

**Special Edition**

Volume 2, Issue 4 | 1st Oct 2020

# PIVOT

**Quarterly Magazine of China-Pakistan Study Centre  
Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad**

## *Commemorating Decades of Pakistan-China Friendship*

**Togetherness and Shared Future**



Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad

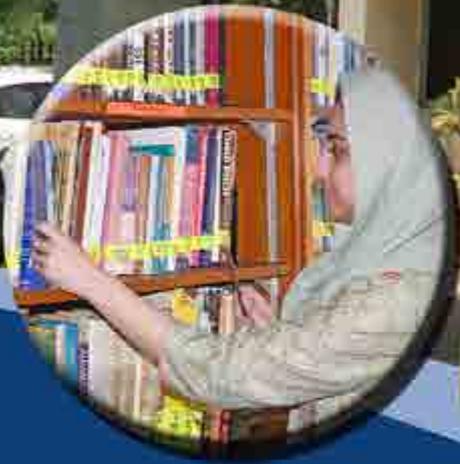


China-Pakistan Study Centre



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## Printer

Farhan's International Printers

5-A Abbas Centre, Fazal-e-Haq Road

Blue Area, Islamabad

Phone: 051-2150285 - 051-2278837

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Price: Rs. 300

## Chief Editor's Note

**7**1st anniversary of founding of the People's Republic of China marks triumph and a historic rejuvenation for Chinese people. Over the past 71 years, China has pursued a foreign policy that promoted peace and development and committed itself to objective of common good. While making contributions to the world economy and global governance, China is actively promoting the 'Belt and Road Initiative' that has received positive response from across the world. China has comprehensively promoted and advocated building of a community with a shared future for mankind, helped maintain regional peace and stability, assisted to transform the global governance system, and demonstrated that it is a responsible and important global power.



Pakistan-China camaraderie has been growing since their inception and both countries stood by each other through thick and thin. No matter how the international landscape, regional dynamics and domestic situation of the two countries changed, Pakistan-China relations have continued to grow stronger as the time passed. Both countries supported each other firmly on each other's core interests. The Pakistani government has repeatedly emphasized that relation with China is the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is manifestation of this special relationship. As a flagship project of the 'Belt and Road Initiative', the CPEC creates new opportunities. Besides connectivity through energy, infrastructure, industrialization, many other areas i.e. blue economy, socio economic development and agricultural cooperation are also becoming focus of broader CPEC vision. The cooperation between the two countries in the areas of culture and people-to-people exchanges, science and technology, education, military affairs and security has also strengthened making it an all-encompassing relation.

On this joyous occasion of 71st anniversary of founding of the People's Republic of China, we wish our Chinese friends a great going. We also hope that we would continue to strengthen our comprehensive cooperation and deepen our relations to jointly create a better future for Pakistan and China. Both countries must steer building a community of shared future.

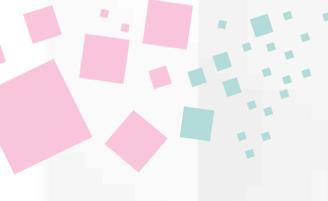
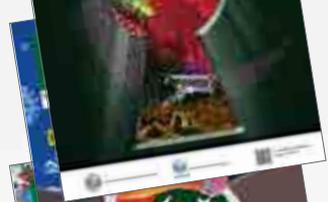
Pak-Cheen Dosti Zindabad

*Talat*

Dr. Talat Shabbir

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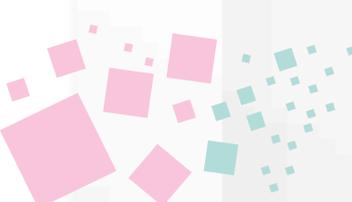
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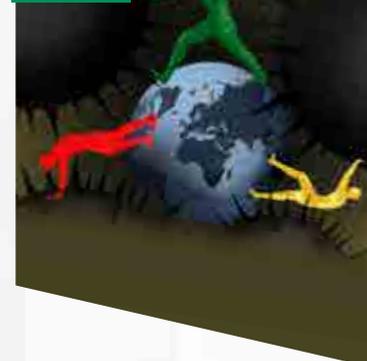
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# Vital Energy Reform and CPEC

By Ziad Alahdad



Pakistan has embarked on a path of enhanced investment in the energy sector, galvanized by its collaboration with China under CPEC. The policies driving this investment must be carefully crafted and implemented in a framework of reform which, unlike the past, eliminates the immense cost penalties of sub-optimal decisions in the capital-intensive energy sector. The essential starting point for Pakistan must be the formal introduction of Integrated Energy Planning and Policy (IEP). This mechanism establishes priorities in the energy sector as a whole and enables balanced, inclusive energy development through optimal resource allocation. China formulates its own energy plans and policies on an integrated basis and has tried to embed this in the CPEC energy program. What better time to embrace this than on the occasion of the Chinese National Day and the 70th year of diplomatic relations between the two 'iron brothers'.

During the 1980s the development community led by the World Bank, introduced IEP in many countries (including Pakistan) as a vital policy tool. However, following the break-up of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, the Bank de-emphasized the concept lest it be construed as supporting a central planning ideology, on the erroneous assumption that free market forces would generate the right policy choices.

Ironically, former Soviet Union states retained IEP while other countries including Pakistan began to reject it, resulting in fragmentation of policy-level institutions. Since then, decisions were increasingly driven by vested interests, impeded by bureaucratic inertia. In cash-strapped economies, erroneous choices led to immense economic losses. Eventually, developing countries began to clamor for the return of IEP citing its absence as a primary constraint to development. In response, the new World Bank's energy strategy accorded top priority to an integrated approach for the entire developing world. This signaled the triumph of economic common sense over ideology.

**China formulates its own energy plans and policies on an integrated basis and has tried to embed this in the CPEC energy program**

Reviving IEP affords a great opportunity for Pakistan especially as the country is undertaking major investments in the sector. Energy shortages

are the most serious impediment to its economic development. Policy initiatives in the energy sector have been thwarted repeatedly by special interests, lack of a long-term vision, missed opportunities, and weak implementation. This is exacerbated by a fragmented institutional structure, governance issues and security concerns. In a high-deficit situation despite significant reserves and vast areas deprived of energy access, there is a temptation to develop all forms of available energy - prohibitive for cash strapped Pakistan. Pakistan's policy makers are remarkably adept in articulating the overall objectives for energy policy within a national development context. The problem is not what the objectives are but how they can be achieved. Overwhelming evidence points to the conspicuous absence of an integrated approach. What is now in place is an ad-hoc process which responds to crises, instead of averting crises through a long-term vision.

As bleak as it seems, the energy sector can be revived. If every crisis presents an opportunity, Pakistan, with many crises, has as many opportunities. Islands of excellence exist in Pakistan and, with the right policies, the current 'perfect storm' of issues can be addressed expeditiously. Rather than resorting to patchwork solutions based on external advice, IEP would strengthen Pakistan's capacity to generate its own policies. Fortunately, much of the technical and human capacity to achieve this exists in Pakistan.

The CPEC program is a crucial lifeline for Pakistan. Its benefits in terms of sheer size (\$62 billion of which 65% is for energy), GDP growth, FDI, and infrastructure development, are unprecedented in Pakistan's economic history. CPEC is not just about providing funds. It implicitly calls on Pakistan to catch up on the backlog of reform, improve governance, enhance security and build capacity to mobilize funds on viable terms. CPEC seeks to develop Pakistan rather than increase its dependence on handouts. In effect, CPEC incentivizes Pakistan's transition to an economically powerful nation. In serving its own strategic interest of gaining access to the Arabian Sea, China is investing in CPEC's success. If managed correctly, CPEC is an economic windfall. If not, it could become a major liability. With the limited options that Pakistan has, this is an opportunity it cannot afford to squander.

China has always been a proponent of the integrated approach which it used in designing CPEC's energy interventions. China has world-

class expertise in energy technology from manufacturing, project design, installation through to operation. It is the world leader in R&D in solar and wind technology. CPEC's least-cost approach is tempered by strategic and energy security considerations. It seeks to double the current power generation capacity focusing on indigenous energy sources to promote energy independence. It introduces solar and wind power at a scale never before envisaged in Pakistan. There is a balance between environmentally benign renewable energy resources (hydro, solar and wind) and a polluting fossil fuel (coal) the reserves of which are too large to ignore. No program is perfect. There are shortcomings. Despite excess generation capacity, power outages continue due to inadequate provision for transmission and distribution, for which extreme measures are contemplated including diverting funds from solar generation projects.

## **With IEP as the basis of reform, what will Pakistan's energy future look like? Pakistan will be a net energy exporter, reaping financial and economic benefits from export earnings and revenues from a vibrant private sector**

How can we address the most critical energy issues, including the prohibitive growing deficit, low resource utilization, sub-optimal energy mix, circular debt, skewed subsidies, and alleviating poverty through pro-poor energy policies? Who better to advise on poverty than China given its economic miracle of raising over 600 million out of poverty? In most developing countries, energy plans are largely confined to short-term remedies within individual energy sub-sectors. What is lacking is the ability to bring together all options for each sub-sector through a robust mechanism which establishes priorities. This encapsulates the concept of IEP, the vital first step in energy reform. IEP develops policy and investment options within financial and capacity constraints. Importantly, IEP also prevents short-term decisions which deviate from the longer-term vision or, even worse, are made without a clear vision.

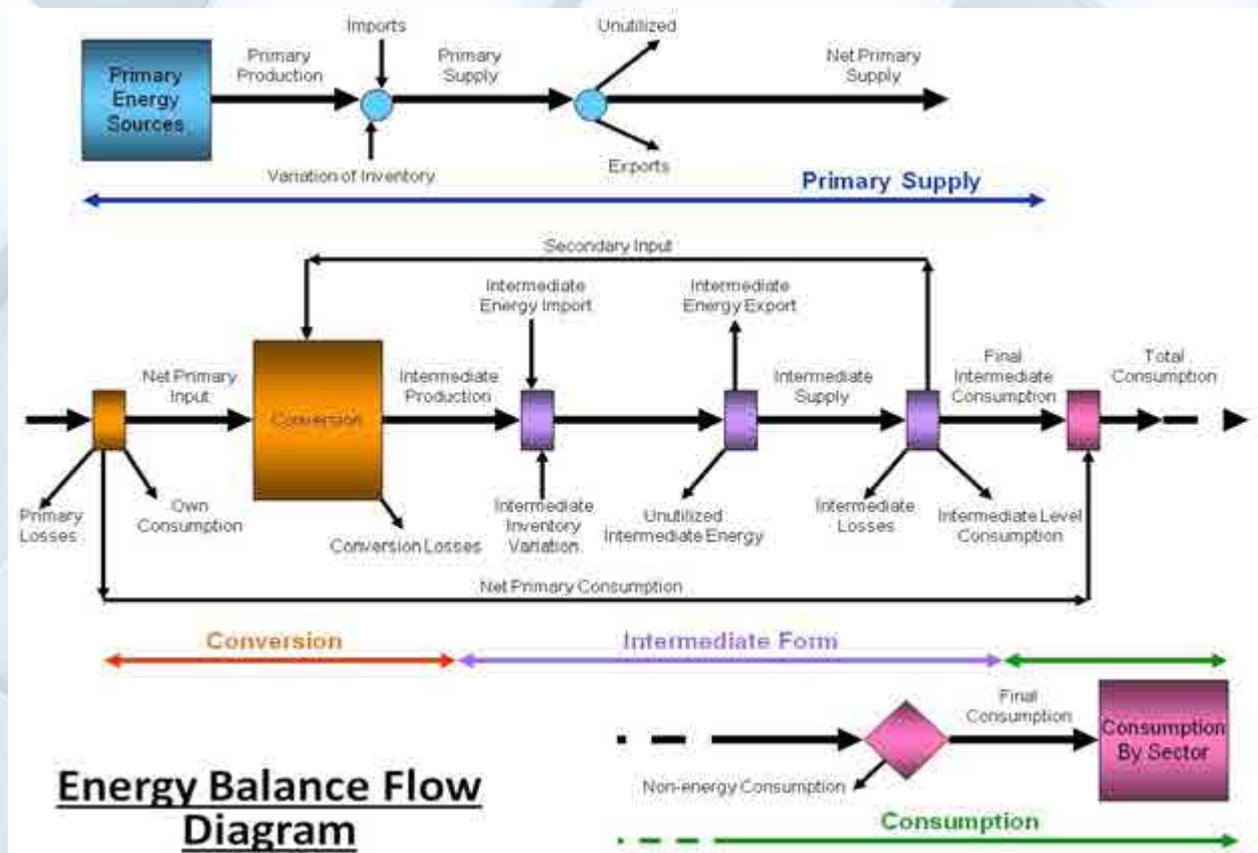
IEP has two essential components: (i) analysis that feeds the decision-making process; and (ii) an institutional structure at the policy level which facilitates implementation through sound

decision-making. The analytical component consists of a 5-stage iterative process (see diagram below). Starting with quantified national socio-economic objectives, the IEP process determines energy demand, identifies supply options, prepares energy balance projections, and carries out an impact analysis of interventions (policy and investment) which is then fed back for impact verification.

The most sophisticated part is the construction of the Energy Balance. The flow chart below shows the logic, sequence, type of inputs and computations required, starting from energy supply through its processing, conversions and transmission, to its consumption. Fortunately, Pakistan has excellent expertise in this area amply demonstrated in the annual publication of its Energy Yearbook.

On the institutional side, the policy level is severely fragmented. There are at least 15 ministries and agencies with overlapping mandates, compounding the complexity and confusion and making coordination impossible. The key challenge is to reverse the fragmentation and consolidate the entities into a single ministry of energy, with overarching responsibility for the sector and access to top policy levels. A modest start has already been made with the merger of two ministries but the process is far from complete.

With IEP as the basis of reform, what will Pakistan's energy future look like? Pakistan will be a net energy exporter, reaping financial and economic benefits from export earnings and revenues from a vibrant private sector.



Examples of policy objectives which IEP can help Pakistan achieve are: determining energy needs to achieve national growth while maintaining environmental standards; optimizing the energy supply mix; identifying and prioritizing energy conservation measures; enhancing energy security by diversification and reducing dependence; meeting energy needs of the poor; saving foreign exchange; reducing trade deficits; and raising revenues for sustained energy development. Without IEP, the default energy situation drives the outcome in each of the areas. With IEP, policy makers are able to influence these often conflicting economic objectives.

How rapidly this scenario unfolds depends on implementation which, in turn, depends on political will. But, if the will is there, improvements will be visible within a year of IEP start-up. IEP is a policy imperative for Pakistan. Continued collaboration with China will help us achieve this. The time to act is now ■



The writer is Consultant Advisor & Former Director of Operations World Bank.



# ISSI-SIIS Virtual Dialogue

By Uroosa Khan

Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) held a bilateral virtual dialogue with Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS) on August 12, 2020 via videoconferencing. Dialogue focused on exchange of views on international security, regional environment and Pakistan-China cooperation to advance peace and stability. Leading scholars, former diplomats and officials from both sides were invited to join the dialogue.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director-General ISSI led Pakistan side, which included Ambassador Masood Khalid, Dr. Rifaat Hussain, Lt. Gen (R) Naeem Khalid Lodhi, Dr. Saranjam Baig, Prof Chen Dongxiao, President SIIS led Chinese side comprising Dr. Wang Shida, Prof. Wu Chunsi, Prof. Zhang Jiadong and Prof. Wang Xu.

Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director CPSC-ISSI in his introductory remarks stated that, 'During past 69 years Pakistan and China withstood all challenges together. This strategic congruence can be seen in all fields may it be political, strategic, cultural or diplomatic.' He further said that Indian belligerent, hegemonic policies have made the environment of the region skeptical and unsettling.

Director General ISSI, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry while delivering his remarks at the Dialogue said, 'The world has come a long way from the World Order that emerged after World War I. Today US, Russia and China are considered competing super powers and India is considered as a counter-balancing regional power. He further said that a very alarming trend is also seen in the contemporary world, which is pre-emption, and India has carried out two preemptive strikes against Pakistan.

Commenting on Pakistan-China relationship he said, 'Camaraderie and support shown by China and Pakistan is exemplary. This not only shows good neighborly relations but it also reflects on the attempts being made to bring stability and unity in the region.'

President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies (SIIS), Mr. Chen Dongxiao opened the discussion from the Chinese side. In his remarks, he stated that, 'Corona pandemic has been the most destructive pandemic after the Black Death, Swine Flu etc. It has brought qualitative as well as quantitative changes in the world order. It has pushed global economy in a shutdown and global supply chains have been disrupted. He went on to say that, COVID19 has further strained US-China relation, which is creating global instability. He further said that Indian

provocative behavior in the region has also increased disrupting the regional stability and peace. Mr. DongXiao summed up his remarks by saying that today the COVID pandemic has magnified and intensified the problems in the ecosystem. At this critical juncture, it has become even more important for think tanks to have frequent exchange of views.

Ambassador Masood Khalid (former Ambassador of Pakistan to China) while delivering his remarks stated that, 'Global order is in a state of flux. Despite interconnectedness of global community, we see growing turbulence worldwide. Erosion of institutions like UN is seen which are unable to deal with core disputes like Kashmir etc.' He further said that, erosions of global institutions like UN etc. could be seen which have become ineffective to deal with growing conflicts and challenges. For instance, Kashmir conflict, Palestine, cybercrimes etc. He went on to say that, current upheaval in US-China relationship is disturbing on many levels. Sane voices in US have questioned the approach taken by President Donald Trump. World politics' will be severely affected by this growing tension between rising China and erratic US.

This was followed by an interactive session between the participants and speakers from both Pakistani and Chinese side.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman ISSI, in his concluding remarks, stated that, during cold war period the policies were quite different in comparison to present times. It was the age of military alliances but later on the age of socio-economic development came and globalization became the goal. He went on saying that, the current situation has evolved. Global superpower like US under Trump administration is promoting unilateralism and use of hard power. However, it is a fact that use of military might will eventually fail and die down. Ambassador Mahmood went on saying that, tensions between US and China have grown and it appears that these tensions will remain the same for a while however; Pakistan will always be in support of China. Summing up his remarks, he opined that, Pakistan and China should look at possibilities, which SCO is offering to reduce tensions in the region. Efforts should be made to explore the solutions Shanghai Cooperation Organization is offering to bring stability in the region. Such efforts will not only bring peace and stability in Pakistan and China but the whole region. For Pakistan China relationship sky is and should be the limit ■



## MY ROMANCE WITH THE LAND OF THREE KINGDOMS

By Zahoor Ahmed

A famous poem by the great Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, called 'My Heart, My Wanderer' (Dil-e-Man Musafir-e-Man) ends with the verse:

*'We roam around in strange lands day and night  
Chatting to one or the other, left and right'*

**A**s a career diplomat, I am destined to go from country to country and city to city making conversations and looking for friends. Words are the tools of my trade, my job and my whole life is a quest for friendship. These travels are not easy. But I am a strong believer in diplomacy being not just a synergy of minds but of hearts as well,

and inter-state relations based upon not just common interests but also mutual trust and common values.

