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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
China, Pakistan, India, South Asia, Strategic Partnership, CPEC, Gwadar Port	In recent years amid 2013-2024, Sino-Pak relations witnessed a qualitative transformation as bilateral ties expanded in strategic perspective. Pakistan has been forced to pursue a strategic collaboration with China in order to preserve the balance of power in South Asia as a result of the dynamic post 9/11 global political changes and expanding strategic partnership between the US and India. Under the auspices of the Indo-US strategic partnership, India is making most of its resources and collaborating with US in a number of areas, including energy, defense and security, so as to fulfill its ambitions of becoming a dominating force in the region and building blue water navy. India regional aspirations are too great for Pakistan to overcome on its own. In order to oppose India's imperial aspirations in South Asian area, the Sino-Pak formed a strategic alliance. This study will pose some queries about most recent iterations of this partnership. In this research, strategic partnership amid two countries is described using a Rational Actor Model. The research goes on to say that Sino-Pak will not be deterred from pursuing the project despite India's assertion that corridor route goes through disputed Northern Pakistani territory.
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INTRODUCTION

Due to the asymmetry in hard power of both Pakistan and India, since their independence in 1947, the balance of power politics in South Asia has periodically come to a head (Magsood, 2021). Both countries are significant players in the region and nuclear powers, but due to an imbalance in their arsenals, India currently has more power than its rivals as a result of the recent strategic alliance between US and India (Gul, 2023). Pakistan is thus forced to shift the balance of power by enlisting the help of nations outside of South Asia, which has led to the development of a stronger diplomatic

and strategic alliance between China and Pakistan. The strategic goal of Pakistan's strong alliance with China is to offset the strategic relationship between the US and India. India remains a common factor behind the strong strategic ties between China and Pakistan. This paper's primary goal is to examine whether or not the strategic alliance between the two countries acts as a regional power balance against India's aspirations to become the dominant force in South Asia. Additionally, this essay responds to two queries: how would India's regional aspirations impact South Asia's security? b) how would India's regional aspirations in the South Asia be impacted by the China-Pakistan Strategic Partnership?

This paper uses neorealism as a lens through which to explain the strategic alliance between China and Pakistan. Understanding the dynamics of relations between China and Pakistan, especially after the 1960s, necessitates a methodical approach to a global system. The book was presented by Waltz in his 1979 "Theory of International Politics". According to Waltz, governments' actions are dictated by the anarchic nature of the international system. One definition of anarchy is a system in which there is neither central government nor central authority inside the international system (Jibran, 2021, pp. 36-47). According to neorealism, governments band together to confront a state that is posing the threat, to oppose a growing power, or when the interests of allies coincide. States collaborate when they discover they have shared interests. Because international interactions are anarchic, mutual interests are essential. Ideological, political, social, and religious differences across states are not very concerning. When states share interests, they tend to build and preserve positive the relationships. The relations between China and Pakistan are one example. Neo-Realism's main concern in the anarchic international system is "security". States are actors who formulate policies to safeguard both their territorial integrity and sovereignty. Sino-Pak strategic partnership indeed holds significant implications for regional dynamics in South Asia, particularly concerning India's interests & regional aims.

LITERATURE REVIEW

China-Pakistan Historical Alliance

China was acknowledged by Pakistan on January 9, 1950. It was third non-communist nation and the first Muslim nation to accomplish so. Because of their shared economic and security objectives, both nations have been established friends for a long time. Despite ideological differences between two nations, their bilateral relations have stayed steady throughout Pakistan's history. Their shared goals are to maintain South Asia's regional geopolitical balance, to advance stability and mutual security. In order to combat regional terrorism and maintain access to Middle East and the Indian Ocean via the port of the Gwadar, China also requires Pakistan's assistance. Similarly, China's best path to Central Asia is through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Additionally, both nations have been collaborating in a number of areas, including technology, energy, infrastructure, health, defense, and counterterrorism (Maqsood, 2021). Chinese army now ranks counterterrorism as its top priority. It looks to regional cooperation to help it accomplish its goals. Pakistan has borne the brunt of "War on Terror" aftereffects and has continued to be a front-runner in the fight against terrorism. China views Pakistan as crucial state in its pursuit of regional cooperation and recognizes Pakistan's efforts in this area.

