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# Gilgit-Baltistan A Gateway In China Pakistan Relations: An Overview Of Constitutional, Political, Strategic And Economic Dimensions

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The study focuses on the constitutional, political, strategic and economic dimensions of Gilgit-Baltistan. With an analysis of the history and constitutional development, the Presidential Order 2009 of Empowerment and Self Governance, a hybrid provincial setup in Pakistan with minimal powers of representatives initiated as the panacea of its issues, GB Order 2018 and current challenges for autonomy, geo-strategically important region, the whole Economic Corridor is based on; but has no say in parliamentary committee on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are discussed. The study concludes by suggesting some policy measures to improve the political institutions, relative autonomy and self-governance, strategic aspects and economic rights of Gilgit-Baltistan.

## INTRODUCTION

Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) has been run by the (temporary panacea of) reforms packages, LFOs, Presidential Order (PO) 2009 of Empowerment and Self Governance and GB Order 2018. There are still many challenges for autonomy of GB. Since the genuine power rests not with the Chief Minister (CM) or elected assembly but with the governor or Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan. The people of GB rejects joining with Kashmir and urges to be transform their region into Pakistan as its fifth province. The government of Pakistan rejects their calls for incorporation in light of the fact that it would imperil its appeals for the entire Kashmir issue to be settled by UN resolution. Geo-strategically important region, the whole Economic Corridor is based on; has no say in CPEC projects and parliamentary committee on CPEC. Nobody is there to defend its rights. Before discussing its constitutional, political status, strategic importance and economic issues, it will be pertinent to familiarize the readers with the salient features of the area, including its geography, demography, geo-strategic importance, potentials,

resources and administrative aspects, so that the problem is better understood. The whole region of GB was ruled by Sikhs after that it was under the Dogras till 1860. After the thrashing of the Sikhs in the First Anglo-Sikh War, this region turned into a part of the princely state called Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Since 1846 kept on under the Dogras. In 1877, to limit Russians, the British India Government, as a suzerain power of princely state J&K established the Gilgit Agency including Hunza and Nagar, Gilgit Wazarat, Punial Jagir, governorship of Kuh-Ghizer, Yasin, Chilas, and Ishkoman. GB was the frontier province of J&K in 19th century during Dogra occupation. The populace in GB saw itself to be ethnically not the same as Kashmiris and detested being ruled by the Kashmir state. On 29th March 1935, the British government took control of Gilgit Agency for 60 years. It continued as princely state. Provisional leases of certain areas were given to the British till 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1947. The area was divided into Wazarats.

- Ladakh Wazarat
- Gilgit Wazarat.

Ladakh Wazarat had five seats in state government while Gilgit Wazarat had no representation in elections of 1934, 1937, 1941 and the last assembly that was terminated. On 1st August 1947, the British Government returned that area back to the J&K state government. Hari Singh appealed to India for help and signed the accession, which was not supported by the people. Under the local Rajas and Mirs, the Muslims revolt was erupted against the government and the entire region of GB got liberation on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1947. Then Shah Rais Khan constituted interim government and Pakistan government also supported it. This was the first self-government. That government worked for sixteen days only then a junior commissioned officer was appointed as a political agent to deal the state affairs by the Government of Pakistan on November 16, 1947. In April 1949, to legitimize its control and for the administrative control of GB, the Government of Pakistan signed the “Karachi Agreement” with the government of AJ&K without the consent of any representative body from the GB as there was no representation from Gilgit Agency. A separate Ministry of Kashmir Affairs was created. It was kept as a secret document and revealed for the first time in the Verdict on Northern Area (current GB) by the High Court of Azad Kashmir in 1990s. GB was linked with Kashmir to gain the help in case of referendum on Kashmir. The administration of GB was entrusted to Pakistan under the resolution of UN. It has been treated as administrative unit of Pakistan since “the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) Resolutions.” Although the name of GB and AJ&K is not expressed in the article 1 of the constitution of Pakistan that defines the territory of the state, they form the part of Pakistan. The clause (d) of article 1, the territory of Pakistan includes “such states and territories as are or may be included in Pakistan whether by accession or otherwise.” (Constitution of Pakistan) Under the UNCIP Resolution GB and J&K are territories otherwise included. This position was accepted by India through the cease fire agreement

1949, Tashkand Agreement 1966 and Shimla Agreement 1972.(Gillani, May 2011, p. 9).

