

Oil on deferred payments

It is heartening to note that Advisor to Prime Minister on Finance Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh has said that Saudi Arabia will provide \$3.2 billion oil on deferred payment to Pakistan which will help improve the country's balance of payment position. "I would like to thank the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia His Highness Mohammed Bin Salman for his continuous support for the people of Pakistan. From July 2019, KSA is activating the deferred amounting to US \$3.2 billion per annum for 3 years. This will strengthen Pakistan's Balance of Payments position," Sheikh reportedly said in his tweet. Minister of State for Revenue Hammad Azhar tweeted: "good news from our brotherly country Saudi Arabia. This will greatly help Pakistan's balance of payments position and the foreign exchange reserves of the country".

Be that as it may, Saudi Arabia has shown time and again that it is Pakistan's most trusted friend; the kingdom can be described as "a friend in need is a friend indeed". Relying on the critical support from 'friendly' countries however does not constitute the right strategy. The PTI government, which is still struggling to learn the ropes, needs to respond to a slew of economic challenges, particularly inflation and economic slowdown, in the most plausible manner.

TEHSIN JAVED (LAHORE)