



Regional Integration through CPEC: Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract:

Regional connectivity is considered as an effective source of regional and international integration. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is going to be such an effective source to extensively attract regional and international attention. Pakistan has been confronting economic challenges ever since its independence and facing the issues of fragile economy which is one of the major causes of other socio-political issues as well. For instance, one of the key outcomes of poverty is the phenomena of terrorism and intolerance in the society. Therefore, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will be an important step to change the destiny of developing countries like Pakistan and other states of the region in different sectors in general and in poverty elevation in particular. Now the question arises how CPEC is an effective attempt to address the issues of socio-economic development and how this project can play its role to provide foundation for regional and international integration? This study is based on liberalist perspective and focuses on diverse approaches, methods and plans related to economic development and will be a source of solid socio-economic growth of Pakistan.

Keywords: China, Pakistan, economic corridor, economic collaboration, regional integration, employment prospects

INTRODUCTION

The concept of regional and International Integration is generally based on pursuance of common interests on domestic, regional and international levels. However, self-interest of the countries that realist theorist perceives is as an appealing element. Theories of integration focus on mutual interests and desires shared by states as well as by non-state thespians in a practice of regional and global integration. Its origins can be traced back to the liberal-idealist tradition that initiated with Kant and lead to as far as Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points" speech (Haas, 1970).

Regional Integration is a procedure in which neighboring states enter into an agreement in order to upgrade cooperation through mutual bargains. The objectives of the agreement could range from economic to political or social. The paybacks rendered by the practice of integration would attract the reliability of the populations and motivate their contribution and enlarge the zone of

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integration. According to previous experiences primarily, the countries integrate in limited efficient or economic sectors. Subsequently, partly integrated states may experience the slow growing momentum for further levels of cooperation and integration in related areas. This "invisible hand" of integration occurrence was labeled "spill-over" by the Neo-functional School. Although integration can be repelled by certain challenges but concerned opportunities may dominate such challenges and same can be observed in the case of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Langenhove, & de Lombaerde, 2007).

Historically, Silk route is famous for the notable factor of the development of Chinese culture and civilization and economic developments. Through trade linkages China was connected with the ancient world of Persians, Greeks, Syrians, Romans, Indians, Arabs, Europeans and many African countries. Various philosophies, technologies, styles and techniques were opted by China's past by the other civilized empires during the 5th to 8th century. Silk was the major product of China therefore the route was called Silk Route. It was the network of many other civilizations associated with Silk route so it became the game changer for the past civilizational variations.

This is the era of globalization and regional integration, according to the same conviction the recent proposed economic corridor would prove to be a fate changer for all participatory states. Since independence in 1947, Pakistan is facing financial constraints. Majority of the population is facing diverse issues related to economic instability and poverty. According to media reports, approximately 60 million Pakistanis are living below the poverty line (Zeb, 2016).

There is a lack of resources and facilities which lead towards substandard provision of basic needs including food, clothing and shelter. In such fiscal suffocation, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an ideal prospect for Pakistan to resolve most of its problems as Chinese President Xi Jinping said during his visit to Pakistan in 2015 (Haider, 2015a). In this visit both countries focused on to strengthen the regional integration and cooperation along with the review of the planning of CPEC. Chinese President addressed the joint session of Parliament and said that "it is bringing huge investment which is almost \$46 billion in different sectors of the country (Haider, 2015a)."

Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Liu Jianchao said that the project would be good for Pakistan's economic development ("China says AIIB," 2015). Through roads and railway linkages and energy projects Pakistan's deep-water Gwadar port will be linked to the Arabian Sea with China's far-western Xinjiang region. Further, it would abridge China's energy imports, bypassing the Straits of Malacca between Malaysia and Indonesia. CPEC is the most aspiring and substantial foreign investment plan ever launched by any government for any neighboring state in the world. The CPEC is a transformation project that grasps enormous potential for altering lives of people living in this region. It is not only the conversion of the meaningful purpose and economic condition of the whole region but also opens a new outlook of common development. China will avail the opportunity to reach European and African markets through land route via this economic corridor.

