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China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a flagship role model project for “One Road and One Belt” initiative of China, has emerged as a most significant landmark in the history of Pakistan-China long lasting and cherished friendship. President Xi Jinping on his visit to Pakistan last year unveiled the $46 billion comprehensive and strategic business plan including several important projects of developing communications linkages, building of economic and industrial zones, energy and infrastructure projects. The project, acronymed as CPEC, is setting a new era of economic progress and bright future for Pakistan to come out from wobbly economic development and energy crisis hence to eradicate the threat of terrorism and extremism, poverty and many other menaces that has been hindering country’s development for quite long. The multifaceted CPEC is not only funding and supporting the construction and connectivity of transportation infrastructures, but more importantly aims to promote bilateral cooperation in multiple areas of major projects, as well as information and communication technology, and to set up more industrial parks and FTAs. The project is also meant to improve the conditions of literacy, education and improved skilled labor market for the projects unleashed length and breadth of Pakistan. It is promising to note, however, that only in energy sector, investment direction is $34 billion for thermal, solar and wind power generation facilities and projects to support Pakistan’s energy needs and demand thus to empower Pakistan’s economy with visible benefits and dividends. Proposed by Chinese premier Li Keqiang during his visit to Pakistan in May 2013, CPEC has been termed and viewed as a “Game Changer” “Milestone” “Monument of the Century” and a “lifeline” for Pakistan. After the emergence of this project, there is visible improvement in the security situation in the country coupled with the improved relationship between civil-military leadership as well, which is good omen for the benefit of the country as a whole. This project has a strategic significance also where not only Pakistan but China itself will get access to Middle East, Africa and beyond through the Gwadar Port strategically located deep-sea port near the Persian Gulf and close to the Strait of Hormuz, through which 40 per cent of the world’s oil passes. The project once completed will provide a connectivity of “supply and demand side” where buyers and sellers can be linked, transport of goods will be shorter and economical henceforth hub of all this economic and trade activity. The project has also translated strategic bilateral political relations between Pakistan and China into strategic economic partnership based on win-win paradigm. CPEC will act as a buckle and bridge to the entire economic activity between Europe, Asia and Africa. According to one estimate, the project will impact the lives of three billion people only in Asia and beyond. Currently the early harvest projects are on the fast swing of completion stages but while the work on CPEC project is going on, there are controversies that have emerged related to its several routes and benefits for smaller provinces. For Pakistan it is much easier to deal with the outside forces and tackle them then to deal with those home grown controversial “fame-gainers’ and ‘vote seekers’ who have nothing substantial to contribute to the projects like CPEC. The comprehensive plan is national in nature and it has nothing to do with any political party or this government or that government but related to benefit for the communities and nations. The project will continue and will be completed in its given time frame, at all cost. Furthermore, these home grown spoilers must remember that this foreign investment is not the only one that has ever been done in Pakistan rather it will set the precedent hence will open the door for further investments and opportunities within and for Pakistan. This has also improved the international image of Pakistan in the global markets as the next destination for investment. Now, all we have to do is to put our false egos behind and shun all difference along with giving voices to those who want to be heard and sharing all the benefits that this country has to offer to all of us, without any differences. Thus wherever the CPEC project pass or not to pass, this route or that rout, it is also necessary for Pakistan’s political elite to restrain from making this project controversial and anticipate the positive impacts that this kind of investment has on the country’s economic and social outlook. More significantly the CPEC project will not only lift the friendship between Pakistan and China to new heights but also it has established fact about the all-weather and time tested friendship between China and Pakistan.
While perceived as a game-changer initially, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has become a fate-changer since every passing day, the regional states are taking keen interest in this mega project because of its huge potential for an inclusive growth and development through regional connectivity. The CPEC in the ‘One Belt One Road’ initiative is pivot to the Chinese engagement with the world, and a leap forward for Pakistan by linking it with Afghanistan, Iran, the Central Asia and Middle East. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Iran are stated to have expressed their desire to be part of the initiative for enhancing connectivity and trade. Iran has signed the Belt and Road agreement with China, and both countries will boost bilateral trade. This immensely illustrates that the CPEC will be vital to the Asian economic landscape and regional prosperity in the coming years.

One of the primary benefits accrued by Pakistan with the initiation of the CPEC is that it has restored investors’ confidence in our country, which will help it in achieving its targeted growth rate. The Corridor has also accelerated economic activity, which is led by the energy and construction sectors at the moment. It will help the country overcome energy deficiency, develop infrastructure, establish new special economic zones along the Corridor, generate employment opportunities across Pakistan, especially in Balochistan and the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, and integrate different sectors of the economy. This will be for an equitable development of Pakistan as all its provinces and regions will be equal beneficiaries. Therefore, the CPEC is a vibrant national project worth $46 billion for transforming the national economy, and is imparting a positive impression of an overall growth.

Work on the CPEC started after a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the two steadfast friends when Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif visited China in July 2013 – his first official visit overseas since assuming the office. This initiated a new phase in the bilateral relationship as the economic cooperation and connectivity have been put at the centre of the joint agenda. The Memorandum aims at enabling the government to cooperate in the planning and development of the CPEC, facilitate and intensify economic activity along the Corridor. The Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform (MoPD&R) is Pakistan’s focal Ministry, whereas its Chinese counterpart is the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). The institutional framework is based on the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC), co-chaired by the Minister PD&R and Vice-Chairman NDRC, which is further supported by the sectoral Joint Working Groups comprising experts of their respective areas.

The Article 3 of the MoU states, “Long-Term Plan should be developed under the principle of scientific planning, steadily developing, and take the easiest the first,” This is the CPEC philosophy for working towards an equitable development of the country. The CPEC is a long-term project comprising different sectoral projects of various durations having four components, that is, Gwadar Port (socio-economic development), energy (coal, Hydel, wind, solar, LNG, transmission), infrastructure (road, rail, aviation, data connectivity) and industrial cooperation (Gwadar Free Zone and other industrial parks). The CPEC has been divided into three phases. In the first phase, to be completed by 2018, a few early-harvest projects of the energy and infrastructure will be completed. The next two phases will be completed by 2030, and the investment has been phased out accordingly.

Now it is for us to jointly work for transforming Pakistan into the next Asian Tiger economy by seizing enormous opportunities under the CPEC.

May Allah bless all! Amen
China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a major and pilot project of the Belt and Road Initiative which is proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping. CPEC has become the framework and platform for comprehensive and substantive cooperation between China and Pakistan. CPEC is the important consensus reached by the leaders of both countries. The leaders of our two countries have attached great importance as well as rendered active promotion to the construction of CPEC. It has also won across-board support from the political parties and peoples of our two countries, which provided profound and solid public support for CPEC.

In May 2013, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang proposed the initiative of CPEC during his visit to Pakistan, which got positive response and support from the Pakistani government. In July 2013, during Prime Minister Sharif’s visit to China, an MOU was signed to start work on CPEC. Up to now, a series of major projects are being implemented in a steady manner. CPEC has gradually entered into the stage of full implementation from planning, which is playing an increasing role in leading and promoting the bilateral substantive cooperation between China and Pakistan.

CPEC is a long-term and systematic project. China and Pakistan have agreed to promote a “1+4” pattern of economic cooperation with CPEC playing the central role and Gwadar port, energy, transportation infrastructure and industrial cooperation as the four major areas. Both sides will explore and expand the cooperation fields to finance, science and technology, tourism, education and poverty elimination, etc.

CPEC is making progress constantly. For example, Port Qasim and Sahiwal Coal Power Plants, Karot Hydro Power Project and the other 5 power projects are under construction. Commercial contracts of Karakorum Highway upgradation Phase II (Thakot to Havellian) and Karachi to Lahore Motorway (Multan to Sukkur) were successfully signed. The maintenance work of Gwadar Port is under way. The two governments have signed the cooperative document for the feasibility study of master planning of Gwadar city.

CPEC is of great significance to the development of China-Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partnership and the building of the community of shared destiny between China and Pakistan. CPEC will provide new opportunities, new vision as well as new impetus to China-Pakistan relations. CPEC is facing Pakistan as a whole. It will effectively promote the economic and social development of Pakistan. The construction of CPEC will enhance connectivity and integration of development strategies of China and Pakistan, which is in the fundamental interests of our two peoples.

CPEC will bring solid benefits to our two peoples. With the completion of energy and infrastructure projects, the energy and infrastructure conditions in Pakistan will be improved. There will be more electricity integrated into national grid and the electricity supply will be more stable. People will enjoy more convenient transportation and a better livelihood. Besides, we are promoting the social welfare projects in the construction process of CPEC. We are pushing forward the construction of Gwadar primary school, Gwadar hospital with Chinese government’s grant and Gwadar vocational school. We will provide medical, educational and training projects in line with the need of local people. For average persons, the outcomes of the CPEC are tangible, accessible and enjoyable to hundreds of thousands families across the country. This is exactly why we promote the construction of CPEC in Pakistan.

CPEC is also a project with consistency. It will give Pakistan wings for becoming “Asian tiger”. China will strengthen coordination and cooperation with Pakistan on the basis of “one corridor, multiple passages”, scientific planning and step-by-step implementation. China stands ready to work with Pakistan through consultation, promote mutual benefits and win-win cooperation and ensure the quality and safety of the project.

Let’s make joint efforts to get CPEC implemented, to get our traditional friendship and cooperation further enhanced, so as to get the goal of China-Pakistan Community of Shared Destiny achieved at an early date.
China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and its Importance

Dr. Zahir Shah

China Pakistan relationship during the past sixty five years achieved many landmarks; starting with the signing of bilateral trade agreement in 1963, followed by construction of Karakoram highway and having cooperation in diverse fields including energy and defence related industries. CPEC is the vision of the leadership of both countries for transforming this relationship to strategic economic cooperation and contours of CPEC came to the limelight in July 2013. CPEC will take the China Pakistan relationship to new heights.

CPEC is of great value to both China and Pakistan. This framework of regional connectivity will open up west China to south and contribute to ‘One Belt One Road’ initiative policy. The establishment of communication networks from Kashghar (China) to Gwadar (Pakistan) has been agreed mutually to be completed by 2030 in phases. Chinese capital, technology and capacity to operate large number of transport infrastructure (highways/railways) projects will play its supporting role to shape the enabling environment for an open economic system and logistic system in the region which is the regional vision of CPEC. It will not only ultimately benefit China and Pakistan but will have subsequently have far reaching benefitting impacts on all the countries surrounding it.

Pakistan sees CPEC as the driving force to boost its economic growth significantly. Pakistan desires to use this opportunity to remove the bottlenecks to its economic development (namely infrastructure related to transport and energy) in the initial phase, and establish reliable and sustainable highways/railways connectivity and setting sound energy foundation for developing industrial clusters along this communication network. The networks of road and rails besides industrial clusters will result in inclusive regional development besides addressing the domestic stability.

CPEC is envisioned as corridor of peace and development. The phase of planning, construction and operation of China Pakistan Economic Corridor, though is challenging but has significant potentials of promising future. Pakistan’s land and people were adversely affected in the past due to denial policy of the area and frictional environment of conflicts zones. As a policy framework, the integration of economics of the region will take place through media of CPEC. CEPC is a promising beacon of peace and development for the region in every tune of its melody. It will have transformational impact on the state and prosperity of people of Pakistan.

