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PIVOT

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



Years of Pakistan-China Partnership



Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad



China-Pakistan Study Centre



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PIVOT

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Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad

'Pakistan is the **PIVOT** of the world, placed on the frontier on which the future position of the world revolves.' Quaid-i-Azam
Mohammad Ali Jinnah, January 1948

Chief Editor's Note



China and Pakistan are celebrating seven decades of their friendship. Both are often referred to as "Iron brothers" and their friendship is described as "Higher than Himalayas, Sweeter than Honey and Deeper than Sea". These phrases are not just phrases but have become proven facts over time. The relations between two brotherly neighboring states are more than mere diplomatic relations as they

have evolved and cooperation between the two-increased manifold. China and Pakistan have a comprehensive mechanism for economic, strategic and political cooperation, which is the vivid manifestation that the relations between the two have transformed into a strategic partnership. Mutual respect and trust are the factors, which make the relations exceptional and formidable.

CPEC is the flagship project of China and Pakistan, which is a significant part of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is driven by the ingenuity of Chinese President Xi Jinping. CPEC has been instrumental in taking the cooperation between the two countries to a higher level. CPEC aims to industrially revolutionize Pakistan by creating Special Economic Zones (SEZ), which will bring enormous jobs and business opportunities for Pakistanis. Pleasingly, CPEC is not just a recipe to transform economic landscape of Pakistan but of the region. It intends to do so by increasing regional connectivity through trade and cooperation. The economic aspect has always been dominant when bilateral ties between China and Pakistan are considered. Prime Minister Imran Khan's frequently expressed wish to learn from Chinese experience reflects the multi-faceted nature of cooperation in future. The economic cooperation is contributing to convergence of interests in other areas of cooperation.

In the current regional situation, Pakistan and China need closer cooperation and look for the ways and means to address the unfolding uncertain situation and work for regional peace and stability.

Indeed, 7 decades of warm bilateral relations are something to be cherished. PIVOT magazine is dedicated to cement this special relationship by reflecting on the accomplishments of past seven decades. Moreover, PIVOT magazine is keen to ideas where future cooperation could be enhanced and more importantly to create cultural affinity between the people of the two countries.

Talat

Dr. Talat Shabbir

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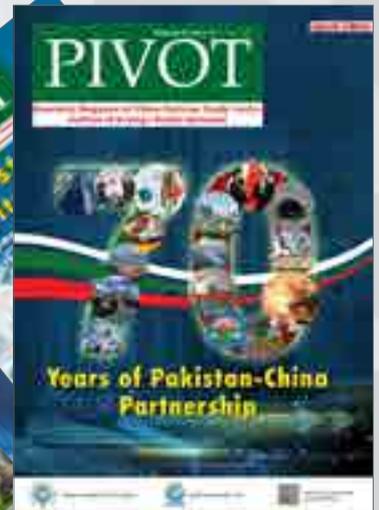
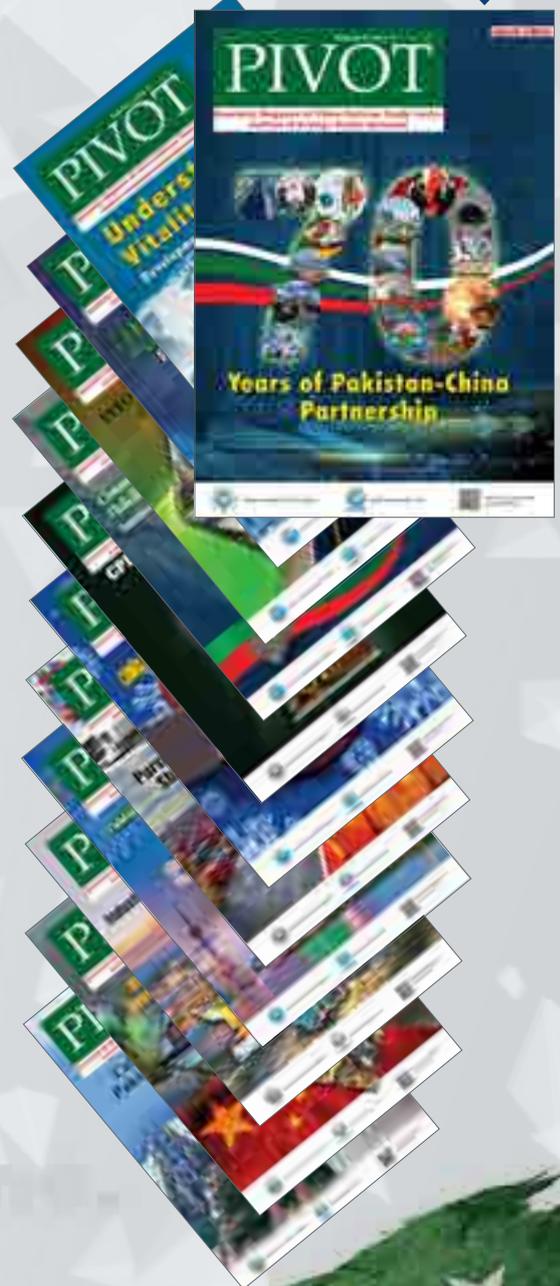
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This Issue





Turpan

A Melting Pot of flavors

By Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

There are many cities around the world that take pride in being referred to as a 'melting pot', a place that is home to a diverse group of people syncing together in harmony. When you think of melting pots, you think of metropolitans, like New York, Toronto and London. I had never imagined that I would one day see a city in the remote stretches of the Xinjiang province of China, which in my view, was far more of a melting pot, and yet still not really known to the outside world. This was the city of Turpan.

Known also as Turfan or Tulufan, the city of Turpan sits a hundred kilometers South East of Urumqi. I had the unique opportunity of visiting Urumqi when I was on an official visit to China representing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan. After a hurricane of meetings, both in Beijing and Urumqi, my colleagues and I happened to have a quieter day available to us before we caught our flight back home the following day. This, in our organizers' view, provided

an ideal opportunity for us to venture and see parts of China that we otherwise would not have seen. Early morning after having a hearty breakfast, our guide took my colleagues and me on a drive. We pestered him to tell us our destination, yet he, in the most mysterious of ways, told us that it is a surprise. With his distinctive cheeky smile, he would assure us that it was a surprise worth the wait.

TURPAN WAS SMALLER THAN AN AVERAGE CHINESE CITY, BUT IN ITS HISTORY AND CULTURAL AMBIENCE, IT HAD WHAT OTHER CITIES DID NOT

Naturally, as we drove onwards and further away from Urumqi, my colleagues and I began feeling more apprehensive, and even anxious, about the adventure that awaited us, yet our anxiousness dissipated like thin vapors once we entered the City of Turpan. What greeted us as we drove into the city was a beautiful wide boulevard, enveloped by tall ancestral trees.

I was so pleasantly surprised to see how a city, so orderly and well-kept, was hidden and tucked away in what felt like the middle of nowhere. The guide, who had otherwise remained quiet throughout the journey from Urumqi, suddenly sprang into action, telling us that this was his hometown. With a chirp in his voice, he started pointing towards all the key features and landmarks of the city. The guide himself had studied arid ecology from the Xinjiang University, but became a tourist guide, to improve his fluency in English and showcase all that his hometown Turpan had to offer.

With a modest population of 650,000, Turpan does not figure anywhere close to a large galaxy of mega cities of China. Our guide told us that Turpan was smaller than an average Chinese city, but in its history and cultural ambience, it had what other cities did not. At first, I thought our guide was exaggerating because his admiration and attachment to the city he grew up in clearly knew no bounds,

but as he spoke on about the richness of Turpan's history, I became more convinced that Turpan was, no doubt, a hidden jewel. Turpan has been a part of many kingdoms - Jushi, Han, Tang, Uyghur Khaganate, and even Moghul - with each of its occupiers leaving a deep imprint on what constitutes of it today. Buddhist and Muslim traditions too had melted into this mix. Behind the serenity of this well-kept city, lay a turbulent history, laced with Chinese and Turkic cultural influences that had amalgamated to create a unique civilizational abode. The lunch we were served reflected years of this civilizational overlap. We enjoyed the Uyghur *samsa*, a kind of pie stuffed with lamb, carrot and onion; *pilaf*, the famous Central Asian dish which is the Pakistani equivalent of *pulao*; and *kebab* made mostly of mutton. We were also served some of the more known Chinese dishes, like spring rolls, dumplings, *chow mein*, fried rice, and *kung pao* chicken.

Our elaborate Sino-Uyghur lunch had left us all feeling a bit heavy, and it seemed like we could each use a nice afternoon slumber, but we ventured off to the Turpan Museum. I am so glad we did, because as soon as we entered the museum, we vaulted into full alertness. The first exhibit we saw was a mummified body, and I marveled over how real it looked because it had been so well preserved. I have seen mummies in the Cairo Museum, but the mummies in Turpan looked so alive. Turpan is a fertile oasis in the middle of a desert-like arid land with severe shortages of water, which probably helped preserve these bodies when they were buried under the desert sands and recovered centuries later. Instinctively, I whipped out my

phone to take a picture, but quickly realized that there was a restriction on photography so as not to spoil the balms. Alongside the mummies, there were computer-generated animations that virtually displayed how humans of that era went about their daily life.

TURPAN HAS BEEN A PART OF MANY KINGDOMS – JUSHI, HAN, TANG, UYGHUR KHAGANATE, AND EVEN MOGHUL – WITH EACH OF ITS OCCUPIERS LEAVING A DEEP IMPRINT ON WHAT CONSTITUTES OF IT TODAY. BUDDHIST AND MUSLIM TRADITIONS TOO HAD MELTED INTO THIS MIX. BEHIND THE SERENITY OF THIS WELL-KEPT CITY, LAY A TURBULENT HISTORY, LACED WITH CHINESE AND TURKIC CULTURAL INFLUENCES THAT HAD AMALGAMATED TO CREATE A UNIQUE CIVILIZATIONAL ABODE

Another aspect of the Turpan life that intrigued me was the *Karez* system, the underground canals that were used to ferry water from one point to the other. We were taken down two flights of the *Karez* Museum to see the *Karez* canals that had fed the city residents for centuries. The Turpan city administration had preserved these canals very well, and had opened them as a tourist site for the visitors. As a child, I recall reading of the *Karez* system of irrigation and how it was used effectively in the Balochistan

province and some hilly areas of Pakistan. I suppose, all humans, no matter where they live, tap into their capabilities to innovate and find solutions. Necessity, as they say, is the mother of invention.

Before leaving the city, we visited the grand mosque of Turpan. Built in the late eighteenth century, the mosque had a beautiful façade, with a spacious prayer hall that was towered by several minarets covering the face of a large dome. The *Emin Minaret*, an impressive tall tower stood adjacent to the mosque. Some of us took the opportunity to offer two *nawafil* in the mosque to thank the Almighty for giving us the opportunity of seeing such rare sights.

It was late into the afternoon, and we were getting tired. Our guide sensed that and took us to the final spot of the day, a bazar that was selling delicious green raisins. These raisins were produced by drying grapes that had been grown using water from *Karez* canals. We were told, and later shown, the *chunche*, purpose-built structures which were used to dry grapes. The Turpan valley is one of the richest sources of green raisins. My colleagues and I filled our sacks with as much raisins as we could possibly carry. I brought this wonderful gift all the way to my home in Islamabad, and for months, my family and I would savor them. Every time I have a raisin, I would fly back to Turpan, a gem of Xinjiang that I could never forget, and a rare melting pot less known to the world. ■



The writer is the Director General of The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad.



PAKISTAN-CHINA RELATIONSHIP

A Window of Numerous Opportunities

By Chen Lijun

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan. The two sides jointly held a lot of celebrations covering political, diplomatic, economic, social and cultural fields, which fully reflect the two countries' special relationship that is "higher than mountains, deeper than seas, sweeter than honey and harder than steel".

Over the past 70 years, China and Pakistan have treated each other wholeheartedly, stood together regardless of difficult situation, shared weal and woe, maintained rock-solid bilateral relations, deepened economic cooperation, increasingly extensive people-to-people and cultural exchanges, strengthened regional cooperation and deepened friendship, which can be regarded as a role model of peaceful co-existence and

common development among different countries in the world. Now, it is the time to firmly seize the new opportunity presented by the establishment of diplomatic relations and constantly deepen cooperation in various fields to take the next 70 years to a new level.

CHINA AND PAKISTAN SHARE MANY COMMON INTERESTS IN THE FIELDS OF POLITICS, ECONOMY, SECURITY, DEVELOPMENT, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE ALWAYS TAKEN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CLOSER STRATEGIC, COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIP AS THEIR GOAL

There are many reasons why China-Pakistan relations have grown stronger over time. Firstly, there is correct navigation of ties by leaders of the two countries. Over the past 70 years, the two sides

have frequently held high-level visits, established an all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, and have given a full play to the leading role of the top, which has made China-Pakistan relations withstand the test of time and the changes in the domestic, regional, and international environment of the two countries. Bilateral relations have thus been deepened and elevated to a new level.

Secondly, the two countries have established a partnership of high mutual trust. Mutual trust is the foundation of friendly cooperation. Over the past 7 decades, their relations have always been at the forefront of the times. Pakistan has become an all-weather strategic cooperative partner, a role-model for cultivating relations between countries in the world, and has become the *batie* - an iron brother - in the hearts of the Chinese people. It is the high degree of mutual trust

and sincere cooperation between China and Pakistan that has carved their special relationship.

Thirdly, the two countries share many common interests. Interests are the links begetting friendly cooperation between countries. China and Pakistan share many common interests in the fields of politics, economy, security, development, regional and international issues. The two countries have always taken the establishment of a closer strategic, cooperative partnership as their goal. Therefore, the two countries respect, understand and trust each other, firmly support each other on core interests and major concerns, give full play to their respective advantages in economy and promote common development. Thanks to the joint efforts of both sides, we can jointly expand the cake of common interests and promote the deepening of friendship.

Fourthly, there was promotion of all-round cooperation in a pragmatic manner. Over the past 70 years, China and Pakistan have been holding high the banner of friendly cooperation, focusing on projects, taking policy funds as the link, adopting a pragmatic attitude and comprehensively promoting cooperation in various fields to provide stable support for China-Pakistan relations. Especially in recent years, led by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the two sides have continuously deepened project cooperation and promoted economic and social development, achieved remarkable results, brought tangible benefits to the two countries and their people, and added new impetus to regional prosperity and development.

Fifth, high-level closer people-to-people ties are growing. China and Pakistan are adjacent to each

other. The friendship between the two people goes back to ancient times.

In recent years, relying on the construction of economic corridors, China and Pakistan have overcome various difficulties and promoted projects across mountains, valleys and seas, creating many miracles in the world and deepening mutual understanding.

PAKISTAN HAS BECOME AN ALL-WEATHER STRATEGIC COOPERATIVE PARTNER, A ROLE-MODEL FOR CULTIVATING RELATIONS BETWEEN COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD, AND BECOME THE BATIC – AN IRON BROTHER – IN THE HEARTS OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE. IT IS THE HIGH DEGREE OF MUTUAL TRUST AND SINCERE COOPERATION BETWEEN CHINA AND PAKISTAN THAT HAVE CREATED THEIR SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

At the same time, all sectors of China and Pakistan do not hold prejudice against each other's development; instead they learn from each other and actively promote the establishment of "good neighbors, good friends, good brothers and good partners" and iron friendship. This sturdy foundation has increasingly consolidated China-Pakistan friendship. At present, the development of China-Pakistan relations has ushered in a new 70-year period with many new opportunities. From the perspective of the international situation, the world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century. China and Pakistan need to grasp the trend in a complex and changeable

situation, adhere to openness, jointly deal with all kinds of risks and challenges, and boost common development.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. A great miracle in the history of mankind, poverty alleviation was unveiled this year: Under the current standards, all the rural poor in China have been lifted out of poverty, which means China has solved its thousand-year-old problem of absolute poverty. As the country's GDP ranks second in the world, China has become an important driving force and stabilizer for promoting world economic growth. At present, as it is moving towards the goal of building socialist modernization in an all-round way, China will be more important to Pakistan than in the past.

From the perspective of Pakistan, great achievements in economic and social development have also been made, the country has withstood the test of the pandemic since 2020, and its economy is moving in the right direction. There will be more opportunities and projects for China-Pakistan cooperation in the future, and the results will be more fruitful.

We sincerely hope that the two countries will take the 70th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations as an opportunity to give full play to their respective advantages. With the construction of the CPEC as a guide, they can deeply tap the potential of cooperation, strengthen security, pragmatically promote cooperation in various fields, and build the China-Pakistan community of shared destiny in the new era to benefit more ordinary people in the two countries for the next 70 years ■



The writer is a Senior Research Fellow with the Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences based in Kunming, China.

PIVOT: You are currently serving as China's Ambassador to Pakistan. How has been your experience in Pakistan, so far?

NR: I am deeply impressed by the local customs of Pakistan. Pakistan has a long history, beautiful scenery and pleasant climate. There are many historical cities such as Peshawar and Lahore, and modern and metropolitan cities like Islamabad and Karachi, as well as Gwadar, which has a long coastline. The climate of Pakistan is very similar to that of my hometown, and I love Pakistani food very much, Balochi Sajji being my most favorite Pakistani dish. Apart from this, Pakistani people are very hospitable and friendly. I have made many good friends here from different social circles including government officials, dignitaries, parliamentarians, experts, scholars, and media professionals. They have been of great help and have assisted me with my work.

PIVOT: Recently China celebrated the 100-year anniversary of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Do you see the party as the major credit holder for China's rise?

NR: There is a famous song in China called "There would be no New China without the Communist Party". I think this song answers the question you asked.

In old China, imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism were what we call "the three mountains" that oppressed the Chinese people. The dignity and right to survival of the Chinese people were severely trampled in the new era under the leadership of the CPC, China is gradually approaching the centre of the world stage. The Chinese people's national self-esteem, self-confidence, and pride has greatly



Interview of Ambassador Nong Rong (China's Ambassador to Pakistan)

By PIVOT Team

increased. No country is qualified to say that it speaks to China from the position of strength. In old China, the level of productivity and the industrial and agricultural production were very low. In the new era under CPC's governance, China's GDP has reached a historic high of RMB 100 trillion yuan, and the per capita GDP has reached 10,000 U.S. dollars. It has become the world's second largest economy and has a significant impact on the global economy.

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CPC, CHINA IS GRADUALLY APPROACHING THE CENTRE OF THE WORLD STAGE. THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL SELF-ESTEEM, SELF-CONFIDENCE, AND PRIDE HAS GREATLY INCREASED

China's contribution to global economic growth has achieved the world's number one position. In old China, the people were struggling at the line of life and death. It is estimated that 80% of the people were in a state of hunger or semi-starvation for a long time. In this new era, China has achieved full victory in its fight against poverty,

the people's living standards has greatly improved, and the nominal per capita disposable income has increased by more than 600 times.

One hundred years ago, what the Chinese nation presented to the world was a scene of decline and decay. Today, the Chinese nation is showing a prosperous image to the world, and it is marching towards a great rejuvenation at an unstoppable pace.

PIVOT: How do you see President Xi's vision for "National Rejuvenation" of China?

NR: General Secretary of CPC's Central Committee Mr. Xi Jinping pointed out that, in the past 100 years, all struggles and sacrifices of CPC and Chinese people circled around the core theme of realizing the national rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Since the Opium War in 1840, realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation has become the greatest dream of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. However, the path was full of hardships. It wasn't until the CPC, a new Marxist party, entered the Chinese political arena that brought changes to the Chinese revolution.

After the 18th National Congress of the CPC, the CPC united and led the Chinese people to build a well-off society in all respects, embark on a new journey of building a socialist modern country in an all-round way, advance and complete the great cause of becoming a powerful country in the middle of this century, and realize the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. From the party's century-long history, we can clearly conclude that realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is the theme that runs through the party's century-old history.

PIVOT: How is China planning to tackle the negative propaganda and bullying from the foreign forces?

NR: We Chinese have always valued peace, harmony, sincerity and integrity. We never pick an unnecessary fight or bully others, but we do have strong principles when we face the threat of bullying. We have and always will push back against any deliberate insult to resolutely defend our national honour and dignity. In addition, we will refute all groundless slander against us with facts to resolutely uphold fairness, justice and human conscience.

China is committed to working with all countries to build a community with a shared future for mankind. The world is undergoing changes of a kind unseen in a century and full of instability and turbulence. Confronted by a growing set of global challenges, we hope all countries will realize that humanity is a community with a shared future. We must render each other more support and cooperation, and there should be less finger pointing and confrontation.

PIVOT: How do you see the World Order evolving amid the Covid-19 period?

NR: Our world is now going through difficult and testing times. It is facing the combined forces of a global pandemic and major transformational changes in the world order. The trend of multipolarity and economic globalization is experiencing transformation, and witnessing a serious contest between multilateralism and unilateralism. The global governance system is going through unprecedented re-adjustment and international peace and security faces serious challenges like never before.

Upholding and practicing true multilateralism in pursuit of a community of shared future for the mankind is the right way forward in tackling complex issues and effectively countering security challenges, both traditional and non-traditional, in today's world. It is also the only way for putting an end to the zero-sum game and to truly achieve lasting peace and common security. China calls on the International Community to pool joint efforts in this regard.

PIVOT: To what extent China is willing to engage in the peace process in Afghanistan in view of the recent developments?

NR: The dramatic changes in Afghanistan situation most recently has drawn global attention. The so-called "democratic transformation" militarily imposed by the United States and its allies proved to be counterproductive, which only

brought about chaos and instability in the state and for people in Afghanistan and the region beyond. It is a lesson worth remembering.

Chairman Mao Zedong once said 'Afghanistan is a heroic country and has never surrendered. China and Afghanistan are friendly countries. China does not want to harm Afghanistan, and Afghanistan does not want to harm China. The two countries always support each other.' As Afghanistan's neighbour and friend, China has always respected Afghanistan's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, adhered to non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs and pursued a friendly policy toward the Afghan people. China has all along maintained contact and communication with the Afghan Taliban based on fully respecting Afghanistan's sovereignty and the will of all factions in the country, and played a constructive role in promoting the political settlement of the Afghan issue.

