

Pakistan News Articles from January 2021 to April 2022



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<https://www.icsf.net/news/>



Pakistan: Alien fish posing threat to local varieties

<https://www.app.com.pk/domestic/alien-fish-posing-threat-to-local-varieties/>

"Alien fish, imported species from other countries, are posing threat to local varieties whose production has decreased recently, according to a report of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Assistant Professor, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture (MNSUA) Dr Naheed Bano told APP on Thursday that reason behind reduction in local fish production was raring of alien fish in water reservoirs.

She shared that as many as 130 kinds of fresh water fish were available in Pakistan adding of whom only 30 types are economically beneficial including Raho, Thaela, Baam, Mori, Palla, Singhala, Khaga, Chandi, and Mahasher etc.

In addition to it, destruction of natural habitat, pollution, and climate change were threats to marine life, the academician said adding that several countries of the world have already faced shortage of local varieties owing to alien fish introduction.

For example, Dr Naheed explained, when Tail Perch was introduced to Victoria Lake in Eastern Africa, its local type Cichlids fell prey to it and ultimately ceased to exist. Later, tail perch also died due to shortage of food for them.

In the USA, during the 70s, four kinds of fish were introduced which included Big Head Carp, Black Carp, Grass Carp and Silver Carp, the assistant professor stated adding that the objective was cleanliness of farm, checking of growing herbs and sewerage treatment, but these managed to enter Mississippi river and altered the food chain in it.

For protecting the ecosystem, it is imperative to fish out these alien types from fresh water, Dr Bano said suggesting that fishing should not go unabated because in this way some other endangered species are also caught in nets.

Federal and provincial officials concerned with Fisheries should take steps to stop introduction of alien fish to save production of local types of fish, she voiced. Australia imports an estimated 18 million ornamental fish each year, and some of those pose a disease threat to domestic fish stocks in aquariums, fish farms and even to wild fish, she informed.

Gulfam (Common Carp) was brought in our country from Thailand and UK in 1964 and was introduced in natural water and was dangerous for food and space for our local fish, the educator concluded."

Pakistan: Fish meal exports to China topped 13,866 tons

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2022/04/19/pakistans-fish-meal-exports-to-china-topped-13866-tons/>

"Pakistan's fish meal export to China topped 13,866 tons with a value of over US\$15.68 million, witnessing a year-on-year increase of 250.59% in the January-February period. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, bilateral trade between Pakistan and China has increased significantly. Pakistan's exports to China stood at US\$ 670.72 million in January- February of FY22, up 22.77 per cent from US\$ 546.30 million in the same period of the previous year.

According to the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC), flours & meals of fish, used in animal feeding commodity code (23012010) from Pakistan, crossed US\$ 15.68 million with a total volume of 13,866 tons, while last year it was US\$ 4.47 million with a total volume 4,917 tons in the January- February period. Data showed that in 2021, the total fish meals used in animal feeding, imported from Pakistan was 40,654.92 tons, worth US\$40.53 million.

Khurram Naseeb, A-One Fish Meal in Karachi, told media that there are several reasons for the growth, including a short supply from other countries: almost all suppliers including Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, the USA, Ecuador, Mauritania and Morocco limited fishmeal export, whereas only Pakistan, India and Peru are exporting to China.

"At the beginning of this year, prices for other agricultural commodities increase a lot, such as soybean meal, corn, rapeseed meal, due to the pandemic and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Therefore, many animals feed relies heavily on fishmeal, which comes from juvenile fish usually", Khurram added.

He mentioned that Pakistan's fishery processing industry needs improving to enhance exports although due to the 2nd China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement in which more than 313 items are now enjoying duty-free access to China including fisheries; there is still a need to build jetties for local fishermen.

"We can increase our export and prices by improving our boats, loading time from boats to trucks and transportation of raw fish from port to factories because Pakistan has more potential than what they are achieving now, roughly 85,000 tons per year", Khurram stated."

Pakistan: Chinese company distributes nets among fishermen of Gwadar

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2022/04/18/chinese-company-distributes-nets-among-fishermen-of-gwadar/>

"The management of China Communication Construction Company (CCCC) and Pakistan Army has distributed fishing nets among poor fishermen in Gwadar. The purpose of the distribution of nets was to enable the needy fishermen of Gwadar to earn a living with dignity as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The ceremony was attended by Mr. Liu Fangtao, project manager of Eastbay Expressway (EBEW), Brigadier Fahad Mansoor of Commander 440 Brigade, Assistant Commissioner, officials from Gwadar Port Authority and Gwadar Development Authority and representatives of local fishermen.

The fishermen expressed gratitude to the Pakistan Army and CCCC for helping them. They also raised Pak-China Friendship slogan and lauded the role of CCCC in uplifting the life of common people in Gwadar.

"The nets are being distributed amongst the poor and needy fishermen of Gwadar," said Mr. Fangtao, adding that the completion of EBEW will lead to the development of North Free Zone and will create numerous jobs for the locals. He said, people of Gwadar will get maximum benefits from the projects. Brigadier Fahad Mansoor thanked the Chinese Government and management of CCCC for their efforts regarding the welfare of local fishermen."

Chinese company distributes nets among fishermen of Gwadar, Pakistan

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Pakistan: Fate and the fisherman

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/948945-fate-and-the-fisherman>

"“We earn whatever is in our fate” – a phrase I heard from the many fisher folk I met in Karachi. They were referring to the fact that the sea is uncontrollable and catch from the sea is unpredictable.

Despite the unpredictability, except for the year that brought a Covid-induced halt to all economic activity including fishing, the economic surveys of Pakistan show continuous growth in the metric tonnes of fish caught as well as the revenue generated from the fishery sector each year. The logic of fate runs deep in creating and sustaining a discourse that allows predictable growth of the fishing sector from the unpredictable sea.

The idea of fate is quite commonly used in our cultural narratives. At the core of it is the notion that the outcomes of our actions are beyond our control. The external locus of control takes human responsibility out of the equation. Once responsibility is out of the equation, the dominated class has no reason to raise questions and the dominant class does not have to answer.

In theory, fisherpersons’ lack of control applies only to the sea, but in practice, it spreads across the organizational structure in a way that the fisherman is completely alienated from the means, forms, and outcomes of production processes. When the fisherman leaves his family behind and risks his life against the unpredictable sea weather to earn a livelihood but fails to bring enough fish to make profits, he returns home with borrowed money to feed his family. It affects his future earnings not only because he must pay back the borrowed money, but also because the boat owner deducts the losses from the fisherman’s future income.

Conversely, when the boat consistently makes decent profits to the point that the boat owner finds himself investing in a second or a third boat in just a matter of a few years, it remains business as usual for the fisherman – he does not get a share in the ownership of the boat. The trap of loans inevitably strengthens and deepens for the fisherman, resulting in the expansion of alienation to his labour, and invariably his self, too.

The credit structure has been crucial in contributing to the growth of the sector. Historically, smaller-sized boats used to be owned by nuclear or joint families, who did not have to travel deep into the sea to catch the fish, yet they were able to self-sustain. However, the capitalist economic structures first made it impossible to catch fish closer to the land because of the ever-increasing dumping of factory pollutants into the sea.

Going deep into the sea had risks that smaller and weaker boats could not manage and, therefore, increasingly fishermen needed large and strong boats to survive sea storms and spend multiple weeks in the sea to catch fish weighing hundreds of tonnes in just one round.

However, individual fishermen never had the capacity to build or buy such large boats, resulting in the rise of corporations that lent money and in return bought the fish for cheap and sold it at competitive prices in the local or international market while remaining almost invisible in the everyday talk about the fishery sector.

The free-market dynamics added fuel to the fire. Unlike wheat, the prices of which were regulated by the state to ensure food security, the price of fish was left completely up to the market. Thus, in the high seasons when the catch of certain sea products increased significantly, market prices dropped significantly because of the surplus. As a result, the life-threatening hard work that fishermen put themselves through to catch more fish did not benefit them even though it contributed to the sector's annual growth.

Corporations today have been accepted as common sense for the fishing sector's survival, resulting in structural inertia in the sector which benefits a few while the majority continues to be exploited until they breathe their very last and pass the suffering onto their future generations. That is how fate tests the majority fishermen while favours a small minority of dominant players of the fishery sector.

In a nutshell, fisher folk are trapped under the exploitative economic structure where the mostly invisible corporations, or their owners precisely speaking, avail the greatest benefits while the folk who risk their lives to catch fish remain at the bottom of the economic, social, and cultural hierarchies.

From the case of the fisher folk community, it is strongly evident that the sociopolitical manifestation of fate, a notion which may have roots in religion, is deeply rooted in class dynamics. Challenging the discourse of fate could be critical to exposing the sociopolitical structures that it embodies and gives acceptance to, and therefore, could help turn a new page in history."

Pakistan: Punjab University (PU) to introduce modern fish farming

<https://krishijagran.com/news/punjab-university-to-promote-modern-methods-of-fish-farming/>

"Prof Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, Vice-Chancellor of Punjab University (PU), has stated that the university administration is promoting initiatives to introduce modern fish farming, which would aid in the growth of relevant sectors.

He was addressing a meeting of stakeholders from the fisheries and aquaculture industries convened by the PU Institute of Zoology. The meeting was attended by Pro-Vice-

Chancellor Prof Dr. Saleem Mazhar, Dean Prof Dr. Javed Iqbal Qazi, ORIC Director Prof Dr. Asmatullah, and fish farmers. The meeting established a PU-Industry Fisheries & Aquaculture working group.

Prof Niaz Ahmed stated that the fisheries curriculum was being updated to meet the demands of the fish market so that graduates could easily find jobs and the industry could be provided with staff as needed. He stated that the issue of future academic research in this area should be finalized after consultation with the firms in order to make positive progress in tackling the industry's difficulties.

The working group includes more than 30 professionals from around Pakistan, including fish farmers, feed makers, industry leaders, and members of the Fisheries Department.

The Pakistan Institute of Chemical Engineers has ended a two-day international conference on Chemical Engineering (ICCE-2022). According to a press release, the UET Department of Chemical Engineering hosted the opening ceremony and the first day of the conference, while the PU Institute of Chemical Engineering and Technology hosted the second day of the conference and the closing ceremony.

Speaking at one of the sessions, UET VC Prof Dr. Syed Mansoor Sarwar emphasized the need of doing research to solve indigenous issues and generate value-added products in order to increase the country's foreign exchange reserves."

Pakistan: Fishermen return home after years in Indian jail

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1682123/fishermen-return-home-after-years-in-indian-jail>

"Seated on some chairs placed for them on the footpath outside the Edhi Foundation's centre at Kharadar, the family members of the six Pakistani fishermen reaching Karachi after being handed over to authorities at Wagah last month, had their eyes fixed on the road on Sunday. Many of them carried plastic bags full of rose petals, many carried garlands.

The returning fishermen, all hailing from Keti Bandar in Thatta, were Ali Hassan, Ali Akbar, Ali Nawaz, Wazir Ali, Didar Ali and Hamza Ali. All of them were arrested at Sir Creek in December of 2016. Their families waiting to receive them in Karachi said that there were some five fishing boats that were taken away by the Indian coast guard along with all the 26 men on them. Over the years, 20 of them have returned. And the remaining six returned on Sunday.

Shaukat Ali, brother of Hamza Ali, who returned this time, told *Dawn* that he was also one of the men arrested with the others in 2016. "I myself only returned three months ago.

When I got my release orders, I felt very sad to learn that my brother had not got his. I didn't want to leave him behind in India but I had no other choice," said Shaukat, who looked relieved to know that his brother was among the ones returning this time.

The aged Mohammad Ramzan had come to receive his paternal grandson Ali Akbar and his maternal grandson Ali Nawaz. As many as nine earning members of his family had been arrested along with the same batch picked up in 2016. All except the two grandsons had returned so far. So he was also relieved to have them back. Didar Hussain, another one of the fishermen returning, was going to meet his son Rizwan for the first time. His wife was three-month pregnant when he was arrested.

"During this while I became father to a son and I also lost my own father," Didar told Dawn. He also said that he won't be returning to Ketu Bandar as his family has moved to Rehri Goth in Karachi now after his father's passing.

The youngest of the returning fishermen was 19-year-old Wazir Ali. He was just 14 when he was caught. His father Sher Ali had also come to Karachi to receive him. While he was away, his younger brother also fell ill and died. His father when hugging him on his return also carried the burden of informing him about that loss. All the Pakistani fishermen had terrible stories to tell of being beaten, of being kept hungry for up to four days in the Indian jails.

Besides their families, the returning fishermen were also received by Ahmed Edhi of the Edhi Foundation, who brought them to Karachi and also handed each of the men cash envelopes of Rs5,000.

Shaukat Hussain of the Fishermen Cooperative Society also handed them cash envelopes of Rs20,000 each. Saeed Baloch of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) was also present. The PFF has been taking care of the fishermen's families in their absence, providing them with food rations while their earning members are away from home. There are still 116 Pakistani fishermen languishing in Indian jails after the return of these fishermen."

Pakistan: Sindh, Balochistan CMS discuss issues of fishing, river water share

<https://arynews.tv/sindh-balochistan-cms-discuss-issues-fishing-river-water-share/>

"Chief Minister of Balochistan held a meeting with his counterpart of Sindh to discuss mutual issues, ARY News reported on Monday. Balochistan CM Abdul Quddus Bizenjo called on Sindh's chief minister Murad Ali Shah to exchange views over the contentious issues of water and fisheries between the two provinces. The chief ministers agreed to resolve the issues amicably with mutual understanding.

It is pertinent to mention here that Balochistan have grievances over its share of Indus river water the province receives through a canal of Sukkur barrage. The barrage feeds its share of water to Balochistan under inter-provincial water distribution.

Balochistan complains getting lesser than the allotted share of water from Sindh for its crops and human consumption. Another issue is dispute over fishing of Sindh's fishermen in Balochistan waters. The fishermen from Sindh had recently protested against restrictions on them over entering the waters off neighboring Balochistan.

The fishermen's protest crippled the oil terminal's operations at Karachi Port in February. They were protesting over the ban on fishing in Balochistan. It is to be mentioned here that the Balochistan government in December last year decided to ensure a complete ban on fishing in the province's waters and asked the Sindh government to stop its fishermen from entering Balochistan's waters.

The decision was taken to stop illegal fishing by foreign trawlers and Sindh's fishermen, Balochistan officials said. The chief secretary said the Sindh government must ensure that the fishermen from the province are prevented from fishing in Balochistan, as it was a violation of provincial boundaries. The Sindh government were told to prevent its fishermen from violating the provincial jurisdiction of 12 nautical miles."

Pakistan: Inland aquaculture is an emerging sector

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1678908/inland-aquaculture>

"Nowadays inland aquaculture farming, commonly known as fish and shrimp farming, is an emerging sector in Pakistan and is part of the Prime Minister Agriculture Emergency Programme 2021. Yet we are far behind our neighbour countries in the said sector, and the government needs to pay more attention in this regard.

Recently, the National Assembly passed the Finance (Supplementary) Act, 2022, abolishing almost all exemptions in sales tax that were available under the sixth schedule of the Sales Tax Act, 1990.

Fish feed was also exempted under the said Act. Abolishing the said exemption will create hurdles in the way of promoting inland aquaculture farming and will also hurt the government's Agriculture Emergency Programme because almost all farmers have been producing fish for the last three to four years using fish feed.

There is a need to encourage the farmers to increase the production that will help increase the nation's wealth in gross domestic product (GDP) terms. Charging sales tax on fish feed will increase the cost of production, which, in turn, will discourage the farmers to use fish feed and will also work against the growth of inland aquaculture.

The poultry and cattle feed is exempted under the Sales Tax Act, 1990. Therefore, fish and shrimp feed should also be included in the afore-mentioned section to let the industry grow."

Pakistan: Fishing in irrigation canals, rivers and other reservoirs serves subsistence needs

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2022/02/21/foodbank/>

"Different reports focus on economic analysis of fishery, reveals that globally export and productivity rate of fish gradually enhance year after year. In Pakistan inland capture fisheries gaining more importance rather than marine capture fisheries because inland fishing is undertaken in irrigation canals, rivers and other reservoirs and generally serves subsistence needs.

Further in many regions of the country, it became a traditional practice. Karachi fish harbour handles about 90% of total fish production and 95% of seafood products are exported almost all over the world from this port. Seafood's export fishery sector earned 169.46 million US dollars and 166.87 million US dollars in 2013-14 and 2015-16 respectively showing a decline of 12% per annum. However, in (2015-16) GDP reached 4.5% and a significant increase was observed in 2016-17 with the difference of 0.8% and was obtained 5.3%GDP. From Dec 2016 to July 2017 fishery department earn 183.5million USD through the export of seafood and their products which was 10% more as compared to the 166.87 million USD dollar of the last fiscal year 2015-16.

During 2017-18 exports of fish and fishery products increased in quantity almost 21.6pc and in value 10.5pc. However, during (FY 2020) 317.305 USD dollars were earned through the export of 130.148 thousand metric tons of fish and fishery products. Furthermore, it is roughly estimated that 30 to 35% of Pakistani seafood is annually imported by over 50 countries of Europe. Malaysia, Sri Lanka, China, Japan and Thailand are major buyers of Pakistani fishery products.

Pakistan's fisheries sector plays a substantive role in order to overcome the poverty ratio and accomplishing the goal of food security. It also moderately participates in economic and social growth that make no more than 0.4% GDP of the total economy. Most people near the coasts of Sindh and Balochistan belong to the fishery sector and are substantial members of the aquacultural GDP. However, to increase the economic potential, it is necessary to run small scale

aquacultural practices across the country. Moreover, round about 390,000 people are directly attached to the fishery department while 90,000 to 1,800,000 are indirectly attached in the form of processing, retailing and transporting.

Despite auspicious agro-climatic conditions and widespread sources of fresh, marine and brackish water, Pakistan's aquacultural industry is facing difficulties to accomplish its selected goals. This industry is limited in its diversity and to some extent carp species, trout and tilapia are making it dominant all over the world. While coastal and marine aquaculture like shrimp farming is near to vanish. Pakistan's fish industry shows almost 1.5% of growth production rate in the last five years which is substantially slower than Bangladesh and India growth rate. In Pakistan, post-harvesting is gaining importance but now it is contributing moderately in this sector.

Researchers believe that the fisheries sector in any country has great opportunities to become the strongest engine of eco-social development and growth. The fundamental potential of the fishery sector is not measured in growth and production. However, this sector offers much more opportunities in form of boosting effective exports profits, maximum funding to coastal communities, offering handsome jobs, improving food security and domestic hygienic food and dominant economic gender inequality.

After all this discussion it can be summarized that in Pakistan aquaculture industry need more attention and some rapid actions are required to fulfil the demand for fish. In this way fishery sector can be utilized as an economic booster and not only easily attain a satisfactory growth rate, fulfil the demand for protein but can also enhance the options for food security, employment and livelihood. The Pakistani government is taking steps to improve the Fisheries Department including launching new fishing techniques, Improvement in advanced products, reinforcement of advisory services and enrichment of per capita. By acting upon these outstanding supportive opportunities Pakistan will achieve its targeted goals very soon."

Pakistan: Fisherfolk community blocks Karachi port, import-export at complete standstill

<https://theprint.in/world/pakistan-fisherfolk-community-blocks-karachi-port-import-export-at-complete-standstill/845061/>

"Import and export activities at Pakistan's Karachi port are at a complete standstill after failed talks between Maritime Affairs Ministry and fisherfolk community which led to protest by the community. The fisherfolk community walked out of the meeting as the talks on Tuesday afternoon with the Ministry officials did not lead anywhere.

“The ships containing petroleum products are parked in the open sea due to the protest, whereas

the wheat shipments are also being delayed due to the blockade,” reported The Express Tribune quoting sources.

On Wednesday, the arrival of at least seven ships to the port was postponed and three ships could not leave the harbour. Another ship could not be berthed at a different location due to the blockade. About nine ships are expected to leave the harbour but may not exit the port due to the protest.

In addition to that, the protest has also affected cement exports. Due to the changes in the schedule of the ships, additional charges are also being increased, reported the newspaper. PM’s aide Mehmood Molvi, who was at the meeting along with representatives of the fisherfolk community and the government officials, said the closure of the channel due to the protest has so far disrupted the movement of eight ships. Molvi said that the talks will resume today to resolve the issues faced by the fisher community, reported the newspaper.

Pakistan: Sindh govt notifies islands off Karachi’s coast as ‘protected forests’

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1675382/sindh-govt-notifies-islands-off-karachis-coast-as-protected-forests>

"On Feb 2, the provincial cabinet had decided to declare the islands of Bundal and Buddo off the coast of Karachi as protected forests on the orders of the Sindh High Court. The court was hearing a petition that challenged the federal government’s authority of promulgating an ordinance over the islands that exist in the “exclusive territories of the province of Sindh” and called for protection of mangrove forests on multiple grounds.

“In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 29 of the Forest Act, 1927 and all other powers enabling the government in this behalf, and in supersession of all notification issued in this behalf, the Government of Sindh is pleased to declare the intertidal land (mangrove areas) of Thatta and Sujawal districts described in the following Schedule to be “Protected Forests” with immediate effect. The provision of Chapter IV of the said Act shall be applicable to it,” the notification dated Feb 15 stated.

According to the notification, an estimated area of 750,000 acres mapped through GIS (geographic information system) has been declared protected under two schedules of the Forest Act. The area included in Schedule 1 starts from the boundary of Mirpur Sakro and moves towards Gharo, Ghaggar Phattak, Deh Pipri, area of Port Qasim, ending at the west boundary of Ibrahim Hydri. The area falling under Schedule 2 starts from the Sir Creek border and includes areas in front of Jati taluka and surrounding areas of Shah Bandar before ending at Kharo Chann.

“The western boundary further follows the reference No: 22 (N 24 81215 E 67.306.727) and moves towards Deh Ibrahim Hyderi, reference No: 22 (N. 24.777469 E 67.126083). This particular portion of this notification encompasses the areas of Korangi and Phitti creek systems on which Bundal and Buddo islands are located,” the notification stated. Levels of protected status: Asked whether the protected status now granted to the twin islands can save them from the prospects of any ‘development’ venture, a senior forest department pointed out that there was no question of federal intervention as these islands were located close to the land area and very much within the provincial limits extended up to 12 nautical miles from the coast.

“The provincial government, however, can take up a project but only after de-notifying the notification,” he said, adding that the two schedules had no effect on the protected status and meant only for description. According to the official, 200 big and small islands of the Indus delta earlier in the “wasteland” category are now “protected forest”. There is no prohibition on human activities in the “wasteland” area.

“There are three levels of protected status; the first is protected forest followed by reserved area and the last is protected area, which prohibits all human intervention. “The communities can only do fishing without government permission in the areas declared protected forest. They can’t cut trees but forest officials can allow them to pick up fallen branches and allocate a small area for camel grazing,” he explained. It’s time to engage communities in mangrove conservation, he added.

Saeed-ul-Islam representing the World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan, however, believed that notifications would not matter unless the government implemented them in letter and spirit.

“The mangroves of the Indus delta are already protected under the Forest Act. What is needed is law’s implementation. Right now, mangrove forests in front of the Port Qasim area and Ibrahim Hyderi are being cut on a large scale. But, there is nobody to stop their destruction,” he said.

Pakistan: Fishermen’s plight

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1674857/fishermens-plight>

"Conditions in detention are far from ideal. This is also true in India. Pakistani fishermen who have returned from Indian jails narrate tales of woe of having to live in deplorable conditions. It is high time that the authorities in both countries devised a mechanism to prevent the detaining of fishermen if they mistakenly stray into the other’s territory.

The fact is that there are no border posts at sea, so it is easy for the fishermen to lose their way. Instead of pouncing on them every so often, and then eventually returning them as a ‘goodwill gesture’, as both states often do, it would be better to put in place a mechanism to prevent their detention in the first place.

For example, if fishermen from one country are found to be in or near the other's territorial waters, they should be warned by the authorities to turn back. If they are apprehended, the process of verification should be swift, and they should be returned to their country of origin as soon as possible.

Lengthy incarcerations have a devastating effect on the fishermen and their families, while the confiscation of boats is equal to taking away their means of livelihood. Moreover, while in detention the fishermen should be granted smooth consular access to help establish their identities.

This is one of the 'soft' areas in Pakistan-India relations where progress can be made if both sides desire it. It is unfair to keep apprehending poor fishermen; a workable mechanism needs to be put in place to permanently address the issue.

Pakistan: Master plan being developed by FAO to restore Indus River Basin

<https://nation.com.pk/09-Feb-2022/master-plan-being-developed-by-fao-to-restore-indus-river-basin>

"A master plan is being developed by Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations to restore the Indus River Basin at the source with three work streams; to protect the source, use the river efficiently and sustainably and protect marine life. In a meeting with Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam, the representative of FAO Ms Florence Roll said that the Indus River Basin is under threat from climate change, environmental degradation, population pressure and pollution hence putting a question mark on its resilience to sustain life for future generations.

A delegation led by representative of FAO, Ms Florence Roll called on the Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam on Tuesday. Ms Florence Roll briefed the federal minister that "A master plan is being developed" to restore the Indus River Basin at the source, through the plains and to the sea. The plan will be developed with three work streams; to protect the source, use the river efficiently and sustainably and protect marine life. An official source told The Nation that the first work stream will be the protection of upstream (the source), conserve and restore mountain ecosystems, watersheds and glaciers, reinvigorate trans-boundary water initiatives, sustainable management of forests and rangelands, increase responsible tourism, monitor river flows for very early warning action, enhance the water storage capacity.

FAO delegation informs Fakhar Imam plan to be developed with three work streams; to protect source, use river efficiently and sustainably and protect marine life. The second work stream includes 'Plains: clean, efficient and sustainable management of rivers for peoples' health and sustainable development, double the productivity and incomes of farmers with sustainable food

production and climate resilient agriculture and water management practices, improve water resource management infrastructure, regulate urbanization and migration of population in response to economic opportunities and climate change, regulate industrialisation and treatment of industrial, agricultural and domestic waste and pollution, protect biodiversity and natural habitats, manage and use underground water resources sustainably, strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related disasters, The third work stream is related to downstream which includes to protect marine ecosystems to sustain life, reduce marine pollution, protect and restore coastal and marine ecosystems, mangroves and riverine forests, increase the economic benefits from sustainable use of marine resources and support small scale fishers, improve the ocean health and biodiversity dependent upon fresh water flows

This plan will build upon the national initiatives such as Ten Billion Tree Tsunami, Recharge Pakistan, Clean and Green Pakistan and other investments going into different aspects of Indus basin including building storage capacities, improving water conveyance and use efficiencies. The plan will be used to raise climate financing with Green Bonds, Nature Performance Financing and Blue Financing. The plan contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals on; zero hunger, climate action, life below water and life above land. It will also contribute to the National Determined Contributions of Pakistan in COP26.

Ms Florence said that the Indus River Basin is under threat from climate change, environmental degradation, population pressure and pollution hence putting a question mark on its resilience to sustain life for future generations. Pakistan therefore needs a Perspective Plan to conserve the resource base, use it wisely and restore the ecosystem. The minister was told that the government requested the technical assistance of the UN to develop a Plan in consultation with all stakeholders to contribute and build upon provincial, national and international initiatives in Pakistan.

The FAO representative said that climate change is shrinking the glaciers and making rains less predictable, reducing agricultural production and washing away the homes of the most indigent. Pollution from industry, agriculture and domestic sewage is sickening tens of millions of people who drink from its waters. Contamination from arsenic, nitrates, metals, plastic waste and microbiological contaminants are all at dangerous levels. Environmental degradation at the river mouth is increasing salination of the delta and destroying marine ecosystems and the fishing economy. Fakhar Imam said that the government is using all its resources to protect Pakistan from the adverse impact of climate change. He said that the issue of food security is at the core of climate change.

84 people involved in illegal fishing arrested in Pakistan

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1673865/84-people-involved-in-illegal-fishing-arrested>

"At least 84 people allegedly involved in illegal fishing in Balochistan's waters near Gwadar in Pakistan were arrested and four trawlers were seized on Monday. The people were arrested in an operation led by the provincial fisheries department, the Maritime Security Agency and Pakistan Coast Guards.

The fishermen of Gwadar district appreciated government's efforts in this regard and hoped they would help create employment opportunities for the local fishermen of Gwadar and Lasbela districts. Fishermen in Gwadar recently staged a month-long sit-in against several issues, including illegal fishing trawlers. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo later went to Gwadar and ordered stern action against such trawlers.

Pakistan: Baloch leaders discuss ways to prevent fishing by illegal trawlers

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/pakistan-baloch-leaders-discuss-ways-to-prevent-fishing-by-illegal-trawlers20220201222630/>

"Amid ongoing talks over plans to restart the Gwadar protest, a meeting was held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Balochistan Mathar Niaz Rana about the prevention of fishing by illegal trawlers. The protest which started in November last year came to a halt in December after the government agreed to the demands of the people protesting the illegal fishing of trawlers in Gwadar.

The major demand was to ban the illegal fishing of trawlers at the Makran Coast and to protect the rights of fishermen of Gwadar and other areas of Balochistan. At this latest meeting, attended by top officers of the provincial government, it was revealed that the illegal trawlers have reappeared in the waters of Balochistan.

According to vernacular media reports, their appearance has disappointed the local fishermen, for which they blame trawlers coming from Sindh province. Local authorities said that they are patrolling the sea but few trawlers can still enter the sea because we don't have coordination with other security agencies.

Bashir Ahmed Mandai, the Deputy Chief of Jamaat-e-Islami, Balochistan said that their party is with the 'give rights' campaign. People are just asking for their basic human rights, relaxation in business and trade restrictions and basic facilities for the citizens, he added. A top Baloch leader has warned the provincial government in Balochistan that if the deal the government signed with the leaders of the 'Gwadar movement' for ending the protest is not implemented, they would organize a long march against it in Quetta.

Speaking at a presser on Monday, Baloch leader Maulana Hidayatur Rehman said besides many other demands, the recovery of missing persons was also included in the accord, the Dawn newspaper reported. Analysts say that the recently-held Gwadar protests were an indication of

resentment of local people against harsh Chinese policies in the region.

Pakistan: Balochistan govt to launch multiple new projects for welfare of fishermen

<https://pakobserver.net/balochistan-govt-to-launch-multiple-new-projects-for-welfare-of-fishermen/>

"The Balochistan government has decided to launch multiple new initiatives for the welfare of fishermen and installation of new technologies in its fisheries sector to boost its business in the province. The provincial government was striving hard to provide basic facilities including education and health to uplift fishermen's living standard, a senior official of fisheries department, Balochistan, told APP on Tuesday.

Many projects like, 'Fish Processing Plant' at Gwadar, 'Fisherman Cooperative Housing Society', 'Sea Ambulances', 'Installation of monitoring system at boats were in progress that would eventually increase the potential of the sector, he added. The roads and other Infrastructure were also being upgraded for easy access of the local fisherman to the port to transfer their hunted fish into the markets, he added.

The state of the art hospital was also being set up at Gwadar to ensure best health facilities to the people of the area. The government would bring improvements in the fisheries department, as the interested entrepreneurs and investors could promote farming in the province purely on commercial basis, he added.

Pakistan's Balochistan coast divided into seven zones to curb illegal fishing

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1672567>

"The Balochistan government in Pakistan has decided to divide its 750km coastal line into seven zones to stop large trawlers from illegally fishing in the provincial waters. The decision was taken in a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Mathar Niaz Rana on Monday to review the steps taken by the authorities and agencies concerned to stop illegal trawling along the Makran coast.

The participants noted that dividing Balochistan's coastal line into seven zones would help security agencies take action against the offenders. It was decided that the police and the Levies Force would be working with other agencies to curb the menace of illegal trawling.

Pakistan: Resilience in the Indus Delta: A decrease in the mangroves poses a challenge to the sector and to the livelihood of the women earning from it

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2341122/resilience-in-the-indus-delta>

"The sun gradually started rising and lit the sky with its soft rays in a pleasant morning. A slight cool breeze blew gently, providing fresh breath. We embarked on our journey towards Keti Bandar, once a port city in district Thatta of Sindh. A road to Keti Bandar did not turn out to be an easy one. Many shocks were waiting for a person who was travelling for the first time to a region, which may rightly be called 'unfortunate' to say the least. Scores of small huts made of wood and dry straws were scattered over acres of land. In between, the 'road' was extremely rough and bumpy. After passing through these huts, pieces of land covered with bamboo shelters began to appear on both sides of the road. When inquired, it was revealed that these were plantation of Betel Leaf (paan).

At the end of the three-hour-and-45-minute journey, we reached our destination. After a brief stop and having a chat with the members of local community, we moved to Mero Dablo, a fishing village on the edge of the Arabian Sea. In Mero Deblo, mangroves cultivation welcomed us with a bonus of fish farm. Several women were busy in mangroves plantation. "Humans, animals and birds all take shelter in Tamar (mangroves). Fish is our livelihood, which also grows in mangroves forest. Our women and men protect mangroves from animal grazing and illegal logging threats. If we do not guard them, we will lose our livelihood," said 55-year-old Hajira Bibi, a grower and guard of mangroves in Mero Deblo. "I have been working in mangrove nursery for the last two years.

We have to protect vulnerable young mangroves from grazing camels and buffaloes as well as from illegal loggers," she added. According to WWF-Pakistan, mangrove forests are one of the most productive ecosystems and around 500,000 people directly rely on the mangroves services in the Indus Delta. The mangrove swamps of Sindh's coastal zone are a sweeping 600,000 hectares – a total 95 per cent of the mangrove population in the country. However, mangroves are continuously on decline due to the rapid deforestation taking place. Both climate change as well as urbanisation and industrialisation have impacted mangrove shrubs. With the help of regional cooperation, schemes by UNESCO, ADB, IUCN and UNDP, which include 'Environmental Protection and Management project', 'Mangrove Plantation for rehabilitation of Korangi-Phitti creek system', 'Development of Mangrove forests in the Indus Delta', 'Working Plan of Mangrove Forests of Indus Delta from 1985-2005', have all worked in its restoration. However, a substantial decline in mangroves, still persists.

Specifically, in the Indus Delta Mangrove forests, out of the eight species previously found along the coast, four have completely vanished. Additionally, three species are on the verge of extinction and only one species, the *Avicinnia Marina*, survives in the Indus Delta. The loss of mangroves in the coastal areas have led to a reduced reproduction and procurement of commercially important fish, loss of livelihood of fishing communities, increase in coastal erosion and reduced availability of wood. The coastal communities of Pakistan's Indus Delta depend upon on the rich mangrove ecosystem for their survival and well-being. In the past, unsustainable and haphazard harvesting of mangroves, sea water intrusion, rising sea levels and other factors posed serious threats for mangroves of Indus Delta.

Despite all odds and various threats, mangroves forest cover in the Indus delta have increased significantly. The Indus Delta mangrove forest cover reached 130,000 hectares in 2021 from 86,000 hectares in 2005, thanks to combined efforts of government departments and NGOs. Climate change threat to Indus Delta means threat to food security and livelihood of coastal communities which is solely depend on sea and mangroves. This situation rang the alarm and forced global players to take notice and come out with some assistance to control the damage. As a result, Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided ADB provided \$36 million to the Sindh Coastal Community Development Project in order to reduce poverty in coastal communities and protect the fragile mangrove ecosystem of the Indus Delta.

Under this development programme, local residents along with Sindh Forest Department plant around 800,000 mangroves sapling in the creeks in a single day and registered themselves in Guinness Book of World records in 2013. Since then, local communities not only plant mangroves but also protect them from grazing, illegal logging and other threats. Indus Delta, a home of world's largest arid mangrove forest witnessed women's active participation in plantation and protection of mangroves which gives them although at minimum level, some financial incentive.

“WWF-Pakistan has been working to address Gender-Specific Challenges linked to climate change vulnerability along the coast of Pakistan. Efforts are focused on supporting to improve the lives and livelihoods of these natural resources linked to women community members, which yielded engagement of over 300 women from the Indus Delta in alternate livelihood and capacity building initiatives,” Dr Tahir Rasheed, Regional Head (Sindh and Balochistan), WWF-Pakistan said. Under the mangrove protection program in Mero Dablo, women were given incentives in the form of sewing machines, ponds for fish to improve livelihood. The women hired for the plantation and protection of the mangroves were also paid a small stipend.

Along with mangroves, alternative sources of livelihood are also helping local community of the area to meet both ends with ease. The story of Zaitoon Deblo, aged 43, a mother of four children, took new turn when she was given a sewing machine. “I was unemployed and searching for work to earn bread and butter for my family. WWF-Pakistan provided us with a sewing machine and solar light. Now things become much easier for me. By sewing clothes, I am able to earn money. I charge Rs 500 for stitching men's clothes and Rs 250 to 300 for ladies suits,” said Zaitoon Deblo.

Engagement of local community, especially women, is crucial for the successful creation and implementation of alternative livelihood in the remote areas like Indus Delta. Small initiatives could bring big change in the lives of many. Rafiul Haq, a Karachi-based consultant ecologist while talking about alternate livelihood for women said that initially women in the area were engaged for the cultivation of mangrove nursery. This was the underutilised work force. Their overwhelming participation has changed the scenario. “Now poultry farming and kitchen garden would be served as an alternative livelihood for these women,” Rafiul Haq further added.

The economic significance of Indus Delta's mangroves reflects from the fact that they contribute nearly \$100 million annually in the country's economy in the form of fish, lobsters, crabs and shrimps breeds. As far as Indus Delta is concerned, it provides livelihood and employment to over 100,000 people associated directly with the fishing industry, stated Mangroves for Future, an initiative to promote investment in coastal ecosystem conservation for sustainable development.

Most households on the delta rely on fishing, and preserving mangroves which is a key in maintaining the marine ecosystem. Salim Deblo, a 39-year-old resident of Mero Deblo is also an example of resilience of local community against climate change. He was a jobless youth with no skill and other source to earn livelihood but now he is not only able to earn decent amount but also giving employment to other community members.

"I started a fish pond after receiving training and financial assistance from an NGO. It ended up being a life changing experience for me. Earlier, a single fish was sold at Rs 500 but after learning proper fish farming techniques and using them in fish ponds, this season we have sold one fish for Rs 8,000. Now we are making crab farms as well," said Salim.

Women mangrove guards also emerged as a source of encouragement for many others. Now more and more men and women of the area are considering mangroves plantation, fish and crab farming as lucrative livelihood opportunities one could not have imagined a few decades ago.

Six bodies of fishermen recovered in Pakistan, six still missing

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/928540-six-bodies-of-fishermen-recovered-six-still-missing>

"As many as six bodies of fishermen have been recovered after their boat capsized near Hajamro area, some 40 nautical miles away from Ketty Bandar in Sukkur, Pakistan. Reports said navy personnel, police and district administration were engaged in searching for the missing fishermen.

The Pakistan Navy personnel set up a camp at Hajamro Creek, where the boats had capsized. The deceased were identified as Ghaos Rahman, Kamran, Abdul Rehman and Noorul Islam. Meanwhile, all the boats were directed to anchor at Ketty Bandar and fishing activities were temporarily suspended in the sea due to the incident.

Balochistan govt. in Pakistan to launch multiple new projects for welfare of fishermen

<https://nation.com.pk/26-Jan-2022/balochistan-govt-to-launch-multiple-new-projects-for-welfare-of-fishermen>

"The Balochistan government in Pakistan has decided to launch multiple new initiatives for the welfare of fishermen and installation of new technologies in its fisheries sector to boost its business in the province. The provincial government was striving hard to provide basic facilities including education and health to uplift fishermen's living standard, a senior official of fisheries department, Balochistan, told media on Tuesday.

Many projects like, 'Fish Processing Plant' at Gwadar, 'Fisherman Cooperative Housing Society', 'Sea Ambulances', 'Installation of monitoring system at boats' were in progress that would eventually increase the potential of the sector, he added. The roads and other Infrastructure were also being upgraded for easy access of the local fishermen to the port to transfer their hunted fish into the markets, he added.

2 months after fisherman killed in Pakistan firing: Indian trawler captain booked for endangering lives of crew

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/rajkot/months-after-fisherman-killed-pak-firing-trawler-captain-booked-7738294/>

"Around two months after a fisherman was killed allegedly in firing by Pakistan Marine Security Agency (PMSA) at the Arabian sea off Kutch coast, the tandel (captain) of the Indian fishing boat was on Saturday booked by Porbandar police for allegedly entering no-fishing zone and thereby endangering his and other's lives. Based on a complaint filed by HC Gohil, police sub-inspector (PSI) of the Special Operations Group (SOG) of the Porbandar district police, Navi Bandar Marine police booked Dilip alias Gado Solanki, captain of fishing boat Jalpari when PMSA allegedly fired on it on November 6, 2021.

Shreedhar Chamre, a fisherman from Maharashtra who was among the seven-member crew on board the trawler was allegedly killed in the firing while Solanki himself sustained injuries. Based on a complaint by Solanki, Navi Bandar police booked PMSA personnel for murder.

Pakistan: Seafood exports increase by 3.18% in 1st half

<https://www.app.com.pk/business/seafood-exports-increase-by-3-18-in-1st-half/>

"The exports of fish and fish preparations increased by 3.18 per cent during the first half of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The seafood exports during July-December (2021-22) were recorded at \$201.581 million against the exports of \$195.364 million in July-December (2020-21), showing growth of around 3.18 per cent, according to Pakistan Bureau of statistics (PBS).

On year-on-year basis, the fish exports from the country increased by 78.21 per cent by going up from \$28.662 million during December 2020 to \$51.078 million in December 2021. On month-on-month basis, the seafood exports however decreased by 5.62 per cent in December 2021 when compared to the exports of \$54.118 million in November 2020, the PBS data revealed.

The overall food group exports from the country during the first-half of current fiscal year increased by 22.28% as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-December, 2021, different food commodities including rice, vegetables, fruits, oil seeds, meat, fish, spices and others valuing \$2.482 billion were exported against the exports of \$2.030 billion of the same period last year.

It is pertinent to mention here that the overall exports from the country during the first half of current financial year witnessed an increase of 24.71% by going up to \$15.102 billion as compared with the exports of \$12.110 billion last year. The imports also registered about 65.94% growth as these went up from \$24.454 billion in 1st half of the last year to \$40.580 billion during current year, the PBS data revealed.

Pakistan: The Gwadar protests: Balochistan stands up for its rights

<https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-gwadar-protests-balochistan-stands-up-for-its-rights/>

"There are many groups in Pakistan, both ethnic and religious, that suffer from political neglect and government indifference. Particularly in the resistive province of Balochistan, the grievances of the local population against Islamabad and Rawalpindi are often not voiced, fearing to be on the receiving end of a brutal crackdown or media blackout. However, an exception seemed to be made in December 2021, when the government acknowledged and agreed to certain demands made by local population in Gwadar.

This is not to be seen as a turning point in the government's compassion for its citizens but rather a clear signal of the Pakistan's government's compassion for the Chinese and their deep pockets. The Gwadar Ko Haq Do (or Give Gwadar its rights) movement saw tens of thousands of women, men, and young children marching on the main roads of the city, home to the 'prized jewel' of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)—the Gwadar port—chanting slogans against the provincial government.

In November 2021, protests began in Gwadar, Balochistan, with the local population demanding better rights and livelihood. The Gwadar Ko Haq Do (or Give Gwadar its rights) movement saw tens of thousands of women, men, and young children marching on the main roads of the city, home to the 'prized jewel' of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)—the Gwadar port—chanting slogans against the provincial government. Protestors had a long list of demands, including better access to electricity and education, the removal of unnecessary check posts, and

action against the ‘trawler mafia’ which has ruined the livelihood of the local fishermen in the coastal city.

Over a month after the protests began, the Balochistan government promised to implement the measures the protestors were demanding, leading the protestors’ leaders to end their sit in. While the state usually dismisses such civil society protests quickly, calling them anti-state, this particular movement in Gwadar did not suffer the same fate. The Prime Minister Imran Khan called their demands ‘legitimate’ and gave in to their demands fairly quickly. The unfolding of the events in Gwadar reflect two main things.

The first being that these are the side-effects of ‘development with Chinese characteristics’. Pakistan believed that the construction of the CPEC and the use of a state-of-the-art port in Gwadar would mean economic resilience and the creation of jobs. It was sold the same lie that other nations such as Sri Lanka or Djibouti also bought; they all hoped that getting into bed with China would lead to economic prosperity and developmental growth. The economic activity generated in Gwadar had continued to benefit Chinese firms and workers, leading to a deep sense of hostility amongst the locals towards Beijing.

Unfortunately, Chinese projects have not provided the local population employment opportunities as it had promised. While Chinese trawlers have depleted fish stocks and exploited natural resources, the project has also fueled high level of corruption with retired army officials being appointed in key positions overseeing CPEC and filling their pockets. The economic activity generated in Gwadar had continued to benefit Chinese firms and workers, leading to a deep sense of hostility amongst the locals towards Beijing.

While the Pakistani state maintains the fallacy that the Chinese-fueled ‘development’ in Balochistan will benefit the local population, the sad reality is that these protests saw locals demanding basic necessities, such as clean drinking water and basic health facilities. Instead of Gwadar making Balochistan an economic haven, integrating the province into the rest of Pakistan, the port project has had the opposite effect of alienating the local population as the Pakistan government continues to make empty promises and commitments to them...

Pakistan: People migrating from coastal areas due to water scarcity

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1669070/people-migrating-from-coastal-areas-due-to-water-scarcity-says-rahu>

"Sindh Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Coastal Development Ismail Rahu on Wednesday said that people living on the coastal areas, including Badin, had started migrating due to acute shortage of water in the province. “The water shortage has aggravated the problems of Badin and other coastal areas where livestock, fisheries and agriculture have been destroyed,”

he said while addressing a seminar on climate change organised by Oxfam, an international NGO working in the country since 1973.

The minister said that hundreds of thousands of acres of coastal land had been washed away due to the scarcity of water, which was also leading to agricultural problems in the province. “Not only the quality of water but also the quantity is an issue. The law on climate change should also be followed,” he opined. He said a lot of people had suffered, especially communities in the lowest coastal belt, due to water issue.

“There has been a loss of agricultural land, wildlife and almost every aspect of people’s lives has been adversely impacted by water scarcity,” he added. Mr Rahu lauded the Australian government on the work it was doing with Oxfam and its partners and said that the government of Pakistan would stand with such noble initiatives.

Oxfam Pakistan programme manager for the climate change, resilience and humanitarian program Sardar Iftikhar Ahmed Khan said that the NGO had worked in Pakistan to improve livelihoods, provide humanitarian aid, create safer communities and promote economic and gender justice. “We have supported local partners and worked with government authorities to improve the livelihoods of those living in poverty while providing humanitarian assistance to those affected by disasters and conflict,” he added.

The event showcased Oxfam’s disaster risk reduction, climate change and resilience work through presentations and panel discussions. A documentary featuring Oxfam’s humanitarian journey since 1973 was also screened. The discussions highlighted how Oxfam and its partners strengthened the resilience of poor and marginalised women, men, and uncertainty.

Oxfam’s success stories were shared about contribution to the development of the national climate change policy of Pakistan, creating climate-smart agricultural solutions in coastal communities, developing an embankment to protect communities in Badin from sea intrusion and developing local adaptation plans of action for climate change and food security.

A key feature of the event was the building resilient communities in Pakistan (BRCP) project funded by the Australian government. The project successes especially in promoting alternative livelihoods, climate-smart agriculture, leveraging technology in the agriculture and disaster risk reduction sector, which were highlighted during the event through documentary screenings, publications, and discussions.

Community members, representatives of civil society organisations, district and provincial government in Badin, and policymakers were a part of the event. John Snobar, second secretary political from the Australian high commission in Pakistan, was also present at the event. He said the Australian high commission congratulated Oxfam and all partners involved in this important project focused on improving resilience.

“Australia has been a long-standing development partner of Pakistan in the agriculture and water sector. This important project helps strengthen community responses to adverse climate change impacts in Pakistan.”

Pakistan activists claim govt. not implementing Gwadar agreement on illegal fishing

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1669319/govt-not-implementing-gwadar-agreement-hidayat>

"Leader of the 'Gwadar rights movement' in Pakistan, Maulana Hidayat-Ur-Rehman, has alleged that the provincial government is not serious in resolving the issues agreed in the accord signed for ending 32-day sit-in in Gwadar. Speaking at a gathering in Turbat on Thursday, he said that the people were facing serious problems across the province due to the ignorance of the authorities.

He said it was agreed in the accord that the provincial government would take immediate steps for stopping illegal fishing near Makran coast and people involved in border trade with Iran would be provided facilities. He said illegal fishing had continued and so far the system was not changed for the border trade. "The people of Gwadar and other areas are still being humiliated at the check-posts by the forces," the Maulana claimed.

Pakistan: Downstream water shortage constitutes serious threat to Indus delta: experts

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40144506/downstream-water-shortage-constitutes-serious-threat-to-indus-delta-experts>

"Downstream water shortage has brought the Indus delta to an imminent colossal damage, besides reducing silt level phenomenally, experts warned the other day. Environment expert, Nasir Ali Panhwar while addressing at an event "Indus Delta: Environmental and socioeconomic issues and solutions", organized by Sindh Madressatul Islam University Karachi said that the water shortage of downstream Kotri barrage threatened the Indus delta that is also faced with a reduced quantity of silt to a drastic level.

He said that the Indus delta is ranked as the fifth largest delta in the world and holds 97 percent of the total mangroves forests of Pakistan. The Indus delta is facing numerous challenges such as lack of adequate freshwater flows, degradation of precious mangroves ecosystem, sea intrusion, loss of livelihood and vulnerability to disasters, he pointed out. Panhwar said that losses to environment are large and irreparable as several habitats, ecosystems and their services are lost. Dwindling ecosystem services have seriously affected economic productivity, including decrease in Palla fish breeding and catch, riverine forest products, and loss of wildlife species, agriculture and marine fish species.

“If the process continues, many more forest, fish, bird and wildlife species may vanish soon,” he feared, suggesting that the 1991 water accord should incorporate environmental flow concept and Indus delta be declared as fifth shareholder of Indus water distribution, besides four provinces.

Vice Chancellor SMIU Prof Dr Mujeebuddin Sahrai Memon said that Thatta was a hub of export and trade in the region as ports were located there a century ago. “If water is released to Indus delta as per 1991 Indus Water Accord the situation can improve drastically,” he said.

Dean Faculty of Sciences Dr Syed Asif Ali, Director ORIC Dr Aamir Iqbal Umrani, Manager ORIC Dr Muhammad Afzal Chhajro, Chairperson Department of Environmental Sciences Dr Imran Chhajro, Coordinator of department Abdul Majeed Pirzada, and a large number of students were present on the occasion.

Pakistan: Governor, CM discuss ecological restoration of Indus basin with UN team

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1668811/governor-cm-discuss-ecological-restoration-of-indus-basin-with-un-team>

"United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator to Pakistan Julien Harneis along with an eight-member team called on Sindh Governor Imran Ismail and Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah separately to discuss matters relating to health, climate change, improved water access and utilisation and economic development. The chief minister was assisted by provincial ministers Syed Nasir Shah, Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, Ismail Rahu, Jam Khan Shoro, Manzoor Wassan and Karachi Administrator Murtaza Wahab.

The UN Pakistan chief told the CM that the organisation was in the process of working to prepare for the next five-year programme called the ‘United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-27’. Mr Julien said that the new framework would be aligned with Pakistan’s priorities towards Agenda 2030 and would focus on supporting the government in the implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Stressing on water crisis, the CM said: “Water availability in Pakistan has plummeted from about 5,000 cubic meters per capita in the early 1950s to less than 1,000 metric per capita today.”

Mr Shah said that the river basin has sustained life for over 5,000 years from the civilisations of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro until today. “Climate change is shrinking the glaciers and making rains less predictable, reducing agricultural production and washing away the homes of the most indigent,” he said. The CM said that pollution from industry and agriculture and domestic sewage was at dangerous level. The contamination from arsenic, nitrates, metals, plastic waste, and microbiological contaminants was sickening millions of people.

“Environmental degradation at the river mouth is increasing salinisation of the delta and destroying marine ecosystems and the fishing economy,” he said. Meeting with governor: The UN team, later, called on Governor Imran Ismail here at Governor House and discussed issues on further consolidation of efforts in the implementation of the SDGs in the context of upcoming UNSDCF (2023-27).

It was also discussed that the Indus river basin was under threat from climate change, environmental degradation, population pressure and pollution, hence putting a question mark on its resilience to sustain life for future generations. The meeting was told that Pakistan needed a perspective plan to conserve the resource base, use it wisely and restore the ecosystem. The UN team said that its system in Pakistan during its formulation exercise of UNSDCF came up with the idea of ecological restoration of the Indus river basin.

It was informed that the UN was developing a plan in consultation with all stakeholders to contribute and build upon provincial, national and international initiatives in Pakistan. The meeting was told that in four-month time from Jan 2022 to April 2022, the Master Plan is to be prepared to unite existing initiatives, cover gaps, identify framework for climate financing and develop a national communication strategy.

The governor said that the government was especially focusing on addressing health-related issues and the federal government was giving top priority to these areas. Highlighting the successes made in the flagship Billion Tree Tsunami project, the governor further observed that this would go a long way towards mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change in the country.

Mr Harneis said that the purpose of the visit was to focus on critical areas such as good governance, health, education, youth development, population control and addressing the issue of climate change.

Pakistan: Why fisheries not on crest?: Country unveiled fisheries policy 14 years ago, but has not updated it since then

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2337915/why-fisheries-not-on-crest>

"According to Zhong Shang Chan Ye Research Agency (a Chinese research consultancy), China produced 65.4 million tonnes of seafood in calendar year 2020 whereas total production of India stood at 12 million tonnes in fiscal year 2020. But Pakistan's production was far less than the two as it produced just 663,893 tonnes in 2018, according to the World Bank data. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) data shows that fish and fish preparations have earned only \$420.9 million annually on an average during the last five fiscal years (FY17-21), which was much lower than its neighbours as China and India exported fishery products worth \$18.3 billion and \$6.68 billion respectively in CY20.

Although Pakistan has lesser coastal length (1,120 km) compared to neighbours China (14,500 km) and India (7,500 km), this does not justify the dismaying performance of its fisheries compared to other countries in the region. Total production of fisheries is directly linked with the available ocean and water bodies of a country so the difference in output of Pakistan and its two neighbours requires a detailed review of this sector. For instance, the one and only National Fisheries Policy was introduced almost 14 years ago, since then the authorities have not bothered to update it.

Another pressing issue that needs to be addressed is the already shrinking population of marine lives due to the continuous contamination of ocean water, which has been supplemented by overfishing for years. Also the illegal practices, with total disregard to the regulations for fisheries, are not permitting Pakistan to increase its production. The Economic Survey of Pakistan 2021 revealed that 68% of the country's production comes from sea while the remaining 32% is obtained from inland fishing.

Since marine fishing has a greater share in Pakistan's total production as compared to inland fishing, it makes a befitting case for boosting the production of inland fishing. The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2020 by the FAO showed that Pakistan has an area of 25,220 square km (0.57%) while Bangladesh has only 17,460 square km (0.39%) of the world's total inland water bodies. However, Bangladesh's output is close to 10% of the total inland production while Pakistan has only 1% share in it.

The question arises why do we lag so behind? Answer to the question is the report issued by the PBS, which revealed that out of the total 37,369 rural areas in Pakistan, 34,860 areas, ie more than 70%, have no (poultry, livestock and fish) farms and unfortunately only 6% (2,509 areas) have fish farms. So, rapid development of the fisheries sector would be possible by utilising those unfarmed rural lands, which are not yet part of fish farming, as it requires a relatively low cost to build farms on those pieces of land.

Like other export-oriented industries, the fisheries too have tremendous potential. Textile and leather industries have been enjoying hundreds of billion rupees in subsidies for several years. If the government could spare some money for the targeted development of fisheries too, then it will be returning more for sure. If they want to boost forex earnings through fisheries, then an urgent plan is terribly needed for its growth.

In addition, the expansion of public-private partnership in the fisheries sector will also help the exporters to grow faster. Besides increasing production, the collaboration between government bodies and exporters for devising a meticulous plan about meeting international standards is needed. As the major export destination for Pakistani seafood exporters is the European Union (EU), but in the past they have faced a ban by the EU as some exporters failed to eliminate the contamination completely.

A few months ago, nine export companies faced a temporary ban from China due to the presence of Covid-19 virus in some consignments. Streamlining the domestic production in accordance with the demand of international market is mandatory for Pakistan if it wants a greater share in coming years. By giving little attention to fishermen, they too can be trained and get expertise to breed highly paid good quality products that will be helping the forex earners eventually.

Pakistan: Exorcising ‘ghosts’ to save the seas

<https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/exorcising-ghosts-to-save-the-seas-in-pakistan-53373>

"In the small fishing village of Abdul Rehman Goth on the outskirts of Pakistan’s biggest city Karachi, fisherman and lifeguard Asif Baloch walks along the beach, scanning the shoreline for ghost gear that may have washed ashore. On the clear beach, he spots two large fishing nets within 50 meters of him, tangled in cloth, plastic, seaweed and other odds and ends. From the corner of his eye, he sees children playing in the water, their mother sitting at a distance, keeping a watchful eye.

“Five years ago, none of us knew the dangers of ghost nets. If a net got caught in outcrops we would cut it loose and toss it into the water,” he says. “Even our shoreside was choked with trash; our feet would get caught in fishing nets and other litter, that’s how bad it was. Our village was unrecognisable.” Ghost nets are abandoned, lost or discarded fishing nets at sea which pose a threat to marine life and the environment. If left ignored, they can result in sea animals getting netted as bycatch and consequently, ending up injured or dead.

Baloch went on to explain that “ghost nets are without discrimination and contribute towards ghost fishing”— a deadly cycle that repeats itself endlessly. It goes like this: abandoned nets in the ocean catch marine/non-marine life which then either die or get injured. The longer the net drifts in the water, the more animals it catches. With time the dead animals weigh the net down causing it to sink to the bottom of the ocean. Once the dead animals decompose, the net resurfaces and the cycle begins all over again.

“Thanks to Olive Ridley Project (ORP) Pakistan, we are conscious of our actions and our beach and water are once again clean and functional.” ORP is an international NGO with a mission to protect sea turtles and conserve their habitat through rescue and rehabilitation. The 22-member team currently has bases in the Maldives, Oman, Pakistan and Kenya. In 2016, ORP came to Pakistan to work towards turtle conservation and “one of the ways we do that is by removing ghost nets from the sea and beaches, where turtles nest and lay eggs,” says Usman Iqbal, ORP Project Manager.

He explains that these abandoned nets jeopardise the safety of turtles as well other marine and non-marine life, for instance, coral reefs and birds. Plus, they contribute to the plastic pollution in the ocean. The charity started its operations in one of the oldest fishing villages in the country,

Abdul Rehman Goth and has since expanded to surrounding areas. Earning and living by the sea The team dive underwater to recover ghost nets and collect those washed ashore. So far they have retrieved over 5216kgs of ghost nets in Pakistan. “Some days we pull out 5kgs of ghost nets, other days the number goes up to 50kgs,” he adds.

Once the nets are collected, the local women repurpose them into bracelets and dog leashes. The process of recovering and cleaning the nets takes two days, and to weave them into leashes and bracelets takes a few hours. “We have sold some 459 leashes and 418 bracelets, raising a little over PKR0.5 million in the last three years,” he says, grateful that “of the 5000+kgs of ghost nets collected, only 200kgs remain”. The funds received are given to the local women as they are the artisans behind the merchandise – providing the villagers with an additional source of income.

The team hopes to expand their repurposed product line and is looking at grocery bags and other jewellery items. Presently, however, “funds are a challenge because we are a small team, plus, environmental changes and the weather cause poor visibility underwater and give us a small window to dive throughout the year,” says Iqbal. This limits the team to dive only between late October and mid-March. To stay up to date, Iqbal makes a trip to the village twice a week and the locals welcome him with open arms. And while ORP has comfortably settled into the local scene, it was not all smooth sailing at the outset.

“When we initially came we needed to gain the trust of the village folk, which took the most time because they viewed us, city people, as self-serving. Nevertheless, we stayed consistent and came to the village every week [to prove our dedication],” he adds. It didn’t take long for the locals to realise that ghost nets cause them harm too. “They finally understood that they are earning and living by the sea and if they take care of it, they are taking care of themselves. Now they trust us and are appreciative of our help and cause,” he says.

Iqbal, however, is quick to add that the fisher people are not always responsible for ghost nets, “at times the weather plays a role and other times, the net gets stuck on rocky outcrops due to which the fishermen have to cut the net loose or his boat can capsize. No fisherman wishes to lose their net, it is an expensive investment.” He stresses that ghost nets are just as much of a nuisance for fishermen because they do not decompose and affect their livelihood.

“The decaying animals caught in ghost nets cause other marine life to swim away, preventing good catch in that spot,” he explains. To limit the chances of ghost nets, ORP hosts workshops and seminars to guide and educate local fishermen on the topic. They are taught to label their gear and identify markers and hot spots from where their net can be retrieved. “Now, local fisherfolk don’t leave their net intentionally, unless the weather is working against them and/or their life is at stake,” says Baloch.

“They bring back damaged nets, if possible, and are careful about leaving nets on the beach so they cannot be washed out to sea. “They are also particular about the net they use, if it is flimsy or in poor condition, they don’t fish with it,” he adds. Having worked with ORP for five years

now, Baloch acknowledges that this change in mindset took a considerable amount of time and they have come a long way since.

As the ORP Field Operator, he plays an active role in spreading the message among other fishermen to inform them of the threat ghost nets pose and how, in the event of losing their net, they, too, can follow the necessary steps to recover it. At the moment, the organisation has managed to broaden its reach to the majority of the Kemari coastline, educating local fishers one village at a time. Despite all the efforts, Iqbal is well aware that the problem of ghost nets will never truly be solved as thousands haunt the oceans worldwide.

“There are about 640,000 tonnes of ghost nets globally,” he estimates. “Though, no one really knows the actual figure since numerous ghost nets are added daily to the ocean and there is no record of how many have been lost and how many are being removed. It is likely that the amount goes up to 1000s of tonnes.”

Pakistan: Government pursuing end to practice as locals complain trawling is destroying livelihoods

<https://gulfnnews.com/world/asia/pakistan/action-taken-against-illegal-fishing-in-coastal-areas-of-balochistan-1.84752282>

"At least three trawlers were seized and dozens of fishermen were caught who were involved in using illegal fishing nets in Balochistan's waters. Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) and Balochistan's fisheries department conducted joint operations against illegal fishing in Gwadar on January 2. During the operation, "PMSA units carried out patrolling at open sea, south of Gwadar, Pasni, Pishukan, Ganz and Jiwani sectors to search for trawlers carrying out illegal fishing or using banned nets."

Multiple trawlers were boarded and searched and trawling vessels, operating in the southwest of Gwadar and Jiwani were intercepted. The joint operation is a "testament to the fact that we are vigilant and remain committed to preventing illegal trawling in Pakistani territorial waters and high seas," PMSA said in its statement.

Fishermen in Balochistan have often complained that trawling is destroying their livelihood and urged the government to take prevent illegal fishing. The provincial government of Balochistan has completely banned fishing and trawling off the Gwadar coast after the protest by the local fishing community last month. Prime Minister Imran Khan has also directed the federal and provincial authorities to take strict action against those involved in illegal trawling.

Pakistan: MoMA, KJP to provide soft loans for capacity building of Balochistan's fishermen

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/agriculture/moma-kjp-to-provide-soft-loans-for-capacity-1442399.html>

"Ministry of Maritime Affairs (MoMA) in collaboration with Kamyab Jawan Programme (KJP) initiated planning to provide soft loans to the fishermen in Balochistan for their capacity building, improving fishing techniques and installation of Vehicle Monitoring system in their boats. The government would empower the poor fishermen by giving loans under Prime Minister's KJP, which would enhance the entrepreneurship among the local fishermen and contribute in national economy, an official source told APP.

The government, keeping in view the potential of the fisheries sector, has also planned multiple incentives for fishermen to ensure maximum contribution of the sector in the country's economy. In addition to digitalize the sector, more initiatives would be rolled out soon to boost the sector. "One of the major concerns of the local fishermen is illegal fishing trawlers which have been addressed on priority basis through improved patrolling by the concerned agencies.

It has also resulted in the conservation of fishing stock," it added. The government was striving hard to provide basic facilities including education and health to uplift the living standard of fishermen thus making them enable to contribute towards economy.

Many projects like, "Fish Processing Plant" at Gwadar, "Fisherman Cooperative Housing Society", "Sea Ambulances", "Installation of monitoring system at boats" were in the pipeline that would eventually increase potential of the sector. "The province has a capacity to produce good quality fish and would generate more revenue by providing access to the global market."

"The government has also decided to provide basic facilities to the fishermen and other people associated with the fisheries. The government would take more steps to save the fishermen's livelihood and life, it said.

Exorcising 'ghosts' to save the seas in Pakistan

<https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/exorcising-ghosts-to-save-the-seas-in-pakistan-53373>

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trash; our feet would get caught in fishing nets and other litter, that's how bad it was. Our village was unrecognisable." Ghost nets are abandoned, lost or discarded fishing nets at sea which pose a threat to marine life and the environment.

If left ignored, they can result in sea animals getting netted as bycatch and consequently, ending up injured or dead. Baloch went on to explain that "ghost nets are without discrimination and contribute towards ghost fishing"—a deadly cycle that repeats itself endlessly. It goes like this: abandoned nets in the ocean catch marine/non-marine life which then either die or get injured.

The longer the net drifts in the water, the more animals it catches. With time the dead animals weigh the net down causing it to sink to the bottom of the ocean. Once the dead animals decompose, the net resurfaces and the cycle begins all over again. "Thanks to Olive Ridley Project (ORP) Pakistan, we are conscious of our actions and our beach and water are once again clean and functional."

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Rights of Balochistan fishermen being ensured, says Pakistan PM

<https://www.bolnews.com/pakistan/2022/01/rights-of-balochistan-fishermen-being-ensured-says-pm-imran/>

"The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, has said that the development of the people of Balochistan is among the top priorities of the federal government. One of the major concerns of the local fishermen is of the illegal fishing trawlers that has been addressed on a priority basis by improved patrolling by the concerned agencies. "The protection of local fishermen by curbing illegal trawling activities is being ensured," he added.

This has also resulted in the conservation of the fishing stock. In addition to that the Ministry of Maritime Affairs (MoMA) in collaboration with Kamyab Jawan Program was providing loans to local fishermen for improvement of techniques and their boats which included installation of vehicle monitoring system, he further said. To efficiently manage the water resources and development of agriculture sector in the province, command area development projects are expedited.

Pakistan: Efforts to promote prawn farming discussed

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1666525>

"Measures to promote prawn farming were discussed at a workshop which ended in Multan on Wednesday. The workshop was held under the auspices of the Fisheries Development Board, Ministry of National Food Security and Research. A numbers of fish farmers participated in the workshop where Secretary Agriculture South Punjab Saqib Ali was a special guest.

This project would bring a profit of hundreds of thousands of rupees, said the secretary. He said a subsidy of up to Rs1.2 million would be provided for promotion of prawn farming. He said processing, value addition and marketing facilities would further strengthen the project. Under the prime minister's agriculture emergency programme, a national prawn farming initiative is being implemented at a cost of Rs6 billion.

A multi-purpose hatchery would be set up on Balochistan coast. A 15-acre demonstration prawn farm would be set up in Punjab and 1,570 prawn farmers would be trained for the promotion and success of this project. In Muzaffargarh district, a saline aquaculture research centre would be set up. At least 50pc subsidy would be given for farming on 3,500 acre.

Pakistan: 'Gateway to unemployment': Pasni fishermen demand restoration of inactive fish harbour

<https://www.thefridaytimes.com/gateway-to-unemployment-pasni-fishermen-demand-restoration-of-inactive-fish-harbour/>

"For the past 15 years, local fishing boats have laid under the open sky in Pasni Fish Harbour, damaged by high waves and hurricanes, and causing a loss of millions of rupees to the local fishermen. In 2010, the Japanese government gave Rs.800 million to the government of Balochistan for the rehabilitation of Pasni Fish Harbor. Why has this money not been spent so far? Why has the restoration of Pasni Fish Harbor been delayed for the past 15 years, despite the untraceable loss of Rs.26 crore from the Japanese grant? After all, what obstacles does the government of Balochistan face in the restoration of Pasni Fish Harbor, adding to the problems of local fishermen?

These are some of the questions that have caused great concern to the local fishermen of Pasni, due to the lack of seriousness and inattention on the part of the Balochistan government. Pasni Fish Harbor is the only economic hub in Pasni, the largest tehsil in Gwadar district. The harbor is currently falling into disrepair due to the lack of care or concern from the Balochistan government. The sole source of livelihood of 90% of the population depends on fishing and fishing industries.

However, this fishermen's city at the foot of Gwadar's China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is instead becoming a gateway to unemployment due to the government's negligence. Pasni Fish Harbor was inaugurated by Prime Minister Shaheed Benazir Bhutto in 1989. The harbor cost Rs. 445 to construct and covers an area of approximately 100,000 meters. It included

an approach channel, harbor basin and berthing area with proper facilities, buildings, water supply, a cargo jetty, four landing berths, market halls and a harbor authority building.

