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Govt solving problems of businessmen, labourers

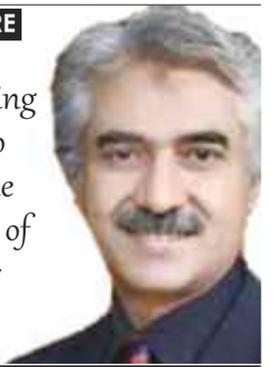
The Business

An English Daily published simultaneously from Lahore and Faisalabad

LAHORE

P2

Efforts being made to overcome problems of poverty



PAGES 08 | Rs 15

www.thebusiness.com.pk

Dhul-Qadah 23 1442 Sunday, July 04, 2021

No compromise on CPEC, China ties: Qureshi

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The US is conveying a message to Pakistan to cut ties with China through various means, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said Friday when asked about how Washington is exerting pressure on Islamabad.

While speaking to media, the foreign minister said Pakistan has its own interests and would like to strengthen ties with the US as well. "This is not a zero-sum game and if we are a friend of China, it doesn't mean we are not friends with the US," he said, adding that China has never asked them to break ties with the US.

When pressed on how

China is actually pressuring Islamabad, he said: "No one says this directly there are ways to communicate such things through double meaning phrases," he said. "A China containment policy is underway at the global level. China is a rising power right now and possibly can overtake the US in the next few years. So there are fears in the West," he said.

On the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Qureshi said, "whether anyone likes it or not, CPEC is our need. It is our economic corridor for energy and trade. It has to reach its logical end."

He said that the CPEC will move ahead at all costs and no pressure will overwhelm Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue, Shaukat Tarin, chairs the third meeting of the economic Advisory Council (EAC).

'More PIA flights to bring back Pakistanis'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Saturday said that Pakistan international Airlines (PIA) has significantly increased the number of its international flights to repatriate the overseas Pakistani stuck abroad.

In a tweet, he said the emigrant Pakistanis were enduring difficulties regarding the schedule of PIA flights to Pakistan for the past few days. The number of international flights has been increased by Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan on the instructions of Prime Minister Imran Khan, after holding detailed meetings with the relevant officials of PIA and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). —APP

PM lauds KP for free treatment to 250,439 patients

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Saturday congratulated the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for giving free of charge medical treatment to 250,439 patients during seven months under Sehat Card Plus Programme.

"Congratulations Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. 250,439 patients treated free of cost under KP Sehat Card Plus programme. This is the Pakistan we are moving towards - that was envisioned by Allama Iqbal & Quaid-i-Azam," the prime minister tweeted.

According to a media report also shared by the prime minister on his Twitter handle, the majority of patients preferred private hospitals for their treatment as around 174,388 people went to private hospitals and only 76,052 patients availed government facilities. The government has paid an amount of Rs 7.2 billion to different hospitals. —APP

'Citizens travelling abroad to get Moderna vaccine'

ISLAMABAD: Planning and Development Minister Asad Umar said on Saturday that overseas workers and students travelling abroad will be administered Moderna vaccine. In a message on his official Twitter handle, the minister said: "Received 2.5 million doses of moderna sent by US govt. This will [be administered to] particularly those who have to travel for work or study to countries which are only accepting certain vaccines."

Umar, who also heads the National Command and Operation Centre (NCO), appreciated US President Joe Biden's "progressive policy" on Covid-19. On Friday, Pakistan received 2.5 million doses of Moderna vaccine from the US. "The United States Mission to Pakistan is pleased to share these safe and effective vaccines with the people of Pakistan," said US Embassy Chargé d'affaires Angela P. Aggeler.

"These vaccines will save lives and help Pakistan emerge from this crisis, which has devastated so many families and communities in both our countries. A vaccinated public will also help bring back the economic and social interactions." —DNA

Businessmen want cut in tax ratio

ISLAMABAD: While condemning the jump in rates of petroleum products, the FPCCI Businessmen Panel Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar has called for reducing tax ratio on oil products to support the trade and industry, as the government has been charging very high petroleum levy and sales tax on petroleum products. Calling for uninterrupted gas supply to the industrial sector, he urged the government to up-grade gas distribution and supply system to avoid losses.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, Mian Anjum Nisar, observed that with a view to improve the cash flow of businesses

Remote regions need to be developed, says Asim Bajwa

From Our Staff Correspondent

QUETTA: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Chairman Asim Saleem Bajwa on Saturday said there was a need to bring the remotest regions of the country in line with developed areas as per the prime minister's vision.