During my stay in China, I came across the great classic Chinese novel 'The Romance of Three Kingdoms' and immediately fell in love with it. This novel is much more than just a piece of literature; it is a reflection of history

also. Actually, it is not just a piece of history, it is a living prism of Chinese culture and heritage. Even though this book was written around the year 1600 and tells us a story of 2nd century AD, the values of Chinese society and the way Chinese people think and talk about different aspects of life even today, are reflected in this book.

Although the famous classic has been translated into many languages, there was no translation in Urdu; the language of China's best friend. So I decided to introduce this great classic to Urdu readers.

**During my stay in China, I came across the great classic Chinese novel 'The Romance of Three Kingdoms' and immediately fell in love with it. This novel is much more than just a piece of literature; it is a reflection of history also. Actually, it is not just a piece of history, it is a living prism of Chinese culture and heritage**

The Romance of Three Kingdoms is based on an era of Chinese history (2nd century AD) when the great Han Dynasty was slowly dying. This was an era when there was a lot of chaos and disturbance in different parts of the realm, but it was also an opportunity for people having different values to show their abilities and display their own strength of character. It was an era of great heroes. It is those great heroes who form the

basis of this great story.

The Romance of Three Kingdoms begins with the sentence 'After remaining disunited for a long period of time, the realms come together; and after staying together, they break down again'. This is the story of the cycle of history; how history comes back to square one after a little while. In one sense this might appear to be a fatalistic approach but it actually demonstrates the great Chinese sense of history. There are ups and downs in life which you should accept. If you are down today, you could get back up again. Similarly, when you are powerful you should not lose sight of the possibilities of decay and decline. This is true for your personal life as well as a nation and this perspective gives a remarkable sense of character to the Chinese nation. There is a verse by the great Sufi poet of Pakistan Mian Mohammad Bakhsh which conveys the same message. He says:

*'Do not celebrate the death of a foe*

*Friends also have to one day go'*

This is the way life is. You should not be too excited at the moment of joy and you should not be too sad in moments of failure. This balance is what defines the Chinese character and which is valued by Pakistani literature and culture as well. Ghalib, a great poet of Urdu language, says that:

*'Seven heavens are in motion day and night'*

*'Need not worry*

*Something or the other is bound to happen'*

The portrayal of characters in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is what makes it a piece of global literary heritage. The main characters are the three kings: Liu Bei, Cao Cao and Sun Quan. Cao Cao and Liu Bei are somewhat of an anti-thesis to each other.

**You should not be too excited at the moment of joy and you should not be too sad in moments of failure. This balance is what defines the Chinese character and which is valued by Pakistani literature and culture as well**

Liu Bei is kind hearted, modest and does not want power. Only when he is forced to take power in his hands, does he accept it. On the other hand, Cao Cao thrives for power; because he knows the value of power through which he can change things. So, they have different personalities and different approaches towards power. Other important characters

include Liu Bei, brothers Guan Yu and Zhang Fei and mentor Zhunge Liang.

## The Chinese concept of a hero is one who does not lose his balance and who does not unnecessarily show off his abilities

The Chinese concept of a hero is one who does not lose his balance and who does not unnecessarily show off his abilities.

There is an episode in the Romance of the Three Kingdoms where the two great leaders Cao Cao and Liu Bei are sitting together and Cao Cao points out at a cloud in the sky which looks like a dragon. He says that a hero is like a dragon who remains aloof in time of peace but displays his talent during crises. He says a hero does not look for trouble nor does he create any but he plays his role only at the appropriate time. It is this quality of understatement which is a unique characteristic of the Chinese nation.

The great Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping's fourteen-character maxim 'hiding your shine, bidding your time etc.' seems to evolve from this concept of Cao Cao. The great Punjabi Poet Mian Muhammad Bakhsh

also believes in patience and perseverance.

*'Stay silent and you will get pearls.*

*Be patient and get diamonds'.*

*'Those who create havoc will get neither'*

The Chinese hero displays a consistent behavior. This reminds me of a couplet by the great Urdu poet and last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar:

*'Zafar you can be wise but cannot be so'*

*'Until you control your senses in anger or in joy'*

Another major theme throughout the novel is the value attached to wise and honest advisors. This reminds me of another verse of Mian Mohammad Bakhsh who said:

*'Friendship of a mean person is of no use*

*Grapes on a thorny tree will always be injured'*

Filial piety and loving one's parents is considered to be a great virtue in Chinese culture and society. This is as true today as was in the times of the Three Kingdoms. In Pakistani society, it is the same. Buses and Rickshaws usually paint this couplet in colourful calligraphy.

(Mother's prayers for her kids are like the breeze of heaven). A frequently quoted saying of The Prophet PBUH is that 'the paradise is under the feet of the mothers'.

Friendship and loyalty is also a major theme in the Romance of the Three Kingdoms. This is a story about history, honour, dignity and strategy of war and politics. But more than anything, it is about friendship and loyalty. The three brothers Guan Yu, Zhang Fei and Liu Bei who took the solemn oath of brotherhood under the peach tree and their fourth brother Zhao Zilong stood fast with each other throughout the times of turmoil. In the end Liu Bei actually undertook a war which led to his downfall, mainly because Guan Yu was killed by the Sun Dynasty.

## Filial piety and loving one's parents is considered to be a great virtue in Chinese culture and society. This is as true today as was in the times of the Three Kingdoms

At one point, Zhao Zilong saves the life of Liu Bei's son and his whole white robe turned red and people thought he was about to die. He hands out the baby proudly to Liu Bei but Liu Bei was not happy at all. He throws the infant on the ground saying that I don't care about my son because he was going to lose me a friend. He says that family is like clothes that you can change but brothers and

friends are like arms which never grow back.

Mian Muhammad Bakhsh says:

*'Without friends, neither a garden nor the spring is of any use'*

At one-point Guan Yu is forced to compromise with his brother Liu Bei's arch-rival Cao Cao. Cao Cao accords him great respect but Guan Yu says that my primary attachment is with my first lord. Once, when Cao Cao bestows a robe of honour upon him, he wears it under the old and torn up robe gifted by his old friend Liu Bei.

It is this value attached to loyalty and friendship that attracted me towards the Romance of the Three Kingdoms.

**China and Pakistan have so many differences in culture, religion and language but scratch it a little bit and we share the same values and morals. This is the message I want to convey by translating this great story**

Friendship between Pakistan and China is not just a friendship between two countries; it is deep-rooted in the shouts of 'Pengyou' and the broad smiles of our ordinary people. The common values expressed in the Romance of the Three Kingdoms form the essence of this long lasting and futuristic relationship.

On the surface, China and Pakistan have so many differences in culture, religion and language but scratch it a little bit and we share the same values and morals. This is the message I want to convey by translating this great story ■



The writer is Additional Secretary Asia Pacific at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan.





# ICT DIMENSION OF CPEC CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

By Lt Col Waseem Ahmed

**B**elt and Road Initiative (BRI) of Chinese government comprises six corridors in the overall canvas of its long-term plan. The Master Plan envisages to expand economic horizon of China around the globe benefitting 4.4 billion people of the region connecting three continents; Asia, Europe and Africa while translating China's future economic and geo-strategic designs into practical implementation.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor tabled by Chinese government in May 2013 is one of the most important components of BRI vision encompassing all neighboring countries with enhanced geographical linkage through improved road, rail and transport infrastructure. CPEC is famously coined as a fortune turner for Pakistan as it is expected to enhance economic development in the country.

The revolution brought by colossal development in Information Technology especially during the last couple of decades has completely transformed today's world and has virtually converted it into Global Village. The increased reliance on information technology has posed greater challenges on provision of related Information

& Communication Technology (ICT) services to meet the ever-increasing demands of consumers. CPEC also requires a comparable ICT infrastructure to support trade corridor.

**Colossal development in Information Technology especially during the last couple of decades has completely transformed today's world and has virtually converted it into Global Village**

While a number of energy, transport infrastructure, industrial zone, Gwadar port related and other miscellaneous projects have been planned under the ambit of CPEC, incorporation of tenable ICT component is considered imperative to commensurate with enhanced voice and data connectivity requirements in view of present day's transformed ICT environments to support large scale commercial activities of the trade corridor akin with ever growing demands of bandwidth hungry internet devices.

The trade corridor in view of its strategic significance, geo-political environments and other internal/ external factors has associated sensitivities which require dedicated, secure and reliable ICT infrastructure. Moreover, to meet ICT requirements of the security forces, development of secure ICT infrastructure is considered imperative.

Pakistan-China Cross Border Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) Connectivity Project is the only ICT Project so far planned under the ambit of CPEC which has been completed under difficult terrain and weather conditions. The Early Harvest ICT Project executed by Special Communications Organization (SCO) with a Chinese company; M/s Huawei Technologies as its prime contractor has been completed much earlier than its planned time lines despite numerous challenges posed by peculiar terrain and extreme weather conditions. The project entailed deployment of OFC from Khunjerab to Rawalpindi alongwith related infrastructure to establish first ever land-based connectivity between the two brotherly countries. The project in view of its geo-strategic significance always remained on agenda during higher level interactions between the two countries. The project due to its peculiar international connectivity arrangements is also referred to as 'Suez Canal of Communication'.

While CPEC is progressing with a steady pace, a well-matched ICT infrastructure is required for the mega projects and potential large-scale commercial activities of trade corridor. Despite its proven role in shaping the socio-economic and technological environments, ICT share at present is not even 1% of total CPEC investment. The existing ICT infrastructure available along the corridor may not be able to meet the ICT requirements of CPEC either due to its insufficiency or vulnerabilities. If not planned and implemented at this stage, the ICT infrastructure will have to be developed subsequently to meet inevitable requirement but at a much higher cost due to its exclusive development which can be developed with much lesser effort and cheaper cost by undertaking ICT projects in conjunction with other mega projects especially road and railway projects.

In the absence of lucid ICT strategy and articulation of ICT development in CPEC, the major infrastructure developers like National Highway Authority and Pakistan Railways have started developing their own ICT infrastructure

to meet their integral ICT requirements of their projects. Consequently, the ICT infrastructure development where being undertaken is without coherent mechanism resulting into multiplicity of piecemeal ICT development resulting into wastage of precious resources.

### **Pakistan-China Cross Border Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) Connectivity Project is the only ICT Project so far planned under the ambit of CPEC which has been completed under difficult terrain and weather conditions**

In the absence of dedicated ICT platform, existing ICT infrastructure is being utilized for CPEC which is not only insufficient to meet high capacity bandwidth requirements but also has associated vulnerabilities being insecure. Even the security forces employed for protection of trade corridor have to rely on insecure media for passage of sensitive information. Moreover, for international connectivity, reliance is placed on submarine cables all landing in Karachi with single point of failure due to non-availability of requisite international connectivity infrastructure (Landing Station) at Gwadar. Nevertheless, ICT challenges of CPEC can be converted into opportunities by both Pakistan and China for the benefit of each other in the realm of ICT development as highlighted in succeeding para,

The existing ICT vulnerabilities can be addressed through development of ICT infrastructure by undertaking ICT projects in conjunction with other mega projects under a unified and coherent planning and execution mechanism incorporating the existing and future ICT piecemeal development projects by individual organizations and departments. The envisaged arrangement will not only help to meet the ICT requirement of CPEC but would enable development of dedicated, state-owned and secure ICT infrastructure for the country. China on the other hand can take advantage of ICT infrastructure development in CPEC by engaging Chinese vendors in the light of framework agreement between the two countries for CPEC.

Pakistan in view of its geographical disposition and dominance in the area can utilize its ICT potential for regional telecom connectivity while playing a pivotal role in geographical linkages with the neighboring countries in the region. The land-based cross-border OFC connectivity with China can be used for connecting China with countries like, Afghanistan, Iran and India.

Pakistan-China terrestrial connectivity link is increasingly becoming a preferred choice for Chinese operators who have started planning to divert sizeable volumes of their existing Europe destined traffic through Pakistan-China cross-border connectivity link. Moreover, there are other important destinations that Chinese operators are focusing to transit through Pakistan like Africa (Djibouti) and UAE (Oman and Fujairah) in view of its inherent advantages like lesser latency, reliability and commercial viability than other routes presently being followed by China like submarine routes, terrestrial routes of Russian networks and Kazakhstan. Besides inherent advantages of these transit routes, geographical diversity of China will also be facilitated with this arrangement.

**Under the ambit of CPEC, incorporation of tenable ICT component is considered imperative to commensurate with enhanced voice and data connectivity requirements in view of present day's transformed ICT environments to support large scale commercial activities of the trade corridor akin with ever growing demands of bandwidth hungry internet devices**

China obviously enjoys digital supremacy in the globalized world with massive ICT infrastructure and dominance across the globe. China is leading consortium member for most of the international submarine cables in the region and has its global ICT

footprint across the world. Pakistan can take advantage of global ICT muscle of China to facilitate its regional and international connectivity which can substantially increase the transit traffic of Pakistan.

This development while facilitating transit traffic of China to international destinations will substantially add to the revenue of Pakistan as Export Income. The revenue potential of international transit traffic can be substantially increased with the development of proposed ICT infrastructure and extending it to Karachi and Gwadar along CPEC routes.

**The coherent, well-coordinated and articulated effort in ICT sphere by formulation of comprehensive strategy will pave the way to exploit full ICT potential of CPEC to 'Complement Trade Corridor with Digital Corridor'**

CPEC has provided a latent opportunity for Pakistan and China to capitalize the CPEC investment and infrastructure development to reap its ICT potential and develop ICT dominance in the area. The challenges need to be translated into opportunities by a well thought-out, systemic, wholesome, progressive and coherent ICT plan for CPEC while taking care of vulnerabilities of existing infrastructure. China can take reciprocal advantages of ICT infrastructure development by participation of Chinese vendors and regional/ international connectivity domains. The pivotal role of Pakistan due to its geo-strategic disposition in the region is required to be exploited not only to facilitate trade activities of China but also in ICT realm. The coherent, well-coordinated and articulated effort in ICT sphere by formulation of comprehensive strategy will pave the way to exploit full ICT potential of CPEC to 'Complement Trade Corridor with Digital Corridor' ■



The writer holds Master's Degree in Telecommunication from NUST and is currently working as Director (Pak-China OFC project) at Special Communications Organization



# THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC'S IMPACT ON WILDLIFE & HABITAT

## UNITED STATES

### FAKE NEWS!

False reports claimed that wild turkeys were now in Oakland, CA, but they've already been roaming the city for years.



## ITALY

### FAKE NEWS!

Dolphins and swans did not return to Venice's canals. The dolphins were elsewhere and swans are already local regulars.

## JAPAN



SIKA DEER WANDERED THE STREETS AND SUBWAY STATIONS OF NARA

## CHILE



A PUMA SHOWED UP IN THE CENTER OF SANTIAGO

## INDIA



A STAG RAN AROUND THE STATE CAPITAL OF DEHRADUN

Viral social media posts showing wildlife returning to urban areas? Largely fake news, sadly. Most of these animals were already regular visitors, or the location was misrepresented. The popularity of these posts shows the need for people to find meaning in this pandemic.



WILDLIFE & HABITAT STATISTICAL SOURCES:

[BBC](#), [National Geographic](#), and [The Guardian](#)

VIRAL FAKE NEWS SOURCE:

[The Japan Times](#)



# Talent Training of Youths promising for mutual understanding

By Jin Qiang

The traditional friendship between China and Pakistan has withstood the test of time. Talent training and media interactions between the two countries have been deepening. As the friendship becomes more embodied in people and media, the youth should develop and maintain exchanges further.

Currently, nearly 30,000 young people from Pakistan are living and studying in China. They have a profound understanding of the neighbor, its culture and people, which is evident in their social media posts. Some of them have become social media celebrities with huge fan following. Likewise, Chinese students studying in Pakistan are also sharing their best moments and warm feelings about the country using their social media accounts.

Pakistan's media system - rather Westernized in a way - has distinct Islamic characteristics. Young people, in particular, can use platforms like Facebook

and Twitter to share their opinions and voice their concerns regarding international issues, which not only increases opportunities for them but also brings challenges. However, China has its own rules and regulations for the media to observe.

Younger Pakistani generation, especially those who have worked in Pakistan's media industry, come to China for post-graduate and doctoral degrees in media. Their observations and experiences while living in China is helping them to introduce new ideas and provide wisdom for in-depth media communication between the two countries.

Some media students who have obtained PhD degrees in China have returned to Pakistan to teach. Different from the teachers who have obtained similar degrees in European countries and the United States, they will add more Chinese elements to their daily teaching, which is what China and Pakistan urgently need for their in-depth media personnel training.

Deepening cooperation between media organizations will enrich media products. News programs provide some timely and important information. However, this is far from being enough.

**IN THE ERA OF DIGITALIZATION AND MULTILATERALISM, PEOPLE OF CHINA AND PAKISTAN HAVE ALL THE POSSIBILITIES TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER THROUGH THE MEDIA OF ENTERTAINMENT AND INFOTAINMENT LIKE MOVIES, BOOKS, MUSIC, FOOD AND CULTURE, AND NOT JUST THROUGH BREAKING NEWS**

Moreover, the impact of negative information cannot be ignored. For example, too much emphasis on information about disasters can harm people's cognitive performance. At present, the number of tourists capable of visiting the two countries is still small, and the scenes of large tour groups have yet to reappear. Therefore, the two countries should deepen their introductions to each other gradually but frequently, which will leave the



impression of 'still waters running deep'.

More importantly, relevant perspectives from Pakistani and Chinese angles should be added to international themes, as diverse viewpoints are needed to balance Western perspectives. The perspectives of two countries can be complementary and integrated.

Islamic and Confucian civilizations have a very friendly history of communication. Many thinkers have incisive discussions on the interactions and exchanges between the two civilizations. All of these can be applied further to today's China-Pakistan exchanges.