After the establishment of the harbor, the fishing sector in Pasni began to grow rapidly, which resulted in employment for a large number of local people. Proceeds from the Pasni harbor made it a self-sufficient entity, but in later years no attention was paid to the maintenance or restoration of the harbor. As a result, the now dysfunctional jetty at Pasni Harbor has sunk into 1.5 million cubic meters of silt.

A delegation of the CPEC Parliamentary Committee visited Pasni in July 2020 and hinted at the rehabilitation of the Pasni Fish Harbor, including the jetty. However, one long year interval has passed with no significant progress made on the restoration of the fishing harbor. The recent visit of the Balochistan chief secretary was due to member of the National Assembly Lasbela Gwadar Muhammad Aslam Bhootani, who met the Prime Minister Imran Khan and apprised him of the problems of fishermen and also demanded notice from the government on the assembly floor.

On July 4 2021, Chief Secretary Balochistan Motahar Niaz Rana, Secretary Planning Commission Islamabad Amir Yaqub Sheikh, Secretary Fisheries Shahid Saleem Qureshi, Commissioner Makran Shah Irfan Gharshin, Director General Fisheries Tariq-ur-Rehman Baloch and other officials visited the Pasni Fish Harbour on the special instructions of Prime Minister Imran Khan. They listened to the problems of the local fishermen in an open forum on the premises and also talked to them.

Prior to the open forum, Managing Director (MD) Pasni Fish Harbor Authority Babar Khan briefed Chief Secretary Balochistan Rana about the implementation of Pasni Fish Harbor Authority project and briefed him about the jetty rehabilitation plan. For the first time in the briefing, Pasni Fish Harbor Authority officials acknowledged that dredging in the past had been a complete failure, and cost Rs.26 crore.

The MD of the Pasni Fish Harbor Authority told the Chief Secretary Balochistan during the briefing that the completion of the rehabilitation project would provide an opportunity to 80,000 fishermen in the area to participate in fishing activities while more than five thousand fishing boats would be activated. The chief secretary Balochistan was also informed that the rehabilitation of Pasni jetty could be resumed by purchasing a dredger machine, re-surveying the breakwater and designing a new jetty.

In the briefing given to the Chief Secretary Balochistan, the officials of Pasni Fish Harbor Authority explained that in 2015, the dredging exercise, in which more than Rs.25 crore and Rs.80 lakh was spent, had been a failure. However, the reasons behind the failure have not been stated and it has not been determined who caused financial loss to the government of Balochistan due to their mistakes. The National Accountability Board (NAB) inquired for four years against corruption and other irregularities of losing this huge sum of grant money awarded by the Japanese government.

No one responsible was caught by the NAB. The Japanese government released the grant of Rs. 80 crore in December 2010 for the Pasni Fish Harbor Rehabilitation Project, which was approved that same year. A project management unit was also set up to run the project. It is known by reliable sources that a large amount has been spent on the rehabilitation project, as well as the salaries of the staff of Pasni Fish Harbor Authority. But until today, Pasni Fish Harbor Authority officials have not been able to explain the number of employees working on the rehabilitation project or whether staff are currently performing their duties.

According to reliable sources, out of the 80 million rupees of the Japanese grant, Rs. 26 crores have been spent on the rehabilitation of the Pasni jetty. Despite the money being spent, the condition of Pasni Fish Harbor has not changed even one per cent. Local fishermen and businessmen in the fishing sectors believe that the Pasni Fish Harbor Authority should be designated under the Gwadar Port Authority. However, the Balochistan government opposes this restructuring and further complicates the rehabilitation of the harbor. As revised by the Planning Commission Islamabad, much of the still outstanding amount from Project Cycle 1 (PC-1), amounting to Rs. 1.13 billion, is present in the accounts of the government of Balochistan till today.

Pakistan: Call for efforts to reduce post-harvest losses of fishermen

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1667138>

"The loss of livelihood and absence of life's basic amenities have pushed fishermen communities along Sindh's coast into extreme poverty. There is a dire need to build their capacity and offer them support for income generation. This was stated by speakers at a workshop held at a local hotel to highlight the work done in the coastal areas of Ibrahim Hyderi and Rehri Goth under a project.

The project — Sustainable fishing entrepreneurship, a citizen-based approach to saving Pakistan's unique marine environment (Phase II) — was implemented by World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-P) in collaboration with Engro Foundation. It aimed at providing assets related to fishing and building the capacity of fisherfolk to decrease post-harvest losses, reduce by-catch and overfishing. Sharing details of the activities carried out under the project, WWF-P regional head Dr Tahir Rasheed said tools were distributed to help fishermen decrease post-harvest losses.

The project enabled fishermen to safely release threatened marine fauna that often get entangled in their net. "For plantation and rehabilitation of forests, 20,000 hectares of mangrove plantation are under way with the support of Engro Foundation," he said, adding that multiple factors were responsible for loss of livelihood of fishermen. Fawad Soomro, Country Head of Engro Foundation, said uncontrolled increase in the size of fishing fleets had resulted in overfishing in

the marine waters of Pakistan. “It is also ironic that post-harvest losses are extremely high because of poor handling and storage on fishing vessels as well as at the landing centres and during transportation,” he said.

The project, he pointed out, contributed towards conservation of ecologically important marine species, developed partnerships and built capacity of fisher communities, the key to improve coastal resources and mitigate poverty of underprivileged communities. Ali Muhammad Mastoi, the director general of the coastal fisheries appreciated the project’s interventions and said similar work was being carried out along the coast of Thatta and Badin. He was of the view that to empower local fishermen and improve their livelihood, efforts should be taken to upgrade jetties that would help improve the landing process and reduce post-harvest losses at the Sindh coast.

Altaf Sheikh, manager conservation Sindh, WWF-Pakistan, gave an overview of the project, its key achievements as well as the challenges fishing communities were facing, which included degradation of coastal resources, loss of livelihoods, poverty and lack of freshwater. To make the project’s interventions effective, he said, the project established male and female fisherfolk groups, which worked towards community mobilisation, networking and awareness on conservation of coastal resources.

Local fishermen from Ibrahim Hyderi and Rehri Goth participated in the session to share their voices on challenges confronting coastal communities. They also talked about their experiences on awareness, capacity building and adaptation of alternative livelihood options. The event was concluded with distribution of mobile phones with data application to ten fishers and souvenirs to the guests.

Pakistan: Downstream water shortage constitutes serious threat to Indus delta: experts

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40144506/downstream-water-shortage-constitutes-serious-threat-to-indus-delta-experts>

"Downstream water shortage has brought the Indus delta to an imminent colossal damage, besides reducing silt level phenomenally, experts warned the other day. Environment expert, Nasir Ali Panhwar while addressing at an event “Indus Delta: Environmental and socioeconomic issues and solutions”, organized by Sindh Madressatul Islam University Karachi said that the water shortage of downstream Kotri barrage threatened the Indus delta that is also faced with a reduced quantity of silt to a drastic level.

He said that the Indus delta is ranked as the fifth largest delta in the world and holds 97 percent of the total mangroves forests of Pakistan. The Indus delta is facing numerous challenges such as lack of adequate freshwater flows, degradation of precious mangroves ecosystem, sea intrusion,

loss of livelihood and vulnerability to disasters, he pointed out. Panhwar said that losses to environment are large and irreparable as several habitats, ecosystems and their services are lost.

Dwindling ecosystem services have seriously affected economic productivity, including decrease in Palla fish breeding and catch, riverine forest products, and loss of wildlife species, agriculture and marine fish species. “If the process continues, many more forest, fish, bird and wildlife species may vanish soon,” he feared, suggesting that the 1991 water accord should incorporate environmental flow concept and Indus delta be declared as fifth shareholder of Indus water distribution, besides four provinces.

Vice Chancellor SMIU Prof Dr Mujeebuddin Sahrai Memon said that Thatta was a hub of export and trade in the region as ports were located there a century ago. “If water is released to Indus delta as per 1991 Indus Water Accord the situation can improve drastically,” he said. Dean Faculty of Sciences Dr Syed Asif Ali, Director ORIC Dr Aamir Iqbal Umrani, Manager ORIC Dr Muhammad Afzal Chhajro, Chairperson Department of Environmental Sciences Dr Imran Chhajro, Coordinator of department Abdul Majeed Pirzada, and a large number of students were present on the occasion.

Pakistan: Heavy rainfall likely in Balochistan’s coastal areas

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40144507/heavy-rainfall-likely-in-balochistans-coastal-areas>

"The Met Office on Monday predicted heavy rainfall with stormy winds in coastal areas of Balochistan. The wet spell in the coastal belt of Balochistan will begin from today and end by January 06, Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said in its weather report. Provincial fisheries department has advised fishermen not to venture into the sea during the rough weather.

“Fishermen should avoid to go for fishing in the sea for four days,” the fisheries department said in an advisory. “To avoid losses boats should be anchored at safe places during rough weather,” the department said. Most of the areas in Balochistan including Quetta have received rainfall, while Ziarat and Kan Mehtarzai mountains have received snowfall.

Minimum temperature in Quetta dropped to 03 degree Celsius amid frosty winds. Mercury dropped to minus 2 in Kalat and minus 4 in Ziarat. More rain and snowfall is expected in Quetta and several other areas of Balochistan during next 24 hours, according to weather forecast.

Pakistan: Protest against Chinese investment in Gwadar cast wider shadows

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/protest-against-chinese-investment-in-gwadar-cast-wider-shadows-in-pakistan20220103084155/>

"Despite lofty claims of Pakistan, the local residents of Gwadar have long complained that Chinese presence and investment in the area has done very little, if any to improve their lives, particularly with regards to water scarcity and jobs, according to Dawn. The success of protests by the Gwadar Ko Huqooq Do Tehreek (Movement for Gwadar's rights) against Pakistani oppressive authority shows the vulnerability of the Imran Khan government, according to European Foundation for South Asian Studies One of the protesters' demands was the elimination of 'unnecessary' checkpoints on major roads.

More and more of these checkpoints had appeared as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project, Chief among the demands of the protesters, who had come together under the Gwadar Ko Huqooq Do Tehreek [Give Rights to Gwadar Movement] and the leadership of Maulana Hidayat, was the demand to end illegal trawlers. Trawlers from neighbouring areas such as Sindh and even other countries come to fish in these waters, severely impacting the catch of local fishermen.

Earlier in December, Prime Minister Imran Khan had finally ""taken notice"" of the ""very legitimate demands of the hardworking fishermen of Gwadar,"" in a tweet. He had also promised strong action would be taken against illegal fishing by trawlers, according to Dawn. However, the issue is not limited to illegal trawlers alone.

Pakistan has given Chinese trawlers licences to fish in the waters off the coast. Locals, most of whom operate small boats, are unable to compete with larger, more advanced Chinese boats causing dissent. Moreover, Gwadar is in Pakistan's impoverished province of Balochistan, which is a sparsely populated, mountainous, desert region bordering Afghanistan and Iran.

Baluchistan is very important to both Pakistan and China because of its strategic position, natural resources and China Pakistan Economic Corridor which ends in Gwadar and provides China access to the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Call for efforts to reduce post-harvest losses of fishermen in Pakistan

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1667138/call-for-efforts-to-reduce-post-harvest-losses-of-fishermen>

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Nature-Pakistan (WWF-P) in collaboration with Engro Foundation. It aimed at providing assets related to fishing and building the capacity of fisherfolk to decrease post-harvest losses, reduce by-catch and overfishing.

Pakistan: Illegal fishing near Makran coast reduced: Maulana Hidayatur Rehman

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1666609>

"The leader of Gwadar Ko Haq Do Tehreek, Maulana Hidayatur Rehman, has said that illegal fishing near Makran coast has come down because of strict steps taken by the authorities. Maulana Rehman was talking to journalists here on Wednesday after attending a meeting which reviewed point-to-point progress and implementation of the agreement reached between the government and the protestors last week.

Deputy Commissioner retired Capt Jameel Ahmed Baloch presided over the meeting. The Maulana, however, said that there were reports of presence of illegal fishing boats and vessels in Ormara and Pasni area and authorities there took immediate action after the chief minister and top officials concerned were informed about them.

Maulana Rehman said that the fishermen of the area had earlier decided to stage a demonstration against the presence of illegal boats and vessels, but after an assurance by senior officials, they put off the protest. Maulana Rehman, who has been elected provincial general secretary of Jamaat-i-Islami for another term of three years after conducting a successful sit-in in Gwadar, said that he had postponed the protest announced for Dec 30 at Zero Point for one week.

Pakistan: To invest USD 34 million to develop climate-resilient shrimp farming

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/aquaculture/pakistan-to-invest-usd-34-million-to-develop-climate-resilient-shrimp-farming>

"Pakistan has announced a plan to spend PKR 6 billion (USD 33.6 million, EUR 29.7 million) for developing climate-resilient shrimp farming across the country. The funds will come from the National Agriculture Emergency Program, Pakistan Fisheries Development Board Director Imdadullah Salar told The Express Tribune on 22 December. FDB is an agency under Pakistan's Ministry of National Food Security and Research.

The program will involve participation of numerous stakeholders in the industry, including shrimp hatcheries, research centers, shrimp farms, shrimp processing plants, and feed mills. FDB is targeting the conversion of 35,000 acres of land on saline soil areas for shrimp-farming activities under the program. A hatchery supplying around 250 million seeds a year will also be built in Balochistan, the largest province by area in the country, in 2022.

Currently, Pakistan doesn't have a single shrimp hatchery, forcing the country to import shrimp seed from Thailand, with the average price of PKR 6.0 (USD 0.03, EUR 0.02) per piece. Salar said he hopes the new hatchery will be able to provide seeds at much cheaper rate of PKR 1 (USD 0.006, EUR 0.005) per piece.

Work on the project's other components – including a 15-acre farm in Punjab Province, a shrimp-research center, a feedmill, and a processing plant – is underway, Salar said. These projects are part of the PKR 309 billion (USD 1.73 billion, EUR 1.53 billion) Agriculture Emergency Program launched by the government in 2019, when Pakistan initiated the collaboration with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, World Food Program, and the U.N. Industrial Development Organization to allocate PKR 13.7 billion (USD 76.7 million, EUR 67.7 million) for three aquaculture development projects to boost the country's fisheries production.

Pakistan is endowed with fisheries and aquatic resources that have significant potential to make a bigger contribution to economic growth and social development, FAO Pakistan Representative Mina Dowlatchahi said at the launch of the program.

Pakistan: 60% of country's total fishery exports destined for China

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/860441/60-of-pakistans-total-fishery-exports-destined-for-china/>

"Out of Pakistan's total fishery exports, 60 per cent are destined for China, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. The report says, that in the processing plant of a seafood company at the fish harbour of Karachi, workers are busying grading, cleaning, and packaging fresh shrimps. Twenty days later, they will make their appearance in some Chinese aquatic market. From ribbon fish, croakers, cuttle fish, to shrimps, crabs, and lobsters, Chinese' appetite for aquatic products has been growing with a considerable momentum since 2013.

"Fishery is a big and emerging industry in Pakistan", said Dr. Saeed Murtaza Hasan Andravi, Director Animal Sciences Institute NARC, Islamabad. It accounts for less than one percent of GDP, but provides vast employment opportunities for the under-developed in Pakistan. Moreover, it can be a profitable profession and a promising means to earn foreign exchange. Since aquatic products enjoyed tariff concession under the second phase of China Pakistan Free trade Agreement (CPFTA) implemented in Dec 2019, Pakistan's fishery sector witnessed a boom in terms of export.

According to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Pakistan's exports of frozen seafood were increased by 83.70% to \$73.947m in the first seven months of 2019-2020 fiscal year. Statistics from Chinese customs show that in the first half this year, Pakistan's fish meal exports to China topped 20,000 tons with a value of over USD 20 million. But still, more is expected out of these abundant aquatic resources, especially amid the pandemic.

“In our seafood industry, we have 450 million dollar export at the time, but we can increase it to 1 billion dollar”, envisaged Muhammad Zafar Kundi, Chairman of Pakistan Fisheries Export Association.”The requirements for fishing in Pakistan have not yet been met as in other countries because people are using traditional methods and they are living a hand to mouth life”, observed Irfan Ahmad, Incharge of Karachi Fisherman Cooperative Society.

Most of Pakistani aquatic exports are captured fishes. Unlike processed products, they faced a lot of uncertainties. A net, a boat, and an engine—these are all the tools used by some fishermen. Unequipped by modern devices, they face the challenges of unpredictable waters and weathers. Engines can be damaged, wind may overthrow the boats, net can get torn, and people can get drowned...

“We sometimes go deep into the ocean. If we are unable to find fish, then we have to bear the loss”, complained a fisherman based in Karachi.”If we have up-to-date cameras as China does and learn how to use them, we can find targets relying on the advanced technology instead of the old experiences”, Bashir Mahmood, a fisherman at Gwadar said.

Freshness is another important dimension of keeping the value of captured fishes. Statistics show that over 60% of the captured fishes are wasted as they have already been dead by the time they reach the market and can only be sold as fish meal. The United Nations estimates that Pakistan is losing \$60 million annually due to low-value cost.”We are still using old methods that consume more electricity and add to the expenses. There is only one factory that has just started working on nitrogen-based quick freezing.

We should use the latest technology because it freezes products fast and maintains their quality”, suggested Muhammad Rafique Awan, CEO of Hei5 International Food Pakistan. “For inshore fishing, acquisition vessels, mostly provided by cold-chain logistics companies, are getting popular in China these years. With adequate freezing facilities, more fish can be saved from being wasted”, introduced Cui He, Chairman of China Aquatic Products Processing and Marketing Alliance.

Pakistan: The current target is of 35,000 acres of land for shrimp fishing across the country

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2335758/climate-resilience-and-agriculture>

"On paper, the initiative seems to be extremely profitable and, according to the FDB Director Training, could generate a profit of 100% on total investment. Moreover, developing a mega-hatchery along the Balochistan coastline could not only generate 250 million seeds annually but also reduce the cost of a seed from Rs8 to Rs1 and create thousands of jobs for the locals. But in the context of climate change, it seems to be a rather weak proposal.

It is essential to understand that the ecological crisis will only exacerbate overtime, leaving our land barren, our waters lifeless and our atmosphere unlivable. The national agriculture emergency programme needs a much more focused approach. The top-most priority should be to mitigate food insecurity through sustainable means.

For this, information on the constantly deteriorating conditions of land, soil, air and water must be fused together with sustainable and innovative agricultural practices. While the programme may be pushing the latter, the former is yet to be realised. And without understanding the dynamics and consequences of climate change, achieving climate resilience will be an arduous if not impossible task.

It would, thus, be in the government's best interest to create collaboration between climate change and agricultural organisations. They must share their data, work collectively to assess the situation, and come up with short-term relief projects along with long-term mitigation solutions. Expanding the focus on these two pivots seems to be the only way forward for an agrarian country bearing the brunt of the ecological crisis.

Pakistan fishery export: Eyeing the US\$1 bn target

http://en.ce.cn/Insight/202112/27/t20211227_37206435.shtml

"In the processing plant of a seafood company at the fish harbour of Karachi, workers are busying grading, cleaning, and packaging fresh shrimps. Twenty days later, they will make their appearance in some Chinese aquatic market. From ribbon fish, croakers, cuttle fish, to shrimps, crabs, and lobsters, Chinese' appetite for aquatic products has been growing with a considerable momentum since 2013. Out of Pakistan's total fishery exports, 60 per cent are destined for China.

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Pakistan: Balochistan leader warns Imran Khan government over fishermen rights and CPEC projects

<https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=908150>

"Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch, the leader of the 'Give Rights to Gwadar' movement has warned Pakistan that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and resources of Balochistan rightfully belong to the local people. Addressing Baloch fishermen in Ormara, he said that nobody would be allowed to rob resources from the Balochistan sea as these belong to the local fishermen.

Maulana Baloch was referring to the Chinese commercial fishing trawlers that have been cleaning out fisheries from the Arabian Sea. He also referred to the fencing being done by the Pakistan Navy, saying: ""From now on, if the Pakistan Navy builds a fence, it will have to ask the people of Ormara or else we will cut the fence and destroy it,"" reported the Dawn newspaper. The Pakistani government has fenced off portions where China is building naval or CPEC projects.

The local people have been protesting against Chinese projects as these have cut off their access to the sea and have curbed their movement even within Balochistan. The Baloch people also resent that jobs at CPEC projects are not coming their way and are being offered to Chinese nationals instead. Speaking with India Narrative, Geopolitical analyst Mark Kinra said: ""Maulana Hidayatur Rehman is back in the limelight after his partially successful Gwadar Ko Haq Do Tehreek movement.

He is not going away from the scene as his agreement with the Balochistan government for the rights of Baloch people have fallen flat as trawlers are still visible in Balochistan waters and businessmen are protesting against bribes and illegal checkpoints."" Capitalising on regional dissatisfaction among the people of Balochistan, Maulana Baloch said: ""Resources of the province are ours, Balochistan is ours, CPEC is ours, the beach is ours and Gwadar Port is also ours."" Kinra adds that the Maulana, who is a local Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) leader, plans another protest from December 28 against drug menace in the Makran region. "

"During the Ormara rally he talked about ownership of CPEC with the people but clearly that was not part of his agreement with the government. He even challenged the Pakistan Navy not to fence any part without the permission of the people but this challenge is an empty threat as was of enforced disappearances,"" Kinra says.

The 'Give Rights to Gwadar' leader warned the Balochistan chief minister with staging a massive sit-in with one million people in Quetta if their demands are not met. Maulana Baloch said: "Our struggle will continue till all check-posts of security forces are removed and illegal fishing in Balochistan sea waters by trawlers was stopped."

Pakistan: Balochistan and Sindh need help

<http://brighterkashmir.com/balochistan-and-sindh-need-help>

"Balochistan and Sindh, the most restive provinces of Pakistan, have entered into a new era of violence and dissent. Inputs of atrocities being committed on innocent civilians by the federal government, the Pakistan Army are coming out frequently despite an attempt to keep the situation under wraps. The latest in the line of protests in Balochistan involves the port city of Gwadar. The city is the most important link to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) since it is from here that the expected trade route through Pakistan and into landlocked Xinjiang Province of China shall commence.

In the initial stages the protestors were demanding basic rights to support the "Gwadar Ko Haq Do" movement in the port city. They wanted the government to do away with unnecessary checkpoints that disrupt normal life and make the people aliens in their own land. Other aspects involved provision of basic amenities like clean drinking water, schools, hospitals etc that are not coming up despite the development promised on the basis of CPEC. In recent days the protests are against unlawful fishing by Chinese trawlers in Gwadar waters which is looked upon as a direct assault upon the livelihood of the local fishermen.

Protesters are also claiming that this type of fishing is killing marine life and thus causing permanent and long term damage. The situation has reinforced a perception of the people that the gains of CPEC will bypass them even as they are turned into a serf-like minority working for the benefit of the Chinese and Pakistan Punjab. The people of Gwadar have protested before too, but the sheer scale of the protests this time has rattled the federal Government. Prime Minister Imran Khan has, after deploying additional forces in thousands to quell the protest, finally acquiesced and promised to take action against what he has termed as "illegal fishing." "I have taken notice of the very legitimate demands of the hardworking fishermen of Gwadar.

Will be taking strong action against illegal fishing by trawlers and will also speak to CM Balochistan," tweeted Imran Khan in an attempt to quell the agitation. The government also attempted to buy off the protestors by distributing money but the matter came into the public domain and has caused even more unrest. The fact of the matter is that, for the first time, there is a protest in Balochistan that has shaken the Government of Pakistan. It is a harbinger of things to come as the time to operationalise CPEC gets closer.

Pakistan's Opposition leader in the National Assembly, Shahbaz Sharif, has described the protests as a "watershed event" in the struggle for basic rights. "An ongoing protest at Gwadar represents a new chapter in our country. Owned and led by people, it is a watershed event in the struggle for the basic rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Pakistan. I ask the Govt to listen to people's voices and address their problems immediately," tweeted Shehbaz Sharif.

Although the people of the port city called off their months long sit-in after talks with the government, it has become quite apparent that the people of Balochistan are unlikely to absorb the step-motherly treatment being meted out to them lying down, hence, the region will witness more turmoil in times to come. The situation is compelling international economic and rights bodies and think tanks to reassess the efficacy of CPEC. The International Forum for Rights and Security (IFFRAS) has said that the ongoing protests and terror attacks against CPEC are causing damage to both the project and to Pakistan.

The think tank says that there has already been a decline in Chinese investment in Pakistan and that this would also be detrimental to future foreign investment in Pakistan thus causing further damage to Pakistan's ailing economy. The people of Sindh are also quite vocal in their protests. They too are convinced that under the garb of CPEC, the Punjabi and Pushtun dominated federal Government of Pakistan is bent upon placing both Sindh and Balochistan into the hands of China as occupied territories akin to the Shaksgam valley in Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (POJK).

The London based leader of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Altaf Hussain, has stated that the atrocities of the Pakistan army personnel, especially the Rangers are on the rise in Sindh and the people are oppressed to an unacceptable degree. "The army has control over Sindh's resources, power, gas, oil, coal. We will take back each yard of Sindh land from the occupiers and free Sindh from the slavery of Punjab," Hussain said. The Sindh province also faces problems of enforced disappearances and State-sponsored kidnappings for which people have been raising their voices.

Both Sindh and Balochistan have now joined hands in fighting against oppression by the Pakistani regime. Voices asking for an early intervention by India to rid them of the suppressive yolk are increasing by the day. Special appeals are being directed towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi to liberate Sindh and Balochistan in a manner similar to the liberation of East Pakistan five decades earlier. It is well known that these provinces have never been made party to any development model of Pakistan.

They have simply been looted of their resources and left beleaguered with the lowest possible quality of life. They were promised the moon on the basis of development through CPEC but have now realised that the project will, in fact, threaten their very existence, The development model of Pakistan is top down. Making Gawadar the next Dubai is nothing more than a pipe

dream. India will need to study the situation very carefully and respond in a manner that is righteous and meets the ends of human justice.

The world too needs to take cognisance of the deteriorating situation and respond appropriately. A coterie in Pakistan, on the basis of military strength, cannot be allowed to suppress two distinct and proud civilisations. Balochistan and Sindh need help, the world needs to come forward.

Pakistan: Govt promoting climate-resilient shrimp farming

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2335023/govt-promoting-climate-resilient-shrimp-farming>

"In an interview with APP on Tuesday, he pointed out that facilities like a shrimp hatchery, research centre, shrimp farm, shrimp processing plant, feed mill and subsidy would be provided to shrimp farmers across the country under the programme. FDB works under the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. Talking about funds, Salar pointed out that around Rs6 billion had been kept under the prime minister's national agriculture emergency programme for the promotion of shrimp farming.

"Efforts are underway to promote profit-generating shrimp farming in collaboration with the fisheries departments of provinces," he highlighted. He underlined that the FDB had set a target of 35,000 acres of land for shrimp farming in the country. He was of the view that saline soil was important for shrimp farming and the country had abundance of such soil "where nothing could be cultivated".

About profit margins, he maintained that it could offer 100% profit on total investment. Salar underlined that a mega hatchery would be established along the Balochistan coastline, which would generate 250 million seeds annually. Regarding shrimp seeds, he revealed that Pakistan was importing shrimp seeds from Thailand, as there was no hatchery available in the country. "The price of imported seed is around Rs.8 per piece," he said.

However, with the establishment of the hatchery next year, "the shrimp seed will be available for just Re1", he added. A research centre was also being established in Muzaffargarh. Equipped with modern facilities, the centre would offer technical assistance to farmers, he said. Salar highlighted that a shrimp farm was being established over an area of 15 acres in Pind Dadan Khan, a city in Punjab. "Work on a modern feed mill and processing plant for value addition is also in progress under the mega initiative," he added.

Pakistan: Neglected fishing industry

<https://www.bolnews.com/latest/2021/12/neglected-industry/>

"Fisheries play a pivotal role in the national economy as they employ more than 5 million fishermen directly and thousands of others that are associated with this industry in various supplementary roles. The provinces of Sindh and Balochistan continuously plead from the government to issue well-planned, focused strategies on fisheries and aquaculture. If this is done, they believe, fishing and fish farming could be transformed into a major industry which is currently undermined by a lack of resources, awareness and poor policies.

If well-planned strategies are implemented this sector can be raised to new heights as a world-class industry in the country and earn more foreign capital by exporting fish and its by-products. The federal government is not only responsible for fisheries in the exclusive economic zone of the country. In fact, it also has an onus to issue policies that create inter-provincial coordination, planning, research, quality control, training, exploratory fishing, stock assessment, fisheries management, fleet improvement, data collection and exports.

“The country is blessed with rich fishing potential, as it lies in the northern part of the Arabian Sea and has a coastline of about 1,120 kilometres with a broad continental shelf,” noted biologist and Sindh Agriculture University Department of Parasitology Chairperson Professor Dr Abdullah G Arijo said this while talking to Bol News. He further added that, “the country’s exclusive economic zone extends upto 200 nautical miles from the coast.”

Currently, there are many thousands of fishing boats in the coastal areas of the country which operate in shallow coastal waters and in offshore areas. These fishing boats undertake fishing trips that can last for a couple of hours to weeks depending on the type of fishing being done.

Aquaculture

According to Dr Arijo, when it comes to aquaculture – the process of breeding fish – in Sindh, the Thatta and Badin districts are highly suitable. This is because they contain vast land areas with ample water supplies, favourable soil, extensive irrigation and drainage networks, perfect temperature and climate for at least 10-months of the year. At the moment fish farming in Thatta and Badin is being conducted on a low scale, meanwhile, in the Sanghar district there are scattered fish ponds or farms.

With the proper attention, Sindh could become one of the leaders of the aquaculture industry in the country as it bristles with vast resources. Despite this, there is only hatchery in Sindh called Chilia Fish Farm near Thatta that is run by Sindh government which ensures the provisions of fry, fingerling and fish eggs to those looking to set up fish farms throughout the province, as the Sindh Livestock and Fisheries Department is eager to bankroll and support fish farming with loans and basic permissions.

If a state-of-the-art hatchery were set up it could greatly help improve fish farming by helping introduce convention and genetically improved species of fish that grow faster, including Tilapia,

Rohu, Mrigal and Catla. What's more is that both marine and fresh water bodies are virtually pollution-free in the region and labour is cheap at Rs25,000 to Rs30,000 a month.

Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum

Despite the country having incredible fishing potential, the industry as it functions now is taken place in a very saturated set of spaces. "2.5 million fishermen and women scrape their living from 1,219 freshwater bodies of Sindh including lakes and others in various districts, while another 2.5 and 3 million fishermen including Sindh and Balochistan belong to marine water," Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) Senior Leader Yasmeen Shah said.

She further maintained that local, small-scale fishers are continuing to suffer because fish stock in the sea and rivers is depleting a very fast pace. This is the consequence of ongoing over fishing by deep fishing trawlers that have been granted permits by the government. According to Yasmeen Shah, the lakes have also been polluted.

This is because the sea has intruded and has annihilated four to eight million acres of agriculture land as the river bring silt and this silt keeps the sea away from freshwater bodies as water is not being released properly into the Kotri downstream, adversely impacting the livelihoods of fish farmers and growers.

The PFF leader has urged that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea's Article 73, pertaining to the release of arrested citizens captured for crossing maritime borders, be implemented. She stressed that, in many cases fisherfolk accidentally cross over into neighbouring sovereign borders as there are no physical boundaries and end up being detained for years.

Feed Mills

Another major issue is the lack of proper infrastructure provided to the fish feed producers, which has the potential to emerge as another major industry on its own if given the right attention. Currently, not a single feed mill exists in the country. Fry and fingerling grow from fish that are fed balls made from rice-bran and cottonseed cake. Kenjhar Lake located near Thatta is one of the largest largest lakes in the country as it encompasses a 50 kilometre area and has a depth between 25 to 35 feet, making it ideal for cage aquaculture of trout.

Besides, Pakistan has 1,120 kilometre long coastline spanning six locations including Badin, Thatta, Karachi, Pasni Gwadar and Ormara with huge potential of brackish water aquaculture and mariculture. There have also been a few attempts to culture shrimps but they remain largely unsuccessful as the basic requirements of shrimp culture, including the required feed and hatcheries, are non-existent in the country. Meanwhile, imported feeds are very expensive and it is really difficult for shrimps to acclimatise to a new place, situation and climate.

National Consumption and Exports

Pakistan's domestic consumption is ranked six in the world at around 1 kilogramme per person being consumed per year, as compared with the world average of 16.2 kilogrammes per person a year. Moreover, in Balochistan the average person consumes as much as six kilogrammes of fish meat a year, as they consume the most fish meat in comparison to those hailing from other provinces of the country.

The country is also a big exporter of fish. Pakistan currently exports fish to around 50 countries, including to the United States and European Union. This is because Pakistan boast a wide range of marine species. On the country's coast there are more than 30 species of shrimps, 10 species of crabs, five species of lobster and around 70 commercial species of fish including tuna, mackerel, hilsa; locally-known as Pallah, sardine, shark, butterfish, pomfret, sole, sea bream, jewfish and catfish and eel.

Fish Harbours

The country has also been blessed with highly productive fish harbours including the Karachi Fish Harbour, Korangi Fish Harbour, Pasni Fish Harbour, Gadani Fish Harbour, Gwadar Fish Harbour and Ormara Fish Harbour. Majority of the people who live on in coastal areas of Sindh and Balochistan scratch their meager living from fisheries, with hundreds of thousands of families being involved in the fish industry.

Despite so many households relying on fishing for their livelihoods and its potential to turn into a major economic cash-cow for the national exchequer, the industry continues to be neglected. If the government were to pay it the attention due, it may well help alleviate the economic issues faced by rural coastal populations.

Pakistan: Fight for their livelihood in Gwadar

<https://www.sundayguardianlive.com/news/pakistanis-fight-livelihood-gwadar>

"For more than a month, the people of Balochistan protested at Gwadar in large numbers before Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Niazi sent his ministers to broker a peace deal. Finally the protests were called off on 16 December, Thursday. The people were not protesting for any special privileges but for basic amenities and livelihood due to the dark shadows of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which not only snatched their livelihood but their very basic right to live. The peaceful protests were named "Gwadar Ko Huqooq Do Tehreek" which means "give Gwadar its rights".

The town which was promised would become the Dubai of Pakistan was in doldrums, with the locals struggling for even basic needs. They had strong reasons to protest. When Chinese companies were given over 2,000 acres of land to develop a Special Economic Zone (SEZ), rosy

promises were made by the Pakistan government. The Chinese were not only supposed to employ over 40,000 locals in the project but also were to provide drinking water and other basic amenities to over 2.5 lakh people living in and around Gwadar Port City. None of this materialised.

Gwadar Special Economic Zone (GSEZ) was to start its operations by 2019 and all its phases were to be completed by 2025 but the picture today is horrible. They are struggling to cope with the work and barely 20% of their scheduled work was completed till August 2021. There is not even a single manufacturing facility functional in the entire GSEZ, and the drinking water plant which was supposed to provide water to entire Gwadar town has been limited to a Chinese colony.

The road projects within the port area are moving at a very slow pace, rail projects have not yet started, and the construction of six big container berths as well as six cargo terminals (one each for bulk cargo, roll on/roll off, grain, LNG and two for oil) are seen only on maps and in master plans. This airport was to be completed in 2017 but the work has been stopped for over three years. As a result, it is still a dirt strip where only turboprop aircraft can land. Recently, Pakistan government has enhanced the project cost from US\$22.2 bn to US\$51.3 bn, which is more than double in just five years.

Interestingly, the primary contractor is a Chinese company, which will be the ultimate beneficiary; the secondary contractors are the companies owned by retired Generals of Pakistan Army. All the projects at Gwadar are not only slow moving, but also instead of employing local manpower as per the promises made by the Pakistan government, they started employing manpower from outside, ignoring the locals. In the name of security of their shipping lanes and development of port, rich fishing areas belonging to the locals were taken away; they were prohibited to go in the same waters where they were fishing for last so many generations.

The same fishing areas are now allotted to Chinese companies who are employing massive Chinese trawlers and not only depleting the marine resources at an alarming pace but eating away the livelihoods of the local fishermen. This has rendered more than 5 lakh families connected to the fishing industry jobless, struggling to make their ends meet. If you snatch the livelihood of a person and give it to another, he will naturally protest and that's what happened in Gwadar. There have been protests in this area earlier too, but this protest was special in many ways. We noticed some unique features in these protests.

Here are some key takeaways. 1. Fight for Livelihood: This protest was unique in a sense that people were fighting for their livelihoods and basic right to survive which has been snatched away and given to Chinese companies. The Pakistan government, which is responsible for its own citizen, kneeled to Chinese companies to such an extent that it snatched the fishing areas, drinking water resources and other basic amenities from the locals and gave that to the Chinese. 2. The long duration of the protests: While other protests lasted for a few days, this time the

protests continued for more than a month, which shows the determination of the locals and their organised fight for justice.

Interestingly, for the entire duration of the protests, the number of people on the streets did not deplete but continuously increased, which forced the Pakistan government to announce that it would accept the protesters' demands. 3. Participation of Women: Among the protesters, there were many women who protested for their basic right to life. It is unprecedented in the history of Pakistan that such a large number of women protesters came out in the open. In an Islamic country, where women are not treated equally with men, such response from the local public against the government has rung many alarm bells. 4. Peaceful protest: Unlike past protests in the area that turned ugly, this protest was largely peaceful, and protesters did not cross their line of dignity.

People blocked highways, railway lines and communication points but nowhere did they clash with the police or create any unrest. This is unique in a country where almost every protest turns violent and results in a loss of human lives. Because of this peaceful nature of the protests, the locals did not give the government a chance to use force on them. 5. Involvement of people from all communities: This protest did not only include people from Gwadar or nearby towns but many people from all over Balochistan and parts of Sindh province including the coastal belt of Turbat, Pishkan, Zamran, Buleda, Ormara and Pasni.

Not only the fishermen but people from different communities joined hands to fight against the government. It was due to the large number of protesters that Prime Minister Imran Khan Niazi was compelled to send large contingents of police and paramilitary forces to Gwadar to control a peaceful movement. 6. Religious angle to the protests: There is a religious angle too and the protests were led by Maulana Hidayat-ur Rehman, who is a local leader of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan.

Traditionally, the Jamaat has been close to the military establishment of Pakistan but this time they were openly against them. Further, it has been the history of Pakistan that whenever a protest gets a religious turn, things get increasingly difficult for the government. The Lal Masjid episode and recent actions of Tehreek-e-Labbaik are live examples. To prevent any such unknown event that the government acted quickly.

What now? Although Prime Minister Imran Khan Niazi has promised the moon to the locals after which they agreed to call off the protests but how he will implement these promises is a very tough question. Does he have the courage to snatch the fishing rights back from Chinese companies and give them back to the locals? Can he force China to speed up the work in Gwadar, especially when Pakistan is struggling to pay back even the interests of the previous loans?

Can the Pakistani government itself invest huge sums of money to raise the living standards of the locals? Can a country which has been ruled by Punjabis all the time, ignoring other provinces

in the past, support a state where Punjabis have limited stake? Similar rosy promises were made when the Pakistan government acquired the land from poor locals forcefully to establish GSEZ, but what people got in the last one decade was “Sifar”, which means zero. In the light of the same, to what extent the new promises be implemented is no longer a question now. We all know the answers.

Pakistan: Promotion of fisheries in Gilgit-Baltistan stressed

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1664673>

"Experts at a seminar held in the Karakoram International University here on Saturday highlighted the importance of fisheries in the sustainable development of Gilgit-Baltistan. They also stressed protecting water bodies from environmental degradation to increase population of trout fish in the region.

GB secretary fisheries department Khadim Hussain, acting KIU Vice-Chancellor Khalil Ahmed, director fisheries Ghulam Mohiuddin, deputy director Ikram Hussain, faculty of the varsity's animal and biological sciences departments and students participated in the event titled role of fisheries and aquaculture in GB's sustainable development. It was organised by GB fisheries department.

Speaking on the occasion, Khadim Hussain said trout fish, which was the world's important fish species, was available in GB. He said promoting fisheries in the region could improve livelihoods of local people. Mr Hussain said GB fisheries department officials were working to increase production of trout fish across the region.

He said the department had so far helped establish over 200 private fish farms in the region, providing income sources to thousands of people. Khadim Hussain said self-employment could be promoted through development of fisheries in GB.

Other experts said fisheries and aquaculture were crucial in fight against hunger, achieving food security and ending malnutrition. They emphasised spreading awareness about fisheries for sustainable development. Students of KIU displayed their works highlighting the importance of fisheries and threats to trout fish in GB.

Pakistan: Gwadar protest ends after over a month as govt accepts demands

<https://www.geo.tv/latest/388044-gwadar-protest-ends-after-govt-accepts-demands>

"After over a month of protests from the people of Gwadar who were demanding their fundamental rights, Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman, the leader of the sit-in, has decided to call off the protest after negotiation with the government. Confirming the development, Balochistan

Minister for Planning and Development Zahoor Buledi took to Twitter and wrote that the negotiation between the government and Balochistan secretary-general of Jamat-e-Islami Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman took place in the presence of the chief minister of Balochistan, Abdul Quddus Bizenjo. "

"The negotiation with Maulana Hidayat Ur Rehman in the presence of CM has been successful. Govt has accepted all demands of Maulana Sb and the dharna is to be called off." CM Bizenjo, in a statement, said all the demands of the Gwadar protesters are legitimate, as he mentioned that the government's priority was to provide them opportunities for growth and make basic necessities available for them.

Gwadar's citizens had a long list of demands, including shortage of drinking water, the poor state of health and education facilities, and the impact of large trawlers on fishermen's earning potential.

The agreement

- According to the agreement signed today between the government and the protesters, the government has decided to accept the following demands.
- Illegal trawling will be completely banned in Gwadar. - Supervision of border trade to be handed over to district administration.
- Committee to be formed for the elimination of unnecessary check posts in Makran division. - Chief Minister to announce a special package for Gwadar fishermen.
- Expressway victims will be re-surveyed and compensated.
- Cases against ""Gwadar ko Haq do"" activists will be dropped immediately.
- DC office to formulate an action plan for assisting fishermen affected by the typhoon. - Disability quota will be implemented in federal and provincial departments.
- Coast Guard, customs will assist in releasing seized boats, launches, agreements reached. - PM Imran Khan takes notice of Gwadar fishermen's 'very legitimate' demands
- A few days ago, Prime Minister Imran Khan had announced that he had taken notice of the ""very legitimate"" demands of the Gwadar fishermen, adding that he would take strong action against illegal fishing by trawlers in the area.

The prime minister's tweet followed a series of protests by locals in Gwadar, who had taken to the streets to raise their voices for their rights. ""I have taken notice of the very legitimate demands of the hardworking fishermen of Gwadar. Will be taking strong action against illegal fishing by trawlers and will also speak to CM Balochistan,"" the premier had stated on Twitter.

Gwadar has seen protests for the past few weeks, sometimes featuring thousands of women with young children, speaking out against the large trawlers.

Locals say the trawlers, which are illegally plundering the Arabian seabed, are making it harder for fishermen to fish in the waters. Fishing is one of the main sources of income for residents of the area. Despite protests from local fishermen about the fleets, they said they had received "no response from the Gwadar Development Authority or the Balochistan government."

"Anis Tarique Gorgej, the assistant deputy commissioner had said that the local administration is in touch with the protestors and all their concerns will be addressed. "We are already working on stopping the trawlers and to facilitate trade at the Iranian border," Gorgej had said. "But fulfilling all the demands will take some time."

Pakistan: Gwadar protests ‘watershed event’ in struggle for basic rights: Shehbaz

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2333996/shehbaz-says-gwadar-protests-watershed-event-in-struggle-for-basic-rights>

"The PML-N president, tweeting from his official handle, said the protests represented "a new chapter in our country". "Owned and led by the people it is a watershed event in the struggle for the basic rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Pakistan." He further urged the incumbent government to listen to "the people's voice" and "address their problems immediately".

Thousands of protestors are staging a sit-in against unnecessary check posts and fishing trawlers in the Gwadar district of Balochistan and are demanding civic amenities and employment opportunities for the local people. Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday announced that the government would take "strong action" against illegal fishing by trawlers off the Gwadar coast.

In a tweet, the premier said he had taken notice of the "very legitimate demands" of the hardworking fisherfolk of Gwadar, a linchpin of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. Maulana Hidayatur Rehman, who is leading the protests, welcomed the premier's tweet and said that they are not stubborn people as local residents also wanted a solution to their problems.

He said that it is really a welcome development that the Prime Minister has taken notice of the protest and decided to accept the demands of the people including the illegal fishing in Balochistan's territorial waters after their 28-day sit-in.

Pakistan: Dwindling marine life due to pollution has snatched away the livelihood of the Ibrahim Hyderi fishing community

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2333497/sweat-tears-and-the-sea>

"Rising marine pollution in the Arabian Sea has led to a decline in sea resources and snatched away the livelihood from fishermen and the women associated with the fisheries industry. While passing through the narrow and dusty streets of Ibrahim Hyderi one can easily noticed different groups of fishermen sitting sideways and doing nothing. It was a clear sign that they have lost their livelihood and facing dark phase of unemployment and poverty. The obvious reason behind this is sea pollution and climate change.

Naziraan Bibi, a 50-year old woman from Ibrahim Hyderi, some 400 years old fishing village located in Korangi district of Karachi says she lost her job when a shrimp peeling factory in her area closed due to decline in catch and soaring price of shrimp. "I lost my job when a shrimp peeling factory in our area closed due to decline in catch and soaring price of shrimps," she said. "My husband is a fisherman. He used to fish for a local contractor on a daily wages. He earned PKR 400 (USD \$5.39) daily.

When fish and shrimp started reducing, both of us lost our jobs. Since then, we are facing extreme hunger and poverty," she added. According to experts, 80 per cent of the population of Pakistan's coastal belt is dependent on fisheries for food and living. 'The sea is everything for us' "As a part of fishing community, sea is everything for us. I used to work in a shrimp peeling factory near a jetty in our area since my childhood. But with the passage of time, swift decline in catch and reduction in shrimp's quantity has made the situation from bad to worse for us," said Naziraan. "I had two sons.

My elder son Subhan died due to diarrhea. My younger son is 6- year old. My husband has been jobless for the past two years and we have been living on the food provided by neighbors or relatives but they are also facing difficult times." "Almost everyone in the area is jobless. Ibrahim Hyderi is our ancestral area but now we want to migrate from here but there is no place for us to go and live and earn livelihood," said Naziraan while wiping tears from her face.

An ecosystem in crisis

Dwindling marine resources could produce serious implications on food security and aquatic life in future. According to Aslam Jarwar, Director Fisheries Sindh, resources have been stagnant for the last 30 to 40 years including fish production. In 2015, a study about stock assessment revealed that many fish species and major sea food groups have already reduced from 50 to 90 per cent. Nearly 80 per cent population of coastal areas is dependent on fisheries for food and living. Decline in marine resources poses a great food security risk for those who rely heavily on seafood.

"At least 500,000 to one million people have coastal dependency. There are approximately 5,000 boats at the coast of Sindh. Some are associated with processing and transportation. Environmental changes like increasing acidity in sea, rising temperature are among different reasons responsible for the disturbance of the environmental balance. An increase in the number of jellyfish in our sea during the last two to three years is an example of the environmental

change impact,” Jarwar stated. Professor, Director Center of Excellence for Marine Biology, University of Karachi Dr. Pirzada Jamal Siddiqui said one of the reasons behind increase in jelly fish is the factor which eats jelly fish or any other organism in eco system has been decreased due to sea pollution.

Over fishing by big fishermen also responsible for decline in microorganism eating factor as well as damage faces by small fishermen. Besides, we are throwing plastic in the sea; it is returning back our plates after passing through different phases of food chain. “Climate change is a cyclic process and the entire world is sharing same atmosphere. Climate change and its adverse effects is not only problem of Pakistan and India but it is a trans boundary and multinational which needs to be tackle collectively,” Dr Jamal said.

Daily life, an uphill task

The story of 48-year old Hajiyaani is not much different from Naziraan. Standing outside her semi dark one room house in a narrow lane in Ibrahim Hyderi, Hajiyaani shares her ordeal. “I was among hundreds of women working in fish and shrimp peeling factories. Till four, five years ago, we were financially stable. I earned PKR 300(\$1.90) daily by peeling shrimp in a factory. My husband also earned decent money by fishing. Slowly, industrial waste and garbage makes sea polluted and snatch our livelihood. I, along with my 12-years old daughter, forced to work as a domestic help in a nearby colony to meet both ends for our family.

I have three daughters and a son. We are living in a single room and paying PKR 3,000 (\$19.04) rent per month. It is very difficult to manage routine life without proper livelihood.” Although the threat of climate change and its adversities is imminent, little efforts seen on ground to control this menace. The younger generation of fishing community still relies on the occupation of their forefathers.

Lack of education and deprived of basic facilities, the younger lot does not have idea of acquiring some skill for earning. As a result, either they just roaming in the streets or falls into a petty crime to make some bucks. The cost of climate change “Climate change already did a sizeable damage. Many fish species have been depleted from Karachi’s coast line. Shrimps and fish are vanished even in mangroves and creek,” Kamal Shah, media coordinator, Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, a non-governmental organisation working for Fishermen rights, said.

Recalling the old times, Shah stated that about three to four years ago, there were small huts in Pakistan’s largest fishing settlement Ibrahim Hyderi called ‘chaapray’ in a local language, served as small peeling factories. Fishermen community women were seen busy in peeling off shrimp whole day in these huts and in the evening dispatched them to large factories in the area for further processing. These big factories are now shut down and majority of women workers are sitting at home with no work.

Hopes for some relief

For fishermen community in Sindh's coastal belt, a major breakthrough was happened in January 14, 2011 when Sindh Assembly has unanimously passed Sindh Fisheries Amended Act replaces contract/leasing system for fishing with license system. The act enables fishermen to get back their right to fish which was seized by the contractors and other influential people before the amendment.

Former Sindh Fisheries Minister Zahid Ali Bhurgari, who tabled Sindh Fisheries Amended Act in Sindh Assembly in 2011, when contacted said that enforcement of Amended act turned out to be a big relief for fishermen community. The act has ended the contract system and gave fishing rights back to ordinary fisherman. At least 1.2 million fishermen benefited by the act. Before amended act, 1,209 water bodies were auctioned to contractor and influential people. Contractor used to pay fisherman PKR 50(\$0.32)or PKR 100(\$0.63).

Now fishermen are independently doing fishing and gaining better monetary advantage. "For the help of fishing community, a fund has been established by Fisherman Cooperative Society collects nominal amount from fishermen after their fishing trips and transfers it into this fund. The amount would be provided to fishermen for weddings or any emergency," he added. Some local and international organisations are busy in damage control exercise on their own level.

They are giving training and support to fishermen community for the preservation of mangroves which serves as a nursery for fish species, shrimps and other marine life. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in collaboration with government of Sindh initiated mangroves plantation and preservation project for the wellbeing of fishermen community and trained them for alternate source of income.

"Mangroves plantation and restoration project is underway in Ibrahim Hyderi, Rehri Goth and Chashma Goth. We have trained fishermen, students and teachers of local schools how to plant mangroves. Now they are giving training to other community members. They have opened nurseries of mangroves and selling mangroves to different people and organizations. This is equally beneficial for fishing community and environment," stated IUCN Pakistan's Natural Resource Management Expert Dr Baber Hussain.

Pakistan: Gwadar protests: Prime Minister Imran Khan promises 'strong action' against illegal fishing

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/gwadar-protests-pak-pm-promises-strong-action-against-illegal-fishing-trawlers-2647835>

"Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Sunday that he will take ""strong action"" against illegal fishing by trawlers off the Gwadar coast, after weeks-long sit-in and protest by local residents rattled the government and forced authorities to deploy thousands of additional police officers in the region. Hundreds of local residents, civil society activists, lawyers, journalists

including women have been holding massive protests and a sit-in Gwadar for the last 28 days against unnecessary checkpoints, a severe shortage of water and electricity and threats to livelihoods from illegal fishing.

“I have taken notice of the very legitimate demands of the hardworking fishermen of Gwadar. Will be taking strong action against illegal fishing by trawlers & will also speak to CM Balochistan,” Khan tweeted. Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman, Balochistan general secretary of Jamaat-i-Islami party, who has led the protests, welcomed the premier's tweet. Mr Rehman, who is leading the Gwadar Ko Huqooq Do Tehreek (Give Rights to Gwadar Movement), said their two major demands were - action against “trawler mafia” and resolution of issues on the Iran border - from overall 19 demands.

Meanwhile, Adviser to the Balochistan Chief Minister on Home and Tribal Affairs Mir Ziaullah Lagau said that the protesters had a list of 19 demands, 16 of which had been accepted by the government. “The demands accepted include illegal trawlers fishing in Gwadar port, patrolling increased to check on illegal trawlers, Freedom for local fishermen to go to sea, elimination of unnecessary checkpoints on major roads, closure of wine shops in Gwadar and elimination of interference in cross-border trade with Iran and end to all kinds of interference and establishment of trade markets at border,” he told reporters.

The protests in Balochistan are part of growing discontent with China's presence in Gwadar, whose port is an integral part of the USD 60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project (CPEC), the flagship project of China's multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The massive infrastructure project connects China's Xinjiang province with Gwadar port in Pakistan's Balochistan province.

Gwadar port has long been portrayed as the jewel in the CPEC crown, but in the process, the city has become the very embodiment of a security state. India has protested to China over the CPEC as it traverses through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Protestors from Gwadar, Turbat, Pishkan, Zamran, Buleda, Ormara and Pasni are taking part in the 'Gwadar Ko Huqooq Do Tehreek' (Give Rights to Gwadar Movement) led by Maulana Rehman. They have vowed to continue their protest till their demands are met and earlier this week even the womenfolk took out a big rally in Gwadar and Pasni.

The protesters have put forth 19 demands, which include steps to rid the sea of the “trawler mafia” and allowing fishermen to freely go into the waters, getting rid of unnecessary checkpoints and to not “insult” citizens in the name of security. They also demanded that all wine stores in Gwadar be shut down, and to allow border trade with Iran.

Balochistan is home to a long-running violent insurgency, and China's presence in Gwadar has been the cause of much social unrest and led to anti-Chinese sentiment. It has also given a fillip to Baloch groups, who have carried out terrorist attacks in protest at CPEC projects. The demands also state that a majority of the people employed by the China Overseas Port Holding

Company were from outside of Gwadar and called for giving priority to locals.

Pakistan: Balochistan directorate of fisheries relocated to Gwadar

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2332962/balochistan-directorate-of-fisheries-relocated-to-gwadar>

"Balochistan Chief Minister Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has directed a complete ban on illegal fishing trawlers as the Directorate of Fisheries Balochistan has been permanently shifted to Gwadar from Quetta.

According to an official source, the Directorate of Fisheries has also been immediately shifted from Quetta to Gwadar to resolve the problems being faced by the local fishermen who are protesting for the past three weeks along with other local residents of Gwadar and Lasbela districts. The token system for fishermen was also abolished, whereby the fishermen could enter into sea without any permission, he added.

Pakistan: Balochistan govt bans illegal fishing trawlers at Gwadar

<https://pakobserver.net/balochistan-govt-bans-illegal-fishing-trawlers-at-gwadar/>

"Chief Minister Balochistan Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has directed the provincial government to ban illegal fishing trawlers while the fisheries department and other agencies have been stepped up patrolling to curb illegal trawling at the Gwadar's waters. According to official source, the Directorate General (DG) Fisheries have also been immediately shifted from Quetta to Gwadar to resolve the problems being faced by the fishermen.

The token system for fishermen was also abolished, where the fishermen could enter into sea without any permission, it added. "All unnecessary check posts in Gwadar have been eliminated. All alcohol shops in Gwadar have been closed in compliance with the government orders," the official source informed. According to source the Gaddani was handed over to the district administration and all interventions from outside were halted, where the Gaddani Point was fully open for food and oil transportation.

With the cooperation of the Federal Government, the development work of Border Market at Mand along Pak-Iran border was also started. The construction work would also commence on other border markets and other areas of Makran division which would boost the trade activities in the border areas, it added. "The federal government has also allocated Rs 600 million for the completion of this project," it told. Vice Chancellor was appointed at Gwadar University and classes would also start soon.

The appointment process for the deployment of non-teaching staff in the educational institutions of Gwadar was completed and orders would be issued soon. All medical stores in Gwadar have

been inspected to prevent counterfeit medicines, he said, adding, “Chief Minister Bizenjo has also written a letter to QESCO officials regarding declaring Gwadar a disaster-hit area and forgiving other arrears.” The government had initiated various projects of clean water supply to Gwadar city and other areas whereas the clean drinking water project initiated in Jiwani would be completed soon.

Pakistan: Karachi-based fishermen go on strike against Balochistan govt

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40138534>

"Dozens of fishermen staged a protest after Balochistan government officially got two boats from Karachi confiscated and crew members convicted into one year prison with a fine of Rs300,000. The fishermen displayed banners with several demands. “It is a strike,” of the fishermen at Karachi Fish Harbour, Noshervan, General Secretary of All Mahigir Association was heard as telling to one of the protestors during a protest gathering in front of the Fishermen Cooperative Society’s head office.

Later, he told Business Recorder that two boats from Karachi were arrested by the Balochistan government, operating even beyond distance of 12 nautical miles. The captured boats included: Al-Makha and Al-Nudia but he did not reveal that how many of the crewmembers were arrested and sentenced into prison. They, the Balochistan government, got these boats confiscated through court, he said adding that there seems a one country with two different laws for each province.

“The Balochistan government arrested the crewmembers and confiscated the boats,” Sarwar Siddiqui, Patron of Sindh Trawlers Owners and Fishermen Association (Stofa) told Business Recorder, saying that each of the arrested crew members, belonging to Karachi, was sentenced for one year in prison and fined for Rs300,000. He said that the fishermen are going to announce a date for a complete strike against the confiscation of boats and arrest of the crew by the Balochistan government.

He also claimed that the boats were captured beyond the 12 nautical miles of the provincial maritime line of Balochistan. He said that boats from Balochistan avail all facilities at Karachi Fish Harbour, including repair, selling of fisheries catch, etc., unrestricted and indiscriminately on a regular basis, but their government has placed a ban on Sindh’s boats. Earlier, speaking at the demonstration, Sarwar told the angry fishermen that a strike may cause a colossal loss to the entire fisheries sector that could be into billions of rupees.

At least Rs10 billion losses will hit the fishermen sector if fishing boats remained moored at the Karachi Fish Harbour during the strike, which is expected to last for about 10 days. He urged the charged fishermen for a solution of this lingering dispute between the Sindh and Balochistan

governments over fishing, saying that: “the protest should be cancelled and the fishermen should resume the halted hunt operation”.

The fishermen leaders spoke to the protesters in a bitter tone against the Balochistan government following the boats and crewmembers’ arrest. They asked the Sindh government to deny a complete entry to all boats of Balochistan into its territorial waters, Karachi Fish Harbour for discharge of catch, repair of vessels and other jobs in retaliation. However, the speakers called upon the Balochistan government to revisit its hard-line policy towards Sindh’s fishing boats and let them enjoy the same facilities, which boats from its province enjoy at Karachi Fish Harbour, indiscriminately.

Pakistan: Illegal fishing in Balochistan’s coastal areas banned

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1662323>

"Official sources said on Monday that the government had started fulfilling demands of the ongoing protest movement in Gwadar titled Gwadar Ko Huqooq Do Tehreek (Gwadar Movement for Rights). They said Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo has issued directives in this regard. The headquarters of the DG Fisheries has immediately been shifted from Quetta to Gwadar to solve the problems of local fishermen, officials of the Balochistan government said. According to them, patrols of the Fisheries Department and other agencies have started efforts to curb illegal fishing in Balochistan’s coastal areas.

The token system for the local fishermen which allowed them to go to the sea for fishing has been abolished and now they can start fishing in the sea without any permission. “All unnecessary check-posts in Gwadar have been removed,” according to the home department sources. The officials said all liquor shops in Gwadar have been closed. Gadani has been completely handed over to the district administration and all interventions have been stopped. With the cooperation of the federal government, a border market in Mand near the Pak-Iran border has been established, they added.

They said soon work would start for establishing border markets in some areas of Makran division. The federal government, they added, has allocated Rs600 million for completion of this project. Vice chancellor for Gwadar University has been appointed and classes in the university will start soon. They said the process for deployment of non-teaching staff in educational institutions of Gwadar has been completed and orders in this regard would be issued soon.

All medical stores in Gwadar have been inspected by officials concerned to prevent the sale of counterfeit medicines. According to the officials, CM Bizenjo has written a letter to Qesco officials in which he has informed them that Gwadar has been declared a disaster-hit area, therefore, all outstanding electricity dues would be withdrawn. They said the personnel of

Pakistan Coast Guards have seized only two vehicles for which an FIR has been registered. The case is pending in the court and a legal team has been formed to deal with the issue.

According to the officials, the supply of safe drinking water has started in Gwadar and other areas. The project for providing safe drinking water in Jiwani would be completed soon, they added. They said a special desk has been formed at the office of the Gwadar's deputy commissioner for giving preference to the local people in jobs in Gwadar Port and projects of the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor.

In this regard, they added, applications have been sought from the unemployed local people. The officials said compensation has been paid to all victims of Darbila while a place is being allotted to them for providing alternative land. Compensation of Rs14.5 million has been paid to expressway victims while special measures have been taken to ensure registration of names of the remaining victims.

They said the case against Maulana Hidayatur Rehman and other participants of the Gwadar Ko Huqooq Do Tehreek has been withdrawn and a summary for the removal of the names of some protesters from the Fourth Schedule List has been referred to the provincial cabinet. The officials said surveys have been conducted to find out damage caused by the recent hurricane.

The matter of the payment of compensation has been referred to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) and orders have been issued to ensure early payment, they said. On the demand of the protesters, the Gwadar Development Authority's director general and Gwadar's deputy commissioner have been transferred and replaced by the most capable officers of the province.

Pakistan: Petroleum prices stifle local fisherfolk

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2332488/petroleum-prices-stifle-local-fisherfolk>

"Per the locals, who have not been able to earn in the last two months, their plight is an augmented product of the governments' inattention. While other issues, such as lack of schools, access to potable water and sanitation have also been plaguing their lives, without much amelioration from any public or private agency.

"There was a time when diesel would cost six or seven rupees per litre and at that time, the price of fish and prawns was four to six hundred rupees. Today, the price of diesel has gone up to Rs145 per litre while the price of fish and prawns has gone up to Rs700-800," claimed Irfan Omer, the head of a fishermen's rights movement. According to the local activist, this gap has greatly burdened the fishermen's community, while they haven't been provided any subsidies from the federal or provincial government.

“The federal government should review the prices of petroleum products and provide subsidy to the fishermen in the same way as it provides a subsidy to the farmers. Just as the official price of wheat, rice and sugar is fixed, the official price of fish and prawns should be fixed for the whole year too. In this way, the fishermen can also redeem maximum profits from their sales, and the government can start grading them,” he urged.

“For instance, grade-one prawns, if fixed at Rs3,000 per kilogrammes, should go at the same rate for the whole year,” he added. Explaining wholesale market dynamics, Omer said that when fishermen catch more fish and prawns from the sea, the rates go down and when the catch is limited, the prices go up. In both cases, there is no benefit to the fishermen, while traders and customers continue to make bank on their losses.

“We can remain at sea from one day to a whole month. There are different sizes of vessels, but a single day usually costs around Rs100,000, with diesel costing between Rs30,000 and Rs50,000 depending on the size of the fishing vessel. Large vessels that go to sea for long periods of time cost between Rs20 lakh and Rs25 lakh, of which diesel costs between Rs12 lakh and Rs13 lakh.

Most of these vessels belong to the capitalists, while very few boats belong to fishermen,” he told. There is no fishing in the months of June and July, owing to breeding season. In the 10 months that fishermen go to sea, they are required to split 50 per cent of their income with investors. The remaining 50 per cent is then split among all the fishermen on board, “which means that individual profit comes down to peanuts.”

Petroleum prices stifle local fisherfolk in Karachi, Pakistan

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2332488/petroleum-prices-stifle-local-fisherfolk>

"Where rising inflation and surge in petroleum prices is an issue which much of Pakistan finds itself grappling with at the moment, in the fishermen's village of Ibrahim Haideri, it has become a source of widespread starvation and chaos. Per the locals, who have not been able to earn in the last two months, their plight is an augmented product of the governments' inattention.

While other issues, such as lack of schools, access to potable water and sanitation have also been plaguing their lives, without much amelioration from any public or private agency. “There was a time when diesel would cost six or seven rupees per litre and at that time, the price of fish and prawns was four to six hundred rupees.

Today, the price of diesel has gone up to Rs145 per litre while the price of fish and prawns has gone up to Rs700-800,” claimed Irfan Omer, the head of a fishermen's rights movement. According to the local activist, this gap has greatly burdened the fishermen's community, while they haven't been provided any subsidies from the federal or provincial government.

Pakistan: Balochistan bans fishing, trawling off Gwadar coast

<https://www.bolnews.com/latest/2021/11/balochistan-bans-fishing-trawling-off-gwadar-coast/>

"The Balochistan government earlier this week banned fishing and trawling off the Gwadar coast after talks with protesters from the local fishing community, Arab News reported on Saturday. A group of protestors in the Gwadar port city staged a sit-in earlier this week, complaining the government was not doing enough to prevent "illegal trawling" in the Arabian Sea and maintaining the practice was depriving residents of a major livelihood source.

According to the data shared by the local fishing community, around 80 per cent of the people in Gwadar district are associated with the fishing industry. Regular trawling in the area has forced more than a dozen fish processing facilities to shut their operations, it showed. The provincial government held negotiations with the protesters and subsequently decided to ban the practice.

"With prior approval [of] the competent authority, [the] government of Balochistan is pleased to impose a ban on illegal fishing/trawling in 12 nautical miles of Gwadar sea area with immediate effect," the Balochistan home department said in a notification on Wednesday. After talks with the protesters, Balochistan Planning Minister Zahoor Buledi said the government had empowered the fisheries department, civil administration and the marine security agency to prevent illegal trawling off the Gwadar coast.

"More steps will be taken to safeguard the livelihood of fisherfolk and prevent marine life from going extinct," Buledi said on Twitter. Gwadar has been central to the multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that promises to secure the economic wellbeing of the people by enhancing regional trade and connectivity. However, its residents, along with the people of Turbat district, staged a massive demonstration against the unavailability of basic amenities, such as clean drinking water, in the area this September.

Pakistan: Blue economy in Indian Ocean: Panel expresses its concerns over govt's lack of interest

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40135725/blue-economy-in-indian-ocean-panel-expresses-its-concerns-over-govts-lack-of-interest>

"It said the country was not benefiting from the ocean ecosystem in comparison to other coastal South Asian countries as maritime revenue (transshipping) of Bangladesh and India was \$6 and \$5.6 billion, respectively, while that of Pakistan stood at \$183 million. The Senate Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs, which met here with Rubina Khalid in the chair, was given a briefing on Blue Economy, its major sectors and initiatives taken by the Maritime Affairs Ministry, which spearheads it.

At the outset of the meeting, the committee members expressed their concern on the problems faced by the residents of coastal areas of Sindh and Balochistan. The members of the committee expressed concerns over the conditions of the people residing around the coastal areas, as according to a rough estimate, more than 200 million people worldwide live along coastlines less than five metres above sea level.

Ministry of Maritime Affairs Secretary, Rizwan Ahmad, said the issue comes in the domain of the provincial government, and they should take measures to address the issues. Senator Maula Buksh Chandio proposed that the ministry should write letters to the provincial governments to address the problem of clean drinking water and other concerns of the local residents near the coastal areas.

The committee was informed that after the approval of claim by the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in 2015, Pakistan has achieved a maritime territory of 350 N (nautical miles), which comprises 200 N of Exclusive Economic zone (EEZ) and an area of 150 N as continental shelf. The maritime sovereignty of Pakistan has been established on the total area of 290,000 sq kilometres, which makes up 36.4 percent of the mainland of the country. To a question by a member, the Secretary Maritime said that constitutionally 12 N (nautical miles) are associated with the provinces and eight nautical miles is a buffer zone, non-fishing area.

The non-fishing area is for the reproduction and growth of the fishes and these fishes are confined for the local fishermen only. The secretary said the federal government regulates fishing beyond 20 N miles and deals in marine fishing. He said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had brought forward potential prospects of development along the Makran Coast, which would pave the way for maritime tourism and aqua/mari-culture contributing to the national economy.

The committee was also informed that a summary dated 23-09-2020 was submitted to Prime Minister Imran Khan through stakeholding ministries/division with proposal for bringing numerous maritime functions presently assigned to different ministries under the umbrella of single ministry i.e. Ministry of Maritime Affairs. A coordination mechanism in the form of the National Maritime Board (NMB) and the National Maritime Coordination Committee (NMCC) was also proposed for addressing issues/development of blue economy in Pakistan.

To a question whether Pakistan Navy is a stakeholder in blue economy or not, the secretary maritime affairs said that the navy is an integral part of the blue economy but commercial shipping is not in the domain of Pakistan Navy. The committee was also informed that Maritime Affairs is working in collaboration with the World Bank to advance the development of blue economy roadmap. It recommended the ministry to also work in collaboration with the World Bank to launch a project for the provision of clean drinking water for the people of coastal areas.