The visit of President Xi Jinping in April 2015 and Chinese commitment of US $ 46 Billion for various project of CPEC, drew the world attention to this new development. It was stated that CPEC will contribute to prosperity of both Pakistan and China and with promising future for the region/world.

Since last year, the environment for investment is continuously improving and implementation of CPEC projects has commenced. The issues are continuously being addressed to achieve new milestones of progress. Most international agencies have expressed positive progression of Pakistan in the last year. Prime Minister of Pakistan held meetings of the political leadership ‘All Parties Conference’, where all political parties repeatedly expressed their consensus and solidarity to the CPEC.

The consideration of new projects in phases is part of the framework of CPEC phased plan till 2030, which will result in inclusive development.

The job opportunities of over million under CPEC will contribute to absorbing the youth bulge of the country. The coast of Pakistan offers unique potential for industrial development, urban development, coastal tourism and marine resources. The development along multiple passages from north to south followed by axis of development west to east will indeed bring the potentials of the regions to interact to form a better world which is peaceful and prosperous for all the players.

A decade and half will be utilized to realize the CPEC projects to achieve the desired regional connectivity, which will bring prosperity besides Pakistan and China to Afghanistan, Iran, CARs and subsequently to India and South Asia.

Let us the seize this grand opportunity and work together to shaper better Pakistan and region for a more peaceful and prosperous region/world of tomorrow.

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Integrating Asia: The History of The ‘One Belt One Road’ Initiative

Dr. Ahmad Rashid Malik

Introduction

Dynamic leaders float ideas to elevate their nations and also the regions at large. The revival of the ancient Silk Road is the main objective of the incumbent Chinese leadership. China has been strongly pursuing an economic diplomacy amongst its neighbors and the regions. China has been shifting its focus from a trading partner to an investment and development partner to share destiny with a number of countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe. The modern Silk Road is a land and a maritime initiative involving a number of countries in south and east to build gigantic roads and physical road, railway, and communication infrastructures. Politically, China does not want to dominate or to influence its neighbors and regions. China’s principles are based upon south-south and north-south cooperation.

Large parts of the postwar world have been economically integrated. Economic integration led them toward a sustainable development and decreasing of political differences and bridging strategic divergences. Bela Balassa in The Theory of Economic Integration emphasised that integration means to bring many parts together as a process. Integration will overcome kind discrimination that exits. Economic integration talks about free trade, custom union, common markets, reduction of tariff, removing of barriers, rules and relaxation etc. Fiscal policies are adjusted according to needs of member countries. We can also include free or relaxed visa regimes among members and easy travel among their citizens. Therefore, all economic effects will come under the economic integration theory.

The United Nations Economic Commissions encouraged economic integration among regions and nations in the postwar period. Many steps were taken to bring about economic integration in Europe such as the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community, and the European Free Trade Association. Besides Europe, Latin America has shown great interests in economic integration.

The chronology of the “One Belt and One Road” initiative is very important to see how carefully Chinese leadership floated the idea and moved to give concrete shape to the very idea over a short span of two years from 2013-16. The Silk Road is a Eurasian ancient concept of land connectivity between China and rest of Asia and Africa, and going beyond Europe. The idea of the Silk Road gained momentum as back in the 2nd century.

The modern Silk Road idea, termed by President Xi Jinping, as the “One Belt and One Road” initiative is a strategic economic vision to create a balanced development across Asia. The idea was revealed when Premier Li Keqiang undertook an official visit to Pakistan in May 2013. In his speech to the Parliament delivered on 23 May 2014 he said:

Our two countries need to develop closer relationship and enhance cooperation to jointly meet international uncertainties and challenges in Asia. The both sides should deepen China-Pakistan comprehensive strategic cooperation, boost pragmatic cooperation in all areas and develop a long-term plan for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, so as to strengthen the connectivity between South Asia and East Asia, promote economic development and livelihood improvement in the neighborhood and provide an exemplary model for cooperation between regional countries.

On 7 September same year, President Xi Jinping delivered an address to Nazarbaye University at Astana in Kazakhstan where he suggested that ‘China and Central Asia should join hands to build a Silk Road Economic Belt to boost cooperation’. China and Central Asia has glorious bonds of friendship from ancient times to post-independence of Central Asian States. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) promotes these bonds. Shaanxi is the hometown of President Xi from where the ancient Silk Road originally starts in ancient times. Chinese Han Dynasty pushed the ancient Silk Road. Many Central States especially Kazakhstan was an important point of the Silk Road linking China with Central Asia and then onward to Europe. President Xi said:

… We need to improve road connections. The SCO is working on an agreement on transport facilitation. Its early signing and implementation will open up a major route connecting the Pacific and the Baltic. On this basis, we can actively discuss the best way to improve cross-border transport infrastructure and work towards a transport network connecting East Asia, West Asia, and South Asia to facilitate economic development and travel in the region.

This will improve trade in the region, enhance monetary circulation, and to promote people-to-people relations, President Xi was of view. The objective of the Silk Road was to open the strategic regional thoroughfare from the Pacific Ocean to the Baltic Sea, and gradually move toward the setting-up of a network of transportation that will connect eastern, western and southern Asia. This would facilitate trade and investment for the benefit of over 3 billion people, half of humanity across China and South Asia alone.

At a SCO session held at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on 13 September 2013, President Xi desired to connect China-Central Asian States through the spirit of the Shanghai Cooperation:
As such, we [SCO], are all duty-bound to carry forward the Silk Road spirit … open up a new transport and logistics routes. The member states could move speedily to sign the Agreement on the Facilitation of International Road Transport. Once signed, the agreement would be open for wide observer participation on a voluntary basis so that the participating countries could build unimpeded transport corridors connecting the Baltic with the Pacific and connecting Central Asia with both the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf.

The fourth important episode in this regard was President Xi’s speech, which he delivered at the People’s Representative Council of Indonesia on 3 October 2013 where he proposed to build a closely-knit China-ASEAN community for constructing a 21st century Maritime Silk Road to promote cooperation.

Then at a seminar held in China on 24 October 2013, President Xi emphasized on the need to establish a Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime Road. The sixth development in this regard was unfolded when at the China-Arab Sixth Ministerial Conference of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum held on 5 June 2014, President Xi reminded:

It was by way of the Silk Road that China’s four great inventions – paper-making, gunpowder, printing, and the compass, were transmitted via the Arab region to Europe, and it was also by way of the Silk Road that the Arab’s astronomy, calendar system, and medicines were introduced to China, making an important chapter in the history of exchanges and mutual learning between civilizations.

President Xi asked Arab countries:

Let us work shoulder to shoulder to promote the Silk Road spirit, strengthen China-Arab cooperation, realize the Chinese Dream and Arab revitalisation, and strive for the lofty cause of peace and development for human kind.

Therefore, after first discussing the idea of the OBOR with Pakistan, China then conducted a series of floating this idea and taking into confidence, Kazakhstan, SCO members, ASEAN, and the Arab States.

The Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) held in November 2013 adopted the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime Silk Road for accelerating and facilitating the interconnection of infrastructure among neighboring countries.

In December 2013, President Xi Jinping urged strategic planning of the “Belt and Road” initiatives to promote the interconnection of infrastructure and build a community of common interests at the Annual Central Economic Work Conference in Beijing.

In February 2014, President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, reached a consensus about the construction of the ‘Belt and Road’, as well as its connection with Russia’s Euro-Asia railways.

On 28 March 2015, during the Boao Forum for Asia, China’s National Development and Reform Commission, in conjunction with China’s Foreign Ministry and Commerce Ministry, issued an action plan for the Belt and Road, bringing the concept one important step closer to realization.

In March 2014, Premier Li Keqiang highlighted acceleration in building the ‘Belt and Road’ in the government work report. The report also promoted balanced development of the Chint Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

In May 2014, the first phase of a logistics terminal jointly built by China and Kazakhstan went into operation in the port of Lianyungang in east China’s Jiangsu Province. The terminal, with a total investment of 606 million Yuan (98 million U.S. dollars), is seen as a platform for goods from central Asian countries to go overseas and a boost to the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt.

As the idea of OBOR received a warm welcome among these countries, in October 2014 Twenty-one Asian countries joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) as founding members.

In November 2014, President Xi announced China will accelerate the construction of the ‘Belt and Road’ and strengthen cooperation with the countries involved. When presiding over the Eighth Meeting of the Central Leading Group on Financial and Economic Affairs in Beijing, he announced that China will contribute US$ 40 billion to set up the ‘Silk Road Fund’. Similarly, the Beijing APEC Summit, he announced that the fund will be used to provide investment and financing support to carry out infrastructure, resources, industrial cooperation, financial cooperation and other projects related to connectivity for countries along the ‘Belt and Road.

The membership of the AIIB exceeded 56 when 50 countries signed the Articles of Association (AoA) on 29 June 2015 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. The event has changed the course of economic relationship among nations and gave them a new sense of participation in development affairs.

In his visit to the Middle East on 19-23 January 2016, President invited Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Iran to join the OBOR.

Therefore, the OBOR idea and its initial implementation have gone through a gradual incremental process during 2013-16. Leaving behind just a few countries (who will join in the near future such as the United States, Canada, Japan, the Philippines, and Malaysia), the OBOR is a comprehensive win-win initiative. The achievements made so far are impressive, leaving toward a more developed and a peaceful world.

The writer is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad. He extensively writes on China, Japan, and East Asian affairs.
What does the “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan” mean to China and Pakistan?

Not long ago, Chinese Ambassador Sun Weidong asked a question to the reporters from Pakistan major Media in a Conference on “Pak-China economic corridor” in Islamabad: “Who can state briefly of three important events happened in China recently?” It regrets very much that no one can give any piece of the events which Ambassador Sun pointed out. I think this means directly that Pak media people couldn’t grasp the situation of China’s development. Even the media people like this, not to mention the common people.

In fact, what the most Ambassador Sun would like to mention is “The Thirteenth Five-Year Plan” on National Economic and Social Development which has passed at the Fifth Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee ended Oct 29 2015, because it has important relevance with Pakistan.

Just look at the name of this plan, it has surprised many people: a central government’s development plan can be continuously carried out for 60 years, and the thirteenth five-year plan is already on the way of implementation. What does it mean? Frankly say that is one of the secret of success of China’s economic and social development. It’s very clear that the successful implementation of the twelve five-Year Plan has made China from a poor and weak developing one into a preliminary modernization country, currently the world’s second largest economy. We can assert that the advantages of China’s political and policy continuity could not be easily matched by other countries.

“The Thirteenth Five-Year Plan” is Chinese five-year development plan from the year of 2016 to 2020. It is very important, not only for China, but also for Pakistan. What does the “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan” mean to China and Pakistan?

For China, the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan is decisive period of building a moderately prosperous society in all aspects. Upon completion of this plan by the year of 2020, China will finish the first century goal of Chinese “two hundred years” goal. “Xiao Kane” (moderately prosperous or comprehensive well-off) society named by Chinese people will be realized. Its measurable standards are following: economy maintaining in high growth (GDP growth at least 6.5%), keeping the balanced, inclusive and sustainable development of China, to double its 2010 GDP and the per capita income of urban and rural residents by the year of 2020 and people’s living standards and quality is generally improving.

In the thirteenth five-year plan to achieve the national goal of building a moderately prosperous society and the process, China will comply with the following principle: adherence to the dominant position of the people, adherence to scientific development, deepening reform, adherence to the rule of law, adherence to co-ordination domestic and foreign situations, adherence to the Party’s leadership.