Sino-Pak strategic partnership is the transformation of political affairs, military relationships into economic relations. Although, China has always provided boost to the poor performing and slow pace economy of Pakistan through financial and technical support from 1960s to date. The recommended route in terms of economic corridor would serve as a major channel for trade between China, Middle East and Africa and all landlocked states in Central Asia will get access to

international markets through very short and cheap transportation charges. The significant advantage of this route would enormously cut the 12,000-kilometre route that Mideast oil deliveries must now take to reach Chinese ports. The planned economic corridor, however, is being an innovative economic and trade route plan between the two neighboring countries to attain the mutual benefits. The western provinces of China can be easily linked to the shortest possible seaport of Gwadar in Pakistan. The distance from Gwadar to Kashgar, and northwestern autonomous region of Xinjiang is 2,041 Km, contrary to it, the distance from China to Kashgar, Xinjiang is 3,151.1 Km. So, it is an ideal plan for both China and other land locked states of this region and Central Asia. Now the questions arise how CPEC is an effective attempt to address the issue of poverty and economic prosperity in Pakistan? How to relate this golden opportunity as the source of regional integration and what are the challenges and opportunities which require the attention of policy makers/ planning organizations to address the diverse approaches, methods and plans. The successful answers will be a source of solid socio-economic development of Pakistan.

The present research aims to explore; the socio-political transformation in South Asian region with perspective of Pakistan and China relations. The socio-political alteration in South Asian region with perspective of CPEC. To, analyze the regional level integration, prospects of development and stability for countries like Pakistan. This study focused these questions; how this project can play its role to provide foundation for regional integration with the reference of Pakistan and other economically dependent countries? and what are the ground realities and challenges to convert this dream into reality?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pak-China friendship and cooperation has a long history of relations since 1950s and it became stronger when both countries started joint venture of 'Silk Road'. China supported Pakistan at all international forums regarding the issue of Kashmir. China also facilitated Pakistan in many other projects such as Heavy Mechanical Complex Texila, Chashma Power Project, and also assisted in the establishment of chemical Fertilizer Industry etc. Gawadar Port Project is another extension of this cooperation. 'The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a major and pilot project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which has become the framework and platform for comprehensive and substantive cooperation between China and Pakistan' (Qingyan, 2017). In Central and South Asian region both countries are crucial for many reasons; '...the contours of a new economic and political geography within South Asia are also becoming visible with enhanced connectivity among western China, Pakistan and Central Asia' (Sharif, 2021). This project is also significant for the whole region and many states covering the Central & South Asia, Middle East and African region. So, it can be easily concluded that this project will play an important role to support the notion of collective development. "Moreover, for Pakistan CPEC is more than an economic investment aimed at invigorating its economy; it is also a strategic asset that could provide much needed equilibrium against emerging Indian military and economic influence in South and South West Asia." It has also been noted that CPEC, for China, "besides being the shortest possible trade route to Arabian Sea, Middle East and Europe is a way out of Malacca Strait Jacket. For landlocked regional states like Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, CPEC could provide a greater than before economic and trade opportunity to stimulate their economies" (Amir, 2016).

Regional Integration Factor

Whole World is really impressed by the stunning and speedy development of Europe from last many decades. European living style, facilities and luxuries always attracted and inspired the public of under developing countries of the world. In spite of current economic recession, majority of the people specially youth of most of the Asian and African countries desired for European nationality and permanent stay. In Pakistan due to poor law and order situation, bomb blasts, terrorist attacks, drone attacks, load shading, unemployment, suppression of underprivileged population, political instability, unsafe borders and social unrest are the major causes of seeking immigration to developed countries. Can we make progress keeping in view the standards set by European countries? Let us see how Europe has made development.

