UOS Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities (UOSJSSH)
ISSN (P) 2224-2341, ISSN (E) 2310-0249
Volume: 8, (1) 2024, Pages (38-49)
Journal Homepage: https://uosjssh.su.edu.pk/

Regional connectivity with reference to the Geostrategic Significance of Pakistan and China

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Abstract

This extensive study examines the intricate network of regional connectivity facilitated by this ambitious project. It also highlights the geostrategic significance of Pakistan and China, detailing how these nations play a pivotal role in shaping global dynamics. Both countries are integrated into various initiatives that are poised to drive significant changes in infrastructure, economic growth, and societal development, impacting not just South Asia but extending well beyond the Asian region. The various projects aim to bridge both physical and social distances between different regions of the world. They offer opportunities for enhanced regional connectivity and contribute to a more globalized world. This project details several initiatives related to regional connectivity, including the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It provides comprehensive insights into these projects, outlining their impact on regional connections and mapping their influence. Additionally, the project highlights the geostrategic significance of Pakistan and China, illustrating their crucial roles in this global network.

Keywords: *Regional connectivity, Geostrategic significance, Belt and Road Initiatives, CPEC, Pakistan, China.*

Introduction

In ancient times Silk Road was a milestone in the up gradation of trade between South Asia, where about one-fourth of the population resides, and China, the largest population country in the world. It would be an injustice if it were not conceived that CPEC China Pakistan Economic Corridor is the modernized and well-equipped phase of the silk route. The obvious fact is that China and Pakistan are very important in geopolitics. Pakistan can offer land and a sea route to fulfill China's desire to circulate its exports outside Asia. Additionally, it makes it simpler for China to easily access the warm water. After Gawadar port is completed, China can import oil from the straits of Hormoz and Malacca. Additionally, it cuts the 45-days distance down to 10 days. Additionally, it offers China a secure means of importing oil in any emergency. The One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative, which will connect China to countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, is another way China plans to connect the world and transport its

commodities there. China is adamant about including the CPEC project in its expansive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) initiative because it will increase FDI in Pakistan. Different states from all over the world are keen to invest in Pakistan through CPEC project. China has primely consider CPEC project main component of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is the way to connect the different continents of the world across both sea and land (Xiguang, 2016).

Hypothesis

1. The net of projects by China in the shape of BRI and CPEC will connect the whole regions beyond the Asian boundaries further it will enhance the importance of Pakistan in the region.
2. Regional connectivity becomes possible due to Geo's strategic significance of Pakistan and China.

Objectives of the Study

The prime object behind this immense work is to explore how Pakistan and China play their proper role in connecting regions. The list of certain projects, such as Belt and Road initiatives, CPEC, etc, makes it impossible. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) seeks to link China's Xinjiang province and other regions with overland routes, as well as Pakistan's deep-water ports of Gwadar and Karachi. (The old Silk Road passed across its region, and Xinjiang has borders with nations including Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan). Avoiding the South China Sea will save the valuable time and money needed to transport products and energy sources like natural gas to China and Straits of Malacca as well. In 2016, the CPEC-driven declaration of collaborative satellite and space initiatives between Pakistan and China was made. CPEC is an essential component of the massive Belt and Road Initiative project, which China announced in 2013, intending to advance communication and commerce connectivity by fostering closer ties with Eurasia-based nations. Regarding CPEC's potential impact on the region and the different nations expected to participate in the project; it is compared to the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of post-World War II Europe.

This project is a sign of a globalized world; the distance of millions of kilometers will decrease, and the whole region will be connected. Pakistan and China have been rewarded with the key location, and they will pragmatically benefit from it. It is a renaissance of the old silk route.

Literature review

The vast body of literature analysis provides significant insight into the geostrategic importance of Pakistan and China. The various initiatives that would enlighten the world will be introduced. It provides connectivity from area to region.