Meanwhile, we must firmly establish and earnestly implement the innovation, coordination, green, open, shared development philosophy. Under the guidance of this principle, China’s “one belt one road” was written into the “Thirteen Five-Year Plan” in the part of creation of opening up and the development of a new pattern of foreign situation.

Particularly, it’s the first time that China’s “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan” which is contained of “one belt one road” asserts the requirement of enhancing the interactivities with the countries along. In the coming period, capitals and enterprises of China will enter into a development stage of both “bringing in” and “going out”. China’s new foreign direct investment will reach to $ 1.5 trillion in the next 10 years, many of which will be achieved through the investments in the projects of “one belt one road”.

So, what does the “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan” mean for Pakistan? The simplest sentence is a good opportunity for development. As an important part of “one belt one road”, “Pakistan-China Economic Corridor”(CPEC) is the common consensus between the two governments and leaders and gets strongly welcome and support from all sectors of the people of two countries. I am sure it will go forward firmly and consistently. It’s very clear that CPEC will be directly related, not only to the progress and implementation of China’s “opening up” and “one belt one road”, but also to the process of economic and social development of Pakistan.

In fact CPEC is the reflection of reality that China and Pakistan are shared the same destiny. This grand project on the basis of “Win Win” principle provides Pakistan a brand new opportunity to promote economic development and social progress, but also make the development of Pakistan-China friendship to a higher stage. I am sure China will work closely with Pakistan to overcome all difficulties and push forward “Pakistan Economic Corridor” construction step by step, and the Pakistani side should also earnestly seize this rare opportunity for development, and go firmly with the tide. All parties should take the national development of Pakistan as a key point, putting aside their differences, completing of the CPEC project earlier, to create a new millennium of economic development and social progress in Pakistan. Long live the friendship between China and Pakistan.

The writer is Chief of Islamabad Bureau, China Guangming Daily.
China Empowering Pakistan

China and Pakistan have developed strong relationship over the period of many years. They have cooperated with each other on every moment of need. China has gradually emerged as one of Pakistan’s closest friends through the whole CPEC project. The first ever bilateral trade between the two countries was signed in 1963.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is expected to further strengthen trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. Chinese Premier Xi Jinping emphasized construction of the CPEC on urgent basis. The Nawaz Sharif led Government has also shown keen interest and enthusiasm in the project. This project will not just make Gwadar a fully operational port but also a significant deep-sea port in the region.

It is important to note that Beijing certainly regards Pakistan as a strategic ally against India and United States of America. It has also brought strong influence to bear on Pakistan not to back attacks on India, and seek a reduction of tension with Delhi. China certainly is watching the whole situation silently and does not influence international terrorism or a new security crisis in the South Asia. This corridor will also enable India improve its relation with Pakistan to connect to Asia and Central Asian Countries through the corridor. A serious work is going on to develop a consensus between Delhi, Islamabad, Beijing and Washington DC on how to seek peace settlement in Pakistan for smooth running of the project and take benefit mutually.

Federal Minister of Planning, Development Mr. Ahsan Iqbal has said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a national project and it would benefit all the provinces as well as three billion people of region. No province or region of the country would be discriminated in the CPEC. Ahsan Iqbal stated while talking to media. He also said that CPEC offers equal opportunities to all the provinces and regions of the country to develop economically and socially. Government would honor all the commitments it made with the top political leadership of the country in All Parties Conference (APC). It is not one road project, but, a multi-sectoral framework covering energy, infrastructure, Gwadar and industrial sector in the country.

A report assesses potential threats and risks that could affect the implementation of the CPEC project in terms of security, and for that purpose the Pakistan Army is playing its part by formation of a separate division that will contain 70,000 security personal whose role will be to provide security to people and to this project. Long-term political stability in Pakistan is very important for the smooth implementation and construction of the projects that are going on under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor banner. Pakistan has gone through many changes in the last few years related to political instability and turmoil that has weakened the countries development. These projects, if run well have the capacity to bring hundreds of billions of dollars in additional investment in Pakistan. It could restore Pakistan’s economic growth of the early 1960s which led economists at the time to predict that the country would be one of the future leading economic powers of Asia.

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Pakistan is a country that is blessed with abundance of nature, all weathers, and a truly diverse geography. A maritime state, astride the North Arabian Sea, it is bestowed with a vast coastline, offering natural ports and harbours. Having a coastline and access to open seas offers both, opportunities as well as vulnerabilities. While the strategic location of Gwadar does constitute political challenges, it also provides the country with diversity of options in terms of maritime security. The realm of maritime security extends far beyond the traditional ambit of security, encompassing political, economic, scientific, technological and diplomatic aspects as well. A major function of the port is to provide connectivity between sea and land transportation routes. Due to the overwhelming advantages of sea transport over other modes of transportation, over 90% of the world’s trade is carried through the sea. Consequently, protection of sea trade has become the prime focus of maritime security apparatus.

Like most other countries of the world, Pakistan is completely dependent on sea, for over 90% of its total trade. Since its inception the country has depended solely on the Karachi port complex (which includes the Qasim port due its close proximity). However, the two adjoining ports are very close to the Indian border and, therefore, susceptible to attack and blockade. Gwadar being farther away from Karachi and Qasim provides the much desired relief from this dilemma and reduces vulnerability of maritime assets. Majority of Pakistan’s trade and 100% of its oil imports approach from the westerly direction. Presently, the ships and oil tankers have to travel a long distance along Pakistan’s coast to reach their destination at the eastern extremity. During this passage the ships remain prone to attack and have to be protected by naval units which could else be used for other operations. Majority of Pakistan’s trade is carried through foreign flagged vessels which, in times of war or tensions, either refuse to call on Pakistani ports or demand very high war premiums. With Gwadar becoming operational, this travel distance reduces considerably, making it almost impossible for any adversary to interdict Pakistani bound shipping. Thus Gwadar ensures continuity of supplies, in shorter time, saving precious national exchequer.

Furthermore, instead of being confined to one port within striking distance of the enemy, Navy can now disperse its forces along the coast gaining strategic reach and poise advantage. This advantage provides Navy and other maritime forces the capability to deter aggression as well as check illegal activities within Pakistani waters. The geographical location of Gwadar can also help in maintaining a close eye on all shipping emanating from the Strait of Hormuz as well as the activities of regional and extra-regional forces in the area. This superior orientation has become the major cause of concern for policy planners in some Western countries, as well as India. Thus despite the fact that it is being developed as a commercial port, it serves to bolster the existing maritime security organization of Pakistan.

After the demise of Soviet Union there was a sudden rush for grab of natural resources, particularly the hydrocarbons. The next few decades are likely to see a struggle among powers to secure routes for transportation of these resources. We have already seen a competition to control choke-points, ports and connecting routes, and this contest will intensify in the near future. Because of the abundant natural resources found in the Indian Ocean region and the gradual rise of many regional powers, this ocean has already become a stage of geopolitical intrigue. Within the Indian Ocean the North Arabian Sea acts as a ‘strategic heart’ which connects with the proverbial energy jugular of the world- the Persian Gulf. Gwadar is located at a unique position at the crown of the North Arabian Sea astride this energy jugular, which alone is enough of a merit. Gwadar and for that matter Pakistan, connects five very important and resource-rich regions of the world, namely South Asia, China, Central Asia, Persia and Arabia; and with a little geographical imagination even Russia.

Central Asian Republics: The decision to build the Gwadar port was taken in 1991; this was the time when the hydrocarbon-laden and mineral-rich Central Asian Republics (CARs) were gaining independence. These states which hitherto depended on Russia for transportation of goods and resources, needed access to the world and the shortest and most feasible access was through the warm waters of the North Arabian Sea, through either Iran or Pakistan. Due to Iran’s bitter relations with the West and even with the other Gulf monarchies, Pakistan and its Gwadar port was hailed as the preferred choice for the world to connect to the CARs. This, however, could not materialize primarily due to post 9/11 invasion of Afghanistan and subsequent security environment in the region. The CARs are still looking for a viable access to the world and the best possibility remains the Gwadar port. Afghanistan itself has always depended on Pakistan’s Karachi port for access to the sea; after requisite connectivity and facilities, Gwadar will become more feasible. Lately, due to political and security reasons, Afghanistan has diverted some of its trade through Iran, which is a longer and less reliable route. Nevertheless, Afghanistan’s dependence on Pakistan for its maritime trade is not likely to decrease significantly.
**China:** Another very important country that will be the major beneficiary of Gwadar is China. Though China has its own long seaboard, the size of the country is so huge that its western regions are far removed from the sea. As China grows in economic and military stature, it needs to ensure harmony and peace within its boundaries. It has, therefore, lately starting paying more attention to its so far neglected western provinces. The effects of China’s economic reforms in these areas are already becoming visible. For example, Xinjiang, the western-most province of China connected to Pakistan’s border, boasted a trade of $33 billion in 2013 as compared to $22.8 billion the previous year. Similarly, its GDP rose to $130 billion, a year on year increase of 12%. There is also a substantial increase in tourism in the province. China’s western region is akin to Baluchistan; it occupies 56% of the country’s landmass and houses only 23% of its population; it is rich in mineral resources but least developed. Furthermore, it is far removed from the more prosperous east and particularly the ports, all of which are located in the east. China has invested large amounts of money in Xinjiang and adjacent regions, particularly in manufacturing units; however, the transport of energy and raw materials to the area and export of manufacturing goods from, is a source of concern for the Chinese government. And this is where Gwadar can play an important role in solving this predicament.

The port of Shanghai is about 10,000 km from the Strait of Hormuz by sea via the Malacca route while Kashgar, the capital city of Xinjiang, is about 4500 km from the port of Shanghai. However, Kashgar is only 2800 km from Gwadar via the envisaged China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and hence just over 3400 km from the Hormuz. It makes plain economic sense for Beijing to prefer this route only on the basis of the time-distance equation. However, besides economy, China also faces security issues which make the Gwadar-Kashgar route important even for China’s entire sea trade from the west. The ships travelling from the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea have to pass close to the Indian territory as well as through the Malacca Strait and South China Sea. China is fully aware of the vulnerability of the ships throughout the long sea passage and particularly through the Malacca which is termed by the Chinese as the “Malacca Dilemma.” China is, therefore, looking for alternative options to safeguard its supplies and Gwadar provides the most secure and economically feasible alternative to link with this side of the world.

**Africa:** Like Asia, the African continent has long remained under the dominance of the West- first Europe and then the United States. However, since 2009 China has surpassed US as the largest trading partner of the African continent. Africa is also the second largest supplier of oil to China. African countries which only hold 9-10% of the world’s oil, account for one-third of China’s oil imports. Angola is the second largest supplier of oil to China after Saudi Arabia. Other African countries that export oil to China include Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria, Gabon, Algeria, Libya, Chad, and Kenya. During the last one decade China-Africa trade volume has grown ten times to about $300 billion under the aegis of Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). The China-Africa trade has to follow the same long and insecure route through the Indian Ocean/Malacca Strait. Diverting this trade to Gwadar could be a sigh of relief for both the trading partners providing a more economical and secure route.