Apparently, there are Ten thousand Chinese workers and 121 Chinese enterprises are reportedly present in Pakistan. Without assistance, Pakistan is unable to offset India's expanding sway over South Asia. In order to limit India's regional influence, China also needs Pakistan. As a result, both nations are emphasizing their security objectives while cementing their strategic connections. An increasingly intricate structure of interdependence is a reality that the modern world politics are witnessing. China and India are working with others while also opposing and competing with one another. There has only been one war between two nations, which culminated in India's devastating defeat in 1962. However, since both sides are nuclear powers, simmering tensions pose the risk of escalation, which might be deadly. India's biggest trading partner is China, hence there would be an impact on economy. Both states rely on same maritime channels for trade at the same time. In future, it's possible that their shared need on maritime routes would force them to form an alliance that could subtly be antagonistic to US. Alternative is that US would take the lead in evolution of global marine system. The China has two options for responding in this situation: either build up its naval might or create the new supply channels that are less exposed to attack by the US or other adversarial nations.

These routes already include infrastructure initiatives like the Port of Gwadar in Pakistan and overland pipeline projects in the energy-rich neighboring countries of Central Asia. In Myanmar, there are further pipelines (Tasleem, 2022). Beijing's friendly relations with Pakistan are still going strong in the twenty-first century. Strengthened civil nuclear and missile cooperation is one way they show up. China's South Asian Policy is influenced by the Indo-US partnership as well as the military and security challenges posed by India (Hassan, 2022). Pakistan's strategic location makes it valuable to China in order to counter India's regional goals.⁴ China believes that in order to defend itself against any future security challenge originating from India, a stronger Pakistan is essential. For this reason, China has always backed Pakistan militarily and economically in effort to keep the balance of power with India. India continues to be the connecting element between China and Pakistan (Maqsood, 2021). The deepening defense ties between China and Pakistan, including arms sales and joint military exercises, raise concerns for India's security planners. For India, Sino-Pak partnership presents several challenges and considerations. Despite their different worldviews and the cultural backgrounds, Pakistan and China have the strategic partnership that embodies enduring friendship. "The journey of the thousand miles begins with a single step," as the Chinese saying states.

Thousands of actions have been taken by both nations to develop their relationship into a strategic alliance founded on the shared interests and values. In April 2005, the countries signed a pact of friendship, collaboration, and good neighborly relations, marking the first step toward a strategic relationship. Their shared strategic interests helped to forge a solid strategic alliance out of their friendship. Since turn of century, China and India have both experienced extraordinary economic growth and have gained significant political clout on the international scene. In South Asia, each pursues their own strategic objectives. Pakistan views China as a crucial ally, providing it with military and economic assistance, including investments in infrastructure projects like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. China acknowledges India's ambitions to dominate the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and does not underestimate them. This partnership has bolstered Pakistan's strategic

position vis-à-vis India, providing it with economic and military support. In this particular situation, China has been forced to back Pakistan as of its desire to confront India in the event that India and Pakistan engage in armed combat. Given Pak-China alliance, India is likewise concerned about security, mainly in area of defense (Thin Ice in Himalayas: Handling India-China Border Dispute, 2023, pp. 1-41).

India's Strategic Interests & Regional Aspirations

India's main motivation for modernizing and expanding its naval capabilities is its ambition to conduct operations deep within Indian Ocean. Indian Ocean is seen by some Indian commentators as India's backyard. India stands to gain from becoming actively involved in the IOR. The only body of water in the world with a state name attached to it is Indian Ocean (Maira, 2020). The strategic, commercial, and economic significance of the Indian Ocean is immense. Landmasses encircle it on three sides. The water area is roughly 73.5 million square kilometers, and 48 states total 18 in Africa, 11 in Middle East, 7 in South Asia, and 6 in South East Asia are located along its perimeter. Together with mainland of Australia, there are five island states (Sharin, 2021). Insufficient funding in early 1990s caused India's military build-up to lag. It has quickened. From 2001 to 2005, military budget accounted for 5% of the country's GDP; however, from 2005 to 2008, that the percentage increased to 10%. Indian military planners aware of critical need of possessing naval hardware, including bases, surface ships, arsenals, submarines and enough personnel to staff them. Eventually, Andaman and Nicobar Islands in Indian Ocean which also happen to be close to mouth of Strait of Malacca were given trilateral command. India received assistance from France to equip and modernize its submarine navy.