Of course, to do a good job in communication also requires making good use of new technologies, relying on young people and being more vigorous and flexible in the specific content planning and presentation. For example, the vast majority of Pakistani students who have studied in China are using WeChat to communicate with friends after returning home. The relatively high efficiency in communication indicates a broader space for cooperation.

With an increasing number of talented people versed in the two cultures, it is possible to produce content that people of both countries would enjoy. Think tanks in both

countries should produce some fresh content that can help improve their performance for the relevant research results in varied cultural arenas such as films, TV programs and publications.

**WITH ITS FAST DEVELOPMENT AND KEENNESS FOR COOPERATION, PAKISTAN HAS AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT STATUS IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD. ITS VIGOR AND VITALITY OF THE CLOSE NEIGHBOR IS LIKE A FOUNTAIN OF CREATIVITY AND EXCITEMENT FOR CHINESE ARTISTS AND INDUSTRIALIST. CHINA IS CONSTANTLY WEAVING AND REALIZING THE 'CHINESE DREAM'**

Few years back, some friends of mine discussed the idea of co-producing a movie to promote similar cultural values to attract the audience in both the countries. Despite many differences, there are some similarities in the cultures of the two countries. One concern was to avoid themes that might be considered as taboos in the other culture.

In the era of digitalization and multilateralism, people of China and Pakistan have all the possibilities to understand each other through the media of entertainment and infotainment like movies, books, music, food and culture, and not just through breaking news.

Among the films on both countries, Heavenly Road is based on a

real-life story, which reflects the mutual support and assistance between the people of China and Pakistan and a mood for harmonious, friendly and warm relationship. Another film, titled *Batie Girl*, tells the fascinating story of a Chinese girl Lu You and a group of Pakistani teenagers for 'redeeming each other'.

The trend of cultural exchanges through film industry between China and Pakistan has just begun. There is an urgent need of cultural understanding and productions that match the cultural norms of both countries.

Young people can make good use of each other's media to further nurture friendship between our countries. This is quite like what many young people say, 'Just speak it out when you love her.'

With its fast development and keenness for cooperation, Pakistan has an increasingly important status in the Islamic world. Its vigor and vitality of the close neighbor is like a fountain of creativity and excitement for Chinese artists and industrialists. China is constantly weaving and realizing the 'Chinese Dream'. It is certain that the two countries will share a brighter future by working hand in hand ■



The writer is an Associate Professor and researcher at the Research Centre of Islamic Cooperation Organization of Hebei University, China.



# Lessons from China's Development Experience

By Ambassador Syed Hasan Javed

**B**eijing in early 1980s was 'a place to be' for professional diplomats. Sadly, many foreign diplomats including myself were not there as a choice or preference, given the difficult local living conditions. Today, I realize as to how important it was to be there at that historic moment, when new 'Postmodern history' was unfolding leading to the reincarnation of a new and better China. Destiny perhaps wanted me to be its witness, to

tell the story. China's success story should not be hidden from the international community due to political compulsions of geopolitics. Despite the great achievements in the Sino-Pakistan friendship, there is huge scope for enhancing cooperation. China is willing to help Pakistan realize its 'dream' as its own dream. Today, Pakistan finds itself yet again at crossroads to demonstrate its ability to adjust to changing global realities.

**China is willing to help Pakistan realize its 'dream' as its own dream. Today, Pakistan finds itself yet again at crossroads to demonstrate its ability to adjust to changing global realities**

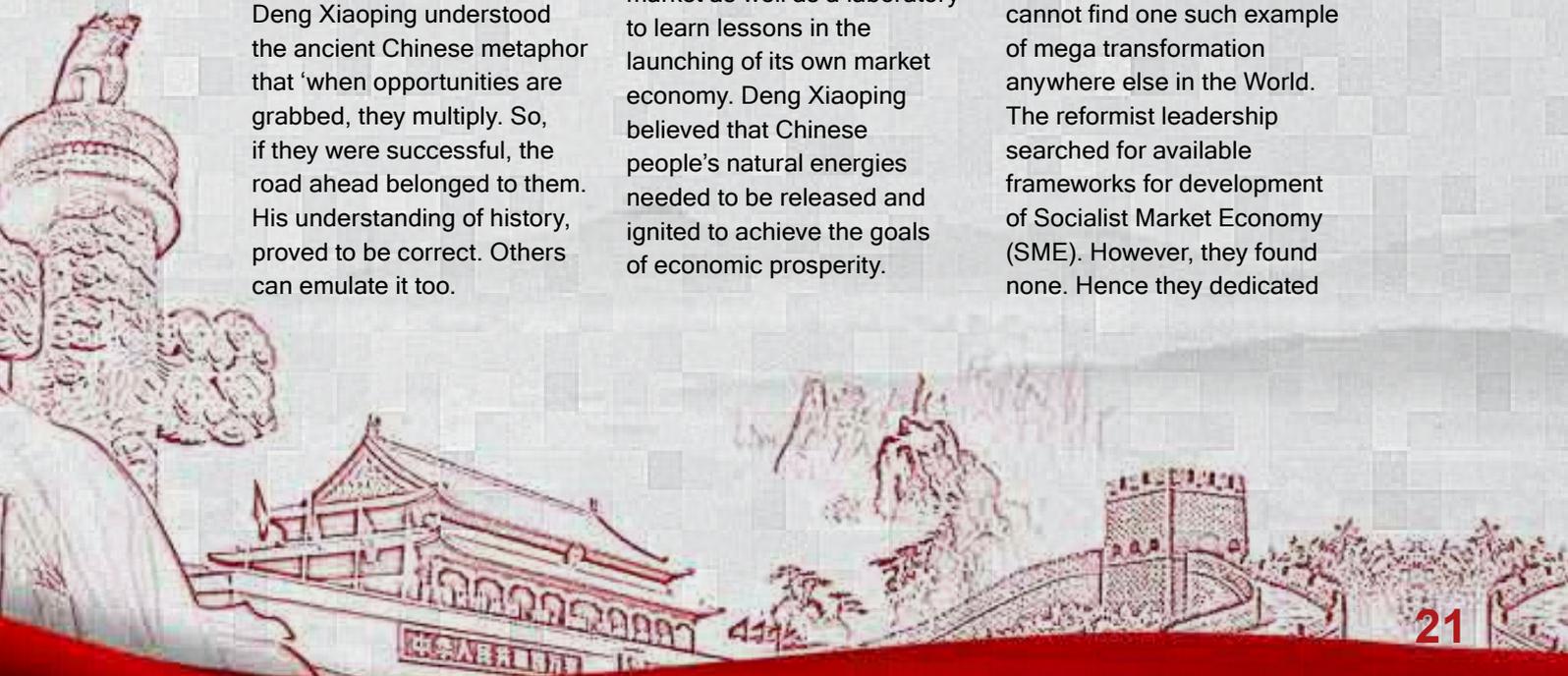
There is no doubt that the rise of China over the past four decades 1980-2020 has sent shockwaves to the corridors of the western intelligentsia and policy making circles. The development template of China's rise, the context and the content of China's power profile is very different to that of the Soviet Union. China used its Soft Power to reclaim its central position in the world. The ancient Chinese wisdom quote says 'Soft Power like water prevails'. China's reforms came after its special revolution which followed the end of the so-called Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution. The greatest challenge was changing the mindset of masses. The Reformer, Statesman and Revolutionary Deng Xiaoping and his team realized that China had badly trapped or encircled itself in its ideological interpretations. It was hence necessary to break through this self inflicted encirclement, which was compounded by western powers' hostility and sanctions. The reformists indeed faced a Herculean task being 'pioneers of change'. Deng Xiaoping understood the ancient Chinese metaphor that 'when opportunities are grabbed, they multiply. So, if they were successful, the road ahead belonged to them. His understanding of history, proved to be correct. Others can emulate it too.

The Reformist Leadership in China at the third session of the 11th Congress of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in December 1978 adopted a three pronged policy for 'Opening Up'. The Opening-Up to the outside world was preceded by opening up of the home economy with integration and to gear up to the challenges of competition from outside.

**The Chinese leadership proved to be 'Doers instead of Talkers' as in most developing countries where the ruling elite keeps the masses hooked perpetually on the promise of a better tomorrow**

Simultaneously, China continued with its Third Pole i.e its economic cooperation with the Third World as a market as well as a laboratory to learn lessons in the launching of its own market economy. Deng Xiaoping believed that Chinese people's natural energies needed to be released and ignited to achieve the goals of economic prosperity.

Once asked by an American Journalist about how he undertook such a momentous transformation. He said that, 'All he did was to release the energy of the people and the people did it themselves'. For releasing the built up energy, comprehensive policy reforms were undertaken in every sphere of life to serve as ignition for epic transformation of the country. The Chinese leadership proved to be 'Doers instead of Talkers' as in most developing countries where the ruling elite keeps the masses hooked perpetually on the promise of a better tomorrow. The whole world is witness to the fact that China faced greater problems in 1980 due to obsolete economic structure, management and conceptual issues, than many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. For all those intellectuals and area experts who studied and observed China while with scrutiny and awe were spending a lot of time of stay in the Mainland in the 1970s or 1980s, it is hard to believe the long distance China has covered in just four decades. One cannot find one such example of mega transformation anywhere else in the World. The reformist leadership searched for available frameworks for development of Socialist Market Economy (SME). However, they found none. Hence they dedicated



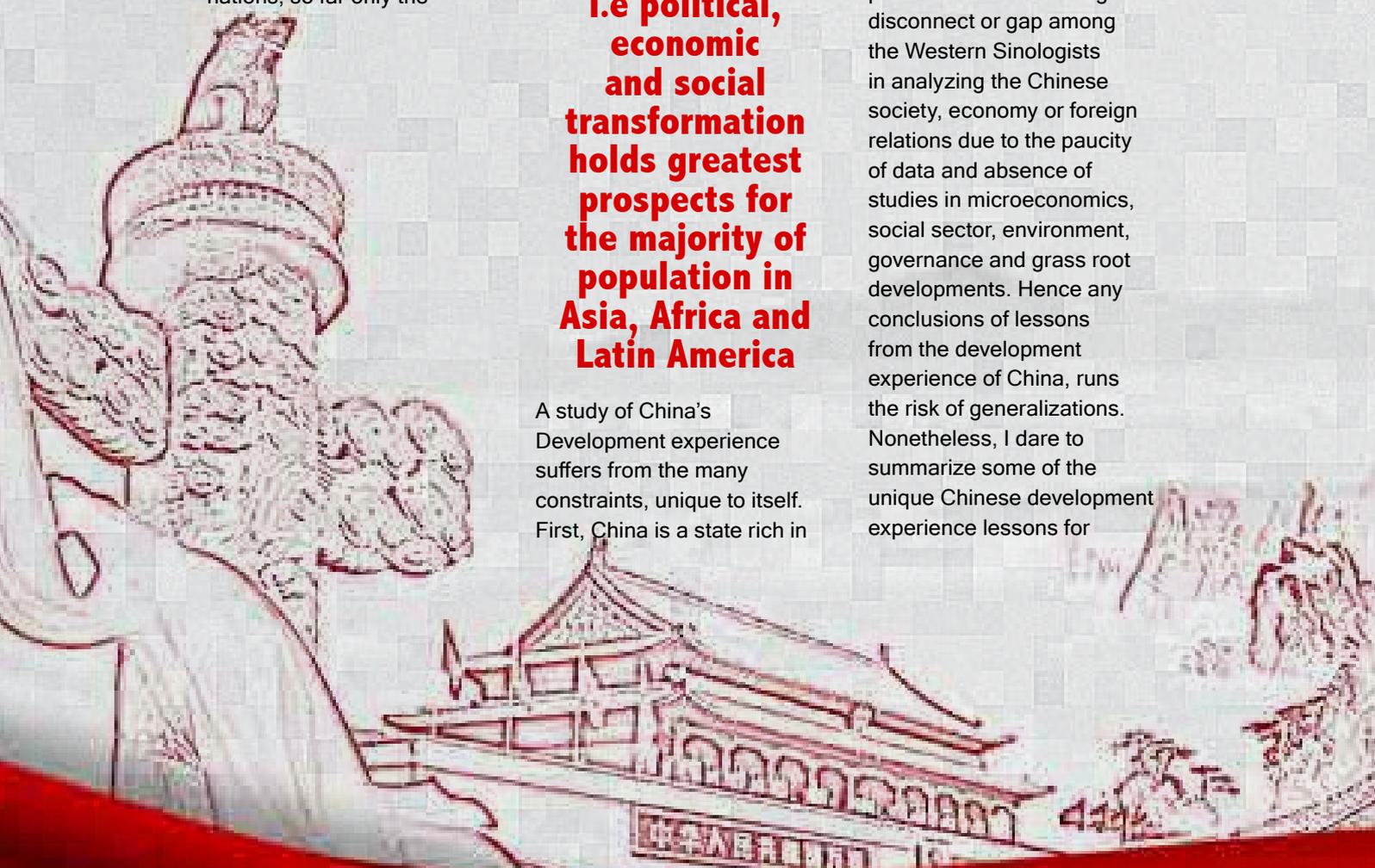
themselves in creating a 'Hybrid Model' drawing on bits and bits of Wisdom brought by their various study teams that were sent in the initial years of Reforms and Open Door Policy. China's rise in all spheres i.e political, economic and social transformation holds greatest prospects for the majority of population in Asia, Africa and Latin America. There is growing interest in Chinese model of development , as it is based on harnessing Soft Power for promoting peace and development and which defies waging conflicts, wars, plunder, exploitation, oppression, and injustice, as had been the case with the former western colonial and imperial powers. Among all the developing nations, so far only the

Vietnamese have succeeded in learning well some of the lessons from China's model of development, due to geographical and cultural proximity; Communist Party Leadership etc. Unlike others, the Vietnamese showed both keenness and demonstrated capability to emulate China's Policies to launch Comprehensive Policy Reforms i.e agriculture reforms, proto industrialization, Small and Medium Enterprises, Start-Ups, Digital Economy, Mobilization of Expatriates, Governance Reforms, Taxation Reforms, Special Economic Zones, Export Culture etc.

## **China's rise in all spheres i.e political, economic and social transformation holds greatest prospects for the majority of population in Asia, Africa and Latin America**

A study of China's Development experience suffers from the many constraints, unique to itself. First, China is a state rich in

civilization with five thousand years' old history. It has a rich repository of cultural heritage and collective wisdom due to the uniqueness of Chinese language providing, one stop connectivity to the past. This is rarely available in any other existing civilizations. This makes the job of the foreigners even more challenging in understanding the Chinese belief system, development thought process or the methodology and the end actions, themselves. The size of China, its' diversity and ever changing nature of its political landscape, the background and the personality profile of its main players' baffle not only best minds, but also even the best endowed foreign institutions, states and major powers. There exists a great disconnect or gap among the Western Sinologists in analyzing the Chinese society, economy or foreign relations due to the paucity of data and absence of studies in microeconomics, social sector, environment, governance and grass root developments. Hence any conclusions of lessons from the development experience of China, runs the risk of generalizations. Nonetheless, I dare to summarize some of the unique Chinese development experience lessons for



other developing countries particularly Pakistan. In my view, developing countries which wish to emulate, imitate or clone China's Model of Development can do it, if they can only muster five things i.e leadership's ability to acknowledge mistakes, revive social capital, undertake comprehensive policy reforms, learn from global best practices by investing in higher education and finally keeping IFI Hit Men/Women, Dual Nationals away from high level policy making institutions. The Reformist leadership of China not only did all these, but took many more aggressive steps for betterment. Some of these are: Develop the Coastal Areas first(China's three Dragonheads); Foreign Companies may be encouraged to export; Wealth creation should develop as a culture; development needs change in mindset ; big cities should not be expanded rather, new cities should be established; agricultural reforms is the key to end poverty; for rural prosperity, proto-industrialization is the right path ; SEZs attract latest technology and best global corporate practices; investment in Human Resources is very profitable; Higher Education investment brings knowledge revolution; adopt foreign knowledge

and technology but maintain control on the steering; Social Capital Revival earns better factor productivity; also let the rich become richer so that they could be taxed.

**China is some state rich in civilization with five thousand years' old history. It has a rich repository of cultural heritage and collective wisdom due to the uniqueness of Chinese language providing, one stop connectivity to the past**

Apart from this no welfare system can sustain without productivity; profitability is key to growth and prosperity. Leadership should avoid lime light, publicity and loose talk and instead focus on actions and results. Leadership, Policies and Reforms(LPR) make huge difference in fortunes of societies. For any economy to take off, reforms in Agriculture, Civil Services and taxation provide the shortcut to success.

Greener Environment adds to economic growth in multiple ways; water conservation and storage are vital not only to human survival but economic progress. We should also treat the foreign investors and tourists with great respect and warmth. For an economy in transition a dual structure and soft power policies ensure stability; the more complex the government regulations, the more there are chances of corruption. Apart from all this, red tape is the greatest hurdle in promoting productivity, growth and prosperity. If the governance is good it will attract investors from everywhere. Along with this, government should not initiate industrialization projects in big cities rather; develop Township Village Enterprises. For a society to move forward, it needs leaderships who is honest, hardworking, ambitious and positive. Leadership demands courage, if you do not have it you cannot be a good leader. Teamwork ensures not only synergy in actions but success too. Time is the most precious thing and now is the time for us to act. Golden opportunities only come once in a life time and we as a nation should be prepared to grasp them ■



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# FIGHTING CORONAVIRUS:

## CHINA AT THE FOREFRONT IN DEVELOPING CORONAVIRUS VACCINE

By Muhammad Armughan Tufail & Hina Mumtaz

**C**OVID 19 is caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome-coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) which appeared in November 2019 at Wuhan in Hubei province of China. To date, it has infected more than 23 million people worldwide and has caused more than 800,000 deaths globally. Newly developed COVID19 vaccines will require enhanced safety checks to prevent further increase in infectivity or inflammation in human beings. Several vaccines are being rapidly developed worldwide, and human trials have already started in most of the countries. China, which is one of the largest developers of vaccines in the world, is working efficiently to develop an effective coronavirus vaccine. Currently, different vaccine strategies such as whole-

virus inactivated vaccines, RNA vaccines, Adenovirus vector vaccines, and nucleic acid vaccines are under evaluation at the clinical and pre-clinical stage.