## **METHODOLOGY**

It is a historical, descriptive and analytical research. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to reach at any conclusion.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objectives of the study are:

- ❖ To understand the current constitutional status, geo-strategic and geo-economics importance of the region in China Pakistan relations.
- ❖ To analyze the challenges regarding its autonomy.
- ❖ To discovers the opportunities created by the CPEC.
- ❖ To find the policy options for the Federal Government of Pakistan.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The geo-strategic significance of GB increased initially with the construction of Karakorum Highway (KKH) and now further increased due to the CPEC. CPEC certainly will be a game changer for the whole country and likely to bring a lot of infrastructure development and business development opportunities for the people of GB too. But there are several challenges to CPEC in GB which cannot be ignored. Because this the region on which the whole Economic Corridor is based;still being run by the PO and waiting for its future fate. India's so-called claim and terming it to be a disputed territory, US secretary of defence support of Indian claim, GB's geographical proximity with Afghanistan through Wakhan strip and known history of sectarian issue in GB remains a major threat and cause of concern for the federal government of Pakistan. Constitutional status of GB can be exploited by external powers. Keeping all these challenges in mind; this is need of hour that federal government must review constitutional status and mitigate constitutional, political and economic deprivations of the region.

## **GEOGRAPHY OF GILGIT BALTISTAN**

GB lies at the extreme north of Pakistan with the border of Afghanistan, China and India, and blessed with three of longest glaciers of the world outside the polar regions, five of 8,000 and more than 50 peaks over 23,000 ft (7,000 meters). In the north, it shares border with Xinjiang Province of China, in the west with Chitral, and in the south with Kaghan, Kohistan and kalam. Towards the East are the territories of Laddakh, Indian Occupied Kashmir and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K). It joints the important mountain ranges of Himalayas,

Hindukash and Karakorum. It has also K-2 which is the second highest peak of the world. It is linked with rest of the country via Karakoram Highway, also known as Silk Route which starts from Hassan Abdal and ends at the Khunjerab Pass, from where it enters China. It is divided into two units of Gilgit and Bultistan. Its capital city is Gilgit.

It's an estimated population was 1,800,000 in 2008. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics conducted the census in the two territories, but it mentioned that census results of AJ&K and GB have not been included in the census results. (www.pbscensus.gov.pk, 2017) The population is 100 percent Muslim, predominately 40 per cent used to be Shias, 25 per cent Ismailis, who are close to the Shias, followed by 35 percent Sunnis. (Karakoram province or Gilgit-Baltistan, 2009) Shena, Balti, Brushaski, Khowar and Wakhi are the main languages, spoken in different areas. It covers about 29,814 square miles (m<sup>2</sup>) area (about six times larger than AJ&K, which holds only 4,144 m<sup>2</sup>) (Gillani, May 2011, p. 9) of which 94% is snow clad mountains and glaciers. Around 4 % of region, spreading over 2900 square kilometers (km<sup>2</sup>) is covered with forests. Due to rugged mountains and severe weather conditions, the total cultivated area is restricted to only 1.8 %.

## ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

The GB is Administratively consisting of 10 districts (and twenty-three tehsils) within three divisions.

- Baltistan Division consist of four districts Skardu, Kharmang, Shigar and Ghanche.
- Gilgit Division consist of four districts Hunza, Nagar, Ghizer and Gilgit.
- Diamir Division comprised of Astore and Diamir.



(Gilgit Baltistan – List of Tehsils, Districts and Divisions, 2017)

Astore was separated from Diamir District in 2004 (Dawn, 2005) In 2015, via amendment in GBESG 2009, four districts Shigar, Kharmang, Hunza and Nagar were announced. Previously Hunza and Nagar were single district with the name

Hunza-Nagar and Kharmang was with Shigar district. The number of districts has now rose to ten.(Sost Today, 2015)

## POTENTIALS

GB is endowed with a high development potential in livestock, tourism, forestry, minerals, gemstones, energy, and human resource small and medium enterprises, the social sector. (Hussain S. A., 2013) According to an estimate, GB has the capacity to produce 40,000 MW electricity. The Diamer-Basha Dam Project 4500 MW is under consideration. With generating capacity of 7,100MW Bunji project, 2,500MW Thungus and 2,500MW Yalbo project can change the economy. Additionally, any displacement of population or resettlement will also not be involved in these projects. Power needs of Pakistan can be met by the development of only three run-of-the-river projects on the Indus. (Shigri A. A., 2016)

## CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The status of GB has been changed and upgraded gradually since creation of Pakistan. Various reform packages like Northern Area Council 1970, Legal Framework Order 1947, Northern Area Legal Framework Order 1994, and Supreme Court Order 1999 were adopted by successive governments to improve the administration to accommodate the local population. In this regard, the major step was taken in September 2009 when Northern Area Legal Framework Order 1994, replaced by new reforms package Gilgit Baltistan Empowerment and Self Governance Order 2009 (GBESGO 2009) signed by President Asif Ali Zardari was offered for giving them maximum administrative internal autonomy. Northern Areas was renamed as Gilgit Baltistan. Under this order, rules of procedures can be formulated by the GB Assembly. In their own jurisdiction, assembly and council entrusted to legislate upon internal matters.