After two world wars in 1914 and 1939, the European countries faced many problems such as economic, social, political and moral. These all glitches were interconnected and the main source was economic recession which was one of most negative outcome of the two world wars. Heavy killings of male members, property loss and destruction of infrastructure made the situation grave. The whole society was under destruction and that was the moment when two European countries- France and Germany thought to rebuild their industry and economy. The European Coal and Steel Community gave them good reason to resolve their mutual differences peacefully in state's national interest. The idea was implemented and ESCS treaty was concluded in early 50s. Afterward EEC, EUR atom and TEU were concluded and successfully implemented. That was the start of the unity of European countries which promoted economic and political activities in order to secure long-lasting peace. Peaceful environment is the first pre-requisite towards economic prosperity and mandatory factor to promote the culture of higher education, research and innovation for the growth of speedy development in different fields of science and technology. Promotion of innovative and productive ideas and projects are major aspects to success for socio-economic prosperity. These efforts provided base for EU.

European Union was established with the aim to windup the frequent and violent conflicts between neighbors in European region. In 1957, the Treaty of Rome created the European Economic Community (EEC) and also introduced the idea of 'Common Market'. That era was the start of the concept of 'Regionalism'. Ireland, Denmark, and the United Kingdom joined the EU in 1973; it upraised the number of member states to nine. The Arab-Israeli wars in October 1973 resulted in an energy crisis and economic problems in Europe. The EU regional policy started to transfer huge sums to create jobs and infrastructure in poorer areas. The European Parliament increased its influence in EU affairs and in 1979 all citizens could, for the first time, elect their members directly. The changing scenario of Europe - the fall of the Berlin Wall happened in late 80s. In early 90s, with the breakdown of communism across central and eastern Europe, Europeans countries become close neighbors and in 1993 the idea of Single Market was initiated and that move was completed with the 'four freedoms' including free movement of goods, services, people and money. In 1995 the three more new members, Austria, Finland and Sweden joined EU. Communication system was made easier and rapid by increasing the use of mobile phones, internet services with use of social media. Moreover, the euro was the new common currency in European region. The event of 11 September 2001 played a very significant role for the unity of EU countries. That was the start of another era of cooperation among EU countries to form common policies regarding the changing

scenario of the world. The political divide between Eastern and Western Europe was resolved finally, and more than 10 new countries joined EU between 2004 and 2007.

In 2008 world economic recession affected European countries therefore the Treaty of Lisbon was signed by all EU countries to face the financial crisis collectively. It provided the EU to establish modern institutions and more efficient working methods and cooperation among the member states. This whole success story of Europe can be a model for other regions of the world. Now take the example of south and central Asian region - Azerbaijan-Iran and Pakistan Gas Pipeline Project.

Roughly we divide the whole world into three major blocs- the capitalist bloc, the communist bloc and the Islamic bloc. The former two are mainly consists on developed countries while the last one having a lowest middle class status within the international community. Muslim world is the one fifth of the population of the world; more than 56 independent Muslim states are on the world map. Having plenty of untouched natural resources and reserves, vast areas, fertile lands but majority of the population is living below poverty line. These countries are mostly located in South Asia, Central Asia, Middle East and North African region. These countries are facing countless economic, political, social, security and moral problems.

Power crisis of the world is making the situation more critical and enhance the grievances of their poor natives. Pakistan is the only nuclear power of the Islamic world but facing the severe power and energy crisis. Pakistan's major industry is being affected severely due to lengthy and unannounced hours of loads shedding. Therefore, Pakistan has decided to sign an agreement with CAR and Iran to minimize the loss in energy sector. Pakistan is also the major ally of US in war against terrorism and fully supported US at all levels and also promoted its causes which resulted in heavy financial load and drained Pakistan's economy since 2001 and it is going on. Few years back, United States showed concerns on Gas Pipeline Projects due to Iran which was facing sanctions against Iranian energy exports because of its nuclear program but recent situation has changed the regional scenario as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says: "the gas pipeline has nothing to do with the nuclear program. Foreign elements who are against the progress of Pakistan and Iran have found the excuse of our nuclear program. The gas pipeline has no connection whatsoever with the nuclear case, with natural gas you cannot make atomic bombs"(Stearns, 2013).

