

Political Implications of Gwadar Port & Its Prospects in Persian Gulf

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Abstract:

The Port of Gwadar is the gateway to the three most strategically important regions of South Asia, Central Asia, and West Asia, with the potential to transform South Asia's geopolitics. Gwadar's deep seaport provides important strategic and financial advantages to Pakistan because of its major position at the mouth of the Arabian sea and the world's most important oil chokepoint Straits of Hormuz. Gwader is regarded as the crown jewel of recent economic paradigms, but it influences the industry in some countries and threatens political interests of others. In Gwadar Port, China intends to improve its relationship with Pakistan to maintain and retain its routes of crude oil imports and extending its links to the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. Pakistan and China need a forward-looking plan to involve the regional countries to ensure the initiative's most promising outcome. This paper explores political implications of Gwader port & its prospects in Persian Gulf.

Keyword: political implications, Gwadar port, economic aspects, Central Asia, India, Afghanistan,

Introduction

Gwadar Port holds a very geostrategic influence in the global world as it is located close to major sea maritime trade, smothering the throat of several major sea routes. Geographical trends are considered one of the key factors driving the growth of global society. Probably the most important part of climate is the sea, which occupies about three-quarters of the planet's surface. Although water is the key source of commerce, further enhancement and modernization of maritime trade has increased the need for water trade (Malik, 2012).

Pakistan seems to have little strategic importance, and Gwadar will undoubtedly extend these defense capabilities tremendously, as the gap from this strategic port lies considerably in India. Gwadar is a strategically very important hub that was built with Chinese assistance. It is connected to Karachi and Sindh through the Makran Coastal highway. China along with Pakistan plan to connect the Port through Indus Highway which leads to Kashgar and it is 414 km from Sost-Tashkurgan (China-Pakistan border) and further extended to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan (Kamel, 2018).

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Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province and its location uniquely connects the deep-water port of Gwadar to Kashgar. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is opposed by a number of separatist leaders in the Balochistan region. Baloch insurgents opposed to the development of Balochistan, especially Gwadar. Baloch leaders never allow Balochistan to become a commercial and economic centre until it wins independence. A brutal separatist insurgency has ravaged this province for over a decade. It is concerning that if Balochistan extends and the port of Gwadar prospers, foreigners will flock to the capital. This might worsen the province's population gap in favor of the Balochs. The absence of political consensus will be a huge impediment to the project's realization, and the country cannot afford to fall prey to disruptions. Prudent decision may be made to address late apprehensions of Balochistan Province. Gwadar has the power to transform the economies of all provinces. It would have far-reaching consequences not only for the national economies, but also for the economics of the people at the local level (Abid, & Ashfaq, 2015).

War and competition between natural resources capacities, particularly hydrocarbons and defense routes, will most likely occur in the next decades. Competition for monitoring Sea lines of communication, ports, and road links have already been observed, and this war will expand shortly. The ocean has also been turned into a strategic surveillance process because of the rich natural resources in the Indian Ocean and the rapid rise of regional forces. The port's key role was to provide the links between sea and land transport routes. The maritime security sphere reaches well beyond the conventional security sphere, covering political, fiscal, science, technical, and diplomatic elements.

The Geo Political Importance of Gwadar Port

Pakistan is a very important country in Asia due to its geographic location. The geopolitics of Gwadar concurrently comprised political and economic insights. Its specific strategic location helps Pakistan in real terms of geostrategic maxims, not only making it easier to control any naval activities in an eastern enemy state but also to map Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) in the Indian Ocean. The Port of Gwadar is locating in three big areas of economic significance on the southern shore of Western Asia, Central Asia, and South Asia. It will be considered the junction of Central Asia's trade and energy corridors. The USA and India regard the rise of China and ensuing geopolitical

ambitions to be a serious setback to their core interests as close regional allies. Gwadar enables China to chart fragile maritime transport lines because 60% of its oil imports emerge from West Asia (Hussain, 2020). The port is positioned geographically not far away from the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Persia. China will transport the majority of its supplies to the port, saving millions of dollars, effort and money. And this will help to reduce its dependence on the Strait of Malacca (Malik, 2012).

