

## Pakistan's Strategic Insufficiency as a Dilemma for the Regional Integration



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### Abstract

*Chahbahar, being part of an Indian grand design is playing its role for counter weighing to Gwadar Port whereas it also provides India with easy access to Afghanistan and CARs. On the other hand, Pakistan's geo-political positioning has been revolving around its anomalous and eccentric relations with various states. The prime rationale for state relations and relevant alliances with states was to maintain harmony with neighboring countries but during world wars, entente meant fighting your brother's war. In this context, Pakistan's acceptance by the world was relatively slower and its take-ups in making friends, in the political playland were much tricky. Pakistan was wary with the former USSR whereas the compliance to the US backfired on many occasions gradually made Pakistan withdraw from its up-close position with the US, therefore now it is time to make independent and rational decisions but yet in the best national interests.*

## Introduction

Pakistan has been enjoying its geo-political significance in the region, mainly owing to its geostrategic positioning of its Balochistan Province that possesses 760 km long oceanic coastal belt well-known Mekran Coast. The Mekran coastline lengthens from Gadani to Jiwani areas near Port of Chahbahar. (Shanglin, 2008, p. 17) Politically, Pakistan has been facing numerous challenges and the most threatening is its handling with a covert war of insurgency and militancy. These schisms are emanating from Eastern and Western borders duly funded, promoted and advocated by a Mossad-CIA-RAW-KHAD nexus based on Afghanistan. In addition, the internal instability, poor governance, standoff among various state organs and external remonstrations are vandalizing Pakistan's international standing and economic progression. Juxtaposing, the religious fanaticism, sectarianism, ethnic division, and provincialism are adding fuel to the chaos and nihilism.

On the other hand, the US is ameliorating India for trifling a major role especially the misconceived idea of containing China in the region. This has led the Indian to acquisitions of arms crossing over the US \$ 200 billion in the next 12 years coupled with Indian's war strategy to pre-emption as a component of its warfighting campaigns. In this context, the strategic partnership between Afghanistan-US and Afghanistan-India being held in April and September 2017 reveals the US's intention to dominate the South Asian region. (Balooch, 2009, pp. 25-29) Pakistan Military being the center of gravity and custodian has been maligned on one or the other pretext so as to establish its links with militant groups to put them under pressure for doing more and more in GWOT. Under the apparition of devout bigotry, the world's powers have been working to neutralize Pakistan's Nuclear Assets. However, it is so inopportune that the opinionated leadership has distant themselves to make out of the national interests and to work out future strategy.

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“Strategically, Pakistan composes a convergence point of the three economically highly active regions, South Asia which is heavily populated, Central Asia which is emerging economically and rich in natural resources and the Middle East which is rich in oil.” (Kurečić, 2010, pp. 21-46) In the past, due to these reasons, Russians in the quest towards warm waters would have never opted to limit their moves towards regional markets and the Indian Ocean. Additionally, the Strait of Hormuz located nearby is the busiest corridor of the world for transportation of crude oil in which approximately 12,000 million tons of freight of 11,000 ships and 33 million tons of 2,500 oil tankers are transhipped annually. Against the pity regional politics and international conspiracy towards both Iran and Pakistan, if Gwadar and Chahbahar ports are integrated, they will have exalted and exhilarated an edifying impact on the region generally and instantaneously arousal of the human standard specifically in both the countries.

While remaining under the ambit of the study, the paper will highlight the strategic deficiencies of Pakistan in relation to its geo-strategic location. Efforts will be made to explore the intricacies of competitiveness of Gwadar and Chahbahar Ports, the Sino and Indian Geo-Strategic Competition and Pakistan’s Regional Integration for Greater Central Asia Partnership so as to bring out as to how the strategic deficiencies of Pakistan can be initially tackled. In the context of Iran-Indian nexus, the development of the North-South Corridor is the preeminent panorama for Iran to enlarge its shipment corridor to India. The important area of the study is the Chinese and Indian efforts in the construction and operating of these ports to the extent that the Major Powers and key regional players are watching these involvements with great suspicion.