India was able to update to newest naval hardware thanks to its rapid economic expansion. India's Navy currently numbers 70,000 men for 130 ships, 200 planes, and an aircraft carrier. Additionally, India sought to buy 32 more ships, six more submarines, and a Russian aircraft carrier that it planned to rename INS Vikramaditya. It also planned to increase capacity of Coast Guard and double the size of the Navy. India wants to be a big power and wants to dominate the Indian Ocean in order to achieve this goal (The Global Risk Report 2024 (19th Edition), 2024, pp. 12-32). India can order six additional submarines and obtain up to six under license from France. It has six upgraded Project 17A frigates and Russian MIG-29K jet fighters in addition to the submarines. All of this is a part of three decades of work on the Advanced Technology Vessel Program. On July 26, 2009, Manmohan Singh, the former Prime Minister of India, unveiled the 6000-ton nuclear-powered submarine INS Arihant. It has a nuclear reactor with 85 megawatts. "Today we join a selected group consisting of five states that have the capability to build a nuclear submarine, i.e., P5 countries US, Russia, UK, France, and China," he said, marking an important day in the India's naval history. 95% of India's international trade is carried out by sea (Kaushik, 2023). It is vital to note that Indian Navy has helpful agreements in place with navy of Indonesia and Thailand, under which it arranges biannual joint sea patrols.

The defence collaboration between US and Israel has given India access to cutting-edge military hardware. India revised its naval strategy in the wake of November 2008 Mumbai terrorist attack

to emphasize defense against maritime terrorism and piracy & to address issues with coastal security (Auntum, 2020). Along with these naval endeavors, India is developing its air force facilities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. India increased its alliance with countries surrounding the Indian Ocean by being involved in creation of East Pakistan in 1971, which resulted in state of Bangladesh, operations in Sri Lanka, and containment of a coup in Maldives. By resisting China in establishing security links with states around Indian Ocean coast, India has been strengthening its security ties with them during last ten years. It talked two issues: maritime security building of Asia and China's rise to prominence, which prompted India to clarify and narrow its strategic aims and to reevaluate its maritime policy (Maira, 2020). All of these events demonstrate how India's regional aspirations impact South Asia's security architecture, power dynamics. How can Pakistan balance out India's imperial goals, one wonders? In order to do this, we must examine the strategic alliance amid China & Pakistan about Gwadar Port & CPEC. As previously said, Pakistan cannot oppose India hegemonic policies on its own.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study took the descriptive, comparative, analytical, and qualitative, approaches qualitative research designs enable collection of complete data. Graham Allison Rational Actor Model apply to evaluate the research. The researcher employed secondary data. The researcher determined that secondary data has been collected after conducting a thorough literature review. Studies related to paper topics were compiled using various sources, including research journals, reports of think tanks, books, magazines, newspapers, thesis, government publications, documentaries, and online resources on China's foreign policy a well-define material is available that explains the basics and crucial points. These sources were employed to gather the necessary information for drawing results & forming conclusions.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Port of Gwadar

Understanding Gwadar Port's structural strength, economic importance and geostrategic standing as well as how China has expressed interest in the port's development is crucial. "If we see this whole region it seems like a funnel, the top of this funnel is wide area of Central Asia and China's western region, at end of this funnel is Gwadar Port and it gets narrowed over Afghanistan and Pakistan," said General Pervez Musharraf, then-president of Pakistan, on March 22, 2002. This funnel signifies future economic growth of entire region. Pakistan is fortunate to have 1100 kilometers of coastline. Seaports serve as the primary center of commerce and offer a vital connection to the outside world. Ninety-five percent of Pakistan 38 million tons of annual commerce go over its ports. The economic downturn prevented this from happening. Nonetheless, it did capitalize on Russia's huge supply of naval hardware. One such port that has potential to transform Pakistan's economy is Gwadar. The country benefits from an additional 460 km of strategic depth from India thanks to Gwadar, which extends its borders from east to west. Consequently, Gwadar improves security and aids Pakistan in keeping an eye on the Sea Lines of Communications (SLC) that start in Persian Gulf and the Hormuz Strait bottleneck.

