

## Socio-Economic Impacts of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor on Pakistan and China Economy

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### Abstract:

*Pakistan and China have signed to make one road one belt project is known as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and it is hoped that this project will be the source of prosperity and peace in South Asia. This length of this project is approximately 2395 km from Kashgar China to Gwadar port of Pakistan. There are several external and internal challenges of Pakistan that can be resolved by multi-dollars projects. Anyhow, this project is a game changer and it will change the fate of Pakistan and modernized the Pakistan. It will enhance the trade and economy, develop infrastructure, regional connectivity, overcome energy crises, and developed the contacts of peoples in both countries. Keeping in mind all these perspectives, this paper has discussed the socio-economic impact of China-Pakistan*

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*Corridor on China and Pakistan Economy. Further research can be undertaken on the fundamentals of economic corridor development with regards to cultural, historical, environmental and economic commonalities and complementarities, recognition of industrial hubs of the area, the links of these industrial hubs to different plans and production series.*

**Key words:** CPEC, Pakistan, China.

## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is seen as a period of establishment regarding global and regional strategic environment across the world. This type of strategic environment enhanced the geo-strategic and geo-economic links between countries. Thus, state security and national interests are essential parameters of that kind of association. Therefore, Countries reshaped and defined their interests because they thought, it will be impossible for them to protect their interests with respect to own capacities and potentials. In the wake of strategic environment, Diplomatic consultations and High-level talks are become the ever-growing collaboration between countries in multi-faceted fields like commerce, industrial ventures, development programs, and defense (Noor et al, 2008).

Though, China is considered as sleeping giant from last decades. But recently, China has a central position in entire world and especially in Asian region. It is a largest country with respect to world population-wise & demographically and economically, it has developed multilateral diplomacy that was ignored from last years. Moreover, another reason behind the China foreign strategy alternation is raising demands of energy (Belokrenitsky, 2007). On the other side, as concern to Pakistan, its foreign policy have included important aspects related to regional connectivity. Pakistan is also trying to have

good domestic relations with neighboring countries. So having a good and worthy relationship with China is a one of main objective of Pakistan's foreign policy.

From last four decades, China is leading the world economy by tremendous development and growth. The financial crises of 2007-2008 positively affect the economy of China and encouraged its role for governance of world. Therefore, China redefined its role due to war on terror and it changed strategies with respect to new world context. In that time period, when world was busy to deal with financial crises and war on terror while china was involved in more international recognitions and trades along with, it started revisited old relations and developed new friendships and partnerships. First time, the Chinese's president Xi Jinping spread the concept of constructive engagements around the world.

Nevertheless, China is located along with South Asia so it got importance for spreading the plan of constructive engagements and proved its leadership in Asia. For this purpose, President of China has announced magnificent trade programs and investment packages for South Asian countries. Additionally, South Asia is well-known as economical underdeveloped, instable and conflict region. China also actively engaged in peace and development activities in this region like in case of Afghanistan. These kinds of cooperation lead to prosperity, development, and stability in this region. The current visit of Chinese President in Pakistan encouraged hopes of stability in upcoming years in Pakistan. China defined its strategic order and started working closely with Pakistan by enhancing new partnerships and investments. The process was started in 1990; but joint announcement was made after meeting of President Gen. Pervez Musharraf and President Hu Jintao at Beijing in 2003 (Fmprc, 2003).

This announcement highlighted the future directions of both countries. In 2006, Free Trade Agreement (FTA) increased

the cooperation among China & Pakistan. It was signed on visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao at Islamabad. This agreement increased the trade among China & Pakistan from \$1 billion (1998) to \$15.15 billion last year (VANDEWALLE, 2015). The idea of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was properly shaped in May 2013 after recent visit of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang. This economic corridor will linked the north-western province Xinjiang of china with Gwadar port of Pakistan by road network having length of 1, 800 miles. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is present near Silk Road Economic Belt & where Maritime Silk Road coincide.

Thus, it is a main project that took initiative of "Belt and Road".

Beijing believed that lack of stability and economic development of Afghanistan and Pakistan could not ensure the security of China's northwest broader. So, the purpose of economic corridor is to help the Muslims of northwest region existing with China, and also to become economical developed through linking with Gwader. This project aimed to increase 17,000 megawatts at the expense of \$34 billion on electricity generation. The remaining money will use on transport infrastructure such as updating railway line among northwest Peshawar city and port megacity in Karachi. This plan will complete in 2030. This economic corridor will cut down the route of energy imports of China from Middle East about 12,000 kms and linked underdeveloped western region of China with Pakistan's Gwadar with the help of pipelines, energy schemes, and network of roads, business zones, and railways.

