

Q NOS) If we do not take charge of our population size, the nature will do it for us. Explain this phenomenon in context of Pakistan. Also suggest measures to address it?

### Introduction:

"If we do not take charge of our population size, the nature will do it for us" is a famous quote, quoted by Sir David Attenborough. As the population size will increase exponentially, so natural resources will also decrease exponentially. As a result there would be imbalance of nature in terms of depletion of resources, environment, facilities etc. The over population cannot bring prosperity in country unless there would be enough reserve and resources to fulfil the demands of its citizens. Pakistan is also going through this phase. The excessive use of natural resources by current generation is depleting the resources for future generation. There are many problems associated with over-population especially in developing and under-developed countries. Same is the case with Pakistan that size of population is more, but resources and facilities are less for the people. As of 2021, the population of Pakistan is estimated to be around 220 million and is projected to continue growing rapidly in coming years.



## a Causes of over population in Pakistan:

The causes of over population in Pakistan are complex and multifaceted. Some are as following.

### a' High fertility rate:

Pakistan has a relatively high fertility rate, because of lack of knowledge, early marriages and family planning.

The fertility rate of around 3.3 children per woman, which is significantly higher than the global average.

### b' Poverty and Lack of education:

Poverty and lack of education are also major factors that contribute to high fertility rates in Pakistan. People who are poor or have limited education are less likely to have access to family planning services and may not have the knowledge or resources to control their fertility. Moreover, if the poor would have more children they can do more work to earn money.

According to Bureau of Statistics 2022-23 the highest ratio of child labor in Pakistan is Punjab and according to the Economic Survey of 2022-23 is 59.3pc.

### c' Cultural and religious beliefs:

Some cultural and religious beliefs in Pakistan discourage the use of birth control methods which are contributing to high fertility rate.



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### d- Urbanization:

Urbanization has led to overpopulation in Pakistan as people migrate to the cities for job opportunities and better living standards. Pakistan is also witnessing a rapid rate of urbanization. According to the 2023 estimates, the extent of urbanization has reached 38.8%. This is higher than urbanization in India and Bangladesh.

Pakistan  $\Rightarrow$  38.8%

India  $\Rightarrow$  35.9%

### e- Decrease in Mortality rate:

Because of advancements in medical field there is a decline in mortality rate. Moreover, there is improvement in combating communicable diseases.

In Pakistan in 1973  $\Rightarrow$  13.2% per 1000 people

In Pakistan in 2022  $\Rightarrow$  7% per 1000 people

### f- Political instability and lack of government action:

Political instability and lack of government action in promoting family planning and education also play a role in overpopulation in Pakistan.



### 3- Consequences of over population in Pakistan:

The consequences of over population in Pakistan can be far-reaching and have a significant impact on the social, economic and environmental well being of country. Therefore, some of the main consequences are:

#### a- Strain on resources:

Over population puts a strain on resources such as food, water and energy leading to shortages and higher prices.

e.g. The population of Pakistan stands at 207.8 million, making the country the fifth most populous in the world.

#### b- Economic challenges:

Over population can lead to increased competition for jobs, which can lead to higher unemployment rates and lower wages.

According to ILO estimates, in 2023, the employment-to-population ratio of Pakistan has fallen well below its pre-crisis trendline at 47.6%. While the number of unemployed persons is expected to reach 5.6 million - a surge of 1.5 million since 2021.

#### c- Dependency of Population:

As a result of high fertility rate and less mortality rate, there is rapid growing



aging population. As they are unable to do more work, therefore dependent on others. Life expectancy in Pakistan has increased from 61.1 years in 1990 to 65.9 in 2019.

#### d- Dearth of Health facilities and educational facilities:

Over population has lead to strain on the public services such as health care and education, which can make it more difficult for people to access these services.

Health According to Health Care Access and Quality index of Lancet study, Pakistan ranked 154<sup>th</sup> among 195 countries. Similarly according to WHO performance report Pakistan ranked 122<sup>nd</sup> out of 190 countries.

Education The current literacy rate in Pakistan is 62.3%. which means that around 90 million people in country cannot read and write.

#### e- Social challenges

Over population can lead to increased crime, poverty and social unrest. It can also put a strain on social services such as housing and welfare programs, which can make it more difficult for people to access these services.

poverty Currently 40% people in Pakistan has crossed the poverty line.