For both regional and extra-regional players, it is essential. There are 235,000 people living there, and the area is 15,210 square kilometers in size (Wasti, 2023). It might serve as the focal point of the Hormuz Strait entrance and offer an improved path to Caspian region. It offers a number of benefits. First is that it's close to transshipment facilities and global Sea Lanes of Communications. Second, it provides more warning time in case of an aerial or naval attack because it is located farther away from India than Karachi. Port Qasim and Karachi Port handle 32% and 68% of total, respectively. A 91 million tons rise in trade is anticipated in 2015. It is better suited for trade with Afghanistan and the Caspian region and offers natural weather protection as well. Third, it provides a wealth of harbor amenities for both regional and extra-regional entities, including the UAE and Europeans, as a gateway to Persian Gulf. For example, dry goods are produced in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and Gwadar provides a reasonably close port for exporting these commodities worldwide. Liquid cargo from Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan & Uzbekistan might be piped to Gwadar & transported there by tanker. Compared to the Caspian route, this one is 400 kilometers shorter at just 1400 kilometers (Sattar, 2023).

Port's Structural Strength

The province of Baluchistan is exclusive economic zone covering around 180,000 square kilometers, nonetheless in order for it to properly grow, Gwadar Port must be expanded along with necessary infrastructure. After purchasing land for Gwadar Port Authority, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor must construct facilities in Gwadar. This would not only significantly increase the amount of goods that these two nations import and export, but it would also allow Chinese businesses to construct an exhibition center next to port where they could showcase both Chinese and Pakistani goods. This would be a 9.23 square kilometer economic zone close to the port. The principal port of Makran, Gwadar, makes up the largest portion of fishing sector in Baluchistan. Infrastructure for fishing would be provided by port's expansion. These partnerships serve not only as a counterweight to China's growing influence but as a means of addressing regional security challenges collectively. Eventually, it would enhance the fish processing and packing at or close to fishing locations and generate a sizeable amount of income for the fishing sector. Baluchistan accounts for over 34% of Pakistan's total fisheries production through its marine capture fisheries sector. Eight key fishing spots along the Baluchistan coastline are the Jiwani, Pishukan, Gwadar, Surbandar, Pasni, Omara, Damb and Gaddani.

The largest contributions to the total production of fisheries came from Gwadar and Pasni, in that order (159798 t and 116036 t, respectively). When combined, these two stations produce 47% of the total catch (2011-2014) (Sher, 2016). Gwadar also has the benefit of being the most practicable and direct route for landlocked Afghanistan, much of Central Asia, and even sections of Russia to access the ocean during winter when most of the country's ports are closed. To put it briefly, this line would be crucial for regional relationships. It would be an important entry point for China as well. Through CPEC, trade with China would significantly boost economic activity in Pakistan and surrounding region. There would be more commercial opportunities and jobs along the route. Due to Gwadar's advantageous location as a natural seawater port, big container ships can load up here for extra transshipment. Pakistan now handles an estimated 67 million tons of maritime trade through ports

of Karachi and Qasim. Over the next fifteen years, Gwadar port has ability to handle 42–65 million tons of cargo, according to Dr. Azhar Ahmad. 300 million tons of this trade may be conducted in the next 50 years.