As important neighbours of Afghanistan and responsible countries in the region, China and Pakistan need to strengthen communication and coordination, play a constructive role in supporting Afghanistan's stable transition and in maintaining regional peace and stability.

First, we need to encourage all Afghan parties to strengthen solidarity, and to establish a broad-based and inclusive political





structure that is suited to the needs of Afghan people. Second, we shall support Afghanistan in its protection for foreigners and for fight against terrorism, and Afghanistan must not become a gathering place for terrorism again. Thirdly, we shall promote international cooperation involving Afghanistan in an orderly manner, establish various complementary mechanisms and expand consensus.

In a nutshell, we should give play to the unique role of neighbouring countries, so as to push the situation in Afghanistan gradually into a virtuous circle. China has attended the first Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Neighbors of Afghanistan chaired by Pakistan and will continue to support various mechanisms facilitating peace and stability in Afghanistan.

PIVOT: Do you think China's vaccine diplomacy has paid off for its soft power image?

NR: Vaccine is a powerful weapon to defeat the pandemic and a hope to save lives. Vaccines are not a tool for political gain, nor should they be used as a political tool to attack and stigmatize countries. China is willing to work with other countries to build a global community of health for all. China opposes any attempts to politicize the origin tracing of the virus, opposes immoral and irresponsible behavior including "vaccine nationalism" and "vaccine divide", and strives to bridge the global "immunization gap".

China is a firm believer in making COVID vaccines a public good. At the Global Health Summit held in May 2021, President Xi Jinping announced China's efforts in five aspects in support of global fight against COVID-19, including the proposal of setting up an international forum on vaccine cooperation so that countries and companies are engaged in the development and production of vaccines, together with other stakeholders may explore ways of promoting a fair and equitable distribution of vaccines around the world.

WE CHINESE HAVE ALWAYS VALUED PEACE, HARMONY, SINCERITY AND INTEGRITY. WE NEVER PICK AN UNNECESSARY FIGHT OR BULLY OTHERS, BUT WE HAVE DO HAVE STRONG PRINCIPLES WHEN WE FACE THE THREAT OF BULLYING. WE HAVE AND ALWAYS WILL PUSH BACK AGAINST ANY DELIBERATE INSULT TO RESOLUTELY DEFEND OUR NATIONAL HONOUR AND DIGNITY

On 5 August, President Xi sent a message to the first meeting of the International Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine Cooperation, announced China's efforts to provide 2 billion doses of vaccines globally throughout this year, and to donate US\$100 million to the COVAX Facility for distributing vaccines to developing countries. China is a committed front-runner in promoting

international vaccine cooperation. We have carried out vaccine R&D and production cooperation with more than 20 countries, attracting more than 100,000 volunteers of over 100 nationalities. China is prepared to discuss with other countries the feasibility and protocols for mutual recognition of vaccination. China is a steadfast advocate for equitable vaccine distribution. China has delivered much-needed help to more than 100 countries, saving lives and containing the pandemic without any political strings attached. If this is termed as vaccine diplomacy, then China's vaccine diplomacy has been largely lauded by the world, and is considered as the common interest of the international community. We are confident that Chinese vaccines will inject more confidence and hope into the global fight against the pandemic.

PIVOT: Where do you see BRI in coming years?

NR: The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a mega-venture by China but the opportunities and deliverables will be enjoyed by the entire world. At present, the circle of friends of the BRI is constantly expanding. 140 countries and 32 international organizations have joined the BRI family, and cooperation in various fields has achieved fruitful deliverables. The cumulative trade volume between China and its BRI partners exceeds US\$9.2 trillion. The BRI is an international economic cooperation initiative. It always adheres to the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, and advocates the spirit of openness, inclusiveness and transparency. It has become the world's widest and largest international cooperation platform and a popular global public good.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the BRI partners have worked together, united and cooperated to strengthen the construction of a healthy silk road,

a green silk road, and a digital silk road. A lot of new progress has been made, which has made positive contributions in fighting the pandemic, stabilizing the economy, and ensuring people's livelihood for all countries.

In President Xi Jinping's keynote speech at the Boao Forum for Asia this year, he proposed that China will continue to work with all parties to jointly build the BRI with high quality, enhance health cooperation, connectivity, green development, and open and inclusive partnerships.

PIVOT: Through what measures bilateral relation between China and Pakistan can be further strengthened and solidified?

NR: This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan. China-Pakistan relations are a banner of China's diplomacy over 70 years. Ties between the two countries have developed into an outstanding model of relations between countries with different social systems, histories and cultures over the past seven decades. Looking forward to the future, China and Pakistan would leverage strengths of the traditional friendship, meet challenges together, achieve common development, and build a closer community of shared future in the times to come.

China will continue to develop its relations with Pakistan from a strategic and long-term perspective, and give Pakistan priority in diplomacy. Since the CPEC was launched, China has become Pakistan's largest trading partner for six consecutive years and its largest source of investment for seven consecutive years. The CPEC will serve as the pilot project of high-quality development under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. As the protocol of the second phase

of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement has come into effect, the trade liberalization between the two countries has been greatly improved. As President Dr. Arif Alvi said, he hopes that both sides will press "fast-forward button" for the construction of the CPEC. China will continue to deepen economic and trade cooperation with Pakistan. China will provide greater convenience for Pakistan's exports to China, strive to narrow the trade deficit, and seek balanced development of bilateral trade.

**UPHOLDING AND PRACTICING
TRUE MULTI-LATERALISM IN
PURSUIT OF A COMMUNITY
OF SHARED FUTURE FOR
THE MANKIND IS THE RIGHT
WAY FORWARD IN TACKLING
COMPLEX ISSUES AND
EFFECTIVELY COUNTERING
SECURITY CHALLENGES,
BOTH TRADITIONAL AND
NON-TRADITIONAL, IN
TODAY'S WORLD**

Both sides should join hands to address security risks. The security interests of China and Pakistan are closely related. China will continue to support Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts by helping the country improve its anti-terrorism and security capabilities and ability to better address non-traditional security threats, especially to improve the security of Chinese projects and personnel in Pakistan. China will build a bridge of friendship and partnership between the two peoples. The cooperation in the fields of art, broadcasting, film and television, publishing and sports is progressing well. This year, both countries held a variety of activities to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, boosting cultural bonds and promoting people-to-people contacts. China and Pakistan should also use multilateral mechanisms to build a better world.

PIVOT: How do you think people-to-people contact can be improved between the people of China and Pakistan?

NR: Friendship between Pakistan and China derives its strength from close contact between the people and holds the key to sound state-to-state relations. Over the past 70 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan, cultural exchanges and cooperation between the two countries have been carried out frequently, the exchange channels expanded, and cultural activities diversified. Until now, one China Cultural Centre, 5 Confucius Institutes and 2 Confucius Classes have been set up in Pakistan. These institutions have become an important window for Pakistani people to understand Chinese culture. Chinese side also regularly participates in the National Book Fair and Independence Day celebrations held by Pakistan to deepen exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

In addition, the Chinese government encourages outstanding Pakistani students to study in China and provides various scholarships. Annual youth exchange program has been successfully implemented, and several Pakistani 100-member youth delegations to China have been organized. In the past few years, China and Pakistan have cooperated closely in the fields of cultural heritage, broadcasting, film, television and publishing etc. The Pakistani film *Parwaaz Hai Junoon* (English name: *Soaring is Passion*) was screened in China in 2020. In 2021, China and Pakistan signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the Mutual Translation and Publication of Classic Works, and the Joint Statement on Cooperation in the Asian Initiative for Cultural Heritage Conservation, etc.,

which can serve to strengthen media and cultural linkage will give a new impetus to bilateral cultural exchanges.

PIVOT: How does China see the progress on CPEC?

NR: The CPEC is a model example to showcase BRI and China-Pakistan cooperation. It has brought \$25.4 billion of investment to Pakistan, with 46 projects completed or under construction. It has helped Pakistan add 5.2 million kilowatts of electricity, 880,000 meters of the national core transmission network and 510 kilometers of expressways. The CPEC has achieved many important early harvest goals. Our cooperation framework has expanded from the initial four key areas of Gwadar Port, energy, transportation infrastructure and industrial cooperation to new areas such as people's livelihood, agriculture, science and technology and international cooperation. Even during the pandemic, the CPEC has not laid off staff, dismissed staff or suspended work, providing strong support to Pakistan's economy and social livelihood.

The CPEC has now entered a new stage of enrichment and expansion. Going forward, while continue to build and operate the existing projects, China will further focus on cooperation in areas such as people's livelihood, industry and agriculture, and strive to make CPEC as a demonstration project

for high-quality development of the BRI, so as to bring more benefits to the people of the two countries and the region.

PIVOT: Do you think the negative propaganda regarding CPEC might be creating hurdles in smooth completion of CPEC projects?

NR: Since its launch, the CPEC has brought economic and social benefits to Pakistan that are quite visible for all. Prime Minister Imran Khan considers the CPEC as the top priority for the Pakistani government, and the Chinese government also renders its fully support in its successful completion. The construction of the corridor conforms to public opinion, has won the hearts of people and has largely benefitted people. It has received great attention and heartfelt support from all sectors of society both in China and in Pakistan.

CHINA AND PAKISTAN WOULD LEVERAGE STRENGTHS OF THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP, MEET CHALLENGES TOGETHER, ACHIEVE COMMON DEVELOPMENT, AND BUILD A CLOSER COMMUNITY OF SHARED FUTURE IN THE TIMES TO COME

With the joint planning of the Chinese and Pakistani governments and the joint efforts of the two people, the CPEC will continue

to steadily promote infrastructure construction, while giving more attention to people's livelihoods, focusing on industrial and agricultural cooperation, eliminating all external

interference, and maintaining the momentum of high-quality development to bring more benefits to the two countries and people.

In the face of some malicious attempts made by some countries in fabricating false propaganda, turning black into white, and aggressively attacking the CPEC, I firmly believe that the Chinese and Pakistani people will make their voices heard, tell the world what is the truth about CPEC, and show the world that the two sides are determined to carry forward the CPEC projects for win-win cooperation.

PIVOT: Which particular areas do you think need to be addressed to make CPEC a success?

NR: CPEC being an important pilot project of the BRI, has maintained a positive momentum of development since its launch in 2013. Going forward, China will work with Pakistan to jointly build the CPEC with high quality.

Agriculture and industry are currently the areas that Pakistan is most concerned about, and they are the most promising areas for China-Pakistan cooperation. Rapid progress in agricultural cooperation has been made, mainly in three aspects: first, strengthening mechanisms. Last year, an agricultural working group under the framework of the CPEC joint Commission was set up. The first task of the working group was to help Pakistan fight against locust plague, which achieved remarkable results. Second, the process of exporting agricultural products to China has been accelerated. The inspection and quarantine procedures of Pakistani agricultural products exported to China, including onions, potatoes, cherries and dairy products, have been stepped up. Pakistan has established a foot-and-mouth



disease free zone. The third is to promote investment. This year, with efforts made by our Embassy, China and Pakistan established an information platform on agricultural and industrial cooperation to promote all-round exchanges and cooperation among government, industry, academia and research institutes. Chinese enterprises also plan to invest and cooperate with Pakistan in pepper planting; buffalo milk industry development, food processing and agricultural machinery.

A lot of progress has been made in industrial cooperation as well. Since the beginning of this year, we are delighted to see that the bilateral industrial cooperation in Pakistan has achieved tremendous progress: the construction of the Rashakai SEZ has started, and the first company to enter the SEZ, Century Steel (Pvt) Ltd has imported equipment from Karachi Port. The Gwadar Free Zone has attracted more than 40 companies, including hotels, banks, metal processing, overseas warehouses, grain and oil processing, with a direct investment of more than RMB 3 billion yuan. In addition, the second phase of the TTE plant established by Transsion Holdings China and Tecno Pack Pakistan assemble 6 million phones each year; the MG plant established by Shanghai SAIC and Pakistan's JW Group in Lahore was put into production, with annual capacity of 18,000 units by 2022; the joint venture company, Service Long March Tyres is under construction as well. China-Pakistan industrial cooperation is moving towards diversification, clustering and high quality.

PIVOT: What kind of hurdles and problems Chinese investors face in Pakistan with regards to business?

NR: The highly complementary industrial development of China



and Pakistan has created broad space for the development of bilateral economic and trade cooperation. The success of CPEC has enabled more investors to see the good returns and potential of doing business in Pakistan. Looking forward, China will assist Pakistan to further improve the overall investment environment in a targeted manner, to better attract Chinese investors and other countries and business groups to invest in Pakistan. From company's perspective, safety is the primary concern.

The recent terrorist attacks in Dasu on July 14 and on Eastbay Expressway on August 20 were tragedies. We strongly condemn the terrorist acts, and will make joint efforts to upgrade and improve the security measures to guarantee the safety of all Chinese enterprises and projects in Pakistan, which will effectively eliminate the negative impact of the incidents and inject confidence into investors. We are pleased to note that Pakistan has improved the business environment in the global rankings, appreciate Pakistan's government for taking a series of measures in this regard, and believe that with a more attractive investment preferential policy, by speeding up the approval process, and by providing "one-stop" service and visa facilitation services for investment, Pakistan's business environment will improve further.

PIVOT: What can Pakistan learn from China's experience in terms of urban development?

NR: Over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, China has experienced a large-scale and rapid urbanization process, scored extraordinary achievements and created huge wealth. From 1978 to the end of 2020, China's urbanization rate has increased from 17.9% to over 60%, and the urban permanent population has increased from 170 million to nearly 850 million, which has injected strong impetus into the sustainable and healthy development of the economy.

In my opinion, China's urbanization mainly has the following successful experiences: Firstly, to promote development through industry. Secondly, to improve the infrastructure to meet the demand for enterprises to invest and settle down, and provide a good living environment for citizens. Thirdly, to improve public services, speed up the construction of public service systems such as education and medical care, and solve people's worries. Fourth, to improve urban management, create a good public environment for urban development and residents' lives, and promote the harmonious and healthy development of the city. The Lahore Safe City and Orange Line projects are successful showcases for bilateral cooperation in urban development and management ■



CPEC

A WIN-WIN STRATAGEM

By Jamal Ahmed

Pakistan recognized the newly established People's Republic of China on 9th January 1950 and established diplomatic relations a year later on the 21st of May. This relationship since then has blossomed into a bond based on trust, harmony, and progress. Despite the uncertainty plaguing International Politics, Pakistan-China relations have shown remarkable stability and consistency braving the transformation in geopolitical landscapes and the upheavals in domestic fortunes.

The relationship reached its zenith when, in 2013, China announced the flagship project of the multi-trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative: China Pakistan Economic Corridor. Belt and Road Initiative is the most ambitious project in recent history, often compared with the Marshall Plan. Spanning over three continents, it aims to connect more than 60% of the world population via a network of railways, roads, highways, and telecommunications infrastructure.

However, Xi Jinping's signature foreign policy initiative has drawn criticism from the Western community. The United States has specifically warned Pakistan about being buried under mountains of debt on numerous occasions. Allowing China to use "debt-trap diplomacy" will give them unprecedented control over the country's affairs.

CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (CPEC) IS A HIGHLY REMUNERATIVE CORRIDOR WITH ITS' CROWN JEWEL: THE GWADAR PORT. THE \$62 BILLION BET ON PAKISTAN IS WHERE THE ECONOMIC BELT MEETS THE MARITIME SILK ROAD, A GAME-CHANGER FOR BOTH COUNTRIES

So the question begs to be asked, is China Pakistan Economic Corridor a repeat of Western Imperialism or a win-win stratagem?

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a highly remunerative corridor with its' crown jewel: the

Gwadar port. The \$62 billion bet on Pakistan is where the economic belt meets the Maritime Silk Road, a game-changer for both countries.

From the Chinese perspective, CPEC is of utmost importance. To overcome the Malacca dilemma, a term coined by the Chinese President Hu Jintao in 2003, the Gwadar-Xinjiang port proves to be the best available option. Currently, China imports up to 80% of its oil and gas through the precarious Malacca strait, spanning over 15,000 km. As the Gwadar port becomes a reality, it provides China with a notable reduction in time, cost, and, most importantly, a safe and secure passage.

On the other hand, this huge investment raises concerns over debt repayment. Pakistan's external debt has centered almost \$63 billion in the past 20 years, reaching a record high of \$116.309 billion in the first quarter of 2021. According to the International Monetary Fund, China has surpassed other institutions and has become the single largest bilateral creditor of Pakistan - owning almost a quarter of its debt.

However, unlike other multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank, China still refrains from directly determining Pakistan's fiscal policies or interfering in its economic policies.

Moreover, according to the Ministry of Planning Development and Reform, the CPEC related government loans have an interest rate of a mere 2% with a repayment period of up to 25 years nullifying the doubts about it being a debt trap.

Pakistan has long been suffering from chronic energy shortages and inadequate economic growth. Inconsistency in the succession of governments and loose macroeconomic policies have plagued the country for ages. However, CPEC has been a godsend and a blessing. The \$60 billion worth of projects encompassing highways, railways, fiberoptics, aviation, and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) can usher Pakistan in an age of unprecedented economic growth.

CPEC has liberated Pakistan from long-standing power shortages with the completion of numerous power plants incorporating Sahiwal Coal-fired Power Plant, Coal-fired Power Plant at Port Qasim Karachi, and the HUBCO coal-fired power plant in Balochistan. Aware of the detrimental impact on the environment, to mitigate the risk China and Pakistan have taken steps to turn the initiative green and eco-friendly. More than 50% of investments in the energy sector have been made in renewable energy. Several projects like the UEP wind farm, Sachal wind farm, Quaid-e-Azam solar park in Bahawalpur are currently operational relieving the national grid of its pressure. Moreover, hydropower plants such as the Kohala hydropower project, Suki Kinari hydropower project, and Karot hydropower station are all expected to be fully operational in the next 5 years.

Before COVID-19 exacerbated the unemployment epidemic in Pakistan,

the unemployment rate was 4% in 2019. According to the Pakistan Economic Survey in 2019-2020, Early Harvest Projects of CPEC have helped create over 85,000 direct jobs for locals. It is also estimated by 2030, CPEC will create up to 2 million direct jobs for skilled and unskilled labor. Furthermore, the extensive road network under the Early Harvest Project category (Havelian-Thakot and Sukkur-Multan motorway) has stimulated economic and social development by linking producers to consumers - providing opportunities to local businessmen and traders. Consequently, it has been a colossal help for tourism throughout the country as well. Overcoming the challenges of transportation and accessibility, road infrastructure can help utilize the massive untapped tourism industry.

PHASE II INTENDS TO REINDUSTRIALIZE PAKISTAN BY CREATING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES (SEZS). THESE SEZS WILL ATTRACT INVESTORS WORLDWIDE GENERATING A HOST OF OTHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES. IT WILL ALSO HELP CREATE PRODIGIOUS EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. HENCE, IT IS IMPERATIVE TO PRIORITIZE EXPORT-ORIENTED INDUSTRIES

However, we must realize that solely relying on road infrastructure and energy power plants will not help us overcome our economic difficulties - our solution lies in industrialization. Here the phase II of CPEC comes into play. Phase II intends to reindustrialize Pakistan by creating Special Economic Zones (SEZs). These SEZs will attract investors worldwide generating a host of

other economic activities. It will also help create prodigious employment opportunities. Hence, it is imperative to prioritize export-oriented industries.

Other projects of Phase II include the development and up-gradation of Gwadar and Karachi Ports. This modernization will result in unprecedented and unparalleled expansion in the region. Ports will be able to handle more traffic and cargo. Being the link between the Maritime Silk Road and the Economic Belt, it will create a paradigm shift by improving regional connectivity with Pakistan at its center.

CPEC has the potential to become the backbone of Pakistan's economy resulting in additional GDP growth of up to 2% after 2025 for the next 15-20 years.

A massive responsibility now lies on the shoulders of the government of Pakistan. It is incumbent upon the government to enact a proactive role in ensuring the complete utilization of the Special Economic Zones. It needs to be developed on a fast-track basis adopting a clear, central, and uniform policy throughout the country. Governance quality must be improved, complemented with the removal of bureaucratic hurdles. Ensuring proper communication and coordination between federal and provincial governments will safeguard us from the loss of resources. These improvements must be incorporated in comprehensive systemic reforms for us to actualize this vision.

In essence, China Pakistan Economic Corridor is the culmination of Pakistan-China's all-weather friendship based on the Confucian principles of beneficence, autonomy, and justice rather than Western Imperialism - a win-win stratagem for both ■



The writer is a graduate from University of London.

CPEC in Comparative Perspective

Addressing Woes of Centrifugal Forces

By Lt. Col. Zafar Iqbal Rawana (Retd)



Despite having different and incompatible socio-economic systems, cultures, beliefs and ideologies, China and Pakistan, over a period of time, have well-managed and maintained a remarkable and unaffected bilateral relationship. Beijing and Islamabad often reciprocate the warmth and depth of their relationship, using adjectives and phrases, such as 'all-weather,' 'time-tested' 'sweeter than honey' and 'deeper than oceans.' A dive-down into history reveals that China's cordial relations with other countries have waxed and waned occasionally but the partnership with Pakistan has strengthened with the passage of time. This unprecedented friendship even remained unmolested and inviolable during the impervious upheavals of the "Cultural Revolution" and the hegemonic phase of former Soviet Union. William Barnds and Rajshree Jetly objectively concluded in 'China's Relations with Pakistan: Durability Amidst Discontinuity': "Sino-Pakistan relations stand out as one the few enduring friendships that withstood the pressure of time and drifting geo-strategic conditions." Despite the fact that national - economic / business - interests govern today's international relations, China-Pakistan bonhomie has transcended the materialistic world. In this regard, China has

not only extended a helping hand to Pakistan in conventional areas - such as development of arms for the country's armed forces - but has also assisted Islamabad in matters of strategic nature. The resilience of this remarkable and durable partnership gave birth to the idea of establishing a mutually-rewarding project - with a view to serve joint political, economic and geo-strategic interests of both the Asian nations. As a result of brain-storming, utmost endeavors and deliberation, spanned over many years, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was conceived.