Crime rate According to Global organized crime index 2023, the crime rate has reached 3.98 in Pakistan.

## f- Environmental degradation:

Over population has lead to environmental degradation, including deforestation, air, water pollution and loss of biodiversity

Water Pollution According to water quality data when compared with the national standards for drinking water quality show that out of total 435 sources, 168 (39%) sources were safe, whereas 267 (61%) sources were unsafe for drinking.

Deforestation According to Pakistan Deforestation Rates and statistics;

2010 → Pakistan had 648 kha of tree cover  
2022 → Pakistan had lost 49 ha of tree cover

## g- Overburdened infrastructure:

Over population can lead to overcrowding which can put a strain on infrastructure such as roads, housing and public transport. Pakistan has been placed on 25<sup>th</sup> position in global ranking of infrastructure.

## h- Political instability

Over population is leading towards political instability as the government may struggle to meet the needs of rapidly growing population.



4- **Solutions of over population in Pakistan**  
There are several solutions that can be implemented to address the issue of over population.

a- **Promoting family planning and reproductive health:**

Increasing access to family planning services and providing education on reproductive health can help people to control the size of their families and reduce the rate of population growth.

b- **Education and Economic development:**

Investing in education and economic development can help to reduce poverty and improve the overall well-being of the population. This can also lead to reduction in the fertility rate as people become more aware of family planning and have more resources to support smaller families.

c- **Encourage urban planning:**

Encouraging urban planning and development can help to alleviate the strain on the infrastructure and resources in urban areas. This can also help to improve living conditions and reduce overcrowding.



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### d- Improve living standards and access to Resources:

Improving living standards and access to resources such as housing, healthcare and education can help to reduce poverty and improve overall well-being. This can also help to reduce the fertility rate.

### e- Government policies:

Government policies such as tax incentives for smaller families and penalties for having more than a certain number of children, can also be implemented to help control population growth.

### f- Promoting Sustainable development:

Encouraging sustainable development and environmental protection can help to reduce the strain on resources and protect the environment. This can also help to improve overall well-being and reduce the rate of population growth.

### 5- Conclusion

Over population is a factor that is impacting many things at a same time as discussed earlier. Therefore government needs a comprehensive and integrated approach to address the issue of over population in Pakistan and it is taking few measures to tackle this issue and to complete sustainability goals for the prosperity of the country.



Q No 4) CPEC is located where the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road meet. Explain now the Belt and Road initiative (BRI) envisions building of infrastructure, reshaping of production chains and trading links.