China wishes to establish its naval base in Gwadar, make the USA and India much frustrated and insecure in their hold on the Persian Gulf region. The further transformation of Gwadar's operations to the Chinese owes much more frustration to the main stakeholders in the Indian Ocean, especially the US and India. China's chance of acquiring an excessively high level of presence in the Indian Ocean via Gwadar Port is, therefore, counterproductive to US and Indian strategic and economic aspirations (Kalim, 2018).

Economic Aspect of Gwadar Port

The economy is an integral aspect of political power and indispensable to the strength and stability of a nation. Gwadar has a desirable location on the Asian-European trade route, close to the strategic and the manufacturing centers of the markets of Asia and Southeast Asia as well as of the Arab Sea. Gwadar's main advantage lies in its position beyond the Persian Gulf throttle points, which are threatened by disruptive challenges during prevailing strategic attacks. In the case of geopolitical uncertainty and potentially overcrowded national ports in the Middle East, it could gain considerable market share in the future while simultaneously growing as a hub (Hussain & Hussain 2017).

The Pakistani economy has proven unable to deliver desirable economic growth and prosperity because of the country's foreign aid pattern, political uncertainty, unforeseen ocean management, intrinsic technical backwardness, and insufficient attention to its industrial significance. The Gwadar Port is situated in the immediate vicinity and is a prime opportunity for Pakistan to boost its economic and commercial relations with the Central Asian Republics' largest oil and gas reservoirs in the world. The Gwadar Port provides direct connectivity via Afghanistan and Balochistan to the Central Asian States through a replacement transport corridor to Europe. The port has the potential to provide a future replacement route to Dubai, a hub for major economic growth in the area (Kalim & Syed, 2020).

As China is a strong ally and long borderline with many South-East Asian countries, it sees itself as a major actor in regional political power in South Asia. In Central Asia, a strong Pak-China relationship would not only improve its economy but also decrease India's growing presence in the region. As all Central Asia countries are landlocked and do not currently have exposure to the sea, Gwadar is the best and easiest path to reach these countries.

Potentials of Gwadar Port

In South Asia, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, many different geopolitical patterns are dominating, particularly given that energy security problems in the modern world are becoming increasingly frequent. Gwadar port is located in the proximity of a very important junction of the gulf region, the Strait of Hormuz. The closure and disturbance in the transit of oil and gas through the Strait of Hormuz affect the economy and energy supplies to all the regional and extra-regional states. The dependency on Iran for the security of the Strait of Hormuz and other gulf countries is declining due to the operation of Gwadar port (Khetran, 2014).

The economic development of Pakistan for China is of critical significance. China claims that stability and peace in Pakistan can be accomplished by economic expansion and growth. The Gulf states and Iran consider Gwadar to be a possible rival in the region. According to them, Gwadar Port is expanding its commercial and economic activities, mainly against their interest in Dubai and Chabahar, and also has reservations that Gwadar will achieve the level of Hong Kong and Singapore. For the United States and India, China's location between the Gulf and the Hormuz Strait has considerable strategic significance. They also fear that the intervention of China in the Middle East and Central Asia Republics (CAR's) is disrupting oil supplies (Khetran, 2016).

Gwadar Port has a range of modern facilities, including the depiction and preservation of marine resources, fishing, and transport at the entrance of the Persian Gulf to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Gulf States and European States. It is strongly added that European nations are striving to enter the Caspian area's mineral-rich region faster than other major players across Afghanistan and Gwader.

Political Implications of Gwadar Port

South Asia, geo-economically, tends to have rich natural wealth, which could be used successfully to support the economic well-being of

the region as a whole. Gwadar is geographically positioned in three very critical places worldwide between South Asia, Central Asia, and Western Asia. The idea of international integration and global connections, considering the multiple rewards, is still difficult for Gwadar to introduce. Certain regional and extra-regional actors have very different and overlapping goals, which preclude the stability and performance of the Gwadar terminal. Gwadar Port will have a higher geographic and economic importance as it will give regional players the ability to make South Asia a well-linked region, and there are various benefits of increasing economic and political collaboration and establishing shared interconnections (Hussain, 2016).