The main economic aspect of CAR-Pakistan relations is also based on realization of the significance of gas pipeline projects. These gas pipeline projects require mandatory infrastructure such as road and railway links, which will take the economic and trade cooperation among these countries to new heights and will promote regional cooperation through these projects. Iran already built the major part of the pipeline.

In short, considering international relation studies the State interest and regional integration are two major concepts which must be addressed in the cases of CPEC and Pakistan's Gas pipeline projects with other regional states as EU countries promoted their regional cooperation and kept aside their mutual differences and rivalries to resolve their economic and finical issues and placed their states on the road of peace and prosperity and set model for the entire world.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

After two world wars, theory of liberalism gradually gained popularity and promoted the idea of interdependence which rapidly converted into complex interdependence within few decades. It also strengthens the concept of individualism, institutions. Francis Fukuyama is known as the most influential political thinkers of the last several decades. He published his book in 1992, The End of History and the Last Man. He described his ideas about consequences on the end of the Cold War. Fukuyama's is in favor of liberal democracy that was the main element for promotion of institutionalization and linked with collected growth and prosperity of the world. Therefore, it provided the base for the promotion of regionalism and that escalatory role of this theory have been opted as a base of the theoretical framework to assess the regional and international integration role of CPEC in this paper.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Mainly the method of 'Content analysis' has been used as a research tool to define certain words, themes, or concepts given in text as qualitative data. Analysis and description of multiple ideas, themes and policies has been related to the research topic. It is essential to give the comprehensive inferences about the messages within the texts, the author(s), the spectators, and even the ethos and time of surrounding the text. Main sources of data were research articles, books, newspaper articles, and reports, analysis with open-ended questions, essays, discussions, newspaper headlines, speeches, media, and historical documents.

CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR: OPPORTUNITIES

CPEC presents various opportunities for both states especially Pakistan. Pakistan's economic issues such as falling foreign investment, weakening currency and an underperforming stock market, Pakistan's relations with Beijing in the economic dominion, especially in terms of Proposed Gwadar-Kashgar route are estimated vital. Following are the notable outputs of expected CPEC plan for Pakistan as:

- 1- International Airport at Gwadar is under Construction; it will be functioning by September 2023 for local and international flights ("Gwadar airport to be," 2022).
- 2- The 1,300-kilometre Karakorum Highway connecting to Islamabad; up gradation ("The Karakoram highway," 2015).
- 3- Laying a fiber-optic cable from the Chinese border to the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi (CPEC Authority, 2018)
- 4- Establishment of industrial parks (CPEC Authority, 2018)
- 5- Establishment of Economic zones along the suggested Kashgar-Gwadar trade corridor (CPEC Authority, 2018)
- 6- Setting up trans-freight stations along the Kashgar-Gwadar corridor to expedite trucks/containers, carrying heavy goods, the subsequent offshoots of it would be the development and welfare of the population (Malik, 2018)
- 7- Efficient transport systems, as it provides the key socio-economic openings and advantages that results in positive multipliers effects such as better availability to markets, employment and further capital spending (Malik, 2018).
- 8- Development of transport system as this sector plays a pivotal role in the overall economic growth (Malik, 2018).
- 9- Gwadar-Kashgar route will incorporate the economies of both Pakistan and China;