Although the first step towards the implementation of this revolutionary project came in May 2013, when Chinese Premier, Li Keqiang, visited Pakistan, the major boost to the mega project came in the wake of Chinese President, Xi Jinping's, first ever visit to Pakistan in April 2015. Consequently, the two brotherly countries signed several accords to fill the infrastructure gaps in Pakistan. In this regard, apart from construction of roads and railways, special emphasis was given to power generation. Here, it's prudent to mention that CPEC has been termed as the "Flagship" project of China's grand infrastructure and connectivity plan - the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The aforementioned visionary plan is aimed at reviving

the historic 'Silk Road' - which stretched from Asia to the Mediterranean Sea; thereby connecting, majority of Asia's landmass.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor aims at connecting the deep-sea port of Gwadar with China's northern-western autonomous region of Xinjiang - via a multi-dimensional network of roads and railways. CPEC - today considered as the fulcrum of China-Pakistan relations - will run approximately 3000-kms. Besides, it is perceived that the completion of the project will ensure that Pakistan possesses everything it requires to become a regional economic hub - the focal point of future North-South and East-West trade.

THE CORRIDOR WILL PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF "GREATER SOUTH ASIA," IT IS EVIDENT THAT PAKISTAN'S PIVOTAL ROLE AND STRATEGIC ECONOMIC AUTONOMY WILL PAVE ITS WAY TO BECOME A REGIONAL ECONOMIC POWER

When President Xi Jinping came to Pakistan in 2015, the visit was widely covered - rather phenomenally - by the Western press. Jane Perlez, writing for 'The New York Times,' claimed it to be a "gesture likely to confirm the decline of US influence in Pakistan." Although the international media - especially the Indian media, which is nothing more than a circus - contrived the unprecedented investment as China's way of wielding influence in the region, our domestic media outlets - coupled with some nationalist leaders - termed it as another "East India Company." Interestingly, none of them had carried out an unbiased, objective, factual analysis of the scope of the projects and the dividends it was expected to give. Similarly, 'The Guardian' babbled vehemently on April 20, 2015: "Chinese are not just offering much needed infrastructure investment but are also making Pakistan a key partner in its grand economic and strategic ambitions." Since the corridor will play a crucial role in regional integration of "Greater South Asia," it is evident that Pakistan's pivotal role and strategic economic autonomy will pave its way to become a regional economic power. However, this perception is not going too well with many global and regional powers - particularly Pakistan's eastern neighbor, India. Washington and New Delhi's twinge is understandable as the corridor will allow China to effectively by-pass its 'Malacca Dilemma' - avoiding a US or Indian naval blockade in case of escalation of hostilities. Besides, Iranian proposal to extend 'Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline' to China has added fuel to the fire. Unfortunately, owing to vested interests and

myopic policies of certain countries, the international community is failing to view Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) from an objective lens - a project that aims to fill the infrastructure gap in countries across Asia, Africa and parts of Europe, leading to accelerated economic growth. Moreover, the project is expected to cover 65% of the world's population and 40% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

US did not limit itself to launching a media campaign against the aforementioned project, it did something more. During the 47th 'Group of Seven' (G7) summit held in 2021 in Cornwall, UK, Washington, along with its allies, discussed at length the possibility of a coherent response to Beijing's growing assertiveness - both in the economic and military domains. A road map of a rival envisioned plan - termed Build Better Back World (B3W) - was also unveiled. In this regard, Washington claimed that B3W was a global value-driven plan, estimating about \$400 trillion - with goals similar to that of BRI. However, US, the lead partner in this enterprise, needs to realize that it's late to the party - as the global economic power is swiftly shifting from the West to the East and global South. Furthermore, it should be also understood that the Chinese infrastructure investment plan has been in-place since 2013 - and Washington has a lot of catching up to do. Therefore, the aforementioned rival infrastructure plan seems to be an effort that is "too little too late" - an exercise in sheer futility.

Nevertheless, there is a dire need to understand that CPEC is a mutually-beneficial project that will bring prosperity to the region as a whole. From Pakistan's perspective, the game-changer project has the potential to create hundreds and thousands of jobs for the youth and bring downtrodden and less-developed areas into mainstream - and along the way, reduce their vulnerabilities to terror-prone activities.

In this context, it is of paramount importance that a coordinated effort is undertaken to separate fact from fiction vis-à-vis CPEC. In addition to that, negative propaganda of anti-Pakistan lobbies, cynics and detractors need to be countered with facts to quell the doubts, fears and misconceptions created by the centrifugal forces. Moreover, the masses should to be educated that the economic engagement being undertaken by China with Pakistan is unprecedented - which will go a long way, not only in improving the country's economy but also increasing Islamabad's concreteness and relevance in the global political arena ■



The writer is a retired army officer.



China's Role in Rebuilding Afghanistan

By Mina Khurram

Taliban have regained the control over Afghanistan as United States has left the country in pieces and Afghan government has collapsed with their President fleeing away leaving the people in a disordered situation with uncertainty and fear looming over them. Although, Taliban have announced general amnesty across the country and claim that they will not seek revenge. Many are still afraid as of what will happen next. As there is a new leadership in Afghanistan now, it is yet to be seen what kind of Foreign Policy Taliban will make.

China from the very beginning has stayed out and not interfered in Afghanistan war. Now as the

United States has departed and the country is in tatters with poor infrastructure and dwindling economy, it needs international assistance to rebuild itself. China being a regional power can be of help to Afghanistan and Taliban seem to be aware of this very well as just after five days of their ascendance, Taliban spokesperson Suhail Shaheen in an interview with CGTN stated that China being a big economic power could play a huge role in rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Before that, Beijing also expressed a desire to have friendly and cooperative relations with Taliban led Afghanistan.

China is a neighbouring state of Afghanistan sharing a 46 kilometres long boundary with it. Being a powerful state, it has an

influence in the region. Beijing is currently concerned about the instability in Afghanistan. It fears the cross-border activities of militant groups rising after the US withdrawal. Many reports propose that Uyghur separatists of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) have profound connections with Al Qaeda so China would need to get insurance from Taliban that ETIM separatists do not get any help within Afghanistan.

BEIJING'S FOREMOST CONCERN IN AFGHANISTAN IS OF BRINGING STABILITY. REBUILDING OF AFGHANISTAN REQUIRES A PEACEFUL RESOLVE OF THE ISSUES

Powerful economy is the major tool of Beijing's external activities. It has been investing heavily in many states, building infrastructure and ports there

but in case of Kabul economic influence would be of second priority. Beijing's foremost concern in Afghanistan is of bringing stability. Rebuilding of Afghanistan requires a peaceful resolve of the issues. In view of that, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met Taliban delegation on July 28th, a month before Taliban takeover to get assurance over Afghanistan's land not being used by separatist groups.

CHINA BEING A REGIONAL POWER CAN BE OF HELP TO AFGHANISTAN AND TALIBAN SEEM TO BE AWARE OF THIS VERY WELL AS JUST AFTER FIVE DAYS OF THEIR ASCENDANCE, TALIBAN SPOKESPERSON SUHAIL SHAHEEN IN AN INTERVIEW WITH CGTN STATED THAT CHINA BEING A BIG ECONOMIC POWER COULD PLAY A HUGE ROLE IN REBUILDING AND RECONSTRUCTION OF AFGHANISTAN

The unresolved security and political issues were coming in the way of China's economic engagements with Afghanistan. The failure of implementation of big economic projects like Aynak copper mine and Amu darya

have made Beijing reluctant for further engagement. However, through Belt and Road Initiative, there is a good opportunity for Beijing to include Kabul in it and cooperate with Afghanistan alongside Pakistan for connecting with Middle Eastern countries through Central and South Asia. If Afghanistan joins CPEC as a third party, it will be positive turnover for the region. There is already a plan made for development of railway to Kandahar via CPEC and Kabul-Peshawar motorway.

Pakistan shares its longest border with Afghanistan. It has a significant role in Kabul to play and if Pakistan succeeds in developing good relations with Kabul in the future, which is, it will indirectly contribute to China's influence in Afghanistan. Due to a long period of wars and fights going on in Afghanistan, the country is currently in pieces with extreme poverty, worse economic and infrastructure condition and refugee and drug problems. Afghanistan is in dire need of international assistance and support of its neighbours. China and Pakistan, as well as other regional and international states should help to rebuild Afghanistan to alleviate the issues it faces.

PAKISTAN SHARES ITS LONGEST BORDER WITH AFGHANISTAN. IT HAS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN KABUL TO PLAY AND IF PAKISTAN SUCCEEDS IN DEVELOPING GOOD RELATIONS WITH KABUL IN THE FUTURE, WHICH IS, IT WILL INDIRECTLY CONTRIBUTE TO CHINA'S INFLUENCE IN AFGHANISTAN

America has failed in Afghanistan having seen that there was never a military solution over there after twenty years. In these two decades, the people who suffered most are the Afghans. As the famous writer Khaled Hosseini rightly said, "There are a lot of children in Afghanistan but little childhood." They have grown up seeing guns and bullets. They deserve to feel secure, have quality education and good healthcare system. It is sincerely hoped that the marginalization and economic deprivation of Afghanistan would lessen and peace would prevail in the region. This is an open opportunity for Beijing to show the world its potential by helping Afghanistan in this need of hour ■



The writer works at China Pakistan Study Centre, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad.

PIVOT: You are currently serving as Pakistan's Ambassador to China. How has been your experience so far? What factors do you think have contributed to China's success?

MUH: Like all Pakistanis, I have always felt a special fondness for China due to our traditional fraternal ties. These sentiments were further reinforced when I arrived in Beijing last August to assume my responsibilities as the Ambassador of Pakistan. Since then it has been a journey of discovery of a country with rich history and a new found confidence; of a land of diversity and opportunities; of hardworking and disciplined people. I happened to travel far and wide in China and met many important leaders of the Chinese government and people from all walks of life. It offered me a chance to observe closely the history, culture, economy and political system of this country, and especially the underlying factors which have propelled China to become a powerful and prosperous nation in such a short duration.

Since the beginning of 'Reform and Opening-Up' in 1978, China has made major headway in poverty alleviation; socio-economic development; innovation and ecology. It is now leading global efforts for mitigation of climate change and exploring new frontiers in space, aviation and medical sciences.

The rapid progress and prosperity of China is not only a reflection of the vision and wisdom of Chinese leadership but also the fruit of toil and labour of the Chinese people.

PIVOT: Pakistan and China have upgraded their economic



Interview of Ambassador Moin ul Haque (Pakistan's Ambassador to China)

By PIVOT Team

and investment cooperation under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which has hugely benefited the two countries. What are the priorities and direction of our practical cooperation in the future?

MUH: CPEC is the flagship project of President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative and occupies a pivotal position in Pakistan's development agenda. It is a transformational enterprise which has contributed greatly to Pakistan's national development by upgrading transport and communication network, eliminating power outages and developing Gwadar Port.

After the success of Phase-I, CPEC is now prioritising on deepening bilateral cooperation in industrialisation, agriculture, science and technology, poverty alleviation and socio-economic development. It is basically aligned with government of Pakistan's

people-centric development agenda to create jobs and improve the livelihood of the people in the country.

Under phase-II, many Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are being set up along the route where Chinese and other foreign investors would have the opportunity to set-up their manufacturing units for which Pakistani government is offering attractive incentives and tax concessions. We are confident that with the successful completion of all CPEC projects, Pakistan and China would be able to jointly shape a prosperous and progressive future for our people and also ensure connectivity and economic integration of the entire region.

PIVOT: How do you assess Chinese help to Pakistan in combating COVID-19 pandemic?

MUH: Pakistan-China

cooperation after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic once again demonstrated the strength of our iron-clad friendship. As iron brother and the most reliable partner, Pakistan decided to stand by China in the hour of crisis and offered utmost assistance to our Chinese brethren. At the peak of crisis, President Arif Alvi paid a visit to China to express Pakistan's support and solidarity with China. Reciprocating Pakistan's gesture, Chinese government and people generously supported Pakistan's efforts to combat the pandemic by providing a huge number of PPEs, ventilators and other relief goods.

After its remarkable success against the pandemic, China is leading global efforts against COVID-19. As the primary supplier of COVID-19 vaccines in world, Pakistan was the first country to receive vaccine from China. With Chinese help, we have kicked-off an ambitious plan to inoculate our people and secure a decisive victory against the pandemic. Both countries have now upgraded their cooperation for building Pakistan's capacity for vaccine development and distribution. I am hopeful that with Chinese assistance and experience sharing, Pakistan would also replicate Chinese success in defeating the pandemic at home.

PIVOT: China-US ties have been strained since last few years. Efforts are being made to contain China and prevent or procrastinate its rise. Would Pakistan be impacted by this development?

MUH: China and the United States are two major powers of the world and have important role to play in defining the trajectory

and trend of this era's politics and economics. Both countries have a good history of mutual cooperation on important issues and their active coordination in the past has definitely been a factor in the growth of multilateralism and globalization.

IN THE COMING YEARS WE WOULD SEE OUR RELATIONSHIP ELEVATED TO A NEW PINNACLE OF BILATERAL UNDERSTANDING AND MUTUAL TRUST. OUR TWO COUNTRIES WOULD MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM OF HIGH-LEVEL EXCHANGES, PUSH FORWARD COMMERCIAL AND TRADE TIES AND EXPAND OUR PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONTACT

As our world faces myriad challenges of varying intensity,

this cooperation is necessitated even more now. We believe that both countries can still find common ground for expanding bilateral cooperation and also manage their differences peacefully.

It is pertinent to recall that fifty years ago, Mr. Henry Kissinger, the then U.S National Security Advisor, secretly visited China with Pakistan's facilitation which changed the dynamics of world politics and proved to be a harbinger of normal ties between the two countries. As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of this landmark visit, I think we should revive the spirit of international cooperation and multilateralism and strive together to find solution to the challenges faced by humanity today. Pakistan, like past, is ready to play a role in this regard.

PIVOT: This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC). How do you evaluate the role of CPC for Chinese development and prosperity?

MUH: 2021 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China and





thus an apt occasion to review its endeavours for China's prosperity and progress. CPC not only is credited with the liberation of China from foreign occupation but also oversaw the largest economic spurt in human history. It is due to CPC's efforts that China, in a very short duration, was catapulted to a leading position in global politics, economics and trade and commerce.

CPC's people-centric approach and strategy of inclusive and sustainable growth has greatly contributed to the national development efforts. Of all the great achievements of the CPC, the most notable is of lifting 800 million people out of absolute poverty thereby unleashing their potential for progress and prosperity of the country.

I am confident that with CPC's efforts, China would succeed in achieving the goal of Great Rejuvenation of Chinese Nation as envisaged by the Chinese leaders and people alike.

PIVOT: This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Pakistan. How do you view the development and changes of bilateral relations over the past 70 years? How will it develop in the future?

MUH: Year 2021 is a special occasion for both Pakistan and China to commemorate the 70th

anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations. Over the course of seven decades, our fraternal ties have evolved into an 'all-weather strategic cooperative partnership'. Both countries have progressively enhanced their engagements in diverse fields ranging from political and economic ties to ever-increasing cooperation in cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

PAKISTAN-CHINA RELATIONSHIP HAS COMPLETELY NEGATED THE NOTION THAT BILATERAL TIES ARE MERELY THE RESULT OF CONVERGENCE OF POLITICAL INTERESTS

Encouraged by our fruitful cooperation of the past, we wish to expand our future ties with China to diverse fields of cooperation in political, security, economic, educational and cultural spheres. In the coming years we would see our relationship elevated to a new pinnacle of bilateral understanding and mutual



trust. Our two countries would maintain the momentum of high-level exchanges, push forward commercial and trade ties and expand our people-to-people contact.

CPEC, as the flagship project of BRI, would be the central pillar of our future bilateral engagements. As Pakistan finds itself at the threshold of new era of economic take-off and seeks to fully utilise its potential as the hub of geo-economics, CPEC represents the next stage of Pakistan's economic development. Taken together with its large and growing consumer market and a priority on industrial development, Pakistan would continue to invite and attract the Chinese investors to discover and take benefit from these opportunities.

Our two countries are mindful of the transformations taking place in our region and in international political landscape. In view of this, there is a complete consensus between Pakistan and China to deepen their strategic communication and coordination at all tiers to ensure peace and stability in our neighborhood. With a strong faith in multilateralism, both Pakistan and China would continue to work for international cooperation and solidarity under the United Nations umbrella.

I am confident that with the strategic vision and guidance of leadership of our two countries and the support of our people, we would take our relationship to new heights, which would continue to inspire many around the world.

PIVOT: The rich history of our bilateral cooperation has set a new paradigm for the development of international relations in modern era and



serves as a model for other countries too. Our time-tested friendship has clearly demonstrated that cooperation, mutual trust, constructive engagement and pursuit of shared benefits could lead to developing an exemplary and lasting friendship.

AS PAKISTAN FINDS ITSELF AT THE THRESHOLD OF NEW ERA OF ECONOMIC TAKE-OFF AND SEEKS TO FULLY UTILISE ITS POTENTIAL AS THE HUB OF GEO-ECONOMICS, CPEC REPRESENTS THE NEXT STAGE OF PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Pakistan-China relationship has completely negated the notion that bilateral ties are merely the result of convergence

of political interests. On the contrary, we have demonstrated that underlying forces driving strong international cooperation are mutual respect and understanding; common experiences of past; adherence to international norms and values, and a sincere desire to work together for a transparent and just international system catering to the legitimate interests of all nations without any discrimination.

Our bilateral ties, therefore, carry important lessons especially for those countries who attempt to gain political mileage by pursuing a policy of unilateralism, aggrandisement and politicking against their neighbours. Such countries could learn from Pakistan and China that successful international cooperation is rooted in the spirit of cooperation not conflagration; multilateralism not unilateralism; globalisation not isolationism; consent not coercion and tranquillity not turmoil ■

KAROT HYDROPOWER PROJECT

A Glaring Example of Pakistan China Hydropower Cooperation

By Armughan Tufail
& Muhammad Omer Sabahat

For the past many decades, power generation has been a heavy burden on Pakistan's economy. Resultantly, it has created unemployment in the country due to the non-profitability of businesses as the cost of manufacturing exceeds the profitability of businesses. But in the past four to five years, affordable "power generation" due to CPEC "Energy projects" have revolutionized the energy sector of Pakistan. Karot Hydropower project 720 MW is one such example, which will produce affordable and clean energy in the first half of the year 2022. The project is being developed by Karot Power Company Limited comprising China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Ltd (CSAIL) is an investment holding company formed by China Three Gorges Corporation (CTG) and the China Three Gorges International Corporation (CTGI). It is the first hydropower project financed by China's Silk Road Project and one of the top priority CPEC projects.

The Jhelum River is one of the largest rivers of Indus Basin River System, and its hydropower potential was identified by various studies carried out by international agencies, with the first report issued by the Canadian Consultant group MONENCO in 1983, followed by a 1994 study by the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) that formally proposed the Karot Hydropower Project. The project will also help Pakistan to overcome energy shortages in the peak summer season.

The Karot Hydropower Project is being constructed on Jhelum River near Karot village, some 1.8 kilometers upstream of Karot Bridge and 75 km upstream of Mangla Dam. The project site is accessible through the Islamabad - Kahuta - Kotli road, approximately 29 kilometers from Kahuta, and 65 kilometers from Islamabad.

The key component of the project is the construction of concrete gravity 95 meters high dam with a crest length of 320 meters near the village of Gohra

including intake, headrace tunnels, surface powerhouse, spillway. The dam's reservoir will be approximately 164 million cubic meters in volume, with a length of 27 kilometers. 72 homes are expected to require relocation as a result of construction, while 2.8 kilometers of the Karot-Kotli road and 8.9 kilometers of the Azad Pattan-Kahuta road will need relocation.

THE KAROT HYDROPOWER WILL GENERATE 3,206 MILLION KW-H OF ENERGY A YEAR, WHICH WILL BE SOLD TO THE NATIONAL TRANSMISSION AND DISPATCH COMPANY UNDER A 30-YEAR POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT. THE GENERATED POWER WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO POWER APPROXIMATELY SEVEN MILLION HOUSEHOLDS

The power intake structure will be constructed on the right bank of the river immediately upstream of the Dam site and will divert the water into headrace tunnels entering into Cavern Powerhouse. The water will be discharged back to River Jhelum through the tail-race channel located at the right bank of the River Jhelum immediately downstream of Karot village.

The Karot Hydropower will generate 3.21 TWh of energy a year, which





will be sold to the National Transmission and Dispatch Company under a 30-year power purchase agreement. The generated power will be sufficient to power approximately seven million households.

The surface powerhouse, consisting of four turbines of 180 MW, will be installed approximately 650m downstream of the dam crest and 300m upstream of the Karot Bridge.

Karot Hydropower Company Limited will operate the plant on a “Build-Own-Operate-Transfer” basis for a period of 30 years, after which ownership of the Hydropower plant will be transferred to the Government of Pakistan.

A 500 KV transmission line will be developed to transmit power from the Karot Hydropower to the national grid.



The land survey of the transmission line has been done by the National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) and currently work regarding the laying of transmission lines is going smoothly.

Total costs for the project are estimated to be approximately \$ 1.7 billion and will be funded by International Finance Corporation, China’s Silk Road Fund. Also, The Export-Import Bank of China will issue loans to the Karot Power Company. Financial Close was achieved on 22nd February 2017. After completion of the Hydropower Project, the company will run and maintain the project for 30 years at a levelized tariff of 7.68 cents per unit after which it will be transferred to the Pakistani government at a notional price of Rs.1. The project is near its completion, 88 percent of work was done till May 2021 providing employment opportunities to approximately 5000 people.

The Environmental Protection Agencies (EPA) of Punjab and AJK approved the environmental impact assessment (EIA) of the run-of-river HPP in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

In January 2015, Pakistan Engineering Services (PES) updated the 2009 EIA following changes in the project design. The updated EIA was approved by EPA Punjab in 2015.

Karot Hydropower Project is an outstanding example of Pakistan-China Cooperation in the field of Clean Energy generation. It is anticipated that in the future similar projects will be initiated and made operationalize to overcome the energy crisis Pakistan faces at the moment ■



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The China Questions Critical Insights into a Rising Power

By Tayyab Ali

The book named “The China Questions Critical Insights into a Rising Power” encompasses a set of chapters authored by different writers on a range of topics regarding China. The book sheds light upon Chinese politics, International Relations, economy, society, history, and culture. What distinguishes this book from available content is its wholesomeness as it brings into light the undiscussed aspects of China. This book expounds comprehensively about the history of China yet also anticipates the future.