**Middle East:** Recently, China has also started warming up to the Middle East primarily to ensure security of its future energy needs. Relations between China and Iran, an important oil and gas exporter, have also witnessed an improvement showing signs of growing bilateral trade. Though Iran’s Chahbahar port is regarded as a competitor to Gwadar, Iran understands the importance of Gwadar as the only rationale route to link it with China- the future economic power house of the world. Iran will, therefore, have no choice but to use Gwadar. Iran has already shown a desire to setup an oil refinery in Gwadar; and to supply electricity to Balochistan. Iran’s stakes in Gwadar are likely to increase as the port becomes fully operational. The same is true for the other Gulf countries, which are already witnessing a growth in economic and political relationship with China. Saudi Arabia the largest and most important Gulf State is the largest oil supplier to China. Saudi Arabia has also undertaken joint construction of oil refineries in China and it would be convenient for Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States to use Gwadar not only for transportation of their oil and other trade but also to invest in the envisaged oil city in Gwadar.

Due to the evolving geo-political scenario in the Indian Ocean, the significance of Gwadar port has become manifold. Gwadar port is not just another alternative but an essential gateway that had to open sooner or later. Gwadar’s importance in not restricted to one single country and has to be understood in the context of global political and economic game plan. Pakistan has long neglected two of its most resource rich areas i.e. Balochistan and the Sea. Gwadar is an opportunity for Pakistan to undo its past mistakes and revive both these areas. Revitalization of these two areas could turn the fortunes of the people of Pakistan and transform the country into a developed prosperous economy. In order to fully benefit from the potential of the port, Pakistan needs to understand the geo-politics of the region and use the port to induce cooperation rather than competition among regional and extra-regional players. Gwadar has the potential to act as a catalyst in promoting harmony and prosperity in the region. Political will, determination and skillful diplomacy will be required to manage all stake holders and guide the project to its rightful destiny.

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Given the state of deteriorating conditions of Pakistan’s economy accompanied unemployment, bulk of youth mounting threat of terrorism, any sign of economic uplift should be welcomed to all and sundry. In the given circumstances the CPEC is a very important opportunity apart from the debate, who initiated it, the present government is lucky that it seems to materialize in its tenure. I am neither an economist nor development analyst but as it starts and I hope it would be soon.

One thing is clear that it will bring dividends and benefits not to one country only but for the entire region. Pakistan needs economic uplift in the terms of provision of jobs, construction of roads, economic zones and so on so forth. China needs access to Central Asia and the Middle East through a shorter route then the longer and expensive sea route used at present. Pakistan and people of Pakistan will get benefit from energy projects, employment, communication projects and all sort of socio-economic development that the CPEC has to offer. But we have doubts and misunderstandings on the issue which may harm our national prospects. True, it is not only politics, the government on its part has not come out in crystal clear words and intents on the subject, which is the right of all political and federal entities in fact all responsible conscientious citizens deserve to know but apart from the government.

Individual and nations both need ideas and ideals to survive and prosper, both for the individual and collective progress. All ideas and ideals may not be realized but having life and nourishment, intellectual and collective. The collective is more important as it would make up for the individual. Therefore we should realize that may be with some disturbance of balance at the federal and political level, we should hope and go along with the project’s achievement which is possible only in cordial and peaceful atmosphere - peace from terror front and peace within our ranks. Unless the country is cleared of terror and terrorism and also in a position to generate – invest its share of investment particularly in the energy sector the CPEC will remain a dream.

China is investing and no stakeholder will do so if the dividends are not insight. The idea is good for both countries – the ideal is attractive but the achievement yet questionable not much from China’s end but at our end. Neither is end to terrorism insight nor is any immediate recipe for the investment required from Pakistan’s side.

We all know that we are a nation of hopes and given the chance we can achieve the much wanted consensus and success on all fronts but those who are our own – our own government should put its trust in the capabilities of the nation as a whole not just depend on the ability of its functionaries – say the establishment. An elected government should rely on its strength – that is the people – the nation. Put the whole plan – project in black and white to the people make them see and understand get their consensus and with their zeal and zest achieve what seems a gigantic task.

In a logical manner the issue can be summarized as :-

1. It is important that the government lay in full detail the whole plan/project that is CPEC with all details, terms and condition before the nation through parliament and print and electronic media without any ambiguity. Besides involving the Federating and Non-Federating units i.e. Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Azad Jammu Kashmir, Fata etc.
2. The attention of governments – Federal and Provincial, all institutions Civil and Defence, all stakeholders Civil and Military Bureaucracy, Parliament, all Political parties, all individuals and groups is focused on the elimination of terrorism of all forms.
3. The difference of opinion between governments Federal and Provincial, political parties, government and opposition be thoroughly discussed, sorted out and even if some lacunas remain, those should be set aside for the rational interest.
4. If this is achieved (let’s hope against hope) then all resources attention and focus should be on realization the CPEC in practice. This will in turn bring benefits for the Pakistani Nation as a whole - if still a province a domain or a group feel unhappy they should be compensated in other ways. But no controversy within Pakistan can be afforded at this stage of our National crises at all ends.

Pakistan is in dire need of Economic development which we have missed so far, we owe it our coming generations not to miss any opportunity towards this end. China is a friend and neighbor, if with China’s co-operation we can gain, in energy, communication and industrial sector. We should work on this opportunity and make the best of it. Meanwhile and at any stage if some other opportunity like the Iran – Pakistan Gas Pipe Line is possible we should work towards it diligently and continue to do so like a ‘Nation’ should. Individuals and Government come and go, Pakistan and Pakistan’s are there to stay. So the way for development of the country and its people should be cleared and everyone should contribute no matter in how big and small way the process should go on. Development is a participatory process which has to go on and on without break. Lets hope, pray and work for our National progress. With our sincerity when we work God will help, guide and give us opportunities.

Senator Dr. Saeeda Iqbal
For those people aspiring to see a smooth implementation of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor free of interruption from political wrangling and media agitation, there can be hardly any less auspicious way in which year 2016 could have begun with. With the federal government and a grand alliance of almost all opposition parties pitched against each other with regards to the CPEC route, and the former accusing the later as traitors, the later accusing the former as liars, thus leaving the two sides with no common ground on which to develop any dialogue, this deadlock doesn’t seem to offer any prospect of quick solution.

Alarmed by this new wave of controversy which is hijacking CPEC as a political hostage, Chinese government, which has long taken a light posture in this Pakistan’s domestic quagmire seemingly beyond its own capacity or responsibility to iron out, in a rare but solemn move, has urged Pakistani leaders to solve the issues between themselves, in an effort to create a favorable condition for the timely completion of CPEC. However, with a pan-party, inter-province common sense of national identity largely absent, any sustainable nationwide agreement on CPEC routes and projects would be more of an alluring dream than a realistic possibility. If a buzzword can be borrowed from China’s own economic lexicon to describe the environment that CPEC is in, it is that the controversial politicizing of CPEC has become a New Norm that we have to live with, with the only alternative being a more damaging Zero Option, read leaving CPEC in the backburner altogether.

Sounding self-defeatist, but ground reality of Pakistan’s political landscape and institutional setup dictates that it is the only realistic option to live with the politicized controversy in the process of CPEC construction, while at the same time taking due damage control measures to prevent the whole project being derailed, to the joy of hostile foreign observers with US and India being on the top of the not so short list. I think I need to pause here a little bit to make two tiny clarifications so that this article might not be taken as another source of controversy which we already have an overabundance of. Firstly, since it is almost impossible to take an absolutely neutral stance on this issue with concerned parties divided into two camps, any argument this article makes in favor of either maintenance or change of status quo is purely based on scientific and economic ground (despite my recognition of the reasonableness of Premium, which I define as critically necessary investment made on uneconomic basis for the general good of the CPEC as a whole); Secondly, any idea or argument I rebuttal against in this article shall not be seen as an insult against the individual or the group of people who make them in the first place (despite the simple fact that any effort of setting the record straight would necessarily involve hurting those sticking to the bended one, and that healing their emotional wound is the responsibility more of an psychiatrist than of an economist). After these clarifications, I would love to develop this article largely in the framework of answering some most frequently asked questions with regards to the CPEC.

1. Does the shorter distance make the western route economically more desirable? To answer this question, we have to go back to the very basic concept or definition of Economic Corridor by making a quick reference to an ADB report titled Operationalizing Economic Corridors in Central Asia, which defines it as something that promotes organization of economic activities to create jobs, increase productivity, strengthen economic clusters, and contribute to economic development of the country, as distinct from a transport corridor, which ensures connectivity (within the country, within the region, and with outside the region) as well as from a transit corridor, which enables smooth transit through countries. Despite not being in a position to know whether the Chinese government consulted with the ADB with regards to the naming of the CPEC, taking into consideration the not insignificant difference in the definitions as mentioned above, it is logical to assume that the mere fact that CPEC was named as CPEC rather than CPTC or anything else speaks volumes of what China was expecting from and Pakistani government was agreeing about this mega project.

The ADB report, besides giving a definition of the three kinds of corridor, went one step further in drawing a general picture of what each of them might look like respectively. A transit corridor, the report rightly argues, is focused on point-to-point trips, with little role for anything in between; An economic corridor, conflicting with the transit objectives of greater speed and reliability in point-to-point movements, focus on increased density and variety of economic activities in the corridor space. Applying this to the CPEC, a shorter distance doesn’t make as much economic sense as some argues it does.

As the corollary of this shorter distance theory, its advocates are also trying to make the less dense population in KPK and Balochistan a big plus, arguing the cost of land acquisition is lower than what would be expected in over congested Punjab and Sind. It would have been a winning argument no one can disagree with if we were talking about a point-to-point transit or transport corridor, yet the true color of CPEC being an economic corridor means that it has far more functions than merely offering China an improved quality of transportation which enables
more rapid movement of goods from Kashgar to Gwadar. Numerous personal interactions with Chinese scholars and officials working South Asia in general and CPEC in particular have made it clear that many more functions beyond merely offering a land bridge to the Arabian Sea are being attached to CPEC, and one most important aspect of that is enabling Pakistan to build its own pillar industry over time, as manifested by the fact that 38 out of the 46 billion dollars is to be investment in energy sector, contributing to a power generation capacity far in excess of the current demand supply gap, in preparation for the establishment of dozens of industrial zones down the pipeline.

As any cost return analysis would be at best incomplete without taking due consideration on both sides of the formula, arguments in favor of the western route made on cost analysis doesn’t stand its ground if we take return side into calculation, which is certain to be more significant along the eastern route with its bigger market, better educated labor force, more accessible materials. However harsh it might sound to the people along the western route, it is the eastern route that offers a bigger leverage to each and every cent of investment, which is more dictated by economic common sense than by the personal or family interest of PM Sharif or his younger brother.

2. Does the development right of KPK and Baloch people just deserve ignorance? A clear answer to this question is a big NO, for the simple reason that we will not let pure economic theory direct the practice of running a country, a job better left to a real statesman rather than an economist however competent he or she might be. For any country that is witness a mega project like CPEC unfolding on its territory, it has to enable all its citizens, however divided between themselves either in terms of language, race, religion, class, to benefit from it in one way or another, otherwise it would have no other option but to face the challenge from those being intentionally or unintentionally left over, for the simple reason that a bigger disgust of inequality than of poverty itself is a human nature built within each and every one of us that we cannot behave as it doesn’t exist or function. It is not the meanness or jealousy of the Baloch or the Pashtun. It is that of us human beings. Now, the question of whether or not has been developed into yes and how and I will try to further elaborate on that path.