In 2018, PML(N) government by annulling PO 2009, announced a new Gilgit Baltistan Reform Order 2018. In this package, all powers practiced by the Gilgit Baltistan Council including hydropower, mineral and tourism sectors are switched to Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly. (Abbas, 2018), (Bhatti, 2018) As per GBESGO 2009, Council of Gilgit Baltistan was comprised of the PM of Pakistan, the Governor of GB, the CM of GB, six members from the members of parliament and federal ministers, nominated by the PM, a member provided by the federal minister for Kashmir Affairs and GB, six members elected by the Assembly with the procedure of proportional representation by a single transferable vote. (Hussain A. , 2009, p. 14) On 55 subjects, given in 3<sup>rd</sup> schedule GBESGO 2009, legislation had been done by this council. This council was organized in such a way, that it had not really represented the people of GB. It was comprised of the people nominated by the federal government. As chairman of the council was prime

minister of Pakistan and deputy chairman of the council was governor. While, federal minister for Kashmir Affairs and GB remained the non-voting member. Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly is renamed as Gilgit Baltistan Assembly. Chief Court is renamed as High Court. There will also be provincial service commission and a provincial Auditor General. Still GB is non-voting, invited member in all constitutional bodies like National Economic Council (NEC), Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), Council of Common Interest (CCI), National Finance Commission (NFC), and Indus River System Authority (IRSA). (Khan, 2018) The appointments like Governor, Chief Justice, Chief Election Commission, Auditor General and Chairman of Public Service Commission can enhance credibility to provide relief to people like people of other Provinces and Pakistan.

## **GILGIT BALTISTAN ASSEMBLY**

Gilgit Baltistan Assembly previously known as Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA) is comprised of thirty-three seats. It is a unicameral body.

- Twenty-four members are directly elected by the adult franchise.
- Six women are elected on reserved seats.
- Three professionals and technocrats are elected on the pattern of reserved seats in Pakistan. (Hussain A. , 2009, p. 13)

GBLA was created through a PO 2009. In subsequent elections, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won and completed its five-year tenure. To conduct free and fair election, a caretaker government comprised of twelve-member cabinet was set up on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2014. General election was held on 8th June 2015. Six members are elected from Skardu, four from Diamer, three from Hunza Nagar, three from Gilgit, three from Ghanche, three from Ghizer and two from Astor. PML-N won on 16, PPP 2, ITP 1, PTI 1, JUI F 1, MWM 2, BNF 1 seats in the assembly. See table below.

### GENERAL SEATS 2015

S.No.	Name	Constituency	Party
1	Jafarullah	GBLA-1 Gilgit-1	PML(N)
2	Hafiz Hafeez ur Rehman	GBLA-2 Gilgit-II	PML(N)
3	Dr. Mohammad Iqbal	GBLA-3 Gilgit-III	PML(N)
4	Dr. Muhammad Ali Haidar/ Javed Hussain	GBLA-4 Nagir-I	ITP/PPP
5	Rizwan Ali	GBLA-5, Nagir-II	MWM
6	Prince Saleem Khan	GBLA-6, Hunza - I	PML(N)
7	Akbar Khan Taban	GBLA-7 Skardu-I	PML(N)
8	Kacho Imtiaz Haider Khan	GBLA-8 Skardu-II	MWM/PLM (N)
9	Fida Muhammad Nashad	GBLA-9 Skardu-III	PML(N)
10	Mohammad Sikandar Ali	GBLA-10 Skardu-IV	ITP
11	Iqbal Hassan	GBLA-11 Skardu-V	PML(N)
12	Imran Nadeem	GBLA-12 Skardu-VI	PPP
1	Farman Ali	GBLA-13 Astore-I	PML(N)
14	Mr. Barkat Jamil	GBLA-14 Astore-II	PML(N)
15	Mr. Shah Baig	GBLA-15 Diamer-I	JUL(F)
16	Mr. Janbaz Khan	GBLA-16 Diamer-II	PML(N)
17	Haji Haider Khan	GBLA-17 Diamer-III	PML(N)
18	Muhammad Wakeel/ Imran Wakeel	GBLA-18 Diamer-IV	PML(N)
19	Nawaz Khan Naji	GBLA-19, Ghizer-I	BNF
20	Fida Khan	GBLA-20 Ghizer-II	Independent/ PML(N)
21	Jahanzeb Khan	GBLA-21 Ghizer-III	PTI
22	Muhammad Ibrahim Sanai	GBLA-22 Ghanche-I	PML(N)
23	Ghulam Hussain	GBLA-23 Ghanche-II	PML(N)
24	Mohammad Shafique	GBLA-24 Ghanche-III	PML(N)

#### TECHNOCRATS

1	Aurangzeb Khan	Gilgit (Technocrate-1)	PML(N)
2	Maj (R) Mohammad Amin	Ghanche (Technocrate-2)	PML(N)
3	Capt (R) Mohammad Shafi	Gilgit (Technocrate-3)	ITP

#### WOMEN RESERVED SEATS

1	Shireen Akhtar	Ghanche	PML(N)
2	Nasreen Bano	Astore	PML(N)
3	Sobia Jabeen Muqadam	Diamer	PML(N)
4	Rani Atiqah Ghazanfar	Hunza	PML(N)
5	Bibi Salima	Gilgit	MWM
6	Rehana Ibadi	Skardu	ITP

Table is prepared by the researcher.