### **Strategic Deficiencies of Pakistan**

Mekran Coastal area is an important area, part or complete area has remained under the suzerainty of various states including Iran, Musket, Oman, and Pakistan. In 1958, Pakistan re-bought the Gwadar area at the total cost of US\$ 8.4 million. Being part of Mekran belt, Gwadar Port, called at that time Port of Barbarikon, located at the far western end of present Balochistan, established by the Great Alexander in 332 BC, was qualifying to be a trading junction for Central Asia and the rest of parts of the world. This belt comprising of Gwadar and Chahbahar ports has remained important for both internal and external powers. In eighteen century these areas had captured the focus of many British writers especially “Charles Masson (1800-1853), being the pseudonym of James Lewis, a British East India Company soldier who discovered the ruins of Harappa near Sahiwal.” (Rana, 2017, p. 45).

Pakistan is well placed at the cross-road of West, Central, and South Asia, however, has not only blessed with numerous eminences but also weighted down severe safekeeping remonstrance. It is argued, “Pakistan’s inability, for a plethora of structural and socio-political reasons, to build, nurture and sustain effective state institutions, has meant that it has remained mired in internal as well as external security crises.” (Hathaway, 2004, pp. 1-5) The past two decades have been eccentrically tumultuous for Pakistan while facing the main brunt of the dribbling over possessions of GWOT in Afghanistan ensuing in the massive outlay of US \$ 118 Billion to the economy and losing approximately 100,000 lives. Asia is witnessing a tumultuous environment in most of its parts; Afghanistan is gazing an important transition of abandonment of the immensity of US-led NATO forces; desecrating a grand temblor in Middle East and dilapidation in the relations of India and Pakistan. (Husain, 2017, pp. 23-33)

It is frugal to assay whether a cremation between the state security and approaches of the state’s identity subsists or not. Every time, it facades to investigate the modes that be deficient in the explicitness of national identity to have collided with national security. It is explained, “The controversy of national power potential is peculiarly relevant to future security prospects of Pakistan, both in conventional and non-conventional contexts.” (Warikoo, 2016, pp. 1-15) Pakistan had been bearing an exterior safekeeping dilemma from the day of its inception in August 1947. However, the quandaries have complicated since the 1980s, because of the security dilemma in neighboring Afghanistan and the rest of Muslim Ummah. On

the other hand, in recent years, internally the quandaries have increased manifold and the impedances to individuals as well as state institutions have emanated domestically. (Salahudin, 2016, pp. 32-44)

In continuum, the gravity of this menace has transformed the doctrinal thinking of Pakistan Armed Forces, in that it has been confirmed that domestic uproar is the leading remonstrance for the security. It is confirmed that "the unfolding of the *National Action Plan* in the aftermath of the tragic school massacre in Peshawar and the emergence of terrorist outfits, fortifies the need to reevaluate national security doctrine." (Markey, 2015, pp. 2-8) Notwithstanding, sound and stable economic indicators strengthen the standing of the country in turn, ensuring sustained development and progression of the state. Withal, this is uninviting veracity that, not a bit of these standards can be met without a judicious safekeeping guiding principle and sufficient stepladder for their maintainability. Internal anxiety and uncertainty unswervingly impinge on the investors' confidence, industrial growth and the flight of critical capital. In this context, Pakistan Strategic Deficiencies can be summarized as under:-

### **Pakistan's Domestic Deficiencies**

- (1) Balochistan's insurgency and international's conspiracy against Gwadar Port.
- (2) Law and Order Situation in the former Federal Administrative Tribal Areas.
- (3) Interprovincial Disharmony and consensus issue on NFC Award.
- (4) Political Immaturity by all political parties in the country.
- (5) Politico-Military Relations - An Unzipped Reality.
- (6) Sectarianism leading to terrorism in all sects.
- (7) National Interests versus Leadership Dilemma.
- (8) Politicizing and Negative Portrayal of Law Enforcement Agencies.
- (9) Corruption, nepotism and self-centred approach of ruling elites.
- (10) Rigging in elections has been a common phenomenon to change majority into minority.
- (11) Energy Crisis of the country.
- (12) Poor Management to preserve Water and Water Resources in the country.
- (13) Electing Incompetent cum Illiterate Leaders.

### **Pakistan's Bilateral and Regional Deficiencies**

- (1) Long unresolved Kashmir Dispute between Pakistan and India.
- (2) Border Disputes with India.
- (3) Indian covert operations in most parts of Pakistan.
- (4) Instability of Afghanistan and its Spillage over to Pakistan.
- (5) Smuggling to and from Pakistan - the heinous Act to hollow Pakistan.
- (6) Narco Business and its fallout on Pakistan.
- (7) Natural Resources of CARs - Source of Regional and International Conspiracy.
- (8) Iran - Saudi embattlement and its grave consequences for Muslim Ummah and Pakistan.
- (9) Regional blocs and making and erosion of States (Alliances and Erosions of the states) etc.