In many aspects, Gwadar will raise Pakistan's profile internationally, and the country has potential to grow into a major global force (Asim, 2021). Regarding Gwadar's past, the Sultanate of Oman sold the city to Pakistan. A little port was constructed in 1988–1992. Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf launched its contemporary iteration in 2007. In 2013, the China was formally granted a multibillion-dollar contract for development and management of Gwadar Port, with expectation that the port's expansion would create new opportunities for Pakistan's improvement, particularly in Baluchistan. According to the terms of the agreement, China Overseas Port Holding Company, a state-owned Chinese enterprise, will manage the port, which will always belong to the Pakistan (COPHC). The Port of Singapore Authority (PSA) was the former recipient of the contract (Pakistan Gives China a 40-Year Lease for the Gwadar Port, 2017). Other projects planned in addition to the port's expansion comprises the Gwadar Power Generation Plant, the city's growth, and the Gwadar International Airport. Thus, Pakistan gains from the port and city's development in three ways: it strengthens its position strategically against India; it stimulates economy by earning money from transit trade fees; and it fosters the travel and hospitality sectors. Investors are already drawn to it (Bukhari, 2024).

Economic Importance

Economically, the port is very significant. It is a major distribution hub for the whole region and offers a dependable and convenient point of entry to Gulf ports, situated 250 miles away from the Strait of Hormuz. Pakistan will be able to draw foreign direct investment by establishing the port of Baluchistan as a regional economic hub. This would allow for expansion of road and rail networks, linking coastal region to rest of Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan. In addition to improving regional connectivity, this development would enhance the socioeconomic standing of the Balochis in the area and cultivate the natural riches of region. The third naval base in nation is Gwadar Port, which is significant from a strategic standpoint. India threatened to shut Karachi during the 1999 crises and actually did so during the war in 1971. Gwadar, which is 450 kilometers west of Karachi, offers vital strategic depth.

China Receives Control Over Gwadar Port

China first shown interest in the region's development in 1999. After several unsuccessful attempts to establish a deep-sea port in Gwadar, China offered to provide technical and financial support to bring the project back to the life. Although it did not materialize at first, in 2001 Pervez Musharraf convinced Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Prime Minister, to support Pakistan in return for installation of a Chinese radar station. The port took 72 months to build, starting on March 22, 2001, and costing \$248 million in total. The continuous war on terror prevented any development on the facility, even though Chinese engineers were ready to work on it. Eventually, a groundbreaking ceremony was place on March 22, 2002. Shaukat Aziz said during the event that they anticipated Phase I of the project to be finished by 2005. Due to delays, the original scheduled completion date for the first phase of this port's construction was rescheduled to June 2006. Additionally, price was changed.

From US\$243 million to US\$298 million, it increased. Hiring operators for the port's management and operations following Phase I development was also envisaged. Thus, on June 12, 2005, Pakistani government released an Expression of Interest and Requests for Proposals. Six months later, on the February 6, 2007, Pakistan and the Port of Singapore Authority (PSA) inked the management agreement for the port.

There were two factors at play when China was not given operational control over the port at that time. First, it would have displeased the US, which was an ally at the time. The second is that because of the precarious security conditions in Baluchistan at the time, China was reportedly unwilling to dedicate itself fully to this initiative, according to the Indian media. The four container berths were constructed as a consequence of the PSA agreement. This involved building two oil terminals, one grain terminal, one approach canal, and one bulk cargo terminal. A variety of advantages were granted to the PSA, such as a 20-year corporate tax exemption, duty-free imports of construction equipment, and a 40-year duty waiver for the export of bunker oil. But PSA withdrew its further investment in the port for two key reasons. Security came first. A fresh insurgency campaign was launched in the province on August 26, 2006, following the murder of Nawab Akber Bhugti, the nationalist leader of Baluchistan. The second was the government's refusal to provide PSA with 550 acres of land for construction of site and Supreme Court stay order prohibiting any foreign company from receiving property for Gwadar port. Similarly, Pakistan's Navy refused to evacuate region due to security concerns.