In other countries, multiple channels and mechanism through which a geographically concentrated development project benefits people far beyond its physical boundary have been or still are functioning. China, for example, thanks to our centralized political system and a planned economy legacy, an effective national wealth redistribution system has enabled people in the western provinces, which is our equivalent of KP and Balochistan, to enjoy the economic dividend of the rapid development in our eastern coastal provinces, which is the equivalent of Punjab and Sind and the frontline of our reform and opening up. The national wealth in the first place generated from economic activities fairly concentrated area along China’s coastline, after being accumulated in the central level, has not only been used to fund some basic necessity of western provinces, but also enabled the central government to launch a state level strategy to develop the western areas of China, an initiative of which the CPEC itself is a part and parcel. Such a strong macro-economic control system, according to most of my interlocutors in Pakistan, does not seem to be in existence here, leading people to worry about a winner takes all scenario where the inter provincial development gap would be more permanently established, a logical worry that has nothing to do with treason at all.

Not betting on any possibility of a corrective move whether due to the present government’s sudden wakening up to the soundness of macro-economic control, or due to a KP or Baloch based nationalist party making their way into the PM house, no miracle will take place in Pakistan’s domestic political landscape to save the CPEC from the controversy in its current shape if the inter province development gap is left unaddressed or allowed to worsen, and the CPEC has no other option but to save itself from this political quagmire by making politically necessary, morally desirable and economically acceptable concessions to the western provinces. Those investment based more on social than on economic calculation has to be made so that the grievances of the otherwise non-priority provinces would not run so high as to capitalize the whole CPEC project as they are threatening to do in a replication of the Kalabagh dam, yet it doesn’t mean that the provincial government or political parties should ask for an absolute equality with the priority province, and threaten blocking CPEC access into their provinces as a whole. A realistic and long term beneficial approach would be to welcome existing development plans, whether it is a 2 lane or 4 lane road, whether it is SEZs dedicated to lower or higher position of the value chain, to make the best use of them for providing local employment and getting economically better prepared to advance to a higher level of economic activities. No leapfrog should be expected to take place overnight from a Stone Age economy into a Digital Age one.

3. Is claiming ADB funded projects as part of CPEC as bad as that?

As a direct trigger to this round of CPEC route controversy, the visit to Zhob and the inauguration of the CPEC Western Route has to be mentioned. A main argument oppositions make against this move is that the government is intentionally ADB funded projects as parts of CPEC, as if it were aimed at distorting facts and misleading the public. Actually, the categorization of these two ADB funded projects as part of CPEC is not as much an embarrassing own goal as someone is taking great joy in making a big fuss about, not
least because the ADB itself has not made any statement of opposition, but because the CPEC is not so much exclusive that any additional investment made by other countries or international institutions than China cannot be part of it. In fact, CPEC is a geographical concept rather than one of financing mechanism and the 46 billion dollar is not the whole scale of the project, but only China’s share of contribution. In the last year alone, multiple third countries and international institutions have clear their intention to invest in CPEC projects, which includes but is not limited to USAID, UK’s DFID and AIIB, without any intention of renaming their respective projects as US-Pakistan Economic Corridor, UK-Pakistan Economic Corridor or AIIB Funded Pakistan Economic Corridor.

That said, the PM’s visit to Zhob, despite all his good intention of silencing dissatisfaction, is misguided at best, and its counterproductive effect through the prism of strategic communication cannot be overlooked. Even without a paralleled groundbreaking for the Eastern Route, the act of laying down a foundation stone of the Western Route makes it writing on the wall that there is a distinction between the western and the eastern route, thus giving room for an irrational yet perfectly understandable comparison between the two routes. Any artificial comparison between the western and eastern route should be avoided, not because there is something to hide beneath the carpet, but because that such a comparison in itself is erosion to the national identity. Just as no man can marry four wives and treat them absolutely equally, no country can build two routes that are identical to each other in terms of both chronological priority and engineering quality.

4. Is there any solution to the current route controversy? The answer to this question depends on how we define a solution to the current controversy. If it is defined as silencing the dissenting voices altogether, there is hardly anything closer to impossible; if it is defined as an effective damage control that enables the CPEC to be built in its scientifically decided shape, there is a sliver of hope that we can accommodate this New Norm without sacrificing the progress of CPEC. In order to catch the sliver of hope, positive steps need to be taken from both sides.

Step One: Create common ground for meaningful dialogue. Trading non-reconciliatory accusations against each other will do no good but to further widen the gap and making dialogue increasingly impossible, and a softening of the tongue from both sides should begin from stop using such words as liars or traitors. The federal government might not be telling all the truth, but terming any clarification one doesn’t like as an outright lie would be nothing but naivety. Similarly, not all opposition parties are reading the script as prepared by some external powers. For any dialogue to take place and to come up with meaningful results, the sincerity of participants is always more important than the channel of dialogue.

Step Two: Prevent the opposition camp from resorting to incrementalism There would be hardly anything more damaging to the long term soundness of the CPEC than an opposition group resorting to incrementalism as a strategy by which they can chop one slice after another of concession from the federal government. Their demand is already on an escalatory course which has inflated all the way up from seeking mere coverage to demanding outright equality. Last year right before the Karachi JCC meeting, news circulated that the federal government agreed upon dualization of the Western Route due to pressure from the opposition camp. If true, this would be a thin end of the wedge, inspiring the opposition parties to seek more benefit simply by making louder noises.

Step Three: Rebuild people’s confidence in CPEC as an economic project. If the political wrangling has not killed the CPEC instantly, at least a deep scar has been left on it. Ordinary people are beginning to view the CPEC as a distorted infant given birth by not scientific design but political struggle. In order to rebuild people’s confidence in and commitment to CPEC, the toxin of over politicization has to be undone and the best detoxification device would be an scientific overhaul of CPEC taking all objective factors such as geography, demography, economic vitality into full consideration. The establishment of a Geo Spatial Technology Cell at Planning Commission is a good start, yet there is still a long way ahead in convincing the public that this cell in particular and upcoming similar cells in general have their true colors, rather than a scientific sugarcoating of another political doze.

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There can be no sustainability of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) without a parallel China Pakistan Education Corridor. Economic Growth can only be fueled by human resources enabled by opportunities for learning, technical skills, communication and transactional technologies.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) comprising almost 3000 (2,700)- kilometer highway stretching from Kashgar to Gwadar is a gigantic milestone for Pakistan. The project is an impressive collaboration for China and Pakistan but especially for the latter where it will be a game changer for human development and economic growth. Extending from the Karakoram Highway that links China’s Province of Xinjiang with Pakistan’s north region, the infrastructure project will be building economic zones along the corridor. CPEC will stretch across all 5 provinces bringing a conservative investment of USD 45 billion over the next 15 years. It will also establish energy and transport infrastructure laying the foundation for an unimaginable supply chain, numerous industry and services clusters and small cities. But none of this can be sustained without giving adequate attention to education, technical vocational and livelihoods skills and a high degree of environmental stewardship and civic responsibility. The overlapping of industry clusters with social capital clusters is a unique opportunity that Pakistan cannot afford to miss and it will not too! The synergies are obvious as are the dividends.

There is much written on the benefits of CPEC and more will emerge as the research on various dimensions deepens. The purpose of this note is to highlight that the government of Pakistan (Federal and Provincial) must exponentially focus on all districts along the corridor in general and those which have poor indicators in particular.

The current 19 districts of the CPEC from Gilgit Baltistan to Sindh is an impressive list indeed.

Hunza- Nagar- Diamer (3 districts Gilgit Baltistan); Kohistan, Battagram, Manshera, Abbottabad and Haripur – (5 districts Khyber Pakhtoonistan); Attock, Mianwali, Sargodha, Layyah, D.G.Khan and Rajanpur (6 districts Punjab); Dera Bugti, Khuzdar, Pungur, Gwadar (4 districts Balochistan) and Jacobabad (1 district Sindh). Of these 19 districts, almost 11 have enrolments less than 80% and learning levels below 50% of grade 5 children tested for grade 2 level competencies with major gender gaps! These girls and boys will be the human capital for CPEC, clearly unable to match with the aspirations of the “economic corridor”. It is imperative to upgrade the human resources, facilities and opportunities for their development through a dynamic 5 year CPEC district education plan (DEP) for each of the 19 districts spanning programs for age groups from 2 years to 40 years of age in hard and soft skills, an age group comprising 75% of our population. These districts are our invaluable national asset, but remain constrained by major challenges of health, nutrition, poverty, decent jobs, environment and climate change. These multiple fault lines can be addressed comprehensively, attracting public and private domestic financing as well as external financing from China and other development partners. Such an approach presents an opportunity for ‘innovating financing models’ for Pakistan, combining cross-sectoral pooling of resources for infrastructure, services, health, education and skills (hard and soft).

On June 23rd 2015, a letter was written...
by the civil society organization Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) to the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Nawaz Sharif prior to his participation at the Oslo Education Summit on July 4-5, 2015. The segment which highlighted CPEC is reproduced below to provide a context for why education and economic clusters must go together.

- The China Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) must have a mirror China – Pak Education Corridor that ensures full integration of economic growth and education. This mega initiative will help us develop an education/human resource cluster alongside the industrial/trade/service clusters across 3000 kilometers pathway. This integration and alignment will support human resource needs for the next 50 or 100 years through formal education/industry partnerships. Sir it is imperative that a multi-sectoral task force is formed under your able chairmanship steering your key team leaders, industry captains, experts, local parliamentarians, youth and citizens to design the architecture of this synergy and details of this initiative. This is no doubt, a win-win program where the government of China, national and provincial governments and people will join hands with industry. This initiative mobilizing foreign and domestic financing will be a huge additionality for education that must be provided due space in the upcoming new National Education Policy in 2016 in the financing, basic, technical vocational and higher education chapters. [http://www.osloeducationsummit.no/](http://www.osloeducationsummit.no/)

After September 25th 2015 when 166 world leaders endorsed the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 at the UN General Assembly including our Prime Minister where each goal is inextricably linked to education for sustainability, CPEC is an opportunity to collaborate across sectors. It can, and must be an intensive model for inter-sectoral planning and constituency building; the general elections are just 2 years away, CPEC could be an accelerator, lifting the political economy of education for sustainability to new and legitimate heights.

**DISTRICTS along CPEC: (19 district)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province Name</th>
<th>Sr. #</th>
<th>District Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gilgit-Baltistan</td>
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<td>Hunza-Nagar</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Gilgit</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Diamer</td>
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<td>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jacobabad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Education Profiles- District Rankings & Data

- [www.aserpakistan.org](http://www.aserpakistan.org)
- [http://www.alifailaan.pk/district_rankings](http://www.alifailaan.pk/district_rankings)

*The writer is Advisor - Trustee Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA), www.itacec.org*
It would be an understatement to iterate that nation really has high hopes from the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). There are reservations by some provinces regarding the alignment of the routes but it is sincerely hoped that in times to come these problems would be amicably resolved and the CPEC will live up to its promised potential. As per available statistics the major portion of the 46 billion dollars will be spent on infrastructure and energy projects. This is all very well. Road and rail network is essential for national and international connectivity and energy shortage is one problem that needs to be addressed at war footing to cover the widening demand and supply deficit. With more electricity in homes, the domestic consumer would breathe easy and would be in a better position to increase his or her productivity at the work place. But more than that it will kick start the moribund industrial sector. With the production lines once again operational, the depressed status of economy will hopefully revive. So it is hoped that all in the entire situation will improve and would become a harbinger for a better future for the next generation Pakistanis.