Haji Muhammad Wakeel (PML-N), Provincial Forest Minister passed away in May and GBLA-18 Diamer-IV seat became vacated and party ticket was given to his brother Imran Wakeel. The by-decision was held in July 2016. The GBLA-4 Nager-I seat was won by Javed Hussain (PPP) in by election. It was vacated in February 2017 after the death of Muhammad Ali Sheikh (ITP) Independent candidate Fida Khan won from GBLA-20 has joined PML-N. The members of GB assembly elect Speaker, Deputy Speaker and CM with majority votes. The members of house can do legislation for 61 subjects, provided in the 4<sup>th</sup> schedule of the PO of GBESGO 2009. *Data source:* (www.gilgitbaltistan.gov.pk, n.d.), (Dunya News, 2016), (www.electionpakistani.com), (Pamir Times,, 2016), (The

Express Tribune, 2016), (www.pakinformation.com), (www.geo.tv, 2017), (Outpost, 2015), (hunzanews.net)

### **ELECTION 2015 PARTY POSITION IN GB LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

<b>Party</b>	<b>General Seats</b>
Pakistan Muslim League (N)	15+1=16
Majlis Wahdat ul Muslimin	2
Islami Tehraik Pakistan	2
Pakistan People's Party	1
Pakistan Tehraik Insaf	1
Jamiat Ulmai Islam (F)	1
Balvaristan National Front	1
Independents candidate from GBLA-20 Ghizer-II later joined PML (N)	0

(www.electionpakistani.com)

### **THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE**

The constitutional structure has three-tiers.

1. The first tier is that all legislative and executive authority in the matter of foreign affairs, foreign trade, currency and defense including implementation of UNCIP resolutions lies with the federation.
2. Second tier was the GB Council. They had decision-making and exclusive legislative power over the items included in the List of Legislative Council.
3. The third tier is legislative assembly and the government of GB. "The Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly has the legislative power over the Assembly Legislative List with all residuary powers belonging to the Government of Pakistan". (Gillani, May 2011, p. 10)

The Executive and legislative power over the Council of Legislative List was vested formally to the Council. But the GBESGO 2009 especially stated that the executive power of the Council lies with the Chairman, the PM of Pakistan who appoints six members out of the fifteen members GB Council from among the member of the parliament and the federal ministers. None of them takes the oath under the GBESGO 2009. Therefore, they were not answerable before the Council and Legislative Assembly of GB or the Parliament of Pakistan. More over the powers were vested to the Pakistan Government indirectly and directly through the Council and GBESGO 2009 stipulates that the Government of Gilgit-Baltistan will use their authority. The six members elected by the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly practically had no role in decision making, policy making and in any matter on the Council Legislative List. The Council was manned by bureaucracy of



Federal Government and was dealt from Islamabad. The powers were given to the Minister of Kashmir Affairs and GB under the rule 9 (4) schedule 2 of the rules of Business of 1973 of Government of Pakistan. That Ministry controls and regulates the administration of the territory directly. If the matter falls within the responsibility of the Government of GB, then effective authority is exercised by the senior member of Civil Services such as Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary, Secretary of Finance and Health, DIG Police and Auditor and Accountant General. Furthermore, "The Northern Light Infantry, which was mainly manned by locals, is now increasingly manned by 'outsiders' because the locals, mostly Shias, are no longer trusted. All prominent bureaucratic positions are held by Sunnis from NWFP and Punjab". (Sood, 2015)

## **GEO-STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE**

Its geo-strategic significance is growing rapidly. It is also an emerging water, energy and trade corridor south to central and western area. The economic corridor that will pass through has further increased its strategic importance. This corridor will provide access to the largest oil reserves located in Central Asian Republics (CARs) and is provoking new strategic debate in the regional and world politics. All three routes alignments pass through GB. Simply, the whole economic corridor is dependent on GB. According to an Indian, "even more crucial than the POK area, has been the Gilgit Baltistan area, and this is the one that does not figure in our strategic thinking, because this is the one that sits on the routes to China and Central Asia". (Sood, 2015) Pakistan Army also is one of the stakeholders in GB regarding troops on border of GB including Siachen Glacier and Headquarter of Force Commander Northern Areas (FCNA). (Hussain A. , 2009, p. 9) GB has a great deal of significance as far as tourism, silk road that connects Pakistan with China. So, the trust of its people on the Islamabad is imperative and need to be won. (Ali, 2016). Holding world's biggest fresh water resources on which agribusiness of Sindh and Punjab relies, an estimated hydroelectric potential of the eight rivers and vast streams goes beyond recent requirements of Pakistan. Undertakings like the Bhasha-Diamir dam further requires that GB must be brought into the mainstream. Its people must be given a voice in decision making in federal structure. (Dawn, Gilgit-Baltistan autonomy, 2009) Indus and its tributaries serve as life line arteries for agriculture and power generation of Pakistan. Though Indus River originates from Tibetan mountains in Indian Occupied Kashmir and enters Pakistan in Skardu District, but bulk of its water originates from the mountain and glaciers of GB. India can effectively regulate or block other rivers, like Jhelum, Nelum and Chenab, but can't do much with Indus.

