

Geostrategic Significance Of Gwadar Port For Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics (Cars), Persian Gulf: Challenges And Impediments

Mustansar Abbas¹, Dr. Ashfaq Ahmed^{2*}, Dr. Saira Nawaz Abbasi³

¹visiting Lecturer At Department Of International Relations, University Of Chakwal. He Is Currently Ph.D Scholar At Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad.

²Assistant Professor At Department Of Politics & International Relations (DPIR) University Of Sargodha, Sargodha.

³Assistant Professor, Cluster Head Of The Faculty Of IR Department Of Humanities And Social Sciences, Bahria University Islamabad.

Abstract

In contemporary world globalization is one of interesting fact of this world. It has broadened the avenues to the economy of this world. Infact it has opened doors towards borderless civilizations. Gwadar port is going to provide a regional as well as international connectivity in near future. Due to its cost and projected future outcomes, this port development specifically and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) generally is thought to be one the major project of Pakistan. This port has the potential to provide a safe and economic route to the traders and also it will promote global shipping in the respective region as well. This port will not only facilitate China but also to the many landlocked central Asian states as well. The paper explains that this port will not only lessen the load on Port Qasim and Karachi of Pakistan but infact will open new avenues to speed up the economic activities for Pakistan. Regional states like United Arab Emirates and Iran take this port of Gwadar as their competitor port. According to them, the port of Gwadar will increase the already existed profit and benefits which are being carried by the ports of Iran and UAE. The US fervor for the noteworthiness assets of Middle East and CARs may cause solid Chinese closeness to the Gulf and Strait of Hormuz and may widen Gwadar's essential significance for the US.

Keywords: Strategic location, Gwadar, Sea lines of communications, Caspian region, Indian ocean

Introduction

Gwadar was a part of Oman till 1958. After that Pakistan purchased it from Oman on 8th September 1958. It was decided to establish a port at Gwadar for the first time in 1964. Geography of Pakistan always supported Gwadar as a central port of this whole region. In 1992, Gwadar point harbor achieved its culmination. The Gwadar remote ocean port undertaking began in June 2002 with the assistance of China. Before the fruition of 2004 first phase of port had been finished (Saeed, 2016). This importance of Pakistan's geography was concisely stated in June 2006 by the then president Pervaiz Musharraf,

“Pakistan provides the natural link between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) states to connect the Eurasian heartland with the Arabian Sea and South Asia... We offer the critical overland routes and connectivity for mutually beneficial trade and energy transactions intraregional and inter regionally”. (Musharraf, 2006)

Gwadar is considered to be Pakistan's economic hub for near future as it has so many advantages. The most important thing about Gwadar is that It's among the deepest sea ports of the world. Its location is also one of the main qualities of this port as it is located very near the passage of Hurmuz through which most of the global trade carried out. Gwadar can assist Pakistan in different ways. First of all, from this point Pakistan can keep on check to the militarily and non-militarily movements of international players and regional powers as well, from Persian Gulf to strait of Hurmuz. Naval Bases at Ormara and Gwadar can also provide safe and secure environment to the surrounding area which ultimately will benefit the smooth flow of trade activities. Presence of US Naval 5th generation fleet and Indian ambitions to make a blue water navy can also be monitored through this point (Ahmad, 2015). In an equivalent test past President of Pakistan expressed, "We as a whole in all are passerby to the creation of history today" (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, 2014). The port of Gwadar has so many advantages over rest of the regional ports, few of them are given below...

- 1) It has a very close presence to boundless SLOCs (Rumley, Chaturvedi, & Yasin, 2007) having a reasonable working environment for all the cargos passing by near to this port.
- 2) It can provide protection and safety to all environment related hazards.
- 3) It is extremely important to landlocked Afghanistan and other regional countries for trade purposes.
- 4) It can easily provide accessibility for the upgrade limit of Heartland and Rimland.

