



**CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR: ASSESSING THE  
TRANSFORMATION OF VISION INTO REALITY WITH A FOCUS ON  
REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY, INNOVATION, AND SECURITY IN  
BALOCHISTAN**

**Seminar**

**6<sup>th</sup> August 2024**



**Centre for Development and Stability**



## **REPORT ON ONE DAY SEMINAR**

**CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR: ASSESSING THE  
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**CONTENTS**

**Concept Note**

**Overture**

**Key Findings**

**Programme**

**Presentation Summaries**

**Impact on the Seminar Goals**

**Impact on the Future Pathways and Actions**

**Picture Gallery**

## CONCEPT NOTE

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a flagship project under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This Project is designed to enhance regional connectivity, stimulate economic growth, and strengthen security cooperation between China and Pakistan. The CPEC has been indicated as a transformative initiative, aimed at revitalizing Pakistan's economy by enhancing regional connectivity, fostering innovation, and ensuring security, particularly in Balochistan.

It is imperative to realize CPEC's vision in Balochistan, a region vital to the corridor's strategic and economic ambitions. Balochistan's distinctive geographical position, vast natural resources, and long-standing socio-economic impediments make it a crucial area for the evaluation of CPEC's effects. Despite of longstanding impediments, CPEC has significantly improved regional connectivity. This transformation has also fostered innovation, with new opportunities emerging in energy, technology, and industry.

The development of Gwadar Port, a key component of CPEC, is intended to transform Balochistan into a regional trade hub, connecting South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Infrastructure projects, such as roads and railways are improving regional connectivity, while energy projects aim to address worst power shortages, promoting industrial growth and innovation.

Balochistan faces significant security issues like insurgency and terrorism, which affect both local communities and CPEC project. Therefore, for the smooth completion of CPEC project, an upgraded management system is required. It is crucial to raise awareness among the people of Balochistan about CPEC's vision.

However, this requires sustained commitment, collaboration, and adaptive strategies to overcome the challenges that persist. The successful implementation of CPEC in Balochistan will not only benefit the local population of Balochistan, but also strengthen Pakistan's position in regional and global geopolitics, ensuring long-term prosperity and stability.

The Seminar on "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Assessing the Transformation of Vision into Reality with a Focus on Regional Connectivity, Innovation, and Security in Balochistan" organized by the CDS, aimed to discuss and analyze the potential for improved cooperation in various sectors, identify the main challenges to the smooth completion of CPEC, and explore the significant role of educational institutions in raising awareness among the youth to acquire the necessary skill set to benefit from CPEC in Balochistan.

## **Overture**

The Centre for Development and Stability (CDS) at Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University (SBK), organized a one-day seminar on “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Assessing the Transformation of Vision into Reality with a Focus on Regional Connectivity, Innovation, and Security in Balochistan” on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024. The event observed the participation of academicians, students, local youth representatives, media persons, and tribal elders of Balochistan. The input from guest speakers on the vision and achievements of CPEC project, with a focus on regional connectivity, innovation and security in Balochistan, led to an informed discussion. This report summarizes the knowledge, discussion, and recommendations presented by the guest speakers during the seminar.

## **Key Findings**

The summary of the one-day seminar is given in following section of this report. However, some key findings of the discussion are listed below:

CPEC aims to enhance regional connectivity, inspire economic growth, and strengthen security cooperation between China and Pakistan, with a focus on Balochistan.

The development of Gwadar port aims to establish Balochistan as a key trade hub, linking South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East.

The development of Gwadar City and Gwadar Port exhibited the progress of CPEC. Additionally, 26 projects, valued at 27 billion dollars, are under negotiation within the CPEC framework, while 27 other projects aimed at Balochistan's social and economic development are actively in progress.

Ongoing security issues, such as insurgency and terrorism, pose significant threats to CPEC project and local communities, requiring improved governance and management.

It is important for educational institutions to integrate CPEC- related studies into their syllabuses and provide training to prepare for future opportunities and challenges.

Effective counteraction against misinformation and propaganda is essential to safeguard the success of CPEC and mitigate negative impacts on the project.

CPEC has the potential to integrate Afro-Eurasian countries and enhance Pakistan's economic and strategic position.

It is important to inform the people of Balochistan that by enhancing regional connectivity, fostering innovation, and addressing security concerns, CPEC has the potential to transform Balochistan into a hub of economic activity.