KKH via GB provides a safe and reliable land route and one of the alternative main supply lines not only to China also offer safer access to CARs across narrow Wakhan strip, which is subject to construction of road. A part of

road link between Pakistan and Tajikistan is completed by the Tajikistan. They expected that the road from Pakistan side would be built too. (gbtribune.blogspot.com, 2013) However, the geo-strategically significant region has no income of its own. It is totally running on aids and grants. There is no tax collection or other income to strengthen its economy and make it stand on own feet. The small income from tourism and Sust Dry Port and so forth goes to the federal government. The financial distribution is a key step for strengthening any Federation. We must keep in mind distribution of resources was one of the main reasons that lead to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. (Mustafa, 2011, p. 12)

National Finance Commission (NFC), award; a step forward for decentralization, provides more noteworthy chances to engaging and serving the economically deprived people through better assistances to decrease poverty. (Mustafa, 2011, p. 3) Except for the development of the KKH, no economic measures have been taken for the development of the region. GB has no voice in NFC, NEC and CCI. Chief Minister and Chief Secretary GB will attend the meetings of the NEC by special invitation. (cabinet.gov.pk), (www.ipc.gov.pk) Hence, it is necessary that appropriate steps should be taken to make GB stand on its own feet.

## **CHALLENGES TO THE AUTONOMY OF GILGIT-BALTISTAN**

The Journey of the people of GB from liberation and then accession to Pakistan was in the expectation of getting the status of Pakistanis. Unfortunately, the government of Pakistan, rather than incorporating this region acknowledged its accession just for regulatory control, characterizing it as an undecided territory of J&K. The area was labelled to the Kashmir dispute and managed through presidential pronouncements. (Shigri, 2016) As a result of Karachi Agreement 1949, GB has a special status in Pakistan federation. Up until now, it has been administered through bureaucratic tool, ad-hoc plans, administrative packages and POs issued by Islamabad occasionally. The political concessions through these packages have not been wholesome and complete yet. Seemingly, in 2009, GB was given a provincial status, yet without right of vote and representation in the Parliament of Pakistan, a big question mark in regard to political rights, citizenry recognition and the future destiny of 1.8 million people of GB. Although it achieved autonomous status by the PO but there are still many challenges for autonomy of GB.

After the approval of Federal Cabinet, GB reforms packages had been promulgated. "These packages were not discussed in the parliament. According to the constitution; the President of Pakistan can issue the ordinance and parliament can approve with simple majority as the Act in 120 days after issuing. That's why the PO had no constitutional and legal bindings for the upcoming governments to continue workings autonomously". (Gillani, May 2011, p. 11) Since GB is not part of Pakistan constitutionally that's why does not have representation in parliament

and in other governmental bodies where decisions are taken regarding federating units. Thus, they don't have anything to do with CPEC ventures. GB does not have representation in any consultative and planning committee of the projects.(Shigri, 2016)All reforms were out of framework and extra constitutional. There is no representation of this territory in the legislative bodies. The representation in NFC and other forums where all Chief Ministers of federating units sit and decide about their reservations is yet to be considered. (Ali Z. , 2017)

## **CPEC**

CPEC is defined as a game changer.The federal government's stated plan is that advantages of CPEC will be given to all the provinces through equitable distribution of projects and resources. CPEC ventures were started with the development of the Gwadar Port and the upgradation of KKH connecting Pakistan with China through GB.Inquisitively,they don't have representation in Parliamentary Committee on CPEC consisting of 22 members. In an answer of a question asked by the researcher, Chairman Parliamentary Committee on CPEC, Mushahid Hussain said that yes, it is not because GB doesn't have representation in National Assembly,yet we invite CM of GB when it is required. Being a vital link in the CPEC, KKH upgradation also bring about scattered stripdevelopment along the roadside. Pakistan-China Friendship Tunnels is constructed in collaboration with China over the Attabad Lake. The 7 km long five tunnels part of 24km long segment of the KKH were built. This part of KKH was damaged because of land sliding at Attabad in 2010. These developments have increased the tourist influx. In summer 2015, more than 600,000 tourists visited GB. (Haider, 2015) During the researcher's visit to the GB, majority of local people and business community working with Xinjiang via this route were found happy for these infrastructure developments.