Financial update of Gwadar port

China's Harbor Engineering Company got a handle on this joint endeavor at a shrouded cost worth United States (US) \$ three hundred million. Islamabad likely to pay an aggregate amount US \$ fifty million. Beijing paid the leftovers. The undertaking has been rented to Port of Singapore Authority. US affiliations were compelling in furnishing the port with cranes, forklifts, transport structure, crane sections, tractor and trailer units, releasing framework, security and typical hardware. As shown by memorandum of understanding (MOU) China, Central Asian Republics

(CARs) and Pakistan have legitimately coordinated a wide progress of correspondence foundation from Xinjiang in the east to Caspian Sea in West, joining at the Gwadar Port in the South (Malik & Schultz, 2008).

Likely, Pakistan would not give majority of the systems required to execute the undertaking alone. Private bit should take an interest enough to attempt unmistakable formative exercises. Involvement of remote money related experts will totally be essential as Pakistan would not provide all resources needed for this goliath experience. Beijing is upgrading the port.

Interests of Key Players

Deliberately Gwadar holds an amazing position in Gulf Region as an important piece of the great Game. It has colossal potential results to climb as a provincial center point and a future trans-shipment port. In any case, the changed conditions have a few worries for the overall key players to misuse its possible results less all potential imperatives. China, Central Asian Republics, Afghanistan and other regional states has much to gain from this port.

Chinese Interests

China has a big advantage to use a road network going through Pakistan till the port of Gwadar starting from its western side. It will not only boost up its trade activities in a short span of time but also this route will decrease its distance from 10,000 kms to only 2500 kms. It will also boost up economy and infrastructure development of its comparatively under developed western side as well. Another advantage of this connectivity to China is that it will provide a shortest possible route to reach out resource rich countries Central Asian republic (Jingpo, 2006). Chinese share in the world scanners is about 70% downsized scale wave barbecues, CD players, shoes and toys (Shenkar, 2005). It can easily transport such types of products to rest of the world at a reasonable expense.

Due to a solid and a strong economic size, China is relied on the international economy in year 2025. It provided an unbending support to Pakistan to upgrade Gwadar Port. Chinese support is essential to sustain bilateral geo-key relations. Pak-China relations is not concerned about dollars and pounds" (Erickson, 2008), and it is evident from the Chinese interests shown in the Gwadar project yet then again China is no doubt going to profit by the Gwadar experience. Diverse basic and financial parts of Chinese vitality for this project are cleared up underneath...

- 1) Despite being most prominent Xinjiang is yet China's least populated zone. It endows Beijing to extend its reach to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Eastern CARs. Trade through Gwadar port can uplift south western Xinjiang Province (Klare, 2006).
- 2) The port of Gwadar is also very much significant for China and Pakistan to act as a listening post to have an idea of American maritime exercises which is also not far from Karachi and Naval basis of Gujrat and Mumbai in India. Gwadar Port also have the capability to help out China and Pakistan to keep an eye to the sea lanes of communication from the Persian Gulf

and its peripheral regions in militarily and non-militarily terms. Chinese maritime closeness is likely going to redesign Pakistan's shoreline front watch (Malik H. Y., 2012). China can utilize Gwadar as a naval base to check Indian authoritative structures in the Indian Ocean. This Deep Sea Port has the capacity to connect the east with west. It has a huge potential to offer business and connectivity to different regions of the world (Stopford, 2009). Key Importance of Gwadar Port, Pacific Rim, Strait of Malacca and Sri Lanka is that the distance covered by Chinese vessels will be lessened to essentially 2500 kms from 10,000 km. Gwadar port would also assist Peoples Republic of China (PRC) to secure oil shipments in Persian Gulf. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) can serve as an alternative to Malacca strait to access Africa, Europe and Asia. In fact this was the main driving force for these both nations to carry out this project other than developing infrastructures and development related projects. Keeping in view all these benefits significance of Gwadar port can never be ignored.

Interests of Central Asian Republics

Central Asian Republics are rich in oil resources. They are exporting their energy resources almost across the globe. They have their interests too because of the globalization and technologically advancement these states need to develop their contacts with other states. When it comes to trade and exporting energy resources particularly, two options are open to them, one encountering the Iranian Chabahar and the other driving through Gwadar. In light of unavoidable comprehensive condition, western nations are not for the exchange course through Iran; along these lines Gwadar makes as a coherently reasonable alternative. Pakistan rushed to gauge the possible results of the incorporating CARs into CPEC. Islamabad restored erstwhile Regional Corporation for Development (RCD), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and stretching out its selection to CARs with goal to make system for more close financial affiliations.

