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Snooping into the Belt & Road Initiative: A Comparative Study of Gwadar with Chabahar Port

Abstract

Historically, Sea has been an important tool for supremacy and dominance over nations. The Sea Ports remained important in modern world politics but are getting more multifaceted with an upsurge in world's commercial activities. Moreover, the ports in contemporary era are subjected to materialize two pronged objectives of strategic leverage and an economic gateway. Owing to greater strategic depth in several Asian countries, their access to sea routes through their own land routes is costly. It has obliged them to search for the shortest access to sea routes to gain a competitive edge over their trade competitors. In this context, the development of Gwadar port in Pakistan by China and Chabahar port in Iran by India is driven by competition for geographic control to secure resources and markets and also by fear of strategic encirclement. The two ports, Gwadar and Chabahar, have huge importance, both in monetary and geographic perspective, not only for Pakistan and India but also for China, Iran, and Central Asian Republics (CARs). The paper intends to delve into the importance of these ports in the region of Middle East, South Asia, and Central Asia. Moreover, it also encapsulates its impacts of regional economic integration in comparison.

Key Words: Gwadar, Chabahar, Trade, Middle East, Central Asia, Afghanistan, China, CPEC, BRI,

Introduction

The ports always provide a vibrant network platform for pro-activeness in engaging with regional businesses, economic integration, and innovation. Infrastructural development of ports is acknowledged as cardinal contributor in catalyzing economic growth of a country owing to its marvelous potential in the fields of employment generation, facilitation in trade, regional and extra-regional connectivity¹. However, the regional development attempts to improve the livelihood and socio-economic situation of a region by supporting employment and generating wealth through economic activities². Modern World has witnessed the role of Ports in connecting the regional geographies, promoting business hubs and prosperity. The best examples are the ports of UAE, Singapore and Hong Kong which has transformed these peripheries ports into major trade centers. There is apparent transition in global economic liaisons owing to considerable economic growth of China. Hence, in order to reinforce and replenish her

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economic competence globally, China has introduced innovative framework of ports and Economic Belt diplomacy that is perceived quite challenging for her competitors in Asia Pacific region. Hence, it is leading towards rapid geo-strategic transformation in the region which can be attributed to the fact that the World powers are now redefining their roles and status in the region.³ Moreover, the post-cold war era witnessed the emergence of Mineral and oil rich countries in Asia like 'Central Asia' on the map of world which has changed the political dynamics of the region. In corollary of the events, there is apparent emergence of new alliances and pacts among nations driven by their economic, political, and strategic interests. China's Belt and Road (BRI) activity is a goal-oriented endeavor that can possibly reshape the worldwide economy and transmute the world trade reviving the Old Silk Route. This vision is being translated into Economic Belts both on Land Routes and Water Channels for trade interaction to Asian, European and African Nations. Many governments, multinational development organizations and international corporations welcome the opportunity to support the series of cross-border infrastructure projects. China is spending generally \$150bn a year in the 68 nations on infrastructural development and connectivity (Ports) that have joined to the plan.⁴ The historic and evergreen Pak China friendship was sublimated into strategic partnership by commencing joint efforts over China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which forming a major part of BRI. This flagship project is expected to resuscitate economy of Pakistan and contribute in its development in coming years. The partnership of Pakistan with China in CPEC is a milestone that is expected to make an ardent contribution in resuscitating economy of Pakistan.⁵ There is silent competition between two most competitive and populous countries of Asia over access to Persian Gulf with a competitive advantage over others. This access to Middle East and Central Asia goes through Pakistan and Iran through Gwadar and Chabahar respectively.⁶ China gaining second class economy status after successful revolution in mid-20th century put the world on the edge of Multipolarity.