The book starts with exploring the sources of the Communist Party of China’s legitimacy. The author quoted a renowned sociologist Max Weber on the sources of legitimacy for the regime. Max Weber notes three chief sources namely Traditional, Charismatic and Rational-legal. In the case of CCP third one- the rational-legal model- fits perfectly, the author notes. Communism was a new idea to China thus it lacked traditional support but the exceptional performance of the communist regime buttressed its position in China. The leaders after Chairman Mao might have lacked charisma but this does not seem true for the current leader Xi Jinping. President Xi has introduced many reforms and the paramount one is

THE
CHINA
QUESTIONS
CRITICAL INSIGHTS INTO A
RISING POWER

EDITED BY JENNIFER RUDOLPH AND MICHAEL SZONYI

Author : Jennifer Rudolf,
Michael Szonyi
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Press
Pages : 320 pages

the Belt and Road initiative, which has boosted China’s international standing.

Joseph Fewsmith, an author, says President Xi Jinping initiated a successful and much-needed purge against corruption after assuming office. The author quoted a respected economist Hu Angang who estimated that malfeasance accounted for 13 to 16% of China’s GDP in 2001. But this is not the case anymore. If one is to name the single fatal factor for cohesion, integrity, and economy of a nation that out rightly is corruption. These steps depict the resolve and conviction of new Chinese leadership to appreciate and abide by the law, which President Xi iterated in his speeches.

**A SIGNIFICANT PORTION
OF THE BOOK DISCUSSES
ALL-IMPORTANT ASPECTS
LIKE CHINA’S ECONOMY
AND POVERTY ERADICATION
PROGRAMS AND RIGHTLY DOES
SO**

Does Mao Still Matter? This question itched many minds as the economic and cultural reforms introduced during the

era of Deng Xiaoping were deemed as a turn away from Maoism. So, the question has been adequately addressed by one of the authors. The author says, President Xi has admonished the Chinese not to divide People's Republic of China into Mao period and reform period. Furthermore, President Xi's book Governance of China illustrates his reverence and adherence to Mao's ideology. This shows the resolve, conviction, and clear-headedness of present leadership.

The pleasantly surprising part of the book was the public opinion in China. Normally, the propaganda machinery of the West accuses China of being repressive while the author has absolved China from this accusation. Interestingly, he says the Chinese government encourages criticism to promote supervision by public opinion in aid with legal supervision.

China has played a role of great power since ancient times and it may assume that role again given its increasing role in the region and world. For this purpose, China needs to clear its backyard as the US did by employing the Monroe Doctrine of President James Monroe. The book has comprehensively explained China's relations with its neighbors. Since World War II, China's neighboring nations have been under the influence of the US. The author opines that tables are turning quickly as China is now actively engaging with its neighbors. China is actively and productively cooperating with East Asian nations, which, undoubtedly, will make the region more stable and prosperous.

At a time when all eyes are on China, one cannot ignore studying Chinese militaristic and economic capabilities. The book aptly weighs up China's military strength and, expectedly, notes that these capabilities are increasing. The author notes rapid expansion in China's naval capabilities which are necessary for the protection of trade routes and sovereignty in the South China Sea. The author also notes that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is pursuing its traditional concept of protecting the sea through the land by deploying several missiles.

A significant portion of the book discusses all-important aspects like China's economy and poverty eradication programs and rightly does so. China's engagement with the world, market-based approach, and transformation from a predominantly agricultural economy to a manufacturing hub were crucial for the exponential growth of its economy as per the book. Before joining the world trade organization (WTO), China had negligible foreign direct investment (FDI) thus exports. From 2001 to 2015, the estimated FDI was 1 trillion and the surge in export was \$266 billion to \$2.3 trillion which indeed is a huge success. The book dissects the underlying reasons for this miraculous success, which ought to be a beacon of light for struggling economies.

FROM 2001 TO 2015, THE ESTIMATED FDI WAS 1 TRILLION AND THE SURGE IN EXPORT WAS \$266 BILLION TO \$2.3 TRILLION WHICH INDEED IS A HUGE SUCCESS. THE BOOK DISSECTS THE UNDERLYING REASONS FOR THIS MIRACULOUS SUCCESS, WHICH OUGHT TO BE A BEACON OF LIGHT FOR STRUGGLING ECONOMIES

At last, it is pertinent to mention, the whole book is written by western authors and it has no Chinese authors even from the Chinese Diaspora living in the west. The book should have had authors from China as they would have been more informed and nuanced about the intricacies and realities regarding China's development over the years. Western authors do exhibit some inclination towards the US narrative, albeit this book is quite neutral, so one needs to be critical and fastidious while giving it a read ■



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Lessons for Pakistan from China's Achievements in Poverty Alleviation

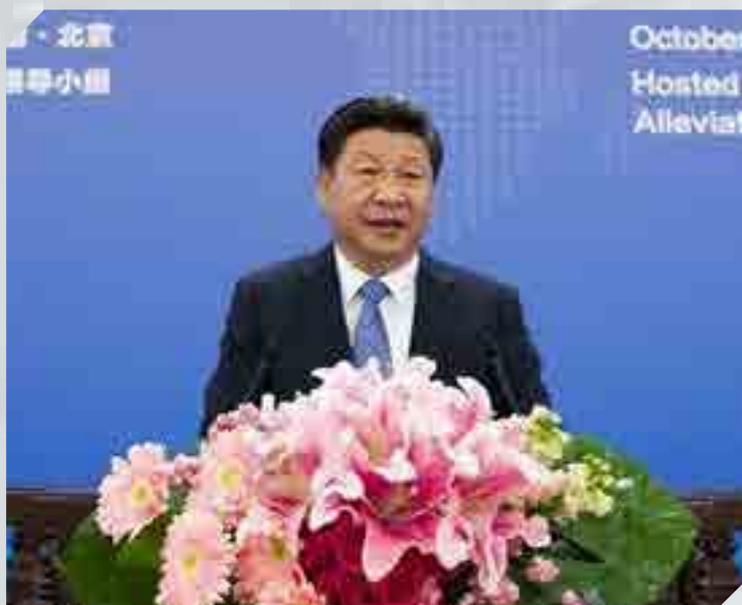
By Dr Abdul Rauf



Poverty alleviation or Poverty reduction is a set of measures taken to permanently lift people out of poverty. Poverty is a global challenge and is the root cause of many problems like hunger, diseases, and even social conflicts. Poverty reduction is so desirable that 'No Poverty' has been kept as the first of 17 goals set by the United Nations for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The poverty line is the minimum level of income deemed adequate to meet the basic human needs, which are food, safe drinking water, shelter, clothing, sanitation, education, healthcare, and information, as defined in the UN declaration at the World Summit on Social Development. International Poverty Line (IPL) as a threshold of absolute poverty is set at US\$1.90 per day by the World Bank in October 2015. The IPL requires to be adjusted for each country as per the local prices and may not just be the income-based affordability but also safe access to these basic needs.

China did extremely well in poverty reduction which is unmatched in the present world. China achieved the goal of eliminating extreme poverty by the end of 2020. Chinese President Xi Jinping has recently announced that China



Chinese President Xi Jinping addresses the 2015 Global Poverty Reduction and Development Forum in Beijing

has successfully brought all counties out of poverty and has achieved the goal of lifting 100 million people out of poverty set by him on assuming office in 2012. Instead of IPL of US\$1.90, China uses the threshold of US\$2.30.

CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING HAS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT CHINA HAS SUCCESSFULLY BROUGHT ALL COUNTIES OUT OF POVERTY AND HAS ACHIEVED THE GOAL OF LIFTING 100 MILLION PEOPLE OUT OF POVERTY SET BY HIM ON ASSUMING OFFICE IN 2012

The commitment of Chinese leadership, with people-centered policies, played a significant role in the success of the poverty alleviation program. These achievements could be used as important lessons by other developing countries, especially Pakistan being China's next-door neighbour and extensively engaged in closed bilateral cooperation.

The World Bank data shows that in 1990 there were more than 750 million Chinese (2/3 of the population) living below IPL, which fall to 90 million in 2012 and 7.2 million (0.5% of the population) in 2016. Bringing more than 745 million out of poverty in under 30 years is a big achievement which



► What China has done in poverty reduction?

 All **832** registered poor counties have shaken off poverty

800 million people lifted out of poverty in past 40 years 

 **9.6** million people who lived in poverty relocated

2.9 million civil servants sent to rural areas to aid 

Source: agencies
Graphics: GT

is achieved through socio-economic reforms and open market policy by the government coupled with extreme hard work of the Chinese people.

Poverty reduction in China is achieved with a focus on both agricultural as well as the industrial sector. Land in most areas was distributed among the farmers in proportion to the size of the household. This coupled with the use of modern agriculture techniques and other reforms resulted in around 42% increase in agricultural

productivity. Market and price reforms where procurement price was enhanced, government control on procurement was reduced, and restrictions on inter-regional trade were abolished which helped to achieve increased production.

On the industrial front strategy adopted was to focus on export-led industrialization, which played a significant role in poverty alleviation. Another fundamental change in the poverty alleviation strategy adopted was that instead of providing financial aid, people's capacity was enhanced to generate income.

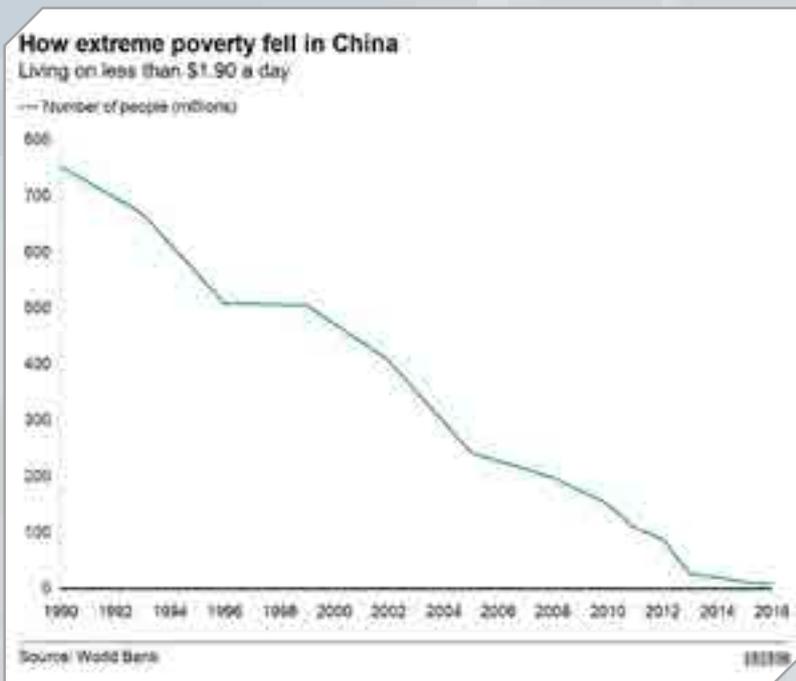
In the early 1990s, Urban Minimum Living Guarantee (MLG) or Dibao program was rolled out which was the largest poverty alleviation program in human history. The programme was regulated by the centre but implemented by local governments. It supported people in four major areas, i.e., housing, health, education, and unexpected disaster. To guarantee that only the deserving people get the support, the applicants were scrutinized by the local county, and data was cross-checked by the Ministry of Civil Affairs at the central level. To ensure that the support is not misused, instead of cash, low-rent

houses and health insurance were provided.

The 8-7 National Poverty Reduction Program (8 for 80 million people lifting out of poverty and 7 for the 7 years to the year 2000) was launched in 1994 with focus on strengthening state institutions, providing additional funds, effectively utilizing these funds, and mobilizing resources. The financial resources from developed provinces were mobilized to underdeveloped provinces.

POVERTY REDUCTION IN CHINA IS ACHIEVED WITH A FOCUS ON BOTH AGRICULTURAL AS WELL AS THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR. LAND IN MOST AREAS WAS DISTRIBUTED AMONG THE FARMERS IN PROPORTION TO THE SIZE OF THE HOUSEHOLD

The government was also committed to providing education and health for all by using additional financial resources. Government also focused on the development of income-generating activities based on local resources and local organisations, as this was found to be a key to sustained poverty reduction.



Analysis of Chinese poverty alleviation programs as discussed above draws following significant conclusions.

- Agricultural and industrial growth with effective government interventions bring sustainable poverty reduction. Agricultural reforms, relocation of people, and export-based industrialisation helped in poverty reduction.
- Political commitments combined with financial commitments are of paramount importance. The Chinese leadership was committed for eradicating poverty from the masses, hence clear goals were set and required funds were provided.
- Education and health for all is critical and were especially focused on by the Chinese government. Lack of education and illness substantially contributes to poverty. Mandatory education for all school-age children was ensured. Healthcare facilities in

the poor areas were improved and medical insurance was provided.

EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE FOR ALL IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR POVERTY REDUCTION. THEREFORE, BASIC EDUCATION MUST BE MADE MANDATORY, AND UNIVERSAL HEALTH INSURANCE BE PROVIDED TO ALL. PROVISIONING OF CLEAN DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION SHALL ALSO BE OUR FOCUS AREAS TO AVOID WATERBORNE DISEASES WHICH ULTIMATELY INCREASES BURDEN ON HEALTH SYSTEM

These conclusions draw clear guidelines for Pakistan. 24.3% of our population is still living in poverty so this becomes our national issue which needs to be addressed as a priority. Political leadership, both in government and opposition,

must show their commitments to end poverty. Policies and projects need to be continuous irrespective of the change in governments. Close cooperation between centre and provinces is essential to make these efforts more effective and fruitful. Not just the allocation of funds but effective utilisation of these funds is most important. This is possible through transparency and accountability ensured by effective state institutions. Institutional reforms, aiming to build strong national institutions and local government bodies, which can play a significant role in poverty alleviation programs are essential.

Majority of our population is living in rural areas and is dependent on agriculture so land reforms shall be our immediate area of focus. Redistribution of land amongst landless farmers according to their household must be ensured. The previous land reforms failed as powerful landlords are in every political party. So political will across the political parties is essential to achieve this aim.

In addition to land reforms, we must simultaneously develop the export-based industry to achieve overall economic growth which will ultimately play an effective role in eliminating poverty. Government must provide incentives for such industries to flourish and compete in the international market.

The government provides financial aid to poor people under 'Ehsaas Program' and 'Benazir Income Support Programme' but these programs seldom elevate people out of poverty as they do not enable people to earn for themselves and thus

remain unsustainable in longer terms. People getting support will fall back to poverty in the absence of such support. Taking lead from Chinese, there is a need to enable people to earn their livings from employment and business, instead of being dependent on financial support forever. Micro-financing could have a better impact on poverty reduction, so 'Kamyab Jawan Program' where youth are given loans for start-ups could be a better option.

TAKING LEAD FROM CHINESE, THERE IS A NEED TO ENABLE PEOPLE TO EARN THEIR LIVINGS FROM EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS, INSTEAD OF BEING DEPENDENT ON FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOREVER. MICRO-FINANCING COULD HAVE A BETTER IMPACT ON POVERTY REDUCTION, SO 'KAMYAB JAWAN PROGRAM' WHERE YOUTH ARE GIVEN LOANS FOR START-UPS COULD BE A BETTER OPTION



New homes built for China's rural poor

Last but not the least, education and healthcare for all is very important for poverty reduction. Therefore, basic education must be made mandatory, and universal health insurance should be provided to all. Provisioning of clean drinking water and

sanitation shall also be our focus areas to avoid waterborne diseases which ultimately increases burden on health system. Basic education shall be coupled with vocational training to make our people more productive for industry and businesses ■



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



Prospects of Energy Deal between Pakistan and China

By Sadia Basharat Wasti

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor is a deliberate network of roads, railways, and energy projects linking China's resource-rich province Xinjiang with Pakistan's strategic Gwadar port on the Arabian sea. China's sixty-two \$62 billion investment in Pakistan is seen as the economic lynchpin with the goal of transforming Pakistan into a prosperous regional trade hub. This corridor will incorporate 2000 km transport link between Kashgar in north-western China to Pakistan's Gwadar port on the Arabian sea near the border with Iran via roads, railways and pipelines. Nevertheless, it is a game changer project which will help transform the fate of Pakistan and aid to Pakistan modernize. Not only will it help improve the economy and trade but will enhance regional corporation. International experts also assert that CPEC would enable Pakistan to overcome energy shortfalls.

On 20 April 2015, Chinese President, Xi Jinping received a grand welcome on his visit to Pakistan. He was the first Chinese President to address a joint session of the Pakistan National Assembly and the Senate. The emphatic speech he delivered to the joint Parliamentary session affirmed 'China's commitment and Pakistan's joy'. Xi

further stated that Pakistan and China 's struggles have brought their hearts and minds together, adding that Pakistan was with us when China stood isolated.

ENERGY PROJECTS UNDER THE CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR ARE PAVING THE WAY FOR PAKISTAN TO ACHIEVE ITS AMBITIOUS TARGETS OF INCREASING THE SHARE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN POWER GENERATION TO 30 PERCENT TILL 2023 FROM THE CURRENT 4 PERCENT

The two brothers then signed 51 memorandum of understanding (MoU) worth \$45.6 billion commitment to building a multi-faceted network. Pakistan's current energy generating capacity is 24,830 MW so energy generation in Pakistan is under main focus, with approximately 33 billion dollars expected to be invested in this sector. An estimated 10,400 MW of electricity has already been slated for generation by March 2018 as part of CPEC's Early Harvest projects. The energy projects, along with other infrastructure projects including Gwadar and industry development projects have been categorized under four phases:

- ◆ Early Harvest (priority) energy projects are to be completed by 2018
- ◆ The short-term projects, or the actively promoted projects are to be completed by 2020-2023
- ◆ The medium-term ones to be completed by 2025
- ◆ The long-term projects to be completed by 2023 (with the opacity regarding which projects are viable and which need to be shelved or revised)

The first phase of the economic corridor focused on \$45.6 billion worth of energy and infrastructure projects. China's state-owned banks financed Chinese companies to fund, build and operate \$45.6 billion worth of energy and infrastructure projects in Pakistan. Major Chinese companies invested in Pakistan's energy sector in which China's Three Gorges Corp which built the world's biggest hydro power project, and China Power International Development Ltd. were included. There are a total of 23 projects in the energy sector which include building new power plants as well as upgrading transmission lines keeping in view the future demands. Electricity from these projects will primarily

be generated from fossil fuels, through hydroelectric, solar and wind-power projects. The experts assert that energy projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor are paving the way for Pakistan to achieve its ambitious targets of increasing the share of renewable energy in power generation to 30 percent till 2023 from the current 4 percent.

China's Zoenergy Company has completed the construction on the world's largest solar power plant -6500 acre 'Quaid-e-Azam solar park' near the city of Bahawalpur with an estimated capacity of 1000 MW completed in December 2016.

With the CPEC entering in the second phase, Pakistan and China have signed deals on June 25 and July 06 2020 for two hydro-power generation projects in Azad Kashmir worth \$3.9 billion. A separate \$7.2 billion deal plans to overhaul Pakistan's colonial-era railways -in what is the most expensive Chinese project in Pakistan to date. In May 2020, Pakistan's government awarded a \$5.8 billion dam-building contract to a joint venture of a Chinese state-owned company with the commercial unit of the Pakistan Army. It is predicted that after completion of all the energy projects, Pakistan would not only become self-sufficient in the energy with addition of 17,000 MW electricity to the National grid, but would also be able to export it. Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Ambassador Nong Rong, in a recent statement also expressed satisfaction over the progress of CPEC projects.

According to official statistics, 20% of CPEC is debt-based finance, while 80% of CPEC is about investments in joint venture (JV) enterprise between China

and Pakistan with the project contributing to forty thousand jobs for local Pakistanis and 80 k jobs for Chinese.

ENERGY PROJECTS UNDER THE CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR ARE PAVING THE WAY FOR PAKISTAN TO ACHIEVE ITS AMBITIOUS TARGETS OF INCREASING THE SHARE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN POWER GENERATION TO 30 PERCENT

The energy projects under the CPEC are not in the interest of the rivals of Pakistan and China. Critics of CPEC launched a slanderous campaign against CPEC, more specifically against energy projects. Initially they targeted the coal power plants, arguing that Pakistan is disturbing the global greenhouse gas (GHG) emission balance through its investment in coal, which constituted only 13% of the energy mix. On the other hand, they forget to mention the consumption of coal based electricity by the developed countries and regions like the US, EU and many others. CPEC, despite these negative propagandas is becoming a success and many power projects, are already operational. Although, hydroelectric power projects of 1590 megawatt will start functioning in the next two years.

It is pertinent to mention that the smear campaign will continue as it is in the interest of opponents of CPEC. Pakistan and China reached consensus to collectively take measures to safeguard their common interests and promote peace, stability and development in the region. In response to critics' (including US and India) objection that CPEC is a debt-trap, Pakistani government came up with a staunch statement that

most of the projects consists of equity finance such as JVs instead of debt finance, giving Pakistan an alternative means of raising capital for the project. On the other hand, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in a press briefing, said that Pakistan and China are "Iron brothers" and Pakistan remains China's "Staunchest Partner" in the region and China firmly backs Pakistan in safeguarding its territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

The importance of CPEC to China is reflected by its inclusion as part of China's 13th five-year development plan. CPEC projects will provide China with an alternate route for energy supplies, as well as a new route by which Western China could conduct trade. Pakistan will definitely gain due to up gradation of infrastructure and introduction of reliable energy supplies, since CPEC is a landmark project in the annals of history of Pakistan. It is the largest investment Pakistan has ever attracted since independence. By 2017, Pakistan was facing energy shortfalls of over 4500 MW on regular basis with routine power cuts of up to 12 hours per day, which has shed an estimated 2-2.5% off its annual GDP. The Financial Times noted that Pakistan's electricity shortages are a major hindrance to foreign investment, and that Chinese investments in Pakistani infrastructure and power projects will lead to a 'Virtuous Cycle' that will make the country more attractive for foreign investment in a variety of sectors. Through CPEC's Early Harvest projects major short-fall of power has been overcome and now is the need to improve the energy transmission and distribution to achieve sustainable economic growth in Pakistan ■



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CPEC

COLLABORATION IN RESEARCH GRANTS

By Abid Hussain

CPEC is a network of megaprojects undertaken between China and Pakistan in 2015 when Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan. It covers many fold projects like Energy, Infrastructure, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) hospitals, railway lines, etc. Though some new landmarks have been achieved through Gwadar Port and other long-term plans (LTP). Contribution to a research collaborative grant is yet another gesture that cannot be ignored. CPEC collaborative research grant (CPEC-CRG) is one of the key components which was initiated with the help of HEC named Academic collaboration under CPEC Consortium of universities. The purpose of this project was to understand and respond to the historic global geostrategic and geoeconomics transition and its impact on the Chinese Belt and Road initiative and its Pakistan-specific component.