- 10- Additionally, for developing of infrastructure, enhanced cooperation “in the industrial, agricultural, mining, financial, telecommunication and service sectors is planned (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), 2021).
- 11- To reduce the fuel deficiencies. Beijing has already pledged \$6.5 billion to build a ‘new nuclear power plant in Karachi (Gul, 2021).
- 12- Construction of an oil pipeline from Gwadar’s port to northwestern China (CPEC, 2016).
- 13- Pakistan’s Gwadar Port: A New Naval Base in China’s String of Pearls in the Indo-Pacific (Gul, 2021).
- 14- ‘Beijing agreed to capitalize around \$33.8 billion in various energy projects and \$11.8 billion in infrastructure projects, which will be completed by 2017 at most’ (Chaudhri, 2017)
- 15- ‘\$15.5 billion worth of coal, wind, solar and hydro energy projects will add 10,400 megawatts of energy to the national grid of Pakistan’ (Zahra, 2014)
- 16- There are substantial chances of development and prosperity for province Baluchistan, KPK and Northern Areas of Pakistan because major projects and installment of industry is planned in these areas according to the approved mutual plan of China & Pakistan (CPEC Authority, 2017).

Economic corridor would result in greater movement between the states, it plays considerable role as a promoter and facilitator for development. The CPEC will help new emerging regional collaboration in South Asia. Therefore, it is as attractive as proposed route may seem for both the neighboring countries; they continue to face challenges that require crucial consideration.

Geo-strategic situation of Pakistan is making it the direct recipient of this super economic passageway. Volume of the businesses option will open in services sector, infrastructure building and manufacturing, therefore it is the prediction that such joint venture of Pakistan and China will reach to new heights. CPEC is being measured as an economic promoter that will benefit to raise economic growth rate of Pakistan to the desired level. Increase in trade sector and import/export business would definitely provide Pakistan more chance to get access to the international markets.

An instant outcome of construction of the CPEC will be an increase in foreign investment flows as “Foreign investors sprang a surprise by making 20-month high investment of \$271.1 million, mostly in power, communication and financial sectors in Pakistan in June 2022, as they set aside all the doom and gloom about the economy and political situation by focusing on long-term business opportunities.” (Saddiqui, 2022)

Pakistan considers the CPEC as a corridor of prospect where people of all provinces will economically grow and benefited in terms of financial and human development. The network of linking roads, industrial parks, power projects, rail links and fiber optics will change the prominent features of the local socio-economic ethos. The CPEC will not only be limited to China and Pakistan but it will be a game-changer for Middle East and Gulf countries. The Chinese government committed to build the corridor as per plan including the construction of highways, railways and natural gas and oil pipelines.

Major Challenges to CPEC

Despite immense benefits and huge potential CPEC has for both China and Pakistan, it also faces several challenges. These challenges are discussed below.

Lack of National Consensus & Grievances of the Provinces

China Pakistan Economic Corridor has created disparity with political elites predominantly of smaller and less developed provinces challenging that this plan has been revamped to mainly profit the province of Punjab. The route actually under its original plan was approved from “Gawadar-Quetta-Zhoband Dera Ismail Khan”. The governments along with the opposition parties in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa claim that the central government has consciously created a controversy, by ignoring the smaller provinces in the 3,000 kilometers long “Gwadar- Kashghar” route of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (Haider, 2015b). They will never tolerate any change in CPEC route (Haider, 2015b). It is claimed that the federal government has also overlooked the under privileged people of Gwadar in terms of progressive activities. Central government must assure the local masses of Gwadar before taking any further step concerning CPEC route change (Shah, 2015).

Security Issues

Most of the parts of the world are facing natural disasters, mishaps and calamities due to many reasons including climate change and heat waves. However, on the other hand Terrorism is another constant threat to world peace and security. In the post 9/11 era the “governments” and “energy sectors” are redesigning their security policies and evaluating the previously unpredicted liabilities of the energy infrastructures. The counter terrorism strategy is the major part of Pak-China strategic cooperation. Chinese Foreign ministry said that China will continue to further strengthen its strategic relations with Pakistan irrespective of global changes. Political turmoil, security concerns and bureaucratic hurdles are some of the major challenges towards the successful completion of the Pak-China Economic Corridor.