Establishment of Binary Ports

The two sister ports are located at the entrance of the Strait of Hormuz where 17 billion (estimated) barrels oil passes every day. Moreover, these ports situated at the cross junction of International Sea Communication Line and oil trade route while it connects three major regions of Asia – Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. It is believed that once these ports are operational, then there will be competitiveness for domination of the regional trade.⁷ Pakistan and Iran are working on Gwadar and Chabahar ports respectively with their accolade for their respective projects; however, the objective comparison of both ports gives decisive leverage to Gwadar owing to its geography, depth, and distance related superiorities. India is disadvantageous position as Chabahar does not lie in Indian Ocean where India could have naval reinforcements⁸. Whereas, its proximity to Gwadar puts Pakistan at strategically advantageous position that will further crucify for India with the presence of supposed Chinese navy.⁹

Gwadar Port:

The port at Gwadar lies at the convergence of three regions, namely Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia; and is being developed by China under the

framework of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The port is being transformed into one of the world's largest transit and transshipment cargo facilities.¹⁰ It is about 75 km from Iranian port Chahbahar, in Baluchistan Province with immense strategic potential flagship project of CPEC. It is also located on a strategic location at the junction of the 'Arabian Sea' and the 'Gulf of Oman'. Its significance is determined out of its proximity to a strategically cardinal Strait of Hormuz that is an important Maritime route to oil rich countries. Its connection with Chinese city of Kashgar is established through Pakistan via Korakoram route that manifests almost 2000 km of distance. China is heavily dependent on Gulf oil that provides her approximately 60% of her energy needs. The previously used route is shockingly 16000 km long taking almost three month time for ships to reach the port of Chinghai through the Indian and Pacific Oceans which takes about three months.¹¹ Hence it can be said that traditional route of China is full of time and resources fatigue.

Chabahar:

Chabahar is the Iran's southernmost port city in Seestan- Baluchistan Province, bordering Pakistani Baluchistan and in the Gulf of Oman that is considered the top ingress point to the Indian Ocean. And it is joint venture of Iran and India in order to facilitate Indian access to oil and gas resources of Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asian Republics. Its route is planned via Milak (Iran)-Zaranj-Dilaram (Afghanistan) roads. In this regard, India has invested tremendous endeavors to construct Zaranj and Dilaram roads in Afghanistan that will serve as to join Central Asia with the Middle East. It further envisages exploitation of gas resources of Turkmenistan by laying a pipeline through Arabian Sea that goes through Gujrat-Afghanistan and Iran. This project is a plausible and optimal alternative for India to benefit from TAPI project without hinging upon Pakistan¹². Chabahar port not only opens a gateway for India to Afghanistan, Central Asia, Russia and beyond but also allows it to monitor Pakistani and Chinese naval activities in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf region.¹³

Delving into the Disposition of Counterparts

Gwadar provides China shortest route for her energy imports and other exports as well hence giving China huge advantage over her trade competitors. Gwadar will serve objective of China to have a round the year trade activity and navigation of energy sources with tacit advantage of huge saving of time and distance. Furthermore, it will serve as major export route of China towards Middle East, Central Asia, and European countries by linking it with "21st Century Silk Road Initiative". This worthy expected output has made China to contribute about 80% of the input of Gwadar port development. It is also under consideration to allow China to access naval bases of Pakistan that will consolidate Chinese position in oil rich Persian Gulf. This domination is worthy enough for US and India to be angry and wriggle to sabotage it.¹⁴ Both ports are equally having their significances in present World scenario and can be compared in many ways. Pakistan and India are working on Gwadar and Chabahar ports respectively with their accolade for their respective projects; however, the objective comparison of both ports gives decisive leverage to Gwadar owing to its geography, depth, and distance related superiorities. India is disadvantageous position as Chabahar does not lie in Indian Ocean where India could have naval reinforcements¹⁵. Whereas,