Iran

Given its important geographical location in the Persian Gulf, Iran sees its involvement in the Indian Ocean as strengthening its ambitions in the Gulf. Iran's geopolitical position within the Persian Gulf region tends to be that the northern coasts of the Gulf, which mainly serves to track the Hormuz Strait. The Iranian port of Chabahar, situated in the middle of the Gulf, tends to be the main engine of economic development until the energy supplies of the Central Asian Republics (CARs) commence their way to the world from this port. Meanwhile, Iran is concerned about its geopolitical and economic goals in the Indian Ocean, as its main infrastructure ventures may include the supply of natural gas to India by pipeline across the Indian Ocean (Tanoli, 2016).

The growing rivalry between India and China has adversely affected the ties between Pakistan and Iran. The two ports, the Pakistani port of Gwadar and the Iranian port of Chabahar are the primary focus of their geostrategic and political rivalries. China is mainly concerned with increasing Indian development in the Indian Ocean and the Arab Sea. The major factor is the geo-strategic importance of both ports. However, both ports are at the confluence of the commodity trading route that passes through most of the world's oil exports. These ports are of strategic significance for the management of operations in the Arab Gulf and the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean has also become a theatre of diplomatic competition because of the rich quality of its resources. Gwadar and Chabahar are creating numerous opportunities for contact throughout most of the region. And the whole region can be powered by both ports (Zeb, 2003).

Afghanistan

Pakistan welcomed the emergence of independent Central Asian states in 1991, anticipating Pakistan to be able to enhance its presence in the region by using its geopolitical theme of scope and to obstruct Indian entrance to that region. Pakistan wants Afghanistan to welcome its Muslim approach as a country and historical links with the Central Asian region (Cohn, 2001). Due to the ongoing insurgency in Afghanistan, the frustration and anmosyness of recent decades has been more obvious than the torrent of border crossing charges and recriminations. Multiple agreements to improve collaboration between the two nations are concluded. These deals include an improvement in bilateral trade, Pakistan's aid in rebuilding Afghanistan, and the formal strengthening of its ties. Pakistan promises itself as a commercial and economic pioneer in South Asia, Central Asia, and West Asia, and is truly involved in Afghanistan. Afghanistan's former finance minister, Ashraf Ghani, has offered the assistance of his country for the building of the port of Gwadar (Manish & Kaushik 2019).

The port of Gwadar has tremendous chances to participate actively in this phase of rebuilding and revisiting Afghanistan's economy. On the premise of its location, Pakistan will play a vital role in the recovery of Afghanistan. Pakistan intends to continue occupied Afghanistan to promote the successful economic activity of Gwadar port.

India

India has consolidated its foreign policy by establishing a joint venture with the US to counteract Beijing's growing room and authority in the region and to grow into a regional powerhouse. India is by far the most powerful and ruling state over the other nations of the region. India took a position to encourage its presence in several countries. These causes have provoked other nations to look at China, which is genuinely ready for aid. China has adopted a cooperation policy of peace and stability in the poorer countries and has also been successful in catching the nations with strengthened control, strong trade, economic relations and assistance in various areas of South Asia (Brewster, 2015).

The tremendous investment of China in Gwadar port and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Pakistan has created Indian malaise and political instability. India never calls on any country to challenge India's hold over the Indian Ocean. India is concerned about China retaining the Gwadar port and managing the Arab Sea and Hormuz Strait. The

growing strategic bilateral ties under the CPEC thus significantly address the main and most powerful power of India in South Asia, which has again been disrupted by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative and voiced opposition (Conrad, 2017).

India also recognized that the economic wealth of Pakistan would transform in a very short period, giving Pakistan a chance to become a well-established, prosperous, developed, and globally accepted country. Because of global monitoring, China's presence, and interest in central Asia, India did not deliberately hinder the project. To balance its diplomatic competitiveness with the two countries, this enabled India not to fall behind and seek numerous geopolitical allies. India is also engaged in cross-border politics through funding militant groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan to dismantle the Gwadar initiative. Such terrorist organizations are carrying out terrorist activities in Pakistan to create security problems for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and China, particularly in Balochistan. India invested tremendous sums in Afghanistan, is taking diplomatic and unorthodox strategies now to avoid the corridor being built, and is ready to play a crucial role. Nevertheless, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will open trading doors for both Afghanistan and India. Other routes for bilateral trade with India and Afghanistan are costly due to Pakistan's geographical position. 'Indo-Afghan alternate channel can be rendered via the port of Chabahar in Iran; moreover, this route is not cost-effective as compared with the land-based route through Pakistan (Takrim & Afif, 2015).