Currently, various international agreements represent the transportation of goods through water. In a time of new advertising practices and inventive advancements, the 2008 Rotterdam Rules testify to the worldwide network's most recent effort to adapt and modernize the norms governing universal contracts of carriage. By the way, most countries, especially those in Asia, have adopted a "sit back and watch" attitude. Considering the never-ending developments in Chinese delivery law, this paper assumes that, while broad adoption of the Rotterdam Rules is unlikely to happen anytime soon, harmonizing transportation laws by incorporating relevant

provisions into domestic laws is feasible. One Belt One Road Initiative proponent China might be seen as a prominent participant in this initiative(Markey, Mollan, Jensen, & Sinclair, 2016)

In order to close the gap between power-free market activity and future strategies that will ensure appropriate power that is productive in terms of age, transmission, and dispersion to aid in the growth of the national economy, strategy developers' task is critical at this point. They must also assess and investigate momentum systems. This study provides an overview of the nation's ebb and flow energy situation, a discussion of the arrangement drivers and plans, an analysis of the power part's problems, as well as recommendations for closing the gap between the nation's potential power supply and demand (Collins, 2004).

Pakistan is struggling with major power supply issues, resulting in limited power outages during the past ten years, lasting from 8 to 12 hours daily in urban areas and up to 18 hours in provincial regions. The true causes of the growing disparity between energy demand and free market activity are mainly budgetary restrictions and declining energy resources on the one hand, and growing energy demand on the other. In this situation, the legislature has been adopting various actions, such as reconstructing the power area partially by the guidelines of universal finance institutions. As a result, the nation is currently not only facing a real challenge in meeting its energy needs but also a challenge in ensuring energy security in light of all-encompassing crucial environmental change challenges (Abid & Ashfaq, 2015)

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Research gap

There is a dearth of literature regarding regional connectivity and the change which will bring by this project the chain of different projects. There is a dire need to focus on these very projects. This research will help the scholars pull attention to how this project will fill the gaps and help to focus on the region and try to do some practicable things to world towards the regional connectivity through this chain of projects.

Methodology

In order to organize the demonstration of complex research models in a way that is practical and supported by a systematic approach that is easily manageable with the entire structural interface modeling that will be used to examine the geostrategic significance of Pakistan and China, a comprehensive process known as research methodology must be developed. This piece of work will make use of the analytical data. To examine various facets of the geostrategic significance of China and Pakistan, which will be connected to the rest of the world by land and water, qualitative research methods are utilized with complete structural and functional demonstrations that can be propagated with research analysis. It employs the "Case

Studies" method. Leading qualitative research methodologies include case studies. It primarily applies to social science fields. This method provides the framework for a detailed investigation of the studied topics. This method entails rigorously studying a few chosen or particular examples (Gilbert et al., 2008). It focuses on phenomena unusually represented in the countries' key locations. According to Ranjit Kumar's research methodology, case studies, An open-ended and flexible way of gathering and analyzing data is used in a step-by-step guide for beginners' case studies (Stepp et al., 1999).

Regional connectivity with reference to the Geostrategic significance of Pakistan

Pakistan is strategically positioned at the intersection of China and Asia, with India to the east. In the West are China, the Arabian Sea, Iran, and Afghanistan (Irshad, 2015). Due to its geographic proximity to central Russia and Asia, where seaports like Gawadar and Karachi connect these states with the Arabian Sea, Pakistan's economic and strategic importance is further increased. These seaports are open all year round and provide these states with the shortest route to the Arabian Sea. Additionally, the seaport of Gawadar plays a vital role in developing China's western area; given that it is only 2,550 kilometers from Xinjiang, compared to the 4,500 kilometers between China's ports and that region. In addition, the CARs (Central Asian States) have the shortest route to Pakistan's Gawadar port, which is 2,550 kilometers long compared to Turkey's 5,000 km and Iran's 4,550 kilometers. Due to its proximity to the two major international powers, China and Russia, Pakistan's strategic relevance is particularly crucial. As a result, at present, the seaport of Gawadar is very important for the state of Russia due to trade and its ports closing for around six months of the year due to sea ice. Due to its ongoing negative relationship with Europe (Javaid & Javaid, 2016), Russia's shortest route to the Gulf States, African States, South East Asian States, and South Asian States is via the port of Gawadar.