The committee was also informed that up to 40-45 Chinese companies are being dislocated from China and anticipated to set up their plants in Pakistan. Gwadar Port and free Zone tax exemptions have also been approved in the Finance Bill, 2020-21. The committee was also told that the people of Gwadar will be given preference in the jobs, adding a vocational institution was also being established to train the residents of Gwadar for better job opportunities.

Pakistan: Gwadar women protest for rights, end to ‘illegal trawler fishing’

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2021/11/29/gwadar-women-protest-for-rights-end-to-illegal-trawler-fishing/>

"Hundreds of women Monday took to roads in Balochistan’s Gwadar district and demanded rights and jobs cut due to curbs on illegal smuggling of petrol and goods across Pakistan, Iran border. The rally commenced from Al Johar Public School and concluded at Marine Drive. Speaking at the rally, the participants stated that the breadwinners of their homes were without jobs which had compelled them to step out into the streets. They called for an end to illegal fishing by trawlers and for lifting restrictions on trade with Iran.

Addressing the rally, Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch, the secretary general of Jamaat-i-Islami’s (JI) Balochistan chapter and who is leading the movement, stated that today’s “historic rally” was a testament to the fact that each and every citizen of Gwadar had mobilised for their basic rights.

Activist Jibrán Nasir, tweeting videos from the rally, said thousands of women marched on the streets of Gwadar, adding that a rally of youth and children had also taken place earlier. “All have the same demand: to provide the entire Makran area with basic amenities like potable and clean water,” he said.

On Sunday, Balochistan Minister for Planning and Development Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, who is heading the government team for talks with the protesters, said that the demands made by Baloch had been implemented to a great extent — something he said Baloch had also acknowledged in his speeches. The minister called on him to show more flexibility in negotiations. Thousands of people from Gwadar, Turbat, Pishkan, Zamran, Buleda, Ormara and Pasni have been staging a protest for the past several days.

Among their demands is the removal of additional check-posts at Pushkan, Sarbandan and Gwadar City, the complete removal of fishing trawlers and the opening of the Pak-Iran border. Last week, the Excise, Taxation and Anti-Narcotics Department had ordered the closure of all wine stores in Gwadar district with immediate effect in view of the “law and order situation”. The notification was shared by Buledi on Twitter, who said the decision was taken after negotiations with JI’s Baloch.

Pakistan: Indus Delta fishermen, farmers suffer brunt of climate change

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2331558/vanishing-wetlands-affect-people-wildlife>

"Owing to the climate change phenomenon, rains are becoming uncertain, threat of droughts looming and summers getting hotter. The people depending over fresh water living along the wetlands have suffered severely. Studies show that the melting glaciers provide 80 per cent of Indus River water. According to filmmaker Abdullah Khan, "Studies show that 28 per cent glaciers in Pakistan have vanished in the last 15 years." He also pointed out that glaciers were melting rapidly. The film on 'Vanishing Wetlands', aired on Express TV on Sunday, disclosed how vanishing wetlands have adversely affected the wildlife and the lives people.

The healthy wetlands nourish birds, including the migratory and resident birds. They are also critical for human survival. During droughts the wetlands can replenish parched fields by releasing water from natural reservoirs. They can even filter out pollutants from the waste. But more than anything wetlands are nature's nurseries, supporting 40 per cent of world's wildlife. Haji Ahmed, one the fishermen of Manchhar Lake, said that his family has been living in the lake for seven generations. "Our forefathers used to sail these boats.

They were born and grown up here. Before we didn't have any worries. We had everything in past," he narrated. Fishermen, commonly known as Mohana, have their lifestyle and culture linked with this profession for over 5,000 years. Basheer Mallah, another man said that: "We slept, worked, married and did everything on the boat houses. Our lives were free of stress. We used to grow vegetables here.

Fishermen never bothered with grains crops." The Manchhar Lake is one of the biggest lakes in the region but drastic changes have taken place in the lake affecting the local mohanas. Polluted water released into the lake has destroyed them. "The water [polluted] is now so poisonous. It devastates everything. Our happiness is gone," Basheer Mallah said. Basheer said that the life of fishermen are very hard and sad now. Ahmed said that the water in the lake comes from Indus River. "

"Now, that flow has been dammed." He said that the size of the fish has reduced. "How can we make a living from that?" he questioned. He also complained that the fresh water for them was a precious commodity. "One container of drinking water costs Rs.40. How can we pay for that? We have no other option but to drink this polluted water," he said. The industrial effluent and illegal fishing is also responsible for this loss. Pakistan is one of the water scared countries. But the country still has 19 Ramsar sites which are wetlands of great importance. Every year over a million of birds pass through the Indus flyway.

The Indus River after an epic journey of 3,000 km finally reaches the Arabian Sea, splitting into a massive delta that has sustained wildlife and people for thousands of years. Indus Delta The life in the Indus Delta is not ideal for the fishermen and the farmers. Ghulam Mohammad, who

lives near the Delta said: "The Indus River has run a natural system for thousands of years by changing its path and direction it gives life to the land." He said that all the crops grown there shine like the river Sindh. "I don't think there is any plant that doesn't flourish here.

The secret ingredient of all this beauty comes from the Indus River. The soil is seeped with the aroma of faraway places along the river Sindh. " He is of the views that the human development has collided with the nature. "Now we are facing the consequences. Water scarcity, the lack of rains, a rise in temperature that risen in just the past 15 years. Before there was nothing like that," he mentioned.

He said that farmers were growing large crops of betel leaf in the area. "Its ideal growing temperature is 25 degrees centigrade. " He said that because of rising temperature, the crop of betel leaf was vanishing." The perturbed farmer said that much of the Sindh's water is channeled into canals. He said that when fresh water stops flowing downstream, the Arabian Sea floods in. "That's why so many acres of land have become barren," he said. "Other areas are now infertile because salt water has seeped in from underground."

" Also reminding, he said: "When our elders tell us that they once grew rice and fruit. We find it hard to believe." Almost 1.2 million people have already migrated from shrinking Indus River Delta to Karachi. And thousands of mohanas have abandoned their ancient floating villages. Abdullah said that the film also aims to portray the beauty of the nature. He said that the wetland supports 40 per cent of wildlife. "We need to tell what kind of threats they are facing," he urged.

He also said that it was difficult for him as a filmmaker to find the animals. Sharing the details, WWF-Pakistan's Jamshed said that '2005 se 2012 Pakistan wetlands programmes' was launched that aimed at focusing on restoration, conservation and preservation of the wetlands of Pakistan. He said that the biodiversity was good at Manchhar Lake. "Pollution is one of the reasons of the destruction of Manchhar Lake," he said. Abdullah also said that fishermen were facing issues as they did not get enough fish from the water. "Farming is also disturbed," he added.

Women in Gwadar, Pakistan, protest for rights, end to 'illegal trawler fishing'

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2021/11/29/gwadar-women-protest-for-rights-end-to-illegal-trawler-fishing/>

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Pakistan: Why Gwadar protests against the CPEC?

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2021/columnists/why-gwadar-protests-against-the-cpec-.html>

"Recently, sudden protests erupted in Gwadar against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project. Slated to be an 'upliftment project' for the people of Pakistan, it has instead become a hallmark of Chinese expansionism resulting in crushing the rights of those very people who have hosted it. Due to Pakistan's fragile governance mechanisms, a weak economy marred with corruption; the situation has turned grave. The protestors were supported by the local political groups and NGOs that had genuine interests against the CPEC Project.

The Head of the 'Give rights to Gwadar' rally, Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman, has often been speaking on the rights of the people of Gwadar. Further, the role of the National Party and Baloch Student Organisation also has to be duly recognized in raising their voices against injustice. CPEC goes much beyond the commercial corridor route. It has more penetrative, severe effects on Pakistani society.

First, the CPEC Project has a long belt of 'coastal enjoyment industry', which will supposedly have a vibrant nightlife with luxury hotels, spas, theatres, golf courses. Undoubtedly, the coastal land that would be appropriated for this purpose has nothing to do with Pakistan's small-scale farmers or fishers. Instead, the facilities will ensure 'entertainment' for the Chinese and Pakistani retired Army personnel at the cost of the fishing industry, which has a share of 2 percent in Islamabad's economy.

The news of the Pakistani government giving licenses to the Chinese fishing trawlers has been around for quite some time now. It is in addition to the Chinese illegal and unregulated fishing in the Arabian Sea even during the critical spawning period. These trawlers possess state of the art technology to fish, process and store fisheries immediately, thereby making the competition with the local fishermen asymmetric in nature.

These developments will surely leave behind a trail of unemployment and poverty, resulting in people moving towards drugs and human trafficking. Second, the CPEC has given immense opportunities to grab huge pieces of fertile agricultural land of the farmers. As the world knows,

Pakistan is by and large a praetorian state, i.e., with the Army having the upper hand in most of the government's decisions.

CPEC aimed to cover all parts of food production and distribution in the agricultural sector, ranging from seeds and fertilizer manufacturing to storage and transportation. However, the Project is implemented through land acquisitions under the direct supervision of the Army. These acquisitions have been without proper compensations and sometimes even without the consent of their rightful owners. The usurped land is rented out further with 'land rights' to the Chinese enterprises. In other cases, the agricultural projects convert to Chinese private corporations forging joint ventures with Pakistani companies.

Also, when the Pakistan-based private enterprises own the land, the owner turns out to be retired army personnel or someone who holds influence via the armed forces. It is for this reason that the army land grabs has been time and forth been brought to the notice of the international community by the judiciary of Pakistan itself. In April 2021, the Lahore High Court Chief Justice Mohammad Qasim Khan went on record to say that "the Army seems to have become the biggest land grabber in the country and .the uniform of the Army is for service and not to rule as a king".

The CPEC Authority has decided to construct a fenced wall with only one entry and exit point to ensure that the voices are suppressed and that international media does not highlight the human rights issue. The city would be guarded fiercely with round-the-clock, AI-enabled CCTV cameras and other high technological types of equipment providing ample surveillance. Sources indicate that this wall is 30 kilometres in length and 10 feet high.

Further, Pakistan raised its 34th Light Infantry Division, also known as Special Security Division (SSD), to protect the CPEC. One can hardly come across any other such example where a loan Project of "commercial importance" requires raising a military Division. The development has led to the social alienation of the people of Balochistan, Gwadar in particular and will undoubtedly lead to a full-blown violent conflict and demands for secession.

Agricultural and urban residential and commercial land appropriation by the Army through concessional purchases in the name of supporting the economy has taken deep inroads into its national character. Various Military subsidies, such as the National Logistics Cell and Fauji Foundation, have at a rapid pace nibbled out the civilian competition in various sectors such as cargo transportation, real estate, fertilizers, oil and gas etc.

With each sector dominated by the Military, CPEC only seems to augment a military economy and the lust for land grab. Given the times to come, the farmers would have no legal standing over their land, and in the name of securitizing the Project, it is beyond doubt who will be the actual owner. The Army thus has a nation to itself which is shared with the Chinese Army. On the other hand, in China, the penetrative extent of the Project is that it is often called an 'internal

corridor’, and hence, it would not be wrong to say that it is a Military Project instead of an economic one.

Last year, Criminal Law [Amendment] Bill 2020 was passed that proscribed ridiculing, bringing into disrepute or defaming Pakistan’s armed forces or its members. Of course, given the brewing discontents and recent developments, the role of this Bill is well understood. Usually, the Uniform is accorded much respect, and people worldwide express their gratitude towards their respective forces.

The emerging role of the Pakistani Army now seems to encapsulate the idea of defending the Taliban and other extremists apart from the Chinese Project. It is now determining the economic and social conditions of the people in Pakistan, which will hurt the geopolitical interests of the region. Further, the military government deepened the Baloch alienation with the murder of Akbar Khan Bugti in 2006, who at the time of his death was 79 years old.

The killing of Mufti Hidayatullah in 2018, another Baloch leader, also raised the intent of the Military presence in Balochistan. Early this year, a Pakistani army Major General Ayman Bilal, confessed TO China’s role in suppressing the Baloch movement and the Sino-Pak intentions against Iran’s activities in Balochistan. The CPEC and housing societies predominantly being given to the Pakistan Army personnel probably intend to replace Balochs with the Pakistani Punjabis to contain the Baloch independence movement.

So closely related to this land plunder is a geopolitical question. Where does more land come from to settle the new batch of military officers who retire every year? The answer to this question lies in the current Afghan conundrum. In case the Afghan corridor is integrated with CPEC, then where do the Afghan people go? It seems that the Afghan refugee crisis would be a problem of Europe and Russia and not a Sino-Pak one.

The appointment of new ISI Chief Lt. Gen Nadeem Anjum, who was previously the awardee of ‘Mohsin e Balochistan’, sets the agenda for Afghan ‘land grabs’ and increased suppression of the Baloch and the Afghan people. More mess, it seems, awaits the region.

Pakistan: Govt bans bottom trawling in Balochistan

<https://profit.pakistantoday.com.pk/2021/11/14/foreign-fishing-vessels-barred-from-fishing-in-exclusive-economic-zone/>

"Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi on Friday informed the National Assembly that foreign fishing vessels are not being allowed to fish in Pakistan’s exclusive economic zone to protect the interests of local fishermen.

Responding to questions during the Question Hour, he said that the deep sea fishing policy has been announced after consultations with the stakeholders. He said the bottom trawling has been

banned in Balochistan as it damages the marine life and ecosystem. In response to another question, he said the maritime ministry proposed the amendments in consultation with the stakeholders as a major concern of local fishermen was regarding the issuance of deep-sea fishing licences to foreign entities and foreign joint venture.

This practice, he said, deprived the local fishermen of their livelihood in the past. Therefore, through the amendments in the said rules, no licence is being issued to the foreign vessels or foreign joint ventures.

Pakistan: Karachi coastal project under CPEC to boost economy

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2021/11/15/karachi-coastal-project-under-cpec-to-boost-economy-officials/>

"The recent inclusion of the Karachi Coastal Comprehensive Development Zone (KCCDZ) project in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will boost Pakistan's economy and enhance industrial and development cooperation between Pakistan and China, said experts and officials. The decision to include the project in Karachi into the CPEC was made at the CPEC's recent 10th Joint Cooperation Committee Meeting. Covering a total area of about 930 hectares, of which 640 hectares are reclaimed, the environment-friendly KCCDZ envisages four new berths for the Karachi Port Trust (KPT), according to a statement from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs of Pakistan.

The mega project, being built with an expected investment of \$3.5 billion, will also house a state-of-the-art fishing port, with a world-class fisheries export processing zone to boost the country's trade potential, said the ministry. It will also drastically improve the marine ecosystem and reduce pollution with the establishment of a water treatment plant, the ministry said. Terming the project a game-changer for Pakistan, Prime Minister Imran Khan recently said the coastal development project will bring Karachi on a par with developed port cities of the world.

The project will present opportunities for investors, he said on Twitter, adding that it will also help clean up marine habitats for fishermen and develop 20,000 low-income housing units. The KCCDZ is the first of its kind under the CPEC, which reflects the commitment of Pakistan and China to forge high-quality cooperation to improve people's livelihoods, Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi told Xinhua.

"As all-weather strategic cooperative partners, China and Pakistan are stepping up cooperation in various sectors, giving impetus to the growth of bilateral relations, economic and social development of the two countries," the minister said. Speaking to Xinhua, Syed Hasan Javed, director of Chinese Studies, School of Social Sciences and Humanities at the National University of Science and Technology in Islamabad, said the KCCDZ is a 21st-century modern project replete with the latest technologies, town planning, urban infrastructure, municipal amenities and environment-friendly marine development.

“It will take Pakistan’s economy to the next level of prosperity by attracting foreign direct investment, generating employment and revenue, boosting exports and promoting regional and global connectivity,” Javed said. Muhammad Asif Noor, director of the Islamabad-based think tank Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies, said the project carries enormous potential to spur the country’s blue economy and exports. “Fishing ports and fisheries export processing zones are critical to boost trade in fishing as coastal areas of Pakistan are rich in maritime trade, giving a way to promote the blue economy in Pakistan through infrastructure development and industrial cooperation in the said sector,” Noor told Xinhua.

The project will also build up the confidence of global investors towards the country and its entire ecosystem for providing and offering a lucrative environment to set up businesses and profit, he said “Furthermore, it has the potential to boost industrial cooperation between Pakistan and China due to its proximity with Karachi, the financial hub of the country,” he added.

Noor said that the low-budget housing under the initiative will create affordability for poverty-stricken fishermen to own a house, boosting their socio-economic profile. He said Pakistan can learn from the Chinese experience of tackling climate change and how to effectively use the project to clean up marine habitats and strengthen biodiversity conservation.

Pakistan’s National Party demands cancellation of deep-sea trawlers’ licences

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/906678-np-demands-cancellation-of-deep-sea-trawlers-licences>

"Leaders of Pakistan's National Party on Friday demanded that the federal and Balochistan governments cancel licences to deep-sea fishing trawlers, provide compensation to the fishermen affected by natural disasters, and give fishermen the status of labourer.

Adam Qadir Baksh, NP secretary for fisheries, addressed a press conference at the Karachi Press Club, in which he said his party had been demanding basic rights for the people of the Makran region, particularly the coastal areas of Gwadar and Pasni, whose rights had been usurped by the rulers and who were even deprived of basic facilities of drinking water, health and education.

“Since the government has allowed big trawlers to fish along the Makran coast, the local fishermen are not able to earn their livelihood,” he said. Baksh said deep-sea trawlers had been fishing beyond 12 nautical miles from the baseline, violating the laws.

Critically endangered Longcomb Sawfish caught by fishermen at Pak-Iran border

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2327283/critically-endangered-longcomb-sawfish-caught-by-fishermen-at-pak-iran-border>

"An extremely rare and critically endangered species of sawfish, Longcomp Sawfish, was caught by fishermen near the Pakistan-Iran border on Saturday, October 29 2021. This species, scientifically known as *Pristis zijsron*, is considered to be extremely rare and faces the threat of extinction.

Three species of sawfish, the Knifetooth (*Anoxypristis cuspidatus*), large tooth (*Pristis pristis*) and largecomb (*Pristis zijsron*), have been reported in Pakistan. However, due to overfishing and habitat degradation, the population of sawfish has decreased substantially and they are now considered to be nearly extinct at the local level.

How climate change, geopolitics are linked to the tragedy of a Pakistani fisherman

<https://thewire.in/south-asia/climate-change-tragedy-india-pakistani-fishermen>

"The tragedy of a fisherman who died of COVID-19 while imprisoned in India, far from his family in Karachi, highlights the link between geopolitics and climate change – issues that will be deliberated at COP26 in Glasgow. In November 2017, Amir Hamza was among the crew of a Pakistani fishing boat arrested by Indian security forces across the maritime border.

Fisherfolk along the Arabian Sea coast shared by nuclear-armed neighbours Pakistan and India know that they risk such arrests, as well as sea storms, if they stray across the invisible line. But it is a risk they take, driven by declining fish populations.

India and Pakistan: The climate is changing fishers' fortunes – But not India-Pakistan animosity

<https://science.thewire.in/environment/climate-change-link-pakistani-indian-fishermen-cop26/>

"The tragedy of a fisherman who died of COVID-19 while imprisoned in India, far from his family in Karachi, highlights the link between geopolitics and climate change – issues that will be deliberated at COP26 in Glasgow. In November 2017, Amir Hamza was among the crew of a Pakistani fishing boat arrested by Indian security forces across the maritime border. Fisherfolk along the Arabian Sea coast shared by nuclear-armed neighbours Pakistan and India know that they risk such arrests, as well as sea storms, if they stray across the invisible line.

But it is a risk they take, driven by declining fish populations. When caught, the men are hauled off to prison on 'the other side' and their boats impounded. Both sides rarely return these vessels, which often represent the life-savings of their owners.

Throw back the catch

Activists have long been urging both countries to adopt a no-arrest policy for fishermen who stray across the maritime border. “They should throw the catch back and let the fishermen go back rather than arresting them,” says Mumbai-based activist Jatin Desai. Instead, “we treat each other’s prisoners like prisoners of war”, to quote the late Mohammad Ali Shah of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF). The Karachi-based community leader died in August, aged 65, after contracting COVID-19.

Amir Hamza, around the same age, was killed by the same virus two months earlier while incarcerated in Bhuj, a town in Gujarat, India. He was one of Shah’s constituents. He had been arrested along with other crew members of a Pakistani fishing boat for violating the maritime border in November 2017. They had all completed their sentences and been repatriated, except Hamza. Shah’s successor at the PFF, Saeed Baloch, says that Hamza was of Bengali origin but had long lived in Pakistan.

The prison sentence itself is typically six-nine months but fishermen may end up spending years in prison as undertrials. Even after completing their terms, they must wait for consular access and identity verification. Abject poverty keeps them far removed from the corridors of power and cutting edge research like a NASA study of 2019, showing how a warming Himalaya is impacting the marine ecology in the Arabian Sea.

These arrests violate international treaties like the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations 1963, which mandates that any foreign national arrested or detained must be granted access to their country’s consulate. In denying consular access to arrested fisherfolk, both countries also violate their own 2008 agreement to provide consular access to all civilian prisoners within three months of detention.

Judicial committee

In 2007, India and Pakistan formed a joint judicial committee on prisoners comprising four retired judges from either side. The committee was supposed to meet twice a year and expedite the release of cross-border prisoners. However, it only met seven times until its last convention in October 2013 in India and has been lying defunct since then. The Committee needs to be urgently reconstituted. In May 2018, India appointed its four nominees.

Pakistan has yet to do so. Hamza had a Pakistani national identity card but had not updated it to the computerised version. This led to delays in his identity verification and repatriation, forcing him to languish in detention until he died of COVID-19. His mortal remains were stored at a morgue at GK Civil Hospital, Bhuj. A Gujarat government certificate, issued on September 9, lists June 13 as the date of demise. The wheels of bureaucracy churn slowly.

The paperwork for Hamza’s identity verification and repatriation of the body began in August, after an official visited Hamza’s family in Karachi. Imagine an official visiting you at home to inquire if you are related to your loved one, held prisoner across the border for four years. Then

he tells you the person died two months ago. That is how Hamza's family learnt of his passing. The Pakistan High Commission in Delhi issued emergency identity papers. Pakistan's interior ministry wrote to the prisons department in Lahore to organise transportation for the body via ambulance to Karachi.

Why these formalities could not have been fulfilled in Hamza's lifetime remains a mystery. Officials on both sides blame the other for the delays. Tortuous delay, tortuous route Hamza's bereaved family had to wait another month to receive his body. His last journey followed the torturous route forced upon cross-border prisoners, alive or dead. Hamza was transported over 1,200 km north to the Attari-Wagah border, then over 1,200 km south to the port city. The direct sea or air journey between the Gujarat coast to Karachi takes about two hours.

The Indian Border Security Force handed over Hamza's mortal remains to a deputation of 18 Wing, Punjab Rangers at the Attari-Wagah border on 14 September 2021 at around 6.30 pm. Representatives of Edhi Centre then transported Hamza by ambulance to Karachi. The body was strapped in such a way that his family could not see his face one last time. They did not even have money for the funeral. The Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum paid those expenses.

Red tape

The delays in repatriating Hamza's body is neither new nor peculiar to one or the other side. In Hamza's case, India provided consular access to Pakistan on February 16, 2018 but couldn't confirm his nationality, says Jatin Desai, a journalist and activist with the Pakistan India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy. Desai, who has been following such cases for years, remembers the Pakistani fisherman Nawaz Ali, incarcerated in India for 13 years. It took a month to repatriate his body after he died in 2012.

In July 2017, an Indian fisherman Kana Chauhan, 37, died in a Pakistani prison after complaining of chest pain. His body too, lay in the morgue for weeks before it could be sent back. Two other Indian fishermen, Vaaga Chauhan and Ratan Das, died in a Karachi prison on December 12, 2015 and February 8, 2016 respectively. Their bodies reached India months later, on April 14, 2016. Last July, it took a month for the body of Pakistani fisherman Abdul Karim Bhatti, who died in India after being imprisoned there for seven months, to be flown home to Karachi.

Explaining the process behind the delay in Hamza's case, Saurabh Singh, superintendent of police, Bhuj, told Shishir Arya of the Times of India that the established procedure for such cases involves the state's home ministry taking up the matter, then pursuing it with the Union home ministry. The Union ministry then takes up the issue with the relevant foreign country. Each country then follows its own procedure to identify the individual and repatriate them.

If the foreign prisoner's nationality cannot be verified the body, it cannot be repatriated and the last rites take place in the arresting country. This is what happened in the case of Imran Kamran,

a 38-year-old man Pakistani national who died in January this year. He had been detained at the Joint Interrogation Centre (JIC) in Bhuj since being arrested in 2009 without valid travel documents.

Kamran's body was taken to the Guru Gobind Singh Government General Hospital for a forensic post-mortem. Eight months later, when his identity as a Pakistani could still not be verified, the authorities gave the green signal for the last rites to take place. Volunteers of a nonprofit buried him in a graveyard in Jamnagar city on August 27, 2021 according to Muslim rites. Not criminals "These men were not criminals or terrorists. Small errors on their part and hostilities between their nations cost them their lives," says Jatin Desai.

"Yet, not even a fraction of the concern and outpouring of emotion for the deaths of brave jawans (soldiers) is extended to them. There is no uproar, no debate." This may have something to do with "their low economic status, semi-literacy, and invisibility to the public in both countries". Prisoner lists between both countries are exchanged annually on the first of January and July. The prisoner lists of January 2021 showed 340 Pakistani prisoners in India, including 263 civilians and 77 fishermen, and 319 Indian prisoners in Pakistan, including 49 civilians and 270 fishermen.

The July lists showed 271 civilian prisoners and 74 fishermen "believed to be Pakistani" in India, and 51 civilian prisoners and 558 fishermen "believed to be Indian" in Pakistan. India has so far confirmed the nationality of 376. However, they remain in prison. Given technological advances, "it won't take more than a day for the Indian consulate to establish the nationality of fishermen lodged in Pakistani jail if they choose", says Desai. Families of such prisoners on either side struggle economically and emotionally in the absence of their main breadwinners.

Heera Savra's husband, an Indian fisherman, has been in Pakistani custody since their son was just five months old. Now four years old, the boy has no memories of his father, reports the Times of India. "Many women from the entire coastal area of Saurashtra – Gir Somnath, Porbandar, Junagadh, Devbhumi Dwarka, Jamnagar districts – have the same heart-breaking tales to tell," the newspaper reports. The day Amir Hamza's body was repatriated to Pakistan, Indian coastguards apprehended another Pakistani fishing boat "Allah Pawawakal" with 12 crew members in Indian waters.

The pattern has been repeated for years now – fishermen on either side are basically "prisoners of poor policies... Arrest, release, repeat". India and Pakistan's toxic official relations continue to take a human toll and hold South Asia hostage even as the region deals with the crisis of climate change that includes fish migration patterns.

Pakistan: Covid affecting Pak-China aquatic products trade

<https://nation.com.pk/01-Nov-2021/covid-affecting-pak-china-aquatic-products-trade>

"The outbreak of the pandemic has been disrupting the trade of aquatic products globally, including that between Pakistan and China. According to China Economic Net, out of Pakistan's total fishery exports, 60 per cent are destined for China. "Since the outbreak of the pandemic, our export to China declined," shared a fisherman from the Karachi Port. Since the beginning of this year, nine out of the top fifteen companies, exporting fish to China have faced or have been facing a temporary ban since January after detection of corona virus in their shipments.

According to Chinese customs, in September alone, frozen food from Pakistan has been tested positive for four times. "In the post-pandemic era, digital means provide a possibility for the badly-hit aquatic sector to revive", this is an idea shared by Zhang Ye, Vice President of Tencent Cloud in the 2021 Global Forum on Sustainable Fisheries Development held in Qingdao, Shandong Province in eastern China.

For this purpose, a brand new digital platform "CFSE Global Marketplace" has been launched by China Fisheries & Seafood Expo (CFSE) in partner with Tencent, a tech giant and parent company of WeChat, to bring global exhibitors and visitors together online, including Pakistani participants. The forum is the first large-scale global forum in the aquatic and fishery sectors since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, signalling an upward trend of the global fishery and aquatic industries.

"Globally, the outlook is cloudy in the short term; but in the long run, demand for seafood will increase", shared Peter Redmay, President of Sea Fare Expositions on the forum. Aquatic products provide about 17percent animal protein to the global population. FAO statistics show that the global average annual consumption of fishery products has reached a record of 20.5 kilograms per person, up from 9.0 kilograms in 1962, and this figure is expected to increase to 21.5 kilograms in the next decade.

In particular, the availability of aquaculture products has been on the rise. Punjab Police official abducted in Tando Muhammad Khan According to TRTA Pakistan, more than 0.8 million people in the country rely directly or indirectly on the industry for their livelihood. "Without the sustainability in the fishery sector, it would be impossible to realize agricultural sustainability and security."

Looking forward, he anticipates a food system transformation that unleashes the full potential of aquaculture and is adapted to pandemic scenarios, improved aquaculture resilience by preparing for emergencies in advance, appropriate government relief and social support, augmented R&D in fish farming methods, fish feed, and new varieties, digitalization and automation, and enhanced cooperation and partnership.

Pakistan: Balochistan to curb illegal fishing in its territorial waters

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2326590/balochistan-to-curb-illegal-fishing-in-its-territorial-waters>

"Balochistan Fisheries Department is unable to take strict action against the boats involved in illegal fishing in its coastal waters due to lack of resources including modern and fast boats and man power. This was disclosed by DG Fisheries Balochistan at a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Matahar Niaz Rana.

The meeting was held to review the situation of illegal hunting and to prevent illegal it in the territorial waters of the province. Additional Chief Secretary Home Arshad Majeed, Secretary Finance Abdul Rehman Buzdar, Secretary Fisheries Babar Khan, DG Fisheries and other concerned officers attended the meeting.

Briefing about the difficulties, DG Fisheries said that his department is taking steps to curb illegal trawlers and fishing boats, however, due to unavailability of manpower and modern patrol boats, the department is unable to take effective action against illegal trawlers and boats.

Addressing the meeting, the chief secretary said that all concerned agencies including Fisheries Department should take strict action against illegal trawlers and unregistered boats in Balochistan waters.

Pakistan: KCCDZ: A crown of Coastal Pakistan

http://en.ce.cn/Insight/202110/24/t20211024_37023780.shtml

"Karachi Coastal Comprehensive Development Zone (KCCDZ) is a new milestone in bilateral economic cooperation between China and Pakistan under CPEC. Recently, Pakistan and China decided to include a new project KCCDZ in CPEC to develop a maritime economic zone to facilitate blue economy in Pakistan. The inclusion of KCCDZ in CPEC is termed as a game changer in Pakistan and China alike because of its perceived potential benefits.

Given that, Pakistan and China agreed to push a project worth multi-billion Pakistani Rupee near Karachi at the 10th Joint Cooperation Committee on CPEC and this new inclusion certainly boosts cooperation at a higher level. The rationalised cost of the project has been estimated at Rs 20.7 billion on a cost-sharing basis. The project will facilitate free movement of KCR trains. KCCDZ will help Pakistan in a number of ways.

The foremost is the category of Direct Investment as China agrees to finance \$3.5 billion direct investment in the project which will increase dollar reserves in Pakistan. In addition to the finances, the facilities envisioned to be developed will assist local population at the social level to seek employment, initiate fishery and fair business to contribute to the economy while creating a tourist spot for the entire region.

This zone is expected to have four new berths for Karachi Port Trust (KPT), 20,000 housing units, state of the art fishing zone and world class processing zone for fisheries. Prime Minister Imran Khan also acknowledged the development, saying it will create immense potential for new investors in the sector. It will clean the maritime ecosystem and reduce pollution by better water waste management and treatment plants at the mouth of River Lyari.

This outstanding contribution and initiative will provide impetus to the growth potential of CPEC to the next best level. Karachi is considered as the business capital of Pakistan being a port city. It facilitates maritime trade of the entire Pakistan from its ports and presents maritime opportunities to introduce new initiatives towards the blue economy.

Since it has the basic infrastructure, it would be easy to capitalize the existing environment to reinvigorate it on modern footings to increase its potential. In this regard, KCCDZ have decided to develop in the vicinity of Karachi to utilize the existing available resources and create new and modern resources for the growth of the local population and national revenue. The inclusion of KCCDZ in the CPEC framework is an important initiative especially when Minister of Maritime Affairs personally takes care to monitor the progress and resource utilization.

This will make Karachi an important top trade hub in the world in the maritime sector. This entire project has a lot to offer to Pakistan especially when there is a foreign direct investment; there comes an improvement in the trade balance. This also builds investors' confidence about the country and its entire ecosystem for providing and offering a lucrative environment to build businesses and profits. In addition, it gives employment to local companies and the population not only in the construction of the project but also after its completion.

The low-budget housing will create affordability for poor fishermen to own a house, boosting their socio-economic profile. Fishing and processing zones are critical to boost trade in fishing as coastal areas of Pakistan are rich in maritime trade, giving a way to promote the maritime economy in Pakistan through development and industrial cooperation in the said sector. Furthermore, it has the potential to boost industrial cooperation between Pakistan and China due to its proximity to Karachi. Karachi is the hub of business and considered as the growth engine of Pakistan. In order to successfully execute the multi-billion dollar projects, it is necessary to set the right direction from the very outset.

Pakistan and China are very clear regarding their goals and come up with plans for maximum possible turnover. Connecting this important project to CPEC will have a huge impact on social and economic level. It is likely to get legitimacy as the major port cities enjoy maritime industries including but not limited to ship logistics, ship manufacturing, port management, fishing and its processing. Pakistan is a house to huge maritime and inland fishery resources of multiple species.

Currently, Makran coast and Karachi coast are two primary areas where the fishery industry is developed but the whole of the coastal line is linked with this small industry as this sector

employs less than one percent national workforce. Usually, fishermen use localized techniques and their whole economic life is linked with fishing only being the sole source of income.

With the development of KCCDZ, this sector would be considered as a formal sector of the economy which would escalate the fishing capacity by modern means and employ more people not only in fishing but also in freezing, processing and canning.

Pakistan can learn from the outstanding Chinese experience of climate change and maritime conservation. Pakistan can further learn how to effectively use this project in cleaning the entire maritime ecosystem, habitat and biodiversity conservation. Ports are developed in urban areas of coastal regions worldwide and Pakistan also operates major ports in Karachi and Gwadar. This particular project will help Karachi and will act as a catalyst for further growth and development of the port city.

Certainly, this project will increase the potential of Pakistan to clean and protect the maritime ecosystem, establish a blue economy, facilitate infrastructure development and generate employment which in the long run can help Pakistan become on par with major developed port cities in the world in terms of trade transit, development, and economic activity.

Blue economy is a new concept in line with climate change conventions which focus on socio-human development in coastal areas, equity and reduced risks to the maritime environment. Pakistan can materialize its dream to develop the port cities on par with major port cities by generating an equal level of economic activity especially in fisheries with excellent China's support. KCCDZ is a milestone in this regard.

Pakistan: Activists vow to continue Muhammad Ali Shah's struggle for fishing community's rights

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/902653-activists-vow-to-continue-muhammad-ali-shah-s-struggle-for-fishing-community-s-rights>

"At a condolence event on Saturday, human rights and trade union activists on Monday paid rich tribute to founder of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) Muhammad Ali Shah, saying that he spent his life fighting not only for the rights of the fishing community but also for other downtrodden communities, such as peasants and people affected by the Thar Coal project. Shah had passed away on August 19 due to complications of Covid-19. He was 66.

The condolence event was organised at the Arts Council of Pakistan by the Joint Action Committee, a Karachi-based alliance of civil society organisations, to reflect on the life and achievements of the deceased fishing community leader. In 1998, Shah founded along with his companions the PFF, a countrywide organisation of the fishing community. Speakers at the event recalled that Shah always called for justice when it came to the fishermen imprisoned in the

Pakistani and Indian jails, construction of dams on the Indus River, abolition of the contracting system on lakes, and construction of illegal jetties.

The late rights activist also faced jail terms while fighting for the rights of the fishermen, it was said. Recently, Shah led a campaign against the federal government's announcement of constructing cities on the twin islands of Bundal and Dingi. He also played an active role in demanding for implementation of basic human rights from the platform of the Awami Tehreek. Because of his lifelong struggle, Shah was also made the chairman of the Asia region of the World Forum of Fisher People (WFFP), a global forum for the small-scale fishermen.

Karamat Ali of the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (Piler) said Shah's friends would carry on his struggle and move forward the PFF in a democratic way. Faisal Edhi, philanthropist and head of the Edhi Foundation, remembered the times when he worked with Shah for the release of fishermen languishing in jails of Pakistan and India for fishing in disputed waters. "The struggle for releasing innocent and poor fishermen from jails of both countries should be continued," Faisal said.

Abdul Khaliq Junejo, head of the Jeay Sindh Mahaz, said that although the PFF was a non-governmental organisations, it was organised by Shah on a political basis and he also focused on ensuring the participation of women in the PFF's campaigns. PFF Senior Vice Chairperson Fatima Majeed said her father Majeed Motani was imprisoned in an Indian jail for fishing in disputed waters in the 1980s.

"When Shah, Motani and other fishermen leaders formed the PFF, we have been associated with the organisation since then," she added. Praising the late activist for his struggle for a cleaner environment, PFF Secretary General Saeed Baloch said Shah ran various campaigns to create awareness among the people against the challenges of climate change and pollution. Shah's children Yasmeen Shah and Mehran Shah said their parents, Shah and his wife Tahira Shah, had spent their lives in the struggle for the fishing community's rights and their mission would be continued.

Tahira, who was the PFF vice-chairperson, died in a car accident near Sujawal in 2015. Sindh Commission on the Status of Women Chairperson Nuzhat Shirin, Aurat Foundation's Mahnaz Rehman, National Trade Union Federation's Nasir Masnoor, Piler's Zulfiqar Shah, researcher Ely Ercelan, historian Gul Hasan Kalmati, and journalist Dodo Chandio were also among the speakers who paid tribute to Shah.

Pakistan: Fish brings good business in winter

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/agriculture/fish-brings-good-business-in-winter-1382943.html>

"The business of fish is flourishing after the weather turned a bit chilly as stalls of fish sellers and those dealing in selling fried fish could be seen in every nook and corner of the city. Stalls of 'Rahu', Mahasher, Silver and other varieties of fish could be seen along roads in Pindora, Commercial Market, Haidri Chowk, Liaquat Road, Committee Chowk, Banni Chowk, Sadiqabad, Tipu Road, Saddar Babu Bazaar, Adiala Road and Lalkurti while many kind of fried fish is available at Rs 600 to Rs 1600 per kilogram at these stalls.

The fishermen bring fish from different dams including Sandimar Dam, Shah Pur Dam, Misriot Dam, Rawal Dam etc to the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. A fried fish seller Waris Khan Chowk said ""I have been doing this business for the past 23 years at Commercial Market and Saddar Babu Bazaar (Hathi Chowk) and we earn a lot during chilly weather as the fish is favorable dish of the season.""A medical practitioner Dr. Arshad Tanoli said that fish was a necessary food item for health. ""People of all ages should eat fish in winter season to keep themselves warm,"" he suggested.

Pakistan: Karachi coastal zone: Country's golden steps into blue-economy

<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/karachi-coastal-zone-pakistans-golden-steps-into-blue-economy/>

"The Pakistan government, under the leadership of Imran Khan, has launched a multi-billion-dollar project in the city of Karachi under the umbrella of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The Karachi coastal zone project (KCCDZ) in the CPEC development initiative is said to be a game-changer for Pakistan and also for the countries that are on board the CPEC development project. Pakistan has a 1,050km long coastline and 2,90,000 sq. km of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with unexploited natural resources and opportunities.

The initiative has been started by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs. The project plans to build a state-of-the-art urban infrastructure zone in the city of Karachi. This brings Karachi to the top seaport cities of the world. What is the Karachi coastal zone project? "The monumental decision was taken during the 10th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) on CPEC, held on 23rd September 2021 at Islamabad and Beijing," said a Pakistan Government official.

The Karachi coastal zone project (KCCDZ) in the CPEC development initiative spreads over a vast area of 640 hectares or 1,581 acres. The plan is to develop a modern fishery board connected by a Harbour bridge connecting Manora Islands and Sandspit beach, a Fisheries export processing zone, a water treatment plant, and 20,000 affordable housing units. The present-day Pakistani regime cares a great deal about the climate.

We have seen Prime Minister Imran Khan's speech in the United Nations regarding climate change and also the Billion tree tsunami campaign in which Pakistan has set new precedents for saving the planet earth. To prosper responsibly, the KCCDZ initiative is going to be an

environmentally friendly one, with considerations for the climate. What will this project include? The plan includes a world-class fisheries export processing zone which will boost Pakistan's trade potential in the region and a water treatment plant to restore the marine ecosystem and reduce pollution in the area.

The Pakistan maritime ministry is also focusing on empowering blue economy initiatives. Blue economy initiatives ensure sustainable use of the ocean resources for economic growth thereby protecting and supporting the eco-system and environment. Some of the sectors include fisheries, shipping, seawater salination, deep-sea mining, aquaculture, and maritime transport, coastal tourism, and cruise ship industry, port activities, shipbuilding, and offshore oil and gas. "KCCDZ will unlock Pakistan's unexplored blue economy and significantly enhance development and industrial cooperation between Pakistan and China," the maritime ministry statement said.

Pakistan Government claims that this project bears the huge potential to attract global investors as well. "Inclusion of Karachi Comprehensive Coastal Development Zone in CPEC is a game-changer. Will clean up our marine habitat for fishermen, develop 20k low-income housing units, & present opportunities for investors," Imran Khan tweeted. Pakistan is on its way towards a more stable and flourishing economy. The plan seems to be responsible for growth, which includes the neighboring countries so that the entire region prospers together.

Pakistan government official has signaled about the Taliban-Led Afghan government's interest to come on board the multi-billion dollar CPEC infrastructure project. "Regional connectivity is an important element of our discussion with Afghan leadership and our way forward for our economic interaction with Afghanistan," said Mansoor Ahmad Khan, Pakistan's envoy to Kabul, in an interview with Reuters.

"This important project — China Pakistan Economic Corridor ... provides good opportunities, good potential for providing infrastructure and energy connectivity between Afghanistan and Pakistan ... (and) also connecting South Asia to the Central Asian region." He added. Other than India and a few other like-minded countries who continue to adopt delusional policies and poor alliances, the entire central Asian and middle eastern region together with Afghanistan are interested in investing in the Pakistan-China CPEC project.

For investors as well as the local population, this initiative will prove to be a gold mine. With CPEC's careful and timely expansion in Karachi and Pakistan Government's environment-friendly policies, Karachi is set to become a strong competitor for the present-day seaports in the world.

Pakistan: Parliamentary panel informed: Foreign trawlers carrying out no fishing activity since Aug

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40126879/parliamentary-panel-informed-foreign-trawlers-carrying-out-no-fishing-activity-since-aug>

"The secretary Ministry of Maritime Affairs was responding to various questions raised by the members of the Senate Standing Committee on Maritimes Affairs held here under the chairmanship of Senator Rubina Khalid. He said that the Chinese trawlers had returned on August 25, 2021 and the ministry has completely shut down both trawlers and joint ventures. The committee reviewed the issue of illegal fishing trawlers in the territorial waters of Balochistan and the measures taken by the ministry to curb illegal fishing by foreign trawlers, and the Pakistan Merchant Marine Policy 2001.

Ahmed further informed the panel that a total 25,000 fishing boats were operating in the waters of Balochistan of which 10,000 are operating on a daily basis. The ministry has recently managed to get approval of deep fishing rules from the cabinet and set up a vessel monitoring system to monitor boats at sea, the committee was informed. Chairperson Committee Senator Rubina Khalid raised the question of whether any action is being taken against illegal trawlers. The panel was informed that illegal fishing activities are a punishable crime and anybody guilty could face up to five years of imprisonment and Rs10 million fine.

Senator Muhammad Tahir Bizenjo said that the issue of trawlers has been going on for a long time and there was a massive protest by local fishermen in Gwadar on September 30, 2021 against illegal trawlers. Senator Muhammad Tahir Bizenjo said that steps should also be taken to stop inter-provincial trawling. Responding to Senator Bizenjo's suggestion the federal secretary Maritimes Affairs said that stopping the inter-provincial trawling activities was the provincial government's responsibility. He said that his ministry has written letters to the relevant departments of the Sindh and Balochistan provincial governments to take necessary actions in this connection.

In order to stop trawling, the secretaries of Sindh and Balochistan have been requested to ban the raw material of net used for trawling. Senator Rubina Khalid, after a thorough review of the matter, said that the Standing Committee would soon visit Sindh and Balochistan provinces, in which details would be sought from the fisheries authorities on the spot. The party presented recommendations and suggestions for the prevention of illegal fishing by foreign trawlers.

Secretary, Ministry of Maritime Affairs informed the committee that about 200 trained sailors graduate from Pakistan Marine Academy every year. The meeting of was attended by senators Abida Mohammad Azeem, Maula Bakhsh Chandio, Kamran Michael, Naseema Ehsan, Mohammad Tahir Bizenjo besides secretary Ministry of Maritime Affairs and senior officials.

Pakistan: Urges China to use Gwadar port for transshipment

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/pakistan-urges-china-to-use-gwadar-port-for-transshipment-report-2576710>

"Pakistan has requested China to market Gwadar Port and at least utilise it for their transshipment cargo, Special Assistant to Prime Minister Imran Khan on Maritime Affairs, Mahmood Moulvi said. Moulvi, while speaking at the '11th Sustainable Shipping, Logistics and Supply China Summit and Exhibition', said that the Chinese private sector held 91 per cent of the Gwadar Port, which meant that Beijing was responsible for its marketing and development, reported The News International. "

"We are asking the Chinese government to market Gwadar Sea Port because it is the responsibility of China to bring cargo at Gwadar Port, we requested China to at least take their transshipment cargo from Gwadar," The News International quoted Moulvi as saying. He said that during the previous government freight subsidy was given to ship imported fertiliser from Gwadar to upcountry, as transportation cost upcountry from Gwadar was higher compared to the Karachi Port.

Emphasising that Beijing has plans to develop fisheries and housing schemes in Machhar Colony, Keamari areas, and three new berths at the Karachi Port, he said that these projects would cost nearly USD 3 billion. Moulvi also highlighted that apart from Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC), no shipping company exists there.

Underlining the incentives announced by the current government to bring more players in the local shipping industry, he informed that the government announced a five per cent financing facility as well as income tax exemption for ten years.

Pakistan: Fish health lab would helpful in controlling fish diseases

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/health/fish-health-lab-would-helpful-in-controlling-1373868.html>

"Director Fisheries (Aquaculture) Dr Muhammad Abid said that the establishment of fish mobile health analytical laboratory in the district would play an important role in controlling fish diseases. While talking to media here on Tuesday, he said that at present, fish farming was being carried out in an area of more than 12,000 acres, while establishment of the laboratory would facilitate fish farmers in water and soil analytical samples and prevention of fish diseases.

The director added that free ambulance service was being provided along with the laboratory through which the department will bring its technical advice at the doorsteps of fishery farmers. He said that any kind of negligence in providing technical assistance to fish farmers would not be tolerated.

Digitising climate action in Pakistan

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/899338-digitising-climate-action>

"Pakistan's climate change concerns include the increased variability of monsoons; the impact of receding Himalayan glaciers on the Indus River; decreased capacity of water reservoirs; reduced hydropower during the drought period; and extreme events including flash floods. The National Assembly Standing Committee on Climate Change provides an evidence-based mechanism of innovation that allows elected representatives to support the executive.

To achieve this vision, we have developed a state-of-the-art web portal that has become a central repository of all climate- and environment-related laws, policies, international treaties and conventions. Our model has been showcased as a regional best practice on a number of multilateral climate forums.

During the eighth dialogue on 'Action for Climate Empowerment' by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), our version was presented as a model for other parliaments and governments to learn and adopt.

Pakistan: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is constructing about 380 trout fish farms mostly in Malakand and Hazara

<https://nation.com.pk/05-Oct-2021/kp-govt-constructing-380-fish-farms-in-malakand-hazara>

"Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is constructing about 380 trout fish farms mostly in Malakand and Hazara divisions to increase meat production in the province. The Fisheries Department's officials on Monday said that 287 trout fish farms are being constructed under Development of Cold Water Fisheries Project (DCWFP) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa costing Rs772.148 million under the Prime Minister's Agriculture Development Programme (PMAGDP).

Similarly, around 93 are being built under Establishment of Trout Villages' Project (ETVP) in Malakand and Hazara divisions with an estimated cost of Rs395.49 million. Kalam, Madain, Kaghan, Naran, Mahodhand, Malam Jabba in Upper Swat, Naran, Kaghan, Siran and Upper Manshera besides Parachinar in Kurram tribal district are ideally suitable for trout farming. The climate condition of Upper Malakand and Hazara divisions are most suitable for trout farming where plenty of cold water reservoirs including River Kunhar and Swat are available to bolster sea food production.

Work on these mega projects had been started in 2019-20 and ETVP would be completed during current fiscal year while PMAGDP would continue till 2023. The official said Rs203 million have been spent on trout village's project by June last while Rs192.949 million allocated for current fiscal year. Similarly, Rs233 million have been utilised on development of cold water fisheries project by June 2021 while Rs75 million set aside for the current financial year.

Under trout villages' project, he said a model hatchery and research centre would be constructed at Swat. He said about 200 beneficiaries are registered for establishment of trout fish farms in KP. Fifty percent each share-cost would be contributed by the KP government and beneficiaries for establishment of trout farms in the province. At least 35 marla land with facilities of inflow and outflow of water, approach road and electricity is mandatory for farmers to take full advantage of the government's package.

He said an ideal hatchery should have 600,000 fish seeds for proper breeding. KP is ideal suited for commercial breeding of 'Masher' to increase revenue and income of fish farmers. Being a national fish of Pakistan, masher is found in rivers Swat, Pajkora, Indus, Siran and Kunhar, however the water pollution, habitat loss and illegal fishing was making negative effects on its population.

The official said a new project for conservation and development of 'Mahsher fish' was being launched with an estimated cost of Rs100 million including an allocation of Rs30 million for Annual Development Programme 2021-22 to increase its production and ensure conservation on modern lines.

Masher hatchery has been established at Thana Malakand district where its breeding on commercial basis has been started. Following completion of these mega projects, the official said, KP would become a hub of trout and masher fish besides its exports to Middle East, Afghanistan, Central Asian states and others international markets would be significantly bolstered.

Pakistan: Alyani orders relief work in rain-hit areas

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1649994>

"A relief package would be announced for the people affected by the rains and cyclone, the chief minister said in a tweet, promising help and assistance to the people living on Gwadar coast. Residents of Gwadar and Pasni as well as fishermen suffered huge losses as roughly over three dozen fishing vessels were destroyed after high tides whipped up by cyclone Shaheen lashed Makran coast.

The chief minister asked the Gwadar administration and PDMA officials to assess the damage in the areas and submit a report. "A financial package will be arranged to compensate victims and their families," he added. While posting photos of some newly built dams, he tweeted: "Sawar dam Gwader and shadi kor dam Pasni... The current rains have benefitted all dams made in Gwader and this really benefits the local communities.... 4 more dams are under construction and inshallah one day the coast shall have a good sufficient source of water."

The chief minister termed the completion of a vocational institute project an important milestone for Balochistan in general and Gwadar in particular. “Inshallah this institute shall pave the way forward for skill development and empowerment of Balochistan youth in achieving their goals,” he tweeted. Responding to a tweet by Senator Khuda Babar Baloch regarding power supply, CM Alyani stated: “Dear senator... the picture is not that dark as you are showing it.

Emense development is under way and alot of works are going in whole of Gwadar. Including water, dams, education, infrastructure, skill development, health facilities, jobs, sports, colleges and more.” In a statement issued on Sunday, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) stated: “Heavy winds, rains and thunderstorm hit coastal areas of Balochistan yesterday, causing urban flooding in low-lying areas of Gwadar old town.

“Stagnant water accumulated, posing extreme problems for local population of Gwadar. Army troops immediately assisted civil administration in rescue and relief efforts, including dewatering of various areas and shifting people stranded in water through boats. “Rescue efforts along Coastal Highway, Pasni and Jiwani are also being conducted, including traffic management at locations where infrastructure is damaged due to hill torrents.

Pakistan Coast Guards successfully conducted rescue operations of stranded and capsized civil launches/ boats in collaboration with local fishermen. Troops in Jiwani, Paishukan and small jetties are assisting the locals in moving their boats to safer locations.”

Pakistan: Fishermen fear loss of boats, infrastructure along coast

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/896594-fishermen-fear-loss-of-boats-infrastructure-along-coast>

"Strong winds in the wake of Cyclone Gulab have spread fear among communities living in close proximity to the shore at Keti Bunder, Kharo Chhan, Shah Bunder, Thatta, Sujawal and parts of Karachi. Heavy rains together with strong winds whipped the wide coastal area in Sindh last night and continued intermittently, in its wake destroying shelters and several mud houses in villages, which forced people to seek refuge elsewhere.

Majeed Motani, a senior fisherman and boat captain said around 3,400 larger and small sized boats have been anchored at nine jetties of the largest coastal locality Ibrahim Hydri, Karachi because of rough weather. He said traditionally, the months of August and September were considered lucrative for catching fish, but with the threat of the cyclone, the fisher community was staying put.

Speaking of variations caused by climate change, Motani said that a number of workers had to stay home and face hardships. The current situation was again uncertain for the boat crews. In Pakistan, fishing activities continue throughout the year, but peak season is traditionally post-

monsoon. Shrimp however are not caught during June and July. Sindh coastal area has been declared as prone to sea storms, including cyclones.

Living along the coast, he said the fisher community was far more aware of the dangers and rough seas, and took precautions as and when needed. Native and Indigenous Fishermen Association (NIFA) President Asif Bhatti said, “Despite threats, we are not really prepared to face any unpleasant situation like a cyclone.” He said normal rain does not affect the people residing on the islands of Karachi. “But in case of heavy rains, like the current forecast of 30-36 hours, infrastructure may get damaged, as well as the boats moored in the joint parking at jetties and harbour,” he added.

Bhatti said he had already asked the boat owners to return from the sea and anchor their vessels along jetties. He feared that the strong winds could cause severe damage to the boats, whereas the heavy rain could be followed by urban flooding, which affects the coastal localities. Gulab Shah, a community activist from Keti Bunder, Thatta district said they were in the dark about how many vessels were still out in the sea, but alerts were sent via mobile phones to advise the fishermen about safety.

“We have also communicated to fishermen families residing in the scattered villages on islands to stay at home and not to venture out with their vessels in this situation,” he said, adding that the islanders could not be moved to a safer location due to a lack of mechanism. Presently, around 50,000 families live in the seven island villages and creeks near coastal towns like Keti Bunder and Kharo Chhan. “Traditionally, these families load their valuables and all members on a boat, and take refuge near the mangrove forests to avoid untoward incidents and loss,” Shah explained.

Pakistan: Playing vital role in reducing marine pollution: President Alvi

<https://www.bolnews.com/latest/2021/10/pakistan-playing-vital-role-in-reducing-marine-pollution-president-alvi/>

"President Dr Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan was making a lot of efforts for sustainability of the marine sector by reducing sea pollution. He expressed these views, while addressing a ceremony via video-link from Islamabad. The ceremony was organised in connection with the World Maritime Day 2021 by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs. Pakistan has three seaports playing a big role by contributing to the national economy, the president said, adding that required standards were being maintained for the ports.

Pakistan has a shipyard, which was doing a tremendous job by building and repairing vessels in the country, he said. Appreciating Federal Minister of Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi, the president said the fishing sector was improving due to his sincere efforts. Sindh Governor Imran Ismail said that the maritime sector has a huge potential for investment but unfortunately, the investors were not interested in that sector.

Less than one per cent of the investors opted to invest in that sector because people were unaware about its potential. President Alvi expressed the need to generate interest of investors towards the maritime sector, besides building more shipyards to exploit its potential. Citing examples of some small countries such as Singapore, he said, they were generating huge revenues from this sector. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi said that many sectors were connected to the blue economy.

Many institutions have been destroyed by nationalization, he added. “We have launched a successful programme for the development of fishermen who should be provided loans on easy installments,” he said. The shipping companies were damaged by the Covid-19 pandemic because they were getting little business, the minister said, adding that the seafarers were facing visa issues, which must be addressed.

The digital identification has been issued to seafarers in collaboration with the National Database Registration Authority, he said, adding that the Karachi Coastal Development Zone (KCDZ) project was being criticised.

The project was started as 550 million gallons wastewater was going into the sea from Liyari River and other drains. Each day, around 5,000 tonnes of solid waste was also falling into the sea and Karachi did not have a solid waste management system, he stressed. Initially, the KCDZ project will include a water treatment plant on the Lyari River, he said, adding that every drop of water will be treated before falling into the sea.

This project would be a game changer for Pakistan as a new fishing harbour and fish processing unit would be set up, the minister said. The World Maritime Day is observed every year on the last Thursday of September to celebrate the International Maritime Organization’s (IMO) founding in 1958.

The theme of this year’s World Maritime Day is “Seafarers: at the core of shipping’s future.” The seminar sought to increase the visibility of seafarers by drawing attention to the invaluable contribution they make to keep the international trade flowing and to keep the world economy running.

Pakistan: China Plans \$3.5B equity investment in Port Project

<https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/china-commits-to-3-5b-equity-investment-in-pakistani-port-project>

"At this year's joint meeting on the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, Pakistan's Ministry of Maritime Affairs came away with a huge commitment. The Chinese government has agreed to make a direct investment - not a loan - of \$3.5 billion in the Karachi Coastal Comprehensive Development Zone, or KCCDZ. This massive proposal would include

constructing a mixed-use residential/commercial/seaport project on underutilized lands belonging to the Karachi Port Trust.

Illustrations of the 1,500-acre development show a mixture of high- and mid-rise buildings on a strip of reclaimed land, just across an inlet from Karachi's TP3 sewage treatment plant. The illustration suggests that its new buildings and roads will also replace the Machar Colony neighborhood, an unplanned settlement also known as the Fisherman's Colony. This area is home to about 150,000 people, primarily low-income residents who work in fishing or shrimp-processing, according to Medecins Sans Frontieres.

In a release, Pakistan's Ministry of Maritime Affairs said that the project would include residential resettlement assistance for "more than 20,000 families living in the surrounding slums." The proposed development also appears to transform the fishing harbor on the port's West Wharf - a jam-packed marina for small fishing vessels - into a new waterfront commercial district. According to the ministry, a new "state-of-the-art fishing port" will take its place, along with a "world-class fisheries export processing zone," according to the ministry.

KCCDZ will also add four new ship berths for the Karachi Port Trust, located on the new, reclaimed "peninsula" in the harbor. It will also add a giant harbor bridge across Baba Channel, giving the new district a direct highway connection with Karachi's container terminals. It also adds an extra sewage plant adjacent to the existing TP3 facility. "The KCCDZ will unlock Pakistan's unexplored Blue Economy and significantly enhance development and industrial cooperation between the two brotherly countries," the ministry said. "The KCCEZ is a game-changer for Pakistan."

Pakistan: Heavy rains may cause urban flooding in Sindh, Balochistan: Met office

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1649075/heavy-rains-may-cause-urban-flooding-in-sindh-balochistan-met-office>

"The situation, being described as "dangerous" by Met officials, is expected to emerge when remnants of cyclone Gulab currently prevailing as a low pressure area over central India reaches Indian Gujarat and gathers steam. "A low-pressure area [remnant of the cyclonic storm Gulab] currently lying over central India is likely to track in northwest direction [towards Indian Gujarat area]. The system is likely to re-emerge over the northeast Arabian Sea by Wednesday night/Thursday morning and regain intensity due to favourable environmental conditions," said an advisory released by the Met department's tropical cyclone warning centre.

Under the system's influence, according to the advisory, widespread rain-wind-thunderstorms with scattered heavy/very heavy falls, extremely heavy at times, are likely in Karachi, Hyderabad, Thatta, Badin, Mirpurkhas, Thaparkar, Umerkot, Sanghar, Shaheed Benazirabad,

Naushehro Feroze, Tando Mohamad Khan, Tando Allah Yar, Dadu, Jamshoro, Sukkur, Larkana, Jacobabad, Shikarpur and Ghotki districts during Sep 28 and Oct 2.

“Widespread rain-wind-thunderstorms with scattered heavy/very heavy falls, extremely heavy at times, are likely in Bela, Awaran, Kech, Makran and Panjgur districts of Balochistan between Sep 30 and Oct 3,” it added. The districts likely to face urban flooding due to heavy downpour are Karachi, Badin, Thatta, Hyderabad, Dadu, Lasbela, Sonmiani, Ormara, Pasni, Gwadar, Turbat and Jiwani. “Windstorm may cause damage to vulnerable structures. Sea conditions would remain rough/very rough with occasional high surge.

Fishermen are advised not to venture in the sea from Thursday to Saturday [Oct 3],” the advisory said, asking all authorities concerned to remain alert during the forecast period. ‘A dangerous situation’ Speaking to Dawn, Sardar Sarfaraz representing the Met department said all forecast models available locally and internationally were suggesting a dangerous situation.

“This means moderate to heavy to extremely heavy rains along Sindh-Makran coast from Thursday [tomorrow] till Oct 3 that might have a devastating effect on our weak urban infrastructure,” he said. The town of Chhor in Umerkot had 100mm rain in three hours on Monday night but nobody noticed it since it’s a small place, he added.

The core system, he said, was currently away but would reach Karachi within eight to 10 hours when it reached Indian Gujarat. Mr Sarfaraz rejected reports of “micro cloud bursts” in Karachi a day earlier. Meanwhile, the Fishermen Cooperative Society (FCS) on Tuesday, alerted all fishermen out at sea about expected sea storms in the next five days. Zahid Ibrahim Bhatti, administrator FCS, has also issued a notification for all fishermen to avoid the deep sea during this time.

And those boats, which are already out in the deep have also been asked to return. “We are very concerned for the safety of our fishermen,” said the FCS administrator. We have also urged them to spread the message further among more members of their community,” he added. It might be recalled that cyclone Gulab developed over the Bay of Bengal a few days back and had landfall in the Indian coastal regions of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa.

Pakistan: Inclusion of Karachi coastal zone in CPEC a game-changer

<https://www.khaleejtimes.com/world/rest-of-asia/inclusion-of-karachi-coastal-zone-in-cpec-a-game-changer>

"A megaproject has been launched in Karachi under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Pakistan and China have agreed to include multi-billion dollar Karachi Coastal Comprehensive Development Zone (KCCDZ) under the CPEC framework.

“The monumental decision was taken during the 10th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) on CPEC, held on 23rd September 2021 at Islamabad and Beijing,” a government statement said. The KCCDZ, an initiative of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, focuses on providing Karachi with an ultra-modern urban infrastructure zone, placing Karachi amongst the top port cities of the world.

In a first of its kind, the planned KCCDZ project will be built on direct Chinese investment in partnership with Karachi Port Trust (KPT). It is expected to bring direct Chinese investment of around \$3.5 billion.

Developed on reclaimed area of approximately 640 hectares on the Western backwaters marsh land of the KPT, the KCCDZ will be a flagship project not only for Pakistan but the entire region. The KCCDZ will also provide housing to more than 20,000 families living in the surrounding slums, in accordance with Prime Minister Imran Khan’s vision of promoting low-cost housing.

The environment friendly KCCDZ, which was described as a game-changer, envisages four new berths for KPT adding depth to Pakistan’s expanding maritime sector. It will also house a state-of-the-art fishing port, with a world class fisheries export processing zone to boost Pakistan’s trade potential. “Inclusion of Karachi Comprehensive Coastal Development Zone in CPEC is a game-changer.

Will clean up our marine habitat for fishermen, develop 20k low-income housing units, & present opportunities for investors,” the prime minister tweeted. It will also drastically improve the marine ecosystem and reduce pollution by establishing a water treatment plant at the mouth of the Lyari River.

The KCCDZ will connect with the rest of Karachi through a majestic harbor bridge rising from behind Pakistan’s Deepwater Port, with exit ramps for Manora Islands and Sandspit beach. The KCCDZ carries enormous potential for global investors as well. The project will unlock Pakistan’s unexplored Blue Economy and significantly enhance development and industrial cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

As climate change threatens food security, Pakistan’s crop farmers are switching to trout farming

<https://scroll.in/article/994927/as-climate-change-threatens-food-security-pakistans-crop-farmers-are-switching-to-trout-farming>

"Qasim Shah, a farmer in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir’s Gilgit-Baltistan region, has no regrets about giving up crop farming. “Trout farming is more lucrative than traditional crops,” said Shah, who is also the vice president of the Private Fish Farms Association in the Ghizer district.

“Crops and fruit have become too climate-sensitive and come with the risk of losing investment.” As climate change threatens food security, traditional crop farmers in Gilgit-Baltistan are opting for trout, which they say is a more sustainable source of income. Across South Asia, farmers are adapting to dwindling outputs and uncertain incomes – with some, like Shah, looking beyond crop cultivation.

Pakistan: As climate change threatens food security, crop farmers are switching to trout farming

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"Qasim Shah, a farmer in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir's Gilgit-Baltistan region, has no regrets about giving up crop farming. "Trout farming is more lucrative than traditional crops," said Shah, who is also the vice president of the Private Fish Farms Association in the Ghizer district. "Crops and fruit have become too climate-sensitive and come with the risk of losing investment."

Trout farms are cropping up in Gilgit-Baltistan, where rapidly warming glaciers form cold-water reservoirs – a key breeding ground for trout. Nearly 200 fish farms have been set up across the province in less than 10 years, with new farms appearing every month. Fish farms are also burgeoning in the neighbouring province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where the government hopes to create jobs. At each of these farms, up to 20,000 trout are bred to be sold as food. As climate change threatens food security, traditional crop farmers in Gilgit-Baltistan are opting for trout, which they say is a more sustainable source of income.

Across South Asia, farmers are adapting to dwindling outputs and uncertain incomes – with some, like Shah, looking beyond crop cultivation. "I earned 5,00,000 Pakistani rupees [\$3,285] in profit at the end of the last season despite the coronavirus pandemic," he added. "This season, my target is much higher." Shah started fish farming in 2018 with an investment of over 10 lakh Pakistani rupees. He set up a small hotel near the farm to serve fried trout to tourists and locals. If the Pakistan government provides transport and packaging facilities, he said, he expects to export the fish to China.

"My village land is highly fertile for crops and fruit but erratic rains and other climatic implications like frequent pest attacks have spoiled the produce over the years," said Shah. The Pakistan government supports trout breeding and private fish farms. In April, the federal government earmarked 11.2 crore Pakistani rupees to promote fish farms in mountain provinces.

The Ministry of National Food Security & Research said the aim was to develop shrimp and fish farms in Pakistan that will create jobs, enhance food insecurity and increase export earnings. The

support includes training and awareness sessions on acquiring land for fish farming, facilitating farmers in getting bank loans for private hatcheries and providing the fish feed.

Fears and denial

Untreated effluent from some hatcheries drains directly into the Indus river and streams which are a source of fresh drinking water for communities. Ali Asghar, an officer in the province's fisheries department, confirmed that "water from some farms mostly drains to the rivers". "If farmers are careless, it may pollute drinking water," Asghar said, though he was dismissive of high levels of pollution in the river.

No study or environmental impact assessment has been conducted since fish farms began to increase in the province. In 2014, a study conducted on water sources by the province's Environmental Protection Agency said only 22% comply with World Health Organization standards. Another official said the department received complaints from areas where locals were directly using water from farms for drinking.

Requesting anonymity, he said freshwater sources in this area are contaminated "not only due to these farms but from waste coming from hotels especially built near the farms". Karim Johar, a research officer in the fisheries department, said: "Our focus is on creating awareness on how to breed trout and how to protect the environment."

He told The Third Pole: "We even shut a few farms – including a government hatchery – from where we received complaints of polluting water." In the past year, the department registered 96 offences related to fish farms and levied total fines of 1,00,000 Pakistani rupees (\$649). Johar said every district's fisheries department monitors activities and educates farmers about sustainable practices.

The training includes guidance on farm management, structure of fish ponds, water concentration, feed provision, water and safety hygiene and environmental sensitivity. "Fish feed or waste from these farms is not significant enough to affect the environment at a large scale or dangerously contaminate the rivers," Johar said. He added: "The waves and flow of these rivers is so powerful that it naturally filters any small level [of] contamination." But as fish farms grow in Pakistan, concerns about pollution and sustainable practices mount.

Barkat Ali, who lives in Birgal village, Ghizer district, said waste from about 30 big and small fish farms established in one village drains waste directly into the Ghizer river – a tributary of the Indus. "This drainage could contaminate drinking water if proper measures are not taken," he said. Farmer Qasim Shah, however, rebuffed such allegations. "We are responsible and very sensitive to the environment. We take every measure to avoid pollution," he said. He said farmers do not use chemicals in fish feed and are "very strict about littering".