South Asian state has dependably been willing to stimulate CARs enabling them to access Arabian sea, which doubtlessly is the hurting of these states. Barely any features because of which Gwadar ascends all around for the CARs are: -

- 1) Caspian littoral states require a reasonable path for pipeline techniques and Gwadar as a door to Strait of Hormuz is the most fittingly option.
- 2) Turkey suggested to build up a railroad crossing point among CARs and South Asia, the recommendation flopped in context of the regular goals. In present circumstances and keeping in view transparency of Silk Route Pakistan has all of the stores of being the best choice.
- 3) The CARs are up to this point subject to Russia, generally as a result of the old Moscow based correspondence frameworks which control by and large mail, phone, convey joins and other correspondence foundation.
- 4) Russia was panicked due to CARs to supply gas for European marketplace since it would battle with Gazprom Russian gas brute. CARs can dispose of Moscow's influence on their energy markets. First option is to access Iranian Chabahar Port and second option is to utilize CPEC. Countering Enemy through Sanctions Act (CATSA) prevents Western European states from

utilizing Iranian option so Gwadar port is a viable option. With the upgrade of Gwadar seaport, all exchange to and from CARs is unequivocal to get the shortest available passage by techniques for Gwadar and the exchange focal points of Pakistan are relied on to duplicate. The stated CARs stores construction will have following repercussions on Gwadar Port: -

- 1) Likely period of dry consignment is more than liquefied freight, which incorporates need of more noteworthy vessels and in like way distant sea port will display better.
- 2) Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan will pass on more dry shipments than other CARs and Gwadar will wrap up being the shortest entree to warm waters.
- 3) Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan having logically fluid load can pass on it through pipelines to 1800 KMs away Mediterranean Sea using Caspian Sea route. However, distance from Gwadar to Mediterranean Sea is 1400 KMs. Accessing Mediterranean Sea via Russia is point of worry for Europe and CARs.
- 4) Western course for fluid freight pipeline to Pacific Ocean through South China Sea Port is 1400 kms in length.
- 5) European countries are endeavoring to achieve this mineral rich area through Caspian Region sooner than other key players through Gwadar and Afghanistan.
- 6) The speculation for fluid load segment through pipeline by strategies for Gwadar, Caspian Region and China will be 2 to 2.5 billion U.S \$, 3.3 billion U.S \$ and 35 billion U.S \$ autonomously.

The hypothesis and separations for gas pipelines are basically same as of oil pipelines. The substances demonstrating the as of late referenced results are attached as under: -

- 1) Russia is interested to create oil and gas pipelines in North encountering Caspian Sea, Baltic Sea to Europe and Novorossiysk port to keep up a key partition from conceivable US and Islamic weight.
- 2) Kazakhstan so as to make hopeful utilization of its standard gas assets and oil reserves joined with restricted speculation should need to interface up to the present pipeline course of action of Northern Gazprom.
- 3) Azerbaijan being individual from locale of Independent States would incline toward the western course encountering Black Sea, Baku port and Ceyhan port to Europe.
- 4) Georgia and Turkey are moreover for western courses. Turkish western pipeline from Turkish Mediterranean to Baku through Port of Ceyhan to the weakness of U.S \$ 3 billion is a point in the event that.
- 5) Iranian Chabahar Port, provide access to Indian Ocean however it will invite US sanctions.
- 6) China has motivated a way to deal with oversee consolidate Southern and Western access to warm waters by stirring up gas pipeline from CARs to Silk Route (Lampton, 2008) through Xing Yang district. Trans Asian Gas pipeline and China – Kazakhstan oil pipe line are focuses.

- 7) The U.S oil goliath 'Unocal' proposed Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI), which further features the fundamental estimation of Gwadar Deep Sea Port (Klare, 2006).