Now-a-days, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a most debated and hot topic in Asia, South Asia, Pakistan and other World. In Pakistan, there are conflicts regarding corridors route, because provinces are taken interest on it. South Asian countries have divided with respect to their opinions like some countries take this as opportunity for

prosperity and development. While, others looked this merger opposite to their concerns. However, Global community & Asian countries have mixed views. Keeping in mind all these perspectives, this present paper will discuss the socio-economic impact of China-Pakistan Corridor on China and Pakistan Economy. The rest of the paper is as organized; section 2 is briefly described history of Pakistan. Moreover, Section 3 present Pak China Economic Corridor respectively discussed in China perspective and Pakistan perspective. After that section 4 conclude the socio-economic impact of China-Pakistan Corridor on China and Pakistan Economy.

## **2. HISTORY OF PAK-CHINA RELATIONS**

Since 1950, China & Pakistan is enjoying friendly and cordial relations. These relations were not as like that but after 1960, the China India war & Pakistan India war. Firstly, Pakistan was not willing to accept the China because of difference among capitalism blocs and communist. The bilateral cooperation of both countries was delayed as they did not know each other at much extent. Luckily, Sir Zafarullah Khan, the foreign affairs minister of that time had Chinese mindset and knowledge, which become the way of these relations (Chaudhri, 1987).

In 1949, the relations of Pakistan and China were strengthened due to devaluation the Indian currency that influenced the economy of Pakistan badly. Pakistan was in position to buy coal for nascent industry, while this devaluation forced Pakistan to accept the agreement of China about trade of coal by cotton respectively. Moreover, Pakistan voted China for permanent seat at UN Security Council (Arif, 1984). These relations were enhanced as both countries were interested in a trade agreement since 1953 (Dixit, 1987).

The signing of CENTO and SEATO agreements in 1955 & 1954 respectively developed few suspicion inside Chinese, as

they perceived it threat to national and regional security. Anyhow, Pakistan explained to China that it was done for safeguard purpose from Indian threat (Syed, 1974). In Bandung conference, Pakistan also clarified doubts and described seven pillars of peace to China (Chaudhri, 1970). In 1959, the statement of President Ayub Khans about Tibet developed conflicts among Pakistan China relations (Jain, 1981). But this damage was handled by S. K. Dehlavi foreign secretary and Foreign minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto at that time. The agreement of border demarcation that introduced by Mr. Bhutto since 1963 become an impetus for Pakistan and China relations. Additionally, China also support in 1965 war of Pakistan with India. Anyhow, in the war of 1971, China acted neutral as forced by several Pakistani leaders (Javaid and Jahangir, 2015).

Since 1970s, the relations among China and Pakistan are strengthened more and more in all sectors. China supported Pakistan especially in economic, missile, nuclear program, and military sector, although sanctions compelled by US. This enhanced the confidence of Chinese and Pakistani people and policy makers. Due to this long lasting friendship we saw the agreement of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) among Pak and China.

### **3. CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR**

The history of Pak-China relations can be traced back since 1950. Both China and Pakistan managed their relationship in a very productive and articulated way. Although confusion over some issues, especially during the first half 1950s and 1970s, impacted the ties but the two nations never let them altogether spoiled. Both of them helped each other at the crucial times. Pakistan helped China to connect to the world. Pakistani air

space was opened for Chinese airline and PIA made travel easy for Chinese.

In 2013, knowing the fact that integration is essential to fulfill the need of globalized economic world, China rephrased and reformulated the Silk Road and Maritime Silk Road (Francois, 2014). Pakistan is a key partner of China as it relates China to Middle East, Central Asia, and Southern Asian, and Gwadar port tendered direct access towards Indian Ocean. China and Pakistan is working for promoting their strategic communication and coordination to protect common interests. Although, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is new mode of cooperation between both countries, that will serve opposite as backdrop for changing and complex for international and regional situations. Pakistan and China has been made economic ties, bilateral trade and cooperation for long term. Pakistan is become key trading partner of import and export for China. Since January 1963, commercial links & bilateral trade among both countries were established, when they signed long term bilateral trade agreement (Godement, 2014).