The city of Kashghar is only 300 kilometers from the port of Gawadar, whereas China's southern ports are 12,000 kilometers away. Similarly, during a time of tight ties with the United States-led Indo-Pacific linked nations, including India, China depends on the port of Gawadar for its trade with the countries of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East and to avoid the tension of Western supremacy it is inclined to travel to the Malacca Straights. (J. Khan, 2016; S. A. Khan & Yousaf, 2016)

In addition, it has been found that the CPEC will protect shared interests and mutual benefits and that it serves as a framework for cooperation, strategic communication, and coordination between Pakistan and China in order to strengthen their economic ties and trade with neighboring nations in order to meet the region's growing energy demand and increase exports. Pakistani leadership views CPEC as a pivotal and transformative initiative for the country. They anticipate that CPEC will position Pakistan as a major commercial hub in South and Central Asia, effectively establishing it as a key regional trade axis. Additionally, CPEC is expected to enhance economic and energy cooperation by linking Central Asia, the Gulf nations of South Asia, and North Africa.

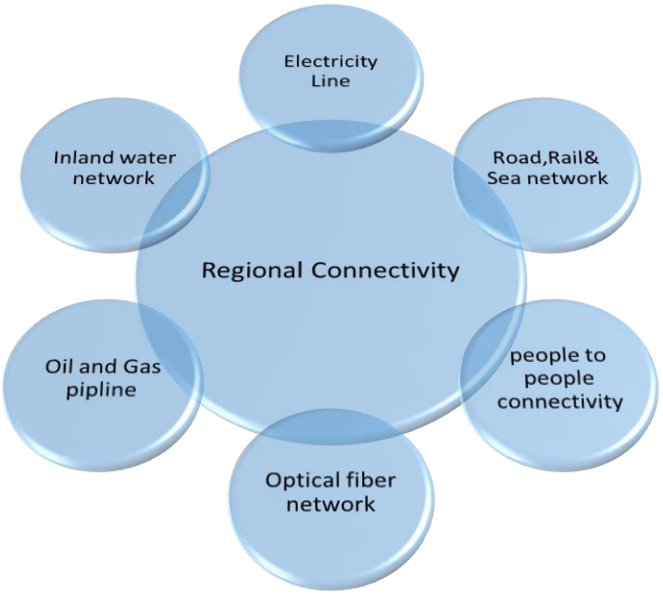
Additionally, China has expressed interest in constructing a direct crude oil pipeline via the CPEC from the Pakistani city of Gawadar to the Chinese city of Xinjiang. The functionalization of the port of Gawadar might redirect all traffic from and to landlocked CARs to the quickest and most direct route available through Gawadar, which could lead to an increase

in trade aid to Pakistan. Due to CPEC, Pakistan may also become the primary global route for petrochemical trade, accelerating its economic development. After that, Baluchistan, a province of Pakistan, would become a large local union.

In the same way Gawadar Port has the unpredictable distinction of being the only location where the OBOR (One Belt, One Road) will intersect. As a result, Pakistan must positively address all problems and obstacles that may arise during the development of CPEC and threaten to turn this wonderful opportunity into an economic certainty. Various elements are present for Pakistan in addition to the significance of CPEC. It also contains tremendous implications for China and its potential to become the world's superpower in the future. Additionally, China views the regional organization as a key element and the first step towards dominating the international scene. Accordingly, President Xi stated that China would prioritize the nations that are its neighbors in all aspects of its diplomacy while addressing the foreign affairs committee at the communist party congress in 2014. The other aspect of the policy is establishing ties with developing nations abundant in natural resources and states with much energy. Being viewed as China's development partner would be helpful.

However, Pakistan's geographic strategic position greatly impacts the region's dynamics. Due to this geopolitical context, neighboring countries are compelled to rely on Pakistan for their strategic advantages. Unfortunately, Pakistan's foreign policy has mostly failed to identify this strategically important and comfortable setup using a consistent vision and framework. Pakistan has turned its position into an insult, something those foreign nations, especially superpowers, avoid from the state's establishment. Instead, the state has turned its position into a resource for itself. Since Pakistan's founding, foreign forces have subjugated the nation, which has consistently led to hardship for the entire nation's citizens. The state's economy has also suffered significant harm, in addition to the state's social fabric being severely damaged.