Even, though terrorism is much lesser in China than Pakistan but still the Chinese government is aware of its consequences and taking necessity measures for its prevention. The strategic cooperation between the two countries can help in eradication of the terrorism from the region to focus on the sustainable economic development and prosperity in the region in the shape of establishing CPEC. Current geopolitical developments are indicative of growing strategic coherence between China and Pakistan. A mistrust has been created between Pakistan and US strategic relations, because of its attack on the army check post in Mohmand agency. However, both Pakistan and China needs a further strong collaboration to curb the menace of terrorism and extremism irrespective of commonalities of their interests.

The key international players such as United State of America, European Union, Russia, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Organization of Islamic Conference are taking CPEC as a biggest change in new world order, especially to combat terrorism. Such projects and Pak-China collaboration against the scourge of terrorism in the region will directly impact the international peace. The strategic location of China and its growing economy and ‘peaceful rise’, along with Pakistan, can play a vital role to preserve peace (Ahmed, 2013).

Regional Issues

The population of both the nations almost reaches half of the world’s population. This particular region is rich with natural resources as well as human resources, which propose the availability of

stability and cordial relations between the countries located in the region. In fact, three of the seven nuclear power countries of the world are situated here. Similarly, Russia has its own interests in the region. Central Asian countries' connection with region further magnify the importance of this region (IPSweb, 2004).

The present scenario of regional and global environment poses a different situation. How Islamabad and Beijing Partnership can conceivably fit in, or could play a positive role in the upcoming crisis (Abbas, 2011). While there are quite a few issues in this region which are associated with security problems, a focus on shared border of "China and Pakistan" highlights, the consequence of the Afghan problem, the prolonged Kashmir issue along with the "extremist trends and rivalry" or race between two or more countries in this region. The Post-9/11 Developments, extremism and terrorism, China's comprehensive development plan is the main security issue in the region (IPSweb, 2004).

Afghanistan Crises

China has maintained an independent policy regarding its economic growth that reflects the peculiarities of Chinese interests, concerns, and priorities in Afghanistan. China has manifold interests in Afghanistan; however, local apprehensions regarding security and stability especially in Muslim region of Xinjiang are still main concerns (Kley, 2014) China sustains normal history of relations with Afghanistan and actively participate in its economic rebuilding and supported Afghanistan in financial and other related areas. China always supported Afghanistan at all international forums regarding its internal and external affairs.

China abstained from condemning American participation in the war in Afghanistan, but it doubts the wars efficacy, and China rejected to join the "Northern Distribution Network" (NDN) to Kabul (Asia Report, 2013). While insisting on its political principles in rebuilding Afghanistan, China has no intention of reconstruction of Afghanistan politically. The domestic affairs of Afghanistan, as political structures, social patterns, and ideological orientations, are beyond what China sees as its task. Rather, China's aims in Afghanistan relate mainly to the issues of security of the region in general, and in Xinjiang in particular' (Huasheng, 2012).

The Western deals to Afghan issues comes at a time when the Afghan government is neither financially self-sufficient nor skillful of overcoming the Taliban uprising. In the short term, there is little substitute to international assistance to keep the Afghan state afloat. In the longer term, however, Afghanistan hopes to control two of the countries to achieve unaffected stability and self-reliance, its natural resources and its strategic location, squeezed as it is locked by Iran, Pakistan, China and the CARs.