## Programme

<b>Beginning of the session</b> Recitation & National Anthem	<b>Time</b> 10: 30-10:40 AM
Moderator Remarks	MS Noreen Head of HR Department, SBK Dr. Huma, SBK

S.NO	Guest Speaker	Designation	Topic	Time
<b>1</b>	Dr. Sajida Noreen	Vice Chancellor SBK	Welcome Remarks & The Role of Educational Institutions in Research related to CPEC Projects and Publishing Content to Raise Youth Awareness	10:45-11:10hrs
<b>2</b>	Meena Majeed Baloch	Member of Provincial Assembly, Balochistan	Governance Challenges and Solutions for the Effective Implementation of CPEC in Balochistan	11:10-11: 30 hrs

3	Aetzaz Ahmed Goraya	DeputyInspector General, Counter Terrorism Department, Balochistan	The Role of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in Countering Terrorism and Mitigating Threats to CPEC	11:30-12:00hrs
4	Dr Irfan Ashraf	Director General, CDS	CPEC: Assessing the Transformation of Vision into Reality	12:00- 12:30hrs
5	Brig. (R) Asif Haroon Raja	Patron-in-Chief CDS	CPEC: A Game Changer for Pakistan	12:30-01:00hrs
Interactive Session				1:00- 1:25 hrs
Wrap-up by the Moderator				1:25-1:30hrs
Lunch				1:30-2:00hrs



## **Guest Speakers Profile**

## Presentation Summaries

### **CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR: ASSESSING THE TRANSFORMATION OF VISION INTO REALITY WITH A FOCUS ON REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY, INNOVATION, AND SECURITY IN BALOCHISTAN**

The Centre for Development and Stability (CDS) organized a one-day seminar with the Collaboration of Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University (SBK) in Quetta, Balochistan titled: **“China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Assessing the Transformation of Vision into Reality with a Focus on Regional Connectivity, Innovation, and Security in Balochistan”** at SBK.

The session started at 10:30 am with the welcome address by Dr. Sajida Noreen, Vice Chancellor of SBK. Joining her as panelists were Ms. Meena Majeed Baloch, Member Provincial Assembly (MPA), Balochistan; Aetezaz Ahmed Goraya, Deputy Inspector General, Counter Terrorism Department (DIG, CTD), Balochistan; Dr. Irfan Ashraf, Director General, CDS; and Brig. (R) Asif Haroon Raja, Patron-in-Chief, CDS.

After presenting her welcome remarks, **Dr. Sajida Noreen, VC SBK**, spoke about the significant role of educational institutions in research related to the CPEC project and the importance of publishing content to raise awareness among our youth. She said that this seminar aims to create awareness among students to understand the importance of

CPEC, a cornerstone initiative for regional cooperation and economic development. She further emphasized that educational institutions are the bedrock of knowledge creation and dissemination.

Dr. Noreen stated that in the context of CPEC, educational institutions play a crucial role in several key areas. In this regard, China Study Center was established at the University in 2021. This center will inform our students about Chinese tradition, culture, arts, and help them learn the Chinese language. By engaging in multidisciplinary research, we can contribute to the optimization and sustainability of CPEC projects.

She further said that through rigorous analysis and research, educational institutions can offer evidence-based policy recommendations. This can help shape the direction of CPEC projects, ensuring they align with national interests, local needs, and international best practices. Moreover, scholars and experts can engage with policymakers to provide informed perspectives on critical issues. Dr. Noreen emphasized that it is essential for our youth to be well-informed about the opportunities and challenges associated with CPEC, as they will be the future leaders and beneficiaries of these projects.

Moreover, incorporating CPEC-related studies into academic syllabuses can help build a knowledgeable workforce ready to tackle the challenges and opportunities presented by these projects. Workshops, seminars, and training programs can further enhance the capacity of students, faculty, and professionals, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge.

**Ms. Meena Majeed Baloch, MPA Balochistan**, also shared her insights on the challenges related to governance in Balochistan, and offered

solutions for effective implementation of CPEC. She emphasized the need for a new model and upgraded management system in the province.

While speaking about the importance of CPEC, Ms. Baloch asserted that no one is allowed to sabotage this project, as it represents a red line for Balochistan, due to its potential to generate economic development and prosperity. She stressed the importance of addressing and eliminating the negative behaviors and challenges that disrupted this multi-million-dollar revenue-generating project.

Ms. Baloch said that twenty years ago, the schools, colleges, and hospitals in Balochistan were functional and operating in a far better way than they are now. The existing condition of our institutions is miserable, largely due to terrorist activities. Many educated people, teachers, doctors, professors, and others have left Balochistan in search of a better and more peaceful future for themselves and their families.