Interests of Afghanistan

Afghanistan natural assets/ resources are yet to be exploited. Obviously, Afghanistan as of now has few exports for example steel, farming, materials, and so on. Everything considered, the nation will be at risk to the imports and the guide from the provider countries, for which it expected to rely on a development concurrence with Pakistan (Matinuddin, 1991). Whatever the understandable imports or the affirmations, Pakistan can profit by them by giving a guaranteed travel course through Gwadar. A few features which will influence the centrality of the Gwadar port for Afghanistan are as per the going with: -

- 1) Gwadar is shortest therefore cost-effective route for Afghanistan to access Indian Ocean.
- 2) Adjacent Pashtuns have social, cultural, religious and economic relations with Pakistan.
- 3) Landlocked Afghanistan, need easy entrance to Indian Ocean. Gwadar transmits an image of the most fit shot.
- 4) America may require that Afghan exchange ought to be coordinated via Gwadar and not through Chabahar Port.
- 5) Afghanistan will get all the port related comforts, travel offices, warehousing associations and import openings. Since the consummation of World War-II U.S incorporated a position of centrality in Afghanistan's socio-financial improvement. Afghanistan believed exceptional and dynamic relationship with Washington were not just essential for the money related and social movement yet likewise for the assistance of their policy balance. Accomplishment of Gwadar port relies upon its use by China, CARs and South Asia in such way, enthusiasm with Afghanistan is dangerous.

Persian Gulf

Gulf region has so many oil and gas rich states. It includes Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE and Saudi Arabia. Iran has the longest coastline while Iraq has the shortest coastline in that region. Majority these states earn from their oil and gas reserves which they sell to rest of energy hungry states of the world. Bahrain is the only Island state in the region. Maximum width of the gulf is 336 km. Gwadar is considered to be among those few port which can strategically and economically give tough time to Dubai Port in near future as it lies very near to that port. Other Gulf states have so many energy resources but UAE is the only state in that region which earns from tourism and ports. Dubai port is one of them. Keeping view, the development of the Gwadar port. There have become two groups of countries. One is Pakistan, China and Qatar while on the second group India and UAE are influential.

There are two major commercial ports in Dubai. One is Port Rashid and second one is port Jabel Ali. Gwadar port is being considered as a serious rival of Dubai port. In near future It is expected

to give access to China and Central Asian states to the Gulf region. It will enhance the trade between these countries which will definitely lessen the business and revenue of the Dubai port. India on the other hand is trying its level best to lessen the importance of Gwadar port by investing a huge money at the port of Chahbahar in Iran. Gwadar port will soon become the main sea gate for central Asian states. Both India and Pakistan are trying their utmost to undermine each other in that region. Chahbahar port of Iran is also very near to Gwadar. No doubt It will definitely pay impact to Gwadar port but the fact is Gwadar port has too much advantage over the chahbahar because of two factors. One is its strategic location and secondly it is one of the naturally deepest sea port of the world. In short words this region of the world will soon witness some huge business activities along with the competition with its nearby ports as well.

Gwadar Linkage with China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

The development of Gwadar Port has changed itself into an achievement in China Pakistan relations (Ahsan, 2018). It has been viewed as a development for get-together provincial money related exercises. Gwadar Port is a business port, which can profit provincial nations. For China, this undertaking has two essential positive conditions. Regardless, it would give the most obliged course toward the western China, where China has set up its major money related zones. In like way, by utilizing the fiscal hall, China can without a great deal of a bit give its stock to the Middle Eastern market (Tiezzi, 2014).

It is particularly perfect for China's western locale, especially the Xinjiang district, as this area is essentially 4000 km far from any standard waterfront urban areas of China. While utilizing Gwadar course, the parcel and the cost will be decreased extensively. Also, the proposed Gwadar-Xinjiang centrality pipeline would give a guaranteed, secure and progressively reasonable criticalness supply to China. The vast majority of the Chinese transshipments move beyond the Strait of Malacca, which still has budgetary expense and security challenges. Gwadar offers diverse fiscal chances to China and its geo-key zone can give a position where China can no ifs ands or buts hook its interests and ocean methods for exchanges the Indian Ocean.