The overall mission initially reflected a NATO consensus that the major threat to allied security lie distant from the treaty area and require new political techniques and military abilities to overcome (NATO, 2022). There were two military actions going on for its stabilization, the "Operation Enduring Freedom" (OEF) working as a counter riot combat operation commanded by US against Taliban and Al-Qaida (Knarr & Frost, 2010). However, OEF is not the part of NATO but still it operated in the eastern and southern part of Afghanistan and the border areas of Pakistan. Another one is the "International Security Assistance Force" (ISAF) managed by the allied NATO. ISAF was created by the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) under the resolution 1386 on 20th December

2001 initially commanded by US. The mission of ISAF was primarily confined to Kabul (Afghanistan). In Aug, 2003 NATO was handed over the control of commanding ISAF in Afghanistan which was legitimized by the UNSC under the article 1883 in August 2008. This resolution has empowered NATO forces for ensuring security law and order in Afghanistan. International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) had total 41 countries including 28 NATO member countries. The dominant number of US forces was approximately 26000 in ISAF. An opinion poll by the "German Marshall Fund" found a sharp decay in the public opinion European towards U.S leadership since the NATO involvement in Afghanistan after 2002 (Morelli, 2009).

Afghanistan could receive a number of infrastructure and other economic investments from China as Beijing pushes ahead with its "Silk Road Economic Belt," connecting western China with Central Asia and beyond. Security concerns are also the obstacle in promoting economic cooperation between China and Afghanistan. The Silk Road Economic Belt could help refresh Afghanistan's economy, which in turn could help discourage the rise of militants.

Indian Role

The gradual development in Beijing's Kashmir policy is against the Indian notions. India considers that new Delhi have strong relations with Beijing which can have negative effect over the Sino-Pak relations. The major source of pressure between India and Pakistan is the close military relations which started in 1960. India perceives the growing military ties between Pakistan and China as a confrontation with "two front threat" which has already been exercised several time. The growing military development is basically anti-Indian strategy of both Pakistan and China which means that China is arming Pakistan against India. Sino Pakistan partnership offered the other power in the region like Soviet Union and the United State in the region which will further lead to tension and militarization in the region (Garver, 1996).

Sino-Indian Relations

The roots of New Delhi and Beijing jealousy can be traced back to the Chinese occupation of Tibet region in the year 1951, which has resulted in the Sino-Indian boundary preciously known as Indo Tibetan boundary (Banerjee, 2022). Tibet issue has abolished the buffer zone between these two Asian joints. Both sides are not ready to leave the strategically important area of Tibet which still is a main issue for them.

The problem inside and even outside the Tibet region are very critical which show the weak/susceptible control of the Chines over this region. Pakistan reviews its foreign policy to come closer to China while observing the altering defence situation in 60s. Pakistan was left alone by its western ally (the US). In the year 1987 United States was a good friend of Pakistan but due to her lesser interests US has detached herself from the region and again the year 1999, when Pakistan conducted nuclear tests, US had reconsiderd its foreign policy towards India. And once again it sees Pakistan a strong alley in the war against terrorism in 2001-02 (Chari et al., 2007).

India sees 'the Gwadar port' as a marine base of Chinese, which is expected to develop a nuclear submarine or "aircraft carrier homeport" with the passage of time. Analysts are of the opinion that the Chinese presence in the Arabian Sea is against the Indian domination of the gateway and in the best interest of Pakistan. In response to these analyses the Indian Navel Chief Adniral Suresh Mehta

Said in Jan, 2008 that due to Gwadar port Pakistan will have a strong hold on the important strategic energy sea lanes of the Persian Gulf. Physically there is no choke point on the coastline of the sub-continent through which international shipping passes. In the global game of quest for energy India and China are in the competitor list. Globally, India is the 6th consumer of the energy.

The Iranian port of Chahbahar is developed by India while Gwadar port is constructed by China. New Delhi is building a 'road to Iran and Afghanistan for reaching' the land locked CARs for bypassing Islamabad. New Delhi has withdrawn from the IPI by calling it as "risky venture" particularly due to pipe lines security reasons because the pipe line will pass the volatile areas of the Baluchistan where many time such incident took place (Fazl-e-Haider, 2009). After 1960 the relation between Pakistan and China has been, one of the defining features of South Asian Geo-Politics. China intends to develop strong strategic relations with other South Asian countries to countervail India (Kumar, 2007). Moreover, Chahbahar and Gwadar ports are not competitor and they can be sister ports in this region.