Vaccine technology has significantly improved in the last few decades. Molecular biology helps in the



Electron Microscope Image of Coronavirus

development of several types of vaccines such as inactivated whole virus vaccines, RNA vaccines, and insect cell culture-based vaccines. Through valiant efforts of Chinese scientists genomic map of COVID-19 was identified in a very short period of time, from the experience of previous vaccine studies on the Middle East respiratory syndrome-coronavirus (MERS-CoV) which appeared in the year 2003, it is known that the Spike -Glycoprotein (S-Protein) on the surface of the virus is a suitable target for vaccine design.

**Through valiant efforts of Chinese scientists genomic map of COVID-19 was identified in a very short period of time, from the experience of previous vaccine studies on the Middle East respiratory syndrome-coronavirus (MERS-CoV)**

Coronaviruses are enveloped and contain a single-stranded ribonucleic acid (RNA) genome. The Spike -Glycoprotein (S-Protein) is responsible for the attachment of the virus to a receptor present on the surface of a host cell, and the protein mediates the fusion of the coronavirus envelope with cellular membranes, allowing entry into the host cell. In addition, the Spike -Glycoprotein (S-Protein) is the main target for antibodies produced by the body as an immune defense against the coronavirus. Chinese scientists are able to decode the complete structure of the Spike -Glycoprotein (S-Protein) from SARS-CoV-2, and it is being examined for vaccine development.



Photo courtesy: Express Pharma

An effective coronavirus vaccine should be developed in a manner so that it can able to produce an antibody response. Recent studies show that coronavirus infected individuals with mild or no symptoms do not induce long-lived antibody responses, and there is a chance of reinfection with the same virus in future. Therefore, an effective

coronavirus vaccine will be needed to minimize these issues and protect the local population when the virus causes multiple waves of epidemics.

Research from Spike -Glycoprotein (S-Protein) vaccines have demonstrated in laboratory tests that they have better protection along with minor complications such as symptoms of common flu etc.



Chinese president Xi Jinping, during a visit to the Academy of Military Medical Sciences in Beijing in March 2020

Coronavirus mostly displays severe infection in elderly people above 65 years of age and with pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes and heart disease, therefore it is also very important to develop a vaccine that is able to provide protection in the elderly people because this segment of the population typically responds less against vaccination because of weak immune system.

The major hurdle to develop COVID-19 vaccines for human use in a short period of time is that novel technologies used to generate these vaccines have not been extensively tested for safety. It may take a significant amount of time to rectify these issues. There are currently dozens of vaccines that are currently in the development phase in China but we will discuss three vaccine candidates that have shown promising results in laboratory research as well as in clinical trials.

ARCoV, a novel coronavirus RNA (Ribonucleic acid) vaccine candidate jointly developed by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Academy of Military Sciences, Suzhou Abogen Biosciences, and Walvax Biotechnology Co, Ltd and was officially approved by the National Medical Products Administration for the clinical trial in June 2020. This is the first COVID-19 RNA vaccine to be approved for clinical trials in China. RNA vaccines work by introducing a molecular RNA sequence (the molecule which tells cells what to build) which is coded for a disease-specific information such as Spike -Glycoprotein (S-Protein) of coronavirus creating immunity in the human body, when coronavirus attacks the human body, the Spike

-Glycoprotein (S-Protein) is recognized by the immune system, producing antibodies for the disease

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19, the Academy of Military Medical Sciences of People Liberation Army has been researching on COVID-19 vaccines.



Photo courtesy: [ClinicalTrialsarena.com](https://ClinicalTrialsarena.com)

Their research shows that the COVID-19 RNA vaccine not only induced high levels of antibodies in mice and macaques, but also induced protective long term immune responses.

The experiment on macaques shows that vaccine-immunized animals can withstand the attack of coronavirus, effectively prevent virus replication and disease progression, and clearly shows good protective effects.

Domestically produced RNA vaccines have three advantages. First, the selection of vaccine antigen target which is, in this case, Spike - Glycoprotein (S-Protein) is more precise, and the vaccine is safe. Second, the main raw materials and equipment for vaccine development have all been locally produced, which makes it possible to expand the production capacity rapidly. Third, the vaccine is stable at 26°C for at least a week, which could make it more attractive for potential immunization campaigns for hard-to-reach populations in places where cold-chain storage and transportation are not always available.

ARCOV RNA vaccine is developed in accordance with the requirements of clinical trials of multiple batches. Phase I clinical trial of ARCOV started in July 2020.

Ad5-nCoV, is a vaccine candidate co-developed by AMS and CanSino Biologics, China. The vaccine candidate is developed by utilizing CanSino Biologics adenovirus-based viral vector vaccine technology platform.

The CanSino Biologics Ad5-nCoV vaccine candidate is a genetically engineered vaccine candidate with the replication-defective adenovirus type 5 as the vector to express SARS-CoV-2 spike protein. It uses a weakened common cold virus

(adenovirus, which infects human cells readily but is incapable of causing disease) to deliver genetic material that codes for the SARS-CoV-2 Spike - Glycoprotein (S-Protein) to the cells. These cells then produce the spike protein and travel to the lymph nodes where the immune system creates antibodies that will recognize that spike protein and fight off the coronavirus. Stage 2 clinical trials are currently going on for Ad5-nCoV vaccine.

CoronaVac, a COVID-19 vaccine candidate produced by Sinovac Biotech, a company based in Beijing China is one of the six vaccines worldwide that have entered Phase 3 clinical trials. CoronaVac uses an old-fashioned traditional approach of vaccine development.

It uses an inactivated whole virus to prompt the body to develop immunity. The virus is grown under controlled conditions and killed chemically, so it cannot replicate to cause disease when injected into the body. This method has long been proven effective with other viruses, and is still used in polio, Hepatitis A and rabies vaccine. Through this method, chemically killed virus induces immunity response in the human body, and thus resulted antibodies are able to detect pathogenic coronavirus and killed it by destroying the virus body including its cell proteins such as Spike - Glycoprotein (S-Protein). Phase 1 and Phase 2 clinical trials have shown encouraging results for CoronaVac.

## **CoronaVac, a COVID-19 vaccine candidate produced by Sinovac Biotech, a company based in Beijing China is one of the six vaccines worldwide that have entered Phase 3 clinical trials**

China is utilizing all its efforts in developing an effective vaccine for the Coronavirus pandemic that has killed thousands of people worldwide. We hope that a successful and clinically proven Chinese vaccine will be available globally in the coming months so that additional loss of human lives can be avoided ■



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# Webtalk on 'Hong Kong: Status and Future'

By Muhammad Faisal



**C**hina Pakistan Study Centre at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad organized a web-talk titled, 'Hong Kong: Current Status and Future' on June 25, 2020.

Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director CPSC-ISSI in his introductory remarks stated that, 'In the past year violent protests have destabilized an economically thriving city, while undermining rule of law and social order. Given the large scale of demonstrations and their frequency, protests appear to be facilitated by external forces. Such actions are blatant 'interference in internal affairs of China' and tantamount to undermining China's sovereignty over Hong Kong. For decades, Pakistan has consistently supported One China policy and with regards to Hong Kong Pakistan considers it as China's internal matter in line with the 'One Country, Two Systems' framework.'

Chief Guest at the occasion was H.E, Mr. Yao Jing, and Ambassador of People's Republic of China. During his remarks he stated, 'China will never compromise in face of foreign interventions and will defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity with firm resolve.' He further said that the protests in China had disturbed peace and coordination with mainland China resulting in severe consequences for the local people. The Western countries are objecting to a legislation, which is purely an internal affair of China. China has every right to introduce laws and exert sovereignty over Hong Kong. Legally and historically, the Chinese central government has authority over diplomatic and security issues related to Hong Kong. He added that China respects international commitments and rights given to Hong Kong.

He went on to say that, the interference in Hong Kong is part of a wider strategy to curtail China's peaceful rise. As China is deemed as a rival by western countries especially the US, they are taking every possible measure to disrupt China's progress. They want to project China as an irresponsible member of the international community. These countries are putting their own agendas over historical facts. The ambassador also said that China values multilateralism

and the main purpose of China's foreign policy is to support peace and development across the globe. China will never take any kind of initiative to sabotage global peace and development agenda.

Ambassador Yao Jing added that the Western countries have also targeted China-Pakistan relations. They have raised baseless rumors regarding bilateral arrangements. He said that our resources and time should be spent more on strengthening and consolidating our ties instead of clearing misconceptions raised by the West. In the end, he said that we should focus on economic revival post COVID-19.

Ambassador Masood Khalid (former Ambassador of Pakistan to China) stated that in 1997 a historic wrong was corrected after Hong Kong was handed over to China. Since then, Hong Kong has achieved remarkable economic progress. He added that China has a sovereign right to introduce laws to normalize situation in Hong Kong and Pakistan is against foreign intervention in China's domestic affairs.

Ambassador Khalid said that continued protests will increase hardships for locals but suggested that this could be the aim of western countries. He urged the saner voices in Hong Kong need to realize that cooperation with central government will be of best interest. He emphasized that China's peaceful rise cannot be curtailed by such negativity.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman ISSI, in his concluding remarks, stated that no other country would tolerate what is being supported in Hong Kong by foreign elements. Beijing is exercising its responsibility towards the people of Hong Kong and safeguarding its security interests. The objections of Western countries against China's rise is evident through their stance on the situation in Ladakh, South China Sea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. He added that there are clear double standards adopted by these countries who allowed India to be elected as non-permanent member of UN Security Council despite the country's history of open violations of its resolutions ■

# Flood Management Crisis in Pakistan Lessons to Learn

By Dr. Abdūl Rauf

Pakistan's major rivers originate from northern mountains of Himalaya, Karakoram, Hindu Kush and Kashmir ranges, falling into Indus River creating Indus River Basin (IRB). There are two major storage dams, nineteen barrages and forty-three major canals with a total length of 57,000 km which together, form one of the most intricate irrigation systems in the world and provides water for 80% (162,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of the country's agricultural lands. Floods in IRB is a regular devastating activity as part of natural cycle and since independence numerous major floods events caused tremendous damages, including significant damages in 1950, 1973, 1976, 1978, 1992 and 2010.

Dams and reservoirs play a major role in controlling floods and have proved their significance but unfortunately

Pakistan's western rivers have only two major reservoirs (Tarbela and Mangla dams on Indus and Jhelum rivers) which not only have insufficient design capacity to control the floods but are also losing their capacity with time due to siltation. Tarbela can hold 12 billion cubic metres (bcm) of water, Mangla 7 bcm, all other dams 3 bcm and Kalabagh dam once build will hold additional 6 bcm but we have to face 135 bcm during monsoon. Thus there is a need to build more dams, especially under the climate change conditions leading to erratic rain patterns with heavy rains in smaller time-frame followed by long dry spells. We have acute shortage of water but we are losing hundreds of bcm of water each year because of delayed construction of dams. So the poor management and inadequate water reservoirs leads to floods and droughts. If we look at Pakistan's flood protection strategy, we see that it has generally failed as our focus

is to fight flood or control floods whereas you cannot fight against nature but learn to live with the nature and use the natural cycles in our favour.

**DAMS AND RESERVOIRS PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN CONTROLLING FLOODS AND HAVE PROVED THEIR SIGNIFICANCE BUT UNFORTUNATELY PAKISTAN'S WESTERN RIVERS HAVE ONLY TWO MAJOR RESERVOIRS (TARBELA AND MANGLA DAMS ON INDUS AND JHELMUM RIVERS) WHICH NOT ONLY HAVE INSUFFICIENT DESIGN CAPACITY TO CONTROL THE FLOODS BUT ARE ALSO LOSING THEIR CAPACITY WITH TIME DUE TO SILTATION**



In case of Pakistan, major issues of failure in flood management includes; lack of national will to address issue and enforce implementation, lack of coordination and data sharing between different (federal and provincial) departments. Departments also lack expertise and specialists. Apart from this, our departments lack capacity to consume allocated funds. Fair consumption and transparency in



management of funds remains an issue, we need to focus on structural measures since they are easy to implement in a short time period. Sustainability and expensive maintenance remains an issue also. Inadequate non-structural measures since these are difficult and takes much longer time to implement, involve critical thinking, expertise and patience, illegal encroachment of floodplain areas, unchecked dumping of raw sewage in city drains which are suffering from illegal encroachments too and blockage of drainage system due to poor maintenance and solid waste dumping.

The Yangtze River in China is the third longest river in the world that flows over 6,300 kilometres through 19 provinces. Terrible floods were always common but by 1990s, the floods became more frequent causing greater losses. This was the result of deforestation and erosion in the upstream areas and shrinking wetlands in the central and lower areas. Chinese government initially implemented short term solutions like reinforcement

and dredging with little focus on long-term sustainable strategies for protection against floods. However breaching of levees which were built to protect agricultural lands caused a massive loss of life and property.

The Yangtze River Basin management plan was then developed after massive floods of 1998 where more than 4,000 people were killed and caused economic loss of around US\$25 billion. At that time, Chinese authorities began to question the efficacy of engineering solutions and realised the importance of restoring the floodplains and the natural environment. A so-called 32 character policy, aimed to reduce flood threats by working with nature rather than fighting it, was introduced. Chinese decided to reforest land in the watershed, reclaim floodplains and restore wetlands. Today, 12 of the 19 provinces in the Yangtze River Basin have wetland conservation regulations with more than 140 national wetland parks. Around 2.1 million people from floodplains were relocated, logging was banned and even farming was prohibited on steep slopes to prevent any further erosion. There is a great

deal Pakistan needs to learn from Chinese knowledge and experience based on the fact that hard engineering solutions are often ineffective and fail to control floods.

In our case we need to understand from Chinese successful management plan that fight against nature by unnatural means and engineering structures can never be successful. These structures are useful at local level only to give limited protection in just smaller area but mostly give false sense of security as often these structures fail causing much more damage to life and property.

**WE NEED TO LEARN TO LIVE WITH FLOODS WHERE FLOODS ARE MANAGED AND NOT FOUGHT WITH. WE NEED TO DIVERT WATER TO WETLANDS (THAT NEED TO BE RESTORED AND CONSERVED) AS FLOOD WATER RECHARGES GROUND WATER, REGENERATES RIVERINE FOREST AND RESTORES POLLUTED LAKES. NUTRIENTS ENRICHED FLOOD WATER IMPROVES SOIL FERTILITY THAT LEADS TO HIGHER CROP YIELDS**

We need to learn to live with floods where floods are managed and not fought with. We need to divert water to wetlands (that need to be restored and conserved) as flood water recharges ground water, regenerates riverine forest and restores polluted lakes. Nutrients

enriched flood water improves soil fertility that leads to higher crop yields. Embankments, levees, dredges may save certain areas at the cost of having more flood water in other downstream areas which are often less populated with reduced infrastructures thus prone to less damages. To effectively manage the floods in Pakistan.

## **REFORESTATION, AFFORESTATION AND INCREASED TREE PLANTATION AND VEGETATIVE COVER IN THE WATER CATCHMENTS AREAS TO SLOW DOWN THE WATER FLOW AND INCREASED ABSORPTION OF WATER IN GROUND SHOULD BE ENSURED**

There it is recommended that, we should come up with a comprehensive national water management and integrated flood management strategy / policy and associated legislation. It needs to be a proactive strategy instead of being a reactive one with effective instead of docile implementation mechanism. Capacity building and increased coordination among different departments should be ensured. Real-time sharing of flood data and effective flood early warning system should be there. Awareness among general public about water, climate change and environmental issues should be created.



Reforestation, afforestation and increased tree plantation and vegetative cover in the water catchments areas to slow down the water flow and increased absorption of water in ground should be ensured. This will check flash floods, reduce soil erosion and will increase the life of water reservoirs due to reduced siltation. The cost and efforts of canal de-siltation will also be reduced.

Construction of new dams and water reservoirs should be done on priority basis, both big and small but many at suitable every location. This will also manage water flow in rivers which actually avoids sea water intrusion as opposed to wrong belief of not having a dam which is actually allowing sea water to cause more damage. Restoration of wet lands be done immediately by removing illegal encroachments.

Excess water to be released to natural flood plains by planned breaching of levee embankments in case of high floods. Water charging wells should harvest rain / flood water and store water in an underground natural storage.

Besides managing floods, this will improve the depleting underground water resources and will gradually improve the sub-surface water reservoirs both in quantity and quality.

Capacity restoration and construction of flood diversion canals should be done. Repairing, strengthening and upgradation of existing flood protection embankments and levees should be done on priority basis. Rehabilitation and capacity enhancement of barrages and of bridges should immediately be performed.

In summary, floods are part of natural cycle which cannot be controlled but can be managed. Flood water is a precious resource, which, if handled properly can be a blessing. We need to move towards flood management or more precisely water management from existing flood control strategies which are prone to failure. We need to increase our emphasis on non-structural measures with limited structures. Water is life and our survival in future is linked with our resolve and skills to manage our depleting water resources ■



The writer holds PhD in Telecom Engineering from University of Sheffield, UK and is a faculty member at NUST.



## IA and NHA joint ventures with Chinese enterprises set to promote socio-economic development of Pakistan

The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and National Highways Authority (NHA) have signed two separate traffic projects with Chinese enterprises. According to a Gwadar Pro report on August 28, the PIA has signed the construction contract of main runway upgrading project of Allama Iqbal International Airport Lahore with a joint venture led by China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC). The main works of this project includes refurbishing the runway and upgrading the drainage ditch and avionics system. According to a manager of the CCECC, advance techniques and professional experts will be deployed for the project so that the upgradation of Allama Iqbal International Airport is successfully completed. The implementation of the project will further expand external connectivity window of nation beside promoting local employment and economic development. Separately, Shaanxi Huashan Construction Group Co, one of the top 250 global contractors of ENR, won the bid by NHA for the addition of two lanes to N-55 National Highway (Ratodero-Shikarpur). The 43.4 km project is the first project issued by NHA in 2020.

August 31, 2020 (BUSINESS WORLD)

## China allows flights into Beijing from Pakistan, seven other countries

China is poised to resume direct international flights to Beijing from several countries with low rates of the deadly coronavirus, aviation authorities said on September 2 after a freeze of more than five months.

The new rules will apply from Thursday to flights from Pakistan, Thailand, Cambodia, Greece, Denmark, Austria, Sweden and Canada, all with low numbers of imported cases of the virus which has hammered global travel.

But travelers would be subject to centralized quarantine on arrival for 14 days and have to take two Covid-19 tests, a Beijing city official told reporters.