Billions of dollars required for oil, LNG and coal imports can be saved by initiating hydro energy projects that are low-cost, economically viable and an environment friendly. When the world (including China itself) is weaning away from coal fired power generation and opting for clean, renewable hydro and non-hydro energy like tidal, wave, solar, wind, biomass, geothermal, surprisingly Pakistan is going to acquire pollution generating coal fired power projects. China is world leading country with well-developed technology and vast experience in hydropower. Its Three Gorges dams alone has 22,500 MW generating capacity. China has also series of dams with 15.8 GW combined capacity on Yellow River. Pakistan must learn lesson from China and GB with huge hydropower potential provides best area to invest.

## SHARE OF THE PROVINCES UNDER CPEC

Name of Province	Investment	Percentage	Capacity of Power Plants in MW
Sindh	\$12.33 Billion	36%	10250
Punjab	\$9 Billion	26%	5020
Blochistan	\$7.46 Billion	22%	5360
KP	\$1.8 Billion	5%	9410
AJK & GB	\$3.81 Billion	11%	(in AJK 4029 and in GB 11917)

Data source Hanif Khalid (Khalid H.)

## GILGIT BALTISTAN

Name of Power Plant	Capacity of Power Plants in MW
Diamer Bhasha Hydro Power Project	4,800
Bonji Hydro Power Project	7,100
Satpara Hydro Power Project	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,917</b>

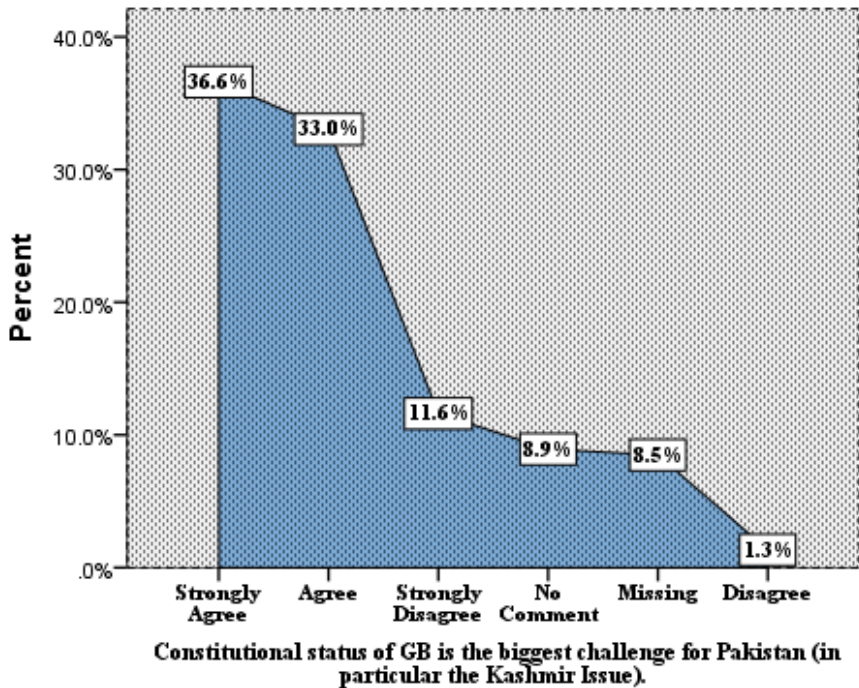
Data source Ahmad Noorani (Noorani, 2016)

The results of the questionnaires are as under: -

### Question No.1

**Constitutional status of GB is the biggest challenge for Pakistan (As it is tagged with the Kashmir Issue).**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	26	11.6	12.7	12.7
	Disagree	3	1.3	1.5	14.1
	No Comment	20	8.9	9.8	23.9
	Agree	74	33.0	36.1	60.0
	Strongly Agree	82	36.6	40.0	100.0
Total		205	91.5	100.0	
Missing	System	19	8.5		
Total		224	100.0		



As graph shows that 74 (36.10%) agreed, 82 (40.00%) strongly agreed. It means total 156 persons think that constitutional status of GB is the one of the biggest challenges for Pakistan. GB is undecided region tagged with Kashmir issue. As the people of GB do not want to go with Kashmir. They want their separate province. As graph shows 3 (1.46%) disagreed, 26 (12.68%) strongly disagreed, while 20 (9.76%) preferred not to comment.

On this question both close and open ended options were provided to the respondents. 35 persons provided their opinion. Five themes are developed here.