Environmental impact In recent years, large-scale fish farming has come under fire for threatening wild fish populations. Big commercial fish farms require tonnes of wild fish to be caught from the oceans and made into fish food. Farid Ahmad Jan, a fisheries and aquaculture specialist at Karakoram International University, told The Third Pole that at the moment farmers in Gilgit-Baltistan use discarded fish from wholesale markets. He said: “It does not make financial sense to invest in catching live fish for fish feed as it will drive up the price of the trout.”

Monitoring fish farms

According to a report by NGO the Global Aquaculture Alliance, common environmental concerns linked to fish farms include nutrient and effluent build-up and disease spreading to local fisheries. “Nutrient build-up happens when there is a high density of fish in one area,” the report said. “Fish produce waste, and their waste has the potential to build up in the surrounding area.

This can deplete the water of oxygen, creating algal blooms and dead zones.” It highlighted the effects of antibiotic use on the ecosystem around enclosures, including on wild fish. It also raised concerns about the escape of non-native fish, which may compete with wild fish for food, potentially displacing native species.

Jan said there is a dire need to educate private farm owners. He talked about a recent incident in Ghizer, where “three tonnes of trout died at a private farm because the bottom of the enclosure was not cleaned properly”. “These farms are built very close together and all the water channels are connected,” said Jan. “If a disease erupts in one, it quickly spreads to the nearby farms.”

“Right now, there is a major focus on promoting trout farms and farmers jump at the opportunity as it is a lucrative business. But they need to listen to experts if they want to farm trout sustainably.” Jan also said that trout farms in Pakistan could help protect trout populations if local demand can be met by farmed rather than wild fish.

“Trout populations in the province will be wiped out in 10 years if something is not done to protect them now,” he said. “At the moment, the trout farms are catering to the elite as their catch is expensive.

As a result, locals go directly to rivers and streams to catch trout and deplete the stock.” Raza Haider, regional head for conservation at the World Wide Fund, said trout farm owners in Pakistan must keep in mind the environmental adversities in their activities. “We need both a sound environment as well as nutrition,” he said.

Pakistan: Agencies to help tackle growing marine pollution that threatens the already depleting fish stocks and livelihood of fishing communities

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1647321>

"Titled 'Marine pollution management: issues and remedies', the programme was organised by the Karachi Port Trust (KPT). Highlighting Pakistan's potential as a maritime nation, speakers said it had a 1,100 kilometres long coastline and possessed diverse marine resources.

Some sectors of the country's blue economy had immense potential that needed to be explored to strengthen food and energy security. Prime Minister Imran Khan, they said, had declared the year 2020 as the "Year of Blue Economy" and steps were needed to help the country move towards developing a sustainable shipping industry.

Pakistan would also contest the elections for Category C of the International Maritime Organisation this year, they said. On marine pollution, chairman KPT Nadir Mumtaz Warriach, also the chief guest, said it's vital to prevent marine pollution in order to explore our potential as a maritime nation and protect the livelihood of Pakistani coastal communities. "Encroachment along harbour and coastal areas also contribute to coastal degradation. All forms of marine pollution are detrimental to juvenile fish while pollution-free beaches promote aquatic sports, national and marine tourism."

Toxicity in the harbour's waters, he pointed out, was damaging for both vessels and port infrastructure. All maritime stakeholders should work together to upgrade the Karachi port as a green port of the region complemented by renewable energy sources.

Summing up the recommendations presented during the programme, the chairman of KPT said research in the maritime sector was the need of the hour, including digitalisation, to further revitalise Karachi's and the national economy.

Universities in coastal cities such as Karachi and Gwadar should have faculties for maritime studies, he said. "Capacity-building of human resources will increase employment generation in the maritime sector, including fishing, ship building, boat construction, port and container logistics as well as in expanding port infrastructure.

This will also help promote ease of doing business in accordance with government policy," he said. The KPT chairman called for a holistic integrated approach and enhanced access to the marine areas. In this connection, he said, KPT chair had been established in Bahria University a few years ago with the aim of developing linkage between academia and operational activities at the sea port.

Pakistan: Analysis of fishing vessels registration rules 2021

<https://pakobserver.net/analysis-of-fishing-vessels-registration-rules-2021-by-dr-kanwar-m-javed-iqbal/>

"There is no doubt that the marine fisheries sector is an important segment of the maritime economy of Pakistan. On one hand, it is a livelihood source for the coastal communities and has big export potential. On the other side, various issues are prevalent such as illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing – a major challenge for maritime governance in Pakistan. It has a very close connection with the proper registration mechanism of sea-going vessels.

Recently, the Federal Government has issued 'Fishing Vessels Registration Rules' vide S.R.O. No. 1057(I)/2021 dated 11 August 2021. Considering the requirements under Chapter 32 titled Fishing Vessels and the legal provision under section 449 of the Pakistan Merchant Shipping Ordinance 2001 (LII of 2001), promulgation of registration rules for fishing vessels was a much-awaited action by the Federal Government since the enactment of the Ordinance in year 2001.

In the context, the federal government has done an admirable job by issuing these rules without which the system was on ad-hoc procedure and registration cases also exist under Coastal Vessel Act 1838 (XIX of 1838) as indicated in clause 3(3) of S.R.O. 1057(I)/2021. These rules are good in order to facilitate the fisher-folk and streamline the outstanding registration related issues of sea-going vessels and IUU fishing. Whereas, there are still some shortcomings which may be addressed through amendment in SRO after meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders including the think tanks, academia, civil society organizations, etc.

Let us overview the good things first. It has provided definitions of the terminologies, particularly important for the case of a foreign vessel i.e. owned-wholly or partially by a foreign nation. A 'central register' of all sea-going fishing vessels is designated that will be maintained by the principal officer of Mercantile Marine Department (MMD), Karachi. It has declared the names of Port Qasim Authority (PQA), Karachi Port Trust (KPT) and Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) for the ports of vessels' registry.

Official numbers will be issued and maintained at each port of registry, which shall immediately transmit to the principal officer of Mercantile Marine Department, Karachi. All registered cases under Coastal Vessel Act 1838 (XIX of 1838) shall be re-registered under Fishing Vessels Registration Rules 2021, without levying registration fee. It has provided a fee structure for registration of different size vessels. It has also provided guideline for the ownership of minors. It has included different types of application / procedural forms. It provides guidance to paint the official number of the vessel in Urdu, in addition to English.

Six critical shortcomings are identified through a holistic review of the Fishing Vessels Registration Rules 2021. Firstly, it lacks a clearly stated procedure for 'deletion of vessel', which needs to be clarified by adding a new clause. Secondly, although foreign vessel and foreign joint venture are defined vide clauses 2(g) and 2(h) of the S.R.O. 1057(I)/2021 respectively, there is no clause included to provide guidance on the owner's citizenship/nationality thus, it is still in ambiguity. There is a need to remove this anomaly by adding a proper clause.

Thirdly, there is no provision or procedure defined regarding IMO number for sea-going fishing vessels in order to enhance maritime safety, and pollution prevention and to facilitate the prevention of maritime fraud; in accordance with the original aim of IMO's Resolution A.600(15) adopted in 1987. In the past, self-propelled sea-going merchant ships of 100GT and above were eligible for an IMO number.

The IMO Assembly expanded the scheme in December 2017 and included fishing vessels of steel and non-steel hull construction, and all motorised inboard fishing vessels of less than 100 GT down to a size limit of 12 meters LOA (Length overall) authorised to operate outside waters under national jurisdiction of the flag State. The fourth shortcoming reveals that S.R.O. 1057(I)/2021 is silent on compliance requirement for Navigation system, which can be ensured initially at time of registration and subsequently through periodic inspection for safety of the fishing vessels.

The navigation system for sea-going vessels is required under IMO's Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREGs). Navigation system is important in determining safe speed, the risk of collision and the conduct of vessels operating in or near traffic separation schemes. IMO COLREG 72 describes requirements for sea-going vessels viz-a-viz different sizes and fishing vessels have no exception.

For example, vessels 12 metres or more in length should carry a whistle and a bell, and vessels 100 metres or more in length should carry, in addition, a gong. Next, it has not included any clause regarding safety measures related periodic inspection of the sea-going vessels in order to ensure sea-worthiness. Safety protocol for sea-going vessels is required primarily under IMO's International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974.

In 1977, delegates at IMO meeting adopted the first international treaty to address the safety of fishing vessels in Torremolinos, with a follow-up Protocol adopted in 1993. Later, the Cape Town Agreement 2012 was adopted in October 2012 with the objective to implement the provisions of the Torremolinos Protocol of 1993 relating to the Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels, 1977. Subsequently, during IMO Conference in 2019, a broader consensus was achieved on the urgent need for the Cape Town Agreement to enter into force.

The Cape Town Agreement features mandatory safety measures for fishing vessels of 24 meters in length and longer and is seen as a "key tool" in combating illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing. The Agreement addresses fishing vessel construction, stability and associated seaworthiness, electrical installations and machinery, communications equipment, fire protection and life-saving appliances.

The provision of the agreement is expected to improve the safety of life at sea for fishers worldwide. Finally, yet importantly, considering the distances involved viz-a-viz fishing vessel's registration at Gwadar as per rules and the operational fishing points at Pasni, Ormara, Jewani

and Gadani, there would be an administrative issue regarding the ease of doing business particularly for poor fisher-folk. There is a need to establish sub-offices at all such points, particularly for the case of Balochistan province.

Pakistan: Industrial waste as well as animal waste causes contamination in the Rehri Goth fishing village

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2320840/crystal-clear-shores-lost-to-sludge>

"In June 2020, a 20-year-old man accidentally fell into the sea near Rehri Goth, located on the outskirts of Karachi and considered to be one of the city's oldest fishing settlements. Muhammad Jumman, a fisherman by profession, says it took three days to find the body due to the heavy levels of pollution in the area. Rehri Goth, which was once a sleepy and picturesque fishing village has now turned into a cesspool of filth causing residents to suffer from health issues and financial disaster. "This was once a beautiful shoreline with crystal clear water filled with different fish species. It has now turned into a gutter due to cattle dung and industrial waste," adds Jumman. Rehri Goth is considered to be one of Pakistan's oldest fishing settlement.

It is located on the coastal belt of Karachi and is part of the Korangi Creek in the Indus Delta. Climate change and pollution are fast taking their toll on this lower income community. Most of the 70,000 residents of Rehri Goth, which falls in the Malir face a number of challenges caused by health issues and dwindling fish catches. Untreated industrial waste from Landhi and Korangi industrial areas is one of the major factors that make sea water poisonous for humans and for marine life. "Rehri Goth is our ancestral village.

Our family and other fishermen were prosperous and happy as there were plenty of catch in the form of fish and shrimp. But nowadays, our younger generations are out of work and roaming in the streets as they don't know where to go," laments Hawwa Bibi, who is part of the fishing community. The worst affected is the marine life, which is also facing consequences of extreme pollution and chemical waste. "Mangroves are the nurseries of fish, shrimp and other marine life. If pollution destroys them, how can marine life and the human life connected to it is to survive," asks Rafiul Haq, a Karachi-based consultant ecologist.

According to a study published on January 2021 in EQA, an International Journal of Environmental Quality which publishes research articles and analysis on soil, water, air quality and sustainable use of environmental resources, the level of chemical pollutants in Karachi's coastal areas is 'exceptionally higher' as compared to National Environmental Quality Standards. The study also revealed that Karachi's coast is heavily polluted and inundated in chemical and metallic pollution because of regular discharge of domestic and industrial effluents. This needs to be addressed with strict regulations to save aquatic ecosystem.

No surprise then that the fishing community is uncertain about what the future holds for their next generation. Kamal Shah, who heads the Coastal Media Centre of the Fisherfolk Forum, an organisation working for the welfare of the fishing community, says that the root of the problem is the over 1,600 cattle pens located at Landhi's Cattle Colony. These pens are dumping their waste directly into the sea. As a result, the catch has declined dramatically.

Many have lost their earnings forcing family members in factories to earn bread and butter for their children. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics social report 2018-19 confirms that the lack of proper facilities for disposal of waste is directly related to pollution of the ecosystem. Solid waste collection figures by the City Government Karachi recorded 20 per cent rise in 2018-19 as compared to 17 per cent in 2013-14, which indicates the poor solid waste management system for collection of solid waste up to its proper disposal.

In 2018-19, overall percentage of garbage collection was 36 per cent in Sindh province. In this, 28 percent garbage collected by municipality and 8 per cent privately. On the other hand, 65 percent households had no garbage collection system which indicates the poor solid waste management system right for collection of solid waste up to its proper disposal. Muhammad Moazzam Khan, who serves as a Technical Advisor for Marine Fisheries to WWF-Pakistan says that the waste produced by Bhains Colony includes body parts of animals, hay and cattle dung which solidifies onto the sea mass and depletes oxygen, thus causing the marine life to suffer and die because of this.

Also, due to the layer on top of the water mass, the water is poisoned and this affects the health of anyone who ventures into it. "Skin diseases in the coastal areas are common. Patients from Rehri Goth, Ibrahim Hyderi often come for treatment. Skin rashes, thickening of skin are few among many skin diseases they suffered due to high level of pollution in the water they used for bathing, washing clothes and other activities.

Polluted water can also cause skin cancer," confirms Dr Shakira Anees of Skin Hospital, commonly known as Chamra Hospital located in Saddar area of Karachi. Dr Moazzam says that the only solution is the installation of industrial waste treatment or recycling plants on urgent basis. The WWF-Pakistan launched an initiative in 2018 under which eight units of biogas plant were installed which were operated by bio gas generated from recycling of cattle dung. The project ended in 2020. Two units are still working and providing gas to four houses.

The rest of the units have shut down because of various reasons. Muhammad Aslam Ghauri, Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Coastal Development in the Sindh government cites the Sindh Environmental protection Act 2014, under which it is mandatory for industries to dispose industrial waste in the sea only after treatment. Similarly, municipal bodies are bound to treat domestic waste before disposing it. "In the year 2021, Rs800 million has been allocated for the installation of waste treatment plants.

Three treatment plants in Karachi and one in Tando Adam will be installed. These treatment plants will treat domestic waste and garbage before disposal into the sea,” says Ghauri. Replying to a question about fishing community relief, Ghauri says that for the development of fishing community settlements in Sindh, development schemes worth Rs997 million are being undertaken. The biggest culprits of industrial pollution into the sea are factories located in Landhi and Korangi industrial areas.

When asked to comment on what they are doing to address the issue, Secretary General of Landhi Association of Trade and Industries Shah Zaman remained silent. An official of the government department said that efforts on a war footing are needed to address the problem. “Noone is willing to take responsibility and play a role to control rising levels of sea contamination,” he said. The alarming water pollution and thickening of the industrial waste layer with each passing day needs solid waste treatment plants in the area.

Despite several attempts to get the comments from the Sindh Solid waste management board, no official was available to talk. It is estimated that nearly 400 million gallons of untreated sewage is being dumped into the sea on a daily basis in Karachi. Increasing sea pollution level in Arabian Sea at Karachi’s coastal belt emerges as a matter of concern for international bodies as well.

The World Bank has announced US\$100 million for the Solid Waste Emergency and Efficiency Project (SWEEP) in December 2020 to improve the solid waste management system in Pakistan’s mega city Karachi. It includes construction and upgradation of infrastructure like garbage collection, transfer and disposal facilities. Rehri Goth’s residents are looking for immediate action from the government to control the damage that has already been done. However, many say that it may already be too late.

Pakistan: Promote blue economy by ending marine pollution

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40121076/promote-blue-economy-by-ending-marine-pollution>

"Prominent international and national speakers participated in the event arranged at KPT Head Office and through Zoom, as well. Summing up the recommendations of eminent scholars during the closing session, the Chief Guest, Chairman KPT, highlighted that Pakistan is a Maritime nation having 1100 kilometres of coastline and possessing diverse living and non-living marine resources.

These resources are providing livelihood to the local communities. However, any form of marine pollution is detrimental to the juvenile fish population, thereby depleting fish stocks. Prime Minister Imran Khan has declared the year 2020 as “Year of Blue economy”. In this regard, Pakistan is moving towards a sustainable shipping industry. Pakistan is also a candidate in

Category-C for IMO elections this year. It was recommended that Karachi and Gwadar should have their maritime faculty in all Universities as both are coastal cities.

Human Resource capacity enrichment will increase employment generation in maritime sector included fishing, ship-building, boat-building, port and container logistics and expanding port infrastructure. This will help to promote ease of doing business in accordance with government policy. The pollution-free beaches would promote aquatic sports, national and marine tourism. Some business sectors of Blue economy have immense potential for Pakistan and unimaginable depth as sea ports ensure food and energy security.

Substantial research in maritime sector is the need of the hour in diverse areas including digitalisation to further revitalise Karachi's economy in specific and rest of the country as well. Encroachment along harbour and coastal areas also contributes to coastal degradation. Toxicity in any harbour water damages is corrosive for craft and port infrastructure. All maritime stakeholders should work together to upgrade Karachi Port as a Green port of the region complimented by renewable energy sources.

Holistic integrated approach and enhanced access to marine areas to facilitate citizens is the need of the hour. In this connection a KPT Chair was established in Bahria University, a few years back, with an aim to develop linkage between academia and operational activities at the sea ports.

Pakistan fishermen allege exploitation by fishing industry contractors

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2320522/exploitation-by-fishing-industry-contractors>

"For the fishermen of Pakistan on the Indus and its tributaries, debt bondage is an outcome of the modern economy, especially the contract system, which is encouraged by entities like the World Bank in the name of enhancing productivity and efficiency. Alizeh Kohari's excellent reportage about fisherfolk communities residing on the Taunsa describes the plight of numerous Punjabi villages caught in the clutches of the contract system.

These fisherfolk can seldom eat fish themselves, as all what they catch becomes the property of entrepreneurs who have bought exclusive rights to all the fish being caught by these poor fishing families. Local fishermen are left with no choice but to work for these middlemen, as they do not have the option of directly selling their catch in the market.

Pakistan: Exploitation by fishing industry contractors

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2320522/exploitation-by-fishing-industry-contractors>

"Human slavery is especially rampant across the fishing industry at large. A few years ago, Reuters broke a story of poor migrant workers working under brutal conditions on Thai fishing trawlers, which provide fish products to prominent global supermarket brands.

The plight of fisherfolk in Pakistan is no less perturbing. For the fishermen on the Indus and its tributaries, debt bondage is an outcome of the modern economy, especially the contract system, which is encouraged by entities like the World Bank in the name of enhancing productivity and efficiency.

Alizeh Kohari's excellent reportage about fisherfolk communities residing on the Taunsa describes the plight of numerous Punjabi villages caught in the clutches of the contract system. These fisherfolk can seldom eat fish themselves, as all what they catch becomes the property of entrepreneurs who have bought exclusive rights to all the fish being caught by these poor fishing families. Local fishermen are left with no choice but to work for these middlemen, as they do not have the option of directly selling their catch in the market.

The contract system on the Taunsa was instituted in 1961, whereby the rivers of the Taunsa were divided into distinct parcels and fishing rights were sold to the highest bidders. The winning contractors decide what to pay fishermen for each kilo of fish caught, and this measly rate often compels fishermen to become indebted to contractors to make ends meet. This vortex of debt is inter-generational, like other instances of debt bondage, evident amongst brick kiln workers or amongst landless haris.

Decades of river construction, floods, and water pollution has propelled tens of thousands of fishermen up the river in search of livelihood. Downstream on the Indus, the contract system was overturned by an act of the Sindh parliament in 2011. But this act did not mean much as there was barely any fish by the time the Indus reaches Sindh. So, fisherfolk have kept moving north to Punjab, willingly submitting themselves to exploitation by contractors.

The Lahore High Court in 2018 issued a temporary injunction upon the annual leasing of public waterways of the Punjab, to the highest bidder. This stay had the potential to break the monopoly of the contract system not only on the Taunsa Barrage but south along the Indus towards DG Khan, and at Chashma Barrage.

Yet, this order was not effectively implemented, and was not renewed. This judicial backtracking was a result of pressure from the fisheries department, which was apparently flailing financially without revenue from the yearly auction.

Fisherfolk and other civil society groups have argued that instead of renewing the contract system, the Punjab government should let fishermen work for themselves and pay an annual licence to government for the right to fish, which seems like a feasible solution to this problem. Unfortunately, the plight of the fisherfolk transcends what is occurring on public waterways.

Fishing communities dependent on the coastal areas are also protesting the federal government's recent decision to provide licences to deep-sea fishing trawlers in the Exclusive Economic Zone around 20 miles off the coast in Sindh and Balochistan. Fish-stocks in our rivers and within the coastal areas are already under immense pressure.

Using the profit maximising contract system on our rivers and allowing trawlers to prowl our coastal areas is worsening the plight of fisherfolk communities, and it is threatening to deplete our remaining fish stocks to a point of no return.

Pakistan: Protesters block Makran coastal highway against illegal fishing

<https://pakobserver.net/protesters-block-makran-coastal-highway-against-illegal-fishing/>

"Local people as protest against illegal fishing and other issues at the Makran coast and other issues have blocked the Coastal Highway on Thursday. People of the area have blocked the highway at Pasni Zero Point to suspend the vehicular traffic. A large queue of vehicles travelling to Karachi and Quetta could be seen stranded at the Makran Coastal Highway. According to reports, local citizens protesting against the lack of water and electricity supplies as well as illegal fishing by trawlers in the sea near Gwadar, where most of the people of the coastal belt depend on fishing for their livelihood. It is to be mentioned here that a top official recently said that government has taken immediate steps for stopping illegal fishing at the Makran coast.

Pakistan: Fishermen gutted by low prices set under traders' monopoly

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/889492-fishermen-gutted-by-low-prices-set-under-traders-monopoly>

"Marine fishermen along the 350km long coastline of Sindh have expressed unhappiness at the low prices of fish that have not risen since the fishing season started on August 1 this year, making it difficult for them to stay afloat economically. They fear it was also connected to the excessive marine pollution between zero and three nautical miles from the coast, as well as the weather ups and downs and rough seas, which together made it difficult for the fishing community to earn their livelihood.

Flow of untreated sewage water via various channels from Karachi into the sea has made it difficult to survive on fishing for coastal communities living in Keti Bunder, Khario Chhan, Shah Bunder and Karachi. Fishermen in the Keti Bunder area said they fix their nets in nearby creeks expecting to catch kiddy (small sized shrimps), but they return empty handed. The shrimp do not use the creeks anymore because of excessive pollution. The situation has forced the fishermen to travel out to 12 nautical miles in search of livelihood. Akhtar Shaikh, a community activist and

local trader at Rehri Mayan Village in Karachi, said fishermen expect the stocks of fish and shrimp to get replenished after a two month break in June and July.

“It is expected that the creeks will have more kiddy once the season kicks off on August 1st, but the fishing boats are returning empty handed,” he added. Larger boats went to the open sea as usual to access commercial fish species. Some of them have returned back home with kiddies, but they get low rates like Rs300-350/kg only. He guessed that after a few days when the larger boats would bring a higher catch of small shrimp, the rates would fall further down to Rs200-250/kg. Besides kiddy, there are two other precious species of shrimps.

The larger ones have more value and fetch up to Rs1,000-1,100/kg, while the other ones are sold for Rs600-700/kg at the local market. However, those associated with the profession consider the prices low and not sufficient to bear the cost of staying out in the sea for a long time. The longer a boat stays out in the sea, the more it spends on fuel, ice and food. “Traders justify the low prices by saying that since there is no way to export the seafood, they were the ones deciding about the prices,” Shaikh said.

Some activists said that since the Fishermen Cooperative Society (FCS), a community welfare body, now has an administrator from the community, he must take action in the interest of the fishermen. Majeed Motani, a boat owner and senior boat captain in Ibrahim Hydri village of Karachi said the fishermen were feeling the heat because not only were the boats coming back with lower catch, they were also getting lower rates. Recalling the past, he said that having access to small shrimps helped earn a little better, but now with the disappearance of that species from the creeks this year, the financial pressure on the community was building up. Out in the sea, the catch was low and back at the market, the rates were low.

Nawaz Dablot, a community activist associated with fishing boats said, “Situation of fish catch does not remain the same. Similarly crew members on boats receive wages depending on the catch.” For example, he said quite recently crew members in his village earned Rs10,000—12,000 share each after returning back with a heavy haul on boats. They stayed out in the sea for one week or more, and brought in a huge catch of precious fish. “Some boats caught the precious hero fish, weighing five-six kg, which sold at Rs700-800/kg,” he said, adding that such finds benefitted workers.

Dablot called the boat owner and crew lucky, and said that “not everyone was this lucky”. A majority of boat owners and fishermen have had an opposite experience this season. The reason it becomes more disappointing is that they restarted their activity after following the government’s two-month fishing ban. Asif Bhatti, FCS director and President of Native and Indigenous Fishermen Association (NIFA) representing island communities, said traders had monopoly at jetties as well as at the fishing harbour. They do not follow the guidelines set by the FCS and as a result, the community suffers.

Talking about the status of marine pollution, he said island villages near Keamari may sink soon as dwellers do not have the option to shift their localities. He said Karachi island villages were vulnerable to disasters because certain people have cleaned major portions of mangroves forest, leaving the people in a helpless situation. Marine pollution is another issue which has contaminated seawater from zero to three nautical miles, he added. Fishermen plead that the government authorities should look in to the increasing prices of essential food items, and decide the rates of fish products.

Pakistan: Fishermen's Cooperative Society elections to be held on June 18, 2022

<https://pakobserver.net/fishermens-cooperative-society-elections-to-be-held-on-june-18-2022/>

"Director General Culture Sindh and Fishermen's Cooperative Society Election Officer Abdul Aleem Lashari has announced to hold Fishermen's Cooperative Society elections on June 18. An important meeting was held at Karachi Fish Harbor on Wednesday. The meeting discussed about holding the election of Fishermen's Cooperative Society as soon as possible.

If the election is held before June, the fishermen who are fishing in the ocean will lose their right to vote. Since fishing is banned in the month of June, any fish in the month of June. If not, the fishermen will be able to exercise their voting right in June. The month of June is very auspicious for elections. Director General Culture, Sindh and Fishermen's Cooperative Society, Election Officer Agreeing unanimously, it was unanimously decided to hold the election of Fishermen's Cooperative Society on Friday 18th June.

Complete your preparations and inform all the fishermen about the conduct of elections on June 18 through media, social media and other means. So that all the members fishermen can exercise their right to vote. The elected representatives of the peasants could take over the reins of the Fishermen's Operative Society.

Pakistan: Fish, farm, forest

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1644221>

"That it is reprehensible for the very state functionaries that are charged with protecting the life and liberty of those at least formally deemed citizens to abduct them has been repeated many times. It is also old news that legislation to criminalise enforced disappearances has been blocked time and again by 'invisible hands'. I am highlighting Younis Anwar's case because it brings into focus what is effectively a slow death for millions of people in this country affiliated with traditional livelihoods like fishing, farming and foresting.

This is not happening because of some reasonable logic that guides the linear development of society. It is happening because of existing political and economic structures. For Gwadar's

subsistence fishing communities, big corporate trawlers — both foreign and domestic — are putting them out of work. Individuals and collectivities that are peacefully calling attention to land, water and forest grabs by state functionaries and private profiteers alike are increasingly subject to repression, confirming contestation between two different worldviews.

On the one hand, those being rendered surplus are speaking out not only for themselves but also future generations that face a planetary crisis if natural resources continue to be pillaged. On the other hand, propertied classes, corporations and state functionaries want to continue exploiting land, water, forest and mountainous highlands without any concern for working people. Displacement of traditional livelihoods is not novel.

The modern era and capitalist economics were arguably initiated by what was called the ‘enclosure of the commons’ in England some five centuries ago. Ever since, capital has sought to commodify nature for the sake of profit, while movements of working people have pushed back by demanding that these resources be conceptualised as a common trust. When the British came to India, they built dams, canals, barrages etc to modernise a predominantly agrarian economy. Many local communities were displaced, some even forced to give up pastoral ways of life for settled agriculture.

In Pakistan’s early years, the burden of mega development projects continued to be borne by pastoralists, farmers, fisherfolk and forest dwellers in much the same way as under the Raj. Then came the ‘Green Revolution’, which mechanised agriculture and displaced yet another generation of working masses who became surplus to requirements. Today, with widespread financialisation of the economy, an even more rapacious process of dispossession is underway.

The building of dams and roads and mechanisation of agriculture may have displaced millions in the past but those surplus populations at least harboured the hope of making their way to a city and finding work in a factory or government job. The scale of dispossession associated with the intensification of mining and forest-felling, corporatisation of water bodies and expansion of real estate under the regime of neoliberal globalisation is unprecedented. This is why we see unrelenting ideological propaganda that depicts all land, water, forest and mountain grabs as ‘development’ alongside strong-arm tactics to silence those who challenge this orthodoxy.

In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, some progressives in the West are arguing that at least a notionally pro-people state is back, and that the 40-year-old neoliberal cycle has reached its end. Such analysis fails to acknowledge two facts about non-Western post-colonial societies. First, that the destruction of traditional livelihoods and dispossession has been a consistent feature of our ‘development’ for hundreds of years.

Second, that a nexus of the postcolonial state, corporations, aid agencies and global superpowers has championed the specifically neoliberal stage of capitalist development in our countries. Forced grabs of land, water, forest and mountains have united all of these players, and there is

no sign that Western governments who are ostensibly going back to spending big on public goods will stop patronising extractive industries and regimes of dispossession abroad.

Indeed, as awareness about climate change grows within the Western mainstream, thus forcing at least some greening of those economies, the pillage of nature can continue apace in the colonial peripheries of Asia and Africa. We can therefore expect authoritarian governments like Modi's India, our own hybrid regime, and many more — maybe even the Afghan Taliban! — to continue making merry in collusion with private profiteers.

Pakistan: Steps being taken against illegal fishing at Makran coast

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1643390/steps-being-taken-against-illegal-fishing-at-makran-coast>

"Presiding over a meeting in the port city of Gwadar, he said that allowing illegal fishing in Arabia Sea close to Makran coast was depriving local fishermen of opportunities to earn their livelihood. Special Assistance to the Prime Minister on CEPC Affairs Khalid Mansoor, Commissioner of Makran division Shah Irfan Gharsheen, Deputy Commissioner of Gwadar retired Major Abdul Kabir Zarkoon and senior officials of the Gwadar Port Authority and Gwadar Development Authority and other departments attended the meeting.

Chief secretary Mathar Niaz Rana briefed the meeting on the Gwadar port and CPEC projects as well as the projects initiated with the collaboration of provincial and federal governments. He said these projects would be completed soon. He said the projects were launched for welfare of the people of the area and that the government was taking steps for development of the fisheries sector.

The meeting was informed that immediate steps had been taken to solve the problem of drinking water shortage in Gwadar. Mr Rana said the provincial government was trying to bring improvement in other sectors by utilising all available resources. He said the provincial government was aware of problems of the people and was making serious efforts for solving them.

"We are launching various projects for resolving the issue of water shortage in Gwadar keeping in view the future requirements of the port city," he said. A detailed briefing was also given on the CPEC projects launched under the supervision of the Gwadar Port, Gwadar Free Zone, and Gwadar International Airport Development Authority, Gwadar.

Pakistan: Sindh allocates Rs.250m for floating jetties

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2317177/sindh-allocates-rs250m-for-floating-jetties>

"Addressing a reception hosted by the fisherfolk, the CM said that he was exploring ways and means to filter the polluted and brackish water of Manchar Lake. He added that he would consider installing a reverse osmosis (RO) plant at Bhit Island.

Shah, who was flanked by Sindh Local Government Minister Nasir Hussain Shah, Livestock and Fisheries Minister Abdul Bari Pitafi, Karachi Administrator Murtaza Wahab, special assistants to CM on human settlement, Liaquat Ali Askani, and on matters relating to Keamari district, Muhammad Asif Khan and Pakistan Peoples Party MNA Qadir Mandokhel, said the proposal for a bridge connecting the islands with the city was at the planning stage and will soon materialise.

The Sindh government had notified the formation of Keamari district as the seventh district of the city after bifurcation of the West district in September 2020. Last month, Wahab, who is also the Sindh government spokesperson, had said that the provincial government planned to promote eco-tourism in coastal areas of the metropolis and development projects are in the works. Elaborating on the schemes, Shah said that brick roads would be constricted in six union councils - UCs 41 to 46 - of Keamari district at the cost of Rs99.35m.

Other projects entailed sewerage lines and paver blocks in UCs 40 and 42 at the cost of Rs140m, roads, drainage work and paver blocks in UC41 at the cost of Rs150m and sewerage and drainage work at in UCs 44, 55 and 46 at the cost of Rs99.3m. Besides, the CM said water supply lines will be laid out near the PRC Tower and MA Jinnah Road in Keamari district at the cost of Rs99.1 million.

According to the statement issued by the Chief Minister House, the fisherfolk informed the CM that the lease of their villages had expired. Shah directed the Karachi Commissioner Naveed Shaikh to renew the lease or issue a fresh one through the Sindh revenue board.

Moreover, the CM directed Shaikh to arrange coronavirus vaccination facilities in a boat, which could move from island to island to inoculate fishing communities against the deadly virus. The statement mentioned that Shah was reminded of former prime minister Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's promise to build a playground on the island and Shah vowed it would be built.

Pakistan: Murad announces uplift schemes for Baba and Bhit islands

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1642647>

"I am also working on a scheme to construct a bridge connecting all three islands — Bhit, Baba and Shams Peer with the city," he said while addressing a reception on Wednesday hosted for fishermen leader Hussain Aslam Bhatti on Bhit Island. The programme was attended by a large number of fishermen of the area. The CM was accompanied by relevant officials. Mr Shah sailed in a boat to Bhit Island where addressing a reception, he said that he had close association with fishermen.

“My village is located near Manchhar Lake where hundreds of fishermen live on boats and the lake banks,” he said and added that therefore he had firsthand knowledge of fishermen. He said he was also exploring ways and means to filter the water of Manchhar Lake which had been polluted with effluent and brackish water draining out from crops. “I have to rehabilitate the fishermen of Manchhar Lake and I am keen to resolve the issues of fishermen of Karachi because they are the jialas” of Benazir Bhutto, he said.

The CM announced construction of three floating jetties and passenger sheds on Bhit and Baba islands and at Mubarak village. “We have allocated Rs250.561 million and the scheme will be executed by the local government department.” He directed Minister for Local Government Nasir Shah to start work on the scheme and complete it by the end of this year. Mr Shah said that he had also approved Rs600m schemes of drainage, water supply, brick roads for the twin islands of Baba and Bhit and Shamspar and Sualehabad.

On the demand of fishermen, the chief minister said he would consider installation of RO plant on Bhit. The fishermen told the chief minister that the lease of their villages had expired, therefore, they requested a fresh lease. At this, the chief minister directed the commissioner to get it done; if it had expired, issue a fresh one through the Board of Revenue. The fishermen told the chief minister that Benazir Bhutto had visited Bhit Island and had announced establishment of a playground on the island but she could not do so because soon after that her government was removed.

At this, Mr Shah said that the announcement for the playground was made by his “great leader” and her promise would be fulfilled at any cost. The schemes he announced included construction of brick roads in six union councils, UC-41 to UC-46 of DMC Keamari for Rs99.35m; improvement of water supply and installation of sewerage lines and paver blocks in UC-40 and UC-42 of DMC Keamari for Rs140m; construction of roads, drains work and paver blocks at UC-41 Bhit, Baba, Shamspar, Younasabad, Sualehabad islands for Rs150m.

The chief minister said that he had planned to construct a bridge to connect all islands of DMC Keamari with the main roads so that people could travel on vehicles. “This bridge is at the planning stage and Inshallah the plan will be materialised,” he added. The chief minister asked the fishermen if they had been vaccinated — upon which most of them replied in the negative. He said that as they remained busy in fishing therefore they could not be vaccinated.

The CM directed Commissioner of Karachi Navid Shaikh to arrange a vaccination unit in a boat and keep the boat moving from one island to the other and vaccinate the entire eligible population. Earlier, in the boat in which the CM sailed to the island. The chief minister announced Rs600m schemes as had been demanded by local fishermen. After attending the reception, he visited an under-construction jetty and directed the project director to complete it at the earliest.

Water Commission in Pakistan urges conservation of groundwater

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1642621/commission-urges-conservation-of-groundwater>

"Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Water Resources Commission has stressed the need for conservation of groundwater on which the province is heavily dependent. The commission, formed for protection, preservation and effective management of the province's water resources under National Water Policy, held its maiden meeting here on Wednesday with Chief Minister Mahmood Khan in the chair. The commission's inaugural meeting also coincided with World Water Week, which is being observed from August 23 to 27.

Pakistan: People of Pakistan's Gwadar protest against illegal fishing by Chinese trawlers

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/people-of-pakistans-gwadar-protest-against-illegal-fishing-by-chinese-trawlers20210822164230/>

"Hundreds of people in Pakistan's Gwadar on Sunday staged a demonstration against illegal fishing by Chinese trawlers." "People in Gawadar protesting against the Chinese trawlers fishing illegally in Gawadar and Pasni. #ChinaHandaoffBalochistan", tweeted Munir Mengal, President of Baloch Voice Association NGO based in Paris. People gathered were shouting slogans like "Till the time labourers are distressed, the battle will go on", "Take a step, we are with you."

"This is not the first time the residents have protested against the Chinese trawlers. Earlier in July, hundreds of fishermen, political workers and members of civil society staged a protest to cancel the fishing licences of Chinese trawlers to protect the livelihood of the Gwadar fishermen. The National Party and Baloch Student Organisation had called for the protest rally and sit-in in front of the Gwadar Press Club against the Imran Khan government's move.

The participants of the rally marched on the roads of the coastal town and later staged the sit-in against the Imran Khan government decision to grant Chinese trawlers fishing rights in Gwadar by issuing them licences. Speakers said the fishermen of Gwadar had vacated their fishing spots for the construction of the Gwadar port hoping that their economic conditions would improve once the port was ready, but now the federal government had issued licences to Chinese trawlers which were badly affecting their livelihood.

They alleged that the provincial fisheries minister and the federal government officials, instead of supporting the stance of the local fishermen, were giving statements in favour of the Chinese fishermen. In 2015, China announced the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project in Pakistan worth USD 46 billion, of which Balochistan is an integral part.

It would link Pakistan's southern Gwadar port in Balochistan on the Arabian Sea to China's western Xinjiang region. It also includes plans to create road, rail and oil pipeline links to

improve connectivity between China and the Middle East. The Balochs opposed China's increasing involvement in the province.

The CPEC has not benefited the people of Balochistan while people of other provinces enjoy the fruits of the mega project. This has led to widespread protests as the Chinese are viewed as encroachers who are squeezing out all the wealth from the region.

Pakistan: PFF chairperson Mohammad Ali Shah passes away

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2316204/pff-chairperson-mohammad-ali-shah-passes-away>

"According to Shah's family, he had been suffering from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and had tested positive for Covid-19 a few weeks ago. They added that the activist had recovered from the infectious disease, but passed away owing to a chest problem.

"His last Covid test came negative, but his condition deteriorated because of his chest problem and doctors put him on a ventilator a few days ago," Yasmin Shah, the deceased activist's daughter, told The Express Tribune.

Soon after the news of Shah's death, messages poured in on social media as people from different sections of the society expressed their grief on his passing. Meanwhile, the activist's family said he would be laid to rest in his family graveyard in Ibrahim Hyderi, one of the major settlements of fishermen in Karachi.

Shah was born in Karachi in 1956 and was known to champion the rights of fishermen. He advocated their case at national and international forums, which also led him to serve as the chairman of the Asia region of World Forum of Fisher People (WWFP), a global forum for fishermen. His struggle for detained fishermen, protection of mangroves, the sustainable livelihood of fisherfolk and struggle for the revival of the Indus Delta were matchless.

Shah was the man who took the initiative to celebrate World Fisheries Day every year on November 21 and advocated against the occupation of water bodies. "It was his struggle which compelled the Sindh government to abolish the contract system in fisheries.

After the contract system came to an end, the fishermen became independent to catch fish from water bodies," Mustafa Mirani, one of his close aides said. The news has brought grief in the coastal belt of Sindh and Balochistan where the fishermen and other traders closed their businesses to mourn the activist's demise.

Pakistan: No fish to catch as water-starved Chotiari dam denied its due fill

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/877419-no-fish-to-catch-as-water-starved-chotiari-dam-denied-its-due-fill>

"Inland fishermen at Chotiari Reservoir, near Sanghar, Sindh, are fighting for survival as water levels have dropped too low to maintain an ecosystem, resulting in a drastic fall in fish stocks. "We usually receive fresh water from the main Nara Canal during the monsoon season starting from June and July. But this year neither rains benefitted River Indus and its tributaries nor did Chotiari receive its fresh water share," said Rasool Bux Mallah, a community leader at the reservoir.

"The rainwater always fills natural water bodies, bringing more fish seed naturally, helping maintaining their biodiversity." The foreign-funded reservoir, situated in Sanghar district of Sindh province of Pakistan, was built on 52 fresh water lakes two decades ago, aiming to supply water to agricultural land in the neighbouring Umerkot district. Fishermen families residing in more than 15 small and large villages near the reservoir depend on it for livelihood and receive water for their domestic needs.

Among these villages, eight are located on the scattered islands inside the reservoir since its building. They live there with their livestock and seem reluctant to shift to safer places despite challenges they are set to face. Rasool Bux said eight years back the community people faced the problem of receding water in the dam and there was no fish to catch for months. Nearby forests that provide natural habitats to several wildlife species also started diminishing, he added.

"Whenever the country receives heavy rains during the monsoon season it positively impacts the wetlands, as the canal water brings silt and fish seeds naturally. But in case of delayed rainfall, the community loses their source of living," he said. Chotiari Reservoir was built with an aim to irrigate 290,000 acres of barren land in Achhro Thar (white desert) and neighbouring Umerkot district.

However, after its building, rich fertile lands turned barren due to increasing water logging and seepages. Ramzan Mallah, another community activist from Baqar Village, near the reservoir, said fishermen were losing traditional sources of income and looking for alternatives for survival. "The community people around the reservoir possess around 900 licensed boats, but due to receding water they cannot sail their small vessels and are sitting mostly idle without any work." Ramzan said traditional fishermen in this situation would use small nets to catch fish for their own consumption as well as little extra for market to earn income.

"Data is not accurate, but it can be responsibly said this reservoir is the source of livelihood for hundreds of families living around it," he said. Chotiari reservoir is the only water body that receives natural fish seed through Nara canal. All inland water bodies, including bigger Manchhar Lake and others, do not receive fish seed naturally because of blockages and losing its natural feeding sources.

Ramzan said the inland fisheries department also provided artificial fish seed to benefit the community people but all efforts went in vain due to receding waters. Reports gathered by The News through local activists show some artisan families, mainly fisherwomen, have adopted the

old practice of weaving mats but due to loss of vegetation at water bodies they too are facing hardships.

Community elders say the area has attracted various threatened wildlife species like otters, crocodiles, freshwater turtles, and many other common animals, reptiles and birds to inhabit there. In fact this water scarcity may shrink the natural habitats of these species. Besides the community, the stakeholders include irrigation department, agriculture, inland fisheries, wildlife, tourism, and environment departments. Looking at impacts of the reservoir the representatives of stakeholders have signed agreements after the completion of an assessment report to avoid seepages and build three alternative drainages to take out seepage water, but owing to lacking of monitoring mechanisms, the plan is yet to be implemented to save the ecosystem.

According to local activists, due to seepages from all sides the reservoir has created small lakes around it, ruining fertile agricultural lands, compelling farmers to find alternative sources of income. Some reports show the seepage and the lakes formed as a result are creating rows between farmers and fishermen over water.

Local landlords lay claim to these waters to make money through fishing contracts, while fishermen look at it as an attempt to snatch their sources of livelihood from other sites. Anyway, due to the recent weather changes and delayed rainfall, almost all freshwater bodies are facing loss of wildlife and water species, forcing people to look for alternatives.

Pakistan: Fishermen and their families living around Sindh’s Hamal Lake say they are falling sick, running out of fish to sell or eat

<https://www.geo.tv/latest/364684-an-inside-look-at-one-of-pakistans-largest-freshwater-lake-which-is-now-heavily-polluted>

"In the last 10 years, Hamal Lake, one of Pakistan’s largest freshwater lakes, has become heavily polluted due to the Qambar Shahdadkot District in Sindh dumping its sewerage and garbage in the water. For the over 300 homes located on the banks of the Hamal Lake, the water is their life line for fishing, hunting, bathing and drinking. But the contamination of the river over the years has affected both the quality of the water and its ecosystem. “Today, there is barely any fish to sell,” said Dhayani, an old woman, “There is not enough fish to even eat.” Hunger and poverty has forced the residents of the areas to continue fishing in the Lake.

The woman added that the children in the area cry due to hunger. “We tell them everything will be okay. But we are not sure if it will.” “We are now compelled to even drink polluted water,” Naseeba Mallah, a 45-year-old resident told Geo.tv, “Most of us are falling sick. Others are migrating to earn a living elsewhere in the district.” The Hamal Lake stretches over 25 kilometers and is 10 kilometers wide.

A decade ago, it was a nursery of fresh water fishes, such as carps, catfish, tilapia, lake herring, bluegill, and white minnow. It was also a habitat for migratory birds such as ducks, geese, and flamingos. While there were once boundaries, marked territories, there are none now. Today, all the fishermen fish in the same patch of water and brawls are common, as for the fisherman of Sindh's Hamal Lake, the fight is for survival.

Back in the day, a local landlord in the Qambar Shahdadkot District had marked out areas for the fishermen to work in, to prevent conflict. But those boundary lines have dissolved over time. "Fights are now routine," Naseeba said, "These days, we hardly earn enough to meet our needs.

Pakistan: Fishermen block Karachi Port

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2314536/fishermen-block-karachi-port>

"Fishermen along with their families on board their fishing vessels were chanting slogans against the alleged misconduct of the personnel security agencies in the sea. The protest demonstration started at 8 am at Keamari jetty and continued till 2 pm, blocking all the routine work of the port for hours. The blockade ended and the fishermen dispersed peacefully on official assurance of the resolution of the issues faced by the fishermen.

The officials from Karachi Port Trust held talks with the protesting fisherman assuring them that their issues will be resolved. The talks were delayed till Monday as the protestors demanded the presence of Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi. It was learnt that Zaidi will join the talks on Monday. The indigenous fishermen from Baba and Bhatt islands, Baldia Town, Khada Market, Keamari, Ibrahim Haidery, Kaka Pir chugged into the harbour with their fishing boats and demanded the government to address their issues.

Speaking to The Express Tribune, they said that on late Friday night some of the fishermen were compelled not to go into the sea for fishing. "It is not the first time we are being insulted and manhandled," said Sharjeel Noor Muhammad. "Enough is enough. There is limit to tolerate such kind of attitude," he said. Sharing the details of the protest, Muhammad said that despite having legal fishing permits, the fishermen have been mistreated by officials of different security agencies deployed in the sea.

"We are not terrorists or foreigners but are being treated like them," he said. Another fisherman, Ibrahim, said that most of the time they were tortured and abused. "The security officials humiliate a father in front of a son. We are indigenous people of this land. Do you think we could hatch a conspiracy or get involved in anything against the country," he said. This is the second massive protest of the fishermen that had blocked the port.

The first was staged in 1996. "Every fisherman is united against such attitude of our security agencies," a fisherman Abdul Karim said. "The protest will be expanded, if our all demands and

issues are not met,” Karim said. Pakistan Peoples Party’s (PPP) MPA Shazia Karim Sanghar claimed that all the fishermen in Sindh’s coastal belt were supporters of the PPP.

“This is the reason they are being targeted,” she said. She warned that the fishermen will not be left alone to face such kind of inhuman attitude. “We are with them and demand the federal government to change its policies,” she urged.

Pakistan: PFD to launch project to offer fresh fish to consumers

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40112538/pfd-to-launch-project-to-offer-fresh-fish-to-consumers>

"Punjab Fisheries Department (PFD) is going to launch a project under which model standard outlets offering frozen, fresh and live fish for consumers in a hygienic and odourless environment will be set up in six different cities of the province at an estimated cost of Rs65 million. First such outlet has been planned at Muridke near Lahore while other cities include Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Multan, Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan (DGK).

The department will be regulating authority while private sector will sell the fish meat. The project is named as 'enhancing fish production and per capital fish consumption in Punjab' having three different initiatives which include creating awareness among the masses about advantage of fish meat through seminars, workshops etc, imparting awareness to youth in Universities and Colleges and setting up the model outlets. "

"Initially the project was designed for Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Multan only but later Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan also included where these shops will be offering frozen (value added) fish products, fresh fish meat and live fish as pilot project. Positive response to these shops will lead to setting up of such outlets in all the districts,"" said DG Fisheries Punjab Dr Sikender Hayat while talking to Business Recorder here on Tuesday.

The project is aimed at realizing the masses that fish can be taken round the year and it has more nutrition and power than mutton, beef or broiler chicken meat. Fish meat is also cheaper than red meat and increase in consumption of per capita per annum will save masses from different deficiencies and diseases, he added.

Regarding the business model, he said the department will only provide the outlet ready to start business while private sector will be responsible to bring fish and sell it according to the SOPs set by the department. He said that the department will rent out the premises and also regulate the quality.

He said those parties will be given preference who have processing plants to produce ready to cook value added fish meat products, farms and experience of the business. To a question, he said preparations are underway and it is hoped that these model outlets will be ready before the

coming fish season.

India and Pakistan: Activists call on India, Pak to release 632 fishermen

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/activists-call-on-india-pak-to-release-632-fishermen/article35821861.ece>

"Peace activists and fishermen have appealed to India and Pakistan to release 632 fishermen, lodged in jails across both countries, as a goodwill gesture and humanitarian step in the run up to their 75th Independence Day celebrations. Of the 632 fishermen, 558 are Indian fishermen lodged in Pakistani jails and 74 are Pakistani fishermen lodged in various jails in India.

Most of the Indian fishermen are from Gujarat and Union Territory of Daman and Diu. Indian fishermen are routinely caught by Pakistan's Marine Security Agency when fishing along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).

"The pandemic has turned the situation dire for the incarcerated fishermen, women and aged prisoners, and both the governments are in a position to stop the suffering of these individuals and their families. In almost all cases, arrested fishermen cross the maritime border inadvertently and should not be treated as criminals by the other country," said Jatin Desai, wellknown activist working for fishermen's welfare.

Mr. Desai and other activists have also asked the governments of both countries to allow a team of medical experts from either side to visit and check upon the incarcerated fishermen. They have also demanded the immediate revival of the Judicial Committee on Prisoners, consisting of four retired judges of the higher judiciary from each country. The last meeting of the Committee was held in October 2013 in India.

The Agreement on Consular Access, 2008, says, "Each government shall provide consular access within three months to nationals of one country, under arrest, detention or imprisonment in the other country." However, according to the activists, most often, this is not followed. "There are social effects of the arrests also.

The families of the arrested fishermen suffer, livelihoods are disrupted and their children's education takes a hit. The situation also causes mental health issues with no one in the families aware of when their near and dear ones will get released and repatriated. A few have even died while in prison in the other country," Mr Desai said, adding that fishermen live in pitiable conditions when they are arrested and imprisoned.

Pakistan: Fishermen end protest after talks with SAPM Mahmood Maulvi

<https://pakobserver.net/fishermen-end-protest-after-talks-with-sapm-mahmood-maulvi/>

"Fishermen on Saturday called off their protest after talks with Prime Minister's aide on marine affairs Mahmood Maulvi. The leaders of protesting fishermen will hold another round of talks with the prime minister's aide over the problems faced by fishermen on Monday. Fishermen had started their protest over unnecessary checking of their boats and misbehaviour by the government officials.

Fishermen blocked the cargo ships' anchoring channel at the port to record their protest against checking in the open sea. They also staged a sit-in at Mauripur road. Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Marine Affairs Mahmood Maulvi reached for talks with fishermen and assured them that their grievances will be addressed.

"The government is aware of the problems faced by fishermen," he said. After his assurance fishermen decided to call off their protest and opened the channel. The protest started last night as the fishermen were stopped from venturing into the open sea for fishing. Due to protest, the anchoring of cargo ships was suspended at the port. The fishermen said that they were unable to do fishing for the last two months and they are facing problems in feeding their families.

Pakistan: Govt approves new fishing policy allowing fishing in deep sea: Zaidi

<https://nation.com.pk/09-Aug-2021/govt-approves-new-fishing-policy-allowing-fishing-in-deep-sea-zaidi>

"Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi says the federal cabinet has approved a new fishing policy to allow the fishermen for fishing in the deep sea. Talking to the media persons in Karachi today (Sunday), he said that new licences will be issued to the local fishermen and steps are being taken to address their problems. Ali Zaidi said that fishermen have also been included in the Kamyab Jawan Programme and now they can expand their business.

Pakistan: Fishermen lead anti-Pak protests in Balochistan, demand rights, jobs

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/fishermen-lead-anti-pak-protests-in-balochistan-demand-rights-jobs20210731144028/>

"Massive protests have swept through the Balochistan province of Pakistan, especially the Gwadar region, where people are holding rallies and demonstrations calling out the government for mistreating the region and its people. While accusing Islamabad of working in cahoots with Chinese authorities, they say that people in Gwadar are losing jobs due to the so-called game-changer China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Their protests have also aimed to highlight a rise in the plights of commoners due to a significant rise in load shedding.

A protester said, ""We are stuck between the devil and the deep blue sea. We, the people of Balochistan have only two options to choose from, either to sink in the sea or sit in the lap of the

devil. CPEC has been a historical problem. We have just been able to just about meet our ends because of CPEC". The fishermen, who are on the front line in these latest anti-Islamabad protests say they have assured prosperity when the CPEC agreement was signed but the promises have vanished into thin air. On the contrary, the situation has grown so desperate that they are able to just about make ends meet."

"Our fishermen used to earn lakhs of rupees before CPEC was conceived in 2003. But even that has been sold by them (Pakistan government)", said a protester in his protest speech. While the Covid-19 pandemic has already rendered a big blow to the already battered economy of Pakistan, the fishermen have suffered a double whammy with even little prospects of returning to sea dying down with the country's new policy under which the Chinese are gaining control of the Gwadar Port and the region around it.

They have been cleared away from their fishing areas and now with no employment, distressed locals say they are left with little or no option to look forward to in life. A protester added, "Had we been wrong then Gwadar port would have never come into existence and now even your Gwadar expressway is on the verge of completion. Imran Khan, If you hate the people of Gwadar so much then just do what Hitler did with Jews.

Gather us all at one place and kill us with poisonous gas. If you cannot do this then stop hating us and stop playing with our lives, Imran Khan". The Baloch, who accuse Islamabad of having devious intentions of their ethnic cleansing also say that a systematic design has been employed to further oppress and subsequently eliminate them. Apart from hours of everyday load shedding, Balochistan also has an acute shortage of potable water. "

"Balochistan has received more rainfall than Islamabad but still, Gwadar has an acute water shortage. What is the reason behind this? It happens because the people of Gwadar are not ready to fall in line with those who are mistreating them", said a resident of Gwadar who has joined the protest. "

The region of Balochistan, which is now the largest province of Pakistan, was annexed by it in 1948. And despite stiff resistance from the locals, Islamabad has continued to rule it with an iron fist. The region is full of mineral and gas reserves and meets a large portion of the gaseous needs of the country. However, in return, all it gets is discrimination and state-sponsored oppression.

Pakistan fishermen seek better prices as new season approaches

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/869997-fishermen-seek-better-prices-as-new-season-approaches>

"After a two-month ban on fishing in the sea, the new fishing season is set to start on August 1, but fishermen in Hyderabad, Pakistan, are uncertain because of the current market prices and the

monopoly of traders and middlemen. The fisher folk feel that the middlemen deprive them of their fair share at local jetties, which at times does not even help them recover the cost of diesel and rations they use on their boats when they go out to the sea.

Reports gathered from the coastal fishermen residing in different areas along the 350km coastline in Sindh are tired of exploitation. They have not been receiving a fair price for seafood, including precious shrimps and other commercially important species, as well as trash fish that is used for fishmeal used in animal feed, especially for poultry, farm-raised fish, and pets. “We do not know the reason as to why, just when the new fishing season is to start on August 1, traders have set the rate of trash fish at Rs22/kg instead of Rs35-Rs38/kg a few days ago,” said Akhtar Shaikh, a community activist in Rehri Mayan Village, Karachi.

Trash fish is used for poultry feed and mostly the factories situated nearby buy it in bulk. But with the lower price set by traders, the fishing community would be in a financially vulnerable situation. A large number of boats running from different jetties, including Keti Bunder, Shah Bunder from Thatta and Sujawal district and parts of Balochistan coast are known for bringing trash fish. The business of trash fish is not being dealt with at the major market in Karachi, and mostly traders buy this fish for meal manufacturing units established near Ibrahim Hydri and other localities.

In Keti Bunder and on isolated islands, people follow the old practice of drying fish for fishmeal. These boats for trash fish carry larger groups, comprising 20-40 for pulling and sorting out the catch for the market. Only a few modern boats have installed machines for pulling nets in the open sea, the community activists said. These boats mostly operate from zero to 12 nautical miles sea zone and catch the products. In fact, the prices of diesel and ration have increased manifold but the product does not have value, Shaikh added.

“Hardly a few days ago, we sold our catch (trash fish) at Rs35/kg, which is being refused by the traders, who now offer a mere Rs22/kg only,” he disclosed. Majeed Motani, a seasoned boat captain, sharing his experience linked the rates with demand and supply. “When there is higher supply, the rates usually go down. But in case of low supply the demand increases and the rates jump high.” He realised that despite many changes in the overall industrial sectors, the workforce in fisheries still do not have any incentive.

He said they have suggested the government to set support prices of commercially important products to avoid exploitation of the poor workforce at the hands of traders. There are around 52 units, manufacturing fishmeal (poultry feed) through trash fish. They supply the feed to the poultry sector across Pakistan.

These factories have easy access to raw material (trash fish) in the coastal areas. Fishermen pleaded that since the prices of everything they used for fishing trips were high, the prices of products should be high too; however, the opposite was happening and the products were getting devalued, making it impossible to recover the cost of fishing.

Poultry rate has jumped high to Rs400-500/kg or more in the open market, but fishermen, who provide the basic raw materials, remain deprived of this benefit, which raises several questions. The News has learned that Karachi Fisheries Harbour, a main market for seafood products, has cleaned auction halls and market premises.

Asif Bhatti, president, Native Indigenous Fishermen Association (Nifa), representing island communities in Karachi said, “Price matter of fish for the new season is yet to resolve, despite frequent meetings with stakeholders at Karachi harbour, Fishermen Cooperative Society (FCS) and marine agencies.” He said around 80 percent of fish catch goes to processing factories, while 20 percent was sold in the local markets. “It is the government’s responsibility to set prices like it does for some other major crops in agriculture.”

About trash fish, Bhatti said it was not fit for human consumption. Long ago, he said fishermen used to dry trash fish in open areas, courtyards in coastal villages and on islands. But now factories have mechanisms to process fresh catch for the feed. There are reports that despite a two-month ban on shrimp catch during June and July, some boats continued their activities.

This happens because the government does not provide any support during these two months to the idle fishermen. Presently, shrimps – both low and high quality – are pouring onto the jetties and in the local markets for sale because of poor monitoring systems to implement the ban.

Fishing is one of the largest industries, providing a source of livelihood to thousands of people who work on boats, at jetties, in the main market as loaders and transporters, and at the fishmeal processing and packaging units. But despite their contributions to the economy, the government does not have any incentive, safety nets and protection available for this large workforce.

Pakistan: Indus Delta mangroves rebound

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/870718-indus-delta-mangroves-rebound>

"The mangrove forests have recovered and reclaimed some of area it lost to massive deforestation. The Indus Delta is now showing a Mangrove cover over 139,000 hectares as compared to in 2005 when the forest cover was reduced to 86,000 hectares. This recovery was discussed by environmental experts in a seminar organized by WWF Pakistan on International Day of Protection of Mangrove Forests in Thatta.

Addressing the seminar, Manager Mangroves Conservation Project, WWF Pakistan, Saeedul Islam, said that mangroves safeguarded coastal belts from natural disasters, particularly sea storms, major tides, tsunamis and floods, and added “these trees absorb toxic gases from the atmosphere and also improve water quality and sustain nurseries of fish.” He emphasized that the proximity and quantity of mangrove forests is vital for the Sindh Forest Department, WWF, IUCN and the local population.

The Coordinator Natural Resource Management, IUCN Pakistan, Dr. Babar Hussein said that awareness was being created among people regarding the protection of mangrove forests. He apprised that mangroves forests were breeding grounds for a wide variety of fish, lizards, birds and other animals. Dr Mukhtar Maher, Director, University of Sindh, Bhutto Campus, said the mangroves reduced the impact of climate change.

India and Pakistan: Series of cloudbursts cause flash floods in Western Himalayas, across

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/climate-change/series-of-cloudbursts-cause-flash-floods-in-western-himalayas-across-india-and-pakistan-78153>

"There have been a series of cloudbursts across the western Himalayan region July 28, 2021. The ensuing flashfloods have wreaked havoc in Himachal Pradesh, the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and across the border, in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi in Pakistan. A cloudburst occurred in the area around the holy cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir causing flooding, according to NDTV.

However, no casualties have been reported. The Amarnath Yatra has been cancelled for a second consecutive year due to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Locals have been advised to stay away from the Sindh river that flows in the area. In Pakistan, there have been two reported deaths of a mother and her child in Sector E11/2 of Islamabad according to the Dawn newspaper. The paper said the deaths happened after floodwaters entered their house basement on the night of July 27, 2021.

Hamza Shafqaat, the deputy commissioner of Islamabad, tweeted that a cloudburst was to blame for the flash flooding in the capital and its twin, Rawalpindi. Both cities are located in the Potohar plateau region of Pakistan. The Pakistan Meteorological Department tweeted that there had been heavy rains in the Islamabad-Rawalpindi area July 28. Teams from the Pakistan Army, which is headquartered in Rawalpindi, have been called out to assist in rescue and relief operations in both cities.

Flash floods have wrought havoc across the Line of Control in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh too. Seven people have been reported dead and many missing after a flash flood occurred at 4.30 am July 28, 2021 at Honzar village in Dacchan tehsil of Kishtwar in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, The Tribune reported. The Greater Kashmir newspaper also tweeted that a house and a mosque had been partially damaged after heavy rains, possibly caused by a cloudburst, triggered flash floods in Bandipora, north Kashmir.

The paper also tweeted about flash floods in Kargil district of the neighbouring Union territory of Ladakh, where a mini hydropower project, some residential houses and agricultural land had been affected. Both the Bandipora and Kargil flash floods had taken place July 28, according to Greater Kashmir. The Tribune also reported that nine people had died in Himachal Pradesh.

Seven had been killed in the district of Lahaul-Spiti due to a cloudburst over the Tozing Nullah. Two others had died in Chamba.

Pakistan: Fishermen seek better prices as new season approaches

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/869997-fishermen-seek-better-prices-as-new-season-approaches>

"After a two-month ban on fishing in the sea, the new fishing season is set to start on August 1, but fishermen are uncertain because of the current market prices and the monopoly of traders and middlemen. The fisher folk feel that the middlemen deprive them of their fair share at local jetties, which at times does not even help them recover the cost of diesel and rations they use on their boats when they go out to the sea. Reports gathered from the coastal fishermen residing in different areas along the 350km coastline in Sindh are tired of exploitation.

They have not been receiving a fair price for seafood, including precious shrimps and other commercially important species, as well as trash fish that is used for fishmeal used in animal feed, especially for poultry, farm-raised fish, and pets. "We do not know the reason as to why, just when the new fishing season is to start on August 1, traders have set the rate of trash fish at Rs22/kg instead of Rs35-Rs38/kg a few days ago," said Akhtar Shaikh, a community activist in Rehri Mayan Village, Karachi.

Trash fish is used for poultry feed and mostly the factories situated nearby buy it in bulk. But with the lower price set by traders, the fishing community would be in a financially vulnerable situation. A large number of boats running from different jetties, including Keti Bunder, Shah Bunder from Thatta and Sujawal district and parts of Balochistan coast are known for bringing trash fish. The business of trash fish is not being dealt with at the major market in Karachi, and mostly traders buy this fish for meal manufacturing units established near Ibrahim Hydri and other localities.

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"Hardly a few days ago, we sold our catch (trash fish) at Rs35/kg, which is being refused by the traders, who now offer a mere Rs22/kg only," he disclosed. Majeed Motani, a seasoned boat captain, sharing his experience linked the rates with demand and supply. "When there is higher supply, the rates usually go down. But in case of low supply the demand increases and the rates jump high." He realised that despite many changes in the overall industrial sectors, the workforce

in fisheries still do not have any incentive. He said they have suggested the government to set support prices of commercially important products to avoid exploitation of the poor workforce at the hands of traders.

There are around 52 units, manufacturing fishmeal (poultry feed) through trash fish. They supply the feed to the poultry sector across Pakistan. These factories have easy access to raw material (trash fish) in the coastal areas. Fishermen pleaded that since the prices of everything they used for fishing trips were high, the prices of products should be high too; however, the opposite was happening and the products were getting devalued, making it impossible to recover the cost of fishing.

Poultry rate has jumped high to Rs400-500/kg or more in the open market, but fishermen, who provide the basic raw materials, remain deprived of this benefit, which raises several questions. The News has learned that Karachi Fisheries Harbour, a main market for seafood products, has cleaned auction halls and market premises. Asif Bhatti, president, Native Indigenous Fishermen Association (Nifa), representing island communities in Karachi said, “Price matter of fish for the new season is yet to resolve, despite frequent meetings with stakeholders at Karachi harbour, Fishermen Cooperative Society (FCS) and marine agencies.”

He said around 80 percent of fish catch goes to processing factories, while 20 percent was sold in the local markets. “It is the government’s responsibility to set prices like it does for some other major crops in agriculture.” About trash fish, Bhatti said it was not fit for human consumption. Long ago, he said fishermen used to dry trash fish in open areas, courtyards in coastal villages and on islands. But now factories have mechanisms to process fresh catch for the feed. There are reports that despite a two-month ban on shrimp catch during June and July, some boats continued their activities.

This happens because the government does not provide any support during these two months to the idle fishermen. Presently, shrimps – both low and high quality – are pouring onto the jetties and in the local markets for sale because of poor monitoring systems to implement the ban. Fishing is one of the largest industries, providing a source of livelihood to thousands of people who work on boats, at jetties, in the main market as loaders and transporters, and at the fishmeal processing and packaging units. But despite their contributions to the economy, the government does not have any incentive, safety nets and protection available for this large workforce.

Pakistan: Senator Danish Kumar informed the Committee that Chinese, Korean and Japanese trawlers were fishing in Pakistan waters illegally due to which local fishermen were facing hunger like situation

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40109569>

"Presided over by Senator Zeeshan Khanzada, the Committee deferred the agenda with a warning that Committee members will boycott meetings if Secretary Commerce failed to make himself available in future. Some of the senators maintained that they had come from Karachi and Quetta for the meeting, but the Secretary did not bother to attend it. They further stated that the briefing given on the Commerce Ministry's performance and future strategy was like a film which they had watched for years.

Senator Danish Kumar and Senator Ahmed Khan walked out of the meeting in protest against absence of Secretary Commerce Sualeh Ahmad Faruqui who, according to Additional Secretary Dr Ahmed Mujtaba Memon, was in Karachi to discuss important issues related to Expo 2021. However, some Committee Members brought their angry colleagues back to the Committee room and wrote a warning letter to the Secretary Commerce and handed it over to Chairman of the Committee.

Chairman Standing Committee remarked that he would also walk out of the meeting, if such an embarrassing situation happened in future. Senator Fida Muhammad requested Chairman Standing Committee to write a letter to Chairman Senate on the attitude of Secretary Commerce. Meanwhile, Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment, Abdul Razak Dawood reached the meeting and poured water on the fiery situation by offering an apology on the absence of Secretary.

He also made the Committee members laugh when he said that Secretary Commerce was not in touch with him too. "I apologise on the absence of Secretary Commerce. In fact, I am also in search of Secretary Commerce. I called him today but he did not pick up the phone. Then I decided to call his Secretary but I was told that he is on leave," said Dawood. Director General (Trade Policy), Waqas Azeem briefed the Committee on STFP 2020-25, saying the targets of two previous trade policies were not based on ground realities as export targets were too high which could not be achieved.

He said the main focus of both policies was on three markets including China and European Union (EU). He maintained that exports had posted growth in FY 2020-21 as compared to FY 2019-20 because orders of other countries were diverted to Pakistan due to Covid-19 situation. However, when Committee members sought details of orders which were diverted to Pakistan, DG, (Trade Policy) declined to share the information on the plea that exporters did not share buyers' information with the Ministry because they feared that the information might be leaked to their competitors.

Committee members argued that if DG (TP) did not have such information, then what type of information was he sharing with the Committee? Senator Palwasha Khan enquired sarcastically if exports came through smuggling, adding that exports were from the documented economy and therefore destination of export orders should be known. Additional Secretary, Additional Secretary (Trade Policy), Dr Ahmed Mujtaba Memon claimed that the incumbent government

reduced energy rates for five export-oriented sectors for the first time in the country's history even though the first time energy rates were reduced was during PML-N government.