'Starting September 3, international passenger flights to Beijing, which previously had their entry points diverted, will gradually resume,' said the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) in a statement, without specifying if passengers would have to be nationals of the eight countries.

Since late March, Beijing-bound international flights have been diverted to other Chinese cities where passengers are screened for the coronavirus before being allowed to travel on to Beijing, the political heart of the country. They would then be sent to quarantine facilities. As of September 1, the CAAC said 511 international flights had undergone diversion.

Life in Beijing has largely returned to normal, although temperature tests remain common when entering buildings and some places require people to scan a QR code logging their visit on a ubiquitous health app.

September 3, 2020 (DAWN)



## China plans huge investment in next-generation chips: Report

China is planning a sweeping set of new government policies to develop its domestic semiconductor industry and counter Trump administration restrictions, conferring the same kind of priority on the effort it accorded to building its atomic capability, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

Beijing is preparing broad support for so-called third-generation semiconductors for the five years through 2025, said the people, asking not to be identified discussing government deliberations. A suite of measures to bolster research, education and financing for the industry has been added to a draft of the country's 14th five-year plan, which will be presented to the country's other chipmakers, which include Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp., Will Semiconductor Ltd. and National Silicon Industry Group Co., may benefit more broadly from the state support. country's top leaders in October.

September 4, 2020 (ALJAZEERA)



## Pak tourism potential showcased at China expo

The photo exhibition titled 'Promoting Pakistan Tourism and Culture' was presented online during the largest comprehensive exhibition of global trade in services and the leading event in the field of trade in services in China, began at the National Convention Centre, Beijing, Gwadar Pro reported. Tourism is one of the important special subjects of CIFTIS. The "World Conference on Tourism Cooperation and Development" would be held during the CIFTIS. The conference will be hosted by the World Tourism Cities Federation (WTCF) and broadcast to more than 200 member units in more than 150 cities in the 75 WTCF countries.

As a sub-activity of CIFTIS, Pakistan Culture and Tourism Promotion Exhibition, co-organized by the All Pakistan-China Friendship Association (APCFA) and Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (BPAFFC), kicked off on August 30.

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September 5, 2020 (THE NATION)



# Friendly neighbors, Iron-clad brothers and Lasting partners

By Shi Lan



If a Chinese is asked 'which nation do you think has the strongest relationship with China?' The answer without any doubt is 'Batie' which means the 'Iron-clad Pakistan'. If a Pakistani is asked which nation do you think, has the best relationship with Pakistan? The answer is most likely to be 'China'.

Behind the answers is tacit understanding and mutual care. Needless to say, in this modern changing world of profound vicissitudes, it is difficult to find a second example of such close partners, brothers and neighbors in the world.

Pakistan was the first Islamic country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. Pakistan has always stood up for and by China and offered valuable and selfless help at critical times of need, especially when New China sought to break external blockades in 1950s, restore the legitimate seat at the United Nations in 1970s and explored reforms and opening up in 1980s.

The past seven decades have been illuminated by the historical context of the good neighborly and friendly partnership between the two countries and borne historical witness to true goodwill

that is heart-felt and lasting. Just as a Chinese poetic line goes, 'The wind knows the strong grass; the fire finds the real gold.'

Under the snow peaks of Karakoram Mountains along the border, a lofty and solemn cemetery in the Pakistan side houses 88 Chinese martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the construction of China-Pakistan Karakoram Highway. In the years 1966-1979, together with their Pakistani colleagues in arms, these martyrs were dedicated to build a 1,032-kilometer 'Road in Heaven' along the ridges and valleys usually forbidden for life. Forever, they left themselves in neighborly Pakistan, the land they cherished for life.

Now, this road is even safer than it used to be and the scenes along the highway are kept perfectly maintained, which should be much to the satisfaction of the souls of the fallen.

After one of the strongest earthquakes struck Wenchuan of Southwest China in 2008, Pakistan flew in tents reserved only for strategic purposes with military aircraft at this extreme hour of need and donated money to assist the families of the victims. The accompanying medical team members from Pakistan humbly reduced themselves to the floor, only because the seats were removed to save space for equipment.

**Needless to say, in this modern changing world of profound vicissitudes, it is difficult to find a second example of such close partners, brothers and neighbors in the world**

The kindness was paid through the same kindness from Chinese side. When Pakistan suffered from one of its worst floods in 2010, China offered a helping hand by immediately sending in a large team of medical experts with latest medical equipment. Also rushing into Pakistan were large-scale rescue convoys and helicopters. This operation was actually the first time in the history of China's foreign aid.

On the other side, 'PIA first to China' itself embodies the profound friendship between China and Pakistan.

In May 2005, a Chinese mountaineering team from the Tibet autonomous region encountered danger in Pakistan. At the time of emergency, Pakistani military helicopters arrived at the site as

quickly as possible and flew the wounded to safety for treatment. Diplomats took military helicopters to the mountains to meet the expedition team of 10 people, because they were from China.

After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Central China earlier this year, Pakistan motivated the whole country to gather masks and relevant material to assist China. Later, when Pakistan was also hit by the pandemic, China stepped forward to share the experience of fighting the pandemic with Pakistan, provided it with much-needed anti-virus materials and sent in teams of medical professionals to battle the disease together. At the same time, China assisted in building temporary hospitals, which helped meet Pakistan's urgent need to treat the infected.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor launched in April 2015 projects bilateral exchanges to a new height. Linking inland Asia and the Indian Ocean, CPEC strengthens regional connectivity. Its focus on energy and transportation cooperation has helped in solving difficulties of immediate concern for Pakistani people, demonstrating in real life not only their all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, but also the sound and solid benefits of the visionary Belt and Road Initiative.

During his visit to Pakistan in 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping pointed out that more than ever before, the two countries and people need to work hand in hand closely to give full play to advantages in traditional friendship, geographical proximity and complementary economic operations. The two nations are encouraged to meet challenges together, share opportunities, seek

mutual development and set out an exemplary role model in building a community of shared future for Asia.

In Pakistan people compare the friendship with China as 'Higher than the mountains, deeper than the ocean and sweeter than honey'. In China, people call the Pakistani people 'Good friends, kind neighbors, reliable partners and iron-clad brothers'.

**The kindness was paid through the same kindness from Chinese side. When Pakistan faced one of its worst floods in 2010, China offered a helping hand by immediately sending in a large team of medical experts with latest medical equipment**

Just as some new verses go:

Crossing Khunjerab Pass under high snow peaks

Roads to fortune and heaven carry friends' dreams.

High mountains and vast plateaus will still echo

Touching tales and striking deeds of martyred heroes.

Though twirling on through tiger mouths, the highway

Remembers those who spared life to pave way.

The Himalaya and Karakoram ranges forever

Stand to prove bonds of neighbors and brothers

Wheels of a new era turn forward in line

Along with common voices of Auld Lang Syne ■



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# Of Sticks and Stones

By Najeha Rashid



The Pakistani nation watched with much intrigue as its two largest neighbours, India and China, went head to head (along a strip of land, in the desolate, mountainous region of Aksai Chin. With the border never solemnised between the British Government of India and China, Aksai Chin, in the northwest of India, as well as the regions eastwards, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, have been a source of constant strife, that reached its zenith in the 1962 Sino-India war. The recent showdown occurred along four main areas at the southern edge of Aksai Chin where it meets India. The areas, namely the Galwan Valley, the Dapsang Plains, Hot Springs and Pangong Lake lie along the Line of Actual Control established post-1962 war. In the tussle China took over the whole of Aksai Chin, despite India claiming it to be a part of Ladakh. However, the LAC remains disputed. Aksai Chin, the north-eastern region of Ladakh, is bordered by the Kunlun Range in the north, and is cut across by the Karakoram Range somewhat through the middle. Since the late 1800s, the British had come up with two borders in that region, to separate India and China: the first one, the Johnson Ardagh Line, followed the crests of the Kunlun Range and placed all of

Aksai Chin in India, and the second one, the Macartney-Macdonald Line was placed further south and followed the Karakoram Range.

The later was proposed in 1899 and the Chinese later on claimed that it was the only line pre-1947 presented to them officially. It lent part of Aksai Chin, the Lingzi Tang Plains to India and the region towards north of the Karakoram to China. However, the British perception on the border kept shifting depending on the perceived Soviet threat, and thus the border, flanked to the west by the Karakoram Pass and to the southeast, by the Pangong Lake, remained ambiguous and unmarked in-between. This did not prevent China from building a highway across the region, connecting Tibet to its western province of Xinjiang in the early 1950s.

Though the construction was kept with the Macdonald Line, India viewed it as a violation of its sovereignty and it became one of the triggers of the war later on. The aggression seen in the last two months, comes in the foreground of China's ambitious Belt Road Initiative (BRI) and India's strategic alliance with the United States; it being part of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), a coterie of four countries, namely,

India, Japan, US and Australia, aiming to counter China's presence in the mineral rich South China sea. As China prepares to modernise the Karakoram Highway, as part of the CPEC, India raises issues of territorial sovereignty, since the road passes through Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). India claims the territory to be its own and blames Pakistan for its illegal and unlawful occupation. Indian analysts have also denounced the BRI as an instrument of Chinese expansionist agenda and a debt trap for poor countries. The conflict in May 2020 was preceded by both sides accusing each other of encroachment upon their territory, through the building up of troops and infrastructure along two points, the Pangong Lake and the Galwan Valley, over the past few months. It ultimately led to a violent face off on May 5-6 in which both sides faced casualties. The Pangong Lake lies across the LAC, with its eastern end under Chinese control. The lake is flanked to the north by eight mountain spurs jutting out along its length, known as the Fingers. Indian troops had been carrying out patrols till the eastern most, 8th, Finger until, the start of May, this year, they were confronted by their Chinese counterparts. Similar

incidents occurred at Galwan Valley towards the northwest, that overlooks the strategic Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldie (DSDBO) road, built by India over the last two decades. The DSDBO road traverses the Depsang Plains, hugging the LAC and links Leh, the capital of Ladakh, to the Karakoram Pass. The road connects to India's northern most military out-post, the Darbuk-Beg-Oldie (DBO) post, lying just 9 km away from the Karakoram Pass and 8 km from the LAC. The post features an air strip, and along with the road, provides access for both men and goods to the battlefield of Siachen and the Aksai Chin border.

In 2013, Chinese troops set up camp 30 km from the DBO post, which led to a 3-weeks long stand-off until tensions were diffused through negotiations. It is for this reason that, the Depsang Plains and the Galwan Valley are of crucial importance to India, as by taking over them, China can potentially block India's access to its restive northern front. The spat in May led to the deployment of thousands of troops and heavy weaponry by both sides, till Commander level meetings led to an agreement to remove any permanent structures and withdraw troops to their respective territories. However, the de-escalation attempt took a catastrophic turn when the Indian troops were attacked by Chinese forces while they were trying to demolish and burn down a Chinese watch post built on the western bank of Galwan river. The Chinese, who carried spiked clubs and stones killed and injured many Indians. With bodies being swept away by the currents of the Galwan River the death toll on the Indian side came up to 20 while China has

yet to disclose its own. China has long claimed possession of whole of the Galwan Valley and the Chinese ambassador to India took the responsibility of the losses of Indian lives from claiming the watch posts to be located on Chinese land. Satellite images issued by US-based space technology firm Maxar Technologies appear to show extensive Chinese structures on a raised river terrace overlooking the Galwan River.

**CALLS TO BOYCOTT CHINESE GOODS, TRIGGERED BY THE AFFAIR, ALLUDE TO A POSSIBILITY FAR FROM REAL FOR THE INDIAN ECONOMY OR THE WELFARE OF ITS POPULACE**

As of now, the two sides have managed to reach a consensus regarding de-escalation and disengagement of troops in phases, in a process which would take months. However, at Galwan valley, according to Indian claim, the LAC has been shifted 15 to 18 km westwards into its territory. Similarly, along the Pengong Lake, China has taken up territory up to the 4th Finger, the highest ridge along the lake, as well as set up post there, giving it a military advantage over India and providing a buffer territory for its Xinjinag-Tibet Highway. The conflict has brought into question India's ability to face China in a military or economic standoff.

China, apart from having a much larger military apparatus is also India's second largest trading partner after the US. Chinese goods of all sorts, especially electronic devices and automobiles and their parts are everywhere in the Indian market

quite like what we see in Pakistan. The Chinese budget friendly products are being purchased and made use of by the lower and middle class of India. Chinese solar power products account for a sweeping 90 percent of the local market and its smartphone brands have a market share of more than 70 percent in India. Chinese tech giants like Alibaba, ByteDance and Tencent are major investors in Indian startup companies providing invaluable technological and monetary support. It provides almost 70 percent of active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) supplies to the Indian pharmaceutical industry. Therefore, calls to boycott Chinese goods, triggered by the affair, allude to a possibility far from real for the Indian economy or the welfare of its populace. As the kerfuffle wraps up, India can be seen to be bolstering its military. Defence Minister of India approved the procurement of 12 Sioki and 21 Mig fighter jets from Russia, as well as inducted 36 Rafael planes, from France, into its air force. This is in addition to buying long range land attack missiles and air to air missiles. The international response to the recent conflict has not been too raucous. Trump, attributed China's activities to the Communist Party of China, showing its 'true face' and the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, has lauded India for safeguarding its sovereignty and national security through the banning of 59 Chinese apps. France came out with a statement proclaiming India as its strategic partner in the region. Although, India did avoid escalation in this case, it has surely come out more aggressively against China in the recent years through its alliance with the US ■



The writer is a researcher at SASSI.



# CPEC: A Corridor of Economic Prosperity

By Professor Dr. Muhammad Khan

In the words of President Xi Jinping Pakistan-China relationship is founded on a 'Friendship based on trust and mutual support.' From the beginning of this relationship in 1950s, both countries have demonstrated steadfastness and devotion for further prolonging this all-weather friendship. In 2013, this journey of bilateral relationship shaped up into an era of connecting entire Asian region through China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). CPEC is a manifestation of shared interests

and common developmental goals of both countries. The project is aimed to drive practical cooperation of both countries with primary focus on Gwadar deep sea port. Upon construction of the port, the other areas of focus were; energy resources, infrastructure development and industrial cooperation. The ultimate objective of these projects is economic opportunities for the masses of both countries and other regions from Asian continent.

**In 2003, Chinese government highlighted its vulnerability at Malacca; 'Chinese Malacca Dilemma'. There have been many studies conducted by Chinese government, think-tanks and universities to find out alternative routes for Chinese trade and energy imports**

According to a recently published book, 'The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor of the Belt and Road Initiative: Concept, Context and Assessment' CPEC is a project of immense significance for Pakistan and China. The book provides an in-depth analysis of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); the colossal Chinese project, which encompasses a set of corridors and Maritime Silk route spreading over to three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe. Siegfried O. Wolf, the author of the book has investigated and highlighted the philosophy behind Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and more about the strategy of Economic Corridors.

The primary objectives of having these economic corridors are to connect China with its neighbours and then other regions and countries beyond Asia. It is pertinent to mention that, the ancient Silk Road started during the westward expansion of Chinese Han Dynasty from; 206 BCE to 220 CE. It forged trade networks passing through contemporary Central Asian region, Afghanistan, India and present day Pakistan to further south, reaching over to European and African continents.

The BRI is therefore, revival of the old Silk Road and Maritime Route by modern Chinese leadership. The enormous size of

Chinese economy and heavy industrialization warrants new communication corridors and routes in this highly interconnected and globalized world.

Besides, China needs energy resources and raw material in order to maintain its sustained growth and economic development. The huge industrial base of China lacked the required energy resources on long-term bases. China is currently importing over 50% of its energy resources from Middle East region and African countries. Besides, it imports over 30 % oil and gas from Central Asian region and Russia. Chinese imports and energy resources from Middle East and Africa have to pass through Indian Ocean region, before entering into South China Sea. Since Indian Navy is dominating the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), therefore in a future scenario there may be constraints for Chinese trade at the Strait of Malacca; a key point in the Indian Ocean. Strait of Malacca is a narrow passage of water between the Indonesian island of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula.

**BRI is revival of the old Silk Road and Maritime Route by modern Chinese leadership. The enormous size of Chinese economy and heavy industrialization warrants new communication corridors and routes in this highly interconnected and globalized world**

In 2003, Chinese government highlighted its vulnerability at Malacca; 'Chinese Malacca Dilemma'. There have been many studies conducted by Chinese government and at the level of its think-tanks and universities to find out alternative routes for Chinese trade

and energy imports. Findings of all such studies concluded that, in case there is a blockage at Malacca Strait, there are less alternatives routes available for China for its trade and oil imports. Other available alternatives are either incompatible to take on the weight of modern ships and heavy traffic or else causing heavy expenditures owing to longer routes.

## **The BRI is therefore, revival of the old Silk Road and Maritime Route by modern Chinese leadership**

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the only alternative and a secure route, which can guarantee an uninterrupted flow of Chinese trade and energy resources. It is shortest route, less expensive and more secure for the sustenance of Chinese energy and trade needs. Chinese leadership had come up with the idea of CPEC after years of deliberations while weighing its pros and cons. President Xi Jinping is the architect of this project, who has been embarked upon the position of life-time President and Secretary General of Communist Party of China (CPC). From the Chinese perspective, CPEC is the most significant part of BRI. The timely completion of CPEC will provide a boost for the completion of other projects and corridors of the BRI. The Chinese dream for global governance through its soft approach depends a lot on the implementation of BRI and completion of CPEC will be a booster for the BRI.

In a rapidly evolving regional and global security situation, Pakistan holds the key for the continuation of Chinese economic development by providing a secure energy corridor. The development and operationalization of Gwadar Port along with full completion of CPEC as per scheduled is the real challenge, facing China and Pakistan. Two security divisions under Pakistan Army have been established to ensure physical security of the CPEC route. Achieving domestic consensus over CPEC and securing its route were gigantic tasks, planned

and executed by Pakistan with lot of foresight, professionalism and dedication. Halford John Mackinder declared Pakistani geopolitics as the 'Geographical Pivot of History'; connecting various regions of Asia, politically as well as economically. Upon its completion, CPEC will integrate entire region of Asia including India. On its part, India has been opposing both BRI and CPEC without judicious explanations.

Apart from New Delhi, there is a discomfort seen in Washington over the developments on CPEC. On more than one occasions, Alice Wells, the US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia warned Pakistan that, 'CPEC is not about aid.' Washington also warned Pakistan that, Pakistan may face long-term economic crisis if it continues allowing 'China keep pursuing its giant infrastructure push' over and across its geopolitics. Alice Wells further said, 'CPEC relies primarily on Chinese workers and supplies, even amid rising unemployment in Pakistan'.