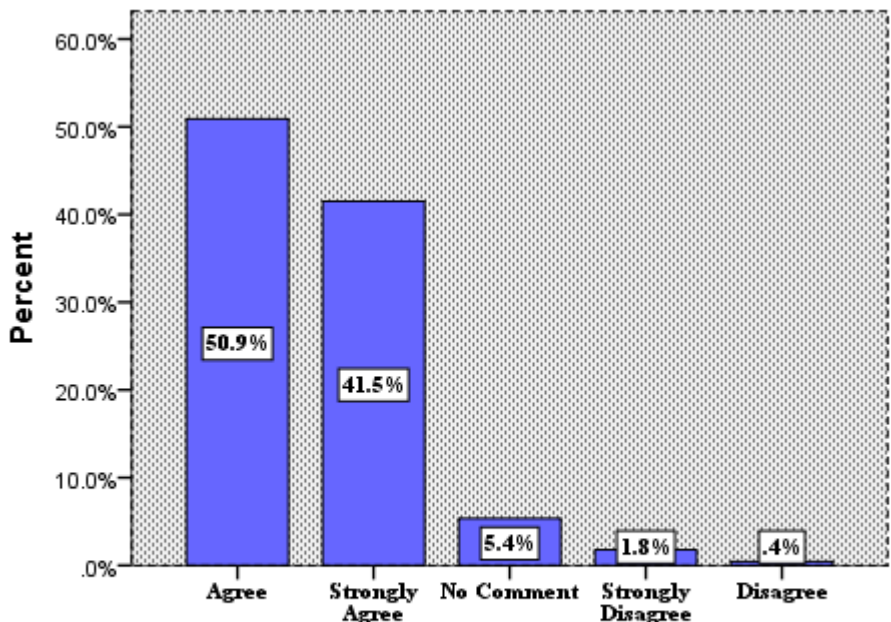
1. According to 3 persons, GB is a 5<sup>th</sup> province of Pakistan now.
2. 10 persons think that it's not an issue. Kashmir issue is actually bigger issue but there are some security reasons.
3. According to 18 persons, yes, it is an issue and it should not be treated with Kashmir. Pakistan should address this issue seriously. GB should be given a status of as province and made part of Pakistan without any delay and confusion.
4. 6 persons want status quo and say that its status need to be remain as it is till the resolution of Kashmir issue. Seat cannot be given in NA. It will impact Kashmir cause that's why not seats in NA. There is also view of a person that global powers influenced Pakistan to create this new province with the view that it will force Pakistan to side line the Kashmir issue.

- According to two persons, they should be given a special representation in both NA and Parliamentary committee on CPEC. GB and Azad Kashmir both should have seats in National assembly. So that they come in mainstream.

**Question No.2**

**How the people of GB will be satisfied when they don't have representation in Parliamentary Committee on CPEC. GB should have representation in Parliamentary Committee.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	1.8	1.8	1.8
	Disagree	1	.4	.4	2.2
	No Comment	12	5.4	5.4	7.6
	Agree	114	50.9	50.9	58.5
	Strongly Agree	93	41.5	41.5	100.0
	Total	224	100.0	100.0	



**How the people of GB will be satisfied when they don't have representation in Parliamentary Committee on CPEC. GB should have representation in Parliamentary Committee.**

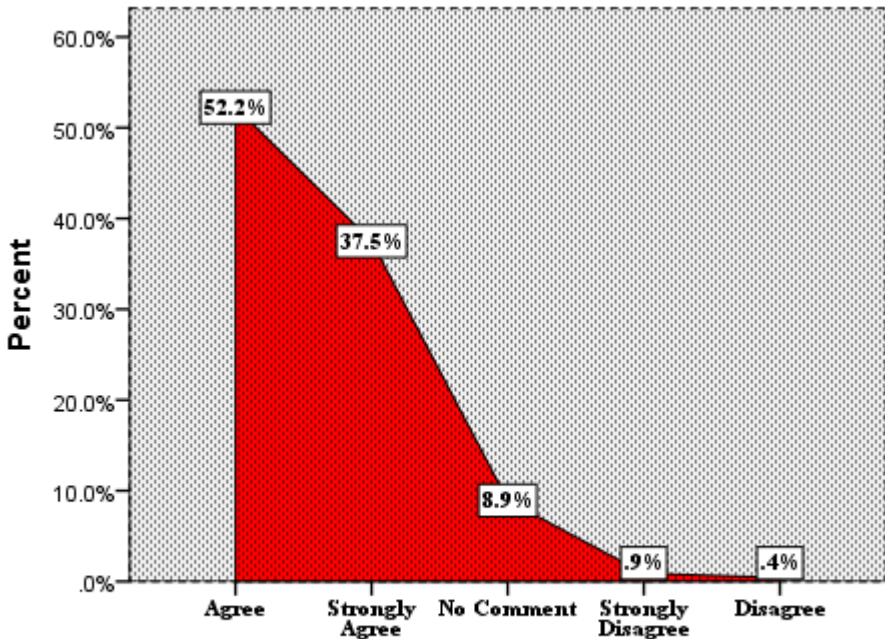
GB has been kept out from the national mainstream and has no representation and opportunities in Federal Government and decision-making

process. GB does not have any seat in parliament for consultation. CPEC which is defined as a game changer passes through the GB. Results shows that 114 (50.89%) agreed, 93 (41.52%) strongly agreed, it means 207 pesons considered GB’s rights and agreed that GB should have representation in not only in Parliamentary Committee but also in the parliament. 1 (0.45%) disagreed, 4 (1.79%) strongly disagreed, while 12 (5.36%) preferred not to comment.