Therefore, for sake of development, peace, and prosperity in Balochistan, indigenous people must raise their voices against the devastating activities of terrorists. These activities have severely affected the peace of Balochistan. Moreover, a paradigm shift in the governance system is required to nip this evil in the bud.

Ms. Baloch, accentuated that the people of Balochistan must take ownership of these developmental projects initiated under the CPEC and stand united. As this is inevitable for the success and salvation of Balochistan. She further said that the biggest opportunity has now arrived at our doorstep, and we should be ready to accept and own it.

While discussing the role of people of Balochistan in protecting their land and CPEC project from being undermined by spoilers, Ms. Baloch highlighted the need to prevent attempts to keep people in despair and hopelessness. She also said that provincial government of Balochistan is focused on utilizing the potential of its youth. For that purpose, the provincial government has created 30,000 vacancies and is working on additional projects to train youth in various skills. These initiatives aim to equip young people with the necessary skills to play a significant role in the development of Balochistan.

**Aetzaz Ahmed Goraya, DIG CTD**, talked about the importance of CPEC and underscored the role of CTD, Balochistan in countering threats to the CPEC. He said that the success of CPEC project is incomplete without a stable and secure Balochistan. A stable and secure Balochistan is very important for the success of Pakistan and CPEC. In addition, he highlighted the challenges to Balochistan which in turn sabotaged the CPEC.

Mr. Goraya said that according to a World Bank report, Balochistan possesses natural reserves valued at USD 1 trillion. The development of Gwadar and the CPEC presents significant competition to the International North-South Transport Corridor between India, Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia, and Europe. However, the region faces ongoing challenges due to frequent terrorist incidents, with a ratio of 1.5 incidents per day, resulting in approximately 200 deaths annually. This persistent violence

deters potential investors and perpetuates a vicious cycle where increased security measures further restrict freedom, leading to a deterioration of human rights in the region.

Mr. Goraya further said that propaganda, misinformation, and other devastating activities should be taken into account seriously with the mindset to mitigate them. Moreover, he mentioned that institutions are accountable to the state. However, it must be kept in mind that the armed forces and law enforcement agencies expect mutual respect and are concerned about any actions that may demoralize their efforts.

Mr. Goraya, designated the youth of Balochistan as progressive. He urged students not to form opinions based on fake news and propaganda, particularly those that falsely accuse security forces of cruelty and atrocities. Instead, they should critically inspect incidents and situations, looking into matters deeply. He also pointed out that external facilitators are contributing to terrorist activities inside Balochistan. Their actions are deteriorating the peace in Balochistan and spreading an environment of fear and terror.

While concluding his speech, Mr. Goraya assured that the state of Pakistan and its all security forces are committed to protecting Balochistan. Specifically, the CTD of Balochistan is playing a crucial role in safeguarding the province from the menace of terrorism.

**Dr. Irfan Ashraf, DG CDS**, delivered his presentation on “CPEC: Assessing the Transformation of Vision into Reality,” and emphasized that

progress is driven by developmental projects and investments, highlighting the achievements of CPEC over the past decade. He highlighted that the ongoing projects in Phase II of CPEC, such as renewable energy, technological industries, economic zones, agricultural development, green infrastructure, and educational institutes are focused on disaster prevention.

Dr. Ashraf, further shed light on CPEC's role in promoting growth and development in Pakistan, fostering regional economic connectivity, and strengthening ties between the people of Pakistan and China. He also highlighted the Pakistani government's efforts in Balochistan to dispel misconceptions about CPEC, especially among the youth. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, inaugurated the Gwadar International Airport, which is a key economic hub and, clean water project in Gwadar on July 27, 2023.

He also explained the contributions of Chinese companies like MRDL (a Chinese company working on the Saindak copper-cum-gold project), CCCPK (China Chamber of Commerce in Pakistan), CECPK, and MHD (operating company of the Duddar Lead-Zinc Mining Project) in completion of various projects in Balochistan, particularly in infrastructure, healthcare, and flood relief efforts. Notably, MRDL has invested nearly \$20 million in corporate social responsibility activities, including running hospitals, providing water and power supplies, and supporting flood-affected communities. MHD has also played a significant role in road repair and health care in Balochistan, spending over 20 million rupees on community projects.