International Issues

Containment of China and the US Factor

The rise of Beijing is a serious threat and concern to the United States (US) as well as to the European countries. The increasing pace of Beijing is considered as a substantial encounter by the US because China will become a military threat to its neighbors and apposition or challenger to the US interests in the region. Similarly, the cultural rise of China can have impacts on the West as well but China is looking for Asian security, commerce, and international Balance of Power (BoP). A strong consideration is under way in the "Western and Asian" nations about the ways and means for the best management of the "rising dragon." The fastest growth in the fields has provided a lucrative cottage industry to the experts in academia corporations, banks, various governments and the media worldwide and created a debate for the alternative policy options."

United States is not happy with the rapid influence and growth of China in the region. The US is anxious of that China's growing involvement in the "Indian Ocean Region" (IOR) where Beijing can observe her naval activities in the region and in future Gwadar can be transformed into a Chinese naval base, thus "threatening" the IOR and Arabian Sea (Chaziza, 2016). The development of Gwadar also fuels the feeling that the US has long felt towards Islamabad-Beijing strategic partnership. To United States, control over Gwadar, has implications for the "war on terror", as it would open the prospect of a long land route across Baluchistan into Afghanistan. From a US/NATO point of view "the Khyber Pass", in the KP, would be an ideal supply route for Western troops in Afghanistan (Mir, n.d.)." Similarly, the strategically important "Strait of Malacca" is very important for Beijing, by any reason if it remained closed, the economy of China cannot even survive a single month. To contain China in this particular region US in Singapore has created permanent warships. US will be providing strategic depth in Philippines and Australia, thus, the United States can easily obstruct the Chinese movement in this particular Strait (Pilko, 2012). It is difficult to predict the domestic political and social cohesion and that how China will exercise its new might (Shambaugh, 1996).

CONCLUSION

CPEC will open new avenues for the prosperity of less developed provinces and areas of Pakistan such as Baluchistan, KPK, Northern areas according to the approved plan road and railway route of China and Pakistan. People can directly participate in all kinds of business and trade activities such as promotion of local products, cottage industry, food, transportation, hoteling and rest houses business with minimal resources and low literacy rate.

An important positive outcome of CPEC will be the economic prosperity in thickly populated region of the world. Appropriate implementation of the plan will open the job market for the low educated labors and semi- skilled workers. It will reduce the unemployment in the region at a fast rate. Small scale local business such as hotel and rest houses along the road and cottage industry will flourish from Gwadar to Kashgar. Economic growth at gross root level will bring peace and harmony in the region in general and in Pakistan in particular. The energy crisis will be reduced and brought under controlled through CPEC projects, such as these. Establishment of industry, foreign investment, multinational's business activities and economic prosperity will bring peace and stability in this region similar to the developed countries of European region.

India, Afghanistan and Iran should be made part of the CPEC. All these states should work for common interest as the EU states set role model for the world. The EU model is the best solution of such cooperation and integration as it does not have a history of mutual threats and a diplomatic freeze. The EU with its origins in a peace and economic interest that endorsed the multilateralism in international relations has a distinct type of soft power. Moreover, according to international social norms and values, all big and small powers should deliberate the humanitarian values and human rights. Socio-political stability provides a solid base for the developed societies, while CPEC can help in eradication of terrorism and extremism through economic development and prosperity in the region. Therefore, both China and Pakistan are serious in completion of this important project. The major factor of 'security' has been handed over to military and para-military faction to ensure the uninterrupted and smooth operation of the CPEC. In this way China and Pakistan while activating mutual potential can also transform concerned challenges into opportunities. There is a dire need to apply liberalist approach to initiate policy for free trade area, customs union, economic union and common markets. Consequently, such strategy for socio-economic development may provide foundation for regional integration leading to sustainable development.

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