**Question No.3**

**The meeting of CCI is necessary to resolve the internal issues on CPEC. GB should also have representation in CCI.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	2	.9	.9	.9
Disagree	1	.4	.4	1.3
No Comment	20	8.9	8.9	10.3
Agree	117	52.2	52.2	62.5
Strongly Agree	84	37.5	37.5	100.0
Total	224	100.0	100.0	



**The meeting of CCI is necessary to resolve the internal issues on CPEC.**

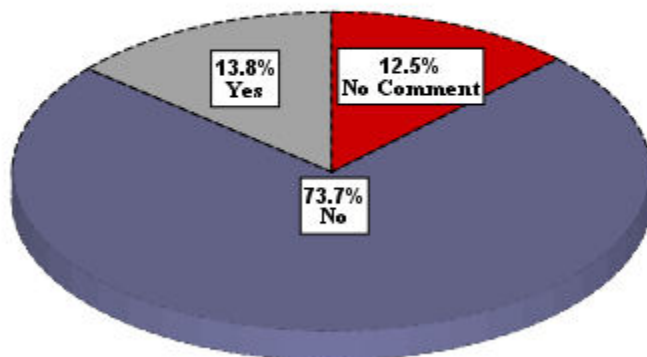
GB has no voice in CCI, NFC and NEC. Chief Minister and Chief Secretary GB will attend the meetings of the NEC by special invitation. As 117 (52.23%) agreed, 84 (37.50%) strongly agreed, it shows that according to 201 persons GB should have representation and internal issues on CPEC must be discussed and resolved in the CCI. only 1 (0.45%) disagreed, 2 (.89%) strongly disagreed, while 20 (8.93%) did not commented.

**Question No.4**

**Do you think security through Special Security Division (SSD) is possible without involving the local people?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	31	13.8	13.8	13.8
No	165	73.7	73.7	87.5
No Comment	28	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	224	100.0	100.0	

**Do you think security through SSD is possible without involving the local people?**



As mentioned above, most of people are not satisfied. The issue of purchasing local lands by the out siders are prevailed in Blochistan and GB. The people of FATA have feeling of alienation. For sustainable development, it need to make sure that all people must be involved, engaged and play their part in these



developmental projects that are ultimately going to make prosperous their country. According to 31 (13.84%) persons security through SSD is possible without involving local people, while majority of people 165 (73.66%) in Pakistan think that local people must be involved to implement and sustain CPEC in long run. Sadly, 28 (12.50%) persons did not comment.

## **FINDINGS**

This study finds that in the political terms, GB has less autonomy than the provinces of Pakistan. Moreover, the liberated territory has been kept out from the national mainstream and has no representation and opportunities in Federal Government and decision-making process. GB does not have any seat in parliament for consultation, to help it in forming constitution and coordination with federation. For example, GB is not considered in NFC, CCI and NEC. It means that all the stakeholders of GB are affected by the decision and policies of federation. The people of the GB always have raised their voice regarding to their deprivation in decent and peaceful manners, but the Government of Pakistan remained indifferent to their demands. It does not solve the issues of GB and put them under the carpet as the government has done from GBESGO 2009, GB Order 2018 that are providing fuel to the flame of nationalism in the region. The PPP lost many major seats including CM Mehdi Shah's seat. Practical measures of transferring powers to the representatives of the GB should be taken.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study reaches at conclusion that, it may not, however, be feasible for Islamabad, to change its stance regarding the matter and incorporate GB in its constitutionally defined territories, because of its obligations with people of J&K, UN, India and international community. But, at the same time, the people of GB likewise seem not to accept the assurances of good times to come anymore. They want to take part in the decisions which affect their future. Any halfway and temporary panacea like observer status in the Parliament, the GBESG 2009, and GB Order 2018 will be unacceptable. A disappointed populace at the end point of the CPEC can disturb the entire project, which will not be good for Pakistan and for GB itself. Without resolution of the legal status of GB, this is impossible.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

The way is to:

- ❖ consider their stance on Kashmir, as the people of GB had decided on Pakistan unconditionally.
- ❖ eliminate the prevailing sense of political deprivation of the people of GB by assuring incorporation of the region with Pakistan. Till

resolution of Kashmir issue, temporary amendment in the constitution of Pakistan should be done.

- ❖ resolve the constitutional status of GB by giving representation in Parliament and all governmental structures. They must have the entire privileges of a citizens of Pakistan.
- ❖ ensure their due rights for economic development under CPEC.
- ❖ consider that the share of Sust Dry Port and after building Diamer-Bhasha Dam, Bunji and Sat Para Hydro power projects royalty should be given to GB.
- ❖ allow GB to impose local taxes on small scale industries, tourism and exploration of minerals to earn revenue to meet the development expenditures.

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