### 1- Introduction:

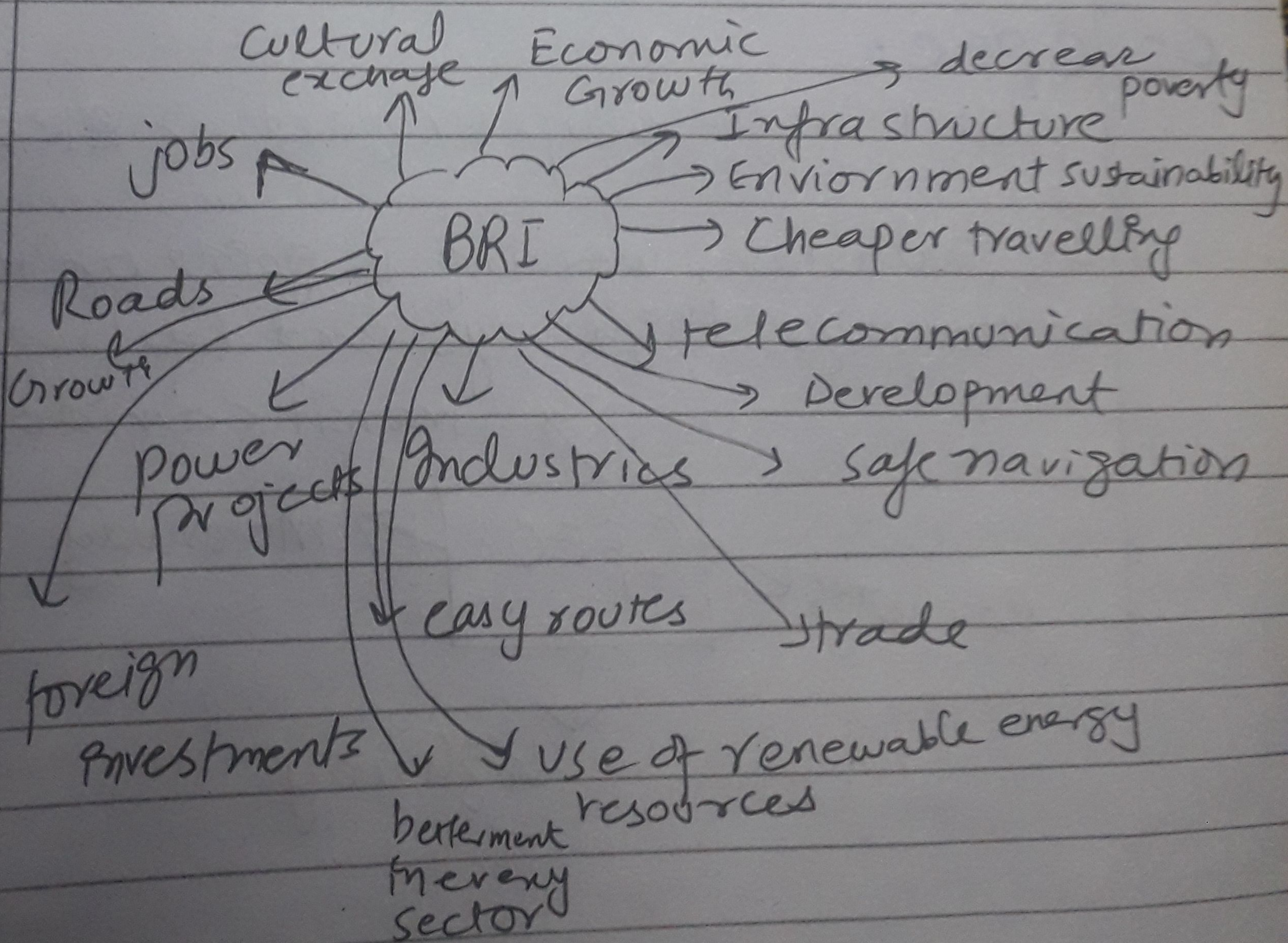
China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship BRI project. A transformational project for the world Belt and Road Initiative is a strategy initiated by People's Republic of China that seeks to connect Asia with Africa and Europe via land and maritime networks with the aim of providing and improving regional integration, increasing trade and stimulating economic growth. The BRI has been associated with a very large programme of investments in infrastructure development for ports, roads, railways and airports, as well as power plants and telecommunication network. So, BRI is an important umbrella mechanism for the bilateral trade of China with BRI partners. So, number of countries have joined this BRI project.



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2- **Historical perspective:**

In 2014, China initiated a massive economic development project called One Belt One Road. China did spend trillion dollars on infrastructure investments in 68 countries. One of the most important countries in this initiative is Pakistan. Pakistan borders Xinjiang province of China in north with an elevation of over 15,000 feet. Pakistan therefore provides China with a potential corridor through Karakoram highway to the sea port at Gwadar in Baluchistan to the Indian Ocean. Thus Pakistan part of the larger project is referred to as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

3- **BRI; A Road of Prosperity for New Era:**





#### 4- Infrastructure under BRI:

Following are some key infrastructure projects under BRI.

##### a- Jakarta - Bandung High Speed Railway:

It connects capital of Indonesia that is Jakarta and provincial capital Bandung with West Java. The speed is 350 km per hour and will reduce the time of three hours to 40 minutes.