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Creating a Trade Community

Gwadar: Central Asian Republics and Afghanistan

The geographical stand-out of Central Asia has rendered it significant strategic stature in global politics. It is not only a buffer zone between Asia and Europe but also a convenient trade route along energy reserves with wide scope of connectivity. Though Central Asian countries are rich in energy reserves, yet the exploitation of these resources has yet been under performed owing to their landlocked geography. These resources have always tantalized West Asian countries including Pakistan and China. Pakistan has been maintaining good diplomatic relations with these countries since their independence from USSR envisaging access to these reserves through Afghanistan. These routes would latently benefit all concerned countries through their trade potential. Similarly, China's public sector has excessively invested in infrastructural and communication development of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan since mid-1990s. Hence CPEC can be inferred as tacit and implicit extension of it. This connectivity through CPEC will render multipurpose services to China. It will provide China potentially outclass market with an invincible competitive superiority to China for trade purposes at regional and global level. Furthermore, it will break ice of connectivity for Central Asian countries and cultivate Chinese goodwill among concerned countries. That's why CPEC has achieved huge approval rate excluding some envious elements.¹⁷ The conclusion of the summit produced additional \$500 million investment apart from previously pledged 57 billion dollars by Beijing and Islamabad to materialize CPEC¹⁸. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif additionally marketed CPEC before Central Asian Republics to lure their investments in infrastructural development including railways, motorways, and energy projects.¹⁹

Despite the CARs the Afghanistan, another landlocked country is also market for emerging global politics which is full of natural resources²⁰ never been explored.²¹ Afghanistan is dependent on Pakistan for international trade including China, USA, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (ATTA) facilitates trade activities of Afghanistan with rest of the world through Pakistan. However owing to trust deficit on the behalf of Afghan government, there is diplomatic innuendo accusing Pakistan of exploiting trade route and dependence of Afghanistan on Pakistan to undermine Afghanistan. There seems a positive correlation between Afghanistan - Pakistan relations and utility of trade route for Afghanistan.²² Beijing Kabul trade is being done through Pakistan Afghanistan agreement APTTA. In this context future, Afghan trade with China will be mainly depending on Pakistan and CPEC. Given that difficulties for Kabul, Chabahar offers other route to bypass Pakistan to link World especially with India whom Pakistan has been reluctant to permit trade facility to Afghanistan and Central Asia. The alternative route to Afghanistan and CARs could decrease the importance of Pakistani transit route and Gwadar. Hence, these alternates will not undermine the importance of transit it will remain important for India Afghanistan and Pakistan because this is very practically short and cheap route to India,

Afghanistan, and China. Hence there are optimum odds of Sino-Pak collaboration in Afghanistan to neutralize ambitious goals of India to access Central Asia bypassing Pakistan. Furthermore, there can be a possibly covert shenanigan of Iran and India to sabotage Gwadar port; however it is less likely to occur owing to its conspicuous improvidence for Iran in terms of its border security and diplomatic relations.

Afghanistan purports to bear a decisive role in materialization Indian trade agreement of Chahbahar as the major route goes through Afghanistan. However, owing to fragile writ of state in South Afghanistan (Most of the area is controlled by Taliban); the goal achievement odds of the project are not plausible owing to galore security challenges. In other words, the security of Indian trade convoys will heavily depend on discretionary goodwill of Pakistan to not use its influence on tribal chiefs in Afghanistan to attack them. However, the turbulent law and order situation in Afghanistan is equally pernicious to CPEC route in Afghanistan that is prone to Indian designs to sabotage CPEC. Confessional statements of Commander Kalbhushan Yadav are written on the wall.²³ On the other hand, Chabahar also intends to connect with these states by road and rail links which is hoping to use the route to bypass Pakistan and reach Afghanistan and landlocked Central Asia.²⁴ This port would be the gateway for Indian products, Trade, and indeed a means to influence into Central Asia. Iran will not permit India's Central Asian dream to come true at the cost of Iranian interests.²⁵ Iran won't enable India's Central Asian dream to work out at the cost of Iranian interests. China and Pakistan's port at Gwadar will comprehend smoother sailing than India and Iran's alternative.