## **Halford John Mackinder declared Pakistani geopolitics as the 'Geographical Pivot of History'; connecting various regions of Asia, politically as well as economically. Upon its completion, CPEC will integrate entire region of Asia including India. On its part, India has been opposing both BRI and CPEC without judicious explanations**

Islamabad fully understands the real motives behind US concerns over CPEC. Indeed, Washington anxieties over the CPEC are part of global power politics where US views China as its peer competitor. In the wordings of Ashley J. Tellis, Alison Szalwinski, and Michael

Wills, United States, 'Has shifted from viewing China as a strategic partner to a strategic competitor'. Upon completion of first two decades of 21st century, Washington contends Beijing in number of areas like: Domination of Asia-Pacific, control of Indian Ocean, China's technical and technological advancements, Chinese military modernization and domination over the global trade and commerce.

**China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the only alternative and a secure route, which can guarantee an uninterrupted flow of Chinese trade and energy resources. It is shortest route, less expensive and more secure for the sustenance of Chinese energy and trade needs**

Belt and Road Initiative and CPEC are the projects which will advance and stimulate the regional and global trade and commerce. In 21st century, economy (trade and commerce) drives the world politics, unlike military domination of 20th century. It is the trade war between Washington and Beijing which persecutes both BRI and CPEC. CPEC is

a project of economic benefits, both for Islamabad and Beijing. However, in order to circumvent the probabilities of any misconstructions at later stages, there is a need to secure the long-term economic interests of Pakistan from CPEC.

These multiple interests include; ownership of the corridor with the state of Pakistan, enhancing job opportunities for local populace, development of education, health and other projects of human security along CPEC and above all a clear allocation of economic dividends of the CPEC for Pakistan. Agreements and MoUs on CPEC must have addressed all these aspects; however, public exhibition of these would close the prospects of external conspiracies against CPEC.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the initiator of a long-term regional integration, not only between Pakistan and China but between various other regions of Asia. This is possible only once the regional states; energy deficient and energy efficient correctly re-assesses their future priorities and cooperation. A well thought-out and deliberated economic integration would pave the way for a wider regional peace, greater political integration and economic prosperity for entire Asian Continent ■



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## How to enhance Cultural and People-to-People exchange between China and Pakistan

By Yang Zhaohui

Frequent comings and goings by high-ranking officials have marked the diplomatic history of Pakistan, one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China. Such a trend will go on in the new era while more non-governmental exchanges can be explored.

**Cultural exchange has achieved certain fruitful results under the promotion of the Chinese and Pakistani governments, it still lags behind in comparison to political and economic exchanges**

Since the two nations formally established ties on May 21, 1951, frequent top-level exchanges

between both sides have played an important role in expanding bilateral cooperation. Late Chairman Mao Zedong and Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and other leaders of the two countries had several meetings. Premier Zhou Enlai visited Pakistan five times.

Today, both sides are enhancing mutual trust and are working together to build the China-Pakistan Community of Shared Future along with the all-weather strategic partnership of cooperation.

Business and trade have prospered. China is now Pakistan's second largest export market and largest source of imports. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, proposed in 2013 as a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, has enhanced bilateral exchanges and cooperation in

transport, energy and maritime shipping, fostered connectivity between the two countries, and promoted common development. The BRI itself encourages not only trade and investment, but also cultural and people-to-people exchanges that link our hearts and minds.

The history of cultural exchange between China and Pakistan dates back to mid-100 BC. Since the 1950s, cultural exchange and cooperation between the two nations have been developing smoothly and thriving. Abundant and fruitful exchanges and cooperation have been engaged in the fields of art, literature, education, news, sports, cultural relics, archives, publishing, health, women issues and other fields.

Over the past decades, various performing arts groups, including Chinese Folk Music Troupes and

China Acrobatic Troupes, have visited Pakistan. The 'Chinese Bridge' competition has been held 19 times and students from Pakistan have participated in each session.

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan in 2011, the Cultural Office of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan held the 'Photo Exhibition of China-Pakistan Friendship' in Pakistan.' This reflects the very friendly relations between the two countries.

During the COVID-19 pandemic periods, Pakistan and China have supported each other. At first, people in Pakistan donated necessities to China. Later, China sent not only medical equipment, but also teams of medical experts. Fighting the virus together strengthens the bilateral bond even more.

Although cultural exchange has achieved certain fruitful results under the promotion of the Chinese and Pakistani governments, it still lags behind in comparison to political and economic exchanges. At present, cultural exchange between the two sides is mainly conducted at the governmental level; it is not happening so much at the grass roots - between the people and individuals of the two countries. As a result, the people of China and Pakistan have yet to understand and get acquainted with each other's culture.

No doubt, the cultures of the two countries are different. Nevertheless, it should also be fair to say that the insufficient cultural dissemination between them, and even a lack of financial support for individuals and families, have led to this situation of fewer non-governmental comings and goings.

Moreover, the cultural industry of each country has yet to enter the other with multiple products. Among the most fundamental reasons is that the market in each country for the other's cultural products is still not large enough.

**Over the past decades, various performing arts groups, including Chinese Folk Music Troupes and China Acrobatic Troupes, have visited Pakistan. The 'Chinese Bridge' competition has been held 19 times and students from Pakistan have participated in each session**

Language is the carrier of culture. Today, the momentum of learning each other's language between the people of China and Pakistan is unprecedented. Chinese language education in Pakistan has a history of more than 40 years, and in more recent years has developed rapidly. The number of institutions of higher learning offering Chinese courses is gradually increasing, and more and more schools are incorporating Chinese into their curriculum.

Urdu, Pakistan's national language is now offered as a major at more than 10 Chinese universities since being introduced in 1954. Hopefully, those talented people who master each other's language, culture and national conditions will act as messengers of Sino-Pakistani culture and jointly promote mutual cultural exchange in the near future.

A number of localities in China are moving to enhance their exchanges with Pakistan. Yunnan province in Southwest China, for example, is striving to build China's South Asia and Southeast Asia radiation center, taking advantage of its unique geographical advantages. Five sessions of the China-South Asia Expo have been successfully held in Kunming, the provincial capital, during the past seven years. In 2017, representatives of the Yunnan Provincial Tourism Development Committee reached agreements on tourism exchange and cooperation at a symposium in Islamabad and sought an intentional cooperation plan for mutual benefit and win-win development.

In 2018, a media delegation from Yunnan Province's Belt and Road alliance visited Pakistan. In 2019, Li Pei, deputy director of the Standing Committee of the Yunnan Provincial People's Congress, led a delegation to Pakistan for exchanges. The delegates conducted in-depth discussions with Pakistani authorities and businesses on the promotion of the 2019 Business Conference and the strengthening of cooperation between Yunnan Province and Pakistan in economic, cultural and tourism fields.

It is hoped that the two countries will continue to promote practical cooperation in various fields to make substantial progress in the future, so that China-Pakistan relations can move forward to an even higher level, and people from both sides can appreciate and enjoy mutual comings and goings ■



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# IS CHINA THE NEW GLOBAL SUPERPOWER?

By Mohammad Jamal Ahmed

**C**hina, the third-largest country, neighboring 14 countries, with a population of over 1.4 billion people, has been the fastest-growing economy for the last thirty years. Its economy was worth \$14 trillion in 2019 and was set to be the largest economy by 2025. However, the pandemic may catalyze China's ambition of becoming a global superpower. At the 19th convention of the Chinese Communist Party in 2017, President Xi Jinping said that a "new era" had dawned on China; the 71st National Day of the People's Republic of China may mark that turning point. In his book 'The Real War', US President Richard

Nixon said, 'Other nations come and go, other empires rise and fall, but China endures; China is forever.'

This is evident by China's tactful response to the outbreak of COVID-19 which shook the world. China was the first country to experience the disastrous effects of the virus. With no relief in sight, China emerged as a victor over the corona virus with the enforcement of very strict health measures. It put its cities under lockdown and set up hospitals and medical centers in only 10 days. The Chinese government provided food, financial reliefs, and other basic facilities to its citizens gratuitously. And with their cooperation,

China was able to declare its epicenter, Wuhan, free from the virus in only 77 days - setting an example worldwide. Soon after the outbreak, the virus spread to more than 200 countries - claiming a huge toll of human lives and shattered economies. As a responsible member of the International community, instead of covering up the virus, China extended its assistance and offered to share its invaluable experiences with rest of the world. Experts called upon the 2 superpowers of the world - US and China - to tackle this pandemic jointly. However, America's doubts about China's transparency made them adopt a more isolative approach. China, on the other hand, undeterred, stepped up to lead this fight globally.

Between March and April, as the pandemic ravaged the world, China provided more than 16,000 ventilators, 2.3 million thermometers, 2.8 million test kits, 8.4 million protective glasses, 37.5 million protective suits and 3.8 billion face masks, worth a total of \$1.4 billion, to more than 130 countries and international organizations. China was keen to provide aid and assistance to The Vatican despite having no diplomatic relations. Lijian Zhao, Chinese Spokesperson, said, 'Viruses respect no border, race nor religion, and the coronavirus is the common enemy of humanity.' On the flipside, President Donald Trump decided to halt the United States' funding to the World Health Organization amidst the pandemic; a move widely criticized by the global society. However, only one week after the decision, China filled the vacuum by committing to provide \$30 million in funds to the organization.

### **At the 19th convention of the Chinese Communist Party in 2017, President Xi Jinping said that a 'New Era' had dawned on China; the 71st National Day of the People's Republic of China may mark that turning point**

World Health Organization commended China several times for its fight against the virus and its support to the international community during the most critical stage of the fight. The USA, unable to handle the pandemic at home to this date, has been criticized for its contradictory stances and response to the pandemic. China, on the other hand, sent medical teams across the world and had video conferences with more than

150 countries and international organizations, positioning itself as the new global leader.

### **On the flipside, President Donald Trump decided to halt the United States' funding to the World Health Organization amidst the pandemic; a move widely criticized by the global society. However, only one week after the decision, China filled the vacuum by committing to provide \$30 million in funds to the organization**

A verifiable indication of a country's dominance and geopolitical influence is the support it gains in the United Nations. Noting the trends in the voting practices can point out the shifts in the balance of power as votes in the UN are often dependent upon the political and economic ties between the countries. To understand the rise of China's geo-political influence, in 2019, a group of 22 nations signed a letter addressed to the president of UNHRC accusing China of its mistreatment of Uighurs in Xinjiang. In a dramatic response, a group of 37 countries signed a similar letter in defense of Chinese policies. In 2020, 27 countries opposed the controversial Hong Kong Security Law imposed by China. However, this time the votes resulted in a landslide victory for China with 53 supporters on its side.

From a holistic point of view, China has showcased to the world its ability to not only tackle but overcome the global crisis. An unflinching response to the pandemic, valiant support to the World Health Organization and virus-stricken countries, and China's recent assertiveness in the United Nations all point to the tilt in the balance of power in China's favor. With the rising support in the international community, it will be no surprise that China will rise as the new global superpower in the post-pandemic era ■



The writer is a graduate from University of London.

# FASHION TASTIC MEMORIES

By Shaiyanne Malik

**T**his is a true story which happened in one of my many memorable and numerous fashion trips I had abroad. I had been invited by the Tourism and Cultural Ministry to showcase my Collection in China and represent Pakistan. All the preparations and activities before the shows are always very hectic and this was no different. The first steps, of simultaneously putting the collection together, getting original music composed and story line written, getting all passports, photographs and forms signed and delivered to the Chinese Embassy was one hell of a task. Being on an official trip, I was not worried about getting the Visas for my group of 25 people. However one model was giving me very hard time, (I shall call him Tippy). Being very prolific he had modelled, acted and sung many times but for some reason he could not make it to SamanZar , my design studio , to deliver all his documents. I offered to replace him but he was determined to go, even though his producers would not let him leave the set for a minute, wanting him to complete all his assignments before leaving the country for two weeks.

I was already in possession of his passport from a recent trip, and decided to manage. I cropped his photograph from one of my shoots, filled his form and left it

with the guard ensuring that he would come in late night or early morning from his shoot and sign it. Not aware that the anxiety I felt at the time was in fact going to turn out to be part of a larger picture.

**AMIDST CRIES AND SCREAMS AND TEARS AND LAUGHTER AND A LOT OF NOISE, WE MANAGED TO HEAR THE AMAZING STORY OF A CHINESE MOTHER WHO HAD BEEN CALLING THE EMBASSY FOR 10 OR 15 YEARS ASKING THEM TO TRACE HER SON, AND HER SON WAS NONE OTHER THAN OUR VERY OWN TIPPY**

Finally the day arrived when everyone was to go and collect their visas and passports. We all didn't had to go, but it had

become a tradition with us, before each trip to collect our passports and then go for lunch and a briefing of the upcoming event. Tippy as usual did not turn up, promising to meet us at the lunch. As we entered the Embassy, I received a call on my mobile. It was the Embassy staff requesting to have a personal meeting with Tippy. My heart skipped a beat, thinking they had rejected the photograph I had put on the form, and now he would not go. I must have looked worried because 20 hands reached for their mobile phones, all to call one person, Tippy. Who accidentally had managed to escape his producers and was happily heading to the lunch venue. Later he said he had never received so many calls in the short span of five minutes telling him to reach the embassy instead. By then we had all been handed our passports with valid visas in them and now we all sat awaiting fate of Tippy. As soon as he arrived



he was whisked away. As we had all been deprived of our phones by then by the embassy staff, the silence while we waited was quite somber. Half an hour later Tippy emerged, his face extremely emotional, he had clearly been crying and he hugged me breaking into tears again, I was taken aback. But then something even more strange happened, the diplomat who had taken Tippy into the inquisition room pulled Tippy away from me and hugged him tight, then with tears in his eyes he proceeded to hug me as well. Even more surprised I heard the words mother, found, and 10 or 15 years. Amidst cries and screams and tears and laughter and a lot of noise, we managed to hear the amazing story of a Chinese mother who had been calling the Embassy for 10 or 15 years asking them to trace her son, and her son was none other than our very own Tippy.

Apparently Tippy had been raised by his step mother, his father's second wife. His father was a pilot in PIA and on one of his flights he had met and married Tippy's mother bringing her with him to live in Pakistan. Five years later she returned to China to visit her ailing father. Her stay while nursing her father was prolonged and her husband brought their four year old son back to Pakistan and re-married. A year later after her father expired she returned to Pakistan but was unable to trace her son and husband, because they had migrated to England. Returning to China, giving all details to her Embassy she had been calling them every few months to ask if they had traced her husband and son.

While filling Tippy's form, I had noticed that he had a very unusual name. It was in fact this that had alerted the embassy staff



when they saw his form. And they had called him to speak to his mother.

With shaking hands he asked someone to save his mother's number into his phone. I noticed that quite a few of us saved the number in our phones as well. The lunch turned out to become a celebration, the focus shifted on seeing pictures and location of the village where Tippy's mother was from.

The flight from Karachi to Shanghai was very exciting as Tippy's mother was going to be at the airport. Tippy of course was extremely nervous. On arrival he could not see his luggage lying in front of him on the conveyor belt. He lost his phone, eventually found it in his pocket, he fretted that he now did not have his mother's number. Once again a dozen phone calls came to share his mother's number. Eventually trying to get smoothly through immigration process, collecting all the luggage that we travelled with while going for shows, and above all trying to control Tippy's anxiety we eventually reached the arrival lounge.

The scene which followed made me glad and to capture

the moment I luckily had my cameraman by my side. Tippy's mother was waiting with her entire family, friends and neighbours. We were all caught up in the emotional moment as Tippy was literally carried off into the opposite direction from us. I stood there thinking 'Well, this is one show we will surely be doing without Tippy', when suddenly his mother turned back to me and said, 'Tippy told me you are very strict, you always want the team to stay together'. 'But for tonight please let me borrow your one team member, tomorrow I will return him to you. We all will come to see your show.' With that she put a mobile phone into my hand, this is for you, call me any time you want, you will never be out of touch with Tippy as I was.' With that she hugged me and walked back to her son. I never did return that phone and treasure it always as a precious memento. We had a brilliant show and the organizers were gracious enough to put in extra seating for Tippy's new family.

In moments like these, when I reflect and relive memories, I believe that I have been truly blessed because my life has not been any less than a fairytale ■



The writer is a Fashion and Interior Designer.



# Learning Public Administration in times of Crisis from China

By Fareed Kaleem Khan

In modern times, China's extraordinary measures to control the spread and eventual containment of the COVID-19 to avoid one of the biggest human tragedies modern China might have faced, will become a case study for the entire world. The first respondents to any crisis situation is the government machinery vis-a-vis public administrators. 'The Mandarins' have proven their mettle and the world must learn from them how they did it.

As the emergency was declared in province of Hubei, the entire government machinery came into action as if they were waiting for the battle horns to be blown. Such was the preparedness of the civil administration in China. The 50 million population of province was kept indoors and strict lockdown was implemented for weeks to contain the virus. From the noodle shop to the

biggest corporate of China, everything was closed. These transmission control efforts included travel restriction, isolating suspected and confirmed cases, suspending schools and entertainment venues, banning public gatherings, and routine health checks on the population. Later, these measures were seen scene as the most effective for containing the pandemic.

The top down mobilization model in times of crisis, and a crisis of a scale which causes existential threat, worked well for China. This allowed China to have one holistic and coordinated national effort to contain the spread of pandemic. Although, the spread was reported in 250+ cities, clear instructions such as ban of inter-province transport saved almost half of China from it. Similarly, thoughtful leadership provided by Chinese policy makers made sure only workable and

effective lessons learned from SARs outbreak were implemented. Lastly, transparent and clear communication at all levels and minimal disinformation ensured there was no confusion about the government strategy.

## **The top down mobilization model in times of crisis, and a crisis of a scale which causes existential threat, worked well for China. This allowed China to have one holistic and coordinated national effort to contain the spread of pandemic**

Once strategy is formulated, it is time to implement it- no questions asked. Although, strategy was evolving in China, for instance the lock-downs were initially not that stringent as they became later on. However, there was never any confusion about the risk management levels, which was kept high throughout the pandemic and at anytime the guard was not dropped. Clear guidance about the degree and scope of lock-downs was available. Effective monitoring of reported cases and tracking allowed administration in China to reduce the number of cases from its peak to zero in matter of weeks. Pakistan lost the initiative due to failure of administration for implementing strict lock-downs. Similarly, centralized reporting and communication channels used by administration in China allowed them to keep the citizens informed which assisted in battling uncertainty.