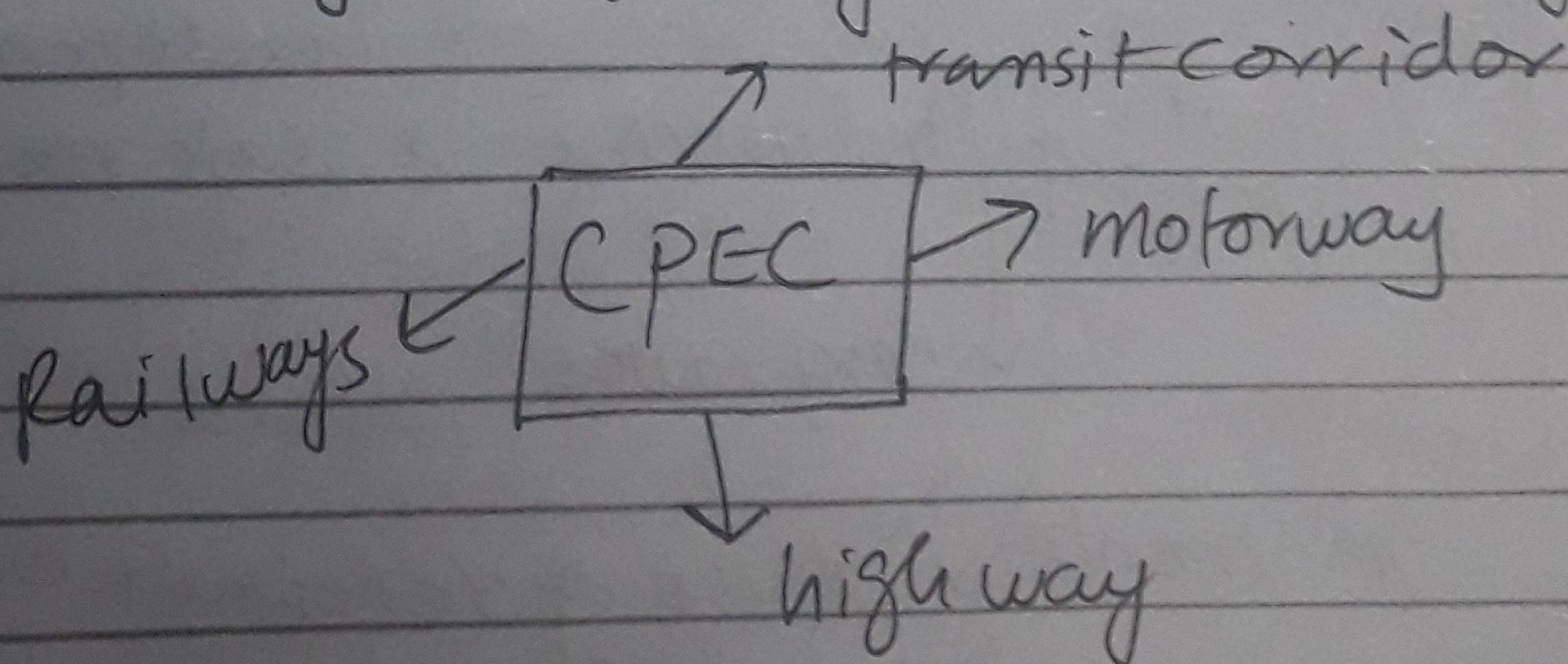
##### b- China - Laos Railway:

It is connecting the section between Kunming and Chinese border town of Mohan, as well as the section connecting Vientiane and Bolten town on the Lao side.

##### c- CPEC:

It is a flagship project of BRI.

In Pakistan, working is going on the motorways, Highways and Railways





# Infrastructure in Pakistan

Motorways

Highways

Railways

1\*

Northern alignment

Khunjarab to burhan on the way to Peshawar.

2\*

Southern alignment

Gawadar to Basimah

3\*

Eastern alignment

Burhan, Faisalabad, Multan, Sukkhar, Hyderabad, Karachi

4\*

Central western alignment

Burhan, Hukla, DI Khan, Swatta, Gawadar

5\*

Rathodero Gawadar motorway

• ML1

• This would be double track and signal free

• Connects Karachi - Lahore - Havelian - Peshawar

• Speed limit of 160

Transient corridor

- Russian
- Arabian sea
- CARs
- Afghanistan
- Iran
- South Asia
- Middle East
- Africa
- Turkey
- Azerbaijan
- Armenia etc.



d- **China-Europe Railway Express**  
 China - Europe freight trains operated by China-Europe Railway Express.