In my opinion, more value can be added to the upcoming project, if the CPEC and routes that will form part of it have an interconnected network of schools, colleges and universities with high caliber curriculum and quality teachers. Pakistan has a burgeoning population. An incredibly young population, weak or non-existent birth control measures and very little by way of spending on education makes for a dismal picture. 25 million children are out of school by official estimates and many more likely to join them. Less than 3 per cent of the GDP is currently being allocated for education is really too small to avert the upcoming storm of an illiterate teeming millions with no skill set worth its name to take on the challenges of modern times.

Government of Pakistan is already planning to have universities in each district. Actually what we need is more schools and the universities that we already have need to be upgraded to provide quality education in order to produce world class engineers, scientists and thinkers. It is really a doable idea to stitch new schools and universities into the fabric of the CPEC routes. Through a systematic plan knowledge hubs can be created at important intersections to lift the nation out of the quagmire of illiteracy and ancient and backward narratives.

The national education policy in any case needs to be overhauled. If the CPEC knowledge corridor is interwoven into its fabric it will become more effective. In case this proposal is accepted then it would be but necessary to involve the managers of CPEC in it, so that they become partners in spreading education for the betterment of the nation. Education for all can then become an integral part of this seminal venture. The resources promised for the CPEC can be buttressed with additional funds to revive education and make it a flagship chapter of this monumental initiative.

It is important to dream and hope for better things. CPEC is a promising vision that aimed to fulfill the potential of Pakistan as a vibrant and dynamic nation. While it is still on the drawing board, its scope can be re-examined and expanded before the policy framework becomes a fixed agenda – immutable an unalterable. I strongly believe that making education a part of it can help the nation to prepare for the upcoming challenges of a world that will be increasingly automated and digitized and dependent on cutting edge technologies like drones and robots.

Investing in the human resource is the only way forward and making it part of the CPEC can have unimaginable gains. Hundreds of schools have been destroyed in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province by terrorists and there is generally a low literacy in Baluchistan. Female education lags considerable behind in the overall scheme of things. Revival of education in areas where it has been systematically destroyed and where it has never existed can be a great game changer for the people of Pakistan and there can be no better platform than CPEC to carry this mission forward.

In order to make this dream a reality this idea would need the support of all the provinces and a uniform plan of action. I don’t think this is not an impossible wish or desire to fulfill. The only thing that is needed is honest resolve, dedication and total commitment to the notion that is at once noble, pristine and forward looking.

The writer is a retired brigadier and is currently the Associate Dean of Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) Islamabad.
Tourism is a diverse sector, which during the past decades, has gained the position of a leading industry in the world. Despite occasional shocks, tourism has shown virtually uninterrupted growth. International tourist arrivals have increased from 25 million globally in 1950 to 1.2 billion in 2015. Likewise in 2015, it brought about a direct review of US$ 1.5 trillion in the global economy and accounted for 10 percent of global GDP.

Being associated with multiple subsectors like transportation, hotels, restaurants, tourist shops, travel guides, tour operators, etc., the sector has a very significant role to play in enhancing the economic activity and creating employment opportunities in tourist areas. Travel and Tourism also acts as a bridge for bringing people from different cultures and traditions together; and thus serves as a powerful vehicle for increasing global harmony and peace.

From the prospect of Pakistan it can be a massive source of earning as our country possess top class tourist attractions from stunning Himalayan peaks, beautiful lakes, scenic valleys, rich culture, centuries old civilizations, vast deserts, golden beaches of Makran to all the other natural and manmade attractions. But unfortunately Pakistan’s tourism potential has largely been untapped and no serious attention has been paid by concerned authorities to make it a major engine of economic growth for the country.

Ironically, government of Pakistan has totally ignored this sector and now Pakistan is almost a forgotten destination on the world tourism map. Pakistan lacks the good policies and government backing which might help bring the tourism industry back on its feet. On top of this the tourism industry in Pakistan has been facing continues wrath of instable law and order situation as a result of post 9/11 wave of terrorism.

The mega project of Pak-China Economic Corridor between Pakistan and China which has been envisaged as a game changer by most of our economic experts also has enormous potential to revive Pakistan’s ailing tourism industry. The multi-billion dollar joint venture will include road and rail link passing through the mighty Karakorum and Himalayas in the northern Pakistan. This modern road and rail link will
not only help in boosting the trade and industrial activity in the region but will also help in boosting tourism in Pakistan, especially in Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and coastal areas of Baluchistan.

This road and rail route will pass through the most spectacular mountain ranges where we have world renowned high mountain peaks, long glaciers and beautiful valleys. The improved accessibility created through this modern road and rail network will also help to attract large number of tourists from across the globe and especially from China which already has achieved the position of No.1 in outbound tourism market in the world with over 70 million Chinese traveling abroad each year. If I am not exaggerating, this unique rail route along the Karakorum Highway has great potential to become one of the top 10 rail journeys in the world because of the incredible landscape value of this region.

In July 2006, China inaugurated similar railway link between Mainland China with Lhasa spanning over 1956 km including nearly 1000 km at an altitude of over 4000 meters. This railway line has brought huge economic benefits to both Qinghai and Tibet and has become a major tourist attraction from its very beginning. In 2011, the railway line saw a record high of tourist number of 10 million compare with 1.8 million in 2006 when it was inaugurated. Similarly the railway link between China and Pakistan passing through the mighty Karakorum will defiantly attract millions of foreign and domestic tourists. While planning this rail link our government should also pay special attention to develop the areas along the route with the tourism point of view.

In order to fully materialize the great potential of Pak-China Economic Corridor, the government should integrate the development of tourism related infrastructure along this route in the overall development plan. Tourist destinations in Gilgit-Baltistan, KPK, Punjab, Sindh and coastal areas of Baluchistan should be especially focused in the near future development agenda to take the load of future high flow of foreign tourists who will enter Pakistan through this scenic route via China. The popular tourism products such as adventure tourism, heritage tourism, cultural tourism, religious tourism, nature tourism, all of them need to be developed keeping in view the suitability along this route by effectively engaging the private sector and foreign investment. Special attention should also be given to ensure improved law and order situation in the region to ensure to safety of tourists.

What we need here is a good national tourism policy and full government backing. The incumbent government should prioritize tourism as a leading sector of Pakistan’s economy and help bring tourism industry back on its feet. Although terrorism has been attributed as one of the major cause of decline of tourism in Pakistan but we can easily defeat terrorism with tourism by creating income and employment generation opportunities for the insolvent people of far flung areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan and coastal areas of Baluchistan where there are limited other industries and business opportunities to support their livelihoods. By developing tourism industry, other small and medium enterprise activity such as hotels, restaurants, transport, handicrafts, shopping, local recreational spots and local entrepreneurs get simultaneously boosted and it create thousands of new jobs for unskilled and skilled workforce.

Far-reaching policy measures would need to be adopted by federal as well as provincial governments, so that the tourists who were scared away due to the terrorist activities may be attracted back to revive the tourism industry in Pakistan. Although in the post 18th Amendment scenario tourism is now a provincial subject but creation of a National Tourism Council at federal level by involving stakeholders from public and private sectors from all regions is the key to enhance coordination, international cooperation and to create harmony on the matters of common interest for the development and promotion of tourism on sustainable lines.

The writer has more than 28 years’ experience in the field of travel and tourism. He is the President of Sustainable Tourism Foundation Pakistan and former Vice President of Adventure Foundation Pakistan. He is also a Fellow of Leadership for Environment and Development.
China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Challenges of Quality Labor-force

Dr. Habibullah Magsi

It is not always the question that how economic corridors to be spread out, but how economic corridors to be sustained? For their sustainability the quality labor force can play a pivotal role, which depends on education, trainings, physique and health. Labor quality is always be measured by its domain knowledge, soft skills like leadership and managerial quality, creativity, and the ability to learn and adapt to the changing environment. For taking the advantages of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor we need to increase percentage of professionals, managers, executives, and technical workers rather than the unskilled laborers/workers. Of course Chinese partners will not only build the required infrastructure, but also make Pakistan a key collaborator, thus they will be expecting for highly skilled professionals in order to retain and sustain this partnership with economic and strategic ambitions. Pakistan, which is the 10th largest country in the world according to the size of the labor force, the country has the blessing of the demographic dividend. The population between age of 15-49 are filled with tremendous and towering ambitions. It will be a great wastage of human resource if the youth are not given an opportunity to exercise their talents. In facts, the country has higher population growth (1.95 percent) as compared to jobs provision; that is why unemployed are increasing by 2 million people annually. Studies have shown that investments in human capital are essential for sustaining economic growth over time. The United States, Japan, France, Germany, and many other nations have sustained economic growth over the past century, while spending on their human resource.

Heavy investment in worker trainings and a better educated, labor force are given credit for much of the growth in per-capita income and economic productivity. For example: a comparison of modern, educated farmers with farmers in traditional economies shows the need for educating workers to help them cope with changing technologies. While as an economists we have been able to demonstrate a statistical relationship between education and earnings since long. That is, higher earnings are directly proportionate with more education and trainings. The theory that more education is a causative factor in higher earnings highly educated individuals have the ability, self-discipline, and motivation; such individuals tend to do well in the labor market.

Contrary, due to our current education system (except a few parts of the country) we are losing our edge in the world, our students are not properly educated and feel entitled to work after high school/college no matter they are skilled or not. Either the curriculum is continually watered down and made inoffensive, or no required attendance (75 percent) is being maintained for examinations. Moreover, the educational institutions, issuing certificates to their students, which means they guarantee for their quality and performance, but most of the institutes are plagued by bureaucracy and financial problems and have become factories that pump out unequipped people (low-quality labor force).

In Pakistani rural settings, due to the poverty majority of parent cannot send their kids for higher education and try to have jobs on a metric basis (10 years of standard education); they think that their kids may start earning no matter how much. That is only reason that in Pakistan a person has primary education (even doesn’t know
the terms used in his local market) usually protest that s/he is unemployed, while in highly industrialized countries, people have to get up to university level education, before to enter into job market or unemployed labor force. As we see that whenever people joined jobs at the lowest literacy level the right attitude gap has increased, as they did not go to university (even college) how they do know the different service positions/cadres/ groups. I would like to quote here some examples published by reputed newspapers in past: (i) due to attitude gap, many professionals, professors had misbehaved by lower grade employees, and were always ignored, because it was conceived that they were unqualified/less-gifted. On the other hand in some nations there is coherence among institutions, where not only the lower employees respects; even judges stood up in respect of teachers while holding courts; (ii) due to lack of professionalism, lots of examples published on disrespects and assassinations of foreigners (professionals/ scientists/ tourists) in the country, because of either they were highly skilled or economically sound; (ii) another example, what to be expected from the government employee cannot read identity cards written in other then local language. This is because people enter in services sector without prior of skilled trainings, and that is a major cause of dwindled productivity.