Speaking to media persons in Hoshab, Balochistan, the CPEC chairman was providing updates on the progress of various development projects in the area. He said there was a special focus on implementation of the Rs600 billion package for development projects in southern Balochistan.

"I am seeing a revolution of development in the area. This [project] will complete CPEC's route and the western route which touches the remotest regions of Pakistan. "As per the vision of the prime minister, all of the remote regions of the country need to be improved and brought up to the [level] of other developed areas," said Bajwa. He said the completion of the overall south Balochistan project would allow people to benefit from CPEC, Gwadar port and accessibility to Karachi would increase as well.

He additionally said there were plans

for education, health, agriculture and modern farming in the area for which a share had been allocated in CPEC.

Addressing some particular areas, the CPEC chairman said a major priority of the prime minister was to connect CPEC and the Gwadar port with the country's north for which roads were being developed. Citing examples, he said construction was under way on the Hoshab-Awaran road while the Basima-Khuzdar road project was 70 percent complete and would be done by year-end.

He said roads and connectivity were among some of the biggest issues facing locals, along with electricity, water and livelihood. Bajwa lamented that ongoing schemes in Balochistan had a tendency to stretch on for too long but added that great priority had been attached now to include them in the south Balochistan development package and complete them. "There are around 80 ongoing schemes but apart from that there are around 200 schemes in this entire [development] package," Bajwa said, adding that a network of roads would be laid "which is a dream of the people here".

The CPEC chairman said around 39

percent of the development package had been set aside for communication infrastructure and connectivity. This included plans for expansion of the Turbat airport and installing internet and broad-

Gwadar Port, CPEC PM's top priorities

HOSHAB: Chairman of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Lt. General (ret'd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Saturday said that Gwadar port and the economic corridor are the top priorities of Prime Minister Imran Khan. Asim Saleem Bajwa said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects will end decades old sense of deprivation in the people of Balochistan and massive Rs600 billion have been set aside for Southern Balochistan.

Chairman CPEC Authority further said that the main issue faced by Balochistan was of connectivity and now under CPEC, a network of roads will be established and work on Hoshab road is underway. —DNA

No compromise on security, says Sarwar

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for Aviation Sarwar Khan Saturday said Pakistan had best foreign policy and there would be no compromise on the national security. Addressing a press conference here at Public Secretariat, he opined that clarity had been made in the foreign policy and Pakistan wanted peace in Afghanistan.

Sarwar underlined that no drone strikes would be allowed in the country, adding, now Pakistan stood for its honour and survival. "We are working for justice, humanity and sovereignty," he added. The minister said Pakistan would not allow any country to use its soil for distorting regional peace. He said Prime Minister Imran Khan's stance on various issues was eulogized nationally and internationally.

Sarwar mentioned that the budget 2021-22 was people friendly whereas Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) had been increased from Rs

600 billion to Rs 900 billion, which would provide employment opportunities to the people. The welfare programme had been increased from Rs 200 billion to Rs 260 billion, he added. Last year, he said Rs 20 million were distributed among the deserving people.

The minister termed the budget as farmer-friendly, adding the farmers would get relief through various schemes. Sarwar Khan said that Rawalpindi Ring Road was a game-changer project, adding that the project would begin this fiscal year. He pointed out the Ring Road project would be completed by the next elections.

"Ring Road has been re-aligned," he added. To meet the water shortage, five dams would be built in Rawalpindi to increase water reserves where two dams under construction to be completed this year, the minister said. He said the PTI government was giving special attention to the education sector as five-degree

colleges in his constituency would be established whereas a technical University was approved in principle.

The minister said that vocational training Institutes were being set up, adding that skilled force, professional training was need of the hour to meet the challenges and provide employment opportunities to the youth.

"There are 7.5 million Pakistanis abroad, Rs 29 billion has been remitted to Pakistan. Billions of rupees are being spent for the construction of roads and development projects in his constituency in two years", he added.