It has a vicinity to the across the board ocean exchange course that gives added security to the Chinese vessels in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean when all is said and done. Vitality and foundation related assignments have goliath massiveness for Pakistan's economy and these undertakings ought to be done as quick as time licenses since Pakistan is experiencing an over the top centrality emergency which has hampered its economy. Pakistan has a goliath potential in making hydro, sun energized and wind-made vitality, yet unfortunately, in the past little significance was given to convey new wellsprings of essentialness. Association of Pakistan has now fathomed that without settling the centrality emergency, the nation can't make.

Challenges and Impediments

Security:

The clearest of the difficulties to the working of Gwadar Port could be that of security. Tragically, a few people with individual stakes have endeavored to contort nerves about the security condition in Gwadar. It is, in this manner, fundamental that such parts are controlled and security of the whole hallway is guaranteed. The best The Potential and Prospects of Gwadar Port 85 approach to manage accomplish this objective is keep the area individuals on board in the crucial expert and use process and let the indications of progress be unmistakable to far reaching system. Without the certain assistance of nearby individuals, it is clear to trust that such a broad errand could be executed enough.

Terrorism

Another test is identified with mental persecution, and developing uprising in Afghanistan. It might aggravate the work in light of the way that the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is as of not long ago amazing regardless of the Zarb-I-Azb endeavors. Despite how it is allocated into minimal parties, mental oppressors could target military staff, workers and organizers working in the area. Thusly, on the Chinese side, the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) in Xinjiang may correspondingly become concerns for the land-course money related exercises. In any case, China has gotten a handle on palatable measures to control the insurrection.

Foreign Involvement

External involvement factor is one of the biggest threat to Pakistan especially in order to develop Gwadar port. Particularly, Indian and foreign funded non state actors are supporting Baloch aggressor relationship in Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has raised this issue with the neighboring nations to oust the uprising. China and Pakistan have consented to work together to counter uprising and dread based mistreatment, and have settled upon a joint security structure for the Chinese experts in Pakistan. The consolidated interests of the restricting powers may catch hands to imperil the CPEC experience. In this strategy, the separatists inside Baluchistan could be made instrumental by India and other remote nations.

Water Scarcity

Currently water scarcity is one of the major issue for the local residents of Gwadar. Sea water is extremely unhygienic and salty in nature. Local people are unable to manage their water scarcity issue. They are neither capable enough to tackle this issue by themselves nor the government is trying to compensate them. The only option for them is to save rain water whenever it occurs. Ratio of rainfall is also not that much sufficient so people are compelled to buy water by themselves. This issue was raised so many time by media as well but unfortunately this issue couldn't get attention of the competent authorities. If the current water scarcity issue is not addressed properly then it can have drastic impact in near future. As the development of Gwadar is being done gradually, government need to pay attention to this issue as well in order to avoid

any upcoming drastic challenge to the local as well as non-local people residing over there (Dashti, 2016).

Conclusion

Being among one of the deepest sea port of the world, the port of Gwadar has the capability to offer countless benefits in particular for Pakistan and generally to the whole region. This port can become economic hub of the region. No doubt Govt of Pakistan is trying its level best to utilize the capacity of the Gwadar port but still much needs to be done yet. Indian and Afghan factor should also be addressed in a proper way. Afghanistan is a landlocked country as we all know. Keeping in view the sensitivity of Indian influence on Afghanistan, Govt of Pakistan needs to formulate friendly policies in order to facilitate Afghanistan. Doing so Pakistan will be able to economically strengthen Afghanistan but also it will create soft image among Afghans. Moreover, this is the only way to counter Indian influence on Afghanistan as well.

Another important aspect that needs to handle properly is the Indian development of Iranian Chahbahar port. Indian ambitions are clear which to reduce the importance of Chahbahar port. Its hardly one hundred km away from Gwadar port. Although there are still speculations that Iran is reluctant to handover Chahbahar port completely to India. China has recently signed 25 years investment plans with Iran. These investments will surely impact on Iran-India relations in particular via economic investments. Govt of Pakistan needs to technically overcome such implications. One thing should be clear that Pakistan should not develop relations with one country at the cost of other. At the moment Govt of Pakistan need to wait and see, what sort of Sino Indian as well as Sino Iran relations are going to be in future. Gwadar is present at one of the most important location of the region. Pakistan need to exploit its geographical location in a full capacity. That is the only way to strengthen Pakistan's economic crunch.

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