CPEC with Regional Connectivity



Regional connectivity with reference to Geo strategic significance of China

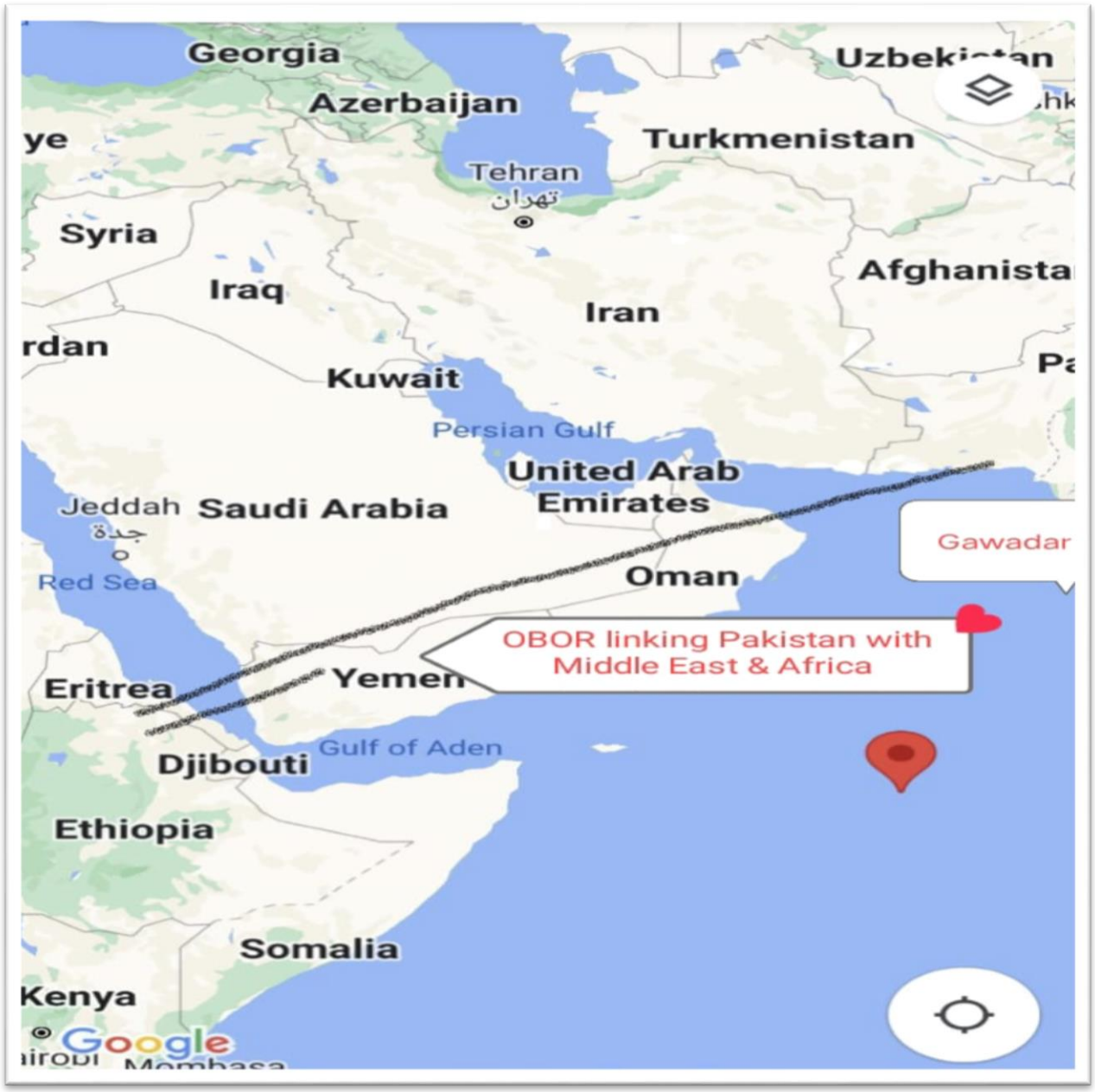
The CPEC has a significant role to play in the development of China's foreign policy. This aims to link structural measures by establishing a "One Belt" (Maritime Silk Road) in the Indian Ocean as well as a "One Road" (New Silk Road) operating by South and Central Asia. The Chinese seek to expand and open up their non-coastal western regions through their Westward Policy(Hong, Luo, & Wang). Similarly, Chinese President Xi introduced the concept of "Constructive Engagement" into China's foreign policy (Xiguang, 2016). The program of productive commercial aid at the local level is being advanced with a strong emphasis on economic assignment (Javaid, 2016). However, when considering Chinese concerns, the link between economics and security is loosely connected because improvements on one side also benefit the other. China is certain that Pakistan's economic expansion, resulting from investments in infrastructure projects and the building of gas and oil pipelines, will support the nation's internal political and economic stability. China expects Pakistan to stabilize its western border, especially in the Xinjiang18 region, and to reach a certain degree of stability. Accordingly, in September 2013, Chinese President Xi stressed the importance of restoring the first commercial routes connecting Europe, China, and Central Asia by creating three important corridors by the Central, Northern, and Southern Xingjian that connect Russia and China, Pakistan, and Europe. Additionally, the Chinese have raised their level of awareness on the Bangladesh-India-Myanmar corridor, which would grant Yunnan access to the Cove of Bengal.