"Rs. 65 crore has also been allocated for the completion of a hospital started by Chaudhry Nisar," he told. The minister said Pakistan had implemented FATF 26 points, whereas India was the world's biggest terrorist as no Super FATF law enforced on it. The government went to IMF where they were asked to increase electricity, gas and tax

Indian Ocean witnessing changes: Niazi

LAHORE: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi on Saturday visited Pakistan Navy War College Lahore and addressed the course participants of 50th PN Staff Course.

Addressing the course participants, the Naval Chief highlighted that Indian Ocean region was witnessing geopolitical changes of seismic nature and it added to the responsibilities of Pakistan Navy, said a Pakistan Navy news release here received.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief dilated upon evolving geo-strategic milieu and its interplay with prevalent security dynamics focused on maritime security challenges. While focusing on threat perception, he underscored Pakistan Navy's capabilities to deal with this paradigm shift in combating traditional and non-traditional security challenges.

The chief divulged on various initiatives and developmental plan in line with his vision for Pakistan Navy to be a formidable regional maritime power.

Niazi hails services of PN War College Lahore

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi has appreciated the efforts of Pak Navy War College for providing academic stimulus and honing professional knack of the course participants.

Addressing the 50th PN Staff Course participants, he shed light on the evolving geo-strategic scenario and its interplay with security dynamics, with special focus on maritime security challenges. The admiral highlighted that Indian Ocean region is witnessing geopolitical changes of seismic nature and it adds to the responsibilities of Pakistan Navy. While focusing on threat perception. —DNA

FIA serves notice on Ali Tareen

ISLAMABAD: Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has issued a show-cause notice to Ali Tareen, son of estranged PTI leader Jhangir Tareen, seeking details of investments from his bank accounts during the sugar scandal probe.

According to sources privy to details, the younger Tareen has been served notice from the FIA, seeking details of his bank accounts besides also details regarding any loan acquired by him from family or financial institutes.

"In case of non-compliance of the FIA notice, the accounts and property of Ali Tareen would be frozen and confiscated," it said.

The sources said that besides Ali Tareen, PML-N leader and Opposition

Leader in Punjab Assembly Hamza Shehbaz has also been served notice in a similar case. It is pertinent to mention here that on June 11, a banking court directed the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to give a seven-day notice to PTI estranged leader Jhangir Tareen before arresting him in a fake accounts case.

Additional Sessions Judge Rafat Ali Gondal heard the case as Tareen turned up before him. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) deputy director informed the court that the agency doesn't need to arrest the PTI leader. It will give advance notice to the accused if such need arises, he added. At this, Tareen's lawyer requested the court to direct the FIA to inform his client 10 days before ar-



HYDERABAD: A large number of people stand in a queue outside the Utility Store at 6 pm.

Pakistan rejects US Child Soldiers Prevention Act List

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has categorically rejected the inclusion of its name in the US State Department's "Child Soldiers Prevention Act List".

In a statement, Foreign Office Spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said we categorically reject the unsubstantiated and baseless inclusion of Pakistan in the "Child Soldiers Prevention Act List" - published under a domestic US legislation - in the US State Department's Annual Trafficking in Persons Report 2021.

He said Pakistan does not support any non-state armed group; nor any entity recruiting or using child soldiers. He said Pakistan's efforts in fighting non-state armed groups including ter-

rorist entities are well recognized.

FO Spokesperson said the inclusion of Pakistan in the "CSPA List" depicts a factual error and lack of understanding. He said no State institution was consulted by the US prior to the publication of the report. Nor were any details provided of the basis on which the conclusion was reached.

He said overall, on the issue of Trafficking in Persons, Pakistan is committed to fighting this scourge both at the national and intl levels. We have taken a range of legislative and administrative actions in that regard during the last one year. Foreign Office Spokesperson called upon the authorities concerned in the United States to

review the baseless assertions made in the TIP Report, especially with regard to the unwarranted inclusion of Pakistan in the "CSPA List".

Afghan fighting rages as US forces see exit by end August

Hundreds of Taliban fighters were killed in fierce battles with government forces across several provinces of Afghanistan, officials said Saturday, as Washington announced it would finish withdrawing its troops from the country by the end of August. Washington's announcement came after all US and NATO troops vacated their main Bagram Air Base, from where the coalition forces led operations for two decades. —APP