### **Pakistan's International Deficiencies**

- (1) Presence of Extra Regional Forces (ERFs) in the India Ocean.
- (2) The Environment of International's Conspiracy against Pakistan.
- (3) Muslim Ummah has been deeply engulfed by terrorism. Much of the World's issues either imposed or lie within the Muslim Ummah including wars and skirmishes all over the Muslim World.....being a lone nuclear Muslim state, Should Pakistan forget the problems of Muslims world?

- (4) Afghanistan has become a battleground for world powers and being a neighbouring country of Pakistan, this battling environment means a lot to Pakistan.
- (5) Mixed Proxies have been in action in Afghanistan under the garb of GWOT with drumming the rhetoric to 'do more'.
- (6) Responsibility to protect the Sacred Places in Saudi Arabia in cases where these are threatened.
- (7) Insecurity prevailed on both Eastern and Western borders of Pakistan.

### **The Afghan Factor**

India has been suppressing the desires of Afghanistan to normalise bilateral relations with Pakistan. This has all been done the way by injecting the lately Indian money and unnatural evocation of what went hostilities between Pakistan and Afghanistan. (Jalalzai, 2009, pp. 3-11) Despite the consequences of the erroneous junction of Afghan and Indian's interests against Pakistan, India's capability to force Afghanistan will provide evidence not as much of effectual in the wake of a unrelenting Pakistan's inventiveness to employ commonalities in culture, positional interdependences, economic complementariness and the re-surfacing of genuine proprietors as dependable authority sharers in a prospect of Afghan's dispensation. Ensuing to the engagement of India, there is distrust between Pakistan and Afghanistan hence the interaction that Afghanistan should sense in a good affiliation to Pakistan, has been weakened by factors like the GWOT. (Rana, 2017, p. 45)

One way of strengthening the desire for strong relations with Pakistan is to bring order and security to FATA, KP and Balochistan provinces. As a part of this strategy, development must take place on an emergency basis in FATA, affected areas of KP and Balochistan, more quickly and more abundantly than it does in Afghanistan. Chinese support and investments can prove crucial in this development strategy but this is conditional upon the establishment of peace and defeat of foreign-provoked terrorism. The aspiration for partaking in the deafening of the economy will be a strapping incentive for Afghanistan to react constructively to the honest and forthcoming propositions of Pakistan. Next to promising there are loads of areas for cooperation, Pakistan may also assist to reconstruct the rundown of the higher educational network of Afghanistan and conceivably employ the unbeaten familiarities of Pakistan's Higher Education Commission to recuperate Afghan's Higher Education. (Wajid, 2017, p. 56)

### **Mutual Interdependence of Pakistan and China**

Pakistan is fulfilling unflinching the regional geo-strategic requirements of China; therefore, Pakistan is an important country for China. Being an essential component of China's premeditated periphery, as always, Pakistan is devoted to entirely support the peaceful policies of China. Abdul Sattar (2013) argues, "Relationship of China with Pakistan is, therefore, very important because it enables China to both check the regional ambitions of India and improve its hegemon in Indian Ocean." (Sattar, 2013, p. 76) The factors like Pakistan's territorial disputes with India, its infatuation and non-breakable hegemonic desires of India, are helping to strengthen its ties with China for a good reason to effectively check the Indian anti-Pakistan yearnings. China intends to set up valuable links of energy and trade together to concentrate on internal development with its neighbours especially Pakistan. (Sidique, 2014, pp. 5-23)

It is hard fact that the US-dominated Strait of Malacca, is an important chokepoint for China through which eighty percent of its oil supply is transported. The predications of the Indian Navy at the Andaman Sea, the peripheral notching in the Malacca Strait, are the manifestation of the auxiliary conservatory of the US's strategy to be in command of Sea Lane of Indian Ocean. Notwithstanding, Ormara and Gwadar Ports of Pakistan offer supply routes to China which are the undeviating and most cost-effective routes in totting up to provide a diminutive and speedy marine right of entry to Mediterranean and Africa. (Engdahl, 2012, pp. 3-13) "A successful China-Pakistan symbiosis would, therefore, reconfigure the arena in South Asia, Central Asia and the Indian Ocean which would persuade the US to be more accommodative towards