e- **New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor:**

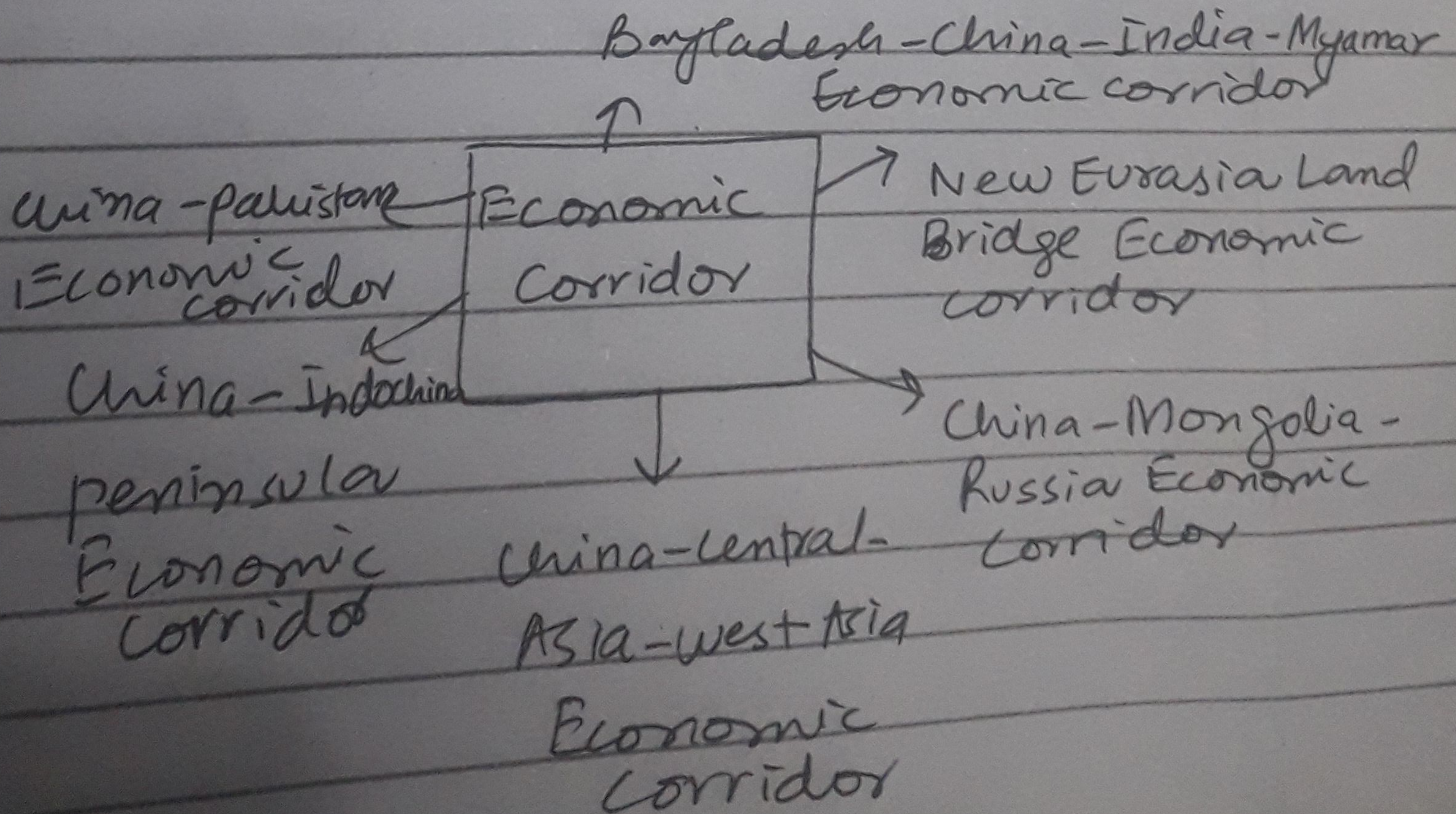
It was jointly built by provincial-level regions in western China and ASEAN countries.

f- **Hungarian-Serbian railway**

It is connecting Hungarian capital Budapest and Serbian capital Belgrade.