Engagement with Gulf Countries

The next important region is Middle East which has been very important for World which can be detached into GCC and Iran halves due to its numerous significant geographic and strategic differences. Mostly states can utilize both ports but their ideological and territorial disputes deprive the access/utilization of Chabahar Port but revisionist attitude of turkey and Qatar towards Iran may the geological scenario. Gulf countries have trade partnership with China. In future, trade link with China is feasible with connectivity with Gwadar. Moreover, their clash with Iran does not make any sense to opt Chabahar port for trade that means majority of GCC state going to rely on Gwadar Port. In contrary, Iran's Port Chabahar is still under developing phase that remains mainly disconnected from the road and rail networks within and to other destinations. On other hand, Iran has to conduct its export and imports from china through Gwadar Port anytime rather than long and difficult alternates.²⁶

Approaching the Markets of African Region

China's BRI framework aimed to find market gap across the proposed countries; in this context, Africa is an indispensable market in modern world. The Chinese policy of coalesce growth and beneficial mutual dependence has added value to African markets. Africa can have infrastructural investments of Africa in return of providing African markets to Chinese products. The lucrative potential of this partnership tantalizes both stake holders. Under the economic integration policy, China is building four ultra-strategic infrastructural corridors along the eastern part

of the African continent which could directly link up with CPEC after their cross-oceanic journey to Gwadar.²⁷ Bilateral Business communication will be done crossing India Ocean and expeditedly via port of Gwadar. In short, between the lines reading of this project envisage it to be the corridor of cosmic trade volumes between China and Africa rendering Pakistan an influential status in East African affairs. It opens up new avenues of connectivity, diplomacy, investment, and trade for Pakistan in East Africa where Muslim population can prove a good luck omen.²⁸ This marvelous potential of CPEC has gravitated South African investors and they have demanded allotment of 100 acres of land to set up state of the art industries there.²⁹

Regional Integration and Community of Common Interests

These cousin ports offer a Regional integration of physical infrastructure between South Central Asia and Middle East. Broadly speaking, in this way, the major potential regions of Globe will be integrated to promote peace and prosperity. In this regard, Pakistan's Gwadar port highlights its geostrategic importance. It offers the connectivity between East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, Middle East, and Europe; additionally with Africa by sea routes and land routes. On other hand, indeed this integration shall enhance the regional commercial growth. Gwadar port has liable to offer Central Asian Governments and Afghanistan opportunity to the Indian Ocean and a chance to send out their products and import through southern land routes. Chabahar also intends to connect Iran, India with Afghanistan, CARs, and Russia. In broader sense, all the states are moving forward to establish a community of common interests under the 'economic philosophy' of Belt and Road Initiative for peace and prosperity.

Trust and Mutual Understanding between Countries:

Both Pakistan and China have been enjoying cordial ties tested in ordeals of adversity for several decades. Furthermore, both nations have close and effective working relationship in the areas of cultural cooperation, economy, and military cooperation. This intimacy of relations is further augmented with aligned strategic goals that have resulted in precedential trust and understanding between both nations. Joint venture of CPEC is furtherance of the cooperation in direction of further strengthening of the partnership. Furthermore, Pakistan and China share common regional contender that is India.³⁰ However, this symmetry and chemistry is absent in case of India-Iran partnership where it is most likely to be unlikely for Iran to benefit India on the cost of Pakistan. Long peaceful border with Pakistan, support of Pakistan over Siestan issue, and strong religious bonding of Shia community are the leading reasons that forestall any step of Iran to join anti-Pakistan movement of Modi government. Owing to these reasons, Iran has opted to support Gwadar port that is certainly against the wishes of India.³¹

String of Pearls: Myth or Reality

Mostly scholar from India and America assume the peaceful rise of China including infrastructural development of Ports in Indo-Pacific region a greater strategy of string of Pearls.³² The other, scholars including Chinese Policy makers believe that all such initiatives of establishing and handling infrastructural framework are to promote exports its product and to protect the sea trade. While