Pakistan - China synergy in the region and also lead India to develop more balanced and realistic relations in the neighborhood." (Khetran, 2013, p. 32)

### **The Indian Factor**

Pakistan will have to take exceptional heed of KP, Balochistan, and Sind because of their vulnerability to exterior destabilizing motives. Notwithstanding, it is a matter of satisfaction that Pakistan's nuclear competence has always dissuaded India from coercive adventurism to achieve premeditated objectives. Lately, Indian Chief of Army Staff addressed limited armed adventures under a nuclear umbrella. Getting strength from the present international environment, India is vigorously assisting terrorist rudiments and fanning sectarian and ethnic factions within Pakistan hence imply proves Indian involvement in terrorist activities inside Pakistan. (Khan & Ahmad, 2015, p. 247) Consequential to its conduct, India is "pursuing a Two-Pronged Strategy composed of Encirclement and of Destabilising of Pakistan's sovereignty." (Felbab-Brown, 2017, p. 43) The importance to settle the Kashmir dispute and other border unresolved issues cannot be denied but sharing of water is taking the middle of contentions between Pakistan and India.

The scarcity of water can encompass unpleasant geopolitical and socio-economic accouterments on Pakistan therefore; the matter requires to be handled firmly and urgently. In Afghanistan, India is playing great game in two ways in the post 9/11 era; "first, its economic assistance package to Afghanistan, primarily run by the Northern Alliance and Tajiks to the detriment of the majority of Pakhtun, is geared to undermining Pak - Afghan relations and second, it is using Afghan territory to coordinate destabilization and balkanization activities inside Pakistan." (Asif, 2017, pp. 23-28) To further its agenda, India has been vigorously pursuing its agenda of anti-Pakistan through inward bound of wide-ranging defense, cultural and economic congruities with Afghanistan, EU and US etc. Side by side India is also actively involved to give utmost promising assistance to ethnic, separatist and secessionist activities. In this context, the Indian involvement in the pestering of the predicaments in FATA, Gilgit-Baltistan, KP, Balochistan, and Sindh can't be ignored.

### **The US Factor**

The ongoing US-NATO's Afghan war that has already embroiled Pakistan, has been employed to further reshuffle geo-political make-up in their best interest. This is now a foregone wrapping up to believe that the presence of US forces in Afghanistan would be redesigned to become an effective element of its strategy of encirclement to Russia and China (Mahmood, 2016, pp. 1-2). To a great extent, the hyped US's drawdown will only be a withdrawal in the number of US forces in Afghanistan. The US will maintain a credible military presence in Afghanistan comprising of Special Operations Forces of having the potentials of dealing with the risks of propping up a weak Afghan government and regional terrorist threats. It is expected that the forces will also facilitate huge reinforcements against any strategic ambitions that may threaten US primacy in the region. (Tidall, 2018, p. 5)

On the other hand, GWOT is similar to the Opium Wars rewarded by Colonial Powers of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The strange inquest that under the watch of US-led NATO, Afghanistan has been converted into a fully opium-producing country and supplying opium as the world's major supplier because a 63 percent increase has been seen in the cultivation of opium in 2017. (Felbab-Brown, 2017, p. 43) Today, Afghanistan is practically a narco-state that is producing approximately ninety percent of the world's demand for opiates valued at the US \$ 40 billion annually, with approximately US \$ 60 billion generated in revenue for merchants in 2015 from Afghan opiates. (UN Report on Drugs and Crime, 2017) It is mystifying that the US-led Nato has allowed the opiate culture to happen within themselves or through their agents while having no discernible plans to tackle the menace (Edmonds, 2017, pp. 32) .

### **The Iranian Factor**

Iran's tenacious stand for being the owner of its distinct standards of political and societal sovereignty

exclusive of helping the US's interests at the outlay is the core area of US animosity. Iran is considered as the major hazard to the safekeeping of Israel and as a matter-of-fact, this agenda is considered to be the security's extension of America. Due to a predominance of Zionist's sway in the US's political and economic globules, therefore US believes that the variety of threat posed to Israel is a real threat to the US. Under this supposition, being the lone Muslim State possessing nuclear capability, Pakistan is also well-thought-out to be an impending threat. Therefore, Pakistan-Iran's reciprocity is considered with discomposure and trepidation on the Centre of Hill. On the other hand, there are imprinting symbols of bruises for a longer period in Iran-Pakistan's relations. (Ahmed, 2016, p. 21)