Additionally, CPEC should be used as a benchmark for China's strategic interests in East Asia and how the US has confronted China. China believes that it can improve its strategic advancement by overcoming these obstacles and advancing toward the West. Pakistan is a crucial link between South Asia, the Middle East, Central Asia, and China. Furthermore,

Pakistan's stability and security allow China to exert more influence in these areas and ensure domestic security. This is why China is concentrating on investing a significant amount of resources through the economic channel based on the justification that improving security through the development of the economy.(Van der Merwe, 2019).

OBOR linking Pakistan with Middle East and Africa

Regional connectivity with reference to the Geostrategic Significance of Pakistan and China



The displayed image demonstrates China's ease of access to warm waters through Gawadar Port, which it may use to link with countries in the Middle East and Africa, such as Muscat, Oman, Yemen, Sana, and Eritrea. The Gawadar Port, an essential component of China's OBOR project, will make it simple for China to conduct business with these nations.

Chinese exporters must travel an additional 3,500 kilometers on land to transport their goods to the region of Xingjian via the costly 12,000-kilometer Channel of Malacca marine route. Additionally, several Chinese and global oils flow by the straits, whose authority is continually challenged by the US Navy and Indian pretensions, which have grown due to the Malaccan conundrum. It will have naturally evolved into one of the largest trans-shipment ports

because of its strategic location at the end of the Passage and the meeting point of most of the world's oil-producing nations.

The proposed development is expected to house a refinery for crude oil, an international airport, and massive ship accommodation facilities, positioning it as a significant hub for trade and travel in the area. Due to its dependency on the Strait of Malacca for energy imports, China is particularly concerned about the "Malacca dilemma" in its foreign policy. According to some political observers, China's strategy also aims to balance off US and Indian power in the Asia-Pacific area. These issues also pertain to China's economic objectives and are essential to the country's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) plan, which aims to establish a physical connection between China and its markets in Europe, Asia, and other regions. Accordingly, the research shows how important the passing is for China from a geopolitical and economic standpoint. China believes that the United States' "Pivot for Asia" plan is incompatible with its fundamental interests because it seeks to stifle its development and growth by strengthening its alliances and cooperation with rising powers like North Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, India, and other Eastern states in order to preserve its hegemony and dominance in the South Pacific.

Moreover, finding a replacement for the Malacca Strait is another concern with the CPEC. The various Southeast Asian republics and China have been given access to the South China Sea, which is rich in resources and serves as a passageway for the Malacca Strait. Similarly, China imports a significant portion of its oil through the Malacca Strait, posing risks. For instance, if other East Asian nations form a coalition against China, they might impose a naval blockade on the narrowest Malacca Strait, which would impact China's economy. Additionally, the analyst has suggested that China's decision-makers adopt a strategy of two-pronged devising a method when building relationships with the major powers and must also strengthen its relationships with its neighboring and developing states. Therefore, the growing powers necessitate a friendly border, which the director of the Foreign Studies University in Beijing's district, Li Yonghui, described as the vital border belt. The chain of maritime ports shared by countries like Pakistan, Burma, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka is called the *"String of Pearl"* policy. It has been seen as a tactical undertaking to constrain India. As a result, the economic route is chosen to cut the distance for energy imports into China from Middle Eastern countries by about 12,000 kilometers and link it with the underdeveloped remote western regions of China and the deep seaport of Gawadar, situated on the Arabian Sea.