Both countries were involved in Free Trade Agreement (FTA) since November 24, 2006 & implantation was done in July, 2007. Afterward, Pakistan & China signed trade agreement in Services since February, 2009 and activated it in October, 2009. Although, CPEC is a mega-project that is under-construction and it will meet the economic and political objectives by development and trade along with it will strongly affect the trade and economic cooperation among Pakistan and China. Moreover, this corridor will be helpful for regional stability of South Asia. After the implementation of this project, it will act like main gateway for trade among Middle East, Africa, and China. It is hoped that this project will cut down about 12,000 Km route to China that oil supplies of Middle East is take to reach China port.

### **3.1 The Chinese Perspective**

By investing in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, China fulfilled its own several interests. Infrastructural and Energy projects will be finish in coming six years that cost about \$45.6 billion and Chinese companies will get profits from it. According to report of media, Chinese banks are willing to provide loans to Chinese companies to do projects, thereby this commercial venture directly influence the China's economy.

Although, Pakistan is facing challenging of political volatility, separatism, corruption, and militancy, China is investing in the region significantly. In Pakistan, China has been faced three major incidents such as Balochi insurgents (2004) & two Pakistani Taliban (2008 and 2014) attacked the development work. One of the attacks on Gwader port by Balochi insurgents was culminated on Chinese President Visit (Ishaan, 2015). Moreover, China also faced troubled through East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) that are responsible for hundreds of Chinese death from last two years.

Regions are developing that exist in territory of corridor, famous for training campus of rebels called Uighur and underdevelopment nearer to border of Afghanistan and Pakistan. It may solve the terrorist aspect in Xinjiang. Moreover, China is tensed due to violence of ethnic Uighurs that is present in Xinjiang region and expected that separatists could be united with Taliban of Pakistan (Ilyas 2015). Pakistani and Chinese government perceived this threat to be real; Pakistan will provide about 12,000 army battalions and Civil Armed Forces to defend the economic projects of Pakistan-China. The division is supervised by Major General along with six Civil Armed Forces (Frontier and Rangers crops) and 9 army battalions. The training session of special force is carried out at Pabbi in National Counter Terrorism Centre. They received training of intelligence drills, security, and counterterrorism (Baqir, 2015).

The projects of China also have direct access towards Indian Ocean, through it China can boost up its influence in South and Central Asia (Ilyas 2015). China is more concerned towards energy security and oil importer. It is involved in a pipeline project that cut out thousands kilometers of sea travel by Southeast Asia (Andrew, 2014). The member of Chinese Communist Party Xi explained in speech regarding work related to Foreign Affairs in November 2014. President modified and adds new diplomatic objectives of China. He told the enhancement of neighborhood diplomacy against management of relations for major powers that was neglected in 2012 speech. He named the China's relation with United State as "new type of great power relations".

China should ignored a Thucydides trap that is a situation of rising power in China case, encouraged fear for established power in US case that moved towards open confrontation. (Graham, 2013). The relations of China with present superpower such as US and with other countries such as Japan, Tally are not due to structural reasons, enhanced its past of specific threshold. So, China should have effective efforts that focused on neighborhood relations. The best way to maintain the rise of China is neighborhood diplomacy that is achieved by Silk Road projects (François, 2015).

Chinese decision makers and analysts suggested two pronged approaches in which China should have great relations with superpowers as well also with neighboring and developing countries. The director of School of International Relations in Beijing, Li Yongh described in 2013 that rising powers should have "strategic periphery belt" (François, 2014). He suggested that China should not only focus on China Pakistan Economic Corridor, it should also plan to start projects of "South Asia Economic Corridor", "Maritime Silk Road with Southeast Asia", and Silk Road Economic Belt with Central Asia", that will linked China with India, Bangladesh and Burma. The Maritime

Silk Road is most important among these three projects. The Silk Road Economic Belt at Central Asia is started where traditional security threats are low and there is a potential of economic development. On the other hand, Maritime Silk Road is concerned with central area of China. If China is felt the US regional presence then involvement and investment in Southeast Asia will give more strategic benefits rather than Central Asia (François, 2015).