The agenda of this project is to support promising research partnership between China and Pakistan to find solutions to CPEC related problems with the joint support of research contributions in both China and Pakistan. Under this project, both sides academics will dig out the various problems that hinder CPEC

and will help in the Socio-economic development pertaining to Pakistan in general and particular to CPEC. Both sides academicians with appropriate expertise will determine the research challenges in industrial and sectoral side within Pakistan and China. To take full advantage of the national research, expertise in faculty members at higher education will bring decency to the underpinning CPEC-CRG.

THE AGENDA OF THIS PROJECT IS TO SUPPORT PROMISING RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CHINA AND PAKISTAN TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO CPEC RELATED PROBLEMS WITH THE JOINT SUPPORT OF RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS IN BOTH CHINA AND PAKISTAN

The award of CPEC-CRG will hire a researcher on basis of merit, for this, independent, transparent evaluation which will be carried out to follow the standard rules at a global level. Prior to the selection process, HEC will organize a series of workshops and webinars that could be helpful for researchers in different fields. The CPEC-CRG ultimately covers sustainable agriculture, clean water

sanitation, health, wellbeing, science and technology, poverty alleviation, sustainable energy, sustainable cities and communities and above all cultural harmony between Pakistan and China.

The budget for the CPEC-CRG award ranges from from Rs.50 million and may be increased up to Rs. 100 million for 3 years duration. The award is not limited for the federations but will allocate positions for other provinces as well.

The selection will be made through an open rigorous, transparent and merit-based process. All proposals will be scrutinized by a dynamic team for evaluation and review panels. External reviewers will also be involved in having relevant expertise in their respective fields.

The Chinese government has played a crucial role in the economic escalation of Pakistan for the last few years. Aforementioned that CPEC is not a name of a single project, but it covers umpteen projects like energy, hospitals, railways, schools, transport, industrial zones and infrastructures, etc. Education is also the key motto of CPEC that needs to be revamped. The Chinese and



Pakistani officials have affirmed that both countries will enhance their strength and international presence under CPEC. High-quality education and professional skill development institutions are part of CPEC which will yield highly skilled professionals and raise the education level of individuals. Apart from CPEC, the government of China has initiated many other programmes for the students of Pakistan as Bilateral programs the Chinese government Scholarships programme and the Chinese universities programs. To undertake a degree in Chinese universities many fully-funded scholarships for BS, Master and PhD students have been extended for Pakistani students.

The Chinese embassy with the collaborations of the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) is helping the students from Pakistan in a bilateral programme of the Chinese government and Chinese Scholarship Councils (CSC). Though the Chinese Embassy does not accept applications directly but they support students to process their applications while availing these scholarships.

According to the China-admission website, there were more than 28000 students enrolled in Chinese universities in 2019. And it has been argued that Pakistan has availed the 3rd position among all international students who study on scholarships in China. It has been claimed that currently there are 6156 students who are getting PhD degree and more than 11000 students are getting a

bachelor's degree while 3000 of them studying on short-term courses across China. Out of all more than 8000 students are studying in China on scholarships. Education and health are basic needs of any society. The government of Pakistan in limited resources can not accomplish these goals without the Chinese government. The Chinese being all-weather-friends of Pakistan in different spheres like health, education and several other things, nevertheless, granting scholarships to the youth of Pakistan under collaborative research grants will pave the way for its students.

CPEC IS NO DOUBT A PROJECT OF PROSPERITY IN DIFFERENT SPHERES BUT EDUCATION IS THE KEY COMPONENT FOR A PROSPEROUS PAKISTAN

As per the statement of ex-ambassador of China to Pakistan Mr Yao Jing once expressed that after coming out from the ongoing pandemic, China will offer 20,000 scholarships and 1500 short internship programmes to Pakistani students and workforces. He also articulated that under the CPEC programme we already have granted 60,000 jobs to Pakistani labour and workforces.

As we know that Belt and Road Initiative is achieving its milestone very quickly. A new avenue under this project has already been launched called Pakistan China Knowledge corridor for higher education in Pakistan. Under this project, many Pakistani students will be granted admissions in different Chinese universities and several other scholarships could be created after this ongoing pandemic. Many students of Pakistan studying in Chinese universities have the opinion that they are enjoying a high status in world-class ranking universities of China and are facilitating Pakistani students to harness their skills and learnings in the right directions. Some paid internship opportunities for Pakistani youth have already been initiated that are boosting the skills of our youth and help them find good jobs abroad. CPEC is no doubt a project of prosperity in different spheres but education is the key component for a prosperous Pakistan. It is now the responsibility of the government of Pakistan to wipe out all hindrances being faced by Chinese stakeholders while moving it forward.

In short, China and Pakistan under the collaborative research grant can help the youth of different academic backgrounds to excel in their respective fields ■



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China-Pakistan Friendship

years of
bonhomie,
togetherness
and trust

By Shi Lan
and Yang Qing

It would be fitting to describe the relationship between China and Pakistan as one between two “brothers”. There is an old saying that “misfortune tests the sincerity of friends”. In the course of the 70-year history of China-Pakistan diplomatic relations, the two nations have jointly composed one deeply touching story of love and friendship after another.

On May 12, 2008, an 8.0 magnitude earthquake struck Wenchuan county in Sichuan province, resulting in severe loss of human life and property, with the casualty number the biggest for a quake in China since the Tangshan earthquake of 1976.

After the Wenchuan disaster, Pakistan mobilized all the tents it could gather and sent the relief supplies to China in the fastest way by utilizing four transport aircrafts. The Chinese Embassy in Pakistan had tried to pay for the supplies but Pakistan made it clear that its assistance could not be measured in monetary terms, and pointing out that as a brother country China had never asked

for any money when it helped Pakistan in the past.

In early 2020, the novel coronavirus broke out in China. During a time of crisis, Pakistan mobilized over 300,000 medical masks and 800 sets of overall protective suits for medical use, as well as 6,800 pairs of gloves from the public hospitals’ inventories across the country, and then shipped them to China.

IN AUGUST, VACCINES PROVIDED BY CHINA TO PAKISTAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COVID-19 VACCINES GLOBAL ACCESS (COVAX) INITIATIVE WERE DELIVERED TO PAKISTAN IN BATCHES, WHICH CAME AS HUGE HELP FOR THE NATION IN ITS PANDEMIC FIGHT

In August 2020, while the COVID-19 pandemic entered its high season on a global scale, China and Pakistan reached an agreement for China National Pharmaceutical Group and the University of Karachi to collaborate on conducting vaccine experiments. This has

become one of the first agreements reached by China to test vaccines overseas. Prior to this, a Chinese-aided isolation hospital in Pakistan had officially been put into use.

In February 2021, the first batch of 500,000 doses of Chinese vaccines arrived in Pakistan. In August, vaccines provided by China to Pakistan in accordance with the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative were delivered to Pakistan in batches, which came as huge help for the nation in its pandemic fight.

The brotherly friendship needs to be cultivated whole-heartedly. Since the establishment of the diplomatic ties about 70 years ago, the relationship between China and Pakistan has seen massive progress, withstanding the tests of time. The collaborations between the two sides in many fields have come to fruition, injecting life and vitality to the brotherhood.

In 2013, when Premier Li Keqiang paid a visit to Pakistan, he proposed the idea of building a China Pakistan Economic Corridor. In 2015, President Xi Jinping paid a state visit to Pakistan and decided

that CPEC will focus on energy-related initiatives, transportation infrastructure, Gwadar Port development and industrial collaboration.

Driven by benefits of major policies for bilateral economic and trade collaboration including the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement, the economic and trade collaboration between China and Pakistan entered a phase of rapid development.

China has remained as the largest trade partner with Pakistan for five years in a row, at the same time becoming Pakistan's largest source of imports and its second largest export destination country, and kept its status as the largest source country of Pakistan's overseas investment inflow for six years straight.

In 2020, bilateral trade between the two sides amounted to US\$1.8 billion, reaching 17.49 billion in 2021. There has been a ten-fold increase in trade between the two sides over a 20-year period. As of now, the CPEC had either taken up or completed 46 projects in total, a list that includes the Suki Kinari Hydropower Project, Sahiwal Coal Power Project and the Phase II of the Karakoram Highway and other key projects. This has resolved the problem of energy shortage for Pakistan and created 75,000 job opportunities. The construction of modernized transportation infrastructure connects all parts of Pakistan in a more convenient way.

Due to the impact of unfavorable conditions such as the outbreak of COVID19, direct investment from China to Pakistan in 2020 dropped significantly. However, economic and trade collaboration between the two sides did not experience many fluctuations.

The solid basis for the bilateral collaboration has ensured continuity of the partnership, regardless of good or bad conditions. To further strengthen the bilateral ties, and deepen mutually beneficial and win-win collaborations, China has in recent years beefed up its comprehensive connections with Pakistan in the fields of culture, education and media.

**IN THE ARENAS OF
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THE COLLABORATION
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In 2016, the China Cultural Heritage Foundation signed with the committee of the CPEC a memorandum of understanding for conducting extensive and in-depth collaborations in various aspects of cultural heritage protection, education, media and the internet industry, bringing into play their respective advantages to integrate the resources and to combine the private forces to aid the China-Pakistan cultural construction.

In January 2018, China Culture Media Group and the China Culture Center in Pakistan jointly launched the activities of "Dream Silk Road International Journey (Pakistan section)", aiming to share the experiences and achievements

in protecting multi-cultural heritage, strengthening culture collaboration and exploring new opportunities.

In May 2021, China's National Cultural Heritage Administration, the National Heritage and Culture Division of Pakistan and the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan signed a "Joint Statement on Coordinating the Implementation of the 'Asian Initiative for Cultural Heritage Conservation'" to provide the possibility of promoting practical collaboration on cultural protection in a more expansive area.

In the arenas of traditional medicine, education, science and technology and cross-culture communication, the collaboration between China and Pakistan has gone very smoothly, which has fully demonstrated the fraternal friendship of mutual trust.

Despite some ups and downs in the past seven decades, the brotherly bond between China and Pakistan has matured into an all-embracing strategic collaboration partnership. This is the result of the joint efforts of China and Pakistan, which have become exemplary for friendly relations between neighbors.

Going forward, the two sides will continue to hold hands and walk forward together and overcome any difficulties, writing up a fresh new chapter for building a community of shared future between China and Pakistan ■



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SCO'S ROLE IN RE-BUILDING AFGHANISTAN

By Hajrah Waqas



With hundreds of billion dollars spent and thousands of people killed, the Biden Administration faces a painful defeat. Washington has lost the last two decades of war it seemed to have waged, and that points towards the grim reality of how any western led system is highly unpromising to establish its bases again in Kabul and that US-led foreign interventions can only result in instability in the country.

However, the future of Afghanistan is a matter of critical concern not only for extra-regional powers but also for regional players, such as Pakistan, China, Russia, Iran, and other Central Asian countries. The ability of these players to form consensus-based decisions towards Afghanistan's future will lay out the determinants crucial in the stability of the region. Regrettably, no consensus exists regarding the decisions to take on Afghanistan's current situation between major regional players. They have varying opinions, diverging perceptions, and views regarding the Taliban.

After the troops' withdrawal, emerging threats like the Humanitarian crisis and Refugee influx in the neighboring countries call for multilateral platforms.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) can be utilized as a forum to ensure peace in post-NATO Afghanistan or could be used to that effect.

THE REGIONAL ANTI-TERRORIST STRUCTURE (RATS) ESTABLISHED BY THE MEMBER STATES AIMS TO COMBAT TERRORISM, SEPARATISM, AND EXTREMISM. ITS MAIN OBJECTIVES, FUNCTIONS, AND PRINCIPLES HIGHLIGHT HOW MEANINGFUL THIS PLATFORM CAN BE TO TEST ITS EFFICIENCY IN A WAR-RAVAGED COUNTRY LIKE AFGHANISTAN

SCO presents itself as the only viable platform that can address the critical issues facing Afghanistan. Founded in 1996 as Shanghai Five, SCO membership has expanded to include Pakistan and India over the years. The Regional Anti-terrorist Structure (RATS) established by the member states aims to combat terrorism, separatism, and extremism. Its main objectives, functions, and principles highlight how meaningful this platform

can be to test its efficiency in a war-ravaged country like Afghanistan. Also, considering the significance of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group that has existed since 2005 can be used as a platform to bring forth the new post-NATO Afghan challenge. SCO platform can help with the security, economic, and human development agendas of Afghanistan. Moreover, it can also gather the required assistance from International actors like United Nations, NGOs, and specialized agencies. SCO can also prove to be a suitable platform considering the Taliban's active support for China's Belt and Road plan. Taliban regards China as a 'trustworthy friend' and have expressed time and again hopes to protect its interests there.

According to the Afghan Taliban spokesperson, Zabiullah Mujahid, the Taliban are praising the BRI and are hopeful that China will increase its humanitarian assistance for the Afghans in the times of the Covid-19 crisis and that Afghanistan will participate in the plans. However, when asked by the Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin, he said that China is watching the situation closely in Afghanistan. It was also said that, "We noticed the Taliban created good conditions for foreign investors and wanted to participate in the Belt and Road. We hope that the situation in Afghanistan will see a smooth transition. This is the pre-requisite for cooperation and the basis for enterprises to invest in Afghanistan."

This explains the unique interest China has in supporting and calling for international support for the largely alienated Taliban, and that Beijing is somewhat interested in filling the lacuna left by the United States. With China being at the forefront of this platform and the Taliban expressing hopes to rely on its investments to bring the country out of shackles of bankruptcy, SCO can fill up the space as a whole. SCO can add to Afghanistan's stability by utilizing its rich resources and streamlining its war-torn economy in return. However, the challenges are evident as well, hostility that exists among members proves to be a big hurdle as in the case of India and Pakistan. SCO's mandates also enshrine to collectively work to confront the emanating threats of terrorism and improve the economic cooperation between its members. Considering the current dynamics, member regional countries now have natural interests in working side by side to counter the violent activities in Afghanistan.

According to a Moscow based American political analyst, Andrew Korybko, the first concerns can

be addressed by supporting the two immediate states bordering Afghanistan, Tajikistan, while the second involves promoting dialogue between the warring factions. He also says that the SCO has diverse members but they lack meaningful security coordination apart from the usual drills that are held every now and then. There exists a likelihood of India putting aside its differences with China and Pakistan in order to pursue a pragmatic approach that could be useful to counter the future crisis under the SCO banner.

SCO CAN ADD TO AFGHANISTAN'S STABILITY BY UTILIZING ITS RICH RESOURCES AND STREAMLINING ITS WAR-TORN ECONOMY IN RETURN

The changed behavior of Taliban is still a cause of confusion for everyone. However, Pakistan is trying its best to ensure peace in Afghanistan. There is also a possibility for the China-Pakistan relations to strengthen further because of the former's positive position under a Taliban-led government. China's role in this overall situation can't be ignored because in order to secure its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) it would work towards integrating Afghanistan's immediate neighborhood.

A division of labor appears to be forming whereby China promise economic support through BRI and CPEC, Pakistan plays a role in facilitating the formation of an inclusive Afghan government, and Russia provides security to Tajikistan to mitigate any potential overspill into Central Asia (whether through terrorists, refugees, or terrorists posing as refugees like Putin previously said he fears).

Without any doubt, Afghanistan poses an arduous challenge for the region as a whole, but it can also serve as a testing ground for many alliances like that of China and Pakistan, and how they can work together to counter the rising situation. If SCO proves to be successful, this will shape the dynamics of International Relations in the times to come. However, there will be a likelihood of clashes but under SCO, nations like China can prove to advance with an easier and consensus-based approach. In sum, Afghanistan should become a subject matter for the multi-lateral grouping rather than be seen as a mere object ■



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Enhancing B2B Linkages to Promote Tourism between China and Pakistan

By Aftab ur Rehman Rana

Pakistan is a fertile land blessed with rich natural resources. Its incredible landscape, biological diversity and historical heritage provide an array of options for tourists from all over the world. In the recent years, we have witnessed an unprecedented tourism boost but more tourists from the international community, especially China, should be attracted provided the right strategy is adopted to create an enabling business environment between the tour operators of both the countries.

Islamabad will bridge the The revolutionary project of CPEC will lead to better road connectivity and improved infrastructure, which will positively affect the tourism sector in Pakistan. As Pakistan is rich in natural landscape and cultural heritage and the new infrastructure of highways and railways under CPEC will develop it further to enhance the trade, employment, tourism and development of rural areas. A number of sections of road projects under CPEC have already been operationalized

and are providing easy and comfortable travel facilities to the ever-growing domestic tourism market. A boom of domestic tourism has been noticed in recent years as people now can easily reach to the tourists destination of their choice in the mountainous areas of Pakistan which were difficult to approach earlier.

A BOOM OF DOMESTIC TOURISM HAVE BEEN NOTICED IN RECENT YEARS AS PEOPLE NOW CAN EASILY REACH TO THE TOURIST DESTINATIONS OF THEIR CHOICE IN THE MOUNTAINOUS AREAS OF PAKISTAN WHICH WERE DIFFICULT TO APPROACH EARLIER

Present flow of tourists between the two countries is just beginning. Pakistan became a destination country for Chinese group tourists since 2003. In 2019, only 80,000 Chinese people chose Pakistan as their travel destination, an increase of 60% than that in 2015 but

most of them were on business visits. However, the number of real recreational visitors is very low. Meanwhile, there were 155 million outbound tourists from China in 2019, representing a huge gap. The poor communication between the tour operators of both the countries is the main cause of this low flow of tourists from a high potential market. In order to create better business-to-business linkages among the tour operators of Pakistan and China there is a need to work on the following aspects:

- Tour operators from Pakistan should be facilitated to participate in Chinese Tourism Expos such as Beijing International Travel Expo, China Outbound Travel and Tourism Market and China International Travel Mart Shanghai. PTDC should take lead role to put up large stand in these expos and tour operators should be invited to promote different tour package by holding meetings with the Chinese tour operators and trade visitors. Chinese tour operators should also be invited to participate in Tourism Expos in Pakistan and should be taken on exposure trips of different

sites so that they can have firsthand experiences of our rich tourist sites. There is also a need to arrange regular exchange visits between the tour operators of Pakistan and China especially in Xinjiang region to develop joint package tour itineraries.

More promotion and marketing needs to be done for Pakistan's tourism potential. In this regard, introducing the eye-catching scenery of Pakistan and its rich cultural heritage should be showcased through short videos in Chinese language. This will serve as a good step forward in the age of social media.

- Buddhist heritage tourism in Pakistan can become an instant hit in China. However, for that we need to develop attractive promotional material in Chinese language and also ensure the availability of that material through the Chinese tour operators and Pakistan's Embassy in China. There is also the need to establish a facilitation mechanism on ground at different Buddhist heritage sites where the religious tourists could also perform their certain religious rituals in comfort and peace. We should contact Buddhist Associations in China to introduce them with the Pakistan's Ancient Buddhist Culture sites.

- There is a need to initiate research work to better understand the Chinese tourist market covering their travel preferences, interest in sightseeing and touristic activities, boarding and lodging preferences, eating habits, shopping preference and spending pattern, consumption habits etc. For this purpose, Institutional linkages between Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) and Institute of International Studies at China

Tourism Academy (CTA) should be established to jointly work on conducting quality research in this domain.

- Chinese tourists like to buy special commodities and souvenirs during their journeys. If a destination country can study the purchasing habits of tourists in-depth, it will promote the development of local tourism. This will also greatly help Pakistan to promote its rich handicrafts.

- We also need to train good tour guides who can explain about our rich history and our cultural heritage to the Chinese tourists in Chinese language and other tourists from Western countries as well.

- We need to learn from the experiences of China in developing tourism infrastructure. For this purpose, exchange visits of tourism professionals of both the countries should be arranged on regular basis to have a firsthand exposure of each other's tourist facilities and infrastructure. Greater emphasis should be on controlling the mushroom growth trend in Pakistan, which is damaging the landscape beauty, and cultural heritage sites of tourist places. Developing tourism infrastructure based on the principles and best practices of sustainable tourism should be the top priority for future tourism development strategy in Pakistan.

There is a greater need to increase the boarding and lodging facilities of high standards to meet the future demand by foreign and domestic tourists. There are number of sites of tourist interest, which are located along the CPEC routes, and easy access created through the improved road network will increase the flow of tourist traffic to these places. In order to harness this potential there is a need to establish

Tourism Economic Zones along CPEC, which could serve as hub for various tourist sites in the surrounding areas. These TEZs should be developed on different themes as joint ventures between Chinese and Pakistani investors and may have hotels of 5 to 3 star category, youth hostels, caravan sites, tourist facilitation centers, recreational facilities, restaurants, shopping malls, large parking areas and modern transport facilities to provide sightseeing tours.

TOUR OPERATORS FROM PAKISTAN SHOULD BE FACILITATED TO PARTICIPATE IN CHINESE TOURISM EXPOS SUCH AS BEIJING INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL EXPO, CHINA OUTBOUND TRAVEL AND TOURISM MARKET AND CHINA INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MART SHANGHAI

There are many restrictions on travel by road via Khunjerab Pass. Dialogs should be held at highest level between the two countries to facilitate tourist movement across the board at Khunjerab Pass to promote bilateral tourism between China and Pakistan. There is also a lot we can do to increase the business travel between the two countries so there should be more flights between Pakistan and China. Moreover, obtaining visa for the tourists of both countries should be made simpler to promote bilateral tourism between China and Pakistan, so necessary steps should be taken in this regard ■



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China's Race in Olympics: Tokyo 2020

By Tabarak Ali Shah

China, originally as a delegation of Republic of China participated in the Olympics in 1924 to Olympics 1976, then changed its name to People's Republic of China in 1952 and for the first time participated in the games under this name. As of this year 2021, this is China's 11th appearance in the games and has won a total of 275 gold medals which makes it one of the successful countries in Olympics history.