Iranian disquiets on the participation of Pakistan in the Islamic Military Alliance mainly led by Saudi Arabia restructured to operate against terrorism. Iran continues to see the "Saudi led Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism" with deep mistrust and apprehensions, despite the assurances given by Pakistan not to be part of any anti-Iran bustles. Such apprehensions would not be entirely surprising in the wake of various statements given by the US and Saudi leaderships oozing out that the mainstay of the new administration would be to offset the Iranian's regional goals. It is also perceived that "this alliance was a sectarian in character being an Alliance of Sunni majority states against Shia majority states." (Yousaf, 2017, pp. 45-51) Iranian apprehensions were further reinforced when the command was taken over by General Raheel Sharif (Retired). To the visiting Ayaz Sadiq ex-speaker of National Assembly, Mr. Hassan Rouhani spoke in a very forceful manner on 24 April 2018 that those states had no right to claim for fighting terrorism who were supporting the terrorist groups (Rathore, 2017, pp. 5-9).

### **Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Role of Russia**

Thomas Cleary (1988) explains, "Land that is surrounded on three sides by competitors and would give the first to get it to access to all the people on the continent is called intersecting ground." Central Asia is the exact intersecting ground where the regional geopolitics revolve and there, the Chinese attempts meet the Russian efforts to reassert dominance. Remodeled relations of China-Pakistan with Russia are heading for renewal of understanding; the colossal natural resources of Russia will be supporting the Chinese development while not undermining Pakistan's position in the region. Therefore, SCO presents a suitable podium for the Chinese policy of promoting strategic partnerships that circumvent the hefty position rather than carrying to provide security. In the coming days, Pakistan-China-Russia's collaboration will discover an appropriate shore up the system in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Ramo, 2004, p. 34).

Pakistan-China's horizontal synthesis will neutralize the major power recompenses like India and the US to twist them for parallel partaking in the regional, economic and social progression. This horizontal amalgamation will help China for allowing a breathing space so that it could focus on tackling its domestic disparities. China has followed a conscious policy of first developing its coastal belt and then re-directing resources such as the relocation of industry and the development of infrastructure in its Northern, Central, and Western regions. (Baker & Zhang, 2012). SCO's scope is on widening to include the Middle East and its ability to formulate a Middle Eastern future from the current uncertainties that are emanating as a result of US-Israel nexus. This will form part of the Chinese strategy for strengthening its relations with important Eurasian states to establish a series of foundations of goodwill that in time shall mature as concrete alternatives to US-led dominance of the Eurasian region (Yousaf, 2017, pp. 23-30).

### **Trumping up Civil-Military Relation in Pakistan**

Pakistan's Political and Military Leadership history is full of having strained relationships between, however, it is imperative that measures should be taken to dispel the prevailing animosity and distrust between them and build a harmonious political-military working relationship based on mutual respect and confidence. In this respect, the ball is always in the court of politicians because a harmonious and beneficial political-military alliance is only possible if competent, honest and visionary political leadership supplemented with by taking interest in the welfare of people and in building a sustainable civil-military communion are available. In the

absence of wise political leadership, the task of building a civil-military alliance would be very difficult. Pakistan Armed Forces are volunteering to actively participate in sustainable nation-building activities on a nonpolitical basis in addition to their overall defense responsibilities.

The state as a mechanism of social cohesiveness has traditionally and historically performed the function of a machine that transforms the capabilities of a nation into a national power. The external causes collide with internal causes to destabilize any national polity. Pakistan, at the moment, is suffering from a fragmentation syndrome in which the various elements of power trading, are engaged in inflation hence their efforts for the unified command are not optimally synchronized. A strong civil-military relations would be critical for, giving the best to the country cause in the internal problems, putting our own house in order to sustain external pressure, improving governance and internal stability, presenting better posture in the world affairs, utilizing resources through concentration and focus in one direction and intensifying Pakistan-China relations to build the momentum to realize its geopolitical returns maximally.

## **China's Gwadar and India's Chahbahar Ports**

### **Significance of Gwadar and Chahbahar Ports in Strategic and Trade Relations of Pak-China and Iran-India**

Gwadar Port after commissioning in CPEC is meant to be a medium to maintain cordial relations with China through which China would like to strengthen and variegate its relationship with Pakistan. This way China will make safe its supply routes and continue to enlarge being there in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. Similarly, Chahbahar Port presents the same entourage of Gwadar Port for India. India has designed to give practical shape to make safe the supply routes and to counteract the increasing influence of China in the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea. Consequently, India joins hands with Iran to be benefited through an economic and strategic alliance. Iran has already been employing in Chahbahar port, which is effortlessly reachable to the trading activities of India while utilizing the networks of Afghanistan and CARs (Khan, 2015, pp. 2-6).