Additional Secretary further stated that the government rationalized duties on raw materials due to which exports crossed \$25 billion. On a question about the absence of Director General (Textile), Kunwar Usman, Additional Secretary informed the Committee that he was from the private sector. He has salary issues and may not be part of Commerce Ministry. Committee members enquired if reduced rate of energy for the export-oriented industry was subsidy, to which Razak Dawood replied that people said it was subsidy but it was actually cross subsidy.

He added that globally energy tariffs were lower for export industry but in Pakistan it was not so. He informed the Committee that non-traditional sectors were being included in sectors which were being incentivised. "Marble, minerals and fisheries will also be included in the sectors which are being incentivised in the next trade policy." He said, entire proposed incentives for auto sector have not been approved, adding export of motorcycles has already started but export of cars appears to be a challenge.

Razak Dawood informed the Committee that Pakistan would start export of mobile phones by January 2022 and two Chinese companies would take the lead. One Chinese company has set up industry in Karachi. He said M/s Samsung was asked twice to set up factory in Pakistan and government would give incentives but they refused. When two Chinese companies set up their factories, Samsung approached the government for incentives, adding that now the company would have to set up factory on already available incentives.

Razak Dawood maintained that tariff was rationalized in a way that if an investor came in for 10 years in Pakistan, tariff would remain the same. He said tariff would also be rationalised for the food sector that year. He said all duties on pharmaceuticals had been eliminated due to which that sector was now ready to export. During the meeting, Razak Dawood said a couple of months ago rice exporters came to him and informed him that China imposed a ban on Pakistani rice after detecting Coronavirus (dead virus) on the surface of plastic packing bags.

This issue has been resolved and 80 percent consignments are cleared. Virus was also detected in Pakistani sea food consignments reaching China but the virus inside the packing material of consignments was alive. Last month, nine companies were banned and this month restrictions have been imposed on six Pakistani companies. Commerce Ministry has asked companies to get sanitary and phytosanitary inspection of their consignments.

Executive Director General, Syed Rafeo Bashir Shah, informed the committee that Chinese companies had tasked Maritime Fisheries Department to inspect seafood consignments destined for China which had not performed well. Now Commerce Ministry has adopted a harsher tone with Maritime Fisheries Department. Senator Danish Kumar informed the Committee that Chinese, Korean and Japanese trawlers were fishing in Pakistan waters illegally due to which local fishermen were facing hunger like situation. He said Pakistan's seafood exports could earn

\$2 billion per annum if incentives were given to local industry. He suggested that local fishermen should be given modern technology for fishing. He also suggested ban should be imposed on fishing by foreign fishermen.

Pakistan's fish export hit by Chinese ban after coronavirus detected in its shipments

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/pakistans-fish-export-hit-by-chinese-ban-after-coronavirus-detected-in-its-shipments20210726161917/>

"Pakistan's seafood exports has been hit by crisis after 'all-weather' ally China banned exports of fish in January after detection of coronavirus in their shipments. Out of top 15 exporters, some nine firms are now temporarily banned by the Chinese authorities, Dawn reported. Qadri Noori Enterprise chief executive officer Manzar Alam told Dawn that around 50 companies have been exporting fish to China. Giving details of the ban, he said in case the coronavirus is detected in one shipment, the exporter faces a one-week ban and in case of four cases, then the exporter cannot send the shipment for eight weeks, he said.

He said Pakistan's seafood exports have since been in crisis as 60 per cent out of the country's total fish exports are destined for China. Alam said coronavirus had been detected in outer cartons and the Chinese authorities instead of destroying the infected consignment or sending it into quarantine for 15 days had suspended the shipping company, reported Dawn. ""The rejected consignments then arrived back in Pakistan and exporters are facing Rs 2 million per container as demurrage and detention and taxes,"" he added. "

"Exporters have taken up the matter with Commerce Adviser Abdul Razak Dawood who had constituted a committee, but no headway has been made so far,"" he added. One container with 26 tonnes of fish is priced between Rs 7 million and Rs 10 million, he said. Pakistan has been exporting seafood at an average unit price (AUP) of less than USD 2.5 per kg from FY18 to FY21 as compared to AUP of USD 5 to 8 per kg earned by regional competitors. Deep Blue Seafood Ltd CEO M Faisal Iftikhar Ali said that India is fetching an AUP of USD 5-7 per kg followed by over USD 5 by Bangladesh and USD 7-8 per kg by China.

The average global AUP comes to USD 5 per kg, reported Dawn. According to the Economic Survey FY21, Pakistan's main buyers of fish products are China, Thailand, Malaysia, the Middle East, Sri Lanka and Japan. Faisal said India and other countries are giving a tough time to Pakistan as these competitors have adopted shrimp farming, while in Pakistan there is negligible marine farming, reported Dawn.

Pakistan has been facing a problem of overfishing of juvenile fish causing persistent drop in landing of high value fish, he said, adding that a joint study by Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and Marine Fisheries Department (MFD) of the Federal

Government had undertaken a comprehensive assessment of Pakistan's Marine Fisheries Resources 2015 and revealed massive fish stocks depletion in Pakistan's seas.

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations has warned in 2016 to reduce fishing fleet by 50 per cent or else major fisheries resources may collapse, however, no heed was paid by the fishermen and authorities concerned and no control on the fleet is in place, said Technical Adviser (Marine Fisheries), WWF-Pakistan, Mohammad Moazam Khan.

Pakistan: Chinese ban on nine firms hits Pakistan's fish exports

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1636776>

"Qadri Noori Enterprise chief executive officer Manzar Alam told Dawn that around 50 companies have been exporting fish to China. Out of top 15 exporters, some nine firms are now temporarily banned by the Chinese authorities. Giving details of the ban, he said in case the coronavirus is detected in one shipment, the exporter faces a one-week ban and in case of four cases, then the exporter cannot send the shipment for eight weeks, he said. He said Pakistan's seafood exports have since been in crisis as 60 per cent out of the country's total fish exports are destined for China.

Mr Alam said coronavirus had been detected in outer cartons and the Chinese authorities instead of destroying the infected consignment or sending it into quarantine for 15 days had suspended the shipping company. "The rejected consignments then arrived back in Pakistan and exporters are facing Rs2 million per container as demurrage and detention and taxes," he added. "Exporters have taken up the matter with Commerce Adviser Abdul Razak Dawood who had constituted a committee, but no headway has been made so far," he added.

One container with 26 tonnes of fish carries a price between Rs7m and Rs10m, he said. Pakistan has been exporting seafood at an average unit price (AUP) of less than \$2.5 per kg from FY18 to FY21 as compared to AUP of \$5 to 8 per kg earned by regional competitors. "We have been exporting small fish which earn low prices for the last four years," Deep Blue Seafood Ltd CEO M. Faisal Iftikhar Ali said, adding that fish meal is being exported in bulk quantities which is used in poultry feed. He said India is fetching an AUP of \$5-7 per kg followed by over \$5 by Bangladesh and \$7-8 per kg by China.

The average global AUP comes to \$5 per kg. Pakistan's fish and fish preparation exports in FY21 stood slightly higher at 184,396 tonnes fetching \$414m but AUP came to \$2.25 per kg compared with exports of 171,704 tonnes valuing \$406m with AUP of \$2.35 per kg in FY20. Pakistan had seen the highest-ever exports of 198,420 tonnes in FY18 which earned \$451m but the AUP was \$2.27 per kg, while in FY19 exports were 195,523 tonnes fetching \$438m with AUP at \$2.24, PBS data showed. Fish exports had managed to get \$2.58 per kg value with export

of 152,858 tonnes worth \$394m in 2016-2017 and AUP of \$2.54 per kg in 2015-2016 with export of 127,910 tonnes fetching \$325m.

According to the Economic Survey FY21, Pakistan's main buyers of fish products are China, Thailand, Malaysia, the Middle East, Sri Lanka and Japan. The survey said since resumption of exports to the European Union (EU), several consignments of fish, cuttlefish and shrimps had been sent by two exporters who were cleared after 100 per cent laboratory tests at the EU borders. Six more fish processing plants are in the pipeline and their cases for approval are under process with the EU authorities.

Belgium, Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom had imported 3,285 tonnes of fish, squid shrimps and crabs valuing \$13mn during July-March FY21 on which the AUP comes to \$395 per tonne, the survey said. Mr Faisal said India as well as other countries are giving a tough time to Pakistan as these competitors have adopted shrimp farming, while in Pakistan there is negligible marine farming.

Pakistan has been facing a problem of overfishing of juvenile fish causing persistent drop in landing of high value fish, he said, adding that a joint study by Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and Marine Fisheries Department (MFD) of the Federal Government had undertaken a comprehensive assessment of Pakistan's Marine Fisheries Resources 2015 and revealed massive fish stocks depletion in Pakistan's seas.

Technical Adviser (Marine Fisheries), WWF-Pakistan, Mohammad Moazam Khan said fish production in Pakistan in 2020 was observed to be 619,000 tonnes of which inland fish contributed 250,000 tonnes, whereas marine production was 369,741 tonnes. The landing of fish in Sindh was 208,001 tonnes whereas Balochistan production is 161,740 tonnes. The export is increasing mainly because of rising export of fish meal.

The production mainly of marine fish in Sindh has been decreasing since 1999 because of over fishing and an increased fishing fleet, he said. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations has warned in 2016 to reduce fishing fleet by 50pc or else major fisheries resources may collapse, however, no heed was paid by the fishermen and authorities concerned and no control on the fleet is in place, he said.

WWF-Pakistan has shown its concern that about 200 tonnes of tuna being smuggled to Iran daily. If this illegal trade is controlled Pakistani exports may reach a level of at least \$550m. There is immediate need to reducing fishing fleet both Sindh and Balochistan else the fisheries may collapse, he stressed.

**Pakistan: Livestock, fisheries sectors near Khunjerab Pass to be developed under CPEC:
Asim Bajwa**

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/611640-Livestock-fisheries-sectors-Khunjerab-Pass-developed-CPEC>

"China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Chairman Lt Gen (Retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa has said that livestock and fisheries sectors in areas near Khunjerab Pass would be developed under CPEC. In a tweet, the CPEC chairman said work is underway to address the challenges in the way of benefiting from the potential sectors.

During his visit to the area, he met with the local farmers and discussed with them about the crops and yields. "On Agriculture prospects with farmers of area close to Khunjrab Pass-Gilgit Baltistan. Agriculture, livestock & fishery has potential but challenges too, working to address them under CPEC. Discussing crops & yields," Asim Bajwa tweeted.

Pakistan: Inland aquaculture a potential area to earn foreign exchange

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/794114/inland-aquaculture-a-potential-area-to-earn-foreign-exchange/>

"Inland aquaculture is a potential area for Pak-China cooperation to earn foreign exchange, says a report published by Gwadar Pro. According to Dr Saeed Murtaza Hasan Andravi, director of Animal Sciences Institute, NARC in Pakistan, fisheries is a big and emerging sector, especially inland fisheries. "As for marine fishery, nature has provided us with a long coast line where we catch different natural varieties of fish and seafood which we are also exporting. Then we have inland fisheries, freshwater fisheries, in Pakistan," he told Gwadar Pro.

"This is an emerging sector and has proven itself that in an agricultural country where crops and livestock are important, fishery is also valuable at the same time," he said. He further explained that it provides a good diet to humans, which is high in protein, and can be exported to earn foreign exchange, adding that "if we look at all these factors such as human health, poverty alleviation, nutritious diet, export, fisheries has proven itself."

Meanwhile, China is advanced in aquaculture fishery. According to the National Scientific Big Data Sharing Platform for Fishery, from 2015 to 2019, the gross output value of China's mariculture industry and freshwater aquaculture industry maintained an average annual growth rate of about five percent and two percent, respectively.

In this new avenue in the business sector, Dr Saeed Murtaza Hasan Andravi believed that the aquaculture fisheries can be a good opportunity for Chinese investors, and the Pakistani side can learn from Chinese experience and expertise.

"For the inland fish farming, farmers need a good, cheap and easily available aqua feed. This is a very good field for Chinese investment. As for breeding, Chinese investors can bring the new Chinese fish breeds to Pakistan and set up their farms, hatcheries and sell these and their eggs to the farmers. This also requires investment, preferably from Chinese," he said. Now that a huge

quantity of Pakistan's seafood is exported to China, "we need to open avenues of export to China from aquaculture and inland fisheries along with seafood."

Pakistani scientists have been working with Chinese experts for the past few years and working to introduce Chinese breeding techniques and Chinese breeds such as trout to Pakistan.

According to Rehana Kausar, program leader and senior scientific officer at Animal Sciences Institute, NARC, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) has established two laboratories at its research station namely Mountain Agriculture Research Centre (MARC) Juglote, Gilgit-Baltistan, with the technical cooperation of Gansu Fisheries Research Institute (GFRI), China.

The laboratory would help produce seeds of new cold-water fish species and to multiply them in Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and AJK. The initiative was taken under the Belt and Road Initiative of the Chinese government. "We also have started a feed formulating unit at a basic level and it has started working.

As soon as the Covid situation becomes better, we will transport the germplasm of Golden Trout from GFRI. Its propagation will begin in our Mountain Agriculture Research Center Janglot, and this seed will be disseminated in the entire region so our farmers can get seeds of good genetic quality," Dr Rehana Kausar said. PARC in collaboration with GFRI had also organised a three-day training course on "Cold Water Fisheries (Trout Farming)" to promote aquaculture farming across the potential areas of the country in 2019.

At that time a delegation of GFRI and Lanzhou University had also visited the Trout Research Station of MARC Gilgit and investigated water resources in various districts of GB, and declared the water bodies highly suitable for cold water fisheries having huge potential for cold-water fish production.

Pakistan: Crackdown against illegal fishing launched

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/crackdown-against-illegal-fishing-launched-1300596.html>

"The fisheries department has launched a crackdown against illegal fishing across the division. Divisional Director Fisheries Dr Rai Hafeez Khan said here Monday that fisheries department teams had formally launched operations against violators of fishing ban and arrested 9 people in a day-long activity. The violators were held from riverine areas Dhand Malkana and Muhammad Wala Super near Chenab River and registered cases against them under Punjab Fisheries act 1961.

The department imposed heavy fines on them and confiscated their nets and other paraphernalia. The team also imposed a fine of Rs 85,000 over selling fish illegally. He said the ban had been

imposed on fishing from June 01 to August 31. He warned the citizens to avoid fishing till August 31, otherwise, strict action would be taken against them.

Pakistan: Voice of the People

<https://pakobserver.net/voice-of-the-people-631/>

"The entire district of Gwadar, from Jiwani to Ormara, known as the Makran Coastal Belt, which employs about 80% of the locals as dependent on the sea. The locals consider the sea as their source of income, like mother and fulfil the economic needs of their families. The very existence of our lives is connected to the ocean that nurtures us by meeting our economic needs.

Fishing in the sea is a source of livelihood for over 2.5 million people in coastal towns of Sindh and Balochistan. While our oceans have distinct identities for producing the best breeds of fish in the world, it is also very attractive to the trawlers of other provinces and abroad who are constantly fishing in violation of international marine law, while leading to the extinction of most of the rare species of fish found in our ocean.

The hunting grounds of the Baloch Sea have already been made barren by the Guju Mafia of Sindh. Most of the fishermen and their dependents have become destitute, since the livelihood of these areas is entirely depended on the sea, markets and small businesses are also being badly affected by the trawlers.

As for the trawlers coming within the country have been exploiting us economically for decades. Now it has come to the point that even the trawlers coming from abroad have decided to look at our sea. The Baloch fishermen are being deprived of two loaves of bread.

Foe to friend: Fishermen join fight to save endangered Pakistan dolphin

<https://www.deccanherald.com/international/foe-to-friend-fishermen-join-fight-to-save-endangered-pakistan-dolphin-1008826.html>

"Freshwater dolphins are flourishing in a stretch of Pakistan's main river after a helping hand from fishermen mobilised to defend a rare species driven to near-extinction. Identifiable by their saw-like beaks, Indus River dolphins once swam from the Himalayas to the Arabian sea, but now mostly cluster in a 180-kilometre (110-mile) length of the waterway in southern Sindh province.

A glimpse of a dolphin cutting through muddy water to gasp for air is a regular sight along the mighty river, but most villagers nearby were unaware their neighbours were on the brink of extinction. ""We had to explain that it was a unique species only found in the Indus and nowhere else,"" Abdul Jabbar, who gave up fishing for a job on the dolphin rescue team, told AFP on the banks of Dadu Canal, which he patrols by motorbike.

Decades of uncontrolled fishing and habitat loss caused by pollution and man-made dams saw the dolphin population plummet to around 1,200 at the turn of the century. They are classed as an endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, which says their numbers have fallen by more than 50 per cent since the 1940s.

In a bid to turn around the fortunes of the mammals, Pakistani wildlife officials began a painstaking door-to-door awareness campaign with the local fishing community on the riverbanks and arterial canals. They offered advice on dolphin-friendly nets and warned against harmful and illegal poison-fishing -- the practice of using chemicals to kill small fish used for poultry feed.

The World Wide Fund for Nature also offered up one million rupees (\$6,300) worth of loans, encouraging fishermen to set up alternative businesses. With the help of the provincial wildlife department, they established a dolphin monitoring network of 100 volunteers and a handful of paid staff, and a 24-hour phone helpline for villagers to call if they see a dolphin in distress.

Pakistan: Seafood exporters see potential in export to China

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/790390/pakistani-seafood-exporters-see-potential-in-export-to-china/>

“China is our backbone in exports. In seafood exports, China is the compulsory aspect of our sales,” Suhail Firdous, CEO of Super Star Enterprise told Gwadar Pro. Located in the northern part of the Arabian Sea, Pakistan is endowed with rich fishing potential and its seafood export has shown robust growth.

The seafood exports during July-May (2020-21) were recorded at \$383.088 million against the exports of \$373.382 million in July-May (2019-20), showing growth of around 2.6 percent, according to the latest data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The export to China takes up a great proportion.

According to data from International Trade Center (ITC), Pakistan’s exports of fish and aquatic products to China accounted for 29% of Pakistan’s total exports of such products in 2019. “7-8 different types of fish are mostly consumed in China. There is a Tianjin City where our Sole Fish is very popular. Pakistan’s 70% Sole Fish is consumed in that city.

There is also Ribbon Fish, cuttlefish, squid, octopus, and other items that are loved by Chinese people,” said Suhail Firdous. Targeting this huge market, Suhail Firdous mentioned that “from a marketing point of view, it’s very easy for the export as all we need to do is to prove the quality.

Pakistan: Paucity of water in Manchar Lake irks fishermen

<https://pakobserver.net/paucity-of-water-in-manchar-lake-irks-fishermen/>

"Manchar Lake, considered to be the largest natural freshwater lake in Pakistan, located west of the Indus River in Jamshoro and Dadu Districts, some 18 km away from Sehwan Sharif, is now facing paucity of water leaving the fishermen in a state of limbo.

The shortage of water also leaves behind loads of dead fish, snatching away the only source of income for the local fishermen. Locals said that native villagers who live around the lake, now migrating from the area as sufficient water is not available in the lake posing serious challenges to fishermen who depend on the freshwater fish in the lake.

It is pertinent to note that Manchar Lake collects water from numerous small streams in the Kirthar Mountains, and then empties into the Indus River and lake's surface area fluctuates with the seasons – from as little as 36 km², to as much as 500 km² during monsoon rains.

Pakistan: Future of Gwadar

<https://pakobserver.net/future-of-gwadar/>

"AS Gwadar Port becomes fully functional – thanks to the commitment of China Overseas Port Holding Company Limited (COPHC) which is developing the region's most strategically well located port into a hub of maritime trade in the whole region, including landlocked Central Asian Region (CAR), in general and of Pakistan in particular, Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurated several projects of far reaching importance on Monday that would go a long way to exploit the full potential of the port.

During his day-long visit to Gwadar, he also announced the intention of the Government to engage estranged elements in Balochistan as part of the efforts to create a congenial atmosphere for accelerated socio-economic progress of the region and the province. The importance of Gwadar Port and its potential has been highlighted by an assessment of the COPHC, which says "Being a Deep Sea Port and because of its location it will be a gateway and hub of world businesses and trades and will cater for all types of international commercial activities generated from one business to another irrespective of quantity, quantum and magnitude".

The potential has been there but the pace of its exploitation remained criminally low because of various reasons but things started to change in 2013 when COPHC took over the command of the port and Gwadar Free Zone. It is also satisfying that the Government too is demonstrating the right kind of interest to prioritize multi-dimensional development of Gwadar, which is evident from the projects that the Prime Minister unveiled during his visit.

Apart from performing the groundbreaking of phase two of the Gwadar Free Zone (GFZ), he launched a number of other development and infrastructure projects including an expo centre, agriculture industrial park and three factories. In a related development, Chairman CPEC Authority shared a piece of good news when he said in a video message that work for Iran's

trade through Gwadar Port was in progress and it would start soon, a step further towards making the port a regional hub of trade and investment.

A latest report speaks volumes about progress made in the all-round development of Gwadar. The new international airport is under construction, the connection with the national power grid is in advanced stages of completion, dams for increased water supply have been built, Eastern Expressway is nearly complete and a number of socioeconomic projects for the people of Gwadar and nearby areas are being implemented.

The development of Gwadar would remain deficient if necessary facilities are not provided and needs and demands of the local population are not addressed in a satisfactory manner. With this in view, agreements have been signed for solarization and a desalination plant to solve the problems of Gwadar related to water and electricity.

The PM, therefore, rightly pointed out that the “future of Gwadar” was being witnessed through the water and energy projects underway as well as the new international airport being constructed there which would connect Gwadar to other areas. He also announced a number of initiatives to promote human development such as a technical college, a hospital, university, cheap loans for farmers and poor households and a programme for uplifting of Gwadar’s fishermen.

As Gwadar was one of the backward regions of the country, locals, whose livelihood was linked to fishing, felt threatened as they were at a disadvantageous position as far as modern fishing facilities are concerned and their concerns have adequately been addressed with the announcement of the Prime Minister that there would be complete ban on entry of foreign fishing trawlers in Pakistan’s water to protect interests of locals.

The next step should be to equip them with modern fishing boats and trawlers and impart them necessary training that could not only lead to enhanced income for them but a meaningful increase in export of fish from Pakistan. As investors are demonstrating greater interest to come to Gwadar, the Government appropriately decided to serve them in a better manner through a one-window operation that would encourage more investors to come to free zones and set up plants and industries which could contribute to exports.

The decision that the PM Office would directly and regularly monitor all progress on development projects in Gwadar on a monthly basis is a step in the right direction that would help accelerate the pace of implementation and remove bottlenecks, if any, in a timely manner. The plan to engage estranged elements has been there since long but faced road-blocks in the past. Prospects for its success are bright this time round as both the PTI Government and the military leadership are on the same page on different issues, therefore, the dialogue should be initiated without loss of further time.

Pakistan: Pasni fish harbour to be rehabilitated

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1633197/pasni-fish-harbour-to-be-rehabilitated-official>

"Balochistan Chief Secretary Mathar Niaz Rana has said that steps would be taken for the rehabilitation of the Pasni fish harbour. The chief secretary, along with Secretary of the Planning Commission Hamid Yaqoob Sheikh, Inspector General of Police Mohammad Tahir Rai and other senior officials, visited Pasni on Sunday on the instructions of Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Mr Rana said the funds allocated for rehabilitation of the abandoned harbour would be spent on related projects which would not only generate income but also provide thousands of jobs to the local people. He said the policy about foreign fishing trawlers in the waters of Balochistan was not of the federal government.

He said that the fisheries department and the Maritime Security Agency would jointly take action against illegal trawlers. He said action would be taken against the officers who were extorting fishermen. There were bright prospects for the development of the fisheries sector and export of marine products after Gwadar port became operational, he added.

Pakistan: A threat to livelihoods

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/magazine/money-matters/859338-a-threat-to-livelihoods>

"Every year, the government imposes a two-month ban on catching shrimp during the months of June and July. The ban is put in place to help replenish the shrimp resources along the coast of Pakistan. Elderly fishermen call this (two-month) season favourable for catching precious fish species, locally known as seri, suwa, morr mangro (Spadenose shark) and others, whose market value is high. Only a few larger boats move to the deep sea for a short trip to catch larger fish using special fishing nets.

The rest of the boats stay anchored at along the jetties throughout the ban for repair and maintenance work to begin the next fishing season starting the first week of August. Routine maintenance includes paint jobs, woodwork, and motor repairs of boats, while nets and other fishing equipment is also taken care of. Catching seri and other larger fish requires experience and technique.

The crew put fishing net in the open sea during rough weather. Inexperienced people cannot take the risk of even anchoring the fishing vessels in the rough waters, activists said. Previously, these fish species were common in creeks and small waters along the beaches. But now, with rising pollution the species have been pushed back into the open waters further from the coast. Marine pollution has also created hurdles for fishermen, especially those working closer to the coast.

Fishing boats capable of accessing deep sea, especially rough waters, enable these fishermen to earn a better income from the market. Nawaz Dablo, a crew member and community activist from Dabla Muhalla of Rehri Mayan village in the outskirts of Karachi, said if a boat brings 100kg of valuable seri in a trip they can earn at least Rs100,000. Presently, the market value of seri is around Rs1,000-Rs1,200/per kilo. Its weight ranges from 4kg to 10kg or more, depending on its health and size.

Quoting elderly people, Dablo said, “Seri, when it was common along the beaches and in the creeks, was used for domestic consumption as well. The rest was sold in the market for sale. But now, despite high demand for this fish, fishermen did not find it in the creeks.” He blamed pollution for depleting a majority of these commercially valuable marine species. Therefore, they travel to catch these fish from the open sea, despite rough weather during these two months- June and July, he added.

Akhtar Shaikh, another community activist from the same neighbourhood said like seri, suwa and morr mangro were also favourite fish for the community people, who enjoyed delicious food during these two months. They always wait to catch this fish because increasing marine pollution has destroyed its natural habitats along the creeks. He said the fish harbour, main market and all processing units had shut their trade following the restrictions imposed by the provincial government due to the breeding season.

But some outside investors, other than fishermen, do not abide by the law and move their boats to the deep sea for fish catch. Talking about the ban by the European Union on Pakistan’s sea food, community activists said that it was pollution and unhygienic conditions at the harbour, which have led the European Union to impose a ban on Pakistani seafood some years back.

The ban is still in place, they said, adding that the situation might worsen further and bring a bad name to the nation due to the destruction of natural resources. Asif Bhatti of Bhit Island in Karachi confirmed some rare species in the open sea, which have high demand in the market. But due to restrictions following the annual ban, the island people abide by the law and do not operate their boats. Compared to that, certain outside investors are being allowed to catch fish, despite the ban, he complained.

“It is not fair a deal by the authorities that indigenous fishermen are being compelled to sit idle despite the fact they have options to catch such species like seri, suwa, morr mangro and others for their survival,” he said. He pointed out that marine pollution has been wiping out fish productivity, despite the fact it is a major component to provide a source of livelihood to fishermen residing along the 129km area of Karachi coast.

He said local jetties located across the entire province do not have facilities and were turning into cesspits, creating hurdles for the community people and traders in handling fish catch safely. Moving fish from the jetties to the market or onto vehicles has become hazardous.

It was learned that there was only one government-run jetty in Ibrahim Hydri village, while all over the province families operate their private jetties, providing access to local boats and its crews for handling seafood. Khuda Ganj, a community activist from Mubarak Village, sharing sea borders with Balochistan near Hawkesbay, said pollution has compelled picnickers to move to other beaches, as all the scenic beaches along the coastline of Karachi were receiving waste through different channels.

He pointed out that while the picnickers had a choice to change their location, the community people residing along the coast did not have that luxury. “They cannot move to safer places,” he added. Majeed Motani, a community elder in Ibrahim Hydri said policymakers do not stop dumping of waste by garbage trucks from all over the city. These people have found beaches near the villages, where they burn waste causing pollution, he informed. Pollution is not only killing valuable fish near beaches and creeks but also causing health problems for the residents near the coast.

Elderly fishermen fear that if the trend of dumping garbage and releasing industrial and municipal waste continue, it might compel the residents living in the villages through centuries to migrate to other safer places. He pointed out that health issues have also increased among the community, something which was impossible to measure from a distance.

Coastal people are suffering from chronic diseases such as asthma, skin ailments, etc, he added. Activists blame government negligence towards the sector for the worsening situation. They also hold investors responsible for destroying the fish trade, which has compelled indigenous people to sit idle at homes without a job.

Pakistan: Blue Economy: An unexpected potential

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/783804/pakistans-blue-economy-an-unexpected-potential/>

"The global communities recognise the importance of oceans because more than three billion people around the globe benefit from marine for their livelihood (directly or indirectly). It also generates employment for more than 200 million and the estimated market value of the marine economy is about US \$3 trillion per year.

From the environmental perspective, oceans absorb about 30 per cent of carbon dioxide produced by humans to soften the impact of global warming. The geographical location of Pakistan—1,047 kilometres coastal area and 290,058 square kilometres seawater in the Indian Ocean—gives an opportunity to explore the potential benefit from the blue economy. But currently, Pakistan is not potentially benefiting from the ocean ecosystem in comparison with other coastal South Asian countries.

The maritime revenue (transshipping) of Bangladesh and India is US \$6 and US \$5.6 billion respectively while that of Pakistan stands at US \$183 million. Its blue economy encompasses many activities, such as shipping, ports, seafaring, fishing, aquaculture, shipbreaking, coastal tourism and offshore basins. The blue economy is currently operating at less than the potential level. When a sector of the economy is functioning far below the potential level, the policy measure to uplift that sector might result in increased economic growth. This would, in turn, result in softening of the poverty level and unemployment.

The development of the blue economy is gaining importance because seven out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are directly linked with the ocean ecosystem. For this purpose, the government needs to design short-term and long-term policies related to maritime affairs with a collaboration of relevant stakeholders. Seven out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals are directly linked with the ocean ecosystem.

The current export volume of Pakistan's fishery industry is US \$351 million while the potential worth of exports is about US \$2 billion. According to Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the total fish production of Pakistan from all sources (inland, marine and aquaculture) in 2018 was 771,608 tonnes, which accounted for only 3.7 per cent of the combined production of India and Bangladesh. The fish export of Bangladesh and India is 10-folds and 26-fold higher than the fish export of Pakistan.

According to the review of maritime transport 2019, the shipbreaking sector shows satisfactory performance with a 21.5 per cent share in the demolition of vessels worldwide. The current position of revenue from shipbreaking is also less than the potential. The shipbreaking yard in Gadani has the potential to generate US \$3 billion annually, but currently, it stands at US \$100 million.

The maritime study forum claims that the coastal tourism of Pakistan accounts for US \$50,000 currently while the potential touches about US \$5 billion. Moreover, the volume of the tourism industry of South Asia is US \$31 billion and Pakistan accounts for only one per cent. Pakistan needs to increase the number of local vessels because currently, 12 vessels are being operated by Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC). While the spending of Pakistan on the seaborne trade in terms of freight charges on foreign vessels is US \$3.5 billion.

However, an increase in local vessels may soften the pressure on the balance of payment account, which, in turn, increases the foreign reserves. It needs to increase the fish vessels to increase the supply of fish because currently, there are 10,053 fishing vessels in Pakistan while that in Bangladesh is six-folds higher.

The adoption of modern technology for sustainable aquaculture is also mandatory to increase the supply of fish. Sustainable aquaculture should be under the Sustainable Aquaculture Guidelines (SAG), proposed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). The maritime sector of an economy is a financially and technologically intensive sector.

Therefore, reallocation of resources required to extract the potential benefit from the blue economy by restructuring and improving the existing infrastructure. Moreover, policies promoting research and development is required to extract sustainable energy from marine like tidal energy. In general, tourists are attracted by mangroves, climate, sandy beaches and enormous bio-diversity.

But Pakistan is unable to fully cash in the potential of tourism even in the presence of these attributes. However, the potential benefit can be extracted by improving the infrastructure, the presence of financial institutions, cheap and secured transportation, recreational spots of international standards, and softening the visa policy.

The government needs to ensure the implementation of the Treaty of Basel Convention to protect human health and the environment as well as to achieve the 98 per cent recycling rate in shipbreaking.

Pakistan: Chinese trawlers with fishing rights usurp Pakistani fishermen's livelihood

<https://swarajyamag.com/news-brief/gwadar-chinese-trawlers-with-fishing-rights-usurp-pakistani-fishermens-livelihood>

"Chinese trawlers getting fishing right licenses in Gwadar has usurped Pakistani fishermen livelihood -- leading to huge demonstrations in the region and various other places, said top sources. A large number of fishermen in Pakistan's Gwadar demonstrated recently against the federal government for granting Chinese trawlers fishing rights in the region by issuing them licenses.

Apart from fishermen, political workers and members of civil society also participated in the protest. Thereafter, the National Party and Baloch Student Organisation had called for the protest rally and sit-in before the Gwadar Press Club against the government's move. The fortunes of this backward region had once looked promising - as China had promised Pakistan a new age of development through its flagship project - China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

However, as times have progressed - it is evident that Chinese loans have only exacerbated Islamabad's debt problem and Pakistan is soon moving to become a vassal state to Beijing. ""The elite governing institutions - both the Pakistani Army and the government - are so indebted to their Chinese masters, that they are not even ready to protect the rights of their own population.

The local populace of Gwadar has been one of the worst sufferers of this massive loot by Chinese masters and their Pakistani puppets - both on land and at sea,"" said a senior officer with the intelligence agency. Gwadar - as the center stage of CPEC - and once touted as next 'Dubai' was supposed to usher in economic upliftment of entire Balochistan. The mirage has proved to

be ever elusive, as huge tracts of lands were acquired by the Federal government from the local populace.

A large part of these lands have been illegally transferred for private purposes - including Defence Housing Authority - the 'biggest land grabber' - as described by Lahore High Court. While this Chinese model of development has already deprived the local population of their homes - the next strike is on their means of livelihood. At least two million people are connected to the fishing business in Gwadar.

Their livelihoods depend on day-to-day fishing. The intrusion of Chinese trawlers has created a fear of deprivation in their minds. Chinese trawlers menace, earlier restricted to south-east Asia has now started spreading in Indian Ocean Region. Chinese trawler fleet consisting of 'factory ships' - which process and package fish for sale in international markets, have intruded territorial waters of Pakistan, resulting in extensive fishing and dwindling catch for local fishermen.

As a video of Chinese trawlers by local fishermen of Gwadar went viral on social media, Ali Haider Zaidi, Pakistan's Shipping Minister tweeted, ""Deep-sea trawling is banned in Pakistan waters. PMSA is closely monitoring the trawler & boats spotted near Gwadar. Have ordered an inquiry. Strong action will be taken. Protecting our local fishermen is our top most priority."" However, with no forthcoming action on ground, local populace has started the protests to fight for their rights.

The locals fear the exploitation of the town's natural resources by China, thereby rebelling against several development projects. Leader of Gwadar's fishermen Khuda-i-Dad Waju stated that fishermen of Gwadar were already facing violation of fishing limits by Sindh's fishing trawlers and now that the federal government has allowed foreign trawlers, it would deprive the fishermen of Gwadar of their livelihood.

Protesters said the fishermen of Gwadar had vacated their fishing spots for the construction of the Gwadar port hoping that their economic conditions would improve once the port was ready, but now the Imran Khan government had issued licences to Chinese trawlers which was badly affecting their livelihood.

With the Chinese fleets of government-subsidised ships straying into distant waters searching for seafood and the continuously increasing influence yielded by China, this intrusion has seriously impacted the local populace of Gwadar.

With no support from the federal or provisional government, the struggle for these fishermen is a long road ahead. ""This form of neo-colonialism by the Chinese, cloaked with promises of CPEC, is expected to have a deep adverse impact on the already struggling poor population of Pakistan,"" said the officer.

Pakistan: 50,000 Trout fishling released in Kumrat river

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/50000-trout-fishling-released-in-kumrat-rive-1291043.html>

"The Livestock and Fisheries department Dir Upper Wednesday released 50,000 trout fishling in Kumrat river, the most suitable habitat for trout as part of efforts to improve and conserve the trout fish population. Deputy Director, Livestock and Fisheries Department, Wari, Dir Upper, under the supervision of Amir Hamza, organized a prestigious function at Kumrat, wherein Deputy Commissioner, Dir Upper, Muhammad Shoaib Khan, District Police Officer, Tariq Iqbal, Assistant Commissioner Sheringal, AD Local Government Haji Badshahzada and fisheries officials besides elders of the area were present.

Speaking on the occasion Deputy Commissioner Dir Upper Shoaib Khan said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has launched a series of awareness programs in different parts of the province to promote fisheries and conserve fish in natural waters. He said that the protection of trout fishling is the joint responsibility of Fisheries Department and the elders of the area, adding the department has banned poaching and taking stern action against poachers.

The Deputy Director Fisheries said that every year the department releases thousands of trout fishling in Kohistan River for breeding due to which the population of trout is increasing. In addition, fish farms are being set up under the development plan in Kumrat so that fisheries can be promoted along with employment and income.

Pakistan: Call for ban on foreign trawlers at Makran coast

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1631871/call-for-ban-on-foreign-trawlers-at-makran-coast>

"While terming the Chinese and inter-provincial trawlers hunting at Balochistan coast 'illegal', the NP chief said they were depriving the local population of their livelihoods besides depleting marine resources.

The National Party had been staging protest demonstrations in every tehsil of Gwadar district for the past several days against the hunting by foreign trawlers, Dr Malik said, adding that the government had paid little attention to the grievances of the local people. He said 'genocide of marine life' could not be accepted.

While expressing serious concern over allowing foreign and other province's trawlers for fishing at Makran coast, the NP chief said: "All illegal hunting permits should be revoked immediately and foreign and inter-provincial trawlers should be banned for fishing at Balochistan coast." Talking about the provincial government, he said the Balochistan coastal belt seemed to have become a hub of extortion mafia due to poaching.

Maritime and fisheries department had become blind and deaf as they were unable to hear the masses voice, he said, adding that it seemed they were unaware of the issue of depriving locals of their livelihoods. Dr Malik said people at every forum, including the Senate of Pakistan, were protesting against the anti-people and anti-Balochistan moves.

He said the positive effects of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor were nowhere to be seen in Balochistan, but the adverse effects of government's policies on the marine life and people's livelihood were visible to everyone.

Pakistan: Chinese fishing trawlers swamp Arabian Sea, Baloch fishermen protest

<https://daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=846598>

"Pakistan has given fishing rights to China in the Arabian Sea near Gwadar port in Balochistan. Now, the sea on the Baloch coastline is dotted with hundreds of Chinese fishing boats. Pakistan has given licenses to the Chinese trawlers causing resentment among fishermen in Gwadar. Pakistani newspaper Dawn reported that hundreds of ""fishermen, political workers and members of civil society staged a protest rally against the federal government for granting Chinese trawlers fishing rights in Gwadar by issuing them licences.

The National Party and Baloch Student Organisation had called for the protest rally and sit-in in front of the Gwadar Press Club against the government's move"". The Baloch fishermen are feeling doubly cheated. They were earlier displaced from their land for the China-driven Gwadar port, which remains out of bounds for them due to security concerns. Despite China's billions of dollars of investment, the local people feel disenfranchised.

Now, with the arrival of huge Chinese trawlers, they feel completely crushed. What is adding to their worry is that the Chinese vessels are no ordinary boats. These are 'factory ships'-- commercial ships which contain food processing units to process and preserve the catch from the ocean. As the Chinese trawlers have begun their large-scale operations, fishermen in not just Balochistan but all along Pakistan's nearly 1,000-km coast are now fretting about their livelihood.

The Chinese have swamped the Pakistani coastline. Last year the Chinese trawlers were spotted at the Karachi port, spreading fear among the fisher folk in Sindh. Trawlers are associated with destructive fishing as they drag large nets across the ocean floor to scoop up everything. The trawlers are equipped with narrow nets that not just catch the fish but even eggs and everything else as well.

The fishermen retain what is useful commercially and throw the rest back into the sea. The Pakistani fishing community is worried because each Chinese vessel can catch over ten times what a Pakistani boat can. The worry is that the entry of Chinese ships will lead to massive

unemployment among the Baloch as well as the Sindhi fishermen. What is also worrying the Pakistani fishermen is the fact that deep-sea trawling is not just large-scale but is also destructive. It not only catches the fish, but also kills the eggs, stirs up the ocean floor and deadens the marine food chain.

Pakistan has opened up its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to Chinese fishing companies. Abdul Berr, Fishermen's Cooperative Society (FCS) chairman, told Arab News that China will help upgrade Pakistani fishing industry and increase its exports. ""Bringing Chinese trawlers for deep-sea fishing is in line with the government's deep-sea fishing policy and aimed at upgrading and modernizing fishing, besides providing job opportunities to local fishermen"", Berr said. What has brought Chinese fishing boats halfway around the globe to Pakistan? It is the need to feed the Chinese population.

China's thousands of ships bring millions of tons of seafood back home--not just from near Pakistan but also from as far as African shores. A report published by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in May 2020, just before the World Oceans Day on June 8 said that China's Distant Water Fishing (DWF) fleet was five to eight times larger than previously thought. ODI estimated the fleet at nearly 17,000 vessels.

The ODI report said: ""The ownership and operational control of China's DWF fleet is both complex and opaque. ODI's analysis of a subsample of 6,122 vessels found that just eight companies owned or operated more than 50 vessels. ...Complicated company structures and a lack of transparency hamper monitoring and regulatory efforts. This makes it difficult for those responsible for malpractice to be held accountable"".

By opening up its EEZ to Chinese fishing companies, Pakistan might be currying favour with the communist country for the latter's mammoth investment of \$62 billion in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). But in doing so, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan just might turn its own people -- Sindhis and Balochistan, who are anyway fighting for independence -- against itself.

Pakistan: Turtle species face extinction threat due to illegal fuel trade

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2306978/turtle-species-face-extinction-threat-due-to-illegal-fuel-trade>

"Owing to a conjunction of factors, including mortality during fishing operations, pollution, habitat degradation and climate change, a change in the scutes of two turtles was observed on the shores of Daran. According to the reports, disfigurement in the size of turtles and their scutes has not been observed on any other coastal area of the country, leading to speculations that this particular aberration may also be caused by oil spill.

The sea route between the two countries has been illegally used to trade fuel with the help of heavy-weight jerry cans, prompting fears about the hazards it poses to wildlife. Photos released by WWF showed that Daran, a small coastal area between the Pak-Iran border, being used for smuggling fuel from Tehran. Hundreds of people can be seen swarming the shores with nearly 50 pickups. Last year in October, the authorities took action against the smugglers.

However, the measures taken by the authorities to deter the illegal trade failed and the smugglers switched to the land route to avert such future actions. The coast remains the hub of fuel smuggling carried out in broad daylight for around. According to WWF Pakistan Technical Adviser Moazzam Khan, the oil spill from heavy weight oil-filled jerry cans in turtle nesting areas poses a serious threat to the population of green turtle.

Moreover, the proliferation of human activity on the beach also hardens the sand, making it difficult for female turtles to form nest in sand, while the stench of oil on the shore can force them to return. The eggs are then deformed and damaged under the weight of the hardened sand, causing a dramatic change in the new species of turtles.

The smuggling of oil stopped on the coast for a brief period. However, the illegal trade came back to the coast with full sweep last February. Along with marine turtles, their freshwater cousins are also confronting serious threats, which include Illegal poaching, water shortage, fragmentation of rivers and canals and fishing operations.

Export of freshwater turtle meat, which is banned, is considered as the main threat to these vulnerable species. Agencies like WWF-Pakistan, provincial wildlife departments, Pakistan Customs and other stakeholders are keeping a vigil to control the illegal trade of the turtle species but efforts result in little or no impact at all.

Pakistan: Seafood exports increase by 2.6% in 11 months, 9.53% in May

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/777831/seafood-exports-increase-by-2-6-in-11-months-9-53-in-may/>

"The exports of fish and fish preparations increased by 2.6 percent during the first eleven months of current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The seafood exports during July-May (2020-21) were recorded at \$383.088 million against the exports of \$373.382 million in July-May (2019-20), showing growth of around 2.6 percent, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

In terms of quantity, Pakistan exported 171,206 metric tons of seafood during the period under review against the exports of 161.080 metric tons last year, showing an increase of 6.29 percent. On a year-on-year basis, the fish exports from the country increased by 9.53 percent by going up from \$28.386 million during May 2020 to \$31.091 million in May 2021. On a month-on-month

basis, the seafood exports, however, decreased by 35.52 percent in May 2020 when compared to the exports of \$48.215 million in April 2020, the PBS data revealed.

The overall food exports from the country decreased by 2.36 percent during the first eleven months of the current year compared to last year. The food exports from the country were recorded at \$3959.991 million during July-May (2020-21) against the exports of \$4055.525 million during July-May (2019-20). It is pertinent to mention here that the overall merchandise exports from the country increased by 14.05 percent during the first eleven months of the current fiscal year (2020-21) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

The exports of the country during July-May (2020-21) were recorded at \$22.576 billion against the exports of \$19.795 billion during July-May (2019-20), according to the latest PBS data. The imports during the period under review also increased by 22.50 percent by growing from \$40.849 billion last year to \$50.039 billion during the first eleven months of the current fiscal year.

Based on the figures, the country's trade deficit increased by 30.44 percent during the period under review as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The trade deficit during the period was recorded at \$27.463 billion against the deficit of \$21.054 billion last year.

Fisheries dept. officers in Sialkot, Pakistan, asked to provide technical facilities to fish farmers

<https://nation.com.pk/22-Jun-2021/fisheries-dept-officers-asked-to-provide-technical-facilities-to-fish-farmers>

"Assistant director fisheries in Sialkot in Punjab, Pakistan, have been directed to provide all technical facilities to fish farmers free of cost in order to boost fish production. This was instructed by Director Aqua Punjab Dr Muhammad Abid during his visit to Sialkot and Narowal on Monday.

On the occasion, he said that improvement should be brought in fish farming and complete guidance should be given to farmers at every level. He said that Sialkot and Narowal have unique identities in terms of their water resources which should be utilized effectively.

Dr Muhammad Abid also visited Government Farm No. 5 and Farm No. 3 near Marala Headworks and listened to the complaints regarding the auction and issued on the spot orders to the assistant director concerned for redressal. He also raided on Naullah Basantar and Naullah Dayan in Narowal district.

Pakistan: PARC inaugurates rice transplanter, rice cum fish culture plant

<https://pakobserver.net/parc-inaugurates-rice-transplanter-rice-cum-fish-culture-plant/>

"PARC in collaboration with Meskey & Femettee Trading Corporation arranged a field demonstration of Rice Transplanter machine on Monday at NARC. Which was inaugurated by SAPM Food Security & Research, Jamshed Iqbal Cheema and Chairman PARC, Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan.

At the occasion, SAPM Food Security & Research, Jamshed Iqbal Cheema said while expressing his views that our government is providing 50% subsidy on farm machinery and seed distribution with the objective to increase per acre paddy yield by 10 mounds for basmati and 20 mounds for non-basmati. The project has been started in 3 provinces (Punjab, KP, Balochistan).

During last rice season we distributed 268 machines, nursery raising machines, DSR drills, Mould bold plough and knapsack power sprayers and 652 tons seed of improved varieties among the farmers. Due to these interventions, rice production in the country increases from 7.4 to 8.2 million tons which is a remarkable achievement.

To modernize agriculture and enhance the per acre yield of Rice crop in Pakistan PARC is conducted comprehensive research under 10 components of mega PSDP rice project on "Productivity Enhancement of Rice" That encompasses the areas of plant soil, water, disease, pest, food quality, genetic resources and machinery.

Pakistan: Losing traditional nesting sites for sea turtles due to increasing pollution, garbage: Report

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/pak-losing-traditional-nesting-sites-for-sea-turtles-due-to-increasing-pollution-garbage-report20210618220458/>

"With increasing water pollution and garbage scattered across its beaches, Pakistan has been rapidly losing its traditional nesting sites for sea turtles, posing further threats to the already endangered species, according to experts. Adnan Hamid, a senior wildlife official, said that Pakistan has lost 25-30 per cent of the nesting ground for green turtles over the past decade, Dawn reported Anadolu Agency. "

"The two beaches are among the 11 largest nesting sites for green turtles worldwide. However, they have been ruined (in terms of serving as nesting sites) mainly because of uncontrolled construction in recent years," Hamid told Anadolu Agency. Excessive water pollution and garbage, accompanied by decreasing natural habitats and careless fishing have immensely contributed to the dwindling number of the large saltwater species in recent decades, he said. "

"Most of the solid waste left behind includes plastic bags and diapers, which are 'killers' for the reptiles. If consumed, they cause asphyxiation and eventually kill them," added the wildlife

official. The official further questioned why Pakistan's sea sites have still not been declared as Marine Protected Areas, reported Dawn. Green turtles are also found on beaches in Balochistan.

Hamid further told Anadolu Agency that on the basis of conservative estimates, it can be safely said that the numbers of sea turtles have reduced by 20-30 per cent over the past ten years. However, Muhammad Moazzam Khan, the technical adviser (marine fisheries) at the Karachi office of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), believes the reptile population is increasing. "

"The latest study shows that the population of endangered green turtles is in fact increasing," Khan told Anadolu Agency, saying there is no evidence to support a general perception of green turtle population decline. "According to our estimates, there is a 5 per cent increase in the population of green turtles over the past 10 years," he added.

Meanwhile, Hamid said that most of the fishing trawlers in Pakistan lack a "turtle excluder device", which is another reason for the decline of sea turtles. But Khan, the WWF official, contended that some "minor" changes in fishing nets, coupled with fishermen training, have helped increase green turtle numbers. Apart from green turtles, Pakistan's sea waters also contain the Olive Ridley Turtle, Leatherback Turtle, Loggerhead Turtle, and Hawksbill Turtle, Dawn reported.

Pakistan: To increase Marine Protected Area by 10pc till 2023

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/852746-pakistan-to-increase-marine-protected-area-by-10pc-till-2023>

"Pakistan is all set to increase its Marine Protected Area (MPA) by ten percent till 2023 to preserve biodiversity resources and create livelihood benefits for the fisherfolk community. According to the details shared by the climate change ministry, the sites that would be included into MPAs comprise Charna Island, Minai Hor, Gwatar Bay and the Indus Swatch.

Prime Minister Imran Khan has specially directed the authorities concerned to turn Charna Island into a protected area as it stands against the worst environmental threats of all time. The proposed MPA sites have been identified through a consultative process involving relevant stakeholders and on the basis of their biodiversity and socioeconomic significance.

The National Coordinating Body of Mangroves headed by the Ministry of Climate Change has also played its due role in identification of these sites. The objective of the designation of the proposed sites as MPAs is to ensure effective protection and conservation of biodiversity resources and create livelihood benefits for dependent fisher folk communities.

The proposed sites support a variety of species of demersal fisheries, cetaceans (dolphins and whales), sea turtles, endemic reptiles, corals, and mangroves. Unregulated human activities have threatened the biodiversity resources of these sites. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on

Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam has said that Pakistan became a leading country in securing biodiversity resources by declaring Astola Island as MPA in line with its commitment made to the United Nations.

He said: “MPAs play an important role in conserving biodiversity and ecosystems stock enhancement and management of fisheries, education and research, nature-based recreation, and tourism.” The purpose of establishing MPAs is to protect, conserve and restore species, habitats, biodiversity, and ecological progress, which may be adversely affected as a result of human interventions, he said.

Pakistan: Gwadar fishermen demonstrate against govt’s decision to grant fishing rights to Chinese trawlers

<https://www.indiablooms.com/world-details/SA/29894/pakistan-gwadar-fishermen-demonstrate-against-govt-s-decision-to-grant-fishing-rights-to-chinese-trawlers.html>

"Apart from fishermen, political workers and members of civil society also participated in the protest. The National Party and Baloch Student Organisation had called for the protest rally and sit-in in front of the Gwadar Press Club against the government’s move, reports Dawn News.

The participants of the rally marched on the roads of the coastal town and later staged the sit-in, the Pakistani newspaper reported. Haji Fida Hussain Dashti, Faiz Nagori, Manzoor Qadir Bakhsh, Abid Rahim Sorabi, Muhammad Noor and leader of Gwadar’s fishermen Khuda-i-Dad Waju spoke while attending the protest.

Waju was quoted as saying by Dawn News that fishermen of Gwadar were already facing violation of fishing limits by Sindh’s fishing trawlers and now the federal government had allowed foreign trawlers to deprive the fishermen of Gwadar of their livelihood.

Speakers said the fishermen of Gwadar had vacated their fishing spots for the construction of the Gwadar port hoping that their economic conditions would improve once the port was ready, but now the federal government had issued licences to Chinese trawlers which was badly affecting their livelihood.

Pakistan: Fishermen stage protest against Imran Khan govt, demand cancellation of fishing licences of Chinese trawlers

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/pakistani-fishermen-stage-protest-against-imran-khan-govt-demand-cancellation-of-fishing-licences-of-chinese-trawlers20210616200438/>

"Hundreds of fishermen, political workers and members of civil society staged a protest to cancel fishing licences of Chinese trawlers to protect the livelihood of the Gwadar fishermen.The

National Party and Baloch Student Organisation had called for the protest rally and sit-in in front of the Gwadar Press Club against the Imran Khan government's move, reported Dawn.

The participants of the rally marched on the roads of the coastal town and later staged the sit-in against Imran government decision to grant Chinese trawlers fishing rights in Gwadar by issuing them licences.

Haji Fida Hussain Dashti, Faiz Nagori, Manzoor Qadir Bakhsh, Abid Rahim Sorabi, Muhammad Noor and leader of Gwadar's fishermen Khuda-i-Dad Waju spoke on the occasion. Waju said that fishermen of Gwadar were already facing violation of fishing limits by Sindh's fishing trawlers and now the federal government had allowed foreign trawlers to deprive the fishermen of Gwadar of their livelihood, reported Dawn.

Speakers said the fishermen of Gwadar had vacated their fishing spots for the construction of the Gwadar port hoping that their economic conditions would improve once the port was ready, but now the federal government had issued licences to Chinese trawlers which was badly affecting their livelihood. They alleged that the provincial fisheries minister and the federal government officials, instead of supporting the stance of the local fishermen, were giving statements in favour of the Chinese fishermen, reported Dawn.

Though Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan with ample natural resources, it remains the poorest and least populous. The Balochs have often raised the issue of under-development, but Pakistan has responded to it with forced abduction, torture, and harassment. In 2015, China announced the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project in Pakistan worth USD 46 billion, of which Balochistan is an integral part.

It would link Pakistan's southern Gwadar port in Balochistan on the Arabian Sea to China's western Xinjiang region. It also includes plans to create road, rail and oil pipeline links to improve connectivity between China and the Middle East.

The Balochs opposed China's increasing involvement in the province. The CPEC has not benefited the people of Balochistan while people of other provinces enjoy the fruits of the mega project. This has led to widespread protests as the Chinese are viewed as encroachers who are squeezing out all the wealth from the region.

Pakistan: Protecting the oceans

<https://pakobserver.net/protecting-the-oceans-by-sajjad-haider/>

"EVERY year on the 8th of June, all member states of the UN officially celebrate "World Oceans Day". This falls into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) laid out by the UN, specifically SDG 14 which mandates that countries must "conserve and sustainable use the

oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development". Oceans are considered essential to the world's economic, social and environmental needs. They cover over two-thirds of the planet's surface area, and contain roughly 97% of its water.

Scientifically speaking, they are considered the source of all life on earth. Ocean temperatures and currents also regulate rain and other climatic aspects on land. Furthermore, just under half the population of the planet depends on some form of marine life as a source of livelihood. Over 11 billion tons of cargo is shipped globally via the world's oceans and seas, making these colossal water bodies the backbone of global trade and mobility.

Furthermore, over 1.9 billion metric tons of crude oil and fuel products are shipped through global shipping lanes every decade. However, similar to man's negative footprint on land, the oceans have been suffering greatly due to rampant misuse. Excessive consumer-led growth has led to ever increasing waste production. At least eight million tons of plastic-based waste material ends up in the oceans, in addition to another two million tons of other such waste products, polluting both the water layer and the undersea sediments across the globe.

Additionally, about 400 million gallons of oil enters the oceans from various sources such as oil spills and household and industrial oil wastes not being recycled properly. This is also compounded by millions of tons of untreated sewage from major cities across the world that is first dumped either into fresh water rivers and lakes and ends up in the oceans eventually, or is directly released into the nearest ocean or sea.

Skimping out on recycling and sewage treatment costs the world upwards of \$2.5 trillion due to ecosystem loss for fish and other aquatic animals, and also loss to fisheries, aquaculture, recreational activities and global wellbeing. It is estimated that pollution causes an estimated 1-5% decline in the benefits humans derive from the world's oceans and seas. Overfishing is a major problem globally, but more so in Pakistan, where fishing yields have dropped despite an increase in the size of the fishing fleet.

Usage and unethical disposal of non-biodegradable fishing nets significantly increases the pollution in our coastal waters and poses a direct threat to aquatic life. Pakistan is a major contributor to this global problem as well. Even though the country has signed the London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, all sorts of its unrecycled waste such as single use plastics, sewage, industrial runoff and even hospital waste end up in the Arabian Sea. Hazardous heavy metals from industries, such as the ship-breaking yard in Gadani, also end up in the sea.

The lack of proper waste treatment facilities in Karachi and across other industrial hubs across the coast results in toxic substances being discharged in what used to be the pristine waters of the Makran Coast. From Karachi alone, it is estimated that about 12 thousand tons of plastics are sent for waste disposal, of which only about 40% ends up in landfills and recycling. The rest eventually ends up in the sea.

A major concern, especially from plastics, is that these compounds often do not biodegrade at all, and dangerously end up in smaller components in fish and animals that rely on the sea. A national cleanliness drive and focus on a shift from consumerism to more sustainable shopping and packaging practices can reduce the waste discharge into the sea, 65 percent of which is estimated to be just plastic bottles, wrappers, bags, single use utensils and such.

Lastly, while this problem may be unique more to Pakistan than other countries in the region, urban development and real estate projects on the coast of Karachi and elsewhere pose a significant further risk to the mangrove forests in those localities. Sustainable land use policies may yield significant benefit to the maritime economy of Pakistan if they are able to incorporate these existing forests for tourism or as protected wetlands, instead of chopping them down.

These pose as a natural barrier against rising ocean levels caused by global warming, and serve as wildlife and fauna reserves. For too long has the maritime sector of this country been neglected and a capacity building and mass education scheme imparting knowledge about the importance of sustainable development, ethical waste disposal and greener ocean-use policies that protect the ecology of our waters.

The area composed of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of Pakistan is bigger in size and arguably resources than any of its provinces. The country relies heavily on trade from the sea and the maritime sector has one of tremendous export and tourism potential. It is equally important that any developments, including any upcoming offshore energy sector projects and the proposed developments on islands off the coast don't come at the cost of protecting the oceans.

Pakistan: Chinese 'Factory ship' trawlers pose a threat to Pakistan's local fishermen

<https://www.wionews.com/south-asia/chinese-factory-ship-trawlers-pose-a-threat-to-pakistans-local-fishermen-391194>

"Posing threat to the livelihood of local fishermen, hundreds of fishing trawlers have amassed at Pakistan's Gwadar Port. Through CPEC ports, China has invested millions in the Gwadar port; a gateway to China's trade ambitions. Though it is believed to be a rich fishing ground, according to local fishermen the area has witnessed a sharp decline in the amount of catch, more so because of the Chinese trawlers.

The trawler fleet consists of 'factory ships' which process and package fish for sale in international markets, thereby depriving local fishermen of their livelihoods. Aziz Singhoor, a senior commentator for the Pakistani daily 'Roznama Azadi', has exposed the issuance of licenses by these Chinese ships. Though the Pakistan government has denied this, the Roznama Azadi newspaper and Singhoor are adamant on their stand.

According to Azadi News, at least 2 million people are connected to the fishing business in Gwadar. Their livelihoods depend on day-to-day fishing. But due to the interference of these factory ships lakhs of local fishermen have been brought to the verge of unemployment, with several families expected to be grossly affected.

The presence of Chinese ships in that area is not only complicating the distribution of fish catches for Pakistani local fishermen but according to activists, they are also threatening the survival of fishermen from the Philippines.

According to a report by DW Newsagency, Members of BIGKIS, a collective of fishermen from the northern fishing provinces of Zambales and Pangasinan, has said that the presence of Chinese boats in the Philippines Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is hampering their fishing activities.

With the Chinese fleets of government-subsidised ships straying into distant waters searching for seafood and the continuously increasing influence yielded by China, this has also become a common point of concern for Hawaii's commercial fishermen and the US military.

Pakistan: Environment: Manchhar awaits a miracle

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1628981>

"Mustafa Mirani, who grew up in a houseboat in the area and later joined the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF), echoes Bakhsh's sentiments. "People here had herds of livestock and would cultivate seasonal crops on agricultural lands around the lake," he says, recalling the all-round prosperity enjoyed by those who resided around the lake. Gone are those days. Lying in the lap of Kirthar Range, the calm waters of Manchhar Lake could fool onlookers into thinking nothing has changed. But these calm waters are toxic and unfit for human consumption.

Like those before them, the fishermen from the area still venture into the waters on their motorised boats, in search of a decent catch. But Bakhsh and his fellow fisherfolk cannot dream of the kind of catches his father and those before him brought home. For centuries, when the lake's ecology was intact, it was the only source of livelihood for the mohanas (fishermen) and their families.

Because of the thick aquatic vegetation and freshwater flows through perennial sources, large catches would take care of the fishing community's livelihood and prosperity. Fisherfolk's families still live in the floating boat houses along the banks of Manchhar, but their living conditions are very different from those before them. "In 1944, Manchhar produced 2,300 tons of fish per annum," says Mirani.

"Now we see only a few thousand maunds of catch, as the toxic water has killed the aquatic plants on which the fish survive." These changing dynamics have posed a threat not only for the fish, but also those fisherfolk communities who have depended on these fish for generations. As

a result of contamination in the lake, many families of fishermen have become daily wagers in different cities or migrated to other parts of the country. Furthermore, as the water becomes toxic, some who live along the banks of the lake are forced to buy drinking water, which they can barely afford.

Others have to walk long distances to fetch water in jerry cans from purification plants. These plants, run by the provincial Public Health Engineering Department, are frequently dysfunctional. “We buy water from a supplier as our area’s RO [Reverse Osmosis] plant in Maula Bakhsh Colony works only for six months,” says Atta Mohammad, another fisherman. The situation we see at Manchhar today has been in the making for decades. Fisherfolk have long been sounding the alarm bells.

‘Solutions’ have been offered and the government has spent huge sums of money on these plans. But the conditions at the lake have only gone from bad to worse. Fisherfolk have been witnessing the lake’s destruction for decades. After the construction of the Sukkur and Guddu Barrages, in the 1930s and 1960s respectively, intense cultivation of paddy and other crops was seen in the barrages’ command areas.

This cultivation necessitated the construction of drainage systems for the disposal of agricultural run-off. And so, a network of small and big drains was built in upper Sindh. Following the construction of these drainage systems, chemical effluent from fertilisers and pesticides eventually found its way into Manchhar. This was only the beginning. The lake — which is, incidentally, located in Jamshoro, the constituency of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah — has a long history of poor planning.

Initially, agricultural effluent was to be disposed of into the river Indus — that could have been a bigger tragedy, so the idea was dropped. But the ecological disaster continues unabated in the shape of effluent disposal through the Main Nara Valley Drain (MNVD) and the incomplete Right Bank Outfall Drain-II (RBOD-II— a drainage project, ironically, aimed at protecting Manchhar Lake by carrying effluent from upper Sindh and Balochistan directly to the Arabian Sea).

Fisherfolk say that MNVD (also known as RBOD-I) was once a freshwater source for the lake but, in the 1990s, the Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) remodelled MNVD’s bed, allowing toxic water to flow into the lake. Because of the drainage water that is continually redirected to the lake, toxic water is now a constant at Manchhar. Last year, the lake momentarily saw more freshwater.

This is because the Nai Gaj, a vital freshwater source for Manchhar, had an unusually high water flow in the monsoon. According to Mahesh Kumar, the then executive engineer at Manchhar, the Nai Gaj flows last year raised the lake’s level by several feet in just a couple of days. But, unfortunately, this good news proved to be short-lived because of the uninterrupted effluent from the MNVD. RBOD has earned its fair share of notoriety.

RBOD-II has been delayed for two decades, while its connection to two tributary drains, i.e. RBOD-I and RBOD-III, have almost been completed by Wapda. So far, the cost of RBOD-II — being built by the Sindh government through the Frontier Works Organisation — has been revised twice; first from 14 billion rupees to 29 billion rupees, and then to 62 billion rupees. It is now set for a third cost revision, as the Sindh government is hiring consultants for another study on the drain.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has already filed a case in the accountability court for alleged misappropriation of funds — 4.482 billion rupees to be exact — by senior and junior project officials. But as the conversation around RBOD-II focuses on the incompetence and corruption of those in charge, the affectees at Manchhar continue to suffer. RBOD-II is not the only proposed solution to Manchhar's ecological neglect that has seen years-long delays.

The Nai Gaj dam — to be constructed by Wapda, and aiming to provide a continuous release of 50 cusecs of freshwater to Manchhar Lake — has also been in the works since 2009. The dam is meant to not only serve as a source of continuous fresh water for the lake, but would also store 300,000 acre feet of water, Wapda claims.

Prime Minister Imran Khan has vowed to complete the dam even if the Sindh government does not share the project's revised cost. But the fisherfolk community is less than hopeful. Mirani thinks it would take a miracle for the lake to be restored as a 'paradise' for the migratory birds that would descend among the reeds on the lake in winter, and for fish to flow in clear waters like they once did. Indeed, the planned projects that have been under construction for years, actually materialising and improving the ecological conditions at Manchhar, would be nothing short of a miracle.

Pakistan: Fish export increased during first nine month of current FY, says Economic Survey

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/fish-export-increased-during-first-nine-month-1274423.html>

"Economic Survey of Pakistan revealed on Thursday that the fish export during the first nine month of current fiscal year increased 4.78 percent as compare to previous survey. According to Economic Survey launched by Minister for Finance and Revenue Shaukat Tarin, Pakistan's major buyers of fishery items are China, Thailand, Malaysia, middle East, Sri Lanka, and Japan.

Export during FY2020 (July-March) were 130,148 thousand metric tonnes which earned US\$ 317.305 million (Rs 49,527 million). Fish production remained at 690.600 thousand metric tonnes of which 465.200 thousand metric tonnes was from marine and the remaining was produced by inland fishery sector.

According to the Survey, fish production in FY2021 (July-March) was 701.726 thousand metric tonnes in which 474.025 thousand metric tonnes was from marine and the remaining from the inland fishery sector. The production of fish & fishery products has witnessed a decreased of 1.5 percent.

Government of Pakistan is undertaking several steps to improve the fisheries sector and its exports. A number of initiatives are being taken by Federal and provincial fisheries departments including strengthening of extension services, introduction of new fishing methodologies, development of value added products, enhancement of per capita.

Pakistan: Inland fisherfolk submit recommendations to fisheries dept

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/847717-inland-fisherfolk-submit-recommendations-to-fisheries-dept>

"Inland fisherfolk of Sindh cry out against lack of mapping for lakes, which enables encroachment by private parties, and have submitted recommendations to inland fisheries department for development of this sector, which provides livelihoods to more than 400,000 families. Fisherfolk hailing from Manchhar Lake in Jamshoro district, Keenjhar Lake in Thatta district, Chotiari reservoir in Sanghar and other freshwater bodies asked the government to rehabilitate natural waters through various interventions, so the community could have a sustainable source of livelihood.

They said that there were visible threats to the source of livelihoods of the people residing along these wetlands due to degradation of natural waters. Manchhar Lake community leader Mustafa Mirani, who led the delegation who met the inland fisheries officials, said, "We just want the Sindh inland fisheries department to strengthen coordination within government stakeholders." This coordination was needed to keep the support mechanism of the fisheries department intact.

Citing an example, Mirani said, "The fisheries department officials put fish seeds in the water to increase community access to higher fish catch; however, at the same time, the irrigation department officials open the outlets to irrigate fields, which also removes fish seeds from the water." This turns the whole exercise futile, he said, adding that if there was better coordination, the government would save resources and also fulfil its duty towards the people.

Similarly, Irrigation, Sindh Wildlife, Revenue department, Sindh Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Culture and Tourism departments have a stake in these waters. But due to lack of coordination, the community people suffer. Mirani also said that due to a lack of demarcation when it comes to natural water bodies, sometimes the source that feeds water to the body was cut, enabling local landlords to encroach upon the land, which deprived the community of their source of income and consumption.

Despite protests, he pointed out that the revenue department had not taken action against violation by landlords to save natural lakes. Kalankar Lake in Achhro Thar (white desert) in Sanghar district, once a scenic water body, was now occupied by certain landlords. The encroachers have disconnected the lake from its natural feeding sources (canal), and the lake was now dying gradually.

There were many other water bodies, which were being deprived of their water share. These practices were harming biodiversity as well, the activists said. Achhro Thar has clusters of natural lakes surrounded by sand dunes, which used to get water from old canals and rains.

But now these waters were being degraded deliberately, so the land could instead be used for farming. These water bodies were not only a source of livelihoods, but the people depend on these waters for domestic use as well. Reports gathered from community activists show that local fisherfolk faced problems in marketing their catch, despite it being organic. A strong network of middlemen bought fish from the local landing sites at meagre rates to sell the same at a high price in various markets.