India and US took it as a part of great strategy of China, a string of Pearls. Establishment of Gwadar Port is basically shows China's very clear interests to secure and to conduct trade many destination of Africa, Europe, Gulf Region and Central Asian Republics. Moreover, this port provides a very short and vibrant route to maintain its Gulf oil supply and import/ export from Muslim-majority Xinjiang Province.³³ It is also alleged that China also intends to balance the Malacca Strait barrier and to monitor the Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs) from the Persian Gulf as approximately 60 percent of China's energy supplies derive from the Gulf and to control over oil trade links from South Asia, Africa, Central Asia, Gulf and the Middle East.³⁴ Contrary to above mentioned threat, India will definitely use the Chabahar Port for military commitments sooner or later to watch Chinese Presence. By using the Chabahar Port, India will attempt to encircle Pakistan and CPEC deliberately.³⁵ It is blamed by American and Indian that China intends to use the Gwadar for her military purpose which is shocking for their presences and engagement in oil rich Gulf region but Pakistani and Chinese have negated this notion adopting the line that this connecting channel will focus on trade across the regions.

Bilateral vs Trilateral Partnership Agreement

Gwadar Port centered CPEC which is entered in its second phase of development and has started its initial experimental services to major countries like china, Pakistan and Qatar, is a natural alliance between two neighboring countries whereas the Chabahar has been concluded trilateral agreement among India, Afghanistan, and Iran that also experimented it first cargo by Indian wheat to Afghanistan but face difficulties at all stages. Furthermore, Gwadar is the shortest route to Central Asia that can be as useful for India as for China. It might be provident for India to be flexible in order to settle its long standing issues with Pakistan including Kashmir and border management. This settlement of squabbles with Pakistan can provide India ameliorations equal to China in terms of trade and access to global markets; which otherwise will render India incompetent to Chinese products in the markets in terms of prices and service delivery.³⁶

India VS China A Global Perspective of Ports Handling

This is an inchoate venture of India regarding development of a port on a foreign land that is neither reinforced by previous experiences nor strategically reinforced by Indian navy.³⁷ It gives India status of a guest state and navigation of trade will be under observation of its perceived arch rival Pakistan with a strategic advantage. Unlike India, China is well cognizant of such gigantic ventures; moreover, Pakistan has handed over control of Gwadar port to China which is unlikely to happen in case of Chabahar port where Iran shall not give control to India retrospectively. In this context evidence came from the stern stance of Tehran who did not let America to topple her national interests within and facing sanctions for UN. So in the light of stance to America it can be said she will not let India to play vested game on behalf of Chabahar in this region. Given that in comparison to India and Iran China has edge over port handling experience.

Global Engagement at Chabahar: Sanctions on Iran

Iran is still facing economic sanctions imposed by UN owing to her nuclear issue which are unlikely to ease owing to minimum prospects of ice breaking between

Iran and USA. Iran still seems pursuing its nuclear program accompanied with anti-America stance over world issues hence purporting prevalence of status quo in US-Iran relations.³⁸ This uncertain situation negatively affects the investors. Hence unlike Chahbahar, Gwadar does not have such issues as there are no economic sanctions over China. Furthermore, any expected move to impede Gwadar through UNO can be vetoed by China. Though Iran had a sigh of relief when US undid embargo on Iran, however, several other restrictions associated with human rights violations and terrorists patronizing are still intact. These sanctions bar American companies and other states to investment or trade with the country. Iran's policies on Israel and its role in the Middle Eastern crisis are at complete odds with those of the West. Gwadar however, has no such problems.