Qandeel Siddique (2014) argues, "The infrastructural development of Gwadar by China, and Chahbahar by India, resulted not only in open rivalry and competition between the two countries in the region, but also raised contentions for the economic and natural resources of Central Asia." Mainly due to the very existence of these ports, the stakeholders are competing for economic and geostrategic gains. China is rightly worried over the mounting expansion of India in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, the conviviality and tenderness in US-India relations after the winding up of "Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Cooperation" and collaboration between Iran and India in Central Asia and Afghanistan become the affairs of momentous disquiet for Chinese having long-standing regional economic and strategic goals. On the other hand, Pakistan cannot overpower the Indian designs, as the Navel force of India is much stronger as compared to Pakistan, therefore, China is believed to be the power that can outclass Indian domination and pre-eminence in the region. (Sivia, 2017, p. 21)

On the other hand, Iranian location at the eastern end of the Persian Gulf, presents a promising export route for oil and gas of CARs therefore, it is in the center of a perpetual hot spot in world affairs. Iran's geo-strategic position concedes to play a significant function in intertwining India to CARs strategically, militarily and economically. India designs Iran at the turning point of the "overland trading route" for Indian products as impending customer markets. As reciprocation, Iran conceives India's profitable sources of information and high technology inputs. (Pasricha, 2017, p. 67) "Relations between India and Iran have been deepening with respect to most issues, especially security, energy and the North-South Transportation Corridor." (Yousaf, 2017, pp. 34-42) The relationship between India-Iran-Central Asia provides a new link that could transform the face of trade in the region. The North-South Corridor holds out new hopes for India by enabling India to bypass Pakistan and yet reach out to Central Asia.

## The Concept of the Greater Central Asia Partnership for Regional Integration

In the direction to get rewards of regional collaboration, the camaraderie surrounded by have prearranged upshot. Wide-reaching, the regional engagements are to find out customs for settling mutual problems. Furthermore, powers that be also moved for the pleasing of Decision-Making Capability to discover way out of an assortment of issues being confronted. (Tynan, 2013, p. 56) The formation of a range of assemblages in connection with looking after the frequent curiosity of trading activities hence these commonalities formulate easy to generate various partnerships and groups. To have one such Prevailing Partnership is “the Greater Central Asia Partnership (GCAP)”. The initiator of this concept is Professor S. Frederick Starr and his theory (GCAP) aiming at developing regional solutions to rejuvenate trade while making the best use of traditional transportation routes (Starr, 2005, p. 19).

This partnership suggests collaboration between Rimland Theory and Heartland Theory simultaneously in the course to have effectual incorporation of geography between economics and geopolitics. This is basically to implant fresh geographic, political and economic establishments during the planning of GCAP in Central Asia and South Asia. In reality, Heartland theory conceptualizes the entire CARs with portions of Russia and Caucasus as a Heartland, which are basically the mainstay to tenet over the planet. On the other hand, the Rimland theory argues that the controlling authorities of Rimland generally composed of Western Europe, the Middle East and South and East Asia will become certified to be in charge of the planet. Fazl-e-Haider (2015) explains, “Both Heartland and Rimland theories are important but to make it technologically accessible for explanation the reality to advanced world, there is need to attach the economic element while taking into account the spatial attributes of the region under analysis.” Nonetheless, Geo-politics and Geography are lately ended product of International Relations, though single-handedly, these may not elucidate the multifaceted character of the political and economic interdependence.



Figure 1: Gwadar Port and Strait of Hormuz

Source: [www.google.com.pk](http://www.google.com.pk)



Figure 2: The Ports of the Region

Source: [www.wordportsource.com](http://www.wordportsource.com)

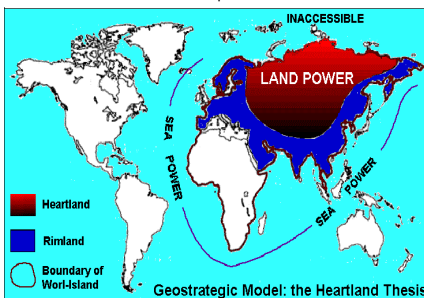


Figure 3: Heartland and Rimland Theories (Source: [www.tdaxp.com](http://www.tdaxp.com))