China is a country known for acknowledging sports and has high emphasis on this, since the start Chinese have been known for being physically fit and athletic people, the country itself has the image of warriors and specially in the

competing world of sports where Olympics is the biggest platform to showcase their art, China has always been placed on the top. Also, China has linked rise of sports performance of its athletes with country's economic and social development and for them the main task of the athletes is to reach heights and bring honor to the country. For this purpose, the Chinese government for the success of its athletes have used the missile guidance system technology for collecting data on the posture of the athletes to improve the performance of its athletes. This system has helped the athletes to improve speed, precision and accuracy, so that their

performance enhances and it is well seen by how Chinese athletes performed during the recent Olympics.

CHINESE GOVERNMENT FOR THE SUCCESS OF ITS ATHLETES HAVE USED THE MISSILE GUIDANCE SYSTEM TECHNOLOGY FOR COLLECTING DATA ON THE POSTURE OF THE ATHLETES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF ITS ATHLETES

Another advantage that China has apart from the government spending a lot of time, money and energy on its athletes is that it has an immense population where it increases the chances of more and more people to have the physical, psychological and biological attributes and

characteristics to become world class athletes.

In the recent games, China sent 431 athletes including previous champions, with 298 female athletes and 133 male athletes and competed in 225 events. This by far has been the largest Olympic delegation sent by China including all coaches and team members.

China expected to claim a lot of gold medals this year in games like weightlifting, badminton, tennis, gymnastics etc. While China ranked second just after USA, as a total claiming 88 medals including 38 gold, 32 silver and 18 bronze medals.

The events in which China claimed medals are artistic gymnastics, athletics, badminton, canoe sprint, cycling, diving, fencing, rowing, sailing, shooting, boxing, wrestling, swimming, table tennis, trampoline gymnastics and in weightlifting where China's Wang Zhouyu and Li wenwen has showed complete dominance in their categories respectively.

All this is an indicator of how much influence China has on competitive sports

and how it has in only few decades reached the top and has always shown adequate improvement from the previous times. Olympics 2021 is a great example of it (as seen in the event of gymnastics, which was a big success this time where China claimed four gold medals while in 2016 Olympics, they failed to secure even one gold medal.

CHINA HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE BIGGEST RIVAL OF US AND IS IN A TRADE RACE AGAINST THE US, WHETHER BE IT TO BECOME THE SUPER POWER, THE LARGEST ECONOMY, OR SPORTS, IF CHINA WOULD HAVE DEFEATED THE US THIS TIME BY CLAIMING THE MOST GOLD MEDALS, THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN A BIG UPSET SINCE 2008 BEIJING OLYMPICS AND WOULD HAVE BEEN A BONUS FOR THE CHINESE

Apart from the social and economic development, the success of China in Olympics 2021 is linked with politics running in the country, as the Winter Olympics is being held next year, the country wants to boost their reputation through their achievements in the sports.

Impressive sports programs around Olympic achievements are constructed by the Communist Party which is seen as a source of national pride. Table tennis, weightlifting, badminton etc. are the sports in which China has dominated traditionally. This has been supported by breakout performances in which it does not traditionally dominate. China has always been the biggest rival of US and is in a trade race against the US, whether be it to become the super power, the largest economy, or sports, if China would have defeated the US this time by claiming the most gold medals, this would have been a big upset since 2008 Beijing Olympics and would have been a bonus for the Chinese as it is a time when there are severe diplomatic and trade battles going on between the two but US scored big in the final days securing the top position in the event. All in all, it's a great win for China, as the next year Winter Olympics are being held in Beijing, making it the first location to host both Summer Olympics (2008) and Winter Olympics (2022) ■



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Techno-Media Collaboration: Next Phase of CPEC

By Dr. M. Ali Hamza

The history of China is both captivating and complicated. There were extensive periods in time, where China isolated itself from outside influence and turned into a closed society. The last century was filled with turbulent moments and extremely difficult situation for China. The occupation by the Japanese in 1930s, the civil war, and then a socialist revolution that resulted in bringing Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to power in 1949; overall it was a stormy journey. Under the influence of Chairman Mao, it was another expedition in isolation. Although China was successful in becoming self-sufficient in nearly all resources but was far behind modern technical standards. The pace of development was significantly slow. After the demise of Chairman Mao in 1976, the new leader, Deng Xiaoping, began a series of reforms that profoundly changed China. Before welcoming free market reforms in 1979, China's economy was very poor, slow, centrally controlled, massively inefficient, and pretty isolated from the global economy. In post-1979 era, China has been among the world's fastest-growing markets, with actual annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth averaging 9.5% through 2018. This velocity of development is described by the World Bank as "the fastest sustained expansion by a major economy in history."

China's rise is often framed in terms of the global shuffling of political, economic, and military power. However, China's influence on the global media-scene has received relatively less attention. As part of 'going out' strategy.

CHINA'S TECHNOLOGY AND STARTUP SCENE HAS BOOMED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS IN CHINA. AS A RESULT, WESTERN COUNTRIES HAVE GAINED MORE AND MORE INTEREST IN THE FIELD THUS ALLOWING THE CHINESE TECH MEDIA INDUSTRY TO GROW. THE CHINESE TECH MEDIA INDUSTRY IS REALLY DIVERSE

China is using its media to promote its narrative and vision to the wider world and to counter-balance negative images portrayed in the US-dominated international media. It is witnessed in last few years that the unprecedented expansion of Chinese media and communications is changing the global media landscape and the role of China within it. How did they do it? A collection of essays, published by Routledge under the title of 'China's Media GO Global' is a good reference book to find answer of the said question. China's Media Go Global, the

first edited collection on this subject, evaluates how in the early economic reform period, China opened up its market to foreign ICT companies in exchange for their technology. In addition to contributing to the development of an export-oriented economic system and the formation of a deep rural-urban divide, this resulted in China becoming overly progressive in emerging domains such as mass media. There are different dimensions of China's media strategies from newspapers, radio, television to social media etc.

One of the dominating dimensions is China's Tech Media Industry. China's technology and start ups have boomed over the last few years in China. Resultantly, Western countries have gained more interest in China's tech and media industry. The Chinese tech media industry is really diverse. TechNode is one of the major players of the Chinese Tech media industry and was founded in 2007 by Dr. Lu Gang with the aim of sharing on China's technology and startup scene to the rest of the world. TechNode offers a variety of content ranging from their daily/ weekly newsletters and a large panel of news articles to their famous podcasts China Tech Talk and China Tech Investor. There are plenty of websites that share technology updates like www.chinamoneynetwork.com/ and www.chinaparadigm.com/ etc.

Tech media industry is also known as technology, media, and telecom (TMT) sector. TMT sector is an industry grouping that includes the majority of companies focused on new technologies. There is a substantial overlap between TMT and the 1990s idea of the new economy. The TMT sector is sometimes also referred to as technology, media, and communications (TMC). TMT companies deliver the products, infrastructure, and content that empower and enlighten, and that boost resilience and sustainability across industries, and across society. Among all the marvels of the contemporary world what transformed the man most is the InfoTech innovation. TMT have become the spine of human communication. The Covid-19 pandemic reassured the call for shifting to the virtual space by replacing the physical one. From Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, Generation Z, and to the burgeoning Generation Alpha, all are users, subscribers, consumers or customers of Telecom, Media and Technology. China has completely grasped the concept of TMT and has successfully executed at various levels and several platforms to pluck its benefits.

In Pakistan the media industry is still employed by traditional mindsets. Newspaper to mainstream media, radio to social platforms, all the programs are

about political or social news that dispense nothing but agony and distress in society. The outdated entertainment, and customary political debates with conclusion-less ends, is the representative face of media in Pakistan. Sharing technology news, debating scientific solutions, producing science based informative documentaries, discussing technology investments, and engaging society with rational thought process, are totally alien concepts in Pakistani Media.

TECH MEDIA INDUSTRY IS ALSO KNOWN AS TECHNOLOGY, MEDIA, AND TELECOM (TMT) SECTOR. TMT SECTOR IS AN INDUSTRY GROUPING THAT INCLUDES THE MAJORITY OF COMPANIES FOCUSED ON NEW TECHNOLOGIES. THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL OVERLAP BETWEEN TMT AND THE 1990S IDEA OF THE NEW ECONOMY. THE TMT SECTOR IS SOMETIMES ALSO REFERRED TO AS TECHNOLOGY, MEDIA, AND COMMUNICATIONS (TMC)

Pakistani Media has grown enormously in terms of scale and influence in last two decades. From virtually a state-owned broadcast at the turn of the century, the sector has transformed into a landscape of dozens of independent news and entertainment channels. This transformation has been assisted partly by a changing socio-political demography of the region and partly by the integration of newer technologies in the information age. But this transformation was unable to nurture the intellectual base of society. Pakistan, the world's fifth most populous country, is slow to adapt to new ecosystem. Unlike China, this has embraced TMT fully. Unlocking Pakistan's potential as a TMT based economy, it is vital to learn from Chinese model of development. As we proceed with CPEC, we need to proceed in learning from China's tech media industry. There is a dire need to connect universities, tech media industry, and tech policy institutes of both the countries. This connection can help Pakistan to train and develop its people, and attain strategic guidance from Chinese counterparts. Furthermore, TMT collaboration should be added as a prime project in coming phases of CPEC ■



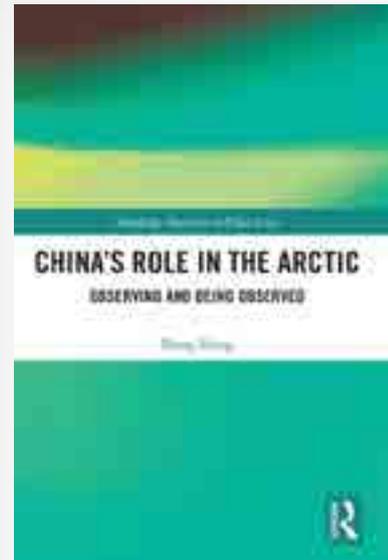
The writer is a columnist and broadcast journalist.

China's Role in the Arctic: Observing and Being Observed

By Ayesha Shaikh

About the Book: The book "China's Role in the Arctic: Observing and Being Observed" was first published in April 2020 by Routledge Taylor and Francis group. It constitutes of 232 pages in total and the ideas are compartmentalized into 8 chapters. The book mainly focuses on the themes of International Law and multilateral cooperation in terms of security. The area the author Nong Hong has chosen to cover is the rapidly melting Arctic Pole. The book explores the establishment of Chinese bridgehead, alongside other Arctic and Non-Arctic actors, in the region.

The book elucidates China's role in the Arctic, tapping primarily into its determined national interests in the Arctic Region, as declared by Chinese Defense White Paper in 2018. It offers a thematic analysis of the strategies that China has adopted to pursue its interest in the region. Author begins with the Chinese call for the Polar Silk Route in the Arctic as it has great interest in the region; she then explains how China is collaborating with regional and international organizations and other stakeholders in the region to pursue its interest.



Author : Dr. Nong Hong
Publisher : Routledge
Pages : 232

Finally, she took moves to three major themes that the Chinese Arctic strategy revolves around; videlicet open and secure shipping, resource development and scientific research in the Arctic.

CHINA'S ARCTIC POLICY RESTS UPON THE CORNERSTONE OF FOUR MAJOR GOALS; TO UNDERSTAND, PROTECT, DEVELOP AND PARTICIPATE IN THE GOVERNANCE OF ARCTIC REGION

She highlights that China's Arctic policy rests upon the cornerstone of four major goals; to understand, protect, develop and participate in the governance of Arctic region. In order to make this policy practicable and successful, China dwells upon the strategy of cooperation under binding International Framework of order. In 1994, an international agreement was reached to forge cooperation among Arctic stakeholders in domain of research Sciences. China contends that governance mechanism under legal order should be essentially

maintained, yet it must keep up with the evolving needs of the time. Although China has never been an indispensable proponent of international organizations, cooperation and multilateralism, yet in the case of Arctic it has explicitly adopted for cooperation. It has forged bilateral and diplomatic ties with all the stakeholders including Arctic states and Non-Arctic states like Japan, South Korea and India as well as the indigenous people of the region. Canada for instance, rules over the Northwestern passage, whereas Russia is the gateway to the Northern Sea Route. Keeping all the differences aside, both these states have welcomed Chinese investment and cooperation in the region.

ALTHOUGH CHINA HAS NEVER BEEN AN INDISPENSABLE PROPONENT OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, COOPERATION AND MULTI-LATERALISM, YET IN THE CASE OF ARCTIC IT HAS EXPLICITLY ADOPTED FOR COOPERATION

Finally, the author determines that China is creating space for itself in the region by becoming the part of fishery, trade mechanism, resource development and research projects on the Arctic region. China has acknowledged the rights and claim of regional actors, including the affiliated sentiments of indigenous population. Alongside, it plans to further its influence and interest without breaching sovereign claims or rights of the inhabitants. In response to all the criticism aimed at China's intention and the so called "debt trap", it contends that despite having conflicting claims, all the stakeholders can still cooperate for peace and stability in the region as it is will be beneficial for all.

In a bird's eye view, this book was a dauntless decentralizing attempt, in the face of highly west oriented anti-Chinese literatures. The book comprehensively took into account all the available perspectives towards China's Role in Arctic and efficaciously addressed the false propaganda against Chinese hegemonic ambitions. All the arguments are deep-rooted into the firm ground of authentic and legal evidence, yet the book lacked the thought over some major threats and challenges to ostensibly smooth cooperation. To create a hard-hitting rebuttal, author proposed that economic prosperity can only happen when different states and relevant stakeholders will put aside their differences will cooperate with one other for shared success and development.

It is an insightful addition to the literature on nascent field of Geopolitics in the Arctic region.

About the Author: Author of the book, Dr. Nong Hong is a Senior Research Fellow at National Institute for South China Sea Studies. She is also the Executive Director and Senior Fellow of Institute for China-America Studies. She has expertise in Interdisciplinary research, principally the interplay of International Relations and International law; likewise is the theme of this book ■



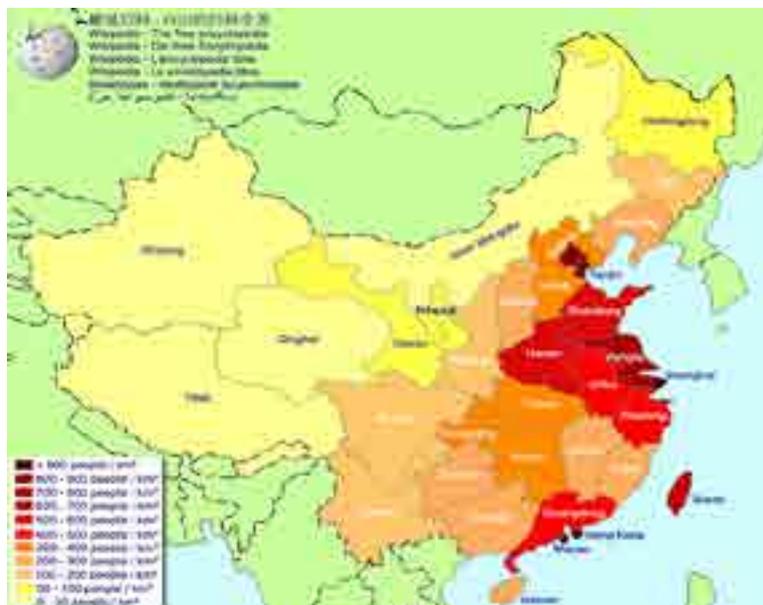
The writer works at China Pakistan Study Centre, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad.

Chinese Great Green Wall: A Model for Pakistan

By Dr. Hasan Yaser Malik

The nation implemented the 'Great Green Wall' of China project in 1978 to hold back the expansion of the Gobi Desert and provide timber to the local population. A quarter of all landmass is desert in China, which until recently was rapidly expanding. The Great Green Wall project is expected to continue until 2050 and aims to plant around 88 million acres of forests in a wall stretching about 5000 km long and 1500 km wide at few places. The Chinese government is continuing many other afforestation initiatives as well that are resulting in the biggest tree planting project of human history. Despite the fact that China has a large land area as big as the United States of America, however only 12 percent of its territory is arable yet China has the World's amplest agricultural production. Every arable land is used intensively, and the Government has recently invested a lot to enhance crop growth but still preserving the territory.

THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT IS CONTINUING MANY OTHER AFFORESTATION INITIATIVES AS WELL THAT ARE RESULTING IN THE BIGGEST TREE PLANTING PROJECT OF HUMAN HISTORY



Let us learn more about Great Green Wall, the biggest man-made forest on the planet earth.

Chinese nation has been dealing with an enemy for over since colonial era as part of modern history, for its danger, it could be compared to the huge problem of overpopulation; referring to the desert, which occupies a big portion of Eastern China, as one can observe from the map below that most startling fact is that it's continuously growing and mostly to North East without stopping.

The Gobi Desert that extends to Mongolia is one of the driest deserts on the planet earth reeving only 194 mm of annual rainfall. This naturally arising phenomenon of desertification has started



forest area coverage in the north has effectively increased from 5 to 13.5 percent.

This progress can be conveniently compared to the reforestation of Western Europe where, over the last few years, 13 million hectares (37 percent of Chinese planned forestations) of trees have been planted, these are not only providing shelter from the wind, but have also saved a portion of the desert that had almost extended to Italy and it now appears that

since decades because of care free agriculture and logging practices. Very often in history people decided to migrate from such places, due to the desertification however many a time it has been observed that and once they moved out, vegetation started to regrow again. However, due to overpopulation, the problem re-emerged with an alarming intensity.

THE WORLD BANK HAD ALSO ENCOURAGED CHINA TO SEEK QUALITY, NOT QUANTITY. IT MAY NOT BE A PERFECT PLAN, BUT WE CANNOT FORGET THAT CHINA HAS PLANTED MORE TREES THAN THE WHOLE PLANET AND THE CHINESE GREAT GREEN WALL IS THE LARGEST ARTIFICIAL FOREST ON THE PLANET EARTH

The hills those were once covered by forests had transformed into the mounting sand dunes. The Great Green Wall initiative aims at enhancing the forest coverage from 5 to 15 per cent. There are numerous stages to stimulate reforestation; during first lines of grass and typical trees of the area are planted; in the second line people plant shrubs that are resilient to drought and dryness, such as the cottonwood. Due to such initiatives

desertification is perhaps going to stop, and forests are re-growing faster than the desert.

In areas where the very first trees were planted, the forest is now mature, and rainfall has increased. Plants, and the land have been able to contain the rainwater and the streams have boosted up their flow. Vegetation can absorb water, or it may remain in the soil, meanwhile in the desert even if it rains, water evaporates because of the sun.

Where the soil used to be arid, now as Natural Parks like Saihanba National Forest Park have emerged in North of China.

Lot of criticism have also been noticed referring to the choice of using and planting only specific species of plants; the practice of monoculture; in most cases, only specific species of plants were planted, which makes the forests vulnerable to epidemics; such incidents have already taken place once plant diseases have destroyed number of trees. Other problems relating to monoculture are characterised by soil consumption and the difficulties faced by animals for living in such environments and places.

The World Bank had also encouraged China to seek quality, not quantity. It may not be a perfect plan, but we cannot forget that China has planted more trees than the whole planet and the Chinese Great Green Wall is the largest artificial forest on the planet Earth.

In Africa also people tried to do experiment like the Chinese achievements to stop the Sahara Desert expansion. In 2007, under the guidance of the African Union, eleven Africans started to build the Great Green Wall of Africa measuring 8,000 km long. Eleven signed Nations and more than 20 Countries supported the initiative. This achievement is hardest to succeed because of its dimensions and the collaboration of huge number of nations.

CONSIDERING THE VALUE OF FOREST AND ENVIRONMENT THE PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED THE BILLION TREE TSUNAMI IN 2014, BY THE GOVERNMENT MOSTLY IN AREAS OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN, AS A RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBAL WARMING

After 10 years, some nations have had better results than others, however in total more than 20 million of hectares of land that have been saved from desertification so far. This is important not just from an environmental point

of view but also from social and economic facets as well. It creates jobs and allows thousands of people to feed themselves, avoiding emigration flows.

Although Pakistan possesses an arable area of 40.20 per cent however its main land is covered by mountains and deserts. Pakistan comprises of Katpana, Thal, Cholistan, Thar and Khuzdar deserts; out of Katpana is the cold desert in Skardu. Considering the value of forest and environment the Pakistani Government launched The Billion Tree Tsunami in 2014, by the government mostly in areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, as a response to the challenge of global warming. Pakistan's Billion Tree Tsunami restores 350,000 hectares of forests and degraded land. The main focus of The Billion Tree Tsunami is towards northern areas of Pakistan however it is pertinent to note that the largest deserts of Pakistan are located in its southern half hence due to rapidly growing population there is a need to stop the growing desertification. Although in Cholistan Desert Green Belt is extending in the desert but at a slower place hence there is need to follow Chinese model for a consistent progress ■



The writer holds PhD in International Relations and is an expert on BRI, CPEC and maritime issues.



Development of Gwadar Under Phase II of CPEC

By Muhammad Iqbal

CPEC is considered as the crown jewel of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) - and Gwadar is the jewel in the crown of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The CPEC, a flagship project of BRI, was launched in 2015. After the successful implementation of phase I, CPEC entered into its Phase II, which is considered an economic lifeline for Pakistan's economy. This phase is about three things: dividends to masses; connectivity and spreading prosperity to remote areas. Most of the phase second projects will be based on a public-private partnership model. Under the CPEC phase-II, the number of projects are allocated for Gwadar, which is considered to play a vital role in fully operationalizing Gwadar Port.