Ramzan Mallah, a community leader from Chotiari reservoir said, “We have suggested the authorities to form cooperative societies at major waters or at district level with provision of structures that encourage the role of the community.” He demanded to take action and stop the exploitation of the community people at the hands of local middlemen and traders, who deprive the fishermen of a fair price for their products.

“Government has established hatcheries, which are producing fish seeds, but we have asked to produce indigenous fish seeds. These native seeds have capacity to survive in natural vegetation without chemical feed,” he said. What the fishermen catch from the lakes was organic.

So if the government wants to introduce fish seeds to these water bodies, it should also focus on indigenous varieties that were better adapted to the environment. He pointed out that fish produced at private farms were harmful for human health, as they survived on a lot of chemicals.

Originally, there were around 52 fish species in Sindh inland waters, out of which hardly a few have survived in the lakes, which receive fresh water. Manchhar Lake being a larger water body has only two three indigenous fish species, while others have been depleted due to receiving contaminated water through Main Nara Valley (MNV) drainage.

The government’s fisheries department asked community leaders to give proposals for the development of waters under the World Bank-funded Sindh Agriculture Growth Project (SAGP), which was working simultaneously for the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors.

Sindh Inland Fisheries Director General Mir Allahdad Talpur said that initially, community stakeholders from major waters were invited to provide suggestions till June 30, 2021 so they could be submitted to the provincial government for approval. “We have formed a committee,

comprising community activists for this purpose. It is just an assessment and then the government is interested to support the people and increasing productivity,” Talpur said.

Talking about demarcation of inland waters, the DG said, “We have authority to see waters, its share of water and livelihood and not land. Demarcation of lakes must be done.” He said they have already asked the government to ensure demarcation of lakes to avoid encroachment, but it was yet to be decided upon.

The development programmes include provision of small boats, equipment, grants for landing sites, besides providing fish seed in freshwaters. Community activists cried against the way the fisheries department officials were adding fish seeds to the water bodies without taking them on board. Further, there have been reports of attacks by armed men on fishermen during their livelihood activities. Certain landlords wanted to occupy natural wetlands for cultivation.

Pakistan: Navy has observed World Ocean Day to fo-cus on the maintenance and development of oceans and coastal areas

<https://nation.com.pk/09-Jun-2021/pak-navy-observes-world-ocean-day>

"Pakistan Navy has observed World Ocean Day to fo-cus on the maintenance and development of oceans and coastal areas in the country. World Oceans Day is celebrated to focus on the maintenance and development of oceans and coast-al areas. Oceans are very important for mankind as these are a major source of sustenance of life on earth and act as lungs to our planet as they provide more than 50 percent of the oxygen produced on this planet.

They are also major absorbers of greenhouse gas-es and carbon dioxide. Oceans regulate our climate holding 97 percent of the water on earth, almost all rain that drops on land comes from the sea. The hu-man activity on land is directly affecting the oceans and the life that flourishes within. The theme selected for World Oceans Day-2021 by the United Nations is, ‘The Ocean: Life and Liveli-hoods.’

This offers an opportunity to explore the hu-man life relationship with the oceans. To commemorate the significance of World Oceans Day, Pakistan Navy is playing a lead role in promoting safe and sustainable use of ocean resources.

Some of the major Pakistan Navy initiatives include; beach cleaning, construction of harbour debris collection barges, intensive mangroves plantation, banning use of destructive fishing nets, tackling oil pollution at sea and coordination with the industrial community to reduce waste dumping into the sea.

Amidst the ongoing crisis of COVID 19, activities involving mass gatherings were not held this year. However, other activities related to creating awareness about the importance of the oceans through effective use of media have been undertaken.

In this regards, National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) has also arranged a number of activities including seminar/webinar and panel discussions focusing on ocean resources and Blue Economy, said a press release.

Pakistan: Meddlesome bureaucracy in FCS responsible for poor fisheries

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/845458-meddlesome-bureaucracy-in-fcs-responsible-for-poor-fisheries>

"Majority of marine fishermen, mostly boat owners, residing in coastal areas of Thatta, Sujawal and Badin districts are yet to get representation in the Fishermen Cooperative Society (FCS), a community welfare body, formed in 1945. The FCS election for seven community directors is set to be held on June 18, 2021, in which around 1,800-2,000 members will cast their votes.

Community activists said that despite contributing taxes and commission to the Karachi Fisheries Harbour, boat owners from these coastal districts had no representation in FCS and could not claim proper share in income and play a role in the development of their areas. Majeed Motani, a senior boat captain and member since 1964, said the FCS was formed in 1945 by community elders, keeping in mind that this might help people in case of an accident during fishing in the sea, retirement, for education and health facilities for their families.

The FCS founders had set criteria to include boat owners as bona fide members, who could cast votes and participate in decision-making through their elected representatives. Specifically, there was a need for development of jetties (fish landing sites), roads, harbour maintenance, markets and other infrastructures using funds earned in the shape of prescribed commission through auction of seafood.

At that time, the number of boats was not so high. Initially, 500 boats were registered. About the boat owners from outside Karachi, Motani said there was a small number from Keti Bunder and Kharo Chhan, Thatta district, who were members for a long time. Previously, the community members used to elect seven directors, while the provincial government would nominate five directors directly to run the affairs of the society smoothly. But now the provincial government through amendment of the bill has become authorised to nominate eight directors directly.

However, seven directors from the community's side remain the same as per the election process. Asif Bhatti, President, Native Indigenous Fishermen Association (Nifa) based in Bhit Island, Karachi said, "We follow the tradition set by our elders to elect seven members from the community to run affairs of FCS." However, bureaucratic hurdles always disrupt the system, and community people feel uneasy about getting their share for development.

"We, the fishermen, are natural custodians of resources. We are eyewitnesses of increasing marine pollution and suggest authorities to address these issues," Bhatti said. The commission

earned through auction of seafood ranges from Rs.25 million to Rs.30 million per month, depending on the situation. Despite huge earnings, the community does not get its due share for developing their jetties, and maintenance of harbour.

Elderly boat captains said that in the past, inexperienced community people had asked the government to run affairs of the FCS, and to nominate secretary finance or commissioner Karachi to manage the system judiciously. But later, the government intervened and manipulated the society's manifesto. Presently, the government appoints eight directors and selects its chairman to run affairs, cutting the role of community-elected directors to use the income, Bhatti said.

Now, though the number of boats has increased manifold, membership remains low. The reason is that FCS has stopped giving new membership to new boats to avoid new claimants. Saeed Baloch of FCS employees union (CBA) said the organisation was getting exploited by the government appointed people, who used the income on their own, without taking community directors onboard.

“Not only Thatta, Sujawal and Badin coastal areas, but Balochistan's coast, despite being larger, spread over 700km, is facing a similar situation,” he added. Pakistan's coast is 1,050km long, including Sindh's 350km and Balochistan's 700km coastline. Balochistan contributes more to the Karachi Fisheries Harbour in terms of catch and trade.

Due to this kind of manipulation and deprivation, fishermen from Balochistan are thinking to part ways and form their own welfare body. Since they have their own fisheries ministry, they should have the right to run affairs on their own. Community activists demand to revive membership and remove those from the voters list who have passed away. They also urge for verification of cards for members through NADRA so the welfare body can be saved.

Gulab Shah, representing fishermen from Keti Bunder, Thatta, said there were three categories of boats, including larger, midsize and low-size 20-foot boats. Of these, only two categories are eligible to get registered under the society act and the rest do not have a role. Otherwise, there are more than 45,000 boats of all sizes operating along the coastline.

Activists believe that the society can be run smoothly to serve as a channel through which credit for working and investment capital can reach individual fishermen, instead of moving to pockets of certain ministers and bureaucrats.

Some elderly fishermen still recall the old harbour between the present Natives Jetty Bridge and the (beach luxury) hotel, where they used to run old boats with sales. Following the building of Natives Jetty Bridge and Keamari as a new a settlement, the old system was disrupted, as it was not possible for sailboats to pass under the bridge.

According to them, even the present fisheries and harbour market were too congested to accommodate the boats, traders, auction system and entrance of community people. They blamed FCS's negligence towards harbour maintenance and cleanliness for the ban on seafood export by the European Union (EU).

This ban was causing problems for people, who have been associated with fishing for generations, they said. Shaukat Hussain, manager, FCS, said they were yet to revise the accurate list of members. "Presently we have an old membership record, in which 11,182 members may cast votes. But usually 1,800-2,000 voters take part in the process."

Talking about the EU ban on the seafood export imposed in 2012, FCS manager said they have only two companies registered to export seafood. Officially, the EU inspection team was due earlier to inspect and allow the process, but due to delay the issue remained unsolved.

Pakistan: Sindh High Court bars Livestock & Fisheries Department from floating tenders for procurement of fish seeds

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/sindh-high-court-bars-livestock-fisheries-d-1269150.html>

"The Sindh High Court has stopped the Sindh Livestock and Fisheries Department from going ahead with the tenders for procurement of fish seeds for the farming in the polluted Manchar lake. The order came on Thursday in a petition filed by Muhammad Sharif Mallah and 7 other residents of the areas surrounding the lake.

They prayed before the court that the said procurement has been made a way of plundering the public funds. They said the level of Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) in the lake has been measured at over 5,000 which could not support life in the lake. They pointed towards certain research according to which fish could not survive in water with more than 2,000 TDS levels.

They informed the court that Main Nara Valley (MNV) drain ended at the Manchar lake with its highly toxic water, adding that the drain had turned the lake's once fresh water into a hazard for the tens of thousands of people living around it.

They contended that the Sindh government had wasted around Rs.250 million by establishing a hatchery to supply fish seeds for the lake. They also brought to the court's knowledge that several tenders had been floated for acquiring the fish seeds which negated the very purpose for which the hatchery was established at such a huge cost.

The petitioners also submitted copies of 5 separate tenders through which the fisheries department acquired seeds of Labeo Rohita (Rahu), Cirrhinus Mirgala (Morakhi), Cyprinus Carpio (Gulfam), Catla (Thaila) and Hypophthalmichthys molitrix (silver carp). "" This entire exercise of buying the fish seeds is an eye wash because the TDS in the lake is so high that I

can't support life and the respondents [concerned government officials] are just making money through this fictitious and perpetual procurement procedure," they argued.

The SHC issued notices to the Sindh Secretary livestock and fisheries and the procurement committee comprising the assistant director fisheries, deputy program director, deputy director fisheries and deputy commissioner Jamshoro.

The respondents have been ordered to appear in person at the next date of hearing on June 24 along with the entire relevant record and inform the court for what purpose those tenders were being floated from time to time. They would also have to apprise the bench about the results of the fish farming in the lake and the cost and benefit analysis of their endeavours. The SHC barred the fisheries department from executing the tenders without the court's permission.

Pakistan initiates work on green financing instruments

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1627427/pakistan-initiates-work-on-green-financing-instruments>

"Pakistan has initiated work on a number of green financing instruments, buoyed by widespread global investor interest in the country's first green bond floated in the international market last week. The development follows the growing concern in Pakistan that it's one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change, and has been hit hard by extreme weather events including devastating floods.

Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday said 10 most vulnerable countries in the world, including Pakistan, were at high risk of climate change due to green gases' emission by developed states of the world. "Pakistan is contributing less than one per cent to global carbon emissions, yet we are more vulnerable than Bangladesh due to the melting of our glaciers. It is not our fault.

There are giants that contribute to carbon emissions but countries like us face the consequences," the prime minister said while addressing a ceremony on "green financing innovations" organised by the Ministry of Climate Change in connection with World Environment Day.

Wapda on May 27 launched Pakistan's first-ever US dollar-denominated green Eurobonds, seeking \$500 million for environment friendly projects to enhance the clean energy share in the country's power generation mix, which relies heavily on fossil fuels — particularly coal.

"The green bond was six times oversubscribed which shows there is a global appetite for a country that has economic stability and as well as green credibility," Climate Change Minister Malik Amin Aslam told Reuters. Pakistan is the host country of the UN's annual World Environment Day on June 5.

It is now looking to become a major player in the global green financing market. Mr Aslam said Pakistan plans to further tap the green bond avenue for building and transport financing. PM Khan said speedy glacier melting in Pakistan was a major threat, adding that his government had launched several green initiatives including Ten Billion Tree Tsunami project to mitigate the effects of global warming.

Country Director of World Bank in Pakistan Najy Benhassine presented to the prime minister the report on blue carbon, which for the first time gives an economic value to Pakistan's unvalued marine wealth, including mangroves and sea grasses.

Pakistan: Food Security and Future of Aquaculture

<https://www.technologytimes.pk/2021/05/30/food-security-and-future-of-aquaculture-in-pakistan/>

"Due to increasing worldwide population, food security has become a serious concern leading to poverty and unemployment. The current population of Pakistan is 219,511,630 according to United Nations data and is equal to 2.83% of the total world population. Protein requirement is also increasing with increasing global population. This condition is threatening and has elevated great alarms for government and other organizations.

According to Economic Survey of Pakistan (2018-2019), Agriculture provides 18.5% to the country GDP and Livestock has share of 60.54 % in agriculture and 11.22 percent in GDP. Due to poor productivity of fodder crops, the performance of agriculture sector remained short in last decade. The growth in agriculture sector was estimated about 0.85%. The negative growth of about 4.4 percent during 2019 was mainly due to negative production (-6.6 percent) of important crops. Livestock sector has shown growth of 4%.

Allah has blessed Pakistan with a variety of livestock. It not only provides food security by supplying milk, meat but also employment to both men and women and has role to eliminate the poverty. Regular supply of adequate and nutritious fodder is important for the growth of livestock. The main and economical source of feed stuff for livestock are the fodder crops. However, the main warning factor for livestock growth in our country is the deficiency of fodder production.

This situation is getting worse due to decrease in fodder area in previous years along with two fodder scarcity periods i.e one in winter season (November to January) and other in summer season (May-June). It is important to increase the agriculture production by increasing per acre yield for food security. Pakistan has rich production potential in agriculture, livestock and fisheries but for economic growth and prosperity, the development of these sectors is important.

As we are facing the problems of food security we have to look for the alternatives of protein sources to meet the protein demands of increasing population. Aquaculture is a very feasible method of food (protein) production and is more effective than production of cattle, pork, pigs and chicken. Many problems like malnourishment, weakness and high infant mortality can develop due to deficiency of proteins in humans.

This situation can be handled by increasing fish production. Fish is a source of animal protein, provides essential nutrients and reduces the problems related with eyes, bone breakage, memory loss, liver and kidneys. Therefore increasing the intake of fish is a good substitute for food security as well as a good source of animal protein. The secondary source of protein in Pakistan is fish.

The major water protein is fish that delivers 7% of total protein and provides 80% consumption of animal protein. Per capita annual intake of fish in Pakistan is very low i.e 1.9kg while in advanced countries it is 20 kg. Aquaculture systems which are being used worldwide include fresh water ponds and tanks, fresh water cages, coastal ponds and tanks, coastal cage farms and marine aquaculture. Pakistan is blessed with natural water resources.

There is an area of about 8,563,820 km² in the form of marine water, fresh water, rivers, ponds, lakes and water lodging areas that are the main reservoirs of aquaculture. This area is appropriate for aquaculture production. There is an area of about 1120 km along the coast line that has great potential for aquaculture.

Pakistan has an area of about 350 nautical miles (Exclusive Economic Zone) in its control. Vast resources are present for aquaculture production but there is no evolution in fisheries sector and resources are not being utilized. The main reason is the aquaculture practice. Extensive and semi intensive aquaculture system is practiced only in fresh water. For aquaculture, deep marine and coastal water resources are not being used. So, from the marine side, we are relying on the natural water resources.

Fish production from natural catch is 600,000 metric tons and 179,900 metric tons from aquaculture. The share of aquaculture in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is 1%. Capture fisheries has major involvement due to very limited culture. There is an increase in price of fish, due to more input and less output and with growing demand of population. For efficient aquaculture production all the water resources should be utilized properly.

Water diversion should be done in rivers and canals by which controlled amount water is send to the pond and that water can again become the part of river. In long rivers, channels and canals pockets should be made for efficient utilization of water. All the reservoirs, lakes, earthen ponds and tanks should be used for aquaculture production.

Efforts should be made to introduce the cage culture, recirculatory and integrated aquaculture in Pakistan. Poultry droppings can be used as a source of fish feed. Poultry droppings and feather meal are first boiled then dried and crushed to form pellets.

These pellets can be used as feed in ponds. When poultry waste is processed by thermal treatment, its protein digestibility increases. If we add yeast, quality of fish feed can be improved. Hence, the aquaculture has a great potential to provide a cheaper animal protein source to its people. It also has great export potential and can help in earning revenue.

Pakistan: Lady luck smiles on Balochistan's fisherman

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1626596/lady-luck-smiles-on-balochistans-fisherman>

"A fisherman from Pishkan, Gwadar, caught a rare fish weighing 48kg off the coast of Jewani, which was sold for a whopping Rs7.2 million, it emerged on Sunday. According to Sajid Haji Ababakar, the owner of the boat credited with catching the prized croaker fish, the vessel was being skippered at the time by Waheed Baloch of Pishkan.

Deputy Director for Fisheries in Gwadar Ahmed Nadeem confirmed that he had never come across a fish that had fetched a greater price. At one time during the auction, said Mr Ababakar, the price of the fish had gone up to Rs8.64m.

"However, after taking into account the discounts allowed under our traditions, we settled for a price of 72 lakhs," he said. Abdul Rahim Baloch, marine biologist and assistant director for environment at the Gwadar Development Authority, said the demand for the large croaker fish was very high in Europe and China.

"Some fish are expensive because of their meat. But this species (large croaker fish) has a high demand because parts of it are known for their use in medicine and surgery," he said. According to sources, not long ago a fisherman called Abdul Haq had caught a croaker fish that was sold for a rather modest Rs780,000.

Pakistan: Fishing community has been expressing concerns about being displaced from their traditional fishing grounds due to the construction of CPEC projects

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/05/24/how-china-and-pakistan-negotiate-pub-84592>

"Since being officially launched in April 2015, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been one of the most watched set of projects under the aegis of Chinese President Xi Jinping's signature Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Having already injected around \$25 billion into Pakistan, the CPEC not only has been dubbed the "flagship project" of the BRI, but it also holds a central role in Beijing's global ambitions.

While much has been said about the geopolitical implications of the CPEC, including for both India and the United States, less attention has been devoted to providing in-depth insights into the mechanics of how the BRI is unfolding on the ground in Pakistan.

How do China and Pakistan negotiate the terms of CPEC deals? To what extent has Islamabad managed to exert agency in its dealings with Beijing? How does China adapt to the contexts it operates in? By now, the CPEC has been subject to much media, academic, and policy scrutiny, but these questions have not been answered.

The power asymmetry between the two partners—coupled with the impression that the BRI represents a unidirectional Chinese endeavor, not just in Pakistan but also globally—has contributed to the erroneous representation that Beijing is merely imposing the CPEC on its all-weather partners in Islamabad.

On the contrary, this study highlights China's adaptive strategies in dealing with a host of Pakistani actors (including political parties, local communities, and the military) against the backdrop of Pakistan's evolving political landscape and change in leadership following the country's 2018 elections.

In filling this gap, this paper foregrounds the importance of adopting a relational approach to studying how the BRI unfolds on the ground. This entails looking at how Pakistan and China have negotiated the CPEC's energy, infrastructure, and industrial cooperation projects.

The analysis is based on semi-structured elite interviews conducted by the two authors during three rounds of fieldwork in 2015, 2018, and 2020–2021 triangulated with a host of official reports, statements, and newspaper articles.

Examining the domestic contours of the CPEC shows that Pakistani actors have wielded agency in important ways throughout the process, while Chinese actors at times have accommodated key Pakistani demands. The CPEC's chosen route was affected by partisan Pakistani politics. The decisionmaking behind the corridor's geographic route was an early indication that Pakistan's preferences have been key in shaping how the CPEC has unfolded on the ground.

In particular, the choice to prioritize projects in Sindh and Punjab stemmed from then prime minister Nawaz Sharif and his party's desire to obtain medium-term electoral gains, alongside China's interests in developing projects in Pakistan's more economically developed provinces. Despite its initial suspicions of the CPEC, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has been as partisan in its use of the CPEC as its predecessor was.

Since taking office in 2018, the PTI's focus on socioeconomic projects has not deviated markedly from the Pakistani government's previously formulated plans for the CPEC. But its choice of the Rashakai special economic zone (SEZ) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, over others rated more favorably in feasibility studies (and despite a strong Chinese preference for an alternative

location), undermines the narrative that China is always the one distorting market forces with ill-suited BRI projects.

The development of Gwadar was as much of a priority for Pakistan as it was for China. Although China's strategic calculations are often emphasized, the port of Gwadar was a Pakistani-initiated proposal in the early 2000s that was only later rebranded as a BRI project after 2013. All Pakistani governments over the past twenty years, both military- and civilian-led, have encouraged China's involvement in Gwadar, while Beijing in turn sees the port as a strategic access point to the Indian Ocean.

Energy projects were initially prioritized by Pakistan's choice. The majority of first-phase CPEC investments went to energy projects, most notably coal power plants. This preference for coal was part of Pakistan's desire to diversify the composition of its energy markets. This goal was also in line with Sharif's and his party's preference for energy projects to end the country's electricity shortages in order to secure a 2018 reelection bid.

The challenges facing SEZs. Despite China's and Islamabad's agreement to focus on and prioritize a few SEZs and China's desire to relocate some industries to lower-cost production areas, the development of SEZs has been slow. This has been the result of a cumbersome bureaucratic structure and the politicization of these projects.

Rhetoric on the CPEC has often failed to match reality. The lofty language on the CPEC has generally failed to measure up to the realities on the ground when it comes to delivering for the people of Pakistan. Many projects aimed at winning Pakistani hearts and minds have been included in the CPEC, but these have often not materialized or have been delayed.

Pakistan: Govt to empower fishermen by giving loans on subsidized rate

<https://www.app.com.pk/national/govt-to-empower-fishermen-by-giving-loans-on-subsidized-rate/>

"Government will empower the poor fishermen by giving loans on subsidized rate under Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan Programme, which will enhance the entrepreneurship among the fishermen and will contribute in national economy.

“In this scheme, significant number of fishermen will get benefited and will be able to get the ownership rather than to work on poor wages”, said a press release issued by Ministry of Maritime Affairs (MoMA).

In this scheme all the modern facilities will be introduced in the sector. It will lead to improvement in the quality of fish and fisheries product for export purposes. Ministry of Maritime Affairs has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with National Bank of

Pakistan, Bank Alfalah, Habib Bank of Pakistan and Bank of Punjab for financing of fishermen under Kamyab Jawan Program.

According to ministry, this scheme will result in improvement of quality of fish – leading to enhanced exports. From this scheme, Fishing Industry will get benefit for procurement of Purchase / construction of mechanized boats and Mechanization of country boats engine.

The ministry has also launched an outreach initiative for fishermen community along the Coastal Belt (Gadani, Kund Malir, Sar Bandar Gwadar) in order to explain and educate them about the salient features of Prime Minister’s Kamyab Jawan Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme.

Pakistani fishing communities struggle inside the nets of bonded labor

<https://thebaffler.com/salvos/freedom-on-the-line-kohari>

"All night it had rained: a furious, unseasonal rain from a wavering sky. God had lost all sense of proportion, the locals said, like a bus driver who crawls on a highway and flies over a speedbump riddled road. But the morning was clear, and the water in the river, swollen with runoff from the bordering mountains, swirled under the bridge and toward the silt ejector. Here stood the fishermen, a dozen or so of them.

Their shalwars, rolled up to their knees, ballooned on the surface of the water; their steel matkas gleamed in the sun. Nets emerged endlessly, like handkerchiefs from a magician’s breast pocket. Sloshing through the water, the fishermen stretched them taut across the channel. Then they waited. Hunting fish near the silt ejector, which flushes sediment back into the river, is against the law. But so are many other things.

From atop the bridge, a man watched the fishermen. Minutes passed. The men in the water stirred back to life. Men is a misnomer, really: many were little boys, helping their fathers and uncles and grandfathers. It was late April, nearly the end of the fishing season, and the river was mostly full of jhalli, a slender, inconsequential fish—small fry. Jhalli doesn’t fetch much in the market. The fish has too many bones: spiky ones that scratch the throat and feathery ones that tickle. Once dead, though, the creature is obliging. Its flesh flakes away easily from its spine and can be eaten with a smattering of salt.

Upstream, in another language, jhalli means happy-go-lucky girl—unacquainted with the ways of the world, or perhaps just unbothered by them. Most of the residents of Basti Allahwali were fishermen, among the oldest inhabitants of the region, but they could seldom eat fish themselves or offer it to guests. What they caught was the property of contractors, local businessmen who held exclusive rights to the river and who paid the fishermen puny wages.

Still, Sonaar smuggled home the occasional jhalli: he would slip it beneath his clothes or stuff it under his cap, dangling it triumphantly before his family before dinner. The risk was absurdly

high. The fishermen were supervised at all times by the contractor's henchmen; if caught in the act at work, they would be fined an amount worth months of wages. This was the best-case scenario.

The worst-case scenario involved being pinned to the ground and lashed. Or perhaps it was the other way round. A beating was brief, after all. A fine dragged you deeper into the quicksand of debt, setting you back months, if not years. How had it come to this, that men and women fishing all their lives could barely eat fish themselves? The fishermen of Taunsa were unanimous: they blamed the contract system, promulgated into law in 1961.

Though colonial legislation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century did not tightly regulate access to the region's rivers—they were more concerned with banning explosives, poison, and other harmful fishing techniques—unofficially, the colonial logic of revenue extraction was more or less in practice. In post-independence Pakistan, the contract system has been formalized—ostensibly to raise revenue for a cash-strapped young nation.

Every summer, the government divides the rivers into distinct parcels of waters, selling fishing rights to the highest bidder. All fish became de facto property of the winning contractors, so local communities—who had been fishing in these waters for centuries—are left with no choice but to work for middlemen, instead of directly selling their catch in the market. The contractor dictates the terms of this relationship.

He decides how much to pay the fisherman for each kilo of fish caught—and it is nowhere near a livable amount, swiftly ensnaring fishing families in a vortex of debt. Consequently, the contractor governs every aspect of a fisherman's life. He floats loans and directs fishermen to handpicked local stores, where they are provided rations at inflated prices, which they agree to pay off through their labor; he even arbitrates family disputes and arranges marriages.

Debt doesn't end at death; it passes on to the next of kin. An estimated six hundred thousand fishermen live on or along the five rivers that flow through Punjab. Today, the majority of them labor under this form of debt bondage. Closer to home, the fisherwoman is at the heart of the founding myth of Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, now home to over fourteen million. A long time ago, one leapt into the sea to yank her son from the clutches of a fish and gave the city her name.

Of the seven folk heroines of the land, one is a fisherwoman: Noori, who married a king but remained wedded to her old way of life. (Her tomb lies in the center of a lake.) But when the nineteenth-century explorer Sir Richard Francis Burton, fluent in twenty-nine languages yet a racist extraordinaire, chanced upon the fisherwomen of the region, all he could see was their sun-seared skin. "Macbeth never saw such hags," he wrote, "as you see in the old Mohání."

There are more than eighteen million bonded laborers in the world, according to the researcher Siddharth Kara—over four out of every five in South Asia. There is no consensus on why this

form of entrapment is most prevalent here. The most common explanation, invoking the caste system, feels unsatisfying—after all, an economic and social underclass exists everywhere, at risk of being sucked into a spiral of debt and control.

Debt bondage has historically occurred throughout the world: sharecropping in the post-Civil War South, manorialism in medieval Europe, similar set-ups in the Japanese shogunate, in ancient Egypt and in Rome.

More recent examples of forced labor from outside South Asia include the continuing use of convict labor in the United States; Canada's seasonal guest worker program, involving seasonal migrant labor from Mexico and the Caribbean; and the resurgence of the gangmaster system in the UK, which provides seasonal labor to the agriculture, shellfish, and processing and packing sectors.

Contrary to the assumption that a “fully functioning” capitalist enterprise needs free workers, these cases prove that modern markets can coexist, and even thrive on unfree labor. Today, profits of more than fifty billion dollars per year are made off the back of bonded labor.

Pakistan: Cage Fish Culture cluster project reviewed

<https://pakobserver.net/cage-fish-culture-cluster-project-reviewed/>

"Secretary Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries South Punjab, Sarfraz Magsi accompanied by Director General Fisheries and Wildlife South Punjab Dr Khalid Pervez visited the Cage Fish Culture Cluster Development Project of the Fisheries Department at Head Panjnad.

He said that according to the vision of Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan, this project is very important to meet the nutritional needs of the country, in which fish production can be increased by using natural water resources.

The project is still in the early stages. He directed to work diligently for timely completion of the project to benefit the masses and exchequer alike. During briefing about the project, Assistant Director Muhammad Ali Gohar said that the project provides a lot of productivity in less space.

This project is a milestone in the supply of high quality protein from fish production for the nutritional needs of the country. By 2023-24, 5,000 cages will be installed across Punjab. In which 80% subsidy is being given to fish farmers. Fish farmers will also be given regular training in this modern technique.

Pakistan: Aaghaz-e-Dosti releases list of prisoners, fishermen jailed in India-Pakistan, suggests measures amid pandemic

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/aaghaz-e-dosti-releases-list-of-prisoners-fishermen-jailed-in-india-pakistan-suggests-measures-amid-pandemic/articleshow/82729665.cms>

"Aaghaz-e-Dosti, a cross border peace initiative, released the latest list of Indian and Pakistani civilian prisoners and fishermen who are lodged in jails on other side of the border. The list is as per data exchanged between India and Pakistan as on January 1, 2021 under the consular access agreement between the two governments that was signed in 2008.

Aaghaz-e-Dosti is the first such initiative that has released such a detailed list of cross border prisoners since 2014, which has been uploaded on its blog. As per data procured by Ravi Nitesh, Founder-Aaghaz-e-Dosti, there are 49 Indian civilian prisoners lodged in jails of Pakistan. Among these, 32 persons have already completed their sentence including 18 who have completed their sentence more than five years ago but still could not return to their home country. The oldest case is of a person who completed sentence in 2004 but still could not return despite passing 17 years.

There are two prisoners whose identity is unknown as they are hearing and speech impaired and both completed sentence. One prisoner is sentenced to death and six are undertrial prisoners who were arrested in the year 2019 and 2020. On the other hand, there are 263 Pakistani civilian prisoners lodged in jails of India. Among these, 67 have completed their sentence including one prisoner who completed sentence in 1998 and a few others in years 2006, 2010 and 2014, but they could not return to their home country.

There are 54 prisoners who are undergoing sentence, the status of 17 is unknown while 125 are undertrials. There are six prisoners whose particulars are unknown as they are speech and hearing impaired. There are a total of 77 Pakistani fishermen in Indian jails mostly caught during 2018 to 2020 and oldest cases are of 2013 and 2014, while 270 Indian fishermen are lodged in Pakistani jails. "Those who have completed their sentences but still could not return to their home country, because of hurdles such as identity confirmation or NOCs from respective states.

This should be considered on priority by both sides of the government and they should work to clear all such cases and to ensure return of persons in their home country without any further delay. The right to return to the home country is assured in Article 12(4) of International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights.

Also, for persons who are declared impaired by respective states, there must be efforts to bring such cases for identity confirmation and their release should be expedited", said Aaghaz-e-Dosti founder Ravi Nitesh, India chapter convener Devika Mittal and Pakistan chapter convener Raza Khan.

They said Aaghaz-e-Dosti have suggested some measures that should be taken by both sides in view of the spread of pandemic where protection of lives is important. The list of prisoners and fishermen should be made public by joint efforts of both the governments. By doing so, there is a

chance that advocates and civil society members would like to take such cases of cross border prisoners to offer legal and humanitarian support.

For civilian prisoners, whose sentence has already been completed, they should be released without delay. Fishermen who are lodged on both sides should be released immediately as they are not criminals and there are no such criminal charges against them. They have been caught in the sea while fishing and they deserve to be made free but there should be a mechanism under which fishermen detention should be worked out to keep their jail term minimum.

Indian fishermen are jailed in large numbers in Pakistan and their boats are also seized. As per the information received, there are about 1110 fishing boats which are believed to be in captivity of Pakistan and these should also be released so that fishermen can get their resources back to survive livelihood.

The Indo-Pak Joint Judicial committee which was formed in 2007 needs to be revived without delay. It has not met since 2013. The government of Pakistan needs to organise the meet, said the peace activists. Full list available at: <https://aaghazedosti.wordpress.com/indo-pak-prisoners/>

Pakistan: Sindh province on high alert for cyclone Tauktae

<https://morungexpress.com/paks-sindh-province-on-high-alert-for-cyclone-tauktae>

"Authorities in Pakistan's Sindh province have adopted a high alert mode after the country's meteorological department issued warnings over cyclone Tauktae. The Pakistan Meteorological Department on Sunday issued the sixth consecutive alert for the cyclone, poised to affect part of the Sindh province, especially its coastal areas with heavy rainfall and gusty winds, reports Xinhua news agency.

According to the alert, the cyclone has intensified into a "very severe cyclonic storm" and lay centres near 15.3 degrees north latitude and 72.5 degrees east longitude, at a distance of about 1,210 km south-southeast of Karachi. "Maximum sustained winds around the system center are 100-120 kph gusting to 140 kph," said the alert, adding that the system is likely to move further northwestward and reach the Indian state of Gujarat by Tuesday morning.

The Department said in an alert issued Saturday night that "based on the existing meteorological conditions, dust/thunderstorm-rain with few moderate to heavy falls with gusty winds of 60-80 kph" are likely to occur in different parts of Sindh, especially its coastal areas. Fishermen have also been advised not to venture in the sea till May 20 because the sea conditions will be rough to very rough.

In a separate notification, the department has also issued a heatwave warning for Karachi until Monday forecasting the rise in temperature to 42 degrees Celsius. Following the alerts, Chief

Minister of Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah had declared an emergency in all districts located along the coastal belt.

Local authorities in Karachi have started removing all billboards and safeguarding under-construction buildings besides cleaning drains and making alternate arrangements for accommodation.

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi has also asked the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency to deploy fast response boats to track and guide all fishing vessels back towards the shore especially in the eastern sector.

Pakistan: With going big on trout farming, why sustainability should be the need of the hour for farmers practicing it

<https://www.firstpost.com/living/with-pakistan-going-big-on-trout-farming-why-sustainability-should-be-the-need-of-the-hour-for-farmers-practicing-it-9629781.html>

"Qasim Shah, a farmer in Pakistan's northern mountain province of Gilgit-Baltistan, has no regrets about giving up crop farming. "Trout farming is more lucrative than traditional crops. Crops and fruit have become too climate-sensitive and come with the risk of losing investment," said Shah, who is also the vice president of the Private Fish Farms Association in Ghizer district. Trout farms are cropping up in Gilgit-Baltistan, where rapidly warming glaciers form cold water reservoirs – a key breeding ground for trout.

Nearly 200 fish farms have been set up across the province in less than 10 years, with new farms appearing every month. Fish farms are also burgeoning in the neighbouring province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where the government hopes to create jobs. At each of these farms, up to 20,000 trout are bred to be sold as food. The department is targeting 500 farms in the next five years. As climate change threatens food security, traditional crop farmers in Gilgit-Baltistan are opting for trout, which they say is a more sustainable source of income.

Across South Asia, farmers are adapting to dwindling outputs and uncertain incomes – with some, like Shah, looking beyond crop cultivation. "I earned 500,000 Pakistani rupees [USD 3,285] in profit at the end of the last season despite the coronavirus pandemic. This season, my target is much higher," he added. Shah started fish farming in 2018 with an investment of over Rs 1 million. He set up a small hotel near the farm to serve fried trout to tourists and locals. If the government provides transport and packaging facilities, he said, he expects to export the fish to China.

"My village land is highly fertile for crops and fruit but erratic rains and other climatic implications like frequent pest attacks have spoiled the produce over the years," said Shah. The

government supports trout breeding and private fish farms. In April, the federal government earmarked Rs 112 million (USD 730,000) to promote fish farms in mountain provinces.

The Ministry of National Food Security & Research said the aim was to develop shrimp and fish farms in Pakistan that will create jobs, enhance food insecurity and increase export earnings. The support includes training and awareness sessions on acquiring land for fish farming, facilitating farmers in getting bank loans for private hatcheries and providing fish feed.

Pollution fears and denial

Untreated effluent from some hatcheries drains directly into the Indus river and streams which are a source of fresh drinking water for communities. Ali Asghar, an officer in the province's fisheries department, confirmed that "water from some farms mostly drains to the rivers". "If farmers are careless, it may pollute drinking water," Asghar said, though he was dismissive of high levels of pollution in the river.

No study or environmental impact assessment has been conducted since fish farms began to increase in the province. In 2014, a study conducted on water sources by the province's Environmental Protection Agency said only 22 percent comply with World Health Organisation standards. Another official said the department received complaints from areas where locals were directly using water from farms for drinking.

Requesting anonymity, he said fresh water sources in this area are contaminated "not only due to these farms, but from waste coming from hotels especially built near the farms". Karim Johar, a research officer in the fisheries department, said: "Our focus is on creating awareness on how to breed trout and how to protect the environment." He told The Third Pole: "We even shut a few farms – including a government hatchery – from where we received complaints of polluting water."

In the past year, the department registered 96 offences related to fish farms, and levied total fines of Rs 100,000 (USD 649). Johar said every district's fisheries department monitors activities and educates farmers about sustainable practices. The training includes guidance on farm management, structure of fish ponds, water concentration, feed provision, water and safety hygiene, and environmental sensitivity.

"Fish feed or waste from these farms is not significant enough to affect the environment at a large scale or dangerously contaminate the rivers," Johar said. He added: "The waves and flow of these rivers is so powerful that it naturally filters any small level [of] contamination."

But as fish farms grow in Pakistan, concerns about pollution and sustainable practices mount. Barkat Ali, who lives in Birgal village, Ghizer district, said waste from about 30 big and small fish farms established in one village drains waste directly into the Ghizer river – a tributary of the Indus.

“This drainage could contaminate drinking water if proper measures are not taken,” he said. Farmer Qasim Shah, however, rebuffed such allegations. “We are responsible and very sensitive to the environment. We take every measure to avoid pollution,” he said. He said farmers do not use chemicals in fish feed and are “very strict about littering”.

Fish food’s environmental impact

In recent years, large-scale fish farming has come under fire for threatening wild fish populations. Big commercial fish farms require tonnes of wild fish to be caught from the oceans and made into fish food. Farid Ahmad Jan, a fisheries and aquaculture specialist at Karakoram International University, told The Third Pole that at the moment farmers in Gilgit-Baltistan use discarded fish from wholesale markets. He said: “It doesn’t make financial sense to invest in catching live fish for fish feed as it will drive up the price of the trout.”

Hazards and monitoring fish farms in Pakistan

According to a report by NGO the Global Aquaculture Alliance, common environmental concerns linked to fish farms include nutrient and effluent build-up and disease spreading to local fisheries. “Nutrient build-up happens when there is a high density of fish in one area. Fish produce waste, and their waste has the potential to build up in the surrounding area. This can deplete the water of oxygen, creating algal blooms and dead zones,” the report said.

It highlighted the effects of antibiotic use on the ecosystem around enclosures, including on wild fish. It also raised concerns about the escape of non-native fish, which may compete with wild fish for food, potentially displacing native species. Jan said there is a dire need to educate private farm owners. He talked about a recent incident in Ghizer, where “three tonnes of trout died at a private farm because the bottom of the enclosure was not cleaned properly”.

“These farms are built very close together and all the water channels are connected. If a disease erupts in one, it quickly spreads to the nearby farms,” said Jan. “Right now, there is a major focus on promoting trout farms and farmers jump at the opportunity as it is a lucrative business. But they need to listen to experts if they want to farm trout sustainably.”

Jan also said that trout farms in Pakistan could help protect trout populations if local demand can be met by farmed rather than wild fish. “Trout populations in the province will be wiped out in 10 years if something is not done to protect them now,” he said. “At the moment, the trout farms are catering to the elite as their catch is expensive.

As a result, locals go directly to rivers and streams to catch trout and deplete the stock.” Raza Haider, regional head for conservation at the WWF, said trout farm owners in Pakistan must keep in mind the environmental adversities in their activities. “We need both a sound environment as well as nutrition,” he said.

Pakistan fishermen protest against Japan

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2299350/fishermen-protest-against-japan>

"Hundreds of fishermen staged a protest on Sunday at Gwadar Press Club against the Japanese government's decision to release contaminated water from its crippled Fukushima nuclear plant into the sea. They carried placards and banners inscribed with their demands as they chanted slogans against the Japanese government in a bid to show solidarity with the world fishermen.

Criticising the anti-human rights and anti-fishermen rights policies of the incumbent Japanese government, senior leaders of the Gwadar Fisherman Association (GFA), while addressing a press conference explained how Japan's decision will affect the livelihood of fishermen and will also damage the eco systems and marine life.

They added that marine analysts and environmental groups have raised doubts over whether Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), the company in charge of the plant, can eventually clean up the Fukushima radioactive water before it discharges into the ocean.

GFA affirmed their support for the world fishermen and demanded the Japanese government through its ambassador in Pakistan to request his government to stop such harmful policies. GFA leaders Afzal Jan, Ghafoor Sajjid, Nakhuda Nabi, Illahi Baksh, Nakuda Obaid and Abdual Khaliq Mengal were also in attendance.

Pakistan: SMIU starts research on enhancement of prawns, lobster production

<https://pakobserver.net/smiu-starts-research-on-enhancement-of-prawns-lobster-production/>

"The Department of Artificial Intelligence and Mathematical Sciences, Sindh Madarsatul-Islam University (SMIU), has launched research to enhance the production of prawns and lobsters using a novel approached artificial intelligence algorithm.

Prof. Dr Syed Asif Ali talking about research work on International / National Day of Prawns said that this day is celebrated on May 10 every year at the international/national level. He further said that Sindh Madrasatul-Islam University is the pioneer public sector university in Pakistan to offer a Ph.D. in Artificial Intelligence.

He further added that the fishing industry can play an eminent role in the improvement of the country's economy. A large number of Pakistanis consume prawns as a portion of food each year, similarly, Pakistan is also a prawn exporter country. Today's environment plays a drastic role in seawater and changes its Pure Hydrogen (PH) value which causes a detrimental effect on prawn growth.

Research Scholar Adnan Alam is designing a novel algorithm using Artificial Intelligence under the supervision of Prof Dr Syed Asif Ali. He further lauded the efforts made by worthy Vice

Chancellor SMIU Prof. Dr Mujeeb-ud-Din Memon Sahrai and glorified his professionalism and unremitting encouragement about university's research-related activities.

Pakistan: Harmful nets, chemicals destroying Keenjhar livelihoods

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/830558-harmful-nets-chemicals-destroying-keenjhar-livelihoods>

"After marine waters, some influential people have started using destructive fishing nets in Keenjhar Lake, threatening the livelihood of a large number of community people. These small-eyed nets not only destroy available fish stock, mainly juvenile fish, but also ruin vegetation, where fish breed, local fishermen activists said.

Fishers in villages around the lake own about 1,700 fishing boats, of these 10-12 boats are equipped with harmful nets despite an official ban. These harmful nets have a capacity to wipe out marine species, including juvenile fish and turtles in the area, and are a threat to the ecosystem.

Community activists claimed that these people had political backing, which was why they used the banned nets with impunity. Sindh Inland Fisheries department, under the World Bank-funded Accelerated Action Plan (AAP) has provided fish seeds for Keenjhar Lake to improve community livelihoods. This has sparked hope among the people, who now expect better catch. However, fish seeds introduced under the plan might not reach maturity if the use of harmful fishing nets does not stop.

Local elders have trained the youth in traditional sustainable fishing practices. They use small nets and avoid catching immature fish and turtles. A majority follows these traditions except a few greedy ones. Irshad Gando, a local community activist said previously the lake used to receive natural fish seeds during May and June through Kalri Baghar (KB) Feeder flowing from Kotri barrage, Jamshoro district. But the canal was now polluted due to industrial and municipal waste from the area, which has wiped out all freshwater species.

Now the lake receives seeds from hatcheries, which can survive on specific chemical feeds. Gulab Shah, a community activist from Keti Bunder, keeping a close eye over the changes in marine and inland waters, said only naturally coming fish seed through canals mostly during May and June benefit people, as this fish was nutritious. He said the fish from hatcheries carried certain risks due to chemical use.

"When these species are released in freshwater bodies, like Keenjhar Lake, they may have little chance of survival, as the fish needs chemical feed for its growth," he added. Anwer Gando, another fisherman activist at Keenjhar Lake recalled the happy days of the past when he used to catch more fish on his small boat and lived a happy life next to the lake.

Presently, there are around 25 fish species in the lake, of which six-seven species have commercial value because of taste and nutrition. He also opposed the use of unlawful practices in the wetland, which has been declared a Ramsar Site due to its international importance under the Ramsar Convention. Ramzan Mallah, a fisherman activist from Sanghar district said presently only the Chotiari reservoir covering 60-lakes cluster produced natural fish seeds, as the breeding season of freshwater species starts in May.

“Otherwise, majority of lakes out of 1,209 registered freshwater bodies have either been ruined by dumping chemical and industrial waste or reclaimed by politically influenced people in Sindh.” Mallah pointed out that certain well-connected people were depriving the lake of its natural species by poaching seeds, and selling to commercial fish farms.

“They are depriving the local fishermen of their right,” he said, adding that private hatcheries were yet not producing precious freshwater species like Sengari and Rohu. These species inhabit and breed in the freshwaters and presently only Chotiari reservoir was their home. The rates of Sengari and Rohu range from Rs400/kg to Rs1,000/kg, depending on the season. Hatcheries produce seeds of kuriro, morakho, theri, silver, grass and others, which have market value ranging from Rs200/kg to Rs500/kg.

Keenjhar Lake is a famous picnic resort, which always attracts a large number of people from different areas throughout the year. There are around 180 motor boats, which are used for tourists. Fishermen activists believe that the practice of using harmful nets at the mouth of creeks has already exploited fish stocks, depriving the community of their source of living. If these practices continue at the lake, future of the local community would become uncertain, they said.

Fishermen residing at different freshwater lakes continue to face ups and downs with new threats emerging every now and then. Sometimes it is chemical waste from factories that gets dumped in the lake, at other times hatcheries release their chemical infused water into the lake, which makes things complicated for them.

Elderly fishermen said it was not just the fish that depended on the lake. Many other water and wildlife species depended on the same ecosystem and needed a safe environment for their survival. Community activists want the government to take an action against all culprits, who harm the freshwater bodies, from industrialists to fishermen using harmful nets.

They urge departments like inland fisheries, irrigation, tourism, Sindh Environment Protection Agency, and wildlife to save the major water bodies by ensuring provision of freshwater and stopping the violations such as use of harmful nets, dumping of chemical waste, and other pollutants. Otherwise, they said the water bodies would be lost to pollution and the communities that depended on these freshwater lakes would be left destitute.

Pakistan: Industrial estate project in Chunian to be turned into aqua business park

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1622050>

"The Punjab government has approved a proposal of the Punjab Industrial Estate Development Management Company (PIEDMC) seeking conversion of the industrial estate project into an aqua business park project, Dawn has learnt. "The Punjab government had earlier spent over Rs350 million on the land acquisition, construction of a boundary wall and preparing a design for developing the industrial estate, also connected to Multan Road, near Bhai Pheru, about 40km away from Lahore.

However, it could not complete the project during the previous government of the PML-N," an official source in the Punjab government told Dawn on Tuesday. The source said when the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf came to power in Aug 2018, it started making changes in various departments, companies etc.

A new board of directors (BoD) of the PIEDMC was also constituted. The PIEDMC, which deals with the affairs of Punjab's industrial estates, resumed work on Chunian Industrial Estate Project. Before initiating civil works at the site, the company got the soil test carried out. "The PIEDMC BoD was surprised to see the soil test report that revealed that groundwater table is lying at just up to 10 feet or slightly above which makes the land unsuitable for an industrial estate," the source said.

According to him, after knowing this, the company started considering other options to utilise the area for other industrial purposes in conformity with the soil tests. Later some studies were conducted that declared that the area was suitable for breeding, growing and exporting seafood species, particularly crab, prawn and shrimp.

Since the land appeared feasible for fish farming also, it was decided to add this component to the project for local consumption through marketing it at a nearby proposed mega fish market project on Multan Road after shifting of Lahore's existing Lohari fish market there.

Pakistan: PM urges youth to tap Balochistan's promising fisheries sector

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40088590/pm-urges-youth-to-tap-balochistans-promising-fisheries-sector>

"Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday said the coastal areas of Balochistan offered immense potential in fisheries and asked the local youth to learn techniques to fully tap the opportunities for revenue generation. Addressing at the ceremony of soft loan distribution among youth of Balochistan under Kamyab Jawan programme, the prime minister said the government would support the youth through proper training in fisheries and help them run their own businesses.

The prime minister expressed satisfaction over the allocation of Rs 10 billion for the small business and skill development of the people of Balochistan. He proposed that learning of cage fishing technique as an aquaculture fish production system could prove beneficial for poor fishermen who were struggling to meet their ends. He pointed that big cartels in fishery sectors were an impediment in removing poverty of fishermen.

Imran Khan said promotion of fisheries sector would help uplift the youth of Balochistan and would ultimately benefit Pakistan. Senior Leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Muhammad Usman Dar, who is leading the Kamyab Jawan project said loans amounting to Rs8 billion had been disbursed among 10,000 youth which had helped create around 70,000 employment opportunities.

He said in line with the directions of prime minister, at least Rs5 billion would be distributed among the youth of Balochistan by this year end for supporting them in setting up their own businesses. Earlier, the prime minister gave away cheques of soft loans to the successful candidates of Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) from Balochistan.

The programme was launched in October 2019 under the banner of Kamyab Jawan Programme to provide the youth soft loans for initiation of their own businesses. Recently, the government has enhanced the scope of YES which was meant to offer huge amount of concessionary loans ranging between Rs 100,000 and Rs 25 million to the youth.

Earlier, it was limited to Rs 5 million only. According to the State Bank of Pakistan, the financing under YES has been segregated into three tiers. Under tier-1, loan limit is from Rs 100,000 up to Rs 1 million, whereas tier-2's loan limit is from above Rs 1 million and upto Rs 10 million and under tier-3, loan limit is from above Rs 10 million and upto Rs 25 million. For tier-1 loans, mark up rate is 3 percent, while mark up rate for tier-2 loans is 4 percent, and for tier-3, mark up rate is 5 percent.

Pakistan: Seafood export biggest opportunity for FDI

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40088420>

"Economic and Financial Analyst Ateeq Ur Rehman has said that presently our fishing industry and sea food export is the biggest opportunity for foreign direct investment, local investment, business, profit and growth of exports of the country.

If the federal government and the provincial governments of Sindh and Balochistan take keen interest in the development and well being of this industry, it will not only improve the conditions of our fishermen and develop the longest coastline in the world but also tremendously increase our exports.

Pakistan's deep sea fishing industry is rich, having immense potential with an enormous prospect for seafood exports but it still remains one of the most neglected sectors of Pakistan. If preferential treatment is given to this sector, it can alone surpass our export targets of 50 billion dollars and even more in a fiscal year, said Ateeq Ur Rehman.

The major problems faced by our fishing industry are huge cost of electricity for refrigeration, heavy duties on import of plant and machinery/processing unit, large number of duties and taxes on the import of raw material, and smuggling.

Government has to seriously and sincerely sort out these grievous issues urgently for the betterment of this sector, said Ateeq. He added that millions of people are working as a component of this industry and then millions are affiliated with this industry as fishermen families, vendors, diesel suppliers, packaging material suppliers and others.

Scheme for easy loan under Kamyab Jawan Program for the fishermen enabling them to purchase the latest equipment besides achieving self-reliance is a magnificent gesture.

Pakistan: Tuna in Trouble

<https://www.technologytimes.pk/2021/04/25/tuna-in-trouble-2/>

"According to the IUCN status of fish species, 1 species is critically endangered, 2 species are vulnerable, 8 are near to threatened, 8, data deficient, 76 fishes are not evaluated, while 100 species are in the list of least concerned

Tuna Fish is Powerhouse of Essential Nutrients

The river system of Pakistan may be divided into three river systems. The Indus drainage, Balochistan coastal drainage, and Landlocked river system. The Indus drainage is the largest river system, originates from Kailas range in western Tibet (China) with a length of 3,100 km, with an average discharge: $5.6 \times 1000 \text{ m}^3 \text{ sec}^{-1}$ with a drainage area of 1,165,500 km². The entire river system and its attributes are rich in fish fauna known for the taste.

All along the coastal line of 1120 km, the marine fish fauna includes 800 species of which 100 are commercially important, Tuna being on top. However, there are identification issues associated with fish taxonomy, therefore DNA barcoding is imperative. Pakistan's fishing potential is highly encouraging. In Sindh alone, there are more than 100 natural lakes of different sizes covering an area of about 100,000 ha.

Among them, Haleji lake (1,800 ha) West of Thatta, Kinjhar Lake (12,000 ha) North of Thatta and Manchar lake (16,000 ha) in Dadu district are quite important for fish production. Manchar alone supports 2,000 fishing families. Apart from these big lakes, a cluster of small lakes extends over 40,000 ha. The natural lakes in Punjab cover about 7,000 ha. Some of the lakes, such as

Namal lake (480 ha), Uchhali lake (943 ha), Jahlar lake (100 ha), Kallar Kahar (100 ha), Kharal lake (235 ha) and Khabikki lake (283 ha) are brackish and are too saline to support aquaculture. Other man-made lakes include Mangla dam, Terbela dam and Chashma Barrage).

On the other hand, Pakistan is rich in Sea Fish resources having an 814Km coastal line and a vast variety of Sea Fish that are exported in significant volumes worldwide. METRO is the pioneer in establishing By Air supply chain of Sea Fish from Karachi to Punjab as it was the need of the hour to provide fresh catch with minimum transportation time and in the well-equipped hygienic mechanism.

After processing fish is packed in boxes with Dry Ice to keep the temperature at 0-4C which enhances the shelf life of fish & provides the best quality to the customers. Tuna and tuna-like species are very important economically to both developed and developing countries — and a significant source of food. They include approximately 40 species occurring in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans and in the Mediterranean Sea. They are remarkable fish.

Tuna can jump high out of the water; they travel in huge schools; they are warm-blooded. They have been known to team up with dolphins for protection from sharks. Tuna and tuna-like fishes are one of the components of pelagic resources. In Pakistan, mainly neritic and oceanic species are encountered in the tuna fishery. The tuna fishing fleet comprises about 709 gillnet boats. The total production of tunas and tuna-like fishes, including Neritic and Oceanic tunas, Billfishes and Seer fishes during the year 2016 was 101,225 m. tones.

Tuna Issues

The world's tuna fisheries face several urgent, common problems that threaten their continued existence and endanger wider marine ecosystems: 1) Alarming tuna stock declines 2) Poor conservation and management strategies 3) High levels of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing 4) Significant bycatch of sharks, marine turtles, seabirds, small cetaceans, juvenile tuna, and other fishes. Due to the amazing key fact on tuna fish, it is caught more than it breeds. It may result in population shrinkage.

Approximately 7 million tons of tuna and tuna-like species are landed yearly. As migratory tuna species account for 20 per cent of the value of all marine capture fisheries and over eight per cent of all globally traded seafood, the celebration by the United Nations of World Tuna Day is an important step in recognizing the critical role of tuna in sustainable development, food security, economic opportunity, and livelihoods of people around the world.

World Tuna Day Background

2 May 2017 was the first internationally recognized World Tuna Day. In December 2016 the United Nations General Assembly voted to officially observe the Day in its resolution 71/124. The move underlined the importance of conservation management to ensure that we have

systems in place to prevent tuna stocks from crashing. Many countries depend heavily on tuna resources for food security and nutrition, economic development, employment, government revenue, livelihoods, culture and recreation.

At present, over 96 countries are involved in the conservation and management of tuna with an annual value of almost 10 billion USD. Initiatives by the government of Pakistan are yet to be on air. The main problems the fishing industry is facing in Pakistan are Water Pollution, Pollution on the Coast of Pakistan particularly in Karachi due to industrial effluent. Pakistan government must embark upon mass awareness programs and short-term training on issues and options associated with the fisheries industry, particularly Tuna.

No one bothers about Karachi's catastrophic pollution of the sea. Untreated waste and oil spills from the city's two ports endanger marine life and the livelihood of Pakistan's fishermen. Nearly 15 years ago, there was huge fishing potential near Karachi shore, but there are no fish near the shores and fishermen must travel into the open sea to find the catch. This all is due to water pollution.

Pollution has destroyed fish catch, and Karachi's fishermen are facing difficult times. The residents in this oldest fishing village are running out of luck as they must find ways to survive with the growing pollution from Pakistan's largest city. These days they need powerful motorboats, bigger fishing nets and extra men to sail into the open sea and spend several days in search of fish.

Karachi with around 10,000 industrial units that manufacture everything from textiles to chemicals and paints. The most polluting, in terms of chemical waste, are the tanneries. Ecologists are worried about increasing marine pollution. Some experts express their concern saying that pollution has badly affected the fish catch and marine life.

Many times, carcasses of endangered green turtles have been seen because of pollution, especially due to the throwing of plastic waste into the sea. If this all continues, there is every likelihood that precious fish species including tuna can face the music of pollution, trouble seems to be too close by now.

Historic opportunities for global action to eradicate poverty, end hunger and reduce inequalities, says FAO Director-General QU Dongyu

<http://www.fao.org/asiapacific/news/detail-events/en/c/1396735/>

"Addressing the 166th Session of the FAO Council today, Director-General QU Dongyu highlighted the ways the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been providing constant support to Members, including to overcome the challenges posed by the

COVID-19 pandemic. Each of the decisions, activities and results shared with Council today are "not an isolated exercise, but part of an interlinked chain of progress," he said.

Alluding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Director-General noted that "we are witnessing the scale of the long-term effects on agri-food systems, food security and nutrition situations around the world," pointing to adverse trends such as increasing food prices, the suspension of school meals in many parts of the world, restrictions on selling food in public urban places, jobs at risk in the processing and distribution sectors, and negative impacts in incomes, especially for rural households in mostly agricultural areas.

FAO has not only continued to assist Members but has also progressed on the "deepest transformative action at FAO since its creation", a restructuring of teams and competencies to create an agile, inclusive and transparent modern FAO with a flexible and modular structure for optimal cross-sectoral collaboration. In that respect, the Director-General noted that "more coherent regional and sub-regional structures" are being established and Country Office capacities strengthened, "to deliver impactful results as One FAO".

The Council is the executive organ of the FAO Conference. It has 49 Members and meets between Conference which brings all 194 Members together every two years. The Council exercises functions dealing with the world food and agricultural situation and related matters, current and prospective activities of the Organization, including the Programme of Work and Budget, administrative matters, financial management of the Organization, and constitutional questions.

Strategic Framework 2022-31 and PWB 2022-23 The Strategic Framework for the next ten years was developed through a series of extensive, inclusive and transparent consultations with Members, both formal and informal, as well as an intensive internal process drawing on the breadth and depth of FAO's knowledge and expertise.

The Strategic Framework seeks to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind.

The "Four Betters" represent an organizing principle for how FAO intends to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities). "The Four Betters reflect the interconnected economic, social and environmental dimensions of agri-food systems. As such, they also encourage a strategic and systems-oriented approach within all of FAO's interventions," Qu said.

He emphasized that four "accelerators" - technology, innovation, data and complements (governance, human capital and institutions) - will be applied to maximize efforts and facilitate the management of trade-offs according to national priorities. The Strategic Framework

identifies 20 interdisciplinary, issue-based and technical Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), where FAO has a comparative advantage, track record and ability to act.

The PPAs are further described in the Medium-Term Plan. Strengthening partnerships is a key aspect of the new Strategic Framework, and innovative funding and financing are also crucial to bridge the current substantial gap for achieving the SDGs, the Director-General said. The Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23 translates the strategic narrative into the biennial programme of work. It maintains a flat nominal regular budget of \$1 005.6 million while reallocating resources to high-priority areas, including the new Programme Priority Areas, the Office of the Inspector-General and multilingualism.

The total budget is \$3.26 billion, more than two-thirds to come from extra-budgetary voluntary contributions. The Director-General urged Members to provide strong support for that to leverage FAO's efficiency and the new network approach geared to breaking down disciplinary and geographic silos and pushing strong cross-continental cooperation. The new FAO is "one strong team that works in harmony and synergy," he added. The Director-General invited the Council to support the proposed Strategic Framework 2022-31, the Medium Term Plan 2022-25 and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2022-23, which will be submitted to the FAO Conference in June.

COVID-19 Response, Food Coalition and Private Sector Engagement

FAO launched the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme, which has enabled intensive work on linking social protection to agricultural and rural-based livelihoods with a focus on more jobs for women and youth in agri-food systems as well as bolstering the use of digital technologies to assist smallholder farmers in maintaining production, productivity and market access. The Programme is expanding its areas to integrate Green Recovery plans, which are gathering importance and urgency in many countries.

More financial resources, innovative solutions and technology on the ground are needed, the Director-General said. For this mandate, FAO launched the Food Coalition, initiated by the Government of Italy, together with Members. The fact that Italy is the President of this year's G20 "provides a unique opportunity to engage, raise awareness and support globally," Qu said. FAO's COVID-19 technical teams will help Members formulate proposals and mobilize additional stakeholders for implementation on the ground, he added.

Qu also hailed good progress in the implementation of the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement endorsed by the Council last December. Since then, for example, FAO has signed a Letter of Intent with a Rwanda-based medium-sized company and a multi-party Cooperation Agreement with various stakeholders in Ghana. The Director-General noted that more agreements with a diversified and balanced portfolio of private sector entities in terms of type and regional representation are expected in the future.

Today, FAO also launched the FAO Connect Portal - a one-stop shop for private-sector engagement - providing information, including access to formal agreements. Hand-in-Hand Initiative In his remarks, the Director-General noted that the extraordinary challenges posed by the pandemic also represent ""historic opportunities"" for global action to help the least advantaged, eradicate poverty, end hunger and malnutrition and reduce inequalities within and among nations. FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative aims at just that, and is steadily gaining strength, with 37 Member countries now accepted as formal participants and still more benefiting from methodologies and platforms developed under its aegis.

Members are using the country-led and country-owned initiative in a variety of ways, including: to drive industrialization by strengthening the middle of food and agriculture value chains; to expand the productivity and earning potential of small farmers, fishers and indigenous peoples; to identify high-value commodities and develop investment plans to ensure efficient and competitive access to markets; and to use high-tech mapping tools to support decision-making for sustainable development. The Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform now has more than 38 000 users, and requests for technical training by national authorities are increasingly steadily, the Director-General noted.

Leading the fight against Food Loss and Waste

FAO has been very active in catalyzing consensus and actions to reduce food loss and waste (FLW), the Director-General stated. That includes capacity development in the realm of statistics, as data on FLW is often too scarce to allow for monitoring progress in its reduction, let alone guide policy decisions. FAO's technical platform on how to measure FLW has seen a fourfold increase in consultations over the past year.

The Director-General also noted that FAO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) are jointly developing a methodology to combine the Food Loss Index indicator, of which FAO is custodian, and the Food Waste indicator, pertaining to UNEP, into a single Food Waste Index for reporting on SDG target 12.3. In June, FAO will submit for endorsement by the Conference a Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction.

The Director-General noted that FLW cuts across all five Action Tracks of the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 and added that FAO is ""supporting the development of game-changing solutions for agri-food systems transformation including ensuring that proposals to address food loss and waste reduction are robust, relevant and impactful.""

Other issues

The Director-General noted that the ""digital FAO"" is now a well-established reality, with more than 290 digital products supporting the Organization's work in the field, a thriving E-Agriculture Community of Practice and a busy portfolio supporting the 1000 Digital Villages

Initiative, which is developing well in Asia and the Pacific, with a host of new members in Latin American and the Caribbean and more to come from Africa.

FAO's Green Cities Initiative is also advancing very well, with implementation under way in five African cities and plans being finalized in another 12. The Director-General expressed his satisfaction with the fact that the threat of a locust invasion in West Africa was completely averted, and that the upsurge in southwest Asia was brought under control. He also applauded the nations of East Africa for scoring ""major successes in suppressing the largest locust upsurge to hit the region in living memory"".

Buoyed by \$223 million from donors, FAO led a campaign to treat more than 2 million hectares in the Greater Horn of Africa and Yemen, leading to the protection of more than \$1.5 billion worth of cereals and dairy products, enough to feed more than 34 million people for a year. Qu also applauded members of the FAO Women and Youth Committees - staff bodies he set up upon assuming office nearly two years ago - for being active engines for solidarity and inclusiveness,"" noting that they have initiated broader action - notably the World Food Forum (WFF) and WFF Youth Action Assembly - to boost engagement and participation in the UN Food System Summit as well as the Pre-Summit to be held at FAO in July.

""Our commitment to deliver was neither stifled nor impeded by the challenging times we are all facing,"" the Director-General said in closing, highlighting FAO's commitment to ""bring hope"" to people around the world who are counting on FAO. This week's session marks the last of Khalid Mehboob, from Pakistan, as the Independent Chairperson of FAO Council. The next session of the FAO Conference will elect a new Chairperson for the next two years.

Pakistan: Develops first ever refrigerated sea water fishing boat

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-develops-first-ever-refrigerated-sea-water-fishing-boat/>

"Pakistan successfully achieved a landmark in fisheries sector by developing first ever state of the art refrigerated sea water (RSW) fishing boat. Recipient of international awards, US based Pakistani origin belonging to Parachinar Engineer Dr Zahid Ayub in a his detailed presentation to Iftikhar Ali Malik, President SAARC Chamber here Sunday said, "We have built it and after meeting all international standards and successful trials now put into operation at Karachi harbour".

Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Vice President Raja Muhmmad Anwar, past president FPCCI Eng Daroo Khan Achakzai, President Exporters' Association Muslim Khan Banowari, eminent SME expert, founder Secretary General SAARC Rehmat Ullah Javed and others were also present on the occasion.

Dr Zahir Ayub said under RSW system sea water is cooled to zero centigrade and fish is kept at that temperature until the arrival at harbour thus maintaining its freshness and hygienic condition. He said this technique would benefit the poor fishermen in Pakistan and also change their socioeconomic condition by exporting fish besides boosting the fisheries sector because now fish will not be spoiled at all thus curtailing their losses to zero. He said European Union for decades banned fish export from Pakistan lacking proper refrigeration of international standards.

India and Pakistan: Small-scale fisheries can back food security efforts in Arabian Sea countries

<https://phys.org/news/2021-04-small-scale-fisheries-food-efforts-arabian.html>

"Countries surrounding the Arabian Sea should empower well-managed artisanal and subsistence fisheries to back food security efforts, a new Sea Around Us study suggests. In a chapter titled ""The Fisheries of the Arabian Sea Large Marine Ecosystem,"" included in the book *The Arabian Seas: Biodiversity, Environmental Challenges and Conservation Measures* published by Springer Nature, Sea Around Us researchers describe the fisheries in the exclusive economic zones of Somalia, Djibouti, Yemen, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, Pakistan and India's Malabar coast, as well as in the region's high seas.

They point out how industrial operations are responsible for 44% of total catches in the 65-year period covered in the study (1950-2014), with most catches being taken from India's, Pakistan's and Yemen's EEZs. Although the industrial sector's catches grew steadily and peaked in 1997, from the early 2000s onwards, catches started declining and have stabilized at around 2.3 Mt per year. The decline is attributed to excessive fishing aided by poor fisheries regulations and often lack of enforcement, which has meant that over the last 20+ years, an increasing number of stocks in the Arabian Sea LME have started to dwindle. "

"We analyzed 298 fish stocks, and of those, over 50 percent are in the fully exploited category with few—if any—with potential for fisheries growth,"" said Deng Palomares, lead author of the chapter, and the Sea Around Us project manager at the University of British Columbia. ""About 25 percent, on the other hand, are overexploited and the trend that we see is one of increasingly more overexploited, collapsed and fully exploited stocks, while stock rebuilding seems to be poor."" Palomares said that over time, catches in this ecosystem have increasingly consisted of species lower in the food web, which means that larger fishes such as tuna are being fished out and smaller organisms are becoming more prevalent. "

"This confirms the existence of ""fishing down the food web"" in this area,"" Palomares said. The small-scale sector also plays an important role in the Arabian Sea Large Marine Ecosystem, with combined catches of artisanal and subsistence fisheries reaching approximately 21.3 Mt in the 2010s. The analysis shows that, throughout the studied period, 56 percent of catches are

taken by small-scale operators who either sell the fish on local markets and keep a small portion or keep the entire catch for their own and their families' consumption. "

"The high proportion of artisanal and subsistence fishers means that the majority of the fishing in this LME and thus the majority of catches occur within national EEZ waters,"" said Dirk Zeller, coauthor of the study and director of the Sea Around Us—Indian Ocean at the University of Western Australia. ""This means that national governments can manage the exploitation of marine resources, allowing for potentially better control compared to most fishing in the high seas waters."