### **The Importance of Transport and Trade in GCAP:**

In the future, the major driving force of economic growth will be transport and trade. Trade is basically conducted between provinces, villages and keep on among states and neighboring countries and next to neighboring countries being linked or will be linked through railways and roads. Afghanistan is geographically positioned at the crossroad between Europe, the Middle East and Asia. However, before the expansion of the former USSR the existing trade routes of South and Central Asia were used for over 2,500 years but finally blocked in 1917. In 1979, after the occupation of Afghanistan by the former USSR, the continental trade got broken. Then the US action, in Afghanistan in 2001, was paving to reopen the trade passages that had boosted trade of Central Asians and Afghans over the long serenity (Kucera, 2006). This reopening of trade of Central Asia and its neighbors would transform from borderline to the center of the world economic region through systematic international and regional transport systems.

The proposed transport system will make it possible for the local and regional dealers of states especially Afghanistan to pack their dried fruits etc and transport to international markets. The kind of activities will create a huge scope to have an alternative to growing opium poppies. This system will further unify various parts of the countries with each other, create numerous job opportunities and will generate capitals in the form of taxes and tariffs. (Zvyagelskaya, 2014) Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan have agreed to construct a road along electric supply lines (CASA - 1000) to assist trilateral trade. CARs acknowledge the geo-polinomic importance of Pakistan and appropriateness of the southern transit route hence the system will prove to be an alternative to their landlocked isolation.

### **The Role of Gwadar Seaport in GCAP:**

Gwadar Port is considered an alternative to the regional ports mainly due to the continued instability in the Arabian Sea region and Gwadar Port location in the opening of the Arabian Sea. Karachi Port Trust (KPT) and Bin Qasim (PQ) Ports, in spite of being modernized and revamped for accommodating large cargoes, are out of places being away from the main shipping route and having limitations on handling oil tankers and large mother ships. Gwadar Port project has high geo-economic importance that will facilitate trading opportunities with the landlocked CARs and Afghanistan. The development plan for Gwadar port was initiated in 1990 and at that time the US also showed interest in constructing Gwadar port but she waned immediately after the Geneva Agreement on Afghanistan. However, China shouldered the responsibility to help Pakistan for undertaking the construction of Gwadar Port.

Gwadar Port provides the shortest route to China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russia and Mongolia via Karakoram and Indus Highways connecting through Ratodero, Khuzdar, Khairpur and Dadu. It also provides links with Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan through Afghanistan. If requisite transportation facilities are developed in Pakistan and Afghanistan, bilateral trade among Pakistan, Iran and CARs or trade under the platform of ECO or GCAP will be established and encouraged internationally. A textile market can increase the regional trade manifold and will lead towards economic integration and cooperation in other areas of interest like minerals, hydroelectric power, jewelry, software technology, tourism and natural gas and oil. This geo-polinomic cartel and other initiatives will be the cornerstones of the GCAP.

### **Findings/Conclusions**

- The Geo-political potentials of Pakistan have a unique versatility to capitalize on the existing strengths for cooperation with regional states especially China.
- Pakistan-China cooperation is on the continuum to breed and lay a much reliable foundation for onward multifarious partnerships for the attainment of strategic sustainability.
- The existing challenges of Pakistan like terrorism, the threat of Indian aggression, regional destabilization, religious extremism and other such instruments can negatively meddle upon Pakistan- China relationship.

- India will keep trying to check the nerves of Pakistan as of now involving itself in unprovoked violence athwart the Line of Control and Working Boundary.
- Terrorism, if not checked properly, can create problems in the western regions of China that will certainly create erosion between China and Pakistan.
- The Geo-strategic significance of Gwadar Port is well known to Chinese whereas the physical infrastructures and economic development of Pakistan will have a positive impact on both the countries in the future, this will bring regional peace, stability, prosperity, harmony paving up both bilateralism and multilateralism.
- Strategic Deficiency of Balochistan /Gwadar Port is hitting the core in order of priority.
- China can secure their oil requirements without entangling into the Malaka Straits Politics.
- In one way or another China may not act the way Pakistan can think for its National Core Issues, therefore, a realistic approach can take us to think independently for Pakistan's national interests with or without foreign help.
- At the moment Political leadership is nowhere to come up and work for a better tomorrow and should think above individual vested interests.
- To play our card, any visionary political leadership in the country except on odd cannot be seen that too with obscure future.
- Pakistan while involved in many internal and external problems cannot properly pursue the Muslim causes at diplomatic and international flora.
- In case of failure of Saudi govt to protect the holy places of Muslims, Pakistan will have to be thinking about the safeguarding of sacred places, Mecca and Medina.