Conflict of interest over Partnerships: China and Pakistan are bilaterally engaged to advent a community of common interest in regions of world. In other words, we would say both strategic partners having same agenda over the years since their independence. Nevertheless, their relations went odd, even bad times of Pakistan being ally of Western Block that eventually against communist bloc. Pakistan let CPEC will help china to promote its economic integration with rest of Asia, Europe, and Africa rather than become hurdle; hence it will revamp Pakistan's feeble economic structure and Gwadar will assistance Pakistan to accelerate trade with both Republic of China and the Middle East. However, on other side, the Iran-India and Afghanistan dynamic is different as these state having different religion (Islam/ Hinduism) and Global imperatives. Tehran is attempting its level best to come into the mainstream Global arena by quickening and promoting the trade to put its stuck monetary wheel back on track while India considers herself emerging power in Asia that at one stage there might be possible conflict of interest divorce. Iran will not agree to India's Central Asian dream to be concluded at the cost of Tehran geopolitical interests. Moreover in Afghanistan may face difficulties to fulfil its dream or role given by America in Taliban controlled Provinces. Given that India's partnership with Iran and Afghanistan is at stake under the unstable Afghanistan and Iran America enmity in this region but on other side, Gwadar at CPEC provides a vibrant facility for India, Afghanistan and ultimately Iran to fulfill their dreams of trade.

Global Interests: Gwadar and Chahbahar

CPEC owing to a Pilot project of BRI promises to unleash limitless possibilities for the economic growth and progress of Pakistan but also meant to enable overland trade across the regions as well.³⁹ Since its announcement it has generated a debated among the international community; thus its economic prospects attracts many countries are now joining it.⁴⁰ Given that Chabahr cannot attract the World Communities than Gwadar while India is very keen to enjoy Chahbahar for her vested interest to encircle Pakistan. Most importantly Iran also ready to joining the CPEC. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani conveyed his wish to Prime Minister of Pakistan to become part of multibillion dollar project on 71st UN General Assembly session.⁴¹ Moreover, Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Mehdi Honardoost reiterated his commitment during lecture in Lahore that "Iran is eager to join CPEC with its full capabilities, possibilities and abilities".⁴² In this context, Iran has offered to lay down rail track and land route from Chahbahar to

Gwadar and use to call Gwadar a sister Port rather than a rival port. This gesture of Iran shows its concerns to establish peace and prosperity in the region.

Challenges for the both Ports

Indian goods will reach Central Asian States through Afghanistan that make these trade convoys prone to deteriorated law and order situation in Afghanistan. In this regard, close ties of Afghan government with India, and huge Indian investment in Afghanistan comprising almost two billion dollars will do little good to neutralize the threats. These areas of Afghanistan are largely controlled by Taliban who have historical conflict of interest with India as the latter supported Northern Alliance against Taliban. Though Gwadar also has security concerns in Baluchistan province, however, the intensity of threat in Gwadar is much lower and state has established its writ to great extent. In other words, it can be said that nuisance value of peace spoilers in Baluchistan is not potent enough to disrupt CPEC.⁴³

Conclusion

The study intends to compare and contrast the two neighboring Ports of South Asia and Persian Gulf in order to find out the prospects of both ports for the integration of physical and economic integration of South Asia, Middle East, Europe, Africa and Central Africa. Owing to ardent significance of both ports, these are desired partners and unaffordable rivals. Hence unaffordable rivalry should be replaced with desired partnership that will give new directions to Pak-Iran relations benefitting both nations in multiple avenues. Pakistan and Iran should not spoil their trust for each other by the dint of third party. In this pursuit, constructive and continued discussions must prevail on the issues of mutual benefit and trust building measures should be taken. Though there are huge prospects of CPEC for concerned countries in term of economic growth, however, its success is heavily dependent on inviolable security provisions. In this regard, the most potent threat is higher vulnerability of Afghanistan as it provides shortest access to Central Asia. Moreover, Pakistan has to seriously and continuously keep an eye on its terrorism torn provinces of Baluchistan and KPK in order to make this initiative successful. It is observed that economic growth by the dint of regional connectivity is the objective of South Asia and neighboring countries. Both Gwadar and Chabahar are quite valuable in pursuit of this objective. Comparatively, though Gwadar has slight advantage over Chabahar, however, both ports can be beneficial for whole region if regional peace is achieved. Hence it entails collective and comprehensive peace making efforts by all countries and seeking cooperation instead of competition to grow. Given that the study had noted these strategically located port may translated the dream of community of common interest and regional integration into reality in future if stated showed economic maturity. Chinese investment in port handling in neighboring states Indians use to take such moves it as cautious of a string of strategically; in reactions beefs up its military clout to compete with its Asian rival. Without a clear economic rationale, Chabahar port might do little more than embroil India in geopolitical games.