Here the question arises that do we need same labour force for this economic corridor or how do quality standards get set? As an academician, to guide/suggest/recommend our functionaries that how it can be coped-up, to enhance good governance and to meet international standards. In order to enhance quality labor force following recommendations are suggested:

1. The current employment policy for different cadres may be revised as proposed below, where, promotion period from one grade to another may remain unchanged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job cadres</th>
<th>Eligibility criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BPS 1 - 9</td>
<td>Graduation or minimum 14 years of standard education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS 10 - 16</td>
<td>Post-Graduation or minimum 16 years of standard education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS 17 - 19</td>
<td>MPhil. or minimum 18 years of standard education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS 20 - 22</td>
<td>PhD or minimum 3 years (1000 accumulative days) specialized/ professional trainings after 18 years of standard education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSS</td>
<td>Minimum 16 years of standard education</td>
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2. Teacher and parents must provide directions to the students in order to set an objective that where they can best serve and what sciences they require for their socioeconomic and geographic wellbeing. It must not be the matter to them if their homework is done as best as they can do it, but to cultivate a sense of honor among them. If there is no objectivity or feeling that if anything is worth doing, thus the students will not care about grades, but only care about honor, prestige and what sort of job they will get, thus it will encourage youth to seek required skills for a suitable job. Parents must understand that if the government is responsible for their jobs, then they must be responsible to provide at least 16 years of standard education for their kids, to meet job criteria.

3. In order to train our youth government must bound universities to send their students for at least 6 months of internship (skill development) in public or private institutions before having their degrees, because skill development based on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to reap benefits of demographic dividend and enhancement in productivity for economic growth. Such investments provide returns to the individual as well as to the economy as a whole. Individuals benefit from higher earnings, and the economy as a whole benefit from higher productivity.

Therefore, the proposed solutions (more time, more money for infrastructure and research, more oversight, more accountability) will encourage true learning. It will not be fun, but if it’s done, it will guarantee the quality labor force; as we are aiming that to get richer and stronger from this corridor.

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The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) presents an unprecedented opportunity for the state and people of Pakistan as never before has such massive investment, capable of a country-wide transformation, been poured into the country. Moreover, a similar proposal would have a lesser significance if offered at an earlier point in history than it has today, thus its endorsement as a Game-changer for Pakistan. This is because Pakistan, by virtue of its favorable geo-strategic positioning had always been a desirable partner and an affable counterpart for states interested in its surrounding region. But in recent times, things have gone from bad to worse and despite the geo-strategic favorability withstanding, the desire and will to engage with Pakistan has followed a constant downward curve. To everyone’s knowledge, that is the outcome of endlessly regressing security situation as well as political and social instability which has become Pakistan’s identifying features in the contemporary International community.

In such circumstances, it is Pakistan’s only all-weather friend, the People’s Republic of China whose strategic interests have given it enough will and courage to embark upon such journey with Pakistan. This single Chinese move counts as a much needed silver-lining for Pakistan, giving hope for multi-faceted dividends in addition to economic revival. The master-plan includes multiple projects for building and improving transportation, communication and energy infrastructure across the corridor touching the least developed parts of the country. It thus gives to the political elite a chance to assuage the decades old reservations regarding their biased policy-making behavior towards backward areas of the country.

Promoting development, employment opportunities and the social stability that will help eradicate radical tendencies having great appeal in the less-developed parts. CPEC therefore provides us with avenues for correcting the course and for seeing its fruitful outcomes as well. However, a potential game-changer can make a real contribution only when the game is being aptly played, that too by adept players well-aware of their interests and priorities. CPEC with a total worth of $46 billion, is no exception to this rule. The proposed corridor would actually turn tables in Pakistan’s favor only if hopes and expectations are seconded by prudent planning and skillful implementation. Unfortunately, that is yet to be seen as instead, shortsightedness and tactical considerations based on parochial interests, present a time-tested recipe for failure, already appear to be adversely impacting this project at its very infancy. Inhibitive tendencies
seem to outnumber the progressive ones; the divides within are becoming sharper; the efforts to bridge the gaps are minimal and superficial; and if the cards are not rightly played, the desired results would remain distant dream. The project is one of the most debated issues and a blame-game is in full swing without any serious thought given to resolve the roots of unnecessary controversy.

The problem that seems to potentially plague the entire CPEC and the humungous benefits associated with it is none other than the long-lasting tradition of Pakistani politics i.e. a system of tampered transparency and selective accountability. Moreover, these concerns have enough force to hinder progress now as successive Governments and different political regimes have been unable to allay them, since narrow self-interests have always gained selfish preference over the broader national interests. CPEC gives to Pakistan a chance to correct the previous wrongs; a chance that states rarely get once they go astray in their journey.

If and when materialized as per the blue-prints, CPEC is meant to ensure socio-economic rejuvenation as well as political stabilization. But for that stability to be sought, conciliatory attitudes and farsightedness - born out of a realization of earlier mistakes – are to be shown by those in charge, those heading the decision-making processes and those to be ultimately held questionable for whatever fate the CPEC comes to. Although it requires a country-wide effort with all parties, factions and provinces doing their part by lending unfettered support and goodwill for CPEC, the greatest responsibility lies with the central Government. The pressures on Government further increased in face of valid criticisms being raised against the paths being chosen and the preferences being made.

The sides in this ongoing controversy have their well-articulated arguments and justifications. The Provinces have been complaining that their due share in the over-all development agenda is again being denied and most of the projects on the list of ‘actively promoted projects’ fall on the Eastern route. These claims are validated when the pattern of funds allocation is referred to; a clearly lopsided allocation of finances is a manifestation of Government’s continued insincerity to the cause of long-term betterment. Concerns of the provincial Governments in KP and Baluchistan are not mere extrapolations; the fears that once Eastern route is made functional on a priority basis, there would be no sense of urgency for completing the Western route can’t be marked as baseless since precedent speaks louder than rhetoric.

What in fact seems ill-formed argumentation is coming from the Centre, which instead of trying to make the entire process look more transparent for addressing opponents’ concerns is shifting the burden of accountability to Chinese side by saying that it is the investors who prefer the Eastern route and want it functional at the earliest possible date. Investor’s preferences must undoubtedly be respected in the case of FDI, but this does not justify a compromise on one’s national interests and domestic considerations, especially when a reinforcement of regional disparities could clearly be foreseen as the outcome of such flawed policies. Also, Government has the freedom to plan the spending of the $11 billion which aren’t a part of FDI. It is therefore imperative for the Central Government to reach a fine balance between the wishes of foreign investors and valid concerns of domestic stake-holders. Both sides in this ongoing controversy need to act responsibly and accommodate each other on rational terms. Consensus and unison are a must for moving on with this mega-initiative and for getting the best out of it that benefits Pakistan. Sadly, this won’t be possible till consensus building remains ridden with hypocrisy and farsightedness remains limited by geographical considerations. A failure to unlock and utilize an opportunity like CPEC to its fullest would be a whopping loss for Pakistan, manifesting the fact that not even game-changers can bring good to inept players.

The writer is PhD Scholar at the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Jilin University, China. She previously holds a Masters and M. Phil in International Relations from Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.
Implications of CPEC on Pakistan in a Geo-Economic and a Multi-Polar World Order

Amna Javed

There is no denying of the fast changes that are taking place in the international arena. Of course this is in context of the slowly reclining unipolar world order towards the emerging multipolarity. Without a doubt this multipolar order comes with both benefits as well as visible vulnerabilities which must be taken into consideration by each state which could have stakes in it. This not only includes the Super-power states but automatically includes the other smaller states like the Developing States. Because it is pertinent for them to survive in a world which has a massive division of power. This is where we talk about Pakistan, which is as a whole already in the middle of a quagmire concerning its policies regarding powerful states and stabilizing economies. In such a time for Pakistan perhaps CPEC has come as a blessing in disguise, depending on how much effort Pakistan is ready to put into it making it a success.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is something which is perhaps the most anticipated phenomenon in the international arena at the moment. In this century, it is going to be a deal breaker for not only international relations but also for multiple economic reasons. As this will generate many new realities which will emerge on the surface as soon as the foundations of this mega-structure will be laid. These new realities will then shape and re-shape global scenarios—not only for China or other states which might benefit—but massively for Pakistan. For Pakistan, CPEC and China’s “One Belt One Road” initiative comes with a multitude of hard facts. We see that at the same time it provides enough opportunities to Pakistan’s otherwise crumbling economy. But at the same end it comes with a number of challenges that Pakistan will have to face. Also, where it has internal implications for Pakistan—in the external domain things are also going to turn out to be much complicated.

For a better understanding of the concepts of CPEC and the implications it carries, lets divide them into two sets; internal and external impacts for Pakistan. In the internal impacts, we will be talking about the domestic transformations CPEC might be having on Pakistan while in the external we will find out the opportunities it provided Pakistan on the international front. Overall it must be taken into account that the complete picture is a holistic one, where one factor is balanced with the other. This is exactly what makes CPEC something of a unique project for Pakistan, not just in its magnanimity but its overall shape.

At present, Pakistan’s internal structure is at the juncture where it is neither too solid and stable that everything is under firm control politically, militarily and socially. Nor is it too unstable and unsteady that it is nearing future disasters. This makes the time for initializing CPEC somewhat perfect as long as, in the future course of action it furthers into a geo-economical win for both China and Pakistan. The current government of Pakistan has taken a great initiative in securing this massive deal with China—its longstanding friend and ally, but perhaps it has overlooked certain factors which are now making things complicated for CPEC to come through.

Considering that the cost-benefit analysis of CPEC for Pakistan is a fairly balanced one, we can safely say that five things might occur for the domestic structure of Pakistan. Firstly, if the government actually manages to pull it through and all the provinces actually get equal representation in this mega-project then there is no doubt about the economic uplift Pakistani industry will get. More than anything the provinces which are currently lagging like Sindh and Balochistan will definitely start to develop more and more and as an offspring, business ventures will perhaps go through a boom. There might be an increase in trading from these areas to international channels. In fact if CPEC is to be an ultimate success it largely depends on equal participation of all provinces. But it is a perplexing factor for the government and the opposition since this problem is inches away from making CPEC the next big “Kalabagh Dam Debate” if it is not taken care of. Chiefly, equal representation of all provinces in development of CPEC, particularly KP, Sindh and Balochistan will deduce some of the internal problems involuntarily and identify as well as eradicate some grey areas of conflict within Pakistan.

Secondly, CPEC will create job opportunities inside Pakistan along with the improvement of the infrastructure and communication services proving a step forward for the overall development of Pakistan. Again this largely depends on how serious is Pakistan in pulling it off. Forthly, on a negative note, the very fact that more opportunities will be created by this mega-project will breed yet more nepotism, corruption among the high level officials and most of all—this will make the rich industrialists richer. This might just lead to a larger gap between the already overwhelming class differences. This is perhaps one societal implication for Pakistan that most people are overlooking.

Fourthly, the overall security situation inside Pakistan might get improved, because it then singularly depends on the internal peace in order for CPEC to come through. This is one factor that is known y both the government as well as security agencies. It is a matter of great concern that even today Pakistan has this menace of terrorism which is somewhat hiding away and
only comes out after long intervals of time. Extremism has taken roots within Pakistan and it must be eradicated as soon as possible, otherwise CPEC will be a waning gambit and that is not in the interest of either Pakistan or China. Terrorism will most definitely lead to a complete annihilation of this project. To make sure this does not happen, there would be involuntary efforts by the state, military and the agencies to completely wipe this peril out ultimately leading towards a peaceful state of affairs.

Finally, the project might just end up bridging the gap between the state and the military faction. Since both parties are equally involved in the stakes for the implementation and safeguarding of this project. They would perhaps work together in safeguarding this venture in such a way that is beneficial on the whole for Pakistan. This will in turn make both institutions stronger in their own capacity. Moreover, this bridge might as well make the state and the government and the overall structure more favorable to the public which at the moment has trust issues regarding the system.

