, clocks and watches, others.

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