### **3.2 The Pakistani Perspective**

The main achievement of Pakistan is to start projects with China for durable and fast solution of energy crisis. The potential project is an attempt to fix the dilapidated power infrastructure of Pakistan on urgent basis that according to expert will 2% increased the GDP each year (Masood, 2013). This project shall give 10, 400 Megawatts by nuclear, coal, and renewable energy projects (Tharoor, 2014). China and Pakistan has been signed about 20 agreements in April that have worth US\$28 billion under PCEC. These agreements are entered in implementation phase because all necessary processes are already completed. They are consisted of: 870MW Suki Kanari hydropower project (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa); 1000MW solar power park (Punjab); 720MW Karot hydropower project (AJK) along with three power projects of wind at: Sachal (50MW) & Hydro China (50MW), Thatta of United Energy (100MW) Pakistan; Chinese government also gave loans for Havelian to Thakot (Karakorum Highway); Multan to Sukkur (Karachi Lahore Motorway); Gwadar international airport; expressway project (Gwadar Port); Marine Research Centre and Biotech Laboratory.

An agreement related to PTV and China Central Television and Pakistan Television ground work CCTV-NEWS/CCTV-9 Documentary has been signed in China Press and Pakistan Information Ministry (Kiani, 2015). Likewise,

Protocol agreements are signed among sister-cities such as Chengdu (Sichuan province of China) & Lahore; Zhuhai (province as Guangdong) & Gwadar & Karamay (Xinjiang Uyghur) & Gwadar (Masood, 2013). One more agreement was done at Gwadar-Nawabshah terminal & for commercial contract, pipeline project and agreements such as Jhimpir wind power project, Lahore Orange Line Metro Train project, production of coal Thar Block II 3.8 million tons per annum, Port Qasim 2x660MW (1320MW) coal-fired power plant & Thar Block II 2x330MW (660MW) coal-fired power project. For implementation of PCEC a financing cooperation has been done among Habib Bank Limited and China Development Corporation. China provided Three Gorges Corporation (CTG) for development related to hydropower projects & Silk Road Fund for private hydropower projects (Business insider, 2015). An agreement among Industrial & Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), HDPPL for wind power Dawood project & PCC of China & framework agreement related to financial services corporation among HBL & ICBC for enhancing Chinese development & investments of industrial parks in Pakistan are started (Tharoor, 2014). The province of Baluchistan is controversial for government of Pakistan that is influenced by several secessionist & extremist groups. Major part of this corridor is exist in this region that will change the condition of region and will make Baluchistan more economically sustainable, stable, and viable. Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif described that China Pakistan Economic Corridor will transform Pakistan, the hub of economic development (Business insider, 2015).

## **4. MAJOR COMPONENTS**

### **4.1 Kashgar-Gwadar Expressway**

According to the provided information, this deal corridor will be approximately 2,000km along with the region of Pakistan (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Communication 2014). Different main cities of Pakistan will also be linked to this corridor through many superhighways, either planned or going to be constructed.

#### **4.1.1 The Trans Asian Highway and the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor:**

Through Pakistan, five nominated Asian Highways routes are passing (Map IV), amongst these the subsequent are extend beyond the planned corridor:

- **Asian Highway 1 (AH-1)**

Wagah border (India)-Lahore-Rawalpindi- Peshawar- Torkham (Total length in Pakistan 520km). AH-1 goes beyond with the Lahore-Islamabad (Motorway M 2) and the Islamabad-Peshawar (Motorway M1).

- **Asian Highway 2 (AH-2)**

Wagah border (India)-Lahore-Sahiwal-Multan- Rohri- Sukkur-Sariab (Quetta)-Lakpass-Nokundi-Taftan (Iran) (Total length in Pakistan;763km): This AH-2 route goes beyond with the Lahore- Karachi section of the N5 from Lahore till Rohri (Sindh). The road state is apparently good.

- **Asian Highway 4 (AH-4)**

Urumqi (China)-Kashi-Khunjrab-Abbottabad- Hassanabdal-Rawalpindi-Lahore-Multan-Rohri-Hyderabad-Karachi (Total length in Pakistan: 1,391km). AH-4 links Karachi port with China through National Highway N-35 (Karakoram Highway) and N-5 (Karachi-Torkham Highway). Both of these highways are component of the economic corridor.

#### **4.2 Kashgar-Gwadar Rail Link**

Along with the Kashgar-Gwadar expressway, a rail link is also designed between Kashgar and Gwadar. Numerous likely arrangements are discussed. As reported by media, the most possible arrangement might be as given: Kashgar-Hotan-Gilgit-Abotabad-Havelian-Rawalpindi-Gujrawalan-Lahore-Sahiwal-Multan-Bahawalpur-Rohri-Spezand-MastungKalat-Hoshab-Turbat- Gwadar (Raja 2013).