Dr. Ashraf concluded by stating that the development of Gwadar City and Gwadar Port showcased the progress of CPEC. Additionally, 26

projects, valued at 27 billion dollars, are under negotiation within the CPEC framework, while 27 other projects aimed at Balochistan's social and economic development are actively underway. He urged the people of Balochistan to recognize their stake in the province's development and resist the influence of hostile entities seeking to sabotage CPEC and destabilize the region.

Following Dr Ashraf's presentation, **Brig. (R) Asif Haroon Raja, Patron-in-Chief, CDS**, delivered his presentation on CPEC: "A Game Changer for Pakistan," while bestowing his presentation, Brig. (R) Haroon briefly explained that the global order is shifting from a western-controlled unipolar system to a multipolar model, driven by the rise of non-western powers like China and Russia. This transition often referred to as the New Cold War, is marked by the struggle of the U.S. and its allies to maintain their dominance against the multipolar initiatives led by BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Brig. (R) Haroon further explicated that CPEC is pivotal in this emerging order, integrating Afro-Eurasian countries and connecting China with South Asia, Central Asia, and Europe. This can reduce the U.S. strategic influence. CPEC also offers Pakistan significant economic and strategic gains, positioning it as an economic hub in the region despite opposition from India, the U.S., and Israel. However, the success of CPEC is contingent on regional stability, particularly in Afghanistan, and the ability of Pakistan to address internal socio-economic challenges and external geopolitical pressures.



An interactive session was held after each presentation, during which participants asked questions and exchanged ideas with the guest speakers. This session provided an engaging platform to the attendees. The session wrapped up around 1:30 p.m. with a note of thanks from Dr. Noreen, VC of SBK, who emphasized that we must all remain vigilant when listening to any anti-state or anti-CPEC narratives and focus on actions that can benefit not only Balochistan but also the whole of Pakistan.

## **Impact on Seminar Goals**

This seminar organized by the CDS with the collaboration of SBK, successfully met its objectives by providing comprehensive presentations on “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Assessing the Transformation of Vision into Reality with a Focus on Regional Connectivity, Innovation, and Security in Balochistan” for policymakers, experts, scholars, local youth representatives, stakeholders, and students to engage in meaningful discussions. The presentation from each guest speaker effectively contributed to the seminar goals.

Participants exchanged ideas and perspectives on how CPEC aims to enhance regional connectivity, stimulate economic growth, and strengthen security cooperation between China and Pakistan, with a particular focus on Balochistan. The dynamic exchange of knowledge fostered by the seminar allowed attendees to delve deeper into the topics, address specific areas of interest, and bridge gaps between theoretical concepts and practical applications.

Additionally, the seminar also presented comprehensive assessment of the last 10 years of developmental projects, highlighting the potential role of CPEC in various sectors for promoting growth and development in Balochistan. It has also briefed the attendees about the opportunities for enhanced cooperation, sustainable development, and inclusive growth in the second phase of CPEC, particularly in Balochistan.

Besides, the seminar also addressed and mitigated negative speculations regarding CPEC, which have often been portrayed as a neo-imperialist or neo-colonialist structure that threatens Pakistan’s economic independence.

Furthermore, the presentations shed light on the challenges posed by miscreants and terrorist activities in Balochistan that aim to disrupt law and order and hinder the smooth completion of CPEC, which is vital for the prosperity of both Balochistan and Pakistan.

In the interactive session, it was emphasized that efforts must be made to prevent adversaries from turning the opportunity presented by CPEC into chaos and destruction. Ultimately, the beneficiaries of CPEC will be the people of Balochistan and Pakistan as a whole.

## **Impact on Future Pathways and Actions**

The seminar's discussions, presentations, and interactive sessions are likely to shape the future strategies, policies, and actions related to CPEC, mainly in Balochistan. The seminar also provided valuable insights that are expected to significantly influence the future direction of CPEC- led projects in Balochistan.

The deliberations highlighted the need for a continued focus on enhancing regional connectivity, fostering innovation, and strengthening security measures. Guest speakers underscored the importance of addressing governance challenges and improving the governance systems to ensure the smooth completion of CPEC projects in Balochistan.

Additionally, the seminar strengthened the important role of educational institutions in preparing the youth with the necessary skills to fully benefit from CPEC. The discussions in the seminar encouraged future initiatives aimed at integrating CPEC studies into academic courses.

The recognition of the need to counter negative narratives and ensure regional stability will likely shape future policies to protect and endorse the success of CPEC. Eventually, this will drive sustainable development and inclusive growth in Balochistan and beyond.

## **Picture Gallery**