China made sure that the track implementation was down to individuals, apartments, houses, communities, organizations, public facilities and city management. Use of modern techniques such as big data and information technology allowed China to monitor progress and pandemic hot-spots from state level down to an individual. China was the first country to go through the pandemic and all at its own. There was no prior information about the virus. Reports are that in the early days of the virus in China, there were no testing kits available, no screening mechanisms in place and even not enough masks to cover up. Seeing this, the response by China is commendable at all levels. From gathering first (basic) information about the virus to preparing a national response, assembling and deploying resources effectively has been the key to their successful campaign against controlling the corona virus. There are several lessons we need to learn from China which are following:

First; China has a well structured governance system down to the local government. Importantly, their local governments are well established. Hence top-down mobilization as well as bottom-up mobilization are possible. For instance, Zhejiang Province was the first to raise the risk management response to the highest level in the early days of the outbreak, when there were no confirmed cases. Pakistan must focus on improving its governance structure.

Second; competence and capacity of public administration in China is far superior than many countries. Monitoring to the level of an individual in a country of more than billion people is remarkable. It speaks volumes about the bandwidth of the systems, human resource and brains which made it happen. Pakistan must invest its human resource to produce experts in the field of crisis management and invest in building state infrastructure as well as institutional capacity which can manage such challenges effectively.

Third, decisions must be based on scientific and expert knowledge. China stumbled in its initial response primarily due to lack of clarity on the disease-virus. Once it was clear, China formulated its entire strategy around expert opinion, implementing lock-downs which was seen by western democracies as draconian, however, these measures were not suspended to appease by any interest groups but continued till the national crisis was almost over.

## **Pakistan must think about working closely with China in this domain as well to enhance its capabilities, capacity and delivery channels at all levels of government**

To sum it up, its not the first time that the cracks in public administration have appeared, in the past, whether it be the response to Earth Quake of 2005, national floods, famine or terrorism, the crisis management has been sub-par. Each time, through individual brilliance, Pakistan emerged victorious and hopefully it will emerge from the pandemic. However, this is not a sustainable model of governance and Pakistan must think about working closely with China in this domain as well to enhance its capabilities, capacity and delivery channels at all levels of government ■



The writer is a Public Policy Practitioner with expertise in Governance and Public Finance.



# WESTERN APPREHENSIONS OVER CPEC

By Dost Muhammad Barrech

**C**hief US diplomat for South Asian affairs, Alice Wells, in her four-day visit to Pakistan in January 2020, warned Pakistan to be extra cautious of China Pakistan Economic Corridor projects. She had charged, CPEC lacked transparency and further said that Pakistan's debt burden has been expanding by virtue of Chinese financing. Foreign Office of Pakistan, on the other hand, said that CPEC was transparently contributing massively to national development and issues in the execution of the projects were bilaterally addressed by China and Pakistan through existing mechanisms. It is a fait accompli;

international politics is derived by conspiracy theories. Orchestrating such theories and doubts in CPEC projects presumably are a part of the US foreign policy.

Ostensibly, there is no free lunch in international politics. CPEC, thus, is not a freebie for Pakistan; policymakers of the country are fully aware of the pros and cons of the projects. Pakistan being a sovereign state knows how to craft a foreign policy to guarantee the relative gains for itself. The US dictation to Pakistan in CPEC projects by all means is a naive approach. Pakistan so far has benefitted immensely from CPEC. In Pre-CPEC period, the country was observed by the

international community in the lens of terrorists attacks, viewing the country as unsafe place for investment. CPEC now has won the confidence of investors; Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan has improved tremendously. During 2012-2013 Pakistan's industrial sector bore Rs. 564 billion loss annually. The losses on account of chronic load shedding was around 7 percent of the economy of the country. Currently, one can see under CPEC load shedding problem has considerably been resolved; the industrial sector, resultantly, is thriving.

Meanwhile, Pakistan is viewed as the pivot of the world, prior

to CPEC the term the pivot was merely in theory that now is emerging in reality in shape of construction of motorways, paving the way for regional connectivity. By 2030, CPEC would create 700,000 job opportunities for the local masses. According to CPEC Centre of Excellence, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform of Pakistan, CPEC is likely to generate indirectly 1.2 million jobs. Pakistan, under CPEC, ought to take pragmatic steps in flourishing its productivity, and exports. The more indigenous productions are exported, the better the country will reduce its trade deficit with its trade partners.

**Pakistan is viewed as the pivot of the world, prior to CPEC the term pivot was merely in theory that now is emerging in reality in shape of construction of motorways, paving the way for regional connectivity**

In such circumstances, when Pakistan under CPEC has been making a steady progress, Wells irrational critics on CPEC puts many commentators in a quandary. Arguably, the US never wants Pakistan to be solely under Chinese influence instead wishes it to be a parasitic state to be more dependent on the US assistance and aid. Pakistan undoubtedly is a crucial player for both the US and China. The US has substantial stakes in the region, without Pakistan's support its geo-strategic and

geo-political interests could reach to desired goals. Making CPEC controversial and granting economic assistance to Pakistan needs to be viewed as US's own geostrategic and geopolitical interest in the region. Waging direct wars among states in the 21st century is simply out of the question; 21st century, would inevitably be an era of non-conventional warfare and proxy wars. The US, thus, avoiding direct confrontation with China is actually trying to create troubles for China in its peripheries either by making CPEC controversial or exacerbating North Korean crisis.

The assassination of Iranian major general Qassim Suleimani by the US was supposed to cause chaos and trouble for China in the region. Chinese growing foothold in the region, its 400 billion dollars investment in Iran pose a grave threat to the US interest. Critics on CPEC and killing of Suleimani testify a great deal of coincidence, attributed to keep China in hot water. However, Pakistan- US relationship in the last seven decades remained transitional, witnessed ups and downs; the US in last seven decades espoused carrot-and-stick policy for Pakistan. The US aid to Pakistan primarily remained military-oriented. On the other hand, China does not follow carrot-and-stick policy instead initiatives like CPEC assure win-win situation for its economic partners.

The US obsession with perpetuating its supremacy tries

to castigate Chinese BRI and CPEC projects. It is distressing to note that the US even spares no effort in accusing China for the spread of novel and has tried to make China controversial once again deliberately maligning soft image of China. Portraying China negatively by the US in this time of COVID-19 pandemic clarifies its malicious intentions towards China. The US is one of the leading trade partners of China, it should have expressed its solidarity with her but making a pandemic contentious is beyond one's comprehension.

**China in COVID-19 appears to be a torch bearer of the world, supporting countries, providing medical aid**

China in COVID-19 appears to be a torch bearer of the world, supporting countries, providing medical aid. Nouriel Roubini, an American economist at NYU, maintains during the pandemic China is building its soft power.' To bear in mind, the US is reluctant to be replaced by China in international politics, rubbish Chinese monolithic BRI and CPEC projects and making COVID-19 controversial will remain part of its long term goals. The US economically stronger than Pakistan depends more on China than Pakistan, questioning CPEC and Pakistan's dependence on China leaves many questions unanswered ■

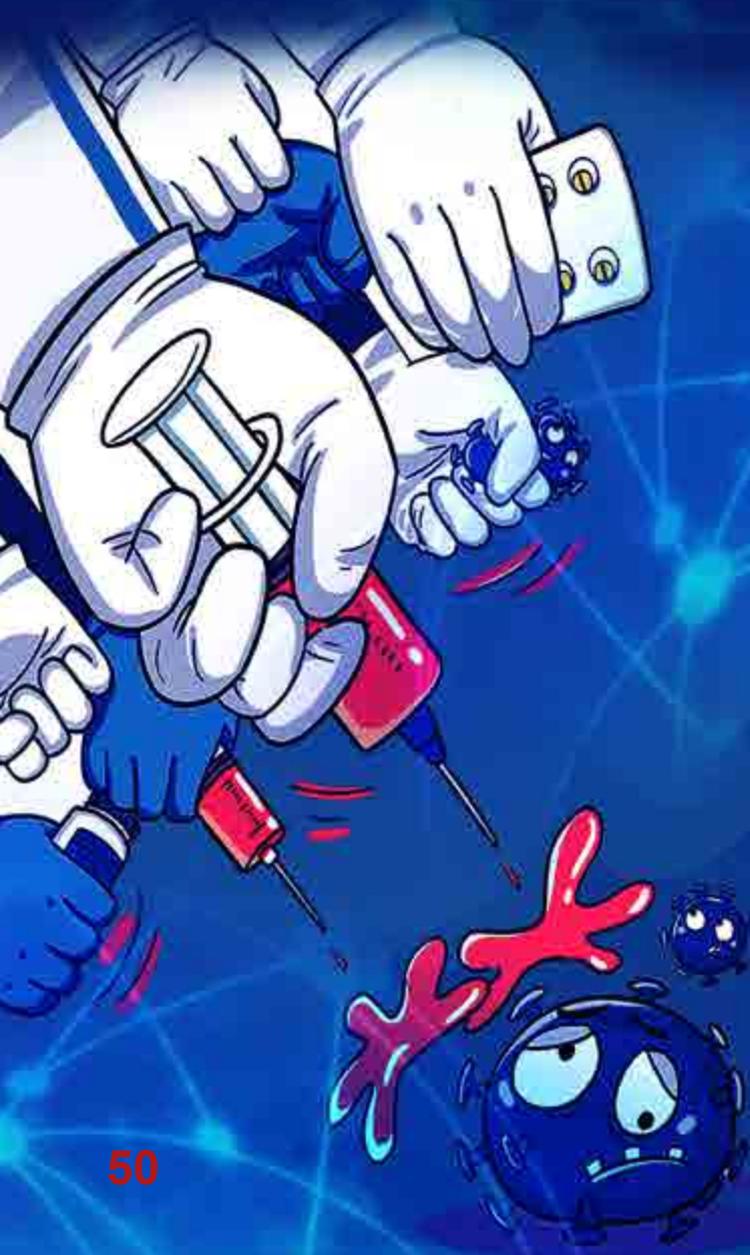


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# Defeating Covid-19

## An Analysis of China's Response

By Asad Ullah Khan & Sannan Sharif Dhillon



As the whole world plunged into lockdown, Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic, was already coming out of one. Given a population of 1.4 billion and the high transmission rates of the virus, initial estimates predicted that approximately 40% of China's population or 500 million people would be infected but as of 9th August, China has recorded only 84,668 cases, out of which 79,232 (94%) have already recovered. With only 802 active cases, 95% of which are mild, China is close to completely eliminating the virus. Even though China was the first country to deal with this unprecedented disease, timely decision-making and effective implementation allowed China to efficiently quell the disease and serve as a model of disease prevention for the rest of the world.

China's response to COVID-19 can be divided into three distinct stages, namely, discovery, containment, and recovery and rehabilitation. The discovery phase initiated on 31st December 2019 when the WHO's in China received reports of 27 pneumonia cases of an unknown etiology from Wuhan, Hubei province, China. Etiologic investigations traced the origin to the Huanan seafood market and the authorities immediately shut the market on 1st January 2020.

**China also launched a National Reporting System, a program to record and publicize daily reports of suspected, asymptomatic and diagnosed cases and deaths. Each province was required to submit such a report daily and this massive data set allowed officials to understand the transmission dynamics and demographic trends and helped them to make predictions accordingly**

Simultaneously, epidemiologic investigations, allowed Chinese experts to isolate, identify and report a new strain of the coronavirus (2019-nCov) by 9th January; on the 10th, they made the COVID-19 genome sequence publicly available for other countries. China's experience in dealing with the SARS epidemic in 2003 guided its decisions and it initiated a mass virus-tracing program. Over 1,800 teams of epidemiologists were assigned to trace hundreds of thousands of people in Wuhan, infrared thermometers were installed in busy public places, thousands of quarantine centers were set up and at times officials were sent to people's houses to force symptomatic people to isolate themselves. Surveillance cameras and a health-monitoring application allowed the authorities to identify people who were showing symptoms,

had been in contact with a patient or were simply not following the SOP's and this data helped the officials make policy decisions for the future.

23rd January marked the beginning of the containment phase when the authorities announced strict stay-at-home orders for about 60 million people and imposed a lockdown on Wuhan and 15 other cities in Hubei province. This decision came just one day before the Chinese New Year holiday began, this is a time when close to 400 million people travel across the country, many of whom would have travelled through Wuhan since it is one of the transportation and industrial hubs in China. Adam Kucharski from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, estimates that just one week after the 23rd January, the number of people an infected person transmitted the virus to dropped to less than half the number it was one week before the lockdown. Imposing such a large scale lockdown was an unprecedented move but since then it has been adopted by every country that has tried to eliminate the virus. China also launched a National Reporting System, a program to record and publicize daily reports of suspected, asymptomatic and diagnosed cases and deaths. Each province was required to submit such a report daily and this massive data set allowed officials to understand the transmission dynamics and demographic trends and helped them to make predictions accordingly. This data also helped other countries prepare for the virus.

The third, recovery and rehabilitation phase worked in tandem with the discovery phase. The data showed a rising trend for the number of reported cases and thus signaled to the government that the patients would shortly overwhelm all healthcare facilities. By February 5th, two new hospitals were constructed and numerous other hospitals and quarantine facilities were prepared to receive COVID-19 patients. China had once again taken lessons from the SARS epidemic and focused on building special facilities for old and critically ill patients. Similarly, the authorities tried to ensure that the 40,000-plus healthcare workers had all the necessary personal protective equipment and were taking the required precautions in order to minimize the spread of the virus from health-care workers. Moreover, on 22nd May China unveiled an economic stimulus package worth \$506 billion (4.5% of the GDP) as a discretionary fiscal measure. Key fiscal measures include an extension of China's policy to waive social security contributions and provide tax relief; increase the production of medical equipment and spending on epidemic control and an accelerated disbursement

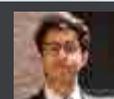
of unemployment benefits. The People's Bank of China also provided monetary policy support to small and medium enterprises (SME), particularly, manufacturers of medical supplies and daily necessities by injecting \$650 billion worth of liquidity into the economy. Key monetary policy and macro-financial measures include a reduction of interest rate and reserve requirement thus encouraging spending, increase in lending to SME's without a collateralized loan and an extension in the loan-payment deadline.

**The Chinese system of governance has a unique comparative advantage when it comes to dealing with pandemics; even though all countries had to impose lockdowns, Chinese authorities took a timely decision and enforced lockdown immediately because of the lack of bureaucratic hurdles in their model**

More lives could have been saved had experts understood the severity of the virus but even now China's response to the pandemic has been praised by the WHO and has taught many lessons to other countries. After successfully dealing with the pandemic at home, China sent personal protective gear and trained paramedic staff to other countries to help them do the same. The Chinese system of governance has a unique comparative advantage when it comes to dealing with pandemics; even though all countries had to impose lockdowns, Chinese authorities took a timely decision and enforced lockdown immediately because of the lack of bureaucratic hurdles in their model. Similarly, their economic model gave them the leverage to impose a lockdown without significantly damaging the economy. China's triumph, however, does not come as a surprise to those who have studied Chinese history; China has endured and overcome even tougher odds through its history and it can be said with credence that it will continue to do so ■



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# A Miracle Known as



By Abdullah Khan

**T**he 15th-century skies stood in awe as huge wooden castles with hundreds of sailors on deck were dashing through clear blue waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean under the leadership of a Muslim eunuch Zheng He. A time marked by religious intolerance and an era characterized by exclusion rather than inclusion was experiencing a phenomenon where a Muslim Eunuch was leading the ships of the mighty Ming Dynasty. This is the characteristic of a civilization that is confident in its skin and assured of its cultural preponderance. China has always been a civilization that has worked towards the betterment of its historical land and people, but the only difference was that it was not at the cost of blood and silver of other people.

Chinese Navy was disbanded after Zheng He came back

from his expeditions. Everyone was shocked and surprised rationalizing why the emperor would break up such a majestic navy the parallel of which was not seen until a century later in the form of the Spanish Armada. The reason, however, was simple. China did not want to interact with the outer world and even more importantly it did not want the outer world to interact with it. This did not mean that China was not multi-cultural. It had multiple cultures than any other state existing at the time.

Years have passed and centuries have gone by since the expeditions of Zheng He. China did see some difficult times during this epoch. None were more excruciating than the 'Century of Humiliation'. Past 300 years were defined by the hegemony of European powers that held sway over virtually every part of the world including China. Yet China broke those chains of imperialism, burned

them in the fires of its distinctive national resilience, and converted them into a crown that is worn not to subjugate and humiliate people, but to educate and advance them.

**China broke those chains of imperialism, burned them in the fires of its distinctive national resilience, and converted them into a crown that is worn not to subjugate and humiliate people, but to educate and advance them**

Deng Xiaoping saw a dream of China that would be an economic powerhouse, technologically advanced, immensely literate, abundantly employed, and open-bordered. That dream is a reality today. Every supermarket is flooded with Chinese products which can be bought by rich and poor alike. Giants in the market of Electronics are giving people

products which are essential like bread today. Its military is competing with powers that won two world wars. There is an open debate that China is going to be the next super power and is ready to take the reins of economic superiority over from the USA.

China has a population that surpasses the mark of one billion. Most of them have been elevated from poverty, given education, and made into citizens who contribute towards the betterment of society in both social and economic terms. China has everything that is required to progress in this world. It includes labor, resources, a suitable environment, and a stable government. It has utilized all resources in a way that has enabled it to maintain a growth rate that others can only dream of. It has made strides in all fields of life. Its universities are considered to be among the best around the world. The research parallels that of Oxford and Harvard. Its doctors are known to save people deemed incurable. Space technology is very advanced. The most interesting part, however, is that this is not the first time that China is the most advanced among all other states. There have been times when China was ahead of every known state at its time but did not impose its will on others when it comfortably could. China possessed paper making technology when everyone was writing on skins and papyrus. It had gunpowder when the world was fighting with sabers and swords. Although it did not share the technology with the known world at the time, it also did not use that technology towards the destruction of other people.

Today, China has changed its historical practices a little. It still is not encroaching upon the defined boundaries and political independence of other states. However, China of our age is willing to share its knowledge with other people. China we know, has set about building physical bridges that would connect different cultures and promote diversity.