#### **4.3 Kashgar-Gwadar Pipeline**

Corresponding to the superhighway and rail link a pipeline is also designed to transfer oil through the port of Gwadar to the Middle East. In an interrelated development Islamabad and Beijing have also incorporated the Iran-Pakistan (IP) gas pipeline scheme in the designed economic corridor, widening this pipeline to attach with western China (Bhutta 2013).

#### **4.4 Development of the Gwadar Free Trade Zone**

Pakistan is also trying to expand Gwadar as a free trade zone in lines with of Hong Kong or Dubai and link it with the Kashgar Economic Development Zone which is already accepted and being developed by China (*Dawn* 2013). At the time of Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif's journey to China in November 2014 the a variety of contracts signed with China consist constructing (i) the Gwadar New International Airport; (ii) the Gwadar Eastbay Expressway; and (iii) a Technical and Vocational Training Institute in Gwadar (Abrar 2013).

### **5. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CPEC ON BOTH THE COUNTRIES**

In South Asia, Pakistan is playing a very important role. When the project will be completed it will brings about economic, commercial and geological improvements in Pakistan. It will

assist Pakistan in combating with the issues of poverty, unemployment and inequities of developing provinces. The China Pakistan economic Corridor would provide evidence to be a game-changer in the entire area by creation of huge trade and economic activity and bringing new panoramas of development and prosperity for the nation of both the countries as well as and about three billion people of South Asia, said by President Mamnoon Hussain at the time of his meeting with President Xi Jinping.

The plan is evenly favorable for China. It offers a highway as well as sea connection to the Xinjiang area, linking it with the Arabian Sea and the Middle East and the rest of the world. The Xinjiang area will achieve significant improvement when these roads, pipelines and sea ports shall successfully works. China will have a new way to sea which is free of difference that describes the South China Sea opening and also leads to decrease its reliance on the Strait of Malacca.

During the previous pair of years, China's increasing role at Global level is viewed as through its economic connection through highways and sea access, energy transfer and trade. Its role is also evident through its cooperation with Pakistan against terrorism. China is also cooperating with Afghanistan to achieve economic development and political stability. CPEC will also leads to increase its influence and leading role at international level.

## **6. CONCLUSION:**

The vision of 2025 that is documented rightly demanding the regional connectivity, not just because of PCEC, but with the help of other similar regional countries. The idea of Chinese's President Xi's described "China-Pakistan Community of Shared Destiny" for achieving common interests by beneficial partnerships among Pakistan and China at higher level.

Although, PCEC is declared as the “China-Pakistan Community of Shared Destiny,” one spirit in two countries. Development of friendly relations among Pakistan and China by PCEC that is getting highest level interests of governments of both countries. The project of PECP that included the energy cooperation projects, Gwadar port development, fiber-optic links, rail and roads are the actual steps towards mutual prosperity of two countries.

Political stability of Pakistan for long-term is essential for smoothly implementation of projects like, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. In past, Pakistan has political instability and chaos that undermined the development roadmap of country & influenced the policy consistency. Likewise, if later or now, few extended political crisis & economic meltdown hold the country, the periodic and yearly budget allocation for CPEC project can disturb the outcomes beyond the targets. While, environment of violence, insecurity, and militancy of Pakistan can become the threats for construction of CPEC, the nature & level of threat is not same across Pakistan. It is encouraging that the eastern alignment of corridor is more secure rather than western alignment with some exceptions. Threat level for security of CPEC project, consisting personnel and sites is low as compare to eastern alignment of Karachi, Gwadar, and Makran Coastal Belt, where level of threat is medium. Similarly, it is essential to make sure rigorous security measures with whole CPEC alignment.

Through establishment of special Economic Zone in specific areas present with CPEC beside the relocation of few midway level industry of China will increase the export of Pakistan through China. CPEC is useless until it will regionally connect as envisioned in Vision 2015 that is documented by Government of Pakistan. Pakistan is located in cusp of West Asia, South Asia and Central Asia that makes it favorite for inter-regional trade. Under CPEC the development

of infrastructure will lead Pakistan to become a trading hub but for achieving that purpose India, Afghanistan, and Pakistan needs to be have good diplomatic relations.

Further research can be undertaken on the fundamentals of economic corridor development with regards to cultural, historical, environmental and economic commonalities and complementarities, recognition of industrial hubs of the area, the links of these industrial hubs to different plans and production series.

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