5- **The Belt and Road Initiative has intensified Bilateral trade links between China and involved countries**

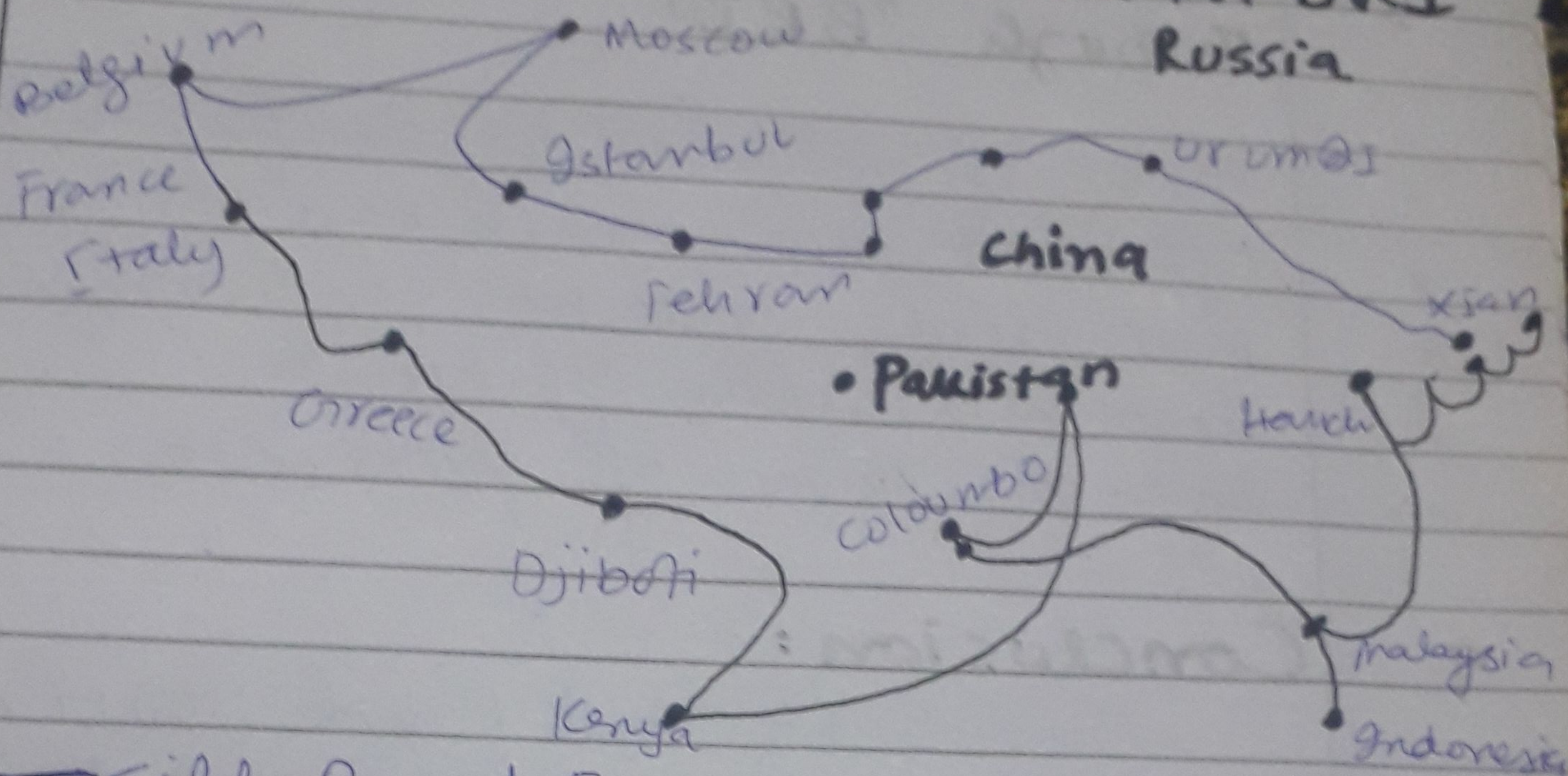
The BRI has had considerable influence on China, on BRI host countries and the world. It is effecting the global trade networks. BRI has established 6 international economic corridors.