"Even though some progressive actions have been taken already, such as the 2011 trawl ban in Oman and the ban on driftnets in the UAE in the late 1980s, in both countries, as elsewhere in the region, the lack of control based on a strong and well-defined legal framework means that most regulatory measures are ignored."

"Serious considerations ought to be given by all countries to policies that focus on reducing and tightly controlling industrial fishing, both domestic and foreign, and assisting well-managed small-scale fisheries for both national consumption and carefully controlled and monitored export fisheries,"" Zeller said. ""This is the direction in which all fisheries around the world need to be heading, to ensure the survival of a blue economy.""

Pakistan: Poverty reduction to gauge PTI govt's success after five years: PM

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40086913>

"Prime Minister Imran Khan Thursday said the reduction in poverty and uplift in the poor's living standard would be the yardstick to gauge the success of his government after its five-year term. "When I will go to the masses after completing my five-year term, my success will be as to how many people have been steered out of poverty and not how many have become richer," the prime minister said addressing here the ceremony of an MoU signing between banks and the Ministry of Maritime Affairs.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), National Bank of Pakistan, Bank of Punjab, Bank Al-Falah and Habib Bank banks will provide easy loans to the fishermen to enable them purchase the latest equipment like boats, onshore freezers and others for value addition in their business, besides achieving self-dependence. Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain, Special Assistant to the PM Usman Dar and senior management of the four banks attended the event.

The representatives of respective banks and the Maritime Affairs Ministry signed the documents to provide loans to the fishermen under the Kamyab Jawan Programme. The prime minister appreciated the initiative aimed at uplifting the fishermen who, he said, usually lived a hard life.

He said the MoU was in light of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) struggle, which was going to complete its 25 years on upcoming Sunday.

The prime minister proudly mentioned the recently published UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) report, which reflected the reduced level of poverty in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province during 2013 to 2018. Due to the very reason, the PTI got a two-third majority in the next election in the province just because the life of the common man had improved there, he remarked.

The prime minister said the corruption was another reason behind the sufferings of fishermen and thanked the banks, which had come up to support the sector. Calling them the engine of growth, he said the banks extending the loan to the poor fishermen were in fact contributing to the national development. The loans under the Kamyab Jawan Programme, he said, would help upgrade the business of fishermen by enabling them to purchase and utilize the modern equipment.

The prime minister said the country was rich with immense potential in fishery, tourism and agriculture. The olive revolution initiated by the incumbent government would change the lives of the people. Moreover, the government was also focusing on the cultivation of avocado and saffron to enhance the country's exports, and improve the nutrition of the people, he added. In wake of the complaints, the prime minister again emphasized the banks' managements to train their staffers to facilitate and expedite the process of housing or business loans under the government's schemes as they were not in the habit of dealing with such process.

He said the pollution was another major issue faced by the cities due to their unplanned growth. Due to the very reasons, the government had planned Ravi City in Lahore and Bundal Island Project in Sindh to promote the vertical buildings. He said the haphazard growth of cities also made it difficult for the civic agencies to provide utility services to the residents. Besides, the ill-planned growth of cities was also eating up the cultivable land, he added.

The prime minister said the Federal Government would try to convince the Sindh Government, that had withdrawn the non-objection certificate (NoC) issued to the former for the development of Bundal Island project which also consisted of plants to treat sea water. Similarly, the Ravi City project also featured the plantation of around 70,000 trees, besides the development of 50 Miyawaki forest sites being developed by the government.

He said the previous government's inability to execute any housing project for the poor led to the mushroom growth of the slums over 40 percent of the Karachi city. However, the incumbent government would come up with a plan to provide better housing facilities for the slum dwellers. Earlier, the prime minister, accompanied by the federal ministers and heads of the banks witnessed the signing of MoU.

Maritime Affairs Minister Ali Haider Zaidi said the exports of the country's fisheries industry stood at around \$450 million contrary to Vietnam's around \$8.5 billion. He, however, expressed the hope that consequent to the government's ongoing initiatives, the seafood exports would touch \$2.5 billion mark within one and a half years. The minister said the fisheries sector engaged around 1% of the labour for it being the third biggest one after oil and gas. He said besides catching many big fish involved in corruption, his ministry had ended the corruption involving the sale of deep sea fishing licenses to the parties, which used to take fish abroad illegally without reflecting it in national exports.

Moreover, the ministry would present to the cabinet the deep sea fishing policy by June for approval, he added. Zaidi said the Kamyab Jawan Programme loans would enable the fishermen to purchase their own vessels and become an entrepreneur. Moreover, they would also be able to install freezers at their vessel to preserve the fish, which, otherwise, used to rot before reaching the market.

SAPM Usman Dar said the four of 21 partner banks of Kamyab Jawan Programme had come up to support the fishery sector, which was rich with immense potential. He said the fishermen were never given access to finance by the previous government but the MoU would help end their deprivation. He said with the help of Kamyab Jawan loans, around 10,000 youths had started their small or medium scale businesses providing direct employment to around 70,000 people and indirectly to 250,000.

However, he hoped that the project would help provide business loans to 100,000 youths to enable them run their own business and act as entrepreneurs. Dar said through the programme, the government would also uplift the small medium enterprises (SMEs) sector, which in the past remained deprived of access to finance.

Pakistan: CM for data collection, registration of fish feed mills

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40084801>

"Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan Thursday directed the Fisheries Department to collect data of fish feed mills, besides starting registration of these factories on priority. An official told APP that the provincial government would formulate fishing policy for the development of fisheries sector and steps would be taken for acquiring modern machinery for processing fish.

The steps would be taken in collaboration with Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences to further develop the fisheries sector by availing the services of Marine Science graduates of the varsity. The chief minister directed to conduct a feasibility study of all jetties. He said the approved projects included construction of two Jetties at Jiwani and Ormara and floating Jetty at Kundmalir, establishment of eight hatcheries and 80 commercial net cultures.

He said the Cage Farming, Mobile Quality Control Laboratory, Establishment of Model Fish Farm, Recirculating Hatchery System, Consumer Fish Processing Facility were also proposed to be developed in next financial year. The Cage fish farming is an innovative method which can bring production equivalent to about an acre from a space of one marla. The cages are installed in natural water.

The provincial government has decided to introduce new technologies in its fisheries sector to boost its business in the province. He said the construction of fishing venue has been enforced on the directives of the Chief Minister of Balochistan to boost the untapped sector and provide facilities to the local fishermen.

“The province has a capacity to produce good quality fish and would generate more revenue by providing access to the global market,” he said. The government would bring improvements in the fisheries department, as the interested entrepreneurs and investors could promote farming in the province purely on commercial basis, he added.

Pakistan: CM Kamal takes notice of illegal fish catching of non-native trawlers at maritime boundaries

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/cm-kamal-takes-notice-of-illegal-fish-catchin-1223027.html>

"Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Jam Kamal Khan on Tuesday took strict notice of illegal arrival of non-native trawlers and catching of fishing activities at maritime boundaries of Balochistan. He also expressed his resentment at the continuation of this illegal trawling process and directed to write to the Secretary Fisheries in this regard to inquire why he did not take practical steps to halt this illegal activity so far.

The Chief Minister said that if the Fisheries Department will not resolve these issues then the provincial government will take legal action against the trespassers. He said we would take all possible steps to rectify the situation for prevention of illegal trawling in our territorial waters and loss of fishermen.

Pakistan: The Fisherfolk and the Mangroves

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1617630>

““Trees exhale for us so that we can inhale them to stay alive. Can we ever forget that? Let us love trees with every breath we take until we perish.”? Munia Khan, poet, writer, editor. Trees sustain life. They give us the air we breathe; the shade we sit under. But many trees do a lot more than just that. The Indus Delta’s mangrove forest ecosystem, for example, supports various life

forms. These dense trees, that protect us from storms, cyclones and tsunamis, are also home to different kinds of marine life including fish, shrimp and crabs, and several species of birds such as pelicans, flamingoes, kingfishers, cranes and even ducks.

The trees also serve as the feeding grounds for tropical birds that feed on the fish, insects and plankton along the mangroves. Yet, the story of the mangrove cover around Pakistan's coast, particularly the coast of Sindh, has been a sad one until now. A report titled 'Mangroves of Pakistan: Status and Management' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) quotes a 1966 study that found that 249,486 hectares in the Indus Delta were occupied by mangroves.

In the early 1980s, estimates of mangrove coverage ranged from about 250,000 to 283,000 hectares, the IUCN report says. But in the early 1990s, this number fell to approximately 160,000 hectares. "The reductions in silt and freshwater flows from the river Indus have made the environment much harsher for the mangroves," the report continues.

The reduction in fresh water flowing downstream of Kotri began after the construction of dams and barrages. Indeed, the bureaucracy's unwillingness to understand the importance of mangroves contributed to the decline of the forests. Many bureaucrats continue to consider any fresh water flowing into the sea — essential for mangrove forests — as simply wasted water. Many writers, researchers, activists and journalists have utilised sheets upon sheets of paper to bring to light how trees are being cut for wood (the irony), and how the mangroves are vanishing, as the desire to 'create' land trumps the will to protect the inhabitants of said land.

One example of this is the contentious KPT Housing Society, for which 250 acres of land, where mangroves once stood, were 'reclaimed'. The history of the mangroves conflict has also been a violent one, depending on who is telling it. In 2011, two environmental activists, Haji Abu Bakar and Abdul Ghani, were allegedly 'drowned' in Kakapir village by 'land grabbers'.

A decade later, Abu Bakar and Ghani's colleagues at the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) maintain that the men had started an awareness raising movement against the illegal cutting down of mangrove trees by the land grabbers, before they met their unfortunate fate.

The colleagues of the departed say that the men were kidnapped, tied and wrapped in fishing nets, and thrown into the sea. Fishermen are the best of swimmers, the late fisherfolks' friends say, but with limbs tied and weights pulling them to the depths of the ocean, the men did not have a chance. The police's findings did not align with the fisherfolks' version of events. The investigation concluded that the men had drowned.

"But fishermen do not drown easily," PFF chairman Mohammad Ali Shah says. "Even our children can teach you how to swim." The fishermen say that Abu Bakar and Ghani's dead bodies served as a warning to all those who had anything to say about the destruction of the mangroves for several years to come. They appear to have succeeded to some extent. Many in

the fisherfolk community still speak about fear of the ‘mangrove mafia’, the ‘timber mafia’ and the ‘land mafia’. Meanwhile, according to these fisherfolk, these ‘mafias’ have continued to operate, albeit a bit more carefully.

Over time, they’ve gotten better at not getting caught, the men observe. The fisherfolk allege that the various ‘mafias’ leave the trees in the front intact and cut the trees hidden from sight. They maintain the illusion of the mangroves standing tall but, in reality, the forests are hollow. The trees at the front are not enough to provide protection against sea storms, the fisherfolk allege; this facade is only protecting the handiwork of thieves.

Seeing Green

The growing concerns regarding the mangroves have not gone unnoticed by the government. The Sindh Government has, time and again, focused on mangrove protection and plantation drives, setting multiple world records for planting trees. Recently, they announced another ambitious number when they promised the citizens of the province, “A gift of over one billion mangrove trees for the people of Sindh.”

According to the provincial government’s rehabilitation plans for the Indus Delta mangroves, 200,000 hectares of mangroves will be planted in the coming five years, in order to enhance the carbon pool in the delta. Further plans include taking this number to two billion. It is estimated that this will lead to eight million days of work, generating some 400 jobs for local coastal developers, who will also be provided with community incentives and benefits such as education, health and alternate energy facilities.

During the summers last year, Sindh’s Minister for Forests, Information and Local Government, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, had said that the trees which were planted in different coastal areas of Sindh were computerised for the first time in the history of the country. This would make it easier to keep track of them and monitor their progress. Nearly a year later, he and his department appear committed to make Sindh greener. He disagrees with the notion that those involved in the cutting of mangrove trees are not brought to justice.

“It is not right to say that they are not caught or punished. They are,” Minister Shah tells Eos, adding that the offenders are caught, punished and fined. “But they are not murderers, after all, and cannot be treated like criminals who get Section 302,” he says. “They will be released after getting a warning and paying fines. That is how it works. That is how such criminals are discouraged.”

The minister’s department is set on imagining a better future. An ad from a few months ago, announcing the one billion+ mangrove trees stated: “Sindh ki khush’hali, har taraf haryali [Sindh’s prosperity, greenery everywhere].” But while the fisherfolk welcome these initiatives, they still continue to be sceptical. They, and those before them, have seen many promising programmes get introduced and fail in the past.

The Fisherfolk And The Mangroves

According to a report the IUCN report, even though there is no “authentic record” regarding the use of mangroves in “Indo-Pakistan”, the traditional methods still being employed “prove that the mangrove ecosystem was used extensively in earlier days.” Mangrove systems, the report adds, play an important role as nurseries and a partial source of food for a number of commercially important fishes and other organisms. The report suggests that the fisherfolk community “even in the earlier days, empirically knew the utility of mangrove swamps.”

So, the relationship of the fisherfolk and the mangroves predates even the creation of Pakistan. Younus Khaskheli, an activist and fisherman, agrees. “These mangroves provided several fisherfolk with livelihood,” he tells Eos. “The indigenous fisherfolk led a far better life before Partition.” Aside from deep-sea trawling by industrial boats, which depleted fish stocks, the destruction of the mangroves also impacted shrimp catches since the forests are where many of these crustaceans breed.

Khaskheli says that fisherfolk love and respect nature. “We don’t just work for ourselves, we work for marine life too,” he says. “We want to see it thrive and prosper as this also means the thriving of our ecosystem.” Fisherfolk are among the most vocal communities every time the natural ecology of the region is under threat. They were again at the forefront of the protests when Bundal and Buddu, twin islands along Karachi’s coast, caught the eyes of some investors.

The plans have since been scrutinised at great length, thanks in part to the voices that brought attention to the issue. “As the fishermen raised a lot of hue and cry about what was happening as there were plans of creating two new modern cities on the islands, some of us environmental activists also approached the court,” says Yasir Husain, an environmental activist. “[The islands] are a part of the Indus Delta, which has some 300 small islands.

But, somehow, [they] were not being considered a part of the delta, even though their coordinates show that they very much are. That also made them a part of the protected mangrove forest,” he says. The mangroves of the Indus Delta were declared a protected forest by the British back in 1923, he says. The mangrove areas under the control of the Sindh Forest Department and Port Qasim Authority are also ‘protected forests’.

And yet, Husain adds, the industrial area, economic zone and coal power plants are also inside that delta and the protected forest area, a contradiction in terms. Even as the Forest Department in Sindh works towards the conservation and rehabilitation of the Indus Delta, environmental activists fear that the department may be dwarfed in front of the influential, who are still eyeing this area and may return for it at another time.

Burning Questions

Mohammad Ali Shah, chairman PFF, fondly remembers the time when he was growing up in Ibrahim Hyderi, the fishing village just off the coast of Karachi. Even if a coin dropped into the waters by the shore here, he recalls, it remained visible and could be easily retrieved from the clear waters. “But now, whatever goes in, is gone forever. You cannot see anything except dirty murky water,” he says.

An environmentalist at heart, he welcomes the mangrove plantation, but also points out that it is made possible, at least in part, by global “carbon trading” mechanisms. According to a BBC article titled, ‘Carbon trading: How does it work?’, carbon trading is a “market-based system aimed at reducing greenhouse gases” that contribute to the rise of climate change. “There have been attempts to allow richer countries to cut their emissions by paying for the development of carbon-lowering schemes in poorer nations,” the article adds.

“However, the effectiveness of these schemes has been questioned, with research indicating that some have created more emissions than they have actually curtailed.” Shah certainly finds the practice questionable himself. “So you commit murder somewhere and then pay blood money somewhere else,” he puts it in simple words with a chuckle. “All this good you see happening for the mangroves is a part of this.

There is a five-year agreement here with some multinational companies of Australia and the UK for the planting of mangroves to absorb tonnes of carbon from this part of the world, as these companies emit it in some other part,” he says. Shah has many questions. “Does the government even have as much land as it has agreed to plant the mangrove saplings on?” “Are the fisherfolk going to be displaced to make room for the new mangrove forests?”

“What happens after the saplings have been planted and the international monitoring teams have filed their reports and left? Will the mangroves be neglected again and be left to ruin?” “What kind of checks and balances are there for the timber mafia and the land mafia?” Many of these questions can be answered.

Indeed, some have even been answered by government representatives in the past. But the plethora of questions simply indicates one thing: the community does not trust these initiatives.

The Other Side

Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah agrees that carbon trading has helped the government work on the rehabilitation of mangroves. “The carbon credit funding will be utilised to protect the existing mangrove forests too, besides developing more mangrove forests during the next five years,” he says.

“We are looking at developing a huge carbon pool in the range of 500 million tonnes of [offset of] CO₂e [carbon dioxide equivalent, i.e. greenhouse gases] and maintaining it to reduce global warming,” he adds. Minister Shah has a much more positive outlook on carbon trading. “It is a

little like the countries or companies that emit more greenhouse gases than their limit are paying for it by helping our nature in the form of carbon trading.

Sooner or later, they will also get tired of paying these fines in the shape of permits, and start controlling their [own] carbon emissions,” he says. When asked about the fisherfolk’s fears that the government’s motivation to monitor the trees will diminish after the plantation drives, the minister smiles. He reminds me that his political party, the Pakistan Peoples Party, has placed a special emphasis on the rehabilitation of mangroves in the Indus Delta since 2008.

During these 12 years, he says, more than 210,000 hectares have already been planted. “And work on the biggest task involved — planting about 40,000 hectares — started in July 2018, making ours one of the leading efforts of restoration of forests in the world,” he claims. “From 2008 to 2020, the Sindh Government has planted and protected 1.172 billion trees,” he says. “Three Guinness World records in 2009, 2013 and 2018 were achieved for planting a maximum number of trees or saplings in one day, through 300 volunteers.”

He says that, in 2009, Pakistan broke the Indian record of 450,000 by planting 541,176 plants at Keti Bundar. Then India beat that record by planting 650,000 plants. The Sindh Forest Department broke that record again by planting 847,250 plants in one day in 2013 at Kharo Chaan Thatta. “And we, again, improved our own record in 2018 by planting 1,129,294 near Juho Thatta district,” he says. “Throughout this, a huge carbon pool in the range of 200 to 300 million tonnes of CO₂e has been developed, and it is building up regularly,” he says.

Then he comes to a major talking point regarding the mangrove plantation drives: that they are not only important sources of marine life, but livelihood. “Through this effort, about four million days of work has already been provided to the local coastal dwellers,” he says. “It has meant about 200 jobs to local households. Community incentives such as education and health facilities are being strengthened in creek areas.

The entire amount of the carbon credit sale in the international market will be diverted to the welfare of poor local people.” When asked about the green jobs said to come with the project, Federal Minister Malik Amin Aslam, who also serves as an adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan for Climate Change, along with wearing the hat of vice president of IUCN, says that they are already paying up to 20,000 rupees a month to those planting the saplings.

This is not happening in Sindh alone, he says. “There is also the example of Balochistan, where camels were destroying the mangrove saplings,” he tells Eos. “We engaged women there to stop the camels. Then [the women] asked us for sewing machines, which we happily supplied to their community. It has turned into a successful model.” Regarding the green jobs, Minister Nasir Hussain Shah, also adds that they start from the people who plant the saplings.

“Although mangrove saplings can be planted at any time, their peak season is two times in the year. The first started in March, and the second will be in August.” Federal Minister Aslam also

gives credit to the environment conservation and protection agencies. “The implementation work of the project lies with the province,” he says. “The NGOs and the Forest Department have all contributed towards a 300 percent increase in mangroves in the last 20 years.”

Working With Communities

Meanwhile, many in the fisherfolk community claim that the mangrove cover increase is being reported inaccurately. But while they are sceptical of the efforts of the government, they are more trusting of non-governmental organisations, such as IUCN and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). WWF-Pakistan’s Director in Sindh and Balochistan, Dr Tahir Rasheed, says that the organisation has been working on mangrove conservation for well over two decades now.

“Our work on mangroves in the Indus Delta and beyond integrates research, inclusive conservation and addresses the poverty-environment nexuses in addressing coastal climate vulnerability,” he says. He adds that WWF-Pakistan gives “prime importance to community engagement and acknowledges the role of gender, their vulnerabilities and effective engagement in addressing climate vulnerability, developing climate resilience as well as the adoption of alternate and improved nature-linked livelihood support systems.

“Our work includes strengthening community participation,” he says. “We help communities organise themselves and build their capacities. We also provide them with alternate opportunities of livelihood-generation as well as fuelwood sources, to reduce their dependence on natural resources.” It is perhaps this effort at community engagement that has resulted in the NGO sector being more successful at winning the trust of the fisherfolk.

The good news is that WWF-Pakistan is also working with the government for mangrove conservation. Dr Rasheed says that, as part of a mangrove conservation initiative in collaboration with the Sindh Forest Department, the organisation is currently working with mangrove-dependent communities in 17 villages in the Indus Delta.

The aim is, he says, “integrated conservation of mangroves, while providing alternate livelihood opportunities to mangroves-dependent communities. “We are aiming to co-manage 14,000 hectares of mangroves in the Indus Delta,” he adds. “Of these, about 7,000 hectares are intact mangroves and are being protected against unsustainable uses, whereas 4,000 hectares of degraded mangroves are restocked and upgraded, and 3,000 hectares are being reforested.” Minister Shah also stresses that the government is working with the communities and wants to continue doing so.

He adds that the credit money from the carbon credit sale is to be used to uplift the fisherfolk community. “All the funds are to be used in laying lines for sweet water [so it may reach] where it does not reach anymore,” he says. “Also for building hospitals and schools, the work at which will be handled by the community, hence [creating] more jobs [for them].” He says the

fisherfolks' villages will neither be disturbed nor would they be uprooted to make way for mangrove plantation.

“There is enough land for planting the trees,” he says. “Why would we hurt the villages when we are looking to engage the fisherfolk community itself in order to make the project successful? All this is going to be used for their benefit and the benefit of the environment. They are both interlinked.”

With cautious optimism, one hopes that the fisherfolk and environmental activists, the protection and conservation NGOs and the government may see that they all share a common goal: planting and protecting mangroves for the benefit of the environment and the people.

A little bit of trust and faith would go a long way in making the mangrove plantation and protection initiatives successful. With the world fighting the impact of climate change, now is clearly the time for all the stakeholders to come together. Only then will they be able to turn over a new leaf and set down roots for the tough battle ahead.

Pakistan: Thousands of fish die as Bada Dam goes dry

<https://menafn.com/1101906750/Pakistan-Thousands-of-fish-die-as-Bada-Dam-goes-dry>

"Thousands of fish died in Bada Dam of Swabi, which is being constructed at a cost of billions of rupees, as it dried up suddenly. The dam was inaugurated by former chief minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pervaiz Khattak and Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser on January 27, 2018 in Gadoon area of Swabi. It was originally built for irrigating 3,000 acres of agricultural land. So far, Rs4 billion have been spent on the project, but only a pond like structure is visible.

The local people said thousands of fish, insects and other creatures died as the dam dried up suddenly. They said the foul smell of dead fish has created a nuisance in the entire area. Tehreek Baidar Gadoon patron-in-chief Ashraf Khan Jadoon, Ali Jillani of Pakistan Reforms Party, JUI-F local leader Haji Ghafoor Khan, QWP district chairman Masood Jabbar Khan, district spokesman Sohail Farooq and other local leaders and elders have demanded probe into alleged use of substandard material and sudden disappearance of water from Bada dam.

They said transparent probe must be held into alleged irregularities and responsible persons must be brought to justice. They said in case of no attention by the government, the local people would be compelled to oppose launching of such projects in the area in future. The government is of the view the dam structure would be completed by the year end. The ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) local lawmaker Rangaiz Khan says Bada dam is one of the three dams in the area.

Kundal Dam has already been completed, Ubla dam is under construction which is expected to be completed by the end of next year. The ruling party says the completion of these dams would

bring a green revolution in the region in shape of increased agricultural yields. It said the government is taking keen interest in development of Swabi.

Bada Dam will also be helpful in provision of drinking water to the area people who had been facing water shortage, especially during summer. It is also expected to mitigate the impact of floods as it would absorb much of the pressure of extra water in case of rains.

Fishermen's boats: Balochistan govt. in Pakistan to install satellite tracking system

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40082206>

"The Balochistan government has started the spade work on the installation of satellite tracking system in boats to ensure the safety of marine life and fishermen. Fishing boats would help to comply with environmental and fishing laws, as well as promote the conservation of rare marine life under a modern monitoring system at a command and control centre in Gwadar, an official of Fisheries department of Balochistan said.

The construction will be carried out to monitor the boats and fishermen to stay within the legal limits and not to violate sea borders. The government is also planning to purchase sea ambulance to provide emergency to fishermen. Giving details about the projects, he said that the project of installation of monitoring system in boats and the plan of purchasing sea ambulances would cost around Rs 426 million.

He said that the government had decided to introduce new technologies in its fisheries sector to boost its business in the province. Many projects like, 'fish processing plant' at Gwadar, 'Fisherman Cooperative Housing Society', 'sea ambulances' and other projects were in pipeline that would eventually increase the potential of the sector, he added.

The roads and other Infrastructure were also being upgraded for easy access of the local fisherman to the port to transfer their hunted fish into the markets, he added. He said the construction of fishing venue had been enforced on the directives of the Chief Minister of Balochistan to boost the untapped sector and provide facilities to the local fishermen.

Pakistan: Balochistan Govt to install satellite tracking system in boats

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/balochistan-govt-to-install-satellite-trackin-1216493.html>

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""The province has a capacity to produce good quality fish and would generate more revenue by providing access to the global market,"" he said. The state of the art hospital was also being set up at Gwadar to ensure best health facilities to the people of the area. The government would bring improvements in the fisheries department, as the interested entrepreneurs and investors could promote farming in the province purely on commercial basis, he added.

The Balochistan government is planning to establish eight fish harbours in its coastal areas to boost and revamp the much declined fishing business in the province which is already in dilapidated condition for the last many years.

Pakistan: BCDA for accelerating development work in coastal areas

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/bcda-for-accelerating-development-work-in-coa-1215820.html>

"The governing body meeting of Balochistan Coastal Development Authority (BCDA) Tuesday took several important decisions for accelerating development work in the coastal areas. The meeting was chaired by Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan, said Mir Abdul Rauf Rind, the chief minister coordinator. Talking to APP, he said many important and positive amendments had been made in the BCDA Act 1998 and the act had been adapted as per modern times requirements.

He said the meeting had given formal approval to BCDA Employees Service Rules 2021. It decided to release Rs57.73 million as grant for development schemes. It agreed to hire human resource services on contract basis in the BCDA. It agreed to abolish and redesign some of the

posts. The meeting also approved a grant of Rs188 million for the salaries of BCDA employees and asked to construct a building at the coastal strip of Balochistan.

Discussing the agenda for obtaining no objection certificate, it was agreed that the BCDA could start work on the proposal and submit it to the government for approval. Under the BCDA's Public Private Partnership (PPP) Act 2018, the governing body agreed to make PPP laws to the extent that the BCDA could start working on its own PPP rules as per amended PPP Act 2018.

On the agenda of formation, the governing body decided that the proposal to amend the BCDA Act could be put before the provincial cabinet. The governing body approved its service rules after fulfilling all the formal conditions.

The meeting also approved the proposal of Authority Allowance Grant. Rind said the BCDA tenders had been issued for a number of projects under the act, while work was underway on a few projects including coastal master planning, construction of seven tourist resorts, construction of rest areas at nine different locations along the coastal strip, construction of eight floating jetties.

Feasibility Study of Authorized Fish Landing Sites, Construction of Beach Parks at five locations, plantation of different types of vegetation on the coastal strip were included, he added. Meanwhile, during the governing body meeting, BCDA Director General Babar Khan gave a briefing to the chief minister in detail.

Pakistan: KP Govt. establishing 287 trout fish farms costing Rs 1286.914mn to bolster meat production, exports

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/kp-govt-establishing-287-trout-fish-farms-co-1213286.html>

"The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government is establishing about 287 trout fish farms mostly in Malakand and Hazara Divisions with an estimated cost of Rs1286.914 million in order to increase production of meat, exports and provide healthy seafood to its people. Muhammad Zubair, Deputy Director, Fisheries Department told APP that KP was blessed with abundance of cold water reservoirs, lakes and favourable climate conditions mostly suited for trout fish farming.

To take full advantage of this God gifted potential, he said the Fisheries Department has accelerated work on establishing 287 trout fish farms mostly in Malakand and Hazara divisions to bolster meat production and fish exports to Afghanistan, Central Asian States (CASs), Gulf and others international markets.

Under project of 'development of water fisheries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,' he said these farms were being established with an estimated cost of Rs.1286.914 million in different districts of KP

mostly in Malakand and Hazara divisions due to its favourable and cold climate besides abundance of water reservoirs suited for trouts farming. The Federal government would contribute Rs514.766 million and KP government would inject Rs772.148 million in the mega project to be completed by 2023-24, he said.

The five years project was launched in 2018-19 under the Prime Minister Emergency Agriculture Programme costing about Rs 309.7 billion for effective utilization of land and water resources, promotion of trout farming, undertaking programmes for fish seed production and replenishment of public water bodies through fish stocking besides launching of mega agriculture and livestock related projects. These farms are being established with the help of private sector on a 50:50 cost share basis, he said, adding, about 50 percent cost would be borne by beneficiaries and remaining by the government.

Muhammad Zubair said proposals for 91 feasible sites had already been submitted to Director General, Water Management for construction of trout farms in different districts of the province. Applications from interested parties for establishment of trout farms on 50:50 cost sharing basis have already been invited and survey for selection of feasible sites completed. Increasing fish production is a cornerstone of PTI Government Agriculture and Fisheries Policy 2018-25, which are focusing on building of new model hatcheries, rehabilitation of existing trout and carp hatcheries besides establishment of model trout farms in the province including merged areas.

Under the project, Rs150 million would be spent on establishment of a cold water fisheries' training and research centre in Swat where farmers and students would be provided training on conservation, production, breeding and marketing of trout farming. Contract for setting up cold water fisheries training and research centre had already been awarded, he maintained. The Government would construct a model trout hatchery at Mansehra with an estimated cost Rs 88.284 million from where fish stock would be provided to others hatcheries in Hazara division and districts of KP at affordable prices.

The site for establishment of a model trout hatchery at Siran Valley in Mansehra was selected, land was acquired and construction work was started, he said. He said most of trout hatcheries constructed in the past require renovation and up-gradation to enhance its production's capacity. The official added that Rs144.517 million would be spent on rehabilitation and up-gradation of existing farms. Construction work on renovation and up-gradation of Dubair hatchery in Lower Kohistan district, which was washed away during the 2020 flood, would soon be started. The official said high bread eye-ova (trout fish seed) would be imported and handed over to farmers and fish growers for breeding on which about Rs100 million would be spent.

Besides purchase of maintenance and equipment with allocation of Rs121 million, interest free loans would be provided to farmers for establishment of feed mills, processing plant and cold storage with an estimated cost of Rs 40 million besides utilisation of Rs 29.274 million on provision of seeds and others services and Rs 67.690 million for recruitment of staff. Zubair said

beneficiaries will take loans from commercial banks and their interest would be paid by the project. He said KP is currently producing over 350 metric tons trout per year, which would be taken to 645 metric tons by the year 2023.

Regarding fish seed production, he informed that current production was 1.4 metric and by 2023 it would be taken to 2.5 metric. He said Pakistani trout was being preferred in gulf and other international markets due its quality meat and there is a huge potential to increase volume of trade with CARs, Afghanistan and Gulf in meat sector. Muhammad Zubair said merged areas of KP especially Kurram, Tirah valley in Khyber and North Waziristan districts were suitable for trout farming and 13 trout farms would be setup in Kurram.

Fish meat consumption in KP is comparatively low than other meat products due to its relatively high prices and construction of these new trout farms and hatcheries which would help increase fish consumption besides bring its prices down. Under the Prime Minister Emergency Agriculture Programme, he said that priority was being given on enhancing fish production through replenishment of fish resources in natural water bodies through quality breeds, aquatic research, conservation programme, co-operative fishing besides introduction of new and fast growing fish varieties.

He said 200 new model fish farms were established by PTI Government in the province and efforts were underway to increase it to 600 by 2023. KP Government is facilitating the private sector by providing fish seeds besides professional training to farmers. More than Rs 85 billion would be spent on development of agriculture, livestock and fisheries during the five year tenure of PTI government.

Under supervision of Director General Fisheries, special teams were constituted for taking prompt action against illegal hunting, sale and transportation of fish in the province. Muhammad Zubair said these projects after completion would make KP a land of trout fish farming having very positive impact on the country's meat exports and generation of employment opportunities for youth.

Pakistan: Supreme Committee for aquatic resources reviews plans to overhaul licencing process for fishermen, fishing boat

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/middle-east/supreme-committee-for-aquatic-resources-revie-1212670.html>

"The Supreme Committee for the Exploitation, Protection, and Development of Living Aquatic Resources held its first meeting of this year presided over by Dr. Abdullah Belhaif Al Nuaimi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment. At the meeting, Dr. Al Nuaimi said, ""As part of this priority, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCA) regulates the fishing sector to minimise its impact on the sustainability of marine life. The ministry has set out the

requirements for fishing practices and the permitted fishing gear to preserve the fisheries stocks for future generations,"" he added.

The ministry highlighted its plans to overhaul the licencing process for fishermen and fishing boats to maximise efficiency. A total of 5,396 fishermen and 6,003 fishing boats are listed in the ministry's general registry. According to the ministry's field surveys, many of the boats are non-operational, and their status must be reviewed. The surveys showed that 522 fishermen own more than one licenced boat, and 362 boats are registered in the Names of heirs.

The ministry pointed out that its decision to stop the issue of new fishing boat licences was misused, leading to the creation of a parallel market where existing licences were traded at vastly inflated prices. As a result, lower-income fishermen were often unable to afford a fishing boat licence or placed themselves under considerable financial pressure to obtain one. Consequently, the ministry decided to cease the sale and transfer of fishing boat licences, unless it was to a first- or second-degree relative whose livelihood depended on fishing.

In 2021, the ministry will review the lists of registered fishing boats in collaboration with the concerned authorities to assess their compliance with the requirements and cancel the licences of non-operational boats. It will also adopt a new mechanism that allows the conditional issue of new fishing boat licences to support the ministry's priorities of enhancing food security, preserving fish stocks, and ensuring the sustainability of the fishing profession.

The ministry will admit a limited number of new fishermen in each emirate to its general registry in line with the needs of the sector. By issuing new licences for fishermen and fishing boats, the ministry seeks to create job opportunities for young Emiratis in the fisheries sector and put an end to the trading of licences in the parallel market. "

"Protection of the marine environment is a strategic priority that the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment works relentlessly to achieve through joining forces with its stakeholders and leveraging cutting-edge innovative technologies,"" Dr. Al Nuaimi concluded.

Pakistan: To introduce a scheme to install refrigeration systems in the storage tanks of the boats fishing in the deep sea

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40080215>

"Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah Thursday said that Pakistan harbors huge livestock nevertheless deficient in milk and depend on the import of huge quantities of dry milk powder. While talking to the media just after inaugurating 'Sindh Institute of Animal Health' Korangi established by the Livestock department, Murad Ali Shah said, the need of the hour is to invest in the livestock sector for food security and poverty alleviation.

He was accompanied by Minister Livestock & Fisheries Bari Pitrafi, PPP Senator Jam Mehtab Dahar. The chief minister said that there was a big opportunity for Pakistan and especially access to Hallal Market with huge export potential. However, due to prevalent Foot Mouth Disease (FMD) has put bans on export of meat and milk to most of the developed countries. “Therefore, there is a need to control FMD through vaccination by establishing an FMD vaccine manufacturing plant in the Sindh,” he said.

Earlier, the minister Livestock and Fisheries Bari Pitafi delivered his welcome speech and briefed the chief minister about the measures taken by his department for ensuring animal health. The chief minister formally inaugurates Sindh Institute of Animal Health and a vaccination lab. The Director General of the department, Dr Nazir Kalhoro also spoke on the occasion and briefed the chief minister about different units of the institute, including poultry section and egg hatchery.

Talking to media on the occasion, Syed Murad Ali Shah said that he had held a meeting with the Pakistan Cricket Board to rehabilitate Niaz Stadium, Hyderabad. “I am still of the opinion that the PSL and international cricket matches must be organized in Hyderabad and we are working on it,” he said and added due to COVID situation the implementation of the proposal has become delayed. The chief minister said that the Contribution of Agriculture sector to the national GDP was 19.3 percent, whereas Livestock contributed 60.6 percent to Agriculture and 11.7 percent to GDP.

“The Agriculture including livestock is the mainstay of the masses in rural and rural economy cannot be lifted without interventions in livestock, which will ultimately result in development of allied sectors and direct employment in rural and remote areas,” he said. The CM directed Livestock and Fisheries dept to introduce a scheme to install refrigeration systems in the storage tanks of the boats fishing in the deep sea.

“This will help to keep the entire catch safe and healthy,” he said and added otherwise a large stock of the fishermen went into trash when returning from fishing trips. He said that it was evident from the fact that only two industries have survived in a sustainable manner in Pakistan - it is either technology or agro-based industry. He said, “Population growth, increase in per capita income and the potential for export are fuelling the demand of livestock and livestock products.

The rise in production cost has increased the retailers and consumers’ price index for milk, yoghurt, meat, fish, eggs, and other items.” He added that after the promulgation of 18th Constitutional amendment, it was now the prime duty of provinces to take efforts for food security and quality food production.

Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the Livestock and Fisheries of Sindh dealt with three major production subsectors-Livestock, Poultry and Fisheries responsible to provide milk, meat, fish and eggs as a unique source of quality food and animal protein in which we were already deficient in the face of ever increasing population.

The CM Sindh said that the livestock sector required special initiatives to bring food security in the province and make sure the public health was safeguarded. “It is assumed that more than 70 percent of infections human being is facing today have been contracted from animals and about 60 percent emerging infectious diseases are transmitted from animals to humans,” he said and added therefore, the world was working on ‘One -Health’ concept that was health of humans was dependent upon health of plants and animals.

The chief minister said that the Vaccine Production, timely diagnosis of Diseases and control of zoonotic diseases was of prime importance in this sense. “Sindh Institute of Animal Health Karachi established in 2018 is involved to carry out such tasks,” he said and added the Sindh Government has invested through Development schemes to develop the capacity of the province for vaccine production, zoonotic disease and public health. He emphasized on the need to invest smartly and largely in the livestock sector, which returned in manifold what was invested.

Pakistan: Fish to be brought to Chinese market: Ahmed Iqbal Baloch

<https://www.app.com.pk/global/pakistani-fish-to-be-brought-to-chinese-market-ahmed-iqbal-baloch/>

"The fishery is a key component of the growing bilateral trade between China and Pakistan and he plans to bring Pakistani fish to the Chinese market, Chairman of Pakistan’s Visionary Group, Ahmed Iqbal Baloch said on Tuesday. “We are importing a lot of things from China, and we want to lift our exports to China as well. Fishery is a key component of Pakistan’s exports.

Pakistan has large seashore and there are fish number one quality available in the sea. We want to make Pakistani fish value-added and export to China and all over the world,” he said in interview. Baloch, who is working in many areas to cement Sino-Pak friendship said, tourism is another area that has great potential to develop between the two countries. “I’ve visited China for many times and I saw so many fascinating cities.

However, a large number of Pakistanis haven’t visited China, so they still have no idea about these places’ charm,” he said. “Pakistan also has many beautiful places like Punjab and Gwadar, which are worth exploring for Chinese people,” he told CEN. Sharing his feeling about China, he said, There are so many countries in the world. But when we talk about China, we feel proud that China is not only a friend to us, it’s also a brother. China-Pakistan friendship and CPEC make me feel that we’re a family.

When I visited China, the common people were happy seeing me and the same feeling is also in Pakistan.” Baloch appreciates the closeness brought by CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) a lot. “The Chinese President Xi Jinping gave an excellent road map not only for China and Pakistan but also for the whole world. His idea establishes a good platform to the world regarding economy, trade, cultural exchanges, etc.”

Baloch praised the great initiative put forward by Xi Jinping. “I am very happy seeing that our Prime Minister Imran Khan is working hard to lead Pakistan into a powerful country and bring more development to Pakistan. In the coming days, China-Pakistan ties definitely deepen because of more connectivity in various areas,” he said. Visionary Group is doing business related to CPEC in a wide scope including media, social club, housing scheme, etc.

Especially in the media area, VSH News TV under Visionary Group has produced many high-quality programs together with CEN like The Belt and Road: Face to Face and When in China. “When we talk about CPEC, there is a question of how we can bring more and more connectivity and make people become closer with each other. Good media definitely bring things in a proper direction. We are working with Chinese companies to show what development is actually going on in Pakistan through CPEC,” he said.

Pakistan: CM Syed Murad Ali Shah Sindh for strengthening livestock, fisheries sectors to enhance export

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/cm-syed-murad-ali-shah-sindh-for-strengthenin-1206030.html>

"Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed Livestock & Fisheries, University & Boards and Law & Prosecution departments to complete their on-going schemes so that fiscal space could be created for taking new initiatives.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting to review progress of development schemes of the three departments on Saturday. He called for further strengthening Livestock and Fisheries sectors so that export of fisheries and halal meat could be initiated at large scale.

The meeting that was attended by Sr. Advisor Works and Universities & board (U&B) Nisar Khuhro, Minister Livestock Bari Pitafi, Advisor Law Murtaza Wahab, Chairman P&D Mohammad Waseem, PSCM Sajid Jamal Abro, Secretary U&B Alamuddin Bullo, Secretary Finance Hassan Naqvi and concerned secretaries. The meeting was informed that Rs.4346.089 million have been released for 26 schemes of Livestock and Fisheries department, of them 22 on-going and 4 were new. The total portfolio of the schemes is Rs.10451.448 million which shows a throw-forward of Rs.6105.359 million.

The on-going schemes have an allocation of Rs.1058 million against which Rs.384.230 million have been released and Rs.168.169 million have been utilized which shows 43.77 percent expenditures of the released amount. The important schemes of the department included provision of sheds, improved laboratory for Semen collection, preparation and preservation for genetically improved animals for Rs.243.567 million, Production facility of Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia Vaccine at Tando Jam for Rs.58 million.

Rehabilitation and Renovation of Liquid Nitrogen Gas Plant at Hyderabad for Rs.270. million, Establishment of Cattle Colonies at Shikarpur for Rs.609.3 million, Establishment of Banbhore Dairy Village and Processing Zone for meat Animals on PPP mode for Rs.2.8 billion.

The portfolio also included Expansion of Poultry Hatcheries & Backyard Farming in Naushehroferoze, Ghotki, Kashmore, Tharparkar, Umerkot and Matiari for Rs.247.376 million, Introduction of High Yielding Boer Goat Breed in Shikarpur, Larkana, Hyderabad, Matiari, Shaheed Benazirabad, Tando Allahyar, Badin and Umerkot for Rs.59.5 million and various other schemes.

The chief minister directed the Livestock & Fisheries department to expedite completion of their on-going schemes so that they could be removed from the budget book in the next financial year. The meeting was informed that Universities and Boards department has launched 46 schemes-, of them 44 on-going and two new- with an allocation of Rs.33813.70 million against which expenditures up to June 2020 have been recorded at Rs.10967.202 million indicating throw-forward of Rs.22846.506 million.

The allocation for the 44 on-going schemes for the current financial year is Rs.3.33 billion against which Rs.1.15 billion have been released while throw forward stands at Rs.533.243 million which showed 46 percent utilization of the released amount.

Some of the fast track schemes of the U&B included construction of Girls Hostel for M.Phil/Ph.D Research Scholars at International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences, University of Karachi for Rs.55.68 million, establishment of Model school at Shah Latif University Khairpur for Rs.89.198 million, establishment of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto chair at Shah Latif University Khairpur for Rs.40.8 million and Rs.8 million grant for technical assistance to conduct feasibility to establish IBA University Campus at Kashmore.

The chief minister directed the University & Boards department to expedite completion of their schemes so that new schemes could be taken up in the next financial year. The law department has total 65 schemes of over Rs.12 billion against which Rs.5235.596 million have been released and throw-forward is Rs.6767.151 million. Out of 65 schemes, 61 are on-going and four are new started during the current financial year. The provincial government during the current financial year has allocated Rs.784 million against which Rs. 537 million has been released and utilization of the released funds is 82.49 percent i.e. 442.970 million.

Pakistan: Local fishers slam MDD for registering 12 deep sea trawlers

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/809361-local-fishers-slam-mdd-for-registering-12-deep-sea-trawlers>

"Local fishermen have expressed concerns on issuance of Mercantile Marine Department (MMD) certificates to 12 deep sea fishing trawlers, which await Sindh Fisheries Department permission to operate in provincial territorial waters of up to 12 nautical miles from the coast. One official source said the Sindh Livestock and Fisheries Department received the letter to grant permission in January, but has not followed through so far.

"The inspection is under way," he added. These trawlers were imported from China under an agreement and letter of intent (LOI) issued by the Fishermen's Cooperative Society (FCS) for operating 20 fishing vessels in Pakistan. "We have received the Kote Certificates 'Provisional Registration under Pakistan Flag' from the MMD, for our 12 Steel Hull Fishing Boats," said ABC Marine Services (Pvt) Limited in a letter to Sindh minister for livestock and fisheries.

Small-scale fishermen aware of the technical details have raised severe reservations about calling these trawlers "boats". They oppose operating these large trawlers due to their capability of over exploitation. Since the fishing reserves are low within the waters of Sindh, introduction of large commercial trawlers further threatens those dependent on subsistence fishing. The letter sent to the Sindh minister for livestock and fisheries declared the trawlers boats, which had the same capacity as the local wooden boats.

"These 12 fishing boats have fish hold capacity of 70 tons each, similar to our local made wooden boats," the letter said. The letter further declared the trawlers employed a sustainable fishing method. However, locals contest the claims. They also held a rally from Arts Council to Karachi Press Club soon after these trawlers were spotted near the coast of Karachi. Sindh Fisheries Department's permission was mandatory to make these trawlers operational in the territorial waters of the province.

Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum Chairperson Muhammad Ali Shah, in a letter to Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said around a dozen trawlers were anchored around the Karachi Port. "Trawlers' arrival in our area is banned and it's illegal." It further added that the government planned to issue licenses to operate these trawlers, as these deep-sea trawlers could not come without the permission of the federal government.

Food and Agricultural Organisation's latest fish stock assessment conducted with the support of the federal government had already painted a very dismal picture of the country's marine fish stock. According to the assessment report, more than 72 percent of the fish stock in coastal areas of Pakistan has declined.

"Then, why there is a deep-sea fishing policy in the making?" asked the letter. "If the provincial assemblies have not approved the policy then it is also a violation of the constitution." Expressing distress at the situation, the letter further added, "Our grave objection to this action is two-fold: it threatens the livelihoods of small fishers by depriving them of catch today, and in future by ecologically destructive practices of these vessels." It also pointed to the destructive

practice of storing premium fish and discarding other varieties adopted by large deep sea vessels, which caused food waste and degradation.

India and Pakistan: Indus water panel holds meeting

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/talks-between-indus-commissioners-of-india-pakistan-underway/article34138593.ece>

"After a gap of more than two and half years Indian and Pakistani delegations on Monday began the 116th Meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission here. The meeting which coincided with the National Day of Pakistan is being viewed as part of the broader process of normalisation of bilateral ties between the two neighbours.

The two-day meeting of the Commission is being led on the Indian side by Indus Water Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Saxena. The Pakistani delegation is led by Pakistan's Commissioner for Indus Waters Syed Mohammad Mehr Ali Shah. The last meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission was held on August 29, 2018.

Hours after the conclusion of the first day's meeting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Ram Nath Kovind greeted Pakistan on the occasion of its National Day which marks the March 23, 1940 Lahore Resolution which paved the way for the creation of Pakistan.

At an event to mark the National Day, organised in the Pakistan High Commission, Aftab Hasan Khan, Charge'd Affaires, said, "Pakistan wants to have friendly relations with all countries including India.

To achieve peace between India and Pakistan both countries shall resolve all outstanding issues." The positive backdrop of the talks between the two delegation has indicated that the interaction is likely supported by the reported back channel talks that are taking place between India and Pakistan.

The Hindu has reported earlier that the United Arab Emirates is playing a role in connecting India and Pakistan through back channel negotiations. The issue, however, did not draw a response from the Ministry of External Affairs.

Pakistan: The DG PMSA urged the fishermen community to avoid using the Gaja net for fishing to save their livelihood source

<https://nation.com.pk/21-Mar-2021/fishermen-s-delegation-visits-pmsa-headquarter>

"A delegation of fishermen and owners of fishing boats paid a visit to headquarter of Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA). According to a press statement issued on Saturday, Director

General (DG) PMSA, Rear Admiral Muhammad Shuaib, listened to the problems and issues of fishermen and issued orders for resolving the same.

Certain issues of fishermen were related to provincial government and its subordinate organisations were discussed and they should contact the relevant forums to resolve those issues, he suggested.

The DG PMSA urged the fishermen community to avoid using the Gaja net for fishing to save their livelihood source. He asked them to educate their children for their better future and do not engage the minor children in labour. PMSA is a national agency and in case of any off shore emergency, fishermen should communicate their problem to the PMSA, he said.

Pakistan: A young entrepreneur makes a splash in the fisheries

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2289454/a-young-entrepreneur-makes-a-splash-in-the-fisheries>

"Coming from a lineage of fish traders, Shoukat Hussain planned on using his computer expertise to improve the trade. With an aim to bring the fisheries online, entered the trade using modern technology and e-sales. However, with tough international competition from Thailand, Vietnam and India, his plans quickly turned to dust.

Fish farming takes place on much larger scales, using biofloc technology, internationally. The technology involves keeping fish in controlled environments in small tanks, with measured temperatures and oxygen levels. In the aqua farms of Vietnam and Thailand, the use of specific barometers helps maintain the water density and the concentration of minerals in water in check, further enhancing the quality of fish.

For startup entrepreneurs like Hussain the only viable option was to compete with international products on the same technological grounds. With the pandemic affecting his fish farm - Assam Biofloc - he tried to arrange for similar tanks, designed using biofloc technology. This, however, proved to be of little help, as the use of such technologies demanded experience. Nevertheless, collaborating with persons employing the technology in other countries, Hussain was able to further his enterprise.

He sought help from people in Bangladesh and Vietnam. After a year of tough competition and losses, Hussain was able to earn profit by exporting fish to markets in Indonesia. By using new found techniques, Hussain was able to cut down on losses and generate revenue, despite having less capital and area for farming.

Towards innovation

Speaking to The Express Tribune, Hussain said the use of biofloc technology could further strengthen the fishing industry in the country. In contrast to other animal breeding industries like

poultry, fish farming is easier and cheaper, he added. With an initial investment of around Rs80 on a fish, a six-month-long process of nurturing can increase their weight. The final produce can be sold for Rs300 in the market, he said.

Moreover, Hussain explained that small fish were usually exportable while bigger fish could meet the needs of the local market. According to Hussain, fish farms in Landhi, Gulshan-e-Maymar and North Karachi have already started using biofloc technology. Elaborating on the technology, Hussain said that a 1,000 fish could be bred in the tanks that are about four feet deep and roughly six to seven feet wide.

In time and with more experience, these same tanks can be used to nurture up to 1,500 fish. Substances like lime, salt and molasses are required to keep the water free of pollutants. The daily maintenance of the tanks requires changing around 10 litres of water from lower levels of the tank.

The setting cost of the tanks, with civil fees and plumbing charges, is around Rs70, 000. Adapting to power cuts and load shedding, oxygen supplying equipment would need the power produced from generators or solar panels, he added.

The same tanks can be used to breed shrimp using biofloc technology, he said. Given the seasonal nature of the produce, it is advisable to start breeding in the month of March, so the fish can be sold later in the winter season. Sharing his expertise and experience, Hussain has started training other interested entrepreneurs in the trade and the specific uses of biofloc technology.

With over 200 students taught in the past two years, Hussain aims to train all those interested in aquaculture and is now working with NED University to modernise the trade. Hussain wishes to see an import-free fish market in the country, with high quality fishes coming from local producers and aquaculturists.

Pakistan: Govt wants to explore livestock, fisheries sectors

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40073498/govt-wants-to-explore-livestock-fisheries-sectors>

"The Chief Secretary Sindh Syed Mumtaz Ali Shah has said that Sindh government is determined to explore and exploit livestock and fisheries sectors to create more jobs and develop economy of the Province and Pakistan. He said that our society is agro-based and livestock and fisheries sectors can play a vital role to boost economy.

This he said while addressing as chief guest to a seminar in Sindh Livestock Expo here at Hyderabad. Syed Mumtaz Ali Shah has said that livestock sector is connected with agriculture sector and this can be a game changer for our rural society because livestock sector itself has a lot of potential and it is an equivalent sector to agriculture and it should be given more importance, the budget allocated for this sector needs to be increased.

He congratulated the Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Abdul Bari Pitafi and his entire team on the successful organization of the second Livestock Expo and said that the Livestock Expo has been more successful this year than last year, he added that farmers, investors and other stakeholders are gathered on one platform and working on how to develop this sector.

Pakistan: Civil society, experts join hands to address climate change and coastal vulnerabilities

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/803961-civil-society-experts-join-hands-to-address-climate-change-and-coastal-vulnerabilities>

"Climate change is seriously threatening the coastal belt of Pakistan and posing a serious threat to livelihoods, health, economy and ecosystems as a whole, experts said and called for public action involving youths, women, grassroots level activists and frontline communities to lead the fight. They said mankind has only 10 years left to radically shift economies and societies to deal with a climate emergency that is threatening to push millions into hunger and poverty. They added that climate crisis is already here and now, and it is disproportionately affecting the world's poorest people, youth, women, indigenous people and other marginalised groups.

Public action was the key for unlocking greater ambition on climate change and the engagement of the youth had a critical part to play as they were future leaders, they said while speaking at a seminar on the engagement of the youth in addressing coastal climate vulnerability held at Karachi University. The event was jointly organised by Oxfam and WWF-Pakistan as part of a nationwide campaign called the "CLIMATE project".

This is a people-powered movement, agile communications lead campaign that connects with and amplifies the voices of women, grassroots activists and frontline communities leading the fight against climate change. The mobilisation will create change in key climate justice actions during the current pandemic and demonstrate public support for systemic change. Welcoming the guests, Oxfam's Climate Campaign Lead Shirin Abbasy said, "Climate change-associated destruction is a powerful story of inequality and injustice in both causes and impacts. It's a crisis that touches almost every aspect of life, providing opportunities to connect to our work on hunger, poverty and the food system, as well as connecting to land rights, rights in crisis, and access to health care.

"We know first-hand that the crisis is here and now, and we're already responding through our humanitarian work and emergency responses. We are here to celebrate and support the women who stand on the frontlines of this crisis as climate heroes. We stand for climate justice and for equitable climate action, not just against climate crisis." Dr Tahir Rasheed, director wildlife, WWF-Pakistan, said that severe impacts of climate change were being felt in the Indus Delta, which was a rich biodiversity hotspot and home to seventh largest mangrove forests in Asia.

He said the delta was now at greater risk due to an inadequate freshwater supply from the Indus River, climate change vulnerabilities, pollution and other anthropogenic pressures. The fallout of climate change impacts was also leading to biodiversity loss in the deltaic region, he added. Dr Rasheed highlighted the key outcomes of the joint initiative of WWF-Pakistan and Oxfam GB in the Indus Delta and shared that two sectoral Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs) had been developed on the basis of Vulnerability Risk Assessment (VRA).

This will serve as guiding mechanisms for policymakers to support in building the resilience of natural resource-dependent communities. The youth, who can inspire hope, should come forward to reverse climate change and protect the mangroves ecosystems in the deltaic areas of Sindh, he added. Abdul Rahim Soomro, secretary agriculture, supply and prices department, Government of Sindh, appreciated the efforts of Oxfam and WWF-Pakistan towards engaging the youth and enhancing awareness of the issue of climate change and its impacts on the coastal communities.

The role of youth, he added, is critical in addressing climate vulnerabilities in the future. This generation will also be witnessing some of the grim impacts of climate change and hence enhancing their capabilities and knowledge of this issue would be instrumental for future adaptation plans and strategies. Waqar Hussain Phulpoto, additional director of the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa), gave an overview of the agency and said they were working to mitigate the effects of climate change by adopting the 3R (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) concept.

Sugara Hajani, a 70-year local from Kakapir, Karachi, who is taking care of a mangroves nursery at Sandspit, shared that coastal women were well aware of the fact that their survival depended on the mangrove forests which protected them from natural calamities and were an important source of fisheries. Other women from the coastal belt of Sindh shared their stories and experiences of supporting the conservation of the mangrove forests and improving their livelihoods through small-scale interventions at the community level. Arif Ali Khokhar, conservator at the Sindh Forest Department; Aamir Alamgir, Professor Environment Sciences, Karachi University; Shoaib Kiyani, Professor Marine Sciences at Karachi University; Khalid Mahmood, Director Fisheries Development Board; Hamera Aisha, Manager Conservation, WWF-Pakistan; Jawad Umair Khan, Coordinator WWF-Pakistan; Shabina Faraz, environmental writer and Kalsoom Siddique, Youth Leader UNEP, also spoke on the occasion.

Pakistan: Rights of the River and personhood rights of the Indus delta

"Pakistan Fisherfolk forum (PFF) has planned to celebrate the international Day of Action (14 March) for rivers "Rights of the Indus River" with 14-days long campaign named as of Rights of the River and personhood rights to Indus River and Indus delta. In this connection PFF decided to organized a series of the dialogues in the different district of Sindh during the Rights of the River Campaign.

After these dialogue PFF, will held a Provincial Dialogue in Karachi in which PFF will raise issues collected from district level. In the provincial dialogue, impacted communities from all over the Sindh will participate and demand for the Rights of the River and legal personhood rights of Indus delta.

In the context of Pakistan and especially Sindh province, among the multiple water issues, drastic decrease of water (and of enriching silt) for the Indus Delta is an intolerable fact. Continuing with various plans of dams and diversions on Indus River by our national government as well as neighboring countries is a continuing assault on the ecology of the Indus Basin. We must recognize it as a threat of the highest order, even when producing hydropower is the justification.

A large water shares of the River Indus utilized for the agricultural and human consumption of Punjab Province. Resultantly, the lower end of the River Indus in Sindh, that used to be termed as the “Mighty River Indus”, has been reduced to the level of an irrigation canal. Then man-built dams and barrages over the Indus River and caged it its water destroyed delta in addition to bringing other far-reaching socio-ecological consequences.

Before the development of an irrigation system on the River Indus up until 1940, the entire flow passed through Sindh’s plains to the Arabian Sea, culminating into 17 branches called creeks and forming the seventh largest delta of the world. An annual flow of over 180 Million Acre feet (MAF) carrying a silt load of about 440 million tons passed through Indus to the Arabian Sea.

This vast flood plain area followed the course of the River Indus, extending 5 to 160 KM on either side. Indus Delta is also one the victims of man are such attitude towards nature and its constituent’s elements. There was time when the Indus Delta seemed like a masterpiece of the river. It was the most prosperous and a fertile region characterized by prosperity, agricultural productivity and soil fertility.

Livestock mushroomed, agricultural production boomed, fruits farms were plentiful, fresh water gushed and a variety of fish species existed. Such a massive destruction of the River Indus has led to the death of livelihood of the deltaic people. These people have depended on fishing and the River are compelled to cut wood for earning some money and buy drinking water with their earnings. What a pity it is see the people who are entitled to the basic right of water but are denied their rights.

The PFF believes that by the building dams and barrages, the government has diverted the natural flow of the River Indus, destroyed the rivers’ ecology, displaced the helpless people whose livelihood depended on the river, destroyed the bio-diversity of the Indus Delta in the name of national interest and sustainable development.

The PFF strongly feels that there is dire need that the River Indus must be restored so that the River flow from start to tail end following the natural consistent flow and that the biodiversity and ecology of the River Indus, the people and their livelihood is restored.

What is solution? Pakistan Fisherfolk believes that unless we grant fundamental human rights to the Delta the way we have granted to citizens, the delta may not be restored. We must accord it fundamental rights to live, to survive and to ""smile"". Realising and retaining rights will require legislation that empowers communities to protect rivers.

Our demand is not vague or a fantasy. It is based on the global precedents. New Zealand has granted the Wanganui River and Indian state Uttarakhand has given Ganga and its tributary Yamuna the same legal rights as a human being. In this regard, we are celebrating International Rivers Day with the 14- day long campaign. So that we could raise the voice of Indus River on the concept of declaring the Indus as a living being with all fundamental human rights and protect her health.

Specific demands of this campaign are:

- The right to free flowing the Indus River;
- Personhood Rights to Indus River and Indus Delta;
- The right to perform essential functions within its ecosystem;
- The right to be free from pollution;
- The right to feed and be fed by sustainable aquifers;
- The right to native biodiversity;
- The right to restoration and conservation of the mangrove forests.

Pakistan: What is Blue Economy and Why is Pakistan lagging behind in it?

<https://www.bolnews.com/business/2021/03/what-is-blue-economy-and-why-is-pakistan-lagging-behind-in-it/>

"Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi announced at the recent International Maritime Conference in Karachi that the government was taking steps to promote the Blue Economy. In this regard, Admiral Amjad Niazi, Chief of Naval Staff of Pakistan, said that Pakistan Maritime Security Agency has to play an important role in developing and promoting the Blue Economy by the government.

In addition to the announcements made by Pakistan's top civil and military officials to promote the Blue Economy, Pakistan's Ministry of Maritime Affairs announced last year that 2020 would

be the Year of the Blue Economy. Could not be launched at the official level. If the growth of the Blue Economy in Pakistan is compared with other countries in the region, especially Bangladesh and India, then Pakistan is lagging behind in reaping the Blue Economy and its financial benefits from both of them.

Experts in Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs say that there is no development in Pakistan in this regard due to lack of awareness and unavailability of required infrastructure, inattention of governments and lack of necessary huge investments.

There are many reasons. What is the Blue Economy and how does it work? The water-based economy is called the Blue Economy. Ever since man started economic activities, trade through water has played a key role. Today, 90 per cent of the world's trade is conducted through water, including both rivers and seas.

Not only trade in goods by sea and river is involved, but the concept of the blue economy is very broad, which includes fishing and processing of marine products and their trade and exports. This includes the shipping sector and the ship breaking industry.

The Blue Economy also covers mangroves, as well as the coastal region and its tourism sector. This includes offshore oil building and extraction of oil from the seabed. It also includes marine biotechnology. Just as a country's economy is measured by its GNP (gross national product) and its gross national value, so is the Gross Marine Product (GMP) applied to determine the value of the Blue Economy.

The GNP of the Blue Economy in the world is \$2.5 trillion or \$2500 billion. What is the state of Pakistan's blue economy? The situation of the Blue Economy in Pakistan is not very encouraging. The GMP of Pakistan's blue economy is only close to \$1.5 billion and it is limited to a few sectors compared to many other sectors of the blue economy in the world. These include fisheries, shipping, shipbreaking industry, mangroves and non-existent coastal tourism. Many sectors of the blue economy were completely missing in Pakistan due to which it could not develop.

Commenting on the situation of Blue Economy in the country, Vice Admiral (Retd) Iftikhar Ahmad Rao, author of the book Elements of Blue Economy, said that two new shipyards were announced in Pakistan in 2007 but it has been implemented till date. It could not be estimated how it could not be promoted in the country. Where does Pakistan stand compared to the region? In the field of the blue economy, if Pakistan is compared with the countries of the region, then the situation of the country is not remarkable.

Bangladesh and India are far ahead of Pakistan in the blue economy. In terms of GMP in terms of Blue Economy, Pakistan's GMP is \$1.5 billion, while Bangladesh's GMP is about \$6 billion and so is India. It has reached six billion dollars. India had formulated a 15-year master plan to

make itself a 'Blue Nation' which he named 'Sagar Mala', through which he could promote various sectors of the Blue Economy.

Similarly, Bangladesh has taken a number of steps to make its blue economy run smoothly and make it a key part of its five-year plan to improve the value-added chain of the fish industry. The competition in Pakistan and other countries in the region can be gauged from the fact that Pakistani fish is being sold abroad at two to three dollars per kg, while fish from Bangladesh and India is being sold abroad. It sells for six to seven dollars per kilogram.

Due to this, we have a poor fish processing system and special attention was paid to it in these countries. What can Pakistan learn from India and Bangladesh? Pakistan must give importance to the blue economy in its national priorities. Just as India has given it a prominent place in its economic policy and Bangladesh has made it a priority in its planning policy, so too must Pakistan work along these lines.

The private sector is at the forefront of India's Sagar Mala' project. Pakistan also needs to encourage the private sector because, without it, the potential in the sector cannot be tapped. Like India and Bangladesh, we have to help the private sector in this area. In these two countries, cheap loans are given to the fisheries sector through microfinance, but there is no such situation in Pakistan. Many fishermen here in Pakistan do not even have identity cards, so how can they get loans.

OPAGAC: IOTC should enforce driftnet ban

https://www.worldfishing.net/news101/industry-news/opagac-iotc-should-enforce-driftnet-ban?mkt_tok=ODgzLURXWS04OTkAAAF7m9-oLzXRekFqkhYxU1V5JtuT5jk5k4sXaugDJynZ6kEdU_VFnhuvLU2N-Hu5uO30d2Si_FT3LgVUxQxKZMxp_7dXHxcr1xrzB1mhv0vMtE

"The Spanish tuna fleet is 'perplexed' that the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission intends to assign yellowfin tuna quotas to fleets that use driftnets despite their high bycatch of threatened species. Driftnets, which one study suggests have led to an 80% reduction in Indian Ocean dolphin populations since 1950, were banned by the UN in 1993, the EU in 2015 and by the IOTC in 2012.

Julio Morón, managing director of the Organisation of Associated Producers of Large Tuna Freezers (OPAGAC) which represents the Spanish fleet, said that what was happening in the Indian Ocean can not be allowed to continue. "There are countries using illegal gear," he said, "which is against the IOTC's own measures and the IOTC is not only letting them have a quota, but letting them get away with exceeding their quota scot free."

The IOTC has released proposals for rebuilding the yellowfin tuna population which OPAGAC says ignore the use of driftnets over the permitted length of 2.5km. Fleets using these larger nets include Iran, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Oman, fleets which OPAGAC feels transgress other requirements such as vessel authorisation and complying with observer programmes.

“The international community, especially the European Union, can not just stand there,” said Julio Morón. “It must demand that the IOTC give driftnet fleets zero quote and include vessels that fish with driftnets on the IUU [illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing] list,” he said.

Pakistan: Rising sea level: Threat to coastal Life (Part 2)

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/730235/rising-sea-level-threat-to-coastal-life-part-2/>

"The effects of the risks coming about because of dynamic environmental change are evident up and down the drift. The antagonistic impact of ocean level ascent on the Pakistan is even more evident as geographically, it is a salt marsh zone in Indus Delta. The low-lying regions along the Baluchistan drift may likewise apply a critical impact. The possible impact of sea level rise would be on the coastal industry such as power plants, ports & harbors, real estate & housing, tourism, coastal fishing/agriculture etc.

Even a modest rise in the sea level will threaten storm barriers and increase salinity of fresh water reservoirs along the coastal belt. The erosion processes (wind and wave) are severe along the Makran coast particularly on coastal cliffs composed of soft rocks. At places, the erosion is very fast and the shoreline between the promontories of hard rocks is receding at a very high rate. Lately, the rate of disintegration seems to have expanded at a few focuses along the drift. The islands at the approaches of the creeks have been severely eroded. The creeks, which are near the present outfall of the Indus River at the concave bulge of the delta, are facing erosion due to natural hydraulic forces.

The high-energy wave actions are strong during South-West monsoon period. The soil cover in the deltaic area is drift type, made up of material transported by rivers, mostly mudflats and marshy areas and can easily be encroached upon by sea. Creek region shows recession towards inland. The Sea Level Rise (SLR) will cause significant flooding impacts in the coastal zone particularly in the low-lying Deltaic regions.

Low-lying coastal areas would become more vulnerable to flooding for four reasons: (1) A higher sea level provides a higher base for storm surges to build upon; (2) Beach erosion would leave coastal properties highly vulnerable to storm waves (3) Higher water levels would increase flooding due to rainstorms by reducing coastal drainage. A rise in sea level would raise the water table. Floods along the Sindh coast continue to be a regular event although damage has always been variable.

Frequent flash flooding because of torrential rains in Baluchistan, particularly Makran division during the Southwest monsoon period causes heavy losses to both human and their property. Hundreds of persons including women and children in villages swept away and thousands rendered homeless by flash flood in recent years. A large part of lower Indus deltaic area would be at risk from frequent flooding by the end of the next century according to these scenarios, even if storms did not become more intense or frequent.

Although the marshy area Rann of Kutch can adapt to moderate rates of sea level rise, but these areas may be unable to keep up with the accelerated sea rise rates. If the number of coastal storms increased, the impacts of flooding would certainly aggravate. The coastal Sindh is prone to storm surges associated with the severe cyclonic storms generated in the adjacent Arabian Sea. A significant number of the cyclonic storms produced in the Arabian Sea move towards North and Northeast and some of them hit Pakistan Coast, resulting in huge losses to life and property in the coastal areas.