The CPEC projects - including roads and railways from Gwadar in Pakistan to Xinjiang in China - will cut short Beijing's trade routes with the world through sea approximately by 12,000 miles. In the recent past, during (1988-1992) a small port was constructed on the shore of Gwadar. In 2007, General Musharraf inaugurated the Gwadar Port. From (2007-2012), Gwadar Port remained under Port Singapore Authority (PSA) but due to its poor performance, the port was handed over to China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) in 2013. Since then the construction work has been done at a rapid pace.

The projects that have already been launched under phase I of the CPEC for Gwadar include: East-Bay Expressway, New Gwadar International Airport, construction of breakwaters, dredging of berthing areas and channels, development of free zone, Pakistan-China friendship hospital, Pak-China technical and vocational Institute at Gwadar and Gwadar Smart Port City master plan. The port has

started shipment, seasonal cargo and commercial trade but it is still under construction.

Prime Minister, Imran Khan, on July 5, 2021, performed the ground-breaking of phase two of Gwadar and launched several development and infrastructure projects including Gwadar Fertiliser Plant, Gwadar Animal Vaccine Plant, Henan Agricultural Industrial Park, Hengmei Lubricants Plant, Gwadar Free Zone Phase Two and Gwadar Expo Centre. The MoUs was also signed that includes implementation of an agreement of 1.2 million gallons per day desalination plant and solar generators grant from China for South Balochistan.

THE INCREASING FLOW OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) IN PAKISTAN IS NOW BECOMING ONE OF THE SIGNIFICANT SOURCES TO STABILIZE ITS MONETARY POLICIES AND ADDRESS ITS FINANCIAL CRISIS

The development of the strategically important port of Gwadar would have socio-economic significance for Pakistan. It is expected to have a profound impact on the remote areas of Balochistan in terms of growth and employment generation through infrastructure and development. The increased exports would lead to wealth creation, correction of macroeconomic imbalance and job opportunities. The development of Gwadar has already attracted an overwhelming investment from China. According to Minister for Planning and Development, Asad Umar, over one billion dollars of Chinese investment is expected in Gwadar Free Zone phase two, which will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Imran Khan. In Gwadar, many private real estate developer companies and builders have launched new housing projects along the CPEC route. The increasing flow of Foreign Direct

Investment (FDI) in Pakistan is now becoming one of the significant sources to stabilize its monetary policies and address its financial crisis.

It is widely believed that once the Gwadar master plan, Gwadar Port and Gwadar Free Zone are fully established command are functionalized it would have the capacity to generate more than 40,000 jobs for the local population living in Gwadar and outskirts.

The emergence of Gwadar Port as a regional economic hub has caused the regional and extra-regional powers to develop strategic and infrastructural development with Gwadar Port to reach the energy-rich Central Asian Republics (CARs). The development of Gwadar Port is rebalancing the regional geo-economic equilibrium as it has started addressing the economic issues of Pakistan by creating a favourable environment of inclusive cooperation with new trade routes toward the other parts of the world. The operationalization of Gwadar port in its full capacity would decrease China's dependence on the Strait of Malacca and provide alternative trade routes in case if any hostility occurs in the South China Sea.

Gwadar may seem to be a project requiring heavy investment and we can see that countries like China have been investing billions worth of dollars. Indeed, the road towards progress and development for Gwadar Port is a long journey but there is a need to keep up the efforts for a stronger Pakistan. In few years from today with the help of Gwadar Port, we will soon be able to see Pakistan as one of the prosperous nations of the world and we will indeed call Gwadar the "Golden sparrow of Asia and Pakistan ■"



The writer works at China Pakistan Study Centre, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad.

China-Pakistan Agro-Industrial Cooperation under CPEC

By Noor Sabah

The potentials of the agro-industry towards developing a vibrant economy cannot be denied in any country, especially developing countries like Pakistan, which is rated to be among the highest producers of many crops, animals and animal products that could be processed into value-added products (VAPs) to enhance foreign earnings.

According to the experts, a strong and efficient agro-industrial sector would enable a country to feed its growing population, generate employment, earn foreign exchange and provide raw materials for industries.

The Agro-based industry is a thriving sector which involves the processing of agricultural products to diversify downstream agriculture-based industries such as crops, livestock, textile and aquaculture. The term agro-based industry refers to “an industry that adds values to agricultural raw materials through processing to produce marketable and usable products that bring forth profits and additional income to the producer”.

As Pakistan’s economy is largely based on agriculture, it contributes about 18.5% to GDP, provides livelihood to 64% of rural inhabitants, employs 38.5% of the total national labour force and is a major contributor to the overall export earnings of Pakistan. The sector has direct and indirect linkages with other sectors of the economy and plays a significant role in the socio-economic development of the country.

Currently, a wide range of agro-industries are operating in Pakistan to produce numerous foods, fibre and other value-added products to consumers, which includes rice and wheat milling, jar and sugar making, oil crushing, cotton ginning, poultry, fish processing, dairy products, etc. But, despite having considerable government attention and energy expended on trying to extract more economic utility out of the sector, the agricultural-based industry has

remained one of the most inefficient segments of the economy over the past several decades.

In Pakistan, agro-industries are facing several challenges, which hinder their potential growth. Most notably, the lack of modern agricultural practices, absence of agricultural product processing mechanism and relative dearth of agricultural finance are some of the major challenges faced by society concerning agricultural industries. Firstly, Pakistan is blessed with good agricultural land but farmers lack the resources needed to switch to modern technology and practices. Secondly, the processing of agricultural produce is another weak area where there are many other food items like pulses, rice, wheat, fruits, vegetables, dairy, etc. which do not have proper processing plants due to which around 40% of the food is wasted. Lastly, the lack of sufficient finance and investment has greatly affected the potential performance of the industrial sector. However, a substantial increase in efficiency and productivity in this sector will likely have a positive impact on income and poverty levels in the country.

THE PROCESSING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE IS ANOTHER WEAK AREA WHERE THERE ARE MANY OTHER FOOD ITEMS LIKE PULSES, RICE, WHEAT, FRUITS, VEGETABLES, DAIRY, ETC.

To assist Pakistan, China has come forward to develop Pakistan’s agro-industrial base, which is negligible at present. As Chinese firms are far ahead in terms of technology and experience, it will help to build the capability of Pakistani companies. Recently, Pakistan and China have launched an online agro-industrial platform to collect and display information and achievements of agricultural and industrial cooperation between two countries. The information platform has jointly been initiated by China Machinery

Engineering Corporation (CMEC) and China Economic Net (CEN) to enhance bilateral cooperation between the Chinese and the Pakistan enterprises in the fields of agriculture and industries under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The China-Pakistan Agricultural and Industrial Cooperation Information Platform aims to organize business forums, business delegations and other activities to promote exchanges and cooperation in the field of agriculture and industry and advance business-to-business cooperation between the two countries.

Agriculture is one of the seven pillars of the long-term CPEC plan. It has been agreed that both countries will work on enhancing cooperation in the agriculture and industrial sector. In this regard, China has initiated various projects under the framework of CPEC to assist Pakistani scientists to introduce different varieties of seeds and techniques to promote bilateral cooperation in the seed industry. Similarly, both countries are also actively cooperating in chilli farming projects and various other projects to strengthen Pakistan's agricultural sector. To promote agro-based industrial growth in Pakistan and to further enhance agricultural and industrial cooperation potential between Pakistan and China, there is a need to consider the following suggestions.

- Establishment of different agro-industrial processing facilities and plants in the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones (SAPZs) should be prioritized.
- Establishing joint agricultural and technological research and development institutes would help to enhance in-depth exchanges and cooperation between scientific research institutions and industrial and agricultural enterprises of the two countries. In this regard, private sector from both the sides can contribute towards the provision of necessary facilities in these institutions as this may help in fostering research activities and improving performance in the agro-industry.
- Pakistan should start embracing modern agriculture technologies and innovations just like China, to protect and enhance the natural resource base while increasing productivity. Developing smart agricultural practices using modern technologies like nanotechnology and

the Internet of Things (IoT) can help increase agricultural productivity.

- Both Pakistan and China should encourage private enterprises to cooperate in different agro-industrial sectors. Such as livestock, inland aquaculture, dairy sector, agro-forestry and leather, etc. The cooperation will help Pakistani companies to secure business due to the presence of Chinese companies in their markets.
- Various long-term programs aimed at raising the level of skills of farmer entrepreneurs in the aspects of operations and production, business management and more systematic marketing should be introduced in Pakistan with the help of Chinese assistance.

THE INFORMATION PLATFORM HAS JOINTLY BEEN INITIATED BY CHINA MACHINERY ENGINEERING CORPORATION (CMEC) AND CHINA ECONOMIC NET (CEN) TO ENHANCE BILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE CHINESE AND THE PAKISTAN ENTERPRISES IN THE FIELDS OF AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES UNDER THE CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (CPEC)

Amid growing worldwide demand for value-added agricultural products, agro-industry development can be a key engine of economic growth, particularly for developing countries. As for the agro-industrial cooperation under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), it can prove to be greatly beneficial for both countries. Pakistan and BRI countries can benefit immensely from the potentials inherent in the agro-industry and can further consolidate their strength in agricultural industries by learning from China's past success stories and upcoming development designs in agricultural science and technology and mechanization. The setting up of such agro-industries would create endless opportunities for the people of Pakistan as well as for developing BRI countries ■



The writer is a graduate from National University of Modern Languages.



China Pakistan Nuclear Cooperation

Another Game Changer

By Muhammad Aftab Alam

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) enters into final stage with projects being completed at enhanced speed. Prime Minister Imran Khan has termed the timely completion of CPEC one of the top priorities of his government and stressed that government is taking steps to promote investment in the export industry in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

“Exporting industries will provide employment, increase economic volume and ensure valuable foreign exchange, as well as access to the ‘Made in Pakistan’ brand in global markets,” he was quoted to have said recently while presiding over a meeting on the implementation of the Foreign Direct Investment strategy from China for the establishment of export industries in the SEZs under the CPEC.

The seriousness attached by federal government to the CPEC projects is portrayed well by the fact that the government has earmarked a hefty Rs. 23 billion for 17 CPEC projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2021-22.

The CPEC has been termed as a game changer for the region since the signing of the agreement between the neighboring states. Another game changer, however, is progressing at full throttle which is equally important for Pakistan. On May 21, 2021, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Imran Khan while inaugurating Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (K-2) in a ceremony held virtually at the PM Office articulated the clear direction of the incumbent government’s policy shift from

conventional to out-of-the-box solutions for meeting energy needs of the country.

He expressed satisfaction on the addition of 1100 Megawatts of clean, affordable and environment-friendly electricity to the national grid and hoped it would help mitigate the impact of global warming “I am glad to know that Pakistan has added another 1100 MW to its national grid, but I am excited over the fact that this addition is of clean energy i.e. nuclear power,” he said. The premier highlighted how public perception of Pakistanis is based on respect for support from China and said that the emotional aspect of people-to-people bond between China and Pakistan is deep rooted.

THE SERIOUSNESS ATTACHED BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO THE CPEC PROJECTS IS PORTRAYED WELL BY THE FACT THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS EARMARKED A HEFTY RS. 23 BILLION FOR 17 CPEC PROJECTS UNDER THE PUBLIC SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (PSDP) 2021-22

The inauguration of K-2 coincided with landmark events of 70 years of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan and 30 years of cooperation between the two countries in the field of using nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Imran

Khan further said that cooperation between Pakistan and China was expanding with the expansion of the CPEC to SEZs. He felicitated management of Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) and the Chinese for making K-2 a reality.

On this occasion, in his video message, the Director General (DG) International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi congratulated Pakistan for embarking on the journey of using nuclear power as a useful, uncorrupted and useful, uncorrupted and clean form of energy.

Chairman PAEC, Mr. Muhammad Naeem (HI, SI), in his welcome address thanked the Prime Minister, Federal Ministers and Director General Strategic Plans Division (SPD) for their unwavering support for nuclear power in the country.

Muhammad Naeem shared with the dignitaries attending the inauguration ceremony, how Pakistan faced difficulties in embarking on its journey of using nuclear power for energy production at the nascent stage in 1972 due to non-cooperation from all advanced countries for no fault of its own. That crucial moment in history of the country proved a blessing in disguise for Pakistan as PAEC managed to run Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP) using indigenous resources. Later, China emerged as all-weather friend of Pakistan and the cooperation in the field of nuclear power between the two nations expanded with the construction of four nuclear power plants at Chashma namely Chashma Nuclear Power Plant Unit 1 (C-1), Unit-2 (C-2) having generation capacity of 325 MW each and Unit-3 (C-3) and Unit-4 (C-4) having generation capacity of 340 MW each.

Thanks to the unflinching support and continued cooperation of Chinese government, PAEC is now running six NPPs in the country. Two of them are located in Karachi and are named KANUPP and K-2, while four sited at Chashma, in District Mianwali. Before coming online of K-2 plant, the collective generation capacity of all PAEC-operated NPPs was about 1,330 MWs. Addition of K-2 has nearly doubled the generation capacity of nuclear power plants in the country, substantially improving the overall share of nuclear power in the energy mix. Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3 (K-3), is also in completion phase and is expected to be operational in the first quarter of 2022.

Besides, PAEC is starting construction of another NPP named Chashma Nuclear Power Plant Unit-5 (C-5), for which the provincial environment regulator i.e. PUNJAB EPA, IRSA, Pakistan Railways, Pakistan Air Force, CAA, District Management

and PNRA have awarded NOCs after successful Public Hearing of its Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report. The C-5, K-2 and K-3 of 1100 MW each are fitted with internal as well as external accident prevention ability and enhanced emergency response capability. These plants will have 60-year life expectancy, extendable to a further 20 years. The power plants are designed with higher plant availability and capacity factors and an extended refueling cycle.

In July 2020, both C-2 and C-4 achieved the milestone of continuous operation for a year and made national records which speaks volumes of the acumen and hard work of PAEC teams of technicians, engineers and scientists involved in operating nuclear power plants. As far as the affordable cost of electricity generation is concerned, all four NPPs sited at Chashma are producing electricity at an average tariff of Rs. 11.16/ kWh, while C-4 has been operating at 97.6% of Capacity Factor.

PAEC IS STARTING CONSTRUCTION OF ANOTHER NPP NAMED CHASHMA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT UNIT-5 (C-5), FOR WHICH THE PROVINCIAL ENVIRONMENT REGULATOR I.E. PUNJAB EPA, IRSA, PAKISTAN RAILWAYS, PAKISTAN AIR FORCE, CAA, DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND PNRA HAVE AWARDED NOCS AFTER SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC HEARING OF ITS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REPORT

Nuclear power is the future of electricity generation in Pakistan for being an affordable baseload energy source. It is environment friendly due to nearly zero Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions and most importantly the nuclear fuel is strategically viable for long-term storage as fuel for over 18 months' operation of nuclear power plant is stored at the site, unlike furnace oil. The addition of clean, reliable and cost-effective nuclear power in the energy mix of Pakistan will greatly benefit the society and country at large. It is high time for Pakistan to embrace this 'new game changer' source of power generation ■



The writer is a law and policy expert.



CPEC

A GATEWAY TO REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

By Nadia Sajjad

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is a bilateral project between Pakistan and China to improve infrastructure and transportation system within Pakistan for better trade with China and further integration with regional countries. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is 3,218-kilometer-long route which will take next several years for its completion consisting of highways, railways, pipelines and transportation systems upgradation.

The goal of CPEC is to transform and modernize the transportation and trade systems by development of the rail, road and air

systems. It aims to connect Deep Sea ports of Pakistan Gwadar and Karachi to China and further integrate them with Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan etc. The interconnectedness and modern transportation will reduce the time and cost of transportation goods and energy. Pakistan's economy is mostly dependent on imported fuel. This ill situation has put Pakistan in danger because any increase in oil price globally will have influence on Pakistan. Pakistan has a lot of natural resources but crises in energy sector is going to be challenging thing for PEC and it needs improvement and empowerment.

CHINESE COMPANIES LIKE COPHC (THE EXECUTING AGENCY FOR GWADAR) HAS CREATED MORE THAN 4000 JOBS DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS IN BALOCHISTAN. IT HAS ALSO BUILT A SCHOOL IN ONE OF THE MOST REMOTE AREAS OF THE COUNTRY

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by China comprises of 65 countries which include Europe, Asia, Africa through 'Silk Road Economic Belt' and the 'Maritime Silk Road'. This would be the win-win situation for all the members and with

increase in collaboration and interdependence financial development of the entire population is guaranteed.

CPEC is part of the larger Belt and Road Initiative to improve trade, communication, connectivity and cooperation in various fields between the countries of Eurasia announced by China in 2013. Under CPEC joint space and satellite initiatives have been announced in 2016. In 2019 three studies were conducted where a quantitative model was applied to analyse the potential impact of the Belt and Road Initiative including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor(CPEC). The studies highlight the importance of CPEC for Pakistan and its numerous benefits. Due to transport infrastructure there would be an increase of 6.43 percent in national GDP and it can be enhanced further if the government brings reforms in trade, investment, and ease of doing business. Employment sector is another area which would benefit from CPEC related infrastructure projects that will create four million jobs directly. Pakistan has faced a lot of issues in power sector and very less attention was given to it. CPEC energy related investment will help in tackling issues like load shedding, issues of aging plants and infrastructure regarding electricity.

Transport infrastructure under the framework of CPEC will help in the industrial development and trade enhancement of Pakistan because bad transportation has contributed in the loss of 4-6 percent to GDP (Vision 2025, Pakistan). One major benefit that could be achieved through

CPEC is that under-developed provinces and cities will get the maximum benefit. As mentioned in the World Bank report, the major beneficiaries in Pakistan would be Peshawar and Balochistan, followed by Lahore and Karachi. Balochistan is on high-agenda of Pakistan and recently the CPEC Authority has deliberated on a development package for Balochistan.

REGIONAL COMPETITION CAN BE TRANSFORMED INTO REGIONAL GEOPOLITICAL COOPERATION WITH THE HELP OF CPEC, THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES CAN PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN MAXIMIZING THEIR POTENTIALITIES AND ENHANCE THEIR ECONOMIC CAPABILITY BY UTILIZING SEA AND LAND ROUTES

The Gwadar port is already delivering benefits to the people of Balochistan and the port will turn Gwadar city into a hub for regional connectivity. Besides Chinese companies like COPHC the executing agency for Gwadar has created more than 4000 jobs during the last five years. It has also built a school in one of the most remote areas of the country. Free Economic Zones is another large initiative; it is the advanced system under which many companies have registered their business at Gwadar. Government of Pakistan offered good packages for investment to investing companies in industrial development at Gwadar.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor route is passing through Gilgit Baltistan province

and will connect China's western province with rest of the world. The Gilgit Baltistan is rich in fruits considered best for exports like cherries, apricot and apples. The CPEC will be a game changer and will provide opportunities and business choices to regional traders. Transportation facility will benefit them and will double their sales by saving the transportation cost. One of the most important benefits of CPEC is the development and strengthening of trade relations between Pakistani and Chinese products such as oil, petroleum products and Sui Gas will be transported to China. China Pakistan Economic Corridor will provide large business and job opportunities to the local residents of Pakistan and their

**CPEC
Success**

living standard will improve and economic activities will boost in the region. CPEC Projects based on road construction, power projects, railway tracks and other economic schemes will deliver jobs to the local people. For example, in agriculture sector China will not only provide seeds, fertilizers, pesticides but will also offer processing facilities and train the local farmers how to use modern technology. Another major benefit of the CPEC is to enhance the power supply in Pakistan. Many dams are constructed in Pakistan to enhance the country's water storage which is currently just 11 million acre feet (MAF). Studies prove that Pakistan had lost about 1049 MAF of water in the years 1980-2010 as a result of lack of the right storage capacity. Construction of dams is associated in Pakistan with multiplier effects like availability which will make cheaper electricity generated through sustainable flow of water.

Regional competition can be transformed into regional geopolitical cooperation with

the help of CPEC, the regional countries can play an influential role in maximizing their potentialities and enhance their economic capability by utilizing sea and land routes.

CPEC IS EXPECTED TO BENEFIT THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH ASIA IN DIFFERENT FIELDS WHICH WILL LEAD TO REGIONAL STABILITY AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

CPEC will connect South Asian region with some of the most important zones in the world. CPEC will provide opportunity to the South Asian states to use Central Asia's huge oil and gas resources to help address its energy deficits. Gwadar port will be connected to Central Asian states for trade and energy transportation purposes.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is a regional connectivity mega-venture and aims at economic integration in the contemporary globalized world. The framework designed

that will not only benefit China, Pakistan but will have also positive impact on Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asian Republic countries. Besides meeting China's need in energy and upgrading Pakistan, the CPEC is expected to benefit the countries of South Asia in different fields which will lead to regional stability and economic integration.

Pakistan and China both have strained ties with India, India feels that with the success of CPEC both Pakistan and China will get more economically sound and this poses a threat to India. Various detractors have been trying to sabotage CPEC from day one but the progress on the projects is steady and the day is not far when Pakistan would become a self-sufficient nation and will have a sound economy ■



The writer holds a PhD in International Relations from University of Peshawar.



Fact Sheet of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor under the BRI

► The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) links Kashi, Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region with Gwadar Port on the southwestern coast of Pakistan, with a total length of 3,000 kilometers between them.

► In April 2015, the Chinese and Pakistani governments agreed to formulate a long-term plan for the construction of highways, railways, oil and gas pipelines linking Kashi and Gwadar Port.

► China and Pakistan will build transportation and power facilities along the route, at an investment of \$45 billion which is scheduled to be completed by 2030.