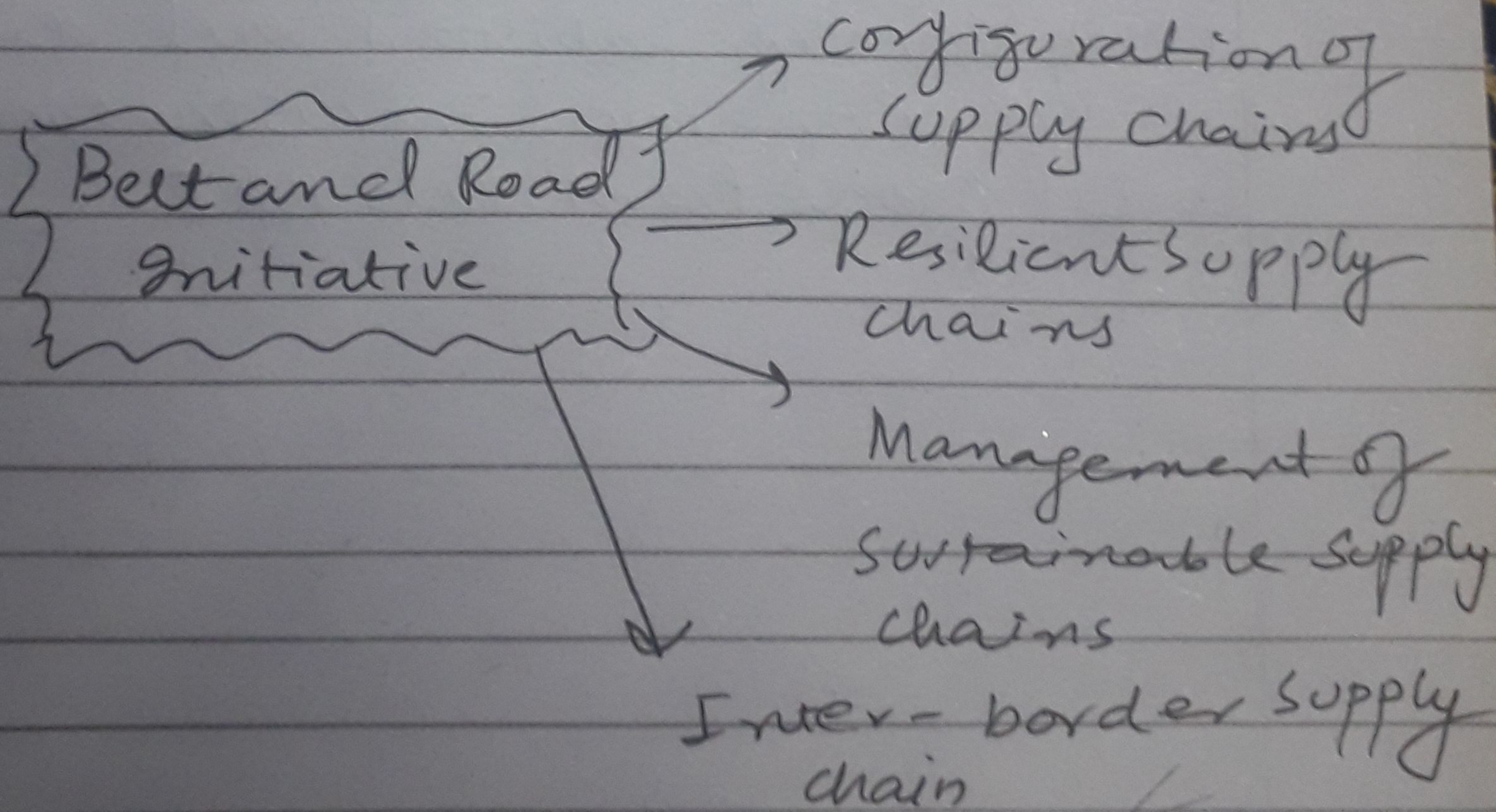
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## 6- Trade points or Network in BRI



- Silk Road Economic Belt
- Maritime Silk Road Initiative

## 7- Production chains in BRI:





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## 8 Advantages of production chains through BRI

- There is reduced geographical distances
- Efficient supply chain resilience
- Maintaining cost border supply chain
- Economically efficient
- Safe disposal of products

## 9 Conclusion:

This Belt and Road Initiative is linking the whole globe together under one umbrella and facilitating each country in this project. As evident from all the projects developed under BRI is going to bring prosperity in every country. Pakistan will also gain all the economic, infrastructure, and social goods from this BRI.