The importance of this project will be versatile in a multi-polar world order when Pakistan will overcome the internal obstacles. In this regard Pakistan’s international standing will also get uplift. But it might open an entire new pattern in the international system. The entire strategic blueprint is now moving tacitly from geo-politics towards geo-economics. This means that powerful states are now moving towards exploring the resource as well as exploiting the resource of the lesser developed states. This is exactly where the multipolarity comes into play as well. In context of CPEC, one can see that Pakistan may be a resource rich state but much more than that, in the “One Belt, One Road” initiative it is more like a tool towards resources. This is both beneficial as well as a setback for Pakistan. It is beneficial because this makes Pakistan stand right in the middle of a passage which Pakistan can utilize for its own cause and economic and strategic expansion. It is a setback because this means that the ultimate prize is much more than just simple political and diplomatic end-games, of which Pakistan then constitutes only a small part of a much larger picture—a contrivance towards gaining something better.

More importantly, another implication for Pakistan and CPEC in the multi-polar world order rests at the point that more and more powerful states are emerging and one common driving force for them is resource. CPEC and Pakistan’s participation is automatically going to be a centre of antagonism to all such states, mostly the ones like U.S, India and Russia which are obviously at odds with a growing China and are untrusting towards Pakistan at the same time. Pakistan has always mattered in the bigger system due to its geographic location. More importantly it has always been in the middle of some shifty relations with some of the big powers like U.S and Russia. Strategically some emerging powers like India and Iran surround Pakistan geographically, yet politically it has been at odds with them. Launching CPEC then, should be seen as an opening for Pakistan to improve its foreign relations with all such states if it wishes CPEC to be a not only a success but survive and thrive. Pakistan must take this as an opportunity to improve its relations with Iran, U.S, UAE and Russia and in a far off way even India—lest these states become an aligned hinderence for Pakistan and CPEC. If it does not follow through this pattern then strained and complicated relations can easily be expected with the fore-mentioned states.

Much more than that, CPEC means that Pakistan will have an easy way into Central Asia—the most sought out region in this century. Automatically this gives Pakistan an edge if CPEC is going to be a success. Not only that, it can then indulge in foreign trade in a massive level and through this it can reasonably beging to out-maneuver other emerging states. Most importantly it can through the new strategic opening in the waterways improve its naval capabilities. But this will put Pakistan and its foreign policies in a very vulnerable position, because Russia, India, Iran and U.S will go to any length to disrupt this venture and Pakistan might have to take the ultimate blow. This tells the policy makers’ one thing; that it is time for Pakistan to pull up its socks and make sound and rationale based policies in the future; both fiscal and diplomatic.

Ultimately the success of this venture and its implications on Pakistan largely depend on which way Pakistan is to go with it. How will it sidetrack the negatives and focus more on the positives. This afterall is going to reshape the future of not only China, but other states as well and largely Pakistan might be the ultimate benefactor. But for that Pakistan needs to play its cards right. This venture is very well going to prove to be a bottom-up approach but in a matter of time, if not played right can easily turn into a top-down one as well. It is going to be a strategic gamble, one which involves not one but all the major powers as in a way, all of them are to be stakeholders in this situation. If Pakistan is to have an international standing after all in a multi-polar world, CPEC might be the way to do so. But it could also be the other way around and to avoid that there must be strict measures taken by Pakistan and it must be shown in some way that Pakistan is ready to take this challenge head on. This can occur through the internal level—so that in the external level things can become stable.

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PAKISTAN

Capital city: Islamabad

Largest city: Karachi

Official languages: English, Urdu

Religion: Islam

Government: Federal parliamentary republic

Area: 881,913 km² (36th)


Currency: Pakistani rupee (PKR)

Pakistan was established on August 14, 1947 after the division of the British Indian Empire into two independent states (India and Pakistan) as a dominium; in 1956 Pakistan was proclaimed as a republic (Islamic Republic of Pakistan). Until 1971 Pakistan was formed from two parts that were separated one each other. However, The Eastern Pakistan was exempted by the Indian help on March 26, 1971 and proclaimed itself as the independent republic of Bangladesh. On a territory of today’s Pakistan once were also India’s stamp countries Lás Béla, Sindh and Bahávalpur. Pakistan’s membership in the Universal Postal Union (UPU) was indirect from July 1, 1876 (as a part of the then British India) and a direct one since November 10, 1947.

Since 1947 had existed Indian stamps with the overprint of PAKISTAN, with the same text also definitive stamps, in 1956 occasionally ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN. The name of a state is reported generally in the Arabic, Latin and earlier also in the Urdu scripture.

Stamps firstly of the British origin, challenging made by a recess, later by the other techniques of a domestic origin. As a general rule, Pakistan issues stamps with a governmental promotional theme, in the latest period also with joint international issues. In a stamp production, there is a graphic and content heterogeneity. From the artistic point of view there are several issues done very well whose author is Rashid ud Din; on the other hand they also apply a photography concept of a stamp image. The Pakistani post issues annually about 10-40 stamps. Commercial implementation: The Manager, Philatelic Bureau, GPO, Karachi.
PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Capital city: Beijing
Largest city: Shanghai
Official languages: Standard Chinese
Religion: atheism (officially)
Government: Socialist one-party state
Area: 9,596,961 km² (3rd)
Population (2015): 1,376,049,000 (1st)
Currency: Renminbi (yuan) (CNY)

Until 1911 China was an empire under the government of the Manchu’s dynasty Qing chao. On December 29, 1911 was proclaimed the first ever republic and its President became Sun Yat-sen. China formed a part of the Allied Powers in the WWI, after the WWI there were three civil wars in its territory (1924-1927, 1929-1936, 1946-1949) and the Japanese assault in 1931 from which a big war did spread in 1937 against all China (immediately in 1937 Japanese created a provisional government and in 1940 in Nanking the national pro-Japanese government of Wang Ching-wei). This led to the national liberation war (1937-1945). After that war, all Chinese occupied territories were given back to China – Manchuria (lost in 1932), Tchaj-wan (lost in 1894) and the rent territories. In 1949 was proclaimed the People’s Republic of China and the nationalistic army of Chiang Kaishen retreated back to Tchaj-wan. Its membership in the Universal Postal Union is direct since March 1, 1914.

On the Chinese territory, mainly in the most important trade centres, have operated the foreign post offices which have used stamps of their land, stamps with an overprint of Chinese cities or stamps with the name ‘China’ in various languages. This last case namely refers to the French post which since 1894 until its end in 1922 used also French stamps with the overprint or text CHINE; totally 48+29 stamps, mostly the images of the French stamp area. The Russian post issued between 1899 and 1920 (when all Russian post offices in China were closed due to a mutual agreement) Russian stamps with the overprint KITAJ (in the Cyrillic). Japanese post issued since 1900, until its end in 1922, totally 49 provisional overprint issues on Japanese stamps with a name CHINA in Japanese language (barely 5,000 copies). French Indochine used between 1902-1905 stamps of French Indochine with the overprint CHINE. The British post used between 1917-1930 stamps of Hong Kong with the overprint CHINA. German stamps with a name CHINA were issued for German post offices between 1898-1917 (when due to a declaration of war by China were closed).
Since 1949 have been issued stamps of the People's Republic of China that are serial numbered and have text exclusively in Chinese. Markedly using of government’s promotional themes, mainly political ones. But on the other hand, many various streams and themes have been implemented into a stamp production, such as sports, flowers, breeding pigs, toys; and issuance of serrated and unserrated stamps. There are also stamps with a text REPUBLIC OF CHINA meaning Tchaj-wan and stamps with a name FORMOSA/CHINA referring also to Tchaj-wan because Formosa means Tchaj-wan in Japanese language (Tchaj-wan in Chinese language). Commercial implementation: China National Stamp Corporation in Beijing.

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编者注

中—巴经济走廊在中国“一带一路”战略中是一个标志性的项目。该项目已经成为中—巴两国在交往过程中形成持久而珍贵友谊的最重要的里程碑。习近平主席在去年访问巴基斯坦时公布了两国460亿美元的全面战略合作计划，其中包括发展通信联系的几个重要项目，建立经济和工业园区还有能源和基础设施项目。该项目的英文缩写为CPEC，将为巴基斯坦带来一个经济增长和光明未来的全新领域以帮助其摆脱动荡的经济发展和能源危机，从而铲除恐怖主义、极端主义、贫困以及许多其他阻碍国家长期发展的威胁。CPEC是多方面的，不仅是在工业和交通基础设施互联互通建设上提供资金和支持，更重要的是旨在促进双方在重大项目中的多领域合作，以及在信息和通信技术方面的交流，并且建立更多的工业园区自由贸易协定。该项目还旨在改善巴基斯坦的教育环境提高识字率，提高技术劳动力市场在项目建设中释放深度和广度。这是值得期待的，仅在能源领域投资意向就达到了340亿美元，包括热能、太阳能和风力发电设施和项目，以满足巴基斯坦的能源需求和请求，从而增加巴基斯坦经济发展中可见的好处和红利。2013年5月中国总理李克强在访问巴基斯坦期间提出CPEC已经被称为和视为“游戏规则改变者”、“里程碑”、“世纪丰碑”和巴基斯坦的“生命线”。这一项目的出现，使巴基斯坦的国家安全形势也有了明显的改善，同时也增强了政府和军方领导之间的关系。总体来说这是一个国家利益的好兆头。该项目具有战略意义，不仅是对巴基斯坦而且中国本身也将进入中东、非洲并且通过瓜达尔港－位于深海港口附近的波斯湾，靠近霍尔木兹海峡，世界上最40%的原油从此通过。该项目一旦完成，将提供一个连接的“供需双方”的桥梁，通过该桥梁将买家和卖家联系在一起，货物的运输时将大大缩短并且更加经济实惠，将成为今后所有经贸活动的枢纽。该项目还会将巴基斯坦与中国之间的战略合作关系转变为以双赢为基础的战略经济伙伴关系。CPEC将作为一个贯穿整个欧亚非三洲经济活动的桥梁和纽带。

据一项估计，该项目将影响亚洲及其周边三十亿人口的生活。目前，前期收获的项目正在快速展开的完成阶段，但随着CPEC项目工作的进展出现了一些小省份关于各自的几条路线和利益的争论。

对于巴基斯坦来说更容易处理的是外部力量和应对他们然后去解决那些没有为像CPEC这样的项目做出实质性贡献的本土“名流”和“拉票者”。这个综合计划是民族性质的，它与任何政党或政府无关，但与整个国家和民族的利益息息相关。该项目将继续，并将在其特定的时间和资金框架内完成。此外，那些本土的破坏者必须记住这个外国投资并不是唯一一个曾经在巴基斯坦投资过的，相反它将为巴基斯坦打开大门进一步吸引投资和机遇而开创先河。这也改善了巴基斯坦的国际形象，使之在全球市场上成为下下一个投资目的地。现在，我们要做的是把我们虚伪的自尊抛到脑后，在避开异议的同时毫不犹豫地向那些希望听到和分享这个国家给我们所有人提供的利益的人发出你们的声音。因此无论CPEC项目通过与否，无论这条路线或那条路径巴基斯坦的政治精英们也有必要抑制这个项目的争论，并预测这种投资对国家经济和社会前景的积极影响。更明显的CPEC项目不仅将中—巴之间的友谊推向新高度，而且建立了中—巴之间全天候和经得起时间考验的友谊。
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