## **Recommendations**

### **Domestic Front**

- a. Pakistan should pursue vigorously a policy for neutralizing militancy.
- b. Pakistan should associate itself with offsetting the extremist philosophies and ideologies to build social and political stability by implementing the socio-economic growth plans on a speedy roadway in the already ignored regions of the country.
- c. All out measures should be taken to attain an unwavering and purposeful political mechanism in the Country; a system shall be free and spotless of corruption based on the participation of people together with the answerable but interactive linkage of powers.
- d. Through adhering to universally acknowledged principles of administration, govt should improve governance.
- e. Govt should also fabricate a specialized merit-based bureaucracy while defining the parameters of the political over-sighting of the governmental machinery.
- f. Developing a new-fangled hypothesis of govt based on "Public-Private Partnership (PPP), especially in economic and social sectors"; in general, a PPP shall comprise of the stipulation of public service being mutually funded by private business and govt.
- g. Gwadar Port should be operationalized to its max capacity to convert it into Three Dimensional Fourth Generation Port.
- h. Fisheries Sector and exploring of Offshore Oil and Gas Sector in Mekran belt and the vicinity of Gwadar Port should be revisited.

- i. Raising of Sizeable Merchant Fleet and integration of Maritime Security Agencies in Gwadar Port.
- j. The hinterland of Gwadar Port comprising of markets and other business activities should be planned systematically through the entire breadth and length of Balochistan.

### **Regional Front**

- a. Pakistan should strengthen ties with China and Iran through the integration of Gwadar and Chahbahar Ports under GCAP in collaboration with all regional Ports for their economic viability.
- b. Pakistan should activate all available diplomatic channels with India to recommence frontal channel track-I negotiations including Kashmir and strike some workable deal to resolve these long outstanding issues.
- c. Pakistan should use international flora to raise voices against Indian involvement in internal affairs of Pakistan including initiation of terrorist activities in Balochistan and FATA.
- d. Pakistan should initiate talks with all Afghan ethnopolitical groups under the mutual consensus of Afghan govt for building a broad-based relationship to provide a platform towards Afghanistan's peace and stability "this should be carried out as a complementary exercise to build peace and stability in Afghanistan and restore normalcy in the region".
- e. Under regional perspective, opening of a ambassadorial initiatives with all regional countries including "Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia, CARs, Turkey, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, etc" for captivating them into assurance concerning the planned bilateral talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan and keep updating them so that any future solution is acknowledged.
- f. Pakistan should pursue to work out well deliberated and workable contingencies for safeguarding the Holy Places of Mecca and Medina through the physical presence of Contingents of Muslima Ummah from major Islamic Countries.

### **International Front**

- a. Pakistan should strengthen its diplomatic relations with EU, major powers of the world, US and other important countries irrespective of Past events so that the issue of negative image portrayal is over.
- b. Hunting a vigorous ambassadorial inventiveness to homogenize Iran and Saudi Arabia for diffusing the tensed situation and avert the heightening of the prevailing treacherous parochial contention, including Sunni-Shia, split within the Muslim States.
- c. Undertaking a well-directed ambassadorial inventiveness with Russia while viewing to get over the past happenings and enable to enlarge a positive interaction with Russia enfolding a broadened regional collaboration.

### **Conclusion**

Pakistan has been enjoying a long-lasting acquaintance with China and a crucial and cheeky association with the US. However, prior to and after the Cold War, Pakistan has never compromised on two important facets, one, the friendship with China and second, the option to pursue its nuclear capability. Pakistan doesn't have grounds to believe that the US and Pakistan relations cannot be developed to a greater understanding of their mutual interests in the region. With the complicated regional environment, Pakistan has to play its role in exception to the regional or bilateral politics. To be able to accrue the benefits, Pakistan should not be purely Indian centric in the international relations however calculating on Muslim Ummah,

Pakistan being the sole Muslim Nuclear State, will have to be on the forefront to safeguard the rights of Muslim Ummah. Moreover, regionally, being the ally of China, its role in Regional Security Environment will have to be more proactive however maintaining relationships with both China and the US will be a colossal task but a definite opportunity.

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