Policy Implications

- The analysis should have considered the CPEC's potential economic benefits more, after completion of this project Pakistan will get lot of Importance in the region.
- In the next ten years, there should be a thorough review of the results and benefits of the CPEC.
- The Pakistani government must expedite the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to ensure that terrorists do not have time to consider and develop new ways to attack the CPEC.
- The federal government and the provinces should cooperate to improve Pakistan's economic and cultural conditions. The country's cultural and economic development has had plenty of room.
- China should also prioritize the work and take some pragmatic initiatives to complete it timely.

- Pakistan should take more security measures to this project for implementing the proper work and get the desire results from CPEC and BRI.
- To boost economic activities Pakistan and China Should work for better relationships in terms of Socio and Economic relations with Asian and African countries specially BRI connected regions.
- Although South Asian nations have worked to increase cross-border transportation links, steps to facilitate transportation have lagged. Improving regional trade requires linking South Asian manufacturing cities and inland production hubs.
- To emphasize the CPEC's existing North-South link, in this connection Pakistan would need to develop the necessary road and railway infrastructure in order to connect with western China and make Gawadar port a significant regional trading hub. Pakistan may strengthen its current economic ties with China by building SEZs as part of the CPEC and putting into action the Long-Term Plan's targets for the agriculture and tourist industries. Under the CPEC framework, there would be two channels for agricultural products and goods produced in SEZs:

I. The Karakoram Highway (KKH), particularly in Western China, and the Central Asian Republics via Western China; overland transportation to the Chinese markets;

II. Transport by land to Gawadar and Karachi, where it will be shipped to eastern China, Southeast Asia, Europe, and North America.

- Establishing connectivity between the Eastern markets of India, Afghanistan, and Iran on the Western side in order to access these markets. The road and rail networks of these three surrounding nations can be connected to the transport infrastructure that is being built as part of the CPEC.
- In addition to responding to India's attempts, to deviate Pakistan from these very projects, there for Pakistan must actively involve its neighbors, especially Afghanistan and Iran, in the CPEC-centric connectivity. China is working on bilateral connectivity projects with Iran and Afghanistan. Pakistan now has the chance to collaborate on Chinese initiatives in these nations. It is critical that Pakistan strengthen its current economic and transit ties with its neighbors as India increases its influence and footprint there. It can be accomplished this by:

I. Placing a priority on developing an integrated road and rail network, as well as maritime links between the ports of Iran and Pakistan.

II. A rise in aerial communication between the three nations i.e. Iran, Pakistan and China.

III. Improving border customs to facilitate trade.

IV. Signing a contract to ease transit for containers leaving certain nations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, China and Pakistan have enormous geostrategic significance that will enlighten the world. The world's nations will be connected regionally, and the world will also be connected by land and water. Between the nations of the various locations, things will be abundant. The CPEC and BRI initiatives will alter the world's future. For Pakistan in the twenty-first century, CPEC is a revolutionary economic and social aspect of object orientation. As a result, this multi-dimensional effort has provided Pakistan with a fresh perspective on its alternatives, from geopolitics to geo-economics.

In addition, research indicates that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is a framework of collaboration, strategic communication, and coordination between China and Pakistan for bolstering economic ties and trade with neighboring countries in order to meet the region's growing energy needs and increase exports, will safeguard the two countries' shared interests and benefits. Thus, the CPEC is characterized by Pakistani leadership as a critical instrument and a game-changer for Pakistan. As a result, it has been noted that Pakistan would become a commercial hub in South and Central Asia through the CPEC and serving as a regional trade axis. In addition, it will connect Central Asia, South Asia's Gulf nations, and North Africa in terms of economic and energy cooperation. The CPEC has a significant role to play in the development of China's foreign policy. This aims to link structural measures by establishing a "One Belt" (Maritime Silk Road) in the Indian Ocean as well as a "One Road" (New Silk Road) operating by South and Central Asia (Wagner, 2016). The Chinese seek to expand and open up their non-coastal western regions through their Westward Policy. As a result, the globe will undergo a revolution toward globalization.

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