Central Asian Republics (CARs)

In the foreign relations of contemporary multi-polar society, natural resources are of immense importance. Central Asia is one of the big flourishing regions in this respect. Russia, China, Iran, Afghanistan are the main Central Asian nations, while Pakistan and India have always been central South Asian progressive societies and the second-largest neighborhood, with conventional links with the region. Central Asia not merely connects Asia and Europe, it also offers the easiest path from Asia to Europe for transportation. The entire area has been greatly impacted by geopolitical influences. Central Asia has indeed acquired good progressive, economic and geopolitical importance in the arena of foreign affairs. There are tremendous natural resources in the area, including crude oil, natural gas, and other precious metals like gold, copper, etc. Driven by the rising need for the region's oil and gas capital,

emerging ambitions and conflicts have been developed between foreign forces (Bayramov,2020).

The vast natural and energy resource of Central Asia has been called to the notice of the regional and external forces, along with large powers like the United States and China.

The countries of Central Asia are blessed with immense natural wealth, but these landlocked republics remain unfortunate. Landlocked countries try to pursue entrance to the sea and diversify the energy channels that can be met by the CPEC program. The project connected to the port of Gwadar would bind CARs to the Gulf area within a very short distance of the economic corridor, and the project would offer enormous economic incentives to these countries. Central Asian nations can facilitate transit and pipeline trading and export their products easily into Eastern and the European States via Pakistan (Anwar, 2010).

Good bilateral relations with China and Pakistan are sponsored by Central Asia and aim to enter the Indian Ocean under the Gwadar initiative. It is certain to increase significantly that Gwadar Port will revive Pakistan's economy. The integration of economic gains of this potential ensures that the port and its external activities are efficiently handled by specifically designed policies.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Gwadar's location is a desirable destination for the Middle East, particularly the GCC countries. To enforce policy changes that will make it possible for other countries in the GCC to raise their monetary policies through Gwadar Port with China. Oman must take advantage of the nearest port to Gwadar. West China to Gwadar is also the shortest and the most cost-efficient path that can provide Chinese and GCC companies and businesses with comparative advantages over a variety of other Global companies in this timeframe saving and route to prevalent insurgent attacks. Gwadar's emergence as an effective and productive port would need China as its driver and the GCC to reshape its political and economic priorities. However, most recently, for a variety of diplomatic, economic, and commercial reasons, the GCC has preferred and prioritized India over Pakistan (Fulton, 2017).

The United States

The United States is forced to ensure consistent influence in the region to protect its essential policy objectives. If the United States intends to reconfigure its position in the region to decrease forces in

violent communities in nations, it will need to construct a new base closest to the Persian Gulf. There is a greater US engagement in the ownership of the massive energy reserves of United Eurasia. "Clear access to reliable energy supplies" is the political and national interest of the US government. The United States has a powerful military and political presence not only in the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Middle East but also on the Eastern Mediterranean and the Indian ocean. Experts claim that Afghanistan could be the most productive path to Pakistan's port of Gwadar from the Caspian Sea south, which may decrease U.S. dependency on Gulf oil (Yuldasheva, 2017).

The US does not only have to buy crude but also needs to remove rising competitors, taking on a political or military role in the region and control the supply of oil and gas in Western and South East Asia according to its wishes in the world markets. It may also perceive that in the future The US Administration will use its military strength to attempt to overcome its competitors in the battle for political control and resources in the Indian Ocean Region (Noonari & Noonari 2014).

Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, it is concluded that all countries' political interests are a product of their economic interests. Gwadar focuses on the needs of all nations with its related capacity to serve as a port center, thus bringing development, security, dignity, political infrastructure, and economic transformation to the entire region. To have accessibility to all of the other energy resources of the Central Asian Republics, all developing countries and the whole world are based on dominance, retaining the Persian Gulf region for energy and oil aspirations.

Gwadar Harbor has developed a rivalry and negative politics in some states due to its remarkable regional capacities and its easy access to the Indian Ocean, its proximity to the Hormuz Strait and the Persian Gulf area, and its facilitation points for China and Central Asia.

The evolved strategic situation in the region has prompted Pakistan to regain its protective role as a leading power, clearly demonstrated by current government decisions to protect its financial interests, for the interests of the regional and extra-regional powers.

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