2013-2020 Energy and infrastructure construction



2021-2025 Industrialization



2025-2030 Construction to focus on finance, trade, tourism, transportation and services

Source: yidajiyu.gov.cn

Trade between China and Pakistan 2016-20



Source: General Administration of Customs
Graphics: GT

Unit: billion US dollars

▲ China to Pakistan

▲ Pakistan to China



CPEC and Socio-Economic Development

By Aneesa Aslam

CPEC- a 46 billion dollars project is a part of the Belt Road Initiative (BRI) which aims to create a more inclusive and economically sound world. This project is based on short-term goals, midterm term goals, and long-term goals of development. It consists of extensive networks of roads, railways, highways, and pipelines for the transportation of oil and gas. CPEC is proving to be a game-changer for Pakistan as it not only increases the strategic significance of Pakistan but also provides an impetus to socio-economic development of the country. CPEC will bring huge development to the under-developed Balochistan. Gwadar is the main hub of China Pakistan Economic Corridor as it is located at the junction of the major trade routes and provides a gateway to the world market. CPEC will connect Gwadar to Kashgar and provides the shortest route to

China that will reduce the cost of oil largely. The major projects of CPEC that serve as a game-changer for Pakistan include the development of Gwadar, the establishment of roads and railways, development in the areas of energy and agriculture sectors, economic growth and peace and prosperity that it will not only bring for Pakistan but for the entire region.

Despite having the largest area, the province of Balochistan received little development since the beginning. Its people are living in the darkroom of poverty and under-development with a poor health care system. With rich natural resources such as coal, natural gas and oil, people are still forced to light the wooden sticks to light up their homes. There is a high rate of unemployment, illiteracy, and mortality there and consequently provides a safe haven for different terrorist and

extremist activities. CPEC proved to be a game-changer because it will bring infrastructural development to this under-developed region of Pakistan and address these problems to a larger extent. Through CPEC, about 500,000 professionals are expected to flow in Gwadar by 2023.

CPEC PROVED TO BE A GAME-CHANGER FOR PAKISTAN AS IT NOT ONLY INCREASES THE STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF PAKISTAN BUT ALSO PROVIDES AN IMPETUS TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY

CPEC bring great significance to Gwadar port as previously known as a small village now became a global port city. Due to its strategic location, Gwadar holds a central

position in CPEC is experiencing rapid growth and fast-paced transformation. Located near the Strait of Hormuz, it will ensure China's energy security on one hand and will connect China to the Central and South Asian markets on the other. Gwadar has the natural potential but Pakistan lacks the resources to utilize those potentials but now CPEC is providing the opportunity to both China and Pakistan to use it more constructively. CPEC will make Gwadar a trade hub by connecting all the countries in a more secure economic route.

Unemployment is one of the serious problems for the people of Balochistan which in turn gives birth to other problems such as terrorism, extremism, robbery. About 25000 individuals graduate from Balochistan university every year but only 2000 students get jobs while the rest of them remain unemployed. CPEC is expected to create job opportunities for those individuals as Gwadar becomes the trade hub, so many people will be required for the transportation of goods. As the employment rate will increase with the increase in job opportunities, more and more technical education and skills will be required which depend on the quality of education. The people of Balochistan are deprived of basic health facilities therefore, the mortality rate is high. A \$100 million project of 50-bedded hospital is funded by the Chinese company for better health facilitation because CPEC opens up an opportunity for different people from different parts of the world and better health facilitation is needed for smooth working which ultimately benefits the residents as well. Unfortunately, Pakistan is facing major energy crises despite having the energy source because it lacks the resources to utilize it. Total power

generation capacity is less than the consumption which results in the shortfall of energy. About 2.5% of the national GDP is lost every year due to the shortfall of power energy. CPEC is expected to increase the energy production of Pakistan. About 10400MW energy was produced under the CPEC in 2018. The energy production projects are based on solar, wind, coal, and hydropower generation that are located in different areas of Azad Kashmir and provinces of Pakistan. 10 projects of 6600 MW energy production will be set up in the Thar desert that will transform the undeveloped area into energy capital opening up economic opportunities for Pakistan.

CPEC IS A MEGA-PROJECT THAT CAN BE A GAME-CHANGER IF ALL THE PROJECTS CAN BE COMPLETED IN A SAFE, SECURE, AND PROPOSED WAY

Roads are the backbone of a country's economy. The modern system of roads and railways will facilitate trade at a rapid rate. Better infrastructure provides an opportunity to access the seaport easily that will make import and export fast. The extensive system of roads will help the residents of Pakistan to have safe and fast passage. All the projects under the CPEC have a spillover effect on others. Better roads and infrastructure helps the cultivators, producers, and traders positively. With improved infrastructure, they are better able to use modern technologies in the agricultural sector. Under CPEC projects, agriculturalists export their surplus food and import the necessary technology through the

Gwadar port. It will help Pakistan's economy to grow by increasing the overall GDP and alleviating poverty.

CPEC is not less than a blessing as it comprises of an extensive network of construction and development projects that will lead Pakistan on the way to prosperity. People will get job opportunities, businessmen will expand their business, traders enhance their trade, and industrialists increase their investments which in turn increase the overall GDP of the country. The standard of living will improve and it energizes people to increase their investments and revive their economic interests through development.

CPEC is a megaproject that can be a game-changer if all the projects are completed in safe, secure, and proposed way. There are challenges and hurdles in its ways such as political polarization, corruption, security threats, and internal instability but the government should take affective initiatives for the successful completion of the mega-project because it will bring prosperity and economic sufficiency for Pakistan as well as China. Government should prioritize national interest over all other political and private interests. Both the federal and provincial governments should work with each other for the common interest of the country. There should be greater transparency for the smooth functioning of all the projects. The government should carry out inclusive risk and gain scrutiny of CPEC projects that will ensure equal benefits against all other competing interests ■



The writer is studying International Relations at National Defense University, Islamabad.



7 Decades of Pakistan-China Relations

By Saad Riaz

After World War II, the world was divided into communists and capitalists, as the Western people and Americans followed capitalism and the USSR followed communist manifesto. In 1949 after reorganizing China from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong had to face a lot of difficulties and those were the times of war as well like Civil war and war with Japan etc. But somehow, it proved itself to be one of the most civilized and fastest-growing state. Pakistan was its neighbor, was the first state (non-communist state) and first Muslim state that accepted PLC and created a diplomatic and bilateral relations. It was a difficult decision for Pakistan because it had already joined the Western camp and China followed communist values. Despite all this, Pakistan wanted to have a peaceful environment with all its neighbors.

In 1951, Karachi-Beijing officially established diplomatic relations. Later on, former PM Hussein SS was the first PM to visit Beijing and met Premier Zhou En-lai. These events formed the basis of cordial relations between the two states. Furthermore, in 1962 during the Sino-Indo war, Pakistan supported the Chinese stance against India. Pakistan ceded Karakoram Trans for peaceful settlement of border disputes. Moreover, Pakistan has always supported China in the Ladakh, Tibet, and Taiwan issues. In return, China supports Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.

Pakistan played a significant role in bringing the two rivals (USA and China) together by using back door diplomacy. Pakistan became the facilitator for the Nixon visit in 1972. Pakistan also helped China in becoming a member of the United Nations.

China in the last 30 years made miraculous developments. It is

now looking economic interactions outside the state where; Pakistan is its major partner. Pakistan provided the path of transit, and CPEC is the best example, which is also the flagship project of BRI. Through CPEC, China is investing in Pakistan in the energy sector, is providing economic assistance and will help to revitalize Pakistan's economy.

PAKISTAN PLAYED A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN BRINGING THE TWO RIVALS (US AND CHINA) TOGETHER BY USING BACK DOOR DIPLOMACY

Coming towards the military assistance and energy sector investment provided by the Chinese to Pakistanis under the light of this project: in economic domain, China provided loans to Pakistan when its economic condition was not sound. In 2018, China provided 3 billion US \$ to Pakistan. It was the time

when economically Pakistan was drowning.

In the military cooperation, the Chinese helped Pakistan in the time, when the US had put sanctions on Pakistan after the end of the cold war. US was providing military assistance to Pakistan under Marshall Plan, meanwhile; China at that time become the major partner in providing military assistance to Pakistan. The best examples are Chinese-provided blueprints of nuclear programs; in addition to that China provided a wide and modern range of modern armament to the Pakistan defense forces.

COMING TOWARDS THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND ENERGY SECTOR INVESTMENT PROVIDED BY THE CHINESE TO PAKISTANIS UNDER THE LIGHT OF THIS PROJECT: IN ECONOMIC DOMAIN, CHINA PROVIDED LOANS TO PAKISTAN WHEN IT'S ECONOMIC CONDITION WAS NOT SOUND

Military cooperation has deepened, with joint projects producing armaments ranging from fighter jets to guided-missile frigates. Chinese also helped PAC Kamra which was under PAF to get acquainted to developing its fighter plane. They helped PAF in developing the JF-17 thunder plane; also they helped in the modification of mirage and training planes. The Chinese navy helped the Pakistan navy in the production of a naval frigate that is PNS Zulfiqar. The POF Wah-Cantt developed the Al-Khalid tank with the assistance of the Chinese. In 2018, Pakistan was

put in the list in the grey list of grey list of FATF. India wanted to isolate Pakistan and to push Pakistan on the black list by using black propaganda as a tool. China defended Pakistan and prevented FATF to include Pakistan in the black list. Now if we talk about the Pakistan's support to China in the national and international issues we would also find many instances. Pakistan provided short route to Chinese, as the Indian and pacific oceans are very risky for China for transportation due to Indian and USA influence there, they keep challenging Chinese presence there. So, Pakistan provided short and safe route for transportation.

If we were to mention Pakistan's support to China at international forums, Pakistan played an important role in warming the relations between the USA and China; by clearing the path for Nixon's secret visit in 1972. Moreover, Pakistan always supported the Chinese stance on the Xinjiang conflict, Ladakh issue, and Tibet issue. Pakistan was the only of the two states, alongside Cuba, to offer crucial support in the Tiananmen Square protest in 1989. Moreover, Pakistan provided assistance to China for creating bilateral relations with the Muslim World.

In South Asia, India is trying to become a hegemonic power by using smart and hawkish tactics. Indeed, the US is backing India to curtail the Chinese influence in Asia: Pakistan and China are jointly acting, avoiding India to gain hegemonic power in South Asia, and its best example

is India wanted to become a member of the nuclear regime, but China vetoed India's request to become a member this is because China knows that India's hope to become the hegemonic power in South Asia is illegitimate because by achieving this, India will suppress its neighbors especially Pakistan. Pakistan and India by using the balance of power as their tool are keeping deterrence in the region and it is preventing war between these two nuclear states.

DUE TO CPEC AND OTHER INVESTMENTS IN PAKISTAN, ALONG WITH THE EXCHANGE OF OFFICIALS, PAKISTANI AND CHINESE PEOPLE HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH EACH OTHER

Due to CPEC and other investments in Pakistan, along with the exchange of officials, Pakistani and Chinese people have good relations with each other. According to a report, majority of Pakistanis have good opinion about China and vice versa.

We hope that Pakistan and China would continue their good relations despite international pressures. As it is said that this is, "A Friendship Higher than the Himalayas, deeper than the ocean, sweeter than honey, and stronger than steel", and also "time-tested and all-weather friend". Let us hope that relations between the both states would remain strong as it was in the past and in contemporary times; Pak Cheen dosti Zindabad ■



The writer is a student of International Relations at National Defense University, Islamabad.

Chinese condiments for a Pakistani household

Spice of Life

By Zainab Sajid

Spice a dish with love and it pleases every palate- Plautus

Since I started going to the grocery shops, the trifecta of vibrantly packaged sauces has always caught my eyes in the condiment's aisle. This trio of soy sauce, chili sauce and vinegar have a special place in every Pakistani's heart. They undoubtedly hold the magic to elevate any basic dish to one of warmth and deliciousness.

These widely popular condiments are distinctly different to their counterparts in China or other Asian countries. Our tastebuds are not habituated to the strong and sharp flavour of fermented soy hence our locally manufactured soy sauce is subtle in its flavor profile. It still gives the perfect umami flavour to the dishes and enhances their taste. Secondly, chilli sauce is made with local red chillis and have a tingly acidic flavour. Whereas vinegar is mostly synthetic white vinegar unlike rice vinegar is commonly used in authentic Chinese cuisine.

These ingredients worked a charm and developed our fondness for Chinese flavours. But the evolving Pakistani Chinese cuisine is inspired by the Sichuan style of cooking. It is characteristic of complex flavours that harmoniously combine range of flavours like spice, sour, sweet, salty, smoky, etc. If I were to bring forward three more condiments, which have also become synonymous with Pakistani Chinese cuisine, they would be sesame oil, oyster sauce and Sichuan chilli paste.

Using sesame oil in gravies and soups builds a nutty flavour, which is uncommon in our regional cuisine. Then comes the flavour booster, oyster sauce. It is a surprise that such a unique sweet and smoky umami flavour is gaining soaring popularity here. Lastly, a personal favorite, Sichuan chilli paste has become a staple in restaurant cooking. Pakistani households, too, have wholeheartedly adopted this amalgamation of spice and sour using local ingredients.

These are the 6 must-have pantry items of every house which savours Pakistani Chinese cuisine. Here is a simple recipe that uses these ingredients to create a flavour-packed bowl of noodles stir-fry.

Ingredients: Noodles Stir-fry

Egg noodles or spaghetti - 250 gms (boiled and strained)

Chicken yakhni powder/ chicken powder - 1 tbsp

Dried round red chilis - about 12

Green Onions - 2-3 stalks (optional)

Sugar - 1 tsp

Sesame oil - 2 tbsp

Soy sauce - 3 tbsp

Kashmiri chilis - 3

Water - 1 1/2 cups

Brown sugar - 2 tbsp

Lemon juice - 1 tbsp

Cooking oil - 2 tbsp

Oyster sauce - 2 tbsp

Crushed red chilis - 1 tbsp

Soy sauce - 2 tbsp

Ketchup - 3 tbsp

Chicken - 300 gms (thinly sliced)

Chile paste - 2-3 tbsp (to taste)

Peanuts - 1/2 cup (roasted & crushed; optional but recommended)

Vegetables - 1 1/2 cup (thinly sliced, such as onions, mushrooms, carrots, bell peppers, cabbage, or boiled/sweet corn)

Salt - to taste

Garlic - 3 cloves (chopped)

Ketchup - 2 tbsp

Garlic - 4 cloves

Vinegar - 2 tbsp

Salt - 1 tsp or to taste

Instructions:

For the Chili Paste:

1. Combine everything in a pan except the last three ingredients. Cook on low flame for 12 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients and simmer for 7- 10 more minutes. If you see that water is drying up quickly, add 2-3 tbsp and cook for 2 more minutes.
2. Cool the mixture and blend until smooth. Transfer it back to the pan and cook for 3 more minutes. (The paste can be refrigerated in a sterilized glass jar for up to 3 weeks.)

For the Noodles:

1. In a wok, heat both the oils and cook garlic until lightly golden. Add chicken and onion and continue cooking for 3 minutes.
2. Add the soy sauce, oyster sauce, chicken powder, chilli paste, ketchup, sugar, and lemon juice to the chicken.
3. Add the vegetables and cook for 3 more minutes. Add a few splashes of water and put the boiled noodles and stir.
4. Make sure to mix ingredients until combined. At this stage, taste the salt and adjust accordingly.
5. Finally, add peanuts and green onions before serving so, they can retain their crispness.



The writer is an anthropology graduate from LUMS and is working in the field of food anthropology. She maintains a food blog on Instagram, [fooddays_withzainab](#).



June 30, 2021: Mr. Suljuk Mustansar Tarar, Ambassador-designate to the Netherlands, presented his book to the DG, ISSI titled "All that Art" projecting vibrant Pakistani art and its global presence.



July 15, 2021: China Pakistan Study Centre at ISSI held an introductory virtual meeting with Bait ul Amanah, Malaysia led by Mr. Abdul Razzak Ahmad-Founding Director. Amb.Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, DG ISSI led the ISSI team. Dr.Talat Shabbir, Director CPSC moderated the meeting.



July 15, 2021: Arms Control & Disarmament Centre at ISSI organized a Panel Discussion on "The Myth of India's Impeccable Nuclear Non-Proliferation Record."



July 28, 2021: Pakistan's Ambassador to Bulgaria, Mariam Aftab, visited ISSI and met the Director General.



July 28, 2021: ISSI held its first bilateral dialogue with the Institute of Strategic & International Studies based in Malaysia. The theme of the dialogue was Food security Cooperation under the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) Framework.



August 2, 2021: A 2-member delegation from US embassy consisting of Mr. David Mauro, Political Economic Officer & Mr. Jacob Choi, Head of Political Military Affairs visited China Pakistan Study Centre at ISSI.



August 6, 2021: MoU Signing ceremony held at National Defence University. The MoU focused on Academic and Research Cooperation between ISSI-NDU.



August 14, 2021: Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad held a celebratory meeting to commemorate 75th Independence Day of Pakistan. The meeting was attended by Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, DG ISSI, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI, the Directors of 5 Centres of Excellence & the entire research faculty.



August 17, 2021, Mr. Imran Akhtar, Advisor on Public Diplomacy to the Foreign Minister visited ISSI & called upon Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director General, ISSI.



August 27, 2021: MoU b/w the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) & Institute of Foreign Affairs & National Security (IFANS) Seoul, South Korea was signed by DG-ISSI, Amb. Aizaz A. Chaudhry & President-IFANS, Amb. Young Ju Oh in a virtual ceremony



August 31, 2021: An MoU b/w the China Pakistan Study Centre (ISSI) & Department of IR University of Peshawar was signed by Director CPSC, Dr. Talat Shabbir & HOD IR Dept. University of Peshawar Dr. Syed Hussain Shaheed Soherwordy.



September 2, 2021: Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed Ali Chairman Muslim Institute visited the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad and called on the Director General Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry.



September 2, 2021: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad hosted the 6th Think Tank Forum under the theme of 'The Situation in Afghanistan: Options for Pakistan'. More than 40 think-tanks & Area Study Centres across Pakistan participated in the meeting.



September 3, 2021: MoU b/w the China Pakistan Study Centre at ISSI & The Human Security Institute was signed by Director CPSC, Dr. Talat Shabbir & DG, THSI Mr. Rafiq Ahmed Qureshi.



September 6, 2021, Arms Control and Disarmament Centre at ISSI celebrated Pakistan Defence Day in a hybrid ceremony.



September 8, 2021: China Pakistan Study Centre at ISSI hosted a webinar on 'Evolving regional situation & Pakistan-China Cooperation' with China Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) under the substructure of Pak-China Think Tank Forum.



China's Mars rover completes primary mission, continues to explore red planet

China's Zhurong Mars rover is soldiering on after completing its initial program to explore the red planet and search for frozen water that could provide clues as to whether it once supported life. China's National Space Administration said on its website on August 20, 2021 that Zhurong completed its 90-day program on Aug. 15 and was in excellent technical condition and fully charged. It said it would continue to explore the area known as Utopia Planitia where it landed on May 14. After the United States, China is the second country to land and sustainably operate a spacecraft on Mars, where days are 40 minutes longer than on Earth.

NBC News, August 21, 2021

Gwadar New Airport to be operational in September 2023

The Parliamentary Committee on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was informed by the Secretary Aviation division that the progress on New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) was on track and it would be fully operational by September, 2023. The meeting of the committee was presided over by its Chairman Sher Ali Arbab. He stressed that Gwadar was gateway to CPEC and undeniably important in entire rationale behind CPEC. The Committee remarked that \$1 billion grant given by China for socio-economic development projects under CPEC framework should be utilized effectively by including the projects having high social impacts and high visibility.

Associated Press of Pakistan, 26 August, 2021



'Huge job opportunities' are coming under CPEC phase 2

Khalid Mansoor, the special assistant to the Prime Minister on CPEC affairs, has said that huge job opportunities will be created for the people under phase two of the multibillion-dollar project and special importance will be attached to their skill enhancement and for that purpose, vocational training institutes will be constructed in special economic zones.

On the role of the Belt and Road Initiative in Pak-Afghan cooperation, he said that BRI would unfold a lot of economic opportunities for landlocked Afghanistan, which will get the chance to enhance its exports through regional connectivity offered by the BRI.

The Express Tribune, September 4, 2021



China issues plan for building Guangdong-Macao cooperation zone

China has announced a plan to boost development in the Macao Special Administrative Region. A new cooperation zone will be set up between Macao and neighboring city of Zhuhai in Guangdong Province.

CGTN, September 6, 2021



COVID-19 VACCINE MYTHS

As the COVID-19 vaccine is administered nationwide, myths and concerns abound. SIUE School of Pharmacy experts are dispelling misinformation with fact.

Michael Williams, Ph.D. & Jennifer Russell, Ph.D.

1 MYTH: THE VACCINE CAN GIVE ME COVID-19.

Fact: None of the available vaccines contain the virus that causes COVID-19 and cannot make anyone sick with COVID-19. The potential vaccine side effects are mild and are due to the immune system building its ability to attack the virus that causes COVID-19.



2 MYTH: THE VACCINE WAS DEVELOPED TOO QUICKLY.

Fact: No steps in the vaccine development, testing or manufacturing processes were skipped. But were able to occur simultaneously. Years of vaccine research and technological advances in vaccine development, along with the collaboration of worldwide organizations and the U.S. Operation Warp Speed provided an unprecedented amount of resources to develop a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine.



3 MYTH: THE VACCINE IS GOING TO ALTER MY DNA.

Fact: COVID-19 vaccines teach the body how to make a spike protein and triggers the body to make an immune response that is ready to fight off COVID-19. The vaccines do not enter the nucleus of the cell, where the DNA is found, and cannot interact or change DNA in any way.



4 MYTH: I HAVE ALREADY HAD COVID-19, SO I DO NOT NEED THE VACCINE.

Fact: The exact length of time that natural immunity lasts after recovering from COVID-19 is unknown, and it is possible to be re-infected with the virus. The CDC recommends that people who test positive for COVID-19 receive the vaccine after the isolation period is over.



5 MYTH: I WILL TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 AFTER I RECEIVE THE VACCINE.

Fact: The vaccines do not contain the coronavirus and cannot cause someone to test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test. The body can develop antibodies when the immune system responds to the COVID-19 vaccine and may result in a positive antibody test.



The Trendsetter in Logistics & Construction

National Logistics Cell (NLC) is a dynamic and multifaceted logistics and construction organization which has a proud history of serving the nation with selfless dedication and firm commitment. We offer a wide range of exceptional services to our valued clients in the fields of speedy and reliable transportation, quality construction of mega projects, operations & management of border terminals and toll tax collection. An enviable combination of highly professional workforce and latest technologies makes NLC the preferred choice of all leading clients from public and private sectors.