Indus Deltaic Creeks are critically located on the path of cyclones of the Arabian Sea. The winds and low pressure creates storm surges which when combined with high tides, can create destruction in the coastal areas. The effects of SLR do not stop at the prompt drift. As ocean level ascents, there is an expanded danger that saltwater will enter upstream and inland. This impact would be especially apparent amid the dry season conditions that are progressively likely under environmental change.

The ocean level ascent would empower saltwater to entrance more distant inland and upstream in to the waterways, wetlands, and aquifers, which would be destructive to the amphibian greenery, and would undermine human employments of water. Expanded saltiness has just been referred to in the greater part of the seaside territories uncommonly in bring down deltaic plain district. The water conditions will become brackish and would causing great economical and health problems in the coastal region.

Mangrove Backwoods Mangrove cover in the Pakistan have diminished and incapacitating the survival of the normal assets and in this way the business of an expansive number of anglers. Aimless misuse and disintegration of the seaside assets because of changes in the natural conditions, for example, hyper-saltiness, contamination, soil disintegration and digging and conceivable effect of ocean level ascent and environmental change and so on.

Sediment and mud stores lift arrive and the mangrove plants have restricted access to tidal water, the plant development consequently ends up impeded and the mangrove backwoods break down. The mangrove woods of the Indus Delta are under worry because of changing levels of water and dregs release from the Indus and the expanding impact of marine hydrological forms. Karachi is situated beside the Indus River Delta, where the Indus streams into the Arabian Sea.

This delta is presently nearly at an indistinguishable level from the Arabian Sea, which is causing seawater intrusion and making devastation to the complex biological community of mangroves

in the locale. Mangrove backwoods cover has diminished because of rising ocean levels, as well as because of land encroachment and badly managed population settlement plans.

One such illustration is the construction of the Port Qasim Power Project along the coastline of the Arabian Sea resulting in a large number of locals, who once lived in this district, having been dislodged because of changes in the Indus delta's biological community caused both by such man-made projects as well as atmosphere interventions.

Pakistan: Water reserves must be enhanced to modernize agriculture, livestock: Governor Balochistan Amanullah Khan Yasinzai

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/water-reserves-must-be-enhanced-to-modernize-1175656.html>

"Balochistan Governor Amanullah Khan Yasinzai on Tuesday said water reserves must be enhanced to modernize agriculture, fisheries and livestock sectors in Balochistan. ""It is as if we can overcome malnutrition only by building new reservoirs"", he said adding, apart from government initiatives on food and nutrition, there was an urgent need for cooperation and guidance from national and international organizations.

He expressed these views while talking to Ms. Rebekah Bell, Country Representative of the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) stationed in Pakistan who called on him at Governor House Quetta. On the occasion, Governor Yasinzai said agriculture and livestock in Balochistan were being adversely affected due to climate change and rains. ""It is the tireless efforts of farmers and wealthy people that lead to an increase in national production,"" he said.

The governor said, it was important to nurture their capabilities and teach them modern skills in agriculture and livestock. The governor further said there was an imperative need to launch a comprehensive public campaign on food and nutrition in remote areas of Balochistan, especially in the backward areas.

He said in view of the special importance of workers and farmers, the incumbent government was taking steps for their welfare. Appreciating the performance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Governor Yasinzai said the decision to hire experts from Balochistan to form a team of experts and researchers was commendable.

Recent incidents highlight risks faced by migrant workers in Taiwan

<https://newbloommag.net/2021/02/20/migrant-worker-transfer/>

"Two recent incidents highlight the dangers facing migrant workers in Taiwan, pointing to lax legal regulation and how that has resulted in dangerous and inhumane working conditions for migrant workers. The first incident in question took place in 2012 on the Ping Shin No. 101, a deep-sea fishing vessel registered to Kaohsiung, but only led to a sentencing last month. A Chinese captain working onboard the vessel was found guilty of murder after video footage was found of him ordering two Pakistani crew members to open fire on four Somali men that he believed to be pirates.

The four men were fired upon and killed after the boat rammed their vessel, overturning it, while floating in the water. The incident only came to light after the phone in which video of the incident was recorded was apparently lost in a taxi cab, resulting in someone finding it and posting the footage online in 2014. The Chinese captain in question, Wang Fengyu, has been sentenced to 26 years in prison. It is not unusual for Chinese nationals to serve as crew members or captains of Taiwanese-owned fishing vessels.

More generally, the incident points to the dangerous conditions that exist on the high seas for deep-sea fishermen, who are almost always migrant workers from southeast Asia. The high seas are often considered somewhat lawless, in which violence from captains against crew members is routine. Crew members have little ability to lodge complaints because of lacking access to the Internet or cell phone signal at sea.

Likewise, vessels may only return to shore once every few years. Working conditions for migrant fishermen have been accused of being a form of modern slavery by international NGOs such as Greenpeace. To this extent, there have been past incidents in which fishermen died at sea, likely killed by their captains, and their bodies were disposed of at sea. The second incident took place among factory workers, another major category of migrant workers in Taiwan, alongside factory workers, and domestic caregivers.

Domestic caregivers are sometimes known to transfer work to become factory workers, something that takes place if domestic caregivers leave their original place of employment if they suffer abuse. Abuse may include sexual harassment or assault, other forms of violence, or simply being forced to work around the clock with no breaks, as Taiwanese employers sometimes force the migrant workers they employ to do.

As reported by migrant worker advocate Lennon Ying-dah Wong, the director of the Serve the People Association's Taoyuan-based shelter, the National Federation of Employment Service Association (NFESA) recently wrote the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) that coordinates Taiwan's response to COVID-19 requesting that the CECC void the ability of migrant workers to shift employment.

The NFESA claimed that this was a necessary measure during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in reality, the NFESA likely simply wished to use the COVID-19 pandemic as a

pretext to weaken the ability to change workplaces, making it easier for employers to control their workers if they have no course of escape.

According to Wong, the NFESA has taken advantage of the inability of many migrant workers to read Chinese by distributing Chinese-language letters that it claims states that migrant workers are no longer allowed to change employers.

This is not the case, however, seeing as the CECC has denied the request by the NFESA, citing that this would be illegal. Nevertheless, it is likely that the NFESA may try to take its case to the Ministry of Labor, though the Ministry of Labor would possibly face scandal if it did, in fact, void this provision. Though not directly related, both cases point to the dire outlook for migrant workers in Taiwan.

Migrant workers often face employers hoping to establish working conditions in which they have complete control of workers, without allowing them time off, without being allowed to travel as they see fit, or to transfer work. Nevertheless, there often is little political willpower to make changes to benefit migrant workers, except where this affects Taiwan's international reputation. Migrant workers, after all, cannot vote, and so it proves difficult to motivate politicians to take action on their behalf, rather than stand on the side of their Taiwanese employers.

Pakistan: Fisheries sector essential for promotion economy of Balochistan: Farman

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/fisheries-sector-essential-for-promotion-econ-1172879.html>

"Chief Executive officer of Balochistan board of Investment and Trade (BBoIT) Farman Zarkoon on Friday said that the fisheries sector is of fundamental importance in the economy of Balochistan. In a statement, he said Balochistan is a rich in terms of fish and marine life saying that more than 1.531 million metric tons of fish are caught annually in the province which constitutes 34% of the GDP and 80% of the fish captured in the area is exported to middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, and other countries.

Farman maintained that there are vast opportunities for employment in this sector and the livelihood of approximately 40,000 fishermen in the 750 km coastal area of Balochistan depends on it.

Balochistan has 250 of the best species of marine life which are attractive to the world, he said the huge profits could be made by investing in fish farming and fish processing which would also improve the condition of local fishermen and export the best marine life abroad. He said under the leadership of Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan, the provincial government is taking steps to promote fisheries and the welfare of fishermen.

Colorful Pakistani ‘boat art’ rules the waves

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1811761/art-culture>

"In Pakistan, where traditional truck art adds color and humor to highways and roads, another unique form of ornamentation has emerged on the country's coast — boat art, which lends beauty to fishing boats sailing the Arabian Sea. According to Muhammad Ali Shah, chairman of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, most of the 15,000 fishing vessels on the 350-kilometer coastline of Sindh province are decorated, but the local craft has yet to be acknowledged as art.

The origins of boat art — painting vessels with floral and marine patterns — are difficult to pinpoint, but artists in Pakistan's port city of Karachi say the practice began in Ibrahim Hyderi, a fishing village in the Qur'angi district. Some say that one man, Abdul Aziz, who has been painting boats for 50 years, pioneered the art form. "My father used to paint boats for decades, and now I've taught the craft to my sons and apprentices," the artist, affectionately called Ustad Aziz, told Arab News.

Aziz learned to paint when he was 12 and since then boat art has been his source of livelihood. "The art of painting fishing boats started in Ibrahim Hyderi area, then other fishing communities also adopted it," said Shoaib Ali, one of Aziz's pupils. Colors and designs are traditionally similar, but "some patterns act as geographical markers of their point of origin," Ali said. A trained eye can distinguish vessels from Ibrahim Hyderi, or from nearby regions such as Ketī Bandar, Gharochan, Badin and Somiani.

Filmmaker and artist Sharjil Baloch said that while truck art also can be found in India and around the world, boat art is a uniquely Pakistani tradition. Indian boats are simple and use only a basic matte coating to protect the wood from the climate and water, he said. Boat art might appear similar to truck art at first glance, Baloch said, but it is actually quite distinctive.

"The shape of a boat is different, so the template is automatically different. Then you see truck art with landscapes, but here you'll see seascapes." He added: "The way they decorate them and make detailed designs gives them their own identity." Jatin Desai, an Indian journalist and activist who has been working with fishermen, also said boat art was unknown in India. In Gujarat or elsewhere in the country, "there is no artwork on Indian fishing boats," he said.

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Pakistan: Govt asked to declare Bundal Island marine protected area

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1607762/govt-asked-to-declare-bundal-island-marine-protected-area>

"Sharing his observations and documentary evidence and highlighting threats to mangroves lying off the city’s coast, particularly those existing in and around Bundal Island and Khiprianwala Island, noted architect Tariq Alexander Qaiser on Tuesday made a passionate call for their protection, urging the government to declare Bundal as a marine protected area. Illegal cutting of forests on Bundal Island, he pointed out, had increased dramatically over the past few months to an extent that it had disturbed the island’s ecology.

This emerged during a webinar titled ‘Karachi’s Hidden Forest on the Edge of Delta’, organised by Aga Khan University’s Sixth Sense Forum. “The island of Bundal is extremely important as it

has dense forests. In recent winter, we found the whole island resounding with the noise of chainsaws, scaring migratory birds away. It needs to stop,” said Mr Qaiser, also an avid photographer, writer and nature conservationist.

He acknowledged, though, locals had been using mangrove wood for a long time in a sustainable manner and there had been times when tree cutting either increased or slowed down. But, now there was too much pressure on the forests as the wood was apparently being used for industrial purposes. He emphasised that the city of Karachi needed green spaces like these islands located off the city’s coast that should be preserved to act as carbon sinks.

“If we are to live in this city with a certain quality of life and breathability of life then these are the very places [we should invest in for ourselves and future generations],” he noted. The topography of Bundal Island, he observed, was such that it could be used to create a very vibrant and large mangrove forest.

“I feel so strongly that we have an opportunity to make a difference. If there is a will within the establishment and government, we can create a green, ecologically friendly place. It’s an opportunity that needs to be grabbed,” he said.

Tale of abuse

Earlier, the programme started off with the introduction of the guest by Kulsoom Ghais and Sami Sadrudin, representing the AKU’s organising committee. Mr Qaiser has authored two books, *Baltistan — Apricot Bloom* and *Sumandar Par*, both a beautiful compilation of poetry, photographs and essays. He, the audience was told, is currently working on a four-volume book and documentary on the ecology of Karachi’s forests titled *Karachi-Korangi Creeks — Edge of Delta*. It’s about the beauty, quantum and density of Karachi’s mangrove forests, their amazing ecosystems and the author’s experiences and interactions with the locals who come to work on these uninhabited islands.

Sharing how he developed an interest in exploring mangroves, Mr Qaiser said his focus turned to the forests when his ‘fishing career’ sort of ended due to a steep decline in the fish stocks in early 2000. This was the time when the government allowed foreign trawlers to sail in its waters that caused enormous loss to marine ecology.

Over the years, Mr Qaiser documented how mangroves and their associated biodiversity was being lost and felt that this issue must be raised and discussed at all forums. “These ecosystems are incredibly vibrant and have adapted to live with the abuse that we give. The stories of their decay need to be told and discussed,” he said, calling for stronger advocacy for their protection.

Pakistan: Sets up first artificial reefs to improve marine life

<https://gulfnews.com/world/asia/pakistan/pakistan-sets-up-first-artificial-reefs-to-improve-marine-life-1.77265836>

"New artificial reefs have been installed off Balochistan coast to improve marine life and fish stocks by creating a sustainable marine ecosystem. The government of Balochistan has placed nearly 330 modular blocks of the artificial reef, each weighing 1.5 tons, in an area of four square nautical miles west of Jiwani town in Gwatar Bay.

"The artificial reef was set up at a total cost of Rs48.5 million" by the provincial government, said Ahmad Nadeem, project leader and director fisheries department of Balochistan government. Following the successful deployment of reefs, the government plans to establish more artificial reefs along the coast, he added.

Significance of Gwatar Bay

The artificial reefs have been installed in Gwatar Bay – a transboundary marine wetland area shared by both Pakistan and Iran – which is known for its rich marine biodiversity. The area is important for marine fisheries and animals including whales, dolphins, sea turtles, migratory birds and mangroves.

The installation of artificial reefs in the area will further enhance the productivity of the area and provide fishermen near Jiwani access to fish stock, experts say. What is an artificial reef? The artificial reef is primarily an underwater structure built to promote marine life in areas with a flat bottom in the sea.

This manmade structure mimics some of the characteristics of a natural reef and provides shelter, food and other necessary elements for marine biodiversity. Natural reefs are made of rock, sand, coral, and other materials, while artificial reefs can be made of sunken ships, wood, rocks, or other structure. Reefs are essential to the health of the ocean, providing habitat for a variety of marine life and play an important role in local economies.

New era of biodiversity conservation

WWF-Pakistan, which was consulted during the planning, design and site selection of the artificial reef, considers the initiative the beginning of a new era of biodiversity conservation that will help increase production of commercially important fish and shellfish in Pakistani waters.

"The reef will help in reducing poaching by trawlers in the Gwatar Bay" as bottom trawl fishing is considered to be highly destructive to the sea biodiversity in Balochistan, said Muhammad Moazzam Khan, technical advisor fisheries at WWF-Pakistan.

Marine experts at WWF-Pakistan say that Pakistan's first artificial reefs would "help protect marine biodiversity and improve socio-economic conditions of the coastal communities" in Balochistan.

The project would also “provide shelter for a number of fish species as well as benthic and agile fauna.” After placement in the seawater, the modular blocks would be encrusted with important marine animals such as corals, barnacles and bivalve shells, which will help in the growth of rich animal and plant communities. “It will also become home to large predatory fishes which are commercially important species and the productivity and biodiversity of the area will be enhanced” through this process.

Pakistan govt asked to declare Bundal Island marine protected area

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1607762>

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Illegal cutting of forests on Bundal Island, he pointed out, had increased dramatically over the past few months to an extent that it had disturbed the island's ecology. This emerged during a webinar titled 'Karachi's Hidden Forest on the Edge of Delta', organised by Aga Khan University's Sixth Sense Forum. "The island of Bundal is extremely important as it has dense forests. In recent winter, we found the whole island resounding with the noise of chainsaws, scaring migratory birds away. It needs to stop," said Mr Qaiser, also an avid photographer, writer and nature conservationist,

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"If we are to live in this city with a certain quality of life and breathability of life then these are the very places [we should invest in for ourselves and future generations]," he noted. The topography of Bundal Island, he observed, was such that it could be used to create a very vibrant and large mangrove forest. "I feel so strongly that we have an opportunity to make a difference. If there is a will within the establishment and government, we can create a green, ecologically friendly place. It's an opportunity that needs to be grabbed," he said.

Pakistan: Japanese envoy agrees to work with Sindh govt on development of fisheries, automobiles

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2284397/japanese-envoy-agrees-to-work-with-sindh-govt-on-development-of-fisheries-automobiles>

"Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and the Japanese ambassador to Pakistan, Kuninori Matsuda, have agreed to work together for the development of fisheries, automobile, and IT-based youth exchange programmes from the next year. This decision was taken in a meeting held between the two at the chief minister's house on Monday. The chief minister said that there were a lot of investment opportunities for Japanese investors in Sindh. "

"The provincial government encourages investment in the province directly or on the public-private partnership mode," he said. The visiting Japanese envoy said that they had chosen to work with the automobile, fisheries, and youth exchange programmes in IT sectors. The CM said that his government was working to develop the fisheries sector on par with international standards. "

"We have best jetties and large fishermen settlements," he said, adding that it would be a great opportunity if Japanese investors came over to invest in fisheries and use the latest technologies to further flourish the sector. ""If Japanese investors want to invest on their own, the government would not only welcome them but extend them complete support and if they intend the provincial government should become their partner, we would do it on PPP mode," he said.

The visiting envoy also showed interest in establishing a presence of Japanese automobiles in or nearby Karachi. The chief minister said that his government would welcome the investment. ""Japanese automobile industry would have a vast market in the region if it is established here,"" Shah said and added that we have sea routes to export the automobiles to the nearby countries apart from meeting the national requirement.

The third sector on which the CM and the Japanese envoy agreed to chalk out a detailed program was the exchange of skilled youth packages. Under the programme, students of information and technology from different universities of the province would acquire necessary training in Japan. The chief minister directed his principal secretary to develop coordination between the Japanese Embassy in Islamabad and the provincial Investment department to start official negotiations to materialize the projects.

Pakistan: Tharparkar holds agri, fishing business prospects

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40064859/tharparkar-holds-agri-fishing-business-prospects>

"Tharp-arkar, once a desolate land and depending on infrequent seasonal rains resulting in regular droughts and migrations, has emerged as the land of opportunities and a great source of livelihoods and enormous business prospects. Recently, two pilot projects in Thar have

demonstrated successful desert fish farming and bio-saline agriculture projects and yielded commercially viable productions.

These successful pilot projects are an outcome of the dewatering process taking place in Thar Coal Block II of Taluka Islamkot of District Tharparkar by Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company (SECMC). “While carrying out hydrogeological studies for Thar coal project, we found out abundant water reserves of groundwater at the depth of 450 plus feet in the whole of the desert region,” said Syed Abul Fazal Rizvi, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SECMC and Thar Foundation.

Speaking exclusively to Business Recorder, Rizvi said our studies suggest the availability of 80 billion cubic feet of water underneath coal, TDS level quality of which ranges between 5000-7000 PPM. The available water in Thar has the potential to irrigate thousands of acres of land by applying modern watering methods such as drip and sprinkler systems, he added.

He said in collaboration with Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) and Institute of Sustainable Halophyte Utilization of Karachi University, we have produced commercially viable production of Apple Ber, Rhodes Grass, Castor Oil, Cluster Bean, and vegetables.

Utilizing the underground saline water, Thar Foundation has piloted a 40 Acres land to grow fruits, vegetables, and local grass species and established Sindh’s largest private sector nursery which nurtures 500,000 saplings at a time. It has also set up a 68-acre Green Park which has grown local species of trees that comprises Neem, Babur, Roheero, Kandi, Moringa, and other species. Umair Aslam Butt, Manager Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) of SECMC said that they have also planted 860,000 trees of mostly local species under the Thar Million Tree campaign by utilizing Biosaline water.

“This is not merely a campaign to plant one million trees but a vision to make greener Thar by collaboration with various entities including Sindh Forest Department, Urban Forestry, HANDS Organization, and others,” said Mr. Butt. He said with the technical help of partners like PARC, Sindh Agriculture University Tando Jam, and ISHU-KU, they adopted proven plantation techniques to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts jointly.

Another massive opening in Thar is the organic fish farming by setting up small- and large-scale fish farms at the pattern of Gorano Pond, which cultivates tons of fish-catch every year. Gorano is 35 KMs south of the Islamkot Taulka where an artificial reservoir of 1500 Acres was established. Dewatering started in April 2017 from SECMC coalmine and so far, 600 Acres of the reservoir have been filled with water.

Project In Charge of the Gorano Fish farming, Hafiz Shakeel told that this is the perfect illustration of innovation derived by the idea of utilizing the excess volume of underground water for which more than 100,000 fish-seedlings (3-4inches in size) were initially released and within 8-9 months, fishes became the size of more than 1Kg only on natural feed (Zooplanktons,

Phytoplanktons, Algae and other marine insects available in Pond) and were declared fit for consumption by an external laboratory.

After the successful production, Hafiz said Thar Foundation and Sindh Fisheries Department under a joint venture also released 200,000 fish seedlings. He said seedlings of 3–4-inch size released in 2018 have now 8kg-12kg in weight, while seedlings released in 2019 have grown to 4kg-6kg.

Pakistan: Establishment of artificial reef at Gwadar Bay

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40064354/wwf-pakistan-lauds-establishment-of-artificial-reef-at-gwadar-bay>

"The Balochistan government has established the first artificial reef at Gwadar Bay near Jiwani at Rs.48.50 million, as the WWF-Pakistan lauded the initiative on Monday. This initiative is aimed to help protect marine biodiversity and improve socio-economic conditions of the coastal communities in the area. The artificial reef set up along the Balochistan coast contains 330 modular blocks, with each block weighing 1.5 tons.

The artificial reef is primarily an underwater structure built to promote marine life in areas with a flat bottom in the sea. Gwadar Bay located between the Pakistan-Iran borders is known for its rich marine biodiversity and important fishing grounds. Establishment of the artificial reef will further enhance the productivity of the area and provide fishermen near Jiwani access to fish stock. Placement of the concrete modular block will provide refuge to a large number of benthic and agile fauna. It will also provide shelter for a number of fish species.

After placement in the seawater the surface of the modular blocks will be encrusted with important marine animals such as corals, barnacles and bivalve shells, which will help in the growth of rich animal and plant communities in and around the artificial reef. It will also become home to large predators, which will feed on fauna in the artificial reef areas. Most predatory fishes are commercially important species and though this process the productivity and biodiversity of the area will be enhanced.

According to Ahmad Nadeem, Director of the project and Director Fisheries Department, Government of Balochistan, this artificial reef was set up at a total cost of Rs48.50 million. He also informed that no foreign assistance was sought for this initiative by the government. The reef is placed in an area of four square nautical miles west of Jiwani town, Balochistan. "Considering the successful deployment of the blocks in the sea, the Government of Balochistan plans to establish more artificial reefs along the Balochistan coast," he added.

WWF-Pakistan, which was consulted during the planning, design and site selection of the artificial reef, considers this initiative the start to a new era of biodiversity conservation that will

help increase production of commercially important fish and shellfish in Pakistani waters. Muhammad Moazzam Khan, Technical Advisor Fisheries, WWF-Pakistan, shared that this reef will help in reducing poaching by trawlers in the Gwadar Bay, as the reef will act as Trawler Excluding Device (TED).

The unauthorized trawling is considered a major issue faced by the fishermen of the coastal area of Balochistan. Gwadar Bay is known for its biodiversity as it has a wide variety of habitat including dense forest between Panwan and the mouth of Dasht River. “It has rich fauna on rocky shores and is a natural abode of Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins, bottlenose dolphins and finless porpoises,” he added.

Pakistan: Trout farming, an option to cut poverty

<https://nation.com.pk/15-Feb-2021/trout-farming-an-option-to-cut-poverty>

"Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a huge potential to produce export quality fish meat while nurturing the rare species of trout in widespread farms to generate substantial revenue after capturing significant share in domestic and international markets. To fully capitalise on favourable climate conditions coupled with abundance of cold water reservoirs--a key habitat for trout fish, the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is establishing 287 trout fish farms mostly in Malakand and Hazara divisions to help promote healthy diet habit among masses besides bolstering fish exports to Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics (CARs), Gulf and others international markets.

“These farms are being established under a mega project, ‘development of water fisheries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,’ costing Rs1286.914 million in different districts mostly in Malakand and Hazara divisions due to its favourable and cold climate and abundance of water reservoirs,” said Muhammad Zubair, Deputy Director, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Department. He said the federal government would contribute Rs514.766 million while the KP government would inject Rs772.148 million in the project to be completed by 2023.

The five-year project was launched in 2018-19 under the Prime Minister Emergency Agriculture Programme costing about Rs.309.7 billion for effective utilisation of land and water resources, promotion of trout farming in private sector, undertaking programmes for fish seed production and replenishment of public water bodies through fish stocking. Under the project, he said, 287 trout farms were being established with the help of the private sector on a 50:50 cost share basis with an estimated cost of Rs524.349 million, adding, about 50 percent cost would be borne by beneficiaries and remaining by the government.

Muhammad Zubair said proposals for 91 feasible sites were already submitted to Director General, Water Management for construction of trout farms in different districts of KP.

“Applications from interested parties for establishment of trout farms on 50:50 cost sharing basis have been invited and survey for selection of feasible sites completed.” Under the project, Rs150

million would be spent on establishment of a cold water fisheries' training and research centre in Swat where farmers and students would be provided training on conservation, production, breeding and marketing of trout farming, he said adding, contract for setting up cold water fisheries training and research centre had already been awarded.

The government would construct a model trout hatchery at Mansehra with an estimated cost Rs88.284 million from where small fish stock would be provided to others hatcheries to the entire Hazara division and others districts of KP at affordable prices. The site for establishment of a model trout hatchery at Siran Valley in Mansehra was selected, land was acquired and construction work was started. "Most of trout hatcheries constructed in the past require renovation and up-gradation to enhance its production's capacity," he said adding, Rs144.517 million would be spent on rehabilitation and up-gradation of existing farms.

He said that construction work on renovation and up-gradation of Dubair hatchery in Lower Kohistan district, washed away during the 2020 flood, would be started. He said high bread eye-ova (trout fish seed) would be imported and handed over to farmers and fish growers for breeding for which Rs100 million would be spent. Besides purchase of maintenance and equipment with allocation of Rs121 million, he said, interest free loans would be provided to farmers for establishment of feed mills, processing plant and cold storage with an estimated cost of Rs40 million besides utilisation of Rs29.274 million on provision of seeds and others services and Rs67.690 million for recruitment of staff. "The beneficiaries will take loans from commercial banks and their interest will be paid by the project," he said adding, KP was currently producing over 350 metric tons trout per year which would be taken to 645 metric tons by the year 2023.

Regarding fish seed production, he said, the current production was 1.4 metric and by 2023 it would be taken to 2.5 metric that help KP to be a land of fish farming. Muhammad Zubair said merged areas of KP, especially Kurram, Tirah valley in Khyber and North Waziristan districts, were the most suitable for trout farming and 13 trout farms would be setup only in Kurram. Manzoorul Haq, former Ambassador of Pakistan, said fish meat consumption in our province was low as compared to other meat products due to its relatively high prices and construction of these new trout farms and hatcheries which would help increase fish consumption besides bolstering the country's exports.

He said Pakistani trout was being preferred in Gulf and other international markets due its quality meat. Mohibullah Khan, Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Department, said increasing fish production was a cornerstone of PTI Agriculture and Fisheries Policy 2018-25, focusing on building of new model hatcheries, rehabilitation of existing trout and carp hatcheries and establishment of model trout farms in the province including merged areas.

Under the Prime Minister Emergency Agriculture Programme worth Rs309.7 billion, he said, priority were being given on enhancing fish production through replenishment of fish resources in natural water bodies through quality breeds, aquatic research, conservation programme, co-operative fishing besides introduction of new and fast growing fish varieties. He said 200 new model fish farms were established by the PTI government in the province and efforts were underway to increase it to 600 by 2023.

“The services of the Fisheries Department have been expanded to merged tribal districts where model trout fish farms and hatcheries would be established.” He said the KP government was facilitating the private sector by providing fish seeds besides professional training to fish farmers. The Minister said Rs85 billion would be spent on development of agriculture, livestock and fisheries during the five year tenure of PTI government, adding, under supervision of Director General Fisheries, special teams were constituted for taking prompt action against illegal hunting, sale and transportation of fish in the province.

Pakistan: Vision for blue economy

<https://pakobserver.net/vision-for-blue-economy/>

"ADDRESSING the inaugural session of 9th International Maritime Conference, organised by Pakistan Navy in tandem with multinational AMAN exercise, President Arif Alvi presented vision and way forward to acquire benefits from maritime sector saying Pakistan will adopt a responsible strategy on blue economy for sustainable use of ocean resources. The very concept of blue economy refers to promote usage of ocean resources for economic growth, social inclusion and preservation of livelihoods while at the same time ensuring environmental sustainability of oceans and coastal areas.

Hence, the President in his address rightly emphasised for better management and protection of ocean resources for the benefit of whole mankind especially to secure the future of coming generations. This responsibility also rests with world community to craft eco-based policies for ocean and coasts. There is no denying the fact that future belongs to oceans. In our view, maritime is not just a sector but also a parallel economy, where all other sectors of economy cross through it.

Luckily Pakistan is blessed with a vast area of ocean with approximately 1,050 km long coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone covering about 240,000 square kilometres. With right kind of approach and required investment, we can turn maritime industry into a profitable venture. Our coastal areas are rich in bio-productivity and bio diversity as they provide huge breeding grounds for commercially important fisheries including crabs and shrimps with a potential resource worth more than \$2b annually.

It is unfortunate that despite vast fish export potential, our fishing sector only contributes 0.4 percent to country's GDP. This again signifies how little we are growing regardless having immense potential in this realm which in turn is impeding our growth prospects. It is a known fact that shipping is the cheapest mode of transportation and this is the reason that most of the world's trade takes place through this manner.

Given the geo strategic location of Pakistan, we can become a hub of trade in the region and beyond. Multi-billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project and development of Gwadar port have provided us an excellent opportunity to tap true potential of blue economy. President Arif Alvi appropriately highlighted the fact that Gwadar port provides shortest route to China and Central Asian States to import and export their goods.

Therefore, it is important that a special focus is put into effect for development of this port city on modern lines. This will also pave way for many subsidiary industries like shipyard, ship-breaking, construction, tourism and hotel industry etc. Gaddani in past used to be one of the largest ship breaking industry but now it is placed below those of India and Bangladesh. If this industry is revived in modern lines and utilised to its full potential, it can provide immense job opportunities and contribute billions of dollars annually to national economy.

Then coastal tourism is another industry that shows great promise. The tourists around the world are attracted towards beautiful places especially seacoasts with vast biodiversity and attractive beaches. Our coastal area that starts from Rann of Kutch in Sindh province till Jiwani in Gwadar is full of scenic spots and tourist resorts. It includes diverse range of landscape such as sand beaches, rock cliffs, bays, deltas, islands, mud volcanoes etc.

Under the umbrella of CPEC, we also need to develop and promote coastal tourism to attract tourists from far and wide. It is need of the hour that an all-encompassing strategy is evolved with dedicated institutional efforts to tap the full potential of blue economy and efforts should be fast tracked to complete all corridor projects within the given time frame to revitalise the blue growth. This is the only way that will steer Pakistan out of economic crisis and put it on road of sustainable growth and progress.

Pakistan: Has acknowledged 270 Indian fishermen in its custody, government informs Rajya Sabha

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/pakistan-has-acknowledged-270-indian-fishermen-in-its-custody-government-informs-rajya-sabha20210204225844/>

"There were 77 Pakistan fishermen and 263 Pakistan civilian prisoners in India's custody while Pakistan has acknowledged that 270 fishermen and 49 civilian prisoners, who are Indian or believed to be Indian, are in their jails, the government told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

In a written reply, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said that as per the India Pakistan' Agreement on Consular Access' signed on May 21, 2008, lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen of each country lodged in the jails of the other are exchanged on January 1 and July 1 of every year."

"According to the lists exchanged on January 1, 2021, there were 77 Pakistan fishermen and 263 Pakistan civilian prisoners in India's custody. Pakistan has acknowledged that 270 fishermen and 49 civilian prisoners, who are Indian or believed to be Indian, are in their jails,"" he said." "In addition, there is the issue of 83 missing Indian defence personnel, whose custody has not been acknowledged by Pakistan so far,"" he added.

Pakistan: Fisheries action plan presented for public consultation in Sindh

<https://pakobserver.net/fisheries-action-plan-presented-for-public-consultation-in-sindh/>

"The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations on Tuesday held a public consultation workshop under the Sindh Agriculture Policy 2018-2030 to validate a proposed Fisheries Action Plan for Sindh province. The workshop was attended by Secretary Livestock and Fisheries, Director General Marine Fisheries, representatives of International Trade Centre, World Wildlife Fund, Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, private fisheries businesses, seafood processors and exporters.

FAO Pakistan, through European Union-assisted Food Security and Nutrition Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST) programme, is seeking to help deepen the dialogue between different sectors with a stake in food security, through its policy assistance service, supporting evidence-based decision making and analysis of proposed policy frameworks and action plans.

In Sindh, it has helped build capacity of the government officials of the Livestock & Fisheries Department over 2019-2021 in formulating its action plan with a view to making the case for more targeted investment in the fisheries and aquaculture sector to meet modern requirements for quality, efficiency and profitability.

FAO Policy Officer Ms. Genevieve Hussain highlighted that the government is keen, through the policy, to create an efficient, prosperous and resilient food production sector that can provide good incomes and decent employment to those involved in fisheries and aquaculture sector, and at the same time provide safe and nutritious food to urban and rural populations.

"Fisheries is indeed an industry where there are complex trade-offs between sustainability, growth, inclusion of smaller fisherfolk and conservation of natural resources" she said. Country and provincial governments need to arrive at compromises that meet the desires of different size

fishing operations, nutritional needs of the people, and economic aspirations of the fishing communities.

Secretary Sindh Livestock & Fisheries Department, Mr. Aijaz Ahmed Mahesar, expressed appreciation for the efforts of FAO in both the formulation of policy and development of action plans under it, saying, without an Action Plan there can be no budgetary allocation.

Pakistan: FAO applauds bio-saline agriculture, fisheries models in Thar

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40058348/fao-applauds-bio-saline-agriculture-fisheries-models-in-thar>

"United Nations organization on agricultural development "Food, and Agriculture Organization" (FAO) has applauded innovative agriculture models in Thar and termed it 'critical for to the success of this area.' The FAO delegation led by Country Representative in Pakistan, Ms. Rebekah Olivia Bell visited Thar and witnessed Bio-saline Agriculture and Bio-saline Fisheries pilot projects being carried out by Thar Foundation and Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company (SECMC) in Thar Coal Block II and Gorano area.

The delegation included FAO senior officials Ashraf Ali, Amir Sultan, Ghulam Qadir Mangrio, Shariq Aziz, and Aamer Irshad. They were briefed on Apple Ber Orchards, Sindh's largest private-sector saplings nursery, Thar Million Tree initiative, Green Park, and Gorano Pond where organic fisheries being practiced. The delegation was also served cooked organic Gorano fish which has been declared fit for human consumption by a leading laboratory of Pakistan.

The delegation was told that the Biosaline agriculture pilots were being carried out in collaboration with Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC), Livestock and Fisheries Department, Govt of Sindh and Sindh Agriculture University Tando Jam, and Institute of Sustainable Halophyte Utilization, University of Karachi.

It was further told that Thar has great potential for Biosaline agriculture and fisheries, as 80 billion cubic meters of water with 5000-6000 TDS available at the 3rd aquifer beneath the soil, which can be pumped out to water nutritive crops for human and livestock population.

Speaking during the visit, Ms. Rebekah Olivia applauded the initiatives and thanked them for showing the initiatives and explaining ambitious models. "The work carried out is critical to the success of this area," she commented. She said, FAO provides technical assistance to the provincial and federal governments of Pakistan and has established its offices in Sindh to work closer in the areas of mutual interest. "Agriculture models should benefit local communities in terms of livelihood betterments and develop linkages with the private sector," she added.

Briefing the delegation about different initiatives, Thar Foundation and SECMC CEO, Syed Abul Fazal Rizvi said the all the community development initiatives undertaken by them have

been linked with UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). "We would like to aim at making Islamkot Taluka UN-SDG compliant by the year 2025," said Rizvi.

And for this purpose, he added that a comprehensive house-to-house survey has been carried out by Thar Foundation in consultation with UN-SDG Cell P&D Dept and UNDP. Rizvi said, they have received successful outcomes under pilot projects of Biosaline Agriculture and fisheries in Thar Desert, which needs to be scaled up with the support of Govt of Sindh and technical expertly support from organizations like FAO. "We have planted 850,000 trees under Thar Million Tree Program and have also cultivated vegetables, fruits, moringa, multiple species of fodder like Rhodes Grass, Corn, and Jantar," he added.

Pakistan: Over 87,482 metric tons of fish, fish preparations worth \$185.088 mln exported in 06 months

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/business/over-87482-metric-tons-of-fish-fish-prepara-1155893.html>

"Fish and fish preparations worth of \$195.088 million were exported during first half of current financial year as against \$225.067 million of corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-December, 2020-21, about 87,482 metric tons of fish and fish products exported as compared the exports of 89,695 metric tons of same period of last year. During the period under review, the exports of fish and fish preparations decreased by 13.32 percent comparing the exports first 06 months of last year, according the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

However, meat and meat preparations exports from the country during the period under review grew by 4.12 percent as 47,788 metric tons of meat valuing \$162.205 million exported as against the exports of 41,671 metric tons worth \$155.780 million of same period last year.

In order to promote and develop the local aquaculture for enhancing the exports, government under Prime Minister National Agricultural Emergency Program had provided Rs112.56 million for promotion of trout farming in Northern Areas of the country.

The government had initiated pilot shrimp framing cluster development program with objectives to promotion of shrimp aquaculture in inland areas, said an official in the Ministry of National food Security and Research. Talking to APP, he said that other aim of the initiative was development of shrimp value chain, support services and legal framework for livelihood and job creation for rural people, besides enhancing export earnings from inland aquaculture farming.

Meanwhile, Rs38.60 million was also provided the project management units of the cage culture cluster development project for optimal utilization of natural water resources, he said adding that it would help in up scaling cage culture technology across Pakistan. The project had provided

livelihood opportunities and job creation for rural people and Increased per-capita fish consumption, besides enhancing export earnings from cage aquaculture, he added.

He further informed that under Prime Minister's initiative for Save the Calf, government had also provided Rs135.31 million in order to promote halal meat production in the country, adding that the initiative would help to enhance meat production in the country as well as to exports.

“Nuclear Niño” – Nuclear war could trigger big El Niño and decrease seafood

<https://scitechdaily.com/nuclear-nino-nuclear-war-could-trigger-big-el-nino-and-decrease-seafood/>

"A nuclear war could trigger an unprecedented El Niño-like warming episode in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, slashing algal populations by 40 percent and likely lowering the fish catch, according to a Rutgers-led study. The research, published in the journal *Communications Earth & Environment*, shows that turning to the oceans for food if land-based farming fails after a nuclear war is unlikely to be a successful strategy – at least in the equatorial Pacific.

“In our computer simulations, we see a 40 percent reduction in phytoplankton (algae) biomass in the equatorial Pacific, which would likely have downstream effects on larger marine organisms that people eat,” said lead author Joshua Coupe, a post-doctoral research associate in the Department of Environmental Sciences in the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. “Previous research has shown that global cooling following a nuclear war could lead to crop failure on land, and our study shows we probably can’t rely on seafood to help feed people, at least in that area of the world.”

Scientists studied climate change in six nuclear war scenarios, focusing on the equatorial Pacific Ocean. The scenarios include a major conflict between the United States and Russia and five smaller wars between India and Pakistan. Such wars could ignite enormous fires that inject millions of tons of soot (black carbon) into the upper atmosphere, blocking sunlight and disrupting Earth’s climate.

With an Earth system model to simulate the six scenarios, the scientists showed that a large-scale nuclear war could trigger an unprecedented El Niño-like event lasting up to seven years. The El Niño-Southern Oscillation is the largest naturally occurring phenomenon that affects Pacific Ocean circulation, alternating between warm El Niño and cold La Niña events and profoundly influencing marine productivity and fisheries.

During a “nuclear Niño,” scientists found that precipitation over the Maritime Continent (the area between the Indian and Pacific oceans and surrounding seas) and equatorial Africa would be shut down, largely because of a cooler climate. More importantly, a nuclear Niño would shut down upwelling of deeper, colder waters along the equator in the Pacific Ocean, reducing the

upward movement of nutrients that phytoplankton – the base of the marine food web – need to survive.

Moreover, the diminished sunlight after a nuclear war would drastically reduce photosynthesis, stressing and potentially killing many phytoplankton. “Turning to the sea for food after a nuclear war that dramatically reduces crop production on land seems like it would be a good idea,” said co-author Alan Robock, a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Environmental Sciences at Rutgers–New Brunswick. “But that would not be a reliable source of the protein we need, and we must prevent nuclear conflict if we want to safeguard our food and Earth’s environment.”

Pakistan: Balochistan fishermen warned of hurricane

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2021/01/23/balochistan-fishermen-warned-of-hurricane/>

"The Balochistan Fisheries Department has directed the fishermen in Gwadar and Pasni to refrain from venturing into the deep sea till Monday (tomorrow) due to an expected hurricane. The department in a statement on Saturday said that typhoons have been reported in coastal areas of Balochistan, including Gwadar and Pasni, following which the fishermen have been instructed to remain cautious. The fishermen were directed to avoid going into the deep sea for fishing.

According to a directive issued by the department, the Pakistan Meteorological Department has warned of a hurricane. Strong winds are likely in the coastal areas of Balochistan till Monday (tomorrow) due to the high tide. The statement asked the fishermen in Gwadar and Pasni to avoid the deep sea and take precautionary measures to avert any mishap.

Pakistan: Fishermen’s moot demands permission for fishing without harassment

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/777752-fishermen-s-moot-demands-permission-for-fishing-without-harassment>

"Speakers at a fishermen’s convention on Thursday demanded of the government to provide basic necessities to the fishing community, allow free access to fishing without any harassment, and impose a ban on deep-sea trawlers. The Pakistan Bonafide Fishermen Forum (PBFF) and the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) jointly organised the convention at Baba Island.

The moot was attended by a large number of fishermen from various parts of the city. Speakers, including PBFF leader Zahid Bhatti, PFF chairman Muhammad Ali Shah and fishermen community leaders Muhammad Hussain and Haji Ali, said the government and policymakers had completely ignored the fishermen, the founders of the city, and because of it, the community had been living a miserable life.

They deplored the fact that fishermen in their neighborhoods were deprived of water, education, health, electricity, gas, roads, livelihood, and other basic necessities of life. Ill-planning and controversial policies of the policymakers had affected the livelihood of fishermen, while some federal and provincial security institutions were harassing them in the name of security when they went on fishing in the sea, speakers said.

“They are being deprived of their livelihood as if they were fishermen in another country,” said a speaker. Presenting the fishermen’s charter of demand, leaders demanded that in the name of security, fishermen should not be harassed, and deep-sea trawlers should be banned immediately. Marine pollution could become dangerous and therefore domestic and industrial waste should not be thrown into the sea, they urged.

They also demanded that the use of harmful nets should be banned, and in order to protect mangrove forests, their cutting should be stopped. They demanded that the children of fishermen should be provided jobs in institutions and departments linked with the sea, such as the Pakistan Navy, Maritime Security Agency, Karachi Port Trust, Port Qasim Authority, Sindh Fisheries Department and Karachi Fish Harbour Authority.

They also said that rates of consumable goods were increasing on a daily basis, but prices of fish and shrimp fixed in 1982 continued to date in the market. “Prices of inputs like diesel, ration and net have also increased, but traders and owners of the factories are offering them lower rates. Thus, prices of fish and shrimp should be revised,” they demanded. They said that during the ban on fishing in June and July, each and every fisherman should be provided an allowance of Rs20,000 per month by the government, their lives insured, their rights protected, and a Sindh Sustainable Policy formulated.

Pakistan: Govt had formed committee to register fish processing plants to improve exports

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2279715/law-minister-questions-mandate-of-probe-body>

"The law minister has raised question over the inspection committee constituted to register fish processing plants to boost exports of fisheries. The government had formed the inspection committee for the registration of fish processing plants in a bid to improve exports of fish and fishery products. The inspection committee comprised Marine Fisheries Department Karachi director general, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Agro & Food Division director and Pakistan Fisheries Exporters Association chairman.

The Maritime Affairs Division moved a summary to the cabinet in a meeting held last week, seeking approval for constitution of the inspection committee. During discussion, however, the minister for law and justice pointed out that registration was not part of the mandate of the inspection committee, as wrongly reflected in Para 5 of the summary. It was advised that the

summary may be rectified in light of functions of the inspection committee mentioned in Clause 5(2) of the Pakistan Fish and Quality Control Act 1997.

The Maritime Affairs Division told the cabinet that as per Rules of Business 1973, as amended from time to time, and the Constitution of Pakistan, Fourth Schedule-Federal Legislative List Part-I, Clause 36, fish and fishing beyond territorial waters was allocated to the Ministry of Ports and Shipping (now Ministry of Maritime Affairs).

The Constitution of Pakistan, Fourth Schedule-Federal Legislative List Part-I, Clause 27 delineates, “Import and export across customs frontiers as deemed by the federal government, inter-provincial trade and commerce, trade and commerce with foreign countries, standard of quality of goods to be exported out of Pakistan.”

Accordingly, the federal government is authorised to regulate export of fish and fishery products through the Marine Fisheries Department, Karachi, which is the executive department under the Ministry of Maritime Affairs. The Marine Fisheries Department regulates export of fish and fishery products through the Pakistan Fish Inspection and Quality Control Act 1997 and Pakistan Fish Inspection and Quality Control Rules 1998.

As per Clause 5(1) of the Pakistan Fish Inspection and Quality Control Act 1997, “The federal government shall constitute an inspection committee consisting of one representative each of the Export Promotion Bureau, the Marine Fisheries Department and a broad-based trade association of fish processing plants.” It was highlighted that Section 5 of the Pakistan Fish Inspection and Quality Control Act 1997, vide Ordinance No XI of 1998, was amended and words “and a broad-based trade association of fish processing plants” at the end, were omitted.

However, the said amendment to the Act could not be carried out within the stipulated time, hence, the ordinance stood repealed. In view of the above, the Maritime Affairs Division sought approval of the cabinet for setting up the inspection committee for registration of fish processing plants as per Clause 5(1) of the Pakistan Fish and Quality Control Act 1997. The cabinet considered the summary titled “Constitution of Inspection Committee for the Registration of Fish Processing Plants” submitted by the Maritime Affairs Division, and approved the proposal.

Pakistan: KP Govt launches crackdown on illegal fishing, supply

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/kp-govt-launches-crackdown-on-illegal-fishing-1138775.html>

"The Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has constituted teams comprising officers from all districts to arrest illegal sale, supply and fishing in the province, said an official handout issued here Tuesday. These teams have been constituted on the

special directives of KP Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Mohibullah Khan and Secretary Agriculture, Mohammad Israr.

In this connection, Deputy Director Fisheries, Khalid Khan and Assistant Director Fisheries, Abdul Awal nabbed a group involved in smuggling of fish from Tarbella Dam along with their vehicles and fishes and for further legal proceedings locked them in the lock-up of the Police Station Kotwali, Peshawar city. The Director General (DG) Fisheries has said that the campaign would continue across the province and no one would be dealt with any concession in this regard.

Pakistan: Govt provides Rs112.56m for trout fish farming development

<https://nation.com.pk/09-Jan-2021/govt-provides-rs112-56m-for-trout-fish-farming-development>

"Federal government had provided Rs 112.56 million for the project promotion of trout farming in Northern Areas of the country under Prime Minister National Agricultural Emergency Program in order to promote fish farming in potential areas of the country. The government had initiated pilot shrimp farming cluster development program with objectives to promotion of shrimp aquaculture in inland areas, said an official in the Ministry of National Food Security and Research.

Talking to APP he said that other aim of the initiative was development of shrimp value chain, support services and legal framework for livelihood and job creation for rural people, besides enhancing export earnings from inland aquaculture farming. Meanwhile, Rs38.60 million was also provided the project management units of the cage culture cluster development project for optimal utilization of natural water resources, he said adding that it would help in up scaling cage culture technology across Pakistan.

The project had provided livelihood opportunities and job creation for rural people and Increased per capita fish consumption, besides enhancing export earnings from cage aquaculture, he added. He further informed that under Prime Minister's initiative for Save the Calf, government had also provided Rs135.31.million in order to promote halal meat production in the country, adding that the initiative would help to enhance meat production in the country as well as to exports.

It is worth mentioning here that country earned \$166.376 million by exporting about 73,421 million tons of fish and fish preparation during first five months of current financial year as compared the exports of corresponding period of last year. Fish and fish preparation exports from the country during the period from July to November 2020-21 decreased by 9.72 percent as fish and fish products worth \$184.294 million exported during the corresponding period of last year/395

Pakistan: Inland fisherfolk fear for living as licensing issues rock their boats

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/771790-inland-fisherfolk-fear-for-living-as-licensing-issues-rock-their-boats>

"Though the contract system for fishing in inland waters was replaced with licence system 12 years ago in 2008, there has been no relief for fisherfolk, who continue to face problems at the hands of allegedly non-cooperative as well as corrupt government officials. Reports gathered from the community activists from different waters show that only 15-20 percent boats/helpers have licences, while the rest of the boat owners as well as helpers do not have licences.

Irshad Gandro, a community activist at Keenjhar Lake, said there were around 2,000 small fishing boats operating at this major water body, out of which hardly 20 percent boat owners had licences.

The provincial inland fisheries department has provided 1.5 million fish seed in the current season, aiming to benefit the community. Usually the lake used to receive fish seed through its natural feeding source Kalri Baghar (KB) Feeder flowing from the river Indus near Kotri barrage. "But after discharging/dumping industrial waste in the canal throughout its route fish seed cannot survive," Gandro said. Despite the cold the community people look happy, but some rowdy elements seem reluctant to get licences. After abolition of contract system the government has decided to fix Rs560 for a boat and Rs111 for helper.

Each small boat requires one or two helpers for a catch. Similarly on annually renewal of licence the boats have to pay Rs500 to operate. Besides boats, there are 220 people who use matka at the Keenjhar Lake for fishing, and they also have to get licence individually paying Rs111. The season of getting licence at inland waters starts from July 1 to June 30.

Sindh province has 1209 registered fresh water bodies. The department officials as well as the community leaders do not have exact data about the status of waters as majority of waters either have been degraded completely or are fighting for survival. A number of water bodies receive effluent from industries situated near them through irrigation channels. Ramzan Mallah, another community activist at Chotiari reservoir in Sanghar district said currently around 1,600 boats were operating in the reservoir, but hardly 20 percent had licences.

Talking about the cruel contract system, Mallah said certain influential persons had taken over around 30 waters in Sanghar district, claiming these waters were on their family's lands. The contract system was abolished in 2008. After that the Sindh Assembly through amendments in 1980 fisheries ordinance issued a notification in 2012 so that the community may have rights on these waters. He pleaded that the government in its notification had defined the rights of fishermen and waters, according to which they were the owners to use their tools for catching fish without any restrictions.

He said it is the responsibility of inland fisheries department authorities to do the demarcation of all waters so the community people may stay safe and operate their vessels in their areas without fear. “Because, certain landlords have hired fishermen for catching fish as labourers, depriving them of their rights on waters, while paying them little,” he said. He said middlemen/traders belonging to the fishermen community themselves were exploiting the poor fishermen in terms of getting licences.

Mustafa Mirani of Manchhar Lake, who is also vice chairman Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, accused the inland fisheries department officials of creating hindrances in licensing process. Giving example, he said he himself paid fees for eight licences for the community but the officials did not comply.

“Actually, these officials wanted to create a situation for re-imposing contract system in which certain influential persons take over waters and force fishermen to work as bonded labour,” Mirani said, adding that the fishermen had launched a struggle against this cruel system to live and work in a free environment.

Therefore, he said the fishermen did not want the officials to make a case for the reintroduction of contract system. Mirani said Manchhar Lake, despite being a larger water body, was experiencing problems of pollution. Majority of workers had migrated to other water bodies, including marine waters in search of better livelihood, he added. Presently, there are hardly 400-450 fishing boats operating in the lake.

Due to declining livelihoods, the community people were not willing invest in getting new boats. Previously, Mirani said they had 1,100 licences for boats. He said the fishermen were facing challenges one after another like rain-flood disasters, increasing degradation because of pollution, declining fish catch and dumping waste through Main Nara Valley (MNV) drain. The community activists appealed to the government to initiate monitoring mechanism and spot-checking to compel the community to get licences as per the law.

The responsible fishermen must be fined if they were unable to produce a licence, they added. Some activists have pointed out that the lands on which a number of fresh water bodies are located have been allotted to landlords for agriculture purposes, depriving the community of their right to fish.

Mir Allahdad Talpur, director general inland fisheries department, said the provincial government under World Bank-funded project had taken an initiative to provide fish seed to help poor workers to have fish for maintaining need of nutrition, besides selling extra fish for earning a better livelihood.

“But the community is seen insincere to extend cooperation with government officials to maintain their own source of livelihood,” Talpur said, adding, “That is why several water bodies directly or indirectly have come under the control of influential persons, who hire the same

community people to work as labourers”. “We have planned to have fish seed for 100 waters initially, so the community may continue their livelihood.

But the federal government is creating hindrances and we are waiting for approval for rehabilitation of degraded waters and protecting biodiversity,” DG fisheries said. Talpur further said there should be an auction system under the provincial government where fishermen could sell the product.

Pakistan: NA body concerned over delay in contracting of fishing in Rawl Dam

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1600332/na-body-concerned-over-delay-in-contracting-of-fishing-in-rawl-dam>

"A parliamentary committee expressed concerns over the overdue expired contract of fishing in Rawal Dam and directed the fisheries department of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration to award the contract within a few weeks to avoid loss to the national exchequer. The subcommittee of National Assembly Standing Committee on Water Resources met with MNA Ali Nawaz Awan in the chair on Thursday. The committee said not awarding the contract was also promoting illegal fishing in the reservoir.

The ICT had awarded the contract in 2017 for two years against Rs44 million and the contract expired in 2019. So far, a new tender has not been called. In the absence of a legal contractor, residents of twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are deprived of fresh catch. Lawmakers say not awarding contract is promoting illegal fishing in reservoir and causing losses to govt. Today, we directed the ICT's fisheries department to award the contract within a few weeks.

Not awarding the contract for the last over two years has paved the way for illegal fishing and depriving the government of revenue,” convener of the committee, Ali Nawaz Awan, told Dawn. He said the committee will ensure that the contract is awarded as soon as possible. He said the committee was told that due to litigation the contract could not be awarded. An officer of the ICT administration said due to a court stay the fisheries department was unable to award the contract, adding the ICT administration has now won the case.

The officer said there was no delay on part of the ICT rather the previous contractor, who faced losses due to killing of a large number of fish in 2017, filed the court case. He said the contractor had been claiming that fish were killed by someone during the peak season, therefore, he faced financial loss and should be given compensation. The officer said the contractor won the case in arbitration but the ICT administration did not accept his plea.

Then, he got a stay order from the court. “Now, after long litigation, we have got the stay vacated and in one week or so we will call a fresh tender,” the officer said. The committee directed the fisheries department to also promote fishing for individuals. “The committee directed for easy

open individuals/families fishing within 10 days,” the convener of the committee said and added that the committee also recommended to the ICT administration to take steps for water sports in the dam.

Rawal Dam is located in the jurisdiction of Islamabad but it has been supplying water exclusively to residents of Rawalpindi. The Punjab government is custodian of the dam. Recently, the standing committee and the Capital Development Authority (CDA) made attempts to get two million gallon daily (mgd) water from the dam for the residents of Islamabad. CDA’s Member Engineering Ayaz Khan, who also attended the meeting, said the Punjab government had showed its willingness to release water for Islamabad.

“We have finalised protocol and soon we will receive two mgd from Rawal Dam,” he said. The CDA has been stating that there is a quota of two mgd to four mgd water for Islamabad from Rawal Dam and till 90s the civic agency used to get water from the dam for Islamabad. But, later the CDA itself stopped taking water from the dam. However, CDA Chairman Amer Ali Ahmed a few months ago had directed the civic agency to get its supply restored from the dam.

Chirah Dam project

The meeting of the committee also discussed the stalled Chirah Dam project. The project was approved in 2009 and is a joint venture of the Punjab government and the CDA with the former being the executing agency. The construction of the dam was approved by Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) with an estimated cost of Rs5.3 billion. According to its PC-1, the dam was to be completed in 2013. But so far, the the project could not move beyond the paperwork.

The dam is to be constructed on the Soan River near Chirah village and will have the capacity of 15 mgd water to be equally shared by Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Sources in the CDA said currently the cost of the project could be more than Rs30 billion. The committee was told that there is no delay on part of the CDA as it has already deposited Rs851 million in two installments in 2013-14 with the Punjab government for acquisition of land.

The subcommittee was told by a representative of the Punjab government that recently the CDA was asked if it was still interested in the project on 50/50 basis. The CDA’s member engineering said the civic agency was very much interested in the project as it had already deposited Rs851 million. “Today, we directed the CDA to give its written consent to the Punjab government. Meanwhile, we have directed the concerned authorities to take steps to revive the project as both Rawalpindi and Islamabad are facing water shortage,” the convener of the committee said.

Pakistan: Arabian Sea islands risk environmental disaster

<https://www.dw.com/en/pakistans-arabian-sea-islands-risk-environmental-disaster/a-56111178>

"Pakistan's federal government is planning to build modern cities on the Bundal and Dingi islands, which could ease pressure on Karachi, the country's financial hub. Experts say it would be an ecological catastrophe. The government's decision to establish the Pakistan Islands Development Authority and bring the Bundal and Dingi islands off the Karachi coast under federal authority shocked Majeed Motani, a 70-year-old fisherman. "

"Our forefathers came to these islands centuries ago. Now, the government is trying to occupy them. It is a threat not only to our livelihoods but also to the island mangroves,"" Motani told DW. Experts say the mangroves along the uninhabited islands are crucial to the environmental protection of Karachi, Pakistan's most-populous city and financial hub.

Bundal Island in the Arabian Sea is part of the Indus Delta region, which is protected under the international Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. It is already facing multiple threats – increasing air and water pollution, rising sea level, exploitation of resources, hunting, and habitat loss. Moreover, Prime Minister Imran Khan said in September he wanted to turn these islands into mammoth real-estate projects, with a proposed investment of \$50 billion (€41 billion) that would also help create 150,000 jobs.

The proposed project aims to ease the urbanization pressure on Karachi, a city of more than 20 million people. DW has seen a Maritime Affairs Ministry tender notice, which seeks proposals from national and international firms for the urban development project. Environmentalists and leaders of the provincial Sindh government are opposed to the Bundal Island ""New Dubai"" housing project. "

"The federal government issued an unconstitutional ordinance. The Sindh government will resist it for the sake of our environment and our people,"" Murtaza Wahab, a spokesperson for the provincial government, told DW. Ali Haider Zaidi, the federal minister for maritime affairs, and Malik Amin Aslam, the federal minister for climate change, did not respond to DW's request for a comment.

Diminishing mangroves

Environmentalists say that coastal mangroves help minimize the risk of natural disasters, including urban flooding, and work as natural barriers to avoid tsunamis. For decades, Pakistani authorities have neglected these small islands off the coast of Karachi. ""I have been filming the biodiversity on these islands for many years. A short boat ride from the mainland will take you to once-pristine mangrove forests, which are now in a terrible shape.

Tree stumps dot the shores, with mud crabs clinging to the remnants of the once mighty mangrove,"" Mahera Omar, a Karachi-based filmmaker who covers environmental stories, told DW. "

"At this rate of habitat loss, several of Karachi's marine species are at risk of extinction," she added. Arif Belgaumi, an architect and town planner, slammed the government's island housing plan, saying a construction of the scale that is being proposed for the Bundal Island Project will destroy the mangroves there. "It will also cause a tremendous environmental damage to the seabed.

Also, the housing project will involve construction of roads, shorelines, bridges and other concrete infrastructure. It will pollute the area and damage the island's natural environment," he told DW.

Livelihood at stake

The fishing community is worried that the development of these islands could threaten their livelihood. "The development of these islands will displace at least 2.5 million fishermen and their families," Mohammad Ali Shah, the founder of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF), told DW. "We have been protesting against the proposal since the government came up with it. We will not allow anyone to exploit our resources. We will go to court if the government starts illegal construction on these islands," Shah added.

Osama Malik, an Islamabad-based legal expert, urges the Pakistani government to fulfill its duties under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the ILO Convention 107 on Indigenous and Tribal Populations. "

"The conventions require Pakistan to respect the economic and cultural rights of the indigenous fisherfolk, who for centuries have earned their living around these two islands," Malik told DW. Filmmaker Omar says the government needs to reconsider its island development plans as "new cities should not be an ecological nightmare for locals."

Pakistan: Govt provides Rs 112.56 Mln for trout fish farming development

<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/business/govt-provides-rs11256-mln-for-trout-fish-far-1132863.html>

"Federal government had provided Rs 112.56 million for the project promotion of trout farming in Northern Areas of the country under Prime Minister National Agricultural Emergency Program. The government had initiated pilot shrimp farming cluster development with objectives of the Project to promotion of shrimp aquaculture in inland areas, said an official in the Ministry of National food Security and Research.

Talking to APP here on Tuesday, he said that other aim of the initiative was development of shrimp value chain, support services and legal framework for livelihood and job creation for rural people. He further informed that other objective was to enhance export earnings from inland aquaculture.

Meanwhile, Rs38.60 million had also provided the project management units of the cage culture cluster development project for optimal utilisation of natural water resources, he said adding that it would help in up scaling cage culture technology across Pakistan. The project had provided livelihood and job creation for rural people and Increased per capita fish consumption, besides enhancing export earnings from cage aquaculture.

Under Prime Minister's initiative for Save the Calf, government had also provided Rs135.31 million in order to promote halal meat production in the country, he added. It is worth mentioning here that country earned \$166.376 million by exporting about 73,421 million tons of fish and fish preparation during first five months of current financial year as compared the exports of corresponding period of last year.

Fish and fish preparation exports from the country during the period from July to November 2020-21 decreased by 9.72 percent as fish and fish products worth \$184.294 million exported during the corresponding period of last year/395.

Pakistan: Fish processing plants: MoMA to set up inspection committee for registrations

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40047507/fish-processing-plants-moma-to-set-up-inspection-committee-for-registrations>

"The Ministry of Maritime Affairs (MoMA) is to constitute a three-member inspection committee for registrations of fish processing plants, official sources told Business Recorder. As per Rules of Business 1973 as amended from time to time and Constitution of Pakistan, Fourth Schedule - Federal Legislative List Part 1, Clause 36 Fish and Fishing beyond territorial waters was allocated to Ministry of Ports and Shipping (now Ministry of Maritime Affairs) as per Inter Provincial Coordination's O M of May 17, 2011.

Constitution of Pakistan, Fourth Schedule - Federal Legislative List Part 1, clause 27 which delineates ""Import and export across customs frontiers as deemed by the Federal Government, inter-provincial trade and commerce, trade and commerce with foreign countries; standard of quality of goods to be exported out of Pakistan."

"Accordingly, Federal Government is authorized to regulate export of Fish and Fisheries products through Marine Fisheries Department, Karachi which is the Executive Department under Ministry of Maritime Affairs as per Cabinet Divisions Memorandum of December 23, 2019. Marine Fisheries Department, Karachi is regulating export of fish and fisheries products through Pakistan Fish Inspection & Quality Control Act, 1997 and Pakistan Fish Inspection & Quality Control Rules, 1998.

As per clause 5(1) of Pakistan Fish Inspection & Quality Control Act, 1997 ""The Federal Government shall constitute an Inspection Committee consisting of one representative each of

the TDAP, the Marine Fisheries Department and a broad based trade association of fish processing plants."

"Section-5 of Pakistan Fish Inspection & Quality Control Act, 1997 vide Ordinance No. XI of 1998 was amended and the words ""and a broad based Trade Association of fish processing plants"" were omitted, however, the amendment in the Act could not be carried out within stipulated time.

Hence, the Ordinance stood repealed. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs has proposed the following Inspection Committee (IC) for registration of fish processing plants as per clause 5(1) of Pakistan Fish and Quality Control Act, 1997:- (i) Director General, Marine Fisheries Department, Karachi;(ii) Director, Agro & Food Division, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan and; (iii) Chairman, Pakistan Fisheries Exporters Association (PAKFEA).

Pakistan: Shunned Pakistani fishermen abandoning profession

<https://nation.com.pk/04-Jan-2021/shunned-pakistani-fishermen-abandoning-profession>

"One of the most frequently aired news in both Pakistan and India media is the arrest of fishermen of both countries, by the security forces of other state. Every other day, news channels report that either Pakistan or India has arrested the fishermen for ‘crossing the border’. It has become so common that newspapers and channels report it like regular news, but no reaction is observed over this news; from public, civil society or from the authorities.

Now, the fishermen in Pakistan are going to face another predicament in the name of development. In September, the twin islands of Dingi and Bundal, located at the mouth of Korangi Creek in Karachi were taken over by the federal government. The government took over this land under a presidential ordinance. According to the ruling party, the government is planning to develop a city which will ‘surpass Dubai’.

“The mega project worth \$50 billion will create 150,000 jobs,” Sindh Governor Imran Ismail said on the other hand, Sindh government has rejected the federal government’s takeover of the islands. The provincial government’s information minister Nasir Hussain Shah said that Islamabad hasn’t shared the development project plans with them.

“Don’t think of these islands as mere tracts of land, we are linked to them by culture, custom and heritage,” he maintained. There is political tussle ongoing between the Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), ruling the centre and Sindh respectively.

However, in this scenario the fishermen might be the collateral damage. According to Sindh Fisheries Department 600,000 people in Sindh are linked to this profession. Furthermore, the coastal waters of Sindh are home of 40 species of fish and shellfish and 15 species of shrimps,

which make up 60% of Pakistan's fisheries export. Additionally, these islands are one of the oldest fishing points. Fishermen have organized an annual festival on these lands for centuries. One of the organizers and fishermen said that they won't leave their ancestral place.

"[They are] occupying the livelihood of fishermen but also a hope for living for them," he said. Another fisherman said that military guards apprehended him recently, when he tried to go to Dingi Island.

"They made me 'murgha' [stress position] and if we did not do it they said they would hit us with batons," he added. As per these fishermen, the government authorities and security forces have taken three major points of fishing from them in last two decades.

Commenting on the development, Environmentalist Arif Hassan said: "The islands are part of a delicate ecosystem. Mangrove marshes are nurseries for fish. They are home to migratory birds and also a buffer between the city and the ocean. This buffer has saved Karachi city during many cyclones."

Being arrested remains a constant threat for these fishermen. According to an exchanged list in July 2020, India has arrested 97 fishermen, while Pakistan apprehended 270 Indian fishermen. This underlines the gravity of the menace. In November this year, India released 20 Pakistani fishermen and the scenes of their reuniting were emotional.

Some of them were kept in jails for two years, while some spent five years in the Indian jails. As per reports, some of the minors didn't recognize their fathers. Shah Alam, a fisherman, told media that his son remained in jail for five years. "Now that my son is back, I will make sure that such a situation never arises again.

He has to find another means of earning besides fishing," he said. The troubles of these fishermen seem not to end, as on one side their major fishing points are being snatched away by their own government, while on the other hand, they have a constant fear of being arrested by the neighboring country.

Essentially, they are being sandwiched from both sides-internally and externally. Thousands of people are linked to this profession, but such policies and circumstances are forcing them to seek new works for their young generations because they don't want their children to be harassed, alienated and apprehended.

Pakistan: One day fishing permit fee: Fishermen, anglers urge minister to review

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40047022>

"Fishermen and anglers of Rawalpindi and Islamabad on Sunday urged Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed to take notice of increased fee of one day fishing permit to Rs 1,000 terming it only leisure time sport and a safe activity during COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier the fee was to Rs 300 on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Hamza Shafqaat, they said. Mohammad Saqlain, a professional angler told APP that despite repeated requests to the officials concerned to review the decision no one paid heed. The fishing permit fee was increased to Rs 1,000 a couple of months back after a summary approved by the Minister for Interior Brig Ejaz Ahmed Shah (retd).

He added that prior to summary approval, a unilateral increase in fishing fee was made by the Fisheries Department. However, after reservations and concerns of anglers and citizens the Deputy Commissioner reduced the fee to Rs 300. The department was charging Rs 1,000 per permit which was unjust and a kind of discouragement of the healthy activity, he remarked.

He urged the authorities concerned to review their decision and revive the previous fee of fishing permit. Saqib Aftab, another angler frequently visiting the Rawal Dam said fishing or angling was a leisure time sport but increase in fishing permit fee had made it difficult for middle-class to afford it.

Aftab urged the Interior Minister and authorities concerned to reduce the fee to make the facility equally accessible to all, adding, "This pandemic is the first of its kind we have observed that had totally changed our lives. We need to come out of its trauma and fear where activities like fishing are one of the few safe things to do while adhering to safety guidelines."