**Chinese civilization has advanced with every passing day with renewed vigor and commitment. It will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. States and nations have risen to the top, fallen to the ground, and buried in the soil never to be heard of again. China has always been different and continues to be different. It has been here for millenniums with a history older than most**

An ambitious project of \$3 trillion known as 'Belt and Road Initiative' is the brainchild of Xi Jinping which aims at connecting the whole South and South East Asian landmass. Such poor countries are economically supported so that inter and intra-regional trade could be promoted. Some have hurled accusations at it citing imperialism. Nothing could be more divorced from reality. China has never disagreed that it would profit from the project as new markets would open up and become more accessible. But, more importantly, these nations through which these veins of rail and road would

pass are economically incapable of initiating development on the scale which China is offering. This is an arrangement where everyone is a victor. But there are losers too. Losers are those who are intent on promoting exclusion at the cost of inclusion, breeding differences instead of bridging the moat of distrust and promoting the ancient concept of self-sufficiency instead of extolling the virtues of interdependence. That era is over. A new sun has dawned which shines upon the east. China is ushering in this era and trying to have everyone on board so all can share the fruits of this prosperity.

Chinese civilization has advanced with every passing day with renewed vigor and commitment. It will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. States and nations have risen to the top, fallen to the ground, and buried in the soil never to be heard of again. China has always been different and continues to be different. It has been here for millenniums with a history older than most. It has always preserved its distinctiveness. Our world is witnessing a China that is different in form yet all the same in character. That does not interfere in the affairs of other states and lets no one interfere in its own. A stable system of today demands that this character of China be respected and be given space to grow. Every system is different, but different does not necessarily mean wrong. China has respected other systems and it is only fair that its system is respected too and given a chance to prove that it wants nothing more than a culturally and economically integrated world ■



The writer is a civil servant.

# COMMEMORATING PRC NATIONAL DAY WITH PAKISTAN-CHINESE CULINARY FUSION

By Arhama Siddiq

This October will mark the 71st anniversary of the People's Republic of China, a much-needed celebration in light of the cancellation of the Chinese New Year festivities because of COVID-19. In my opinion, a dish showcasing Pakistan-Chinese fusion would be fitting for the occasion.

## Mango Pudding

Every Pakistani in retrospect, grows up on memories of mangoes. In fact, many associate summer fruits with the only thing appealing about the hot and humid Pakistani summers. Without doubt, Pakistani mangoes are the best in the world, be it in taste, juiciness or aroma. Mangoes have rightfully been called the King of Fruits.



For me, eating Anwar Ratols is a competitive pursuit. You don't eat them; you gulp them after mashing the pulp with your thumbs and sucking the rich, flavoursome chunky nectar from the stalk end of the fruit. For those who like the bigger mango, biting into a chilled Sindhi followed by a glass of cold lassi (yoghurt drink) is probably one of the best feelings in the world.

In China, mango pudding is quite popular in dessert shops. Hence, the perfect

way to end any Chinese feast would be this delicacy.

### Ingredients:

1 pound/ 3 middle size mature mangoes, fresh mango cubes

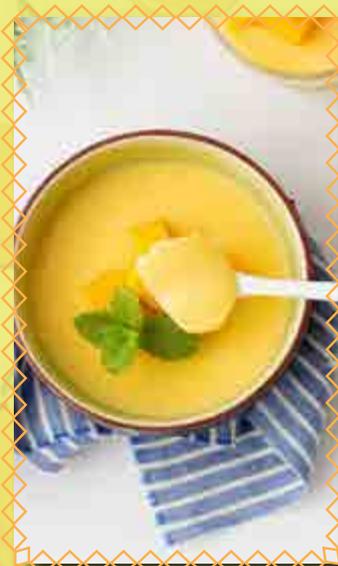
160 ml milk

60 ml heavy cream, chilled

1/2 cup granulated sugar

### Method:

- Cut fresh mango in half and then dice the fresh mangos out. Place the mango cubes in a blender, add milk, heavy cream and blend until smooth.
- Pour the mixture to your container or ramekins.
- Move to refrigerator for around 2 to 3 hours until completely set.
- Before eating, decorate with left mango cubes and mint leaves. Enjoy!



## Gobi Manchurian

In Pakistan, when one thinks of going to a Chinese restaurant, ordering the Chicken Manchurian is a must. Therefore, the Chinese element of my dish was covered. As I was thinking of the Pakistani counterpart, I recalled what my professor Ambassador Shahryar Khan had once told us during a lecture on Pakistan-China relations. With eyes closed and a nostalgic smile on his face, he had recollected that the best Aloo Gobi (potato cauliflower) he had ever had was during one of his visits to China.

Hence, the perfect combination to mark this special occasion would be Gobi Manchurian- a delicious dish that is made with crispy fried gobi (cauliflower) coated in a delicious sweet and tangy manchurian sauce.

### Ingredients:

For the Fried Cauliflower:

- 1/2 cup or 250 grams cauliflower florets gobi cut into pieces
- 1/3 cup all purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons corn flour
- 1/2 teaspoon red chilli powder
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper powder
- Salt to taste
- Oil for deep frying

For the Manchurian Sauce:

- 1/2 tablespoon garlic finely chopped
- 1/2 tablespoon ginger finely chopped
- 1/4 cup spring onions finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sriracha sauce or red chilli sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon red chilli powder
- 1/4 cup tomato ketchup
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons water
- Salt to taste

### Method:

For the Cauliflower:

- Start by blanching the cauliflower florets in water

for 5 minutes.

- Take out in a strainer, and let the florets cool a bit. Then place the cauliflower florets on kitchen towel, and thoroughly dry the florets. Set aside.
- Mix all the batter ingredients, and then slowly add a little bit of water and mix. You will need about 3-4 tablespoons of water, but add them one by one. The batter should be thin and smooth.



- Heat oil to a medium high temperature in a wok or deep pot. Dip each cauliflower floret in the batter and drop in medium hot oil. The trick is to keep the oil at a medium heat, and not too high, because lower temperature helps the cauliflower florets crisp up. Do not overcrowd the pot with cauliflower florets. Fry the florets for a few minutes (about 3-4 minutes) until crispy and golden brown. Place on kitchen towel to drain excess oil. Set aside.

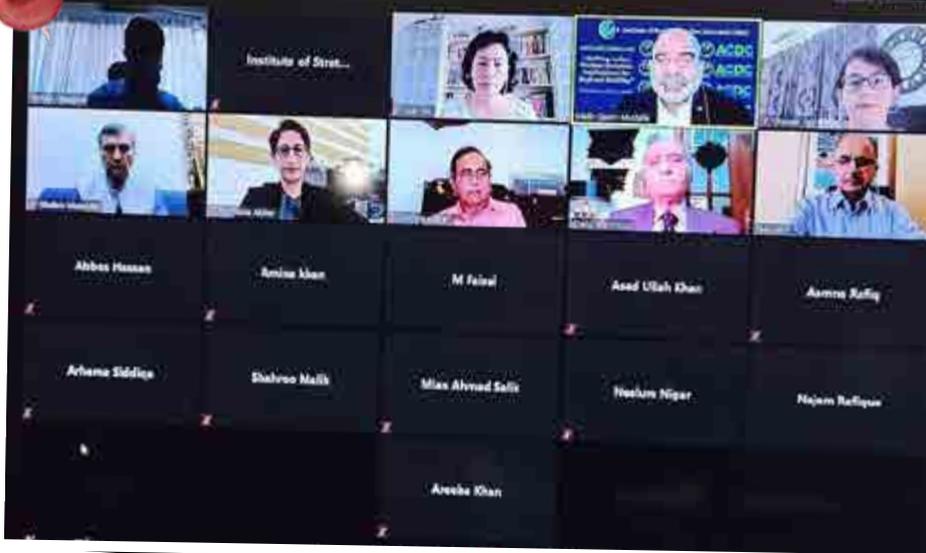
For the Manchurian Sauce:

- In a separate frying pan, heat oil and add the finely chopped garlic and ginger and green onions. Fry for a minute or so, and then add the soy sauce, sriracha sauce, red chilli powder, ketchup and sugar. Mix and cook on medium heat for 3 minutes or so, until the sauce is bubbling.
- Now add the cornstarch to the water, and make a cornstarch slurry. Add this slurry to the sauce and mix until the Manchurian sauce is slightly thickened.
- Now add the cauliflower florets and toss so that the sauce covers all the cauliflower.
- Serve immediately with garlic butter or egg fried rice.



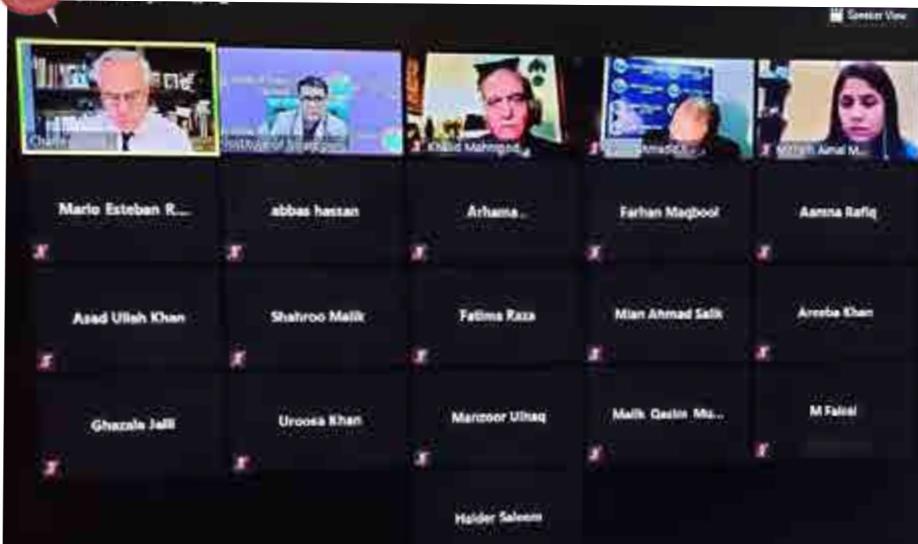
The writer tweets @arhama\_siddiq and maintains a food website [www.chakhoos.com](http://www.chakhoos.com).



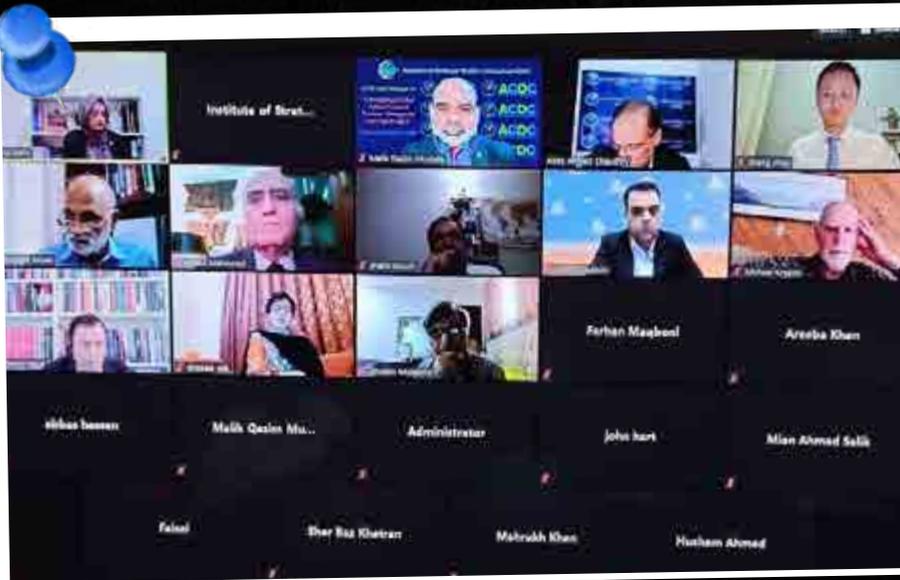


The Arms Control and Disarmament Centre at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad organized a webinar titled, 'Shifting Indian Nuclear Doctrine: Implications for Regional Stability'- July 2, 2020

Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad in collaboration with The Institute for Political and International Studies, Iran organized a webinar titled, 'Iran, Pakistan and South Asia under the Pandemic'- July 14, 2020



Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad in collaboration with Real Institute Elcano organized a WebTalk titled, 'Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on EU's Role as a Global Actor'- July 15, 2020



The Arms Control & Disarmament Centre at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad organized a webinar titled, 'Changing Global Arms Control Norms: Prospects & Challenges'- July 21, 2020

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, DG Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad had a meeting with researchers at Institute of Regional Studies Islamabad- July 21, 2020



India Study Centre at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad organized a webinar titled, „The New Domicile Law & the Future of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir“. The webinar was organized to highlight the current demographic change in IOJK that is being brought by the Indian state- August 5, 2020



Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad organized a webinar titled, 'India and Pakistan: Searching for Humanity in South Asia'- August 6, 2020

China Pakistan Study Centre at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad in collaboration with Shanghai Institute for International Studies organized a virtual dialogue for exchange of views on International Strategic Environment, Regional Security, and Pakistan-China cooperation to advance peace and stability- August 12, 2020



DG Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry and Chairman BOG-ISSI Ambassador Khalid Mahmood met with the Honorable Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Honorable Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and presented 'ISSI Vision 2020-2023'- August 17, 2020



# SUPER POWERS RIVALRY AMIDST COVID-19

By Zoya Zafar

**T**he end of cold war marked the inception of a unipolar age whereby all the political, economic, social and cultural threats to the ascendancy of United States of America obliterated from the face of earth. It was in these extraordinary circumstances that the modern history started its exceptional journey. The readers of contemporary history are well cognizant of the fact as it was also proudly proclaimed by the political commentators that the history has come to an end and the dialectical process of evolution

has ceased to be. It was further argued that US has fashioned herself in a formidable nature as can never be put a serious challenge to. For many sane minds this seems to be an undisputed proposition but future held something entirely different for all the political pundits who are dazzled by their limited understanding and now are questioning their own beliefs. This historic happening was the rise of China as a power parallel to United States of America. As is the case the rise of another serious and potential contender of power did not go well with US who made

all efforts to thwart the process of Chinese rise.

**China rose up to the expectations of the whole world and did everything to combat deadly corona virus and this in some sense has caused the global community to re-think Chinese image in terms of a global power**

This situation gradually took an ugly turn and in many aspects both nations found themselves standing at a collision course, a condition that was and has augmented after COVID-19. The rivalry has been building for a generation and has intensified manifold in the past few years. In the face of adversity as the one stated China faced a difficult choice to be made between cowering down to US' threats or standing up to it keeping its posture erect.

**Mask diplomacy has enabled Beijing to strike the strategic bliss point of doing the favors and winning hearts and minds of one-half of a divided Europe**

Then came COVID-19 putting a halt to the whole world, suspending all links of international trade, travel and talk. It was an affliction of the kind world never confronted before hence was at odds articulating a response to it. In such troubled times the rule had been that the Global power or a claimant thereof would stand up, come to the fore and rescue the world by laying down an elaborate plan of action. At this moment since China was a new entrant to the club of global powers, the whole world had its eyes fixated on as who shall come to their rescue and assume the charge of global leadership or at least make a claim to it.

China rose up to the expectations of the whole world and did everything to combat deadly corona virus and this in some sense has caused the global community to re-think Chinese image in terms of a global power. Its willingness to help struggling governments, even in Europe, with critical medical supplies and cashflows, has allowed Beijing to claim a crisis leadership role that once fell to Washington. Historically, the United States has assumed the role of taking burdens of all kinds by intervening in almost every crisis around the world. As the most powerful country in the world, it has led on international crisis after crisis—from pandemics such as Ebola, H1N1, and Zika to the 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, and the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan. But due to leadership void, this time around, has enabled other countries especially China to assume leadership position and fill the gap. Chinese mask diplomacy has added massively to its soft image. Reportedly, more than 10 flights containing millions of masks headed to the Czech Republic and pledged medical supplies and resources for other European countries. Additionally, China's wealthiest entrepreneur, Jack Ma, promised 2 million masks to be distributed across European countries, including Spain, Italy, Belgium, and France. Even China's much-maligned flagship tech company, Huawei, has offered to donate numerous volumes of personal protection equipment to Ireland. Needless to reiterate that Mask diplomacy

has enabled Beijing to strike the strategic bliss point of doing the favors and winning hearts and minds of one-half of a divided Europe.

Apparently, China will be a more daunting foe than Russia ever was to America. However it may not be implied that the diplomatic measures being taken by China implies the decline of US in the post-COVID world. Nonetheless, the faulty closed borders strategy and populist enchants of US are giving edge to China who is operating through integration with rest of the world.

China has provided aid to Italy with great fanfare and has also provided medical supplies to countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and Latin America. Countries such as Serbia have appealed to China for help, rather than the United States or the European Union.

**The faulty closed borders strategy and populist enchants of US are giving edge to China who is operating through integration with rest of the world**

American policymakers must learn that a state that declared global warming a myth and pulled itself out of COP21 must not continue to act in the same fashion when COVID is spreading insanely across the borders. There is contrast of actions between the policy

of both the states. Where China rushed healthcare supplies and doctors to Italy, the United States issued a travel ban on European countries with no advance coordination.

**There is contrast of actions between the policy of both the states. Where China rushed healthcare supplies and doctors to Italy, the United States issued a travel ban on European countries with no advance coordination**

Germany was offended when a rumour got out that the Trump administration sought to buy exclusive rights to a coronavirus vaccine. Thus, United States should not only avoid counterproductive actions but also support allies in finding help wherever they can, whether from China or elsewhere.

If one turns the pages of history one may find that in 1956, a botched intervention in the Suez laid bare the decay in British power and marked the end of the United Kingdom's reign as a global power. Similarly, if the United States does not rise to meet the need of the moment, the coronavirus pandemic could mark another 'Suez moment'. Washington must realize and work in integration with allies and foes for now,

keeping aside slogans of 'America First' rather focus collectively with other states to combat the spread of deadly virus and must learn from the Chinese model, keeping the battle aside. The hopes of the inhabitants of the world, going through its darkest times, must not be shattered or burnt in rage and rivalry of the two - economically and technologically - developed countries that may come up with a vaccination to release the nations from the shackles of novel Corona Virus. To conclude, the world needs international collaboration, harmony and co-existence among nations to restore peace for global betterment and also face non-traditional threats like calamities and even deadly virus that has put their existence at stake ■



The writer is a civil servant.



Commemorating 71<sup>st</sup>  
National Day of People's  
Republic of China



中華人民共和國萬歲

中國人民大團結萬歲