Ultimately, though, PSA was granted a No Objection Certificate (NOC) by Pakistani government, and it was accepted. In February 2013, President House in Islamabad hosted a historic ceremony. The circumstances shifted when China rekindled its interest in advancing and finishing the project and reached a deal with Pakistan to assume management of the port. China Overseas Ports Holding Company, a Chinese company, assumed operation of the Gwadar port in 2013 and will hold it for 43 years. Gwadar Port joined the CPEC program when the two countries agreed on it in 2015. India believes that it is encircled by China's operational authority over Gwadar. The counterargument posits that Gwadar's proximity to the Strait of Hormuz, at just 400 km, provides a shorter path to China, the world's second-largest oil consumer, although China and India are not so strong or weak as to render these arguments particularly convincing (Dr. Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, 2020, pp. 292-305). In this linking, the Chinese Foreign Ministry has defended the decision, saying that it is part of ongoing cooperation between China and Pakistan. India's Defense Minister, A.K. Antony, believes that Pakistan's decision to turn over Gwadar Port to Chinese control is a significant one (Ahmad, 2024).

China's Intentions

China's interests in the growth of Gwadar Port are many. Joint and long-term development projects would boost its bilateral relations with Pakistan. China is also looking into ways to diversify and safeguard its oil routes, access to the Indian Ocean, and imports of crude oil. By 2003, China's purchases of crude oil accounted for 51% of its overall imports from the Middle East. China was forced to look for other routes due to an increase in piracy in the Strait of Malacca, which resulted in the usage of Gwadar as a transit/passage facility for the importation of crude oil into Xinjiang

province from Iran and Africa. In this linking, maintaining control of Gwadar guarantees shipping over the current routes. Additionally, it makes it easier to keep an eye on Indian navy operations, US naval operations in the Persian Gulf, and Indo-US maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean (Siddique, 2023).

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

One significant advancement for the region is the CPEC project. It will link Gwadar Port to region of Xinjiang in northwest China via a network of roads, trains, airports, and pipelines. Gas and oil are to be transported 3000 kilometers from the Gwadar to Kashgar. At the beginning, the construction project was expected to cost roughly 46 billion dollars and take 20 years to complete. Both nations finished building the well-known Karakoram Highway in 1982, which crosses the Khunjrab pass to link Islamabad with Kashgar. The roadway was expanded and upgraded in the 2000s to handle a variety of traffic types (Ali, 2015). Initial investment that China planned to make was estimated to be over US\$46 billion, or 20% of Pakistan's GDP (Khan, 2019). This project was expected to cost US\$62 billion in 2020. It's seen as a game-changer in the area. Pakistan is anticipated to see the prosperity as a result of its ability to link major population centers and economic hubs. Thus, the promotion of the inter-civilizational communication through the cultural exchanges, interpersonal interactions, and the coordinating of diplomatic measures are the anticipated results of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). These aspirations were expressed in a joint statement released by China and Pakistan during the Chinese President Xi Jinping's April 21, 2015, visit to Pakistan (Winter 2014).

The CPEC's suggested routes are as follows: a) Quetta, Gwadar, Zhob Qillah Safiullah, Dera Ismael Khan, Peshawar, Khunjrab, & Kashgar. b) Dera Ismael Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Kashgar, Khunjrab, Peshawar, Gwadar, Ratodero & Sukkar) Multan, Sukkar, Hyderabad, Islamabad, Kashgar, Lahore, Khunjrab, and Karachi-Gwadar. In addition to connecting China & Pakistan, this communication network that makes the Silk Route more useful for China's trading with the Persian Gulf's abundant resources. This will particularly assist China in quickening development initiatives in the province of Xinjiang, where the political authority of nation is being challenged by the separatist movement of native Uighurs. China and the Persian Gulf will be closer together by 1300 kilometers along the CPEC's projected route, which would cut their current 2500 kilometers apart. China is anticipated to get extremely favorable financial rewards from this. Infrastructure developments in China will make use of Chinese labor and equipment, creating a significant number of work possibilities. Thus, when completely completed, this corridor will play the crucial role in safeguarding its access to markets and resources by offering a different route to the Malacca Strait, which is used to obtain access to the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. Thus, on May 11, 2015, the Gwadar handled its first private cargo ship.

Energy Projects Under CPEC

The Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park was built by Tebian Electric Apparatus Stock Co Ltd of China with the goal of developing 100 megawatts of energy, which is something that Pakistan sorely needs. Its launched-on May 6, 2015, and is governed by the Punjab government. Nine days later, on May 15, Jhimpir (Thatha) saw the official opening of a 50-megawatt windmill project by the United Energy

Group. A financing agreement was also signed by SK Hydro (Private) Ltd, EXIM Bank of China, and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd for the 870-megawatt Suki Kinari hydropower project. China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Limited also actively pursued land acquisition for 720-megawatt Karot Hydropower project, with December 2015 closure goal date. About the industrial sector, Pakistan's steel and cement companies stand to gain the most. It was anticipated that China's significant investment will directly contribute to the GDP growth of more than 6% in FY16-18. For the machinery of intense coal-based power plants, it is twenty percent less. It was expected that would boost GDP growth above 6%. A 15,000-megawatt coal-based power station, or around 74% of current capacity, was part of this initiative. On the other hand, this investment has enormous indirect effects, particularly in terms of guaranteeing the private sector a steady supply of electricity.

CPEC's Importance to China

Thanks to the CPEC project, China now enjoys direct access to the Indian Ocean. China's present maritime transportation distance is reduced from 12,000 kilometers to 3,000 kilometers thanks to Gwadar Port, which acts as a vital center for the country's energy and oil transit needs from West Asia. This is crucial as pirate activities made the Malacca Strait dangerous. Gwadar's connection to Indian Ocean lessens China's susceptibility to interruptions in its trade routes (Amir, 2016). China's Belt and Road Initiative in Pakistan revolves around the CPEC. It is the biggest and first investment made by a regional or extra-regional nation in Pakistan. Additionally, this approach will cut the shipping time from 45 days to 15 days. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) holds great economic significance since it stimulates economic growth and expansion its territorial integrity, and promoting economic and diplomatic ties with other regional actors. Furthermore, because of CPEC's improved infrastructure, heightened security & production of desperately needed energy, private investment is anticipated to rise. With a cumulative impact of investments from 2016 to 2018, the country's GDP was predicted to increase by 0.5% as a result of these private investments (Ramay, 2016).

Reservation of India in Relation to CPEC

Consequently, India has been vocally opposed to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) since its inception, citing the corridor's path as passing through the disputed Northern Area of Pakistan. The US supported this attitude. Thus, regardless of whether the foreign investment has a political motivation or not, the strife in Kashmir has always made India and Pakistan leery of any significant foreign investment into the region. It is important to note that both Indian-controlled Kashmir and the northern region of India that borders Pakistan lack even the most basic infrastructure. With increasing local investment in rail, road, hydro, and Gwadar Port, the estimated local component of this investment was 18 billion dollars are shaped by its strategic imperatives, including managing the implications of the Sino-Pak partnership. Any growth in the region will only help the locals and create much-needed jobs. James Mattis, the US Secretary of Defense, controversially entered the CPEC conflict by claiming that "One Belt, One Road" passes through contested land. Thus, this was obviously the reference to the Gilgit-Baltistan section of the CPEC route. India can gain from the

region's rapid development as well, as the CPEC is an inclusive strategy and a part of China's Belt and Road Initiative.

CONCLUSION

The China and Pakistan are dedicated to advancing their own economies while preserving their sovereignty. There is great geostrategic significance to the strategic collaboration between China and Pakistan in development of Gwadar Port and the establishment of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The deep-water port at Gwadar Port, the region's strategic location, and the need for the landlocked Central Asian governments and China's Xinjiang province to have access to the sea for their products have all contributed to the CPEC's increasing significance. Pakistan may promote economic expansion and strategic alliances with other nations over Gwadar. It will lessen Pakistan's susceptibility to Indian aggression threats and increase Pakistan strategic depth by 460 kilometers from east to west. In addition to having the potential to bring about the significant commercial and economic benefits, the massive projects in question will strategically provide Pakistan significant power over India in the entire region. In this connection, Chinese presence will discourage Indian territorial claims to Pakistan's northern regions. Thus, both Pakistan's economy and security would benefit from this.

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