

Name : Atkia Altaf.

Batch : 63

Test : Current Affairs.

Q. 7. CPEC Projects have become increasingly slow. Critically evaluate the reasons ~~and~~ ~~and~~ and find out solutions.

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### CPEC Project:

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a major infrastructure initiative that aims to enhance economic connectivity between China and Pakistan.

⇒ CPEC officially launched Belt in 2013, CPEC is a flagship Project of China's broader Belt and Road initiative.

⇒ The Corridor encompasses a network of transportation, energy, and industrial projects, with the goal of linking Gwadar port in southwestern Pakistan to China's northwestern region of Xinjiang, passing through various key

regions of Pakistan. CPEC includes the construction of highways, railways, and pipelines, as well as the development of energy projects, including power plants and renewable energy initiatives. The Gwadar port, a key component of CPEC, is strategically located on the Arabian sea and serves as a crucial maritime link.

⇒ The initiative aims to not only strengthen economic ties between China and Pakistan but also foster regional development and connectivity.

⇒ CPEC Projects include:

1. Energy Projects:- Power plants

(Coal, gas, solar, and wind)

Transmission lines and distribution networks.

2. Infrastructure Projects:- Roads and

highways (motorways, expressways, and

national highways). Railways, Gwadar

port expansion and development.

Airport upgrades and new constructions.

3. Industrial Projects:-

Special Economic Zones for industries

like textiles, food processing,

and Pharmaceuticals. Industrial Parks and clusters.

4. Agriculture Projects: Farm-to-market roads and storage facilities. Agricultural research and development centers.

5. Water Projects:

Dams and water reservoirs. Irrigation systems and canals.

⇒ Why CPEC Project increasingly Slow?

The completion process of CPEC has been slow since the past few years, main compelling reasons:

1. Security Concerns:

The project, crucial for enhancing economic ties between China and Pakistan, faces challenges in regions marked by terrorist threats and insurgent activities.

Particularly in Balochistan, where separatist movements and episodes of violence have occurred, CPEC construction sites have been targeted, reflecting security risks. The tribal areas bordering Afghanistan, known for historical militancy, add complexity to the security landscape.

Additionally, geopolitical tensions and the corridor's proximity to sensitive border regions further underscore the need of robust security measures. Both governments have responded by deploying additional security forces and implementing surveillance systems.

## 2. Political Instability:

The fluctuating political landscape in Pakistan, marked by changes in government and policy priorities, has led to uncertainties and alternations in the execution of CPEC initiatives. Instances of political transitions have often resulted in shifts in project priorities, funding allocations, and administrative approaches, introducing complexities that contribute to delays.

These changes can stem from broader geopolitical dynamics, internal governance issues, or shifts in public political instability ~~instability~~ or shift in public sentiment.

## 3. Financial constraints:-

One major hurdle slowing CPEC progress is the financial strain

on both Pakistan and China. Initially envisioned at 62 million dollars, costs ballooned to over 90 billion dollars. Pakistan, grappling with a ballooning current account deficit and IMF loan conditions, struggles to secure funds for its share. This has led to project delays, like the stalled Gwadar LNG terminal, initially funded by Pakistan but now awaiting Chinese investment. China, too, faces economic headwinds, prompting a shift towards stricter lending policies. This cautious approach means less readily available financing for CPEC, further impacting project timelines.

### ↳ Environmental Concerns:-

A major road block on CPEC path is protecting the environment. Large-scale projects like road construction can leave their mark, with thousands of trees being felled for CPEC expansion, potentially disrupting ecosystems and harming wildlife. Additionally, coal-fired power plants planned under

CPEC raise concerns about air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

### 5- Technical challenges:-

CPEC's ambitious infrastructure goals come with significant technical hurdles.

Building roads and railways through mountainous terrain like the Karakoram Highway is no easy feat. The 2018 earthquake near Gwadar, which damaged sections of the Eastbay Expressway, highlighted the vulnerability of infrastructure to natural disasters.

### 6- Transparency and Governance

#### Issues:-

The shadows of secrecy and opaque decision-making can often stall progress.

CPEC faces its own share of transparency concerns, with critics calling for clearer information on project costs, contracts, and environmental impact assessments. Transparency International Pakistan highlighted weaknesses in procurement processes for CPEC projects, raising concerns about potential misuse of funds.

## ⇒ How can Pakistan speed up the CPEC Process?

### 1. Enhance Financial Agility:-

Explore alternative financing models like Public-Private Partnerships and attract Private sector investment to bridge funding gaps.

### 2. Streamline Bureaucracy:-

Establish fast-track approvals, dedicated CPEC facilitation desks, and empower lower-level decision-making to eliminate bureaucratic roadblocks.

### 3. Prioritize Green Solutions:-

Integrate stricter environmental regulations, invest in renewable energy sources like solar and wind, and adopt sustainable practices to mitigate environmental concerns.

### 4. Leverage Technical Expertise:-

Partner with international experts for complex engineering challenges, disaster resilient infrastructure design, and adherence to safety regulations.

### 5. Build Local Capacity:-

Invest in training and skill development programs for Pakistani workers to enhance their participation in CPEC.

Projects and create long-term economic benefits.

## 6. Strengthen Transparency and Governance:

Implement open data initiatives, Publish regular project reports, and strengthen anti-corruption measures to rebuild trust and ensure responsible management.

Q. No. 2. Gaza human Crises has become a classic example of war crimes by Israel but the champion of Human rights is silent. Find out the reasons and explain how it would affect US relations with the Muslims world.

The Gaza humanitarian crisis has been a longstanding issue, with Israel's actions being widely criticized as potential war crimes. The reasons for the silence from the "champion of human rights" are complex and multifaceted.

## 1. Strategic alliance:

The US has a strong strategic partnership with Israel,



which influences its policy decisions.

## 2. Political dynamics:-

Domestic politics, including the influential Pro-Israel lobby, play a significant role in shaping US policy.

## 3. Security concerns:-

The US shares intelligence with security interests with Israel, particularly regarding Iran and regional stability.

## 4. Veto power:-

The US has consistently used its UN Security Council veto to block resolutions critical of Israel's actions in Gaza.