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⁸ Mumbai, Kolkata and Goa are the famous ports of India which located in Indian Ocean having the cover of the Indian Navy to ensure their maritime operations.

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¹⁷ Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov talked about CPEC with Pakistan's Sharif in March 2016, underscoring the part of the venture in advancing advancement and flourishing. Berdimuhamedov's eagerness ought not to come as an amazement, as his nation is permitted to utilize the crown gem of CPEC, the recently modernized Gwadar remote ocean port in Pakistan, which gives Turkmenistan access to the Indian Ocean. Tajikistan is likewise looking at access to Gwadar port, as it would be an intersection to associate the landlocked Central Asian state with whatever is left of world. Be that as it may, there is as of now an absence of noteworthy associations, regardless of whether streets or railroads, amongst Dushanbe and Islamabad. At last, Tajikistan may furnish a street connecting Pakistan with other Central Asian nations through Murghab territory in Tajikistan. Yet, that will require the development of another parkway, because

of the last's precipitous location. In 2015, Tajik President Emomali Rahmon and Nawaz Sharif affirmed three new roadway ventures connecting their nations and associated with the more extensive CPEC structure. Delegate Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Ulugbek Rozukulov communicated an also steady position amid his official visit to Islamabad in December 2016. The support of vitality rich Uzbekistan in the CPEC venture can possibly twofold Pakistan's vitality yield for the following six years, guaranteeing the nation with lasting access to power. Kazakhstan is likewise apparently anxious to dispatch joint activities under CPEC In 2015; at that point Prime Minister Karim Massimov featured the significance of the CPEC venture for Kazakhstan and the Central Asian locale.

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²⁷ From the north to south, these are the Ethiopia-Djibouti railroad; the LAPSET Corridor between Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Kenya; the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) crosswise over Kenya and Uganda; and the Central Corridor (CC) from Tanzania to Rwanda and Burundi. Furthermore, there's likewise the 1970s inheritance undertaking of the TAZARA railroad which has as of late been modernized and associates the beach front nation to its landlocked and copper-rich neighbor of Zambia. It ought to likewise be said the SGR, CC, and TAZARA have the genuine probability of establishing the framework for an interoceanic North and South Trans-African Railway spanning the mainland's Indian and Atlantic coasts. For details see. <http://cpecvela.com/cpec-effects-on-regional-connectivity/>.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ <https://par.com.pk/news/african-investors-keen-invest-gwadar>; See also <https://dailytimes.com.pk/36767/south-african-investors-demand-100-acres-of-land-in-gwadar-for-industrial-zone-under-cpec/>.

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³² Under new economic framework china establishing ports evenues around Asia, Europe and Africa to maintain and to promote trade.

³³ <http://cpecvela.com/cpec-effects-on-regional-connectivity/>.

³⁴ Gwadar vs Chabahar, *The Daily News*, October 11, 2015.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Chabahar is a geographical reach for New Delhi, since it is not in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) where India not only has several functional ports (Mumbai, Kolkata, and Goa) but has the shield of Indian Navy also.

³⁸ Which prohibits any Iranian nuclear launch or test.

³⁹ <https://pakobserver.net/52-countries-interested-in-cpec-nawaz/>.

⁴⁰ <https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/these-are-the-countries-hoping-to-become-part-of-cpec.473493/>. See more details <http://www.valuewalk.com/2016/11/uk-france-russia-join-pakistan-china-cpec/>.

⁴¹ “Iran keen to become part of China-Pak Economic Corridor”, *Times of India*, Sep 22, 2016. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Iran-keen-to-become-part-of-China-Pak-Economic-Corridor/articleshow/54462795.cms>.

⁴² Iran keen to join CPEC, *The Dawn News*, January 27, 2017. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1311031>.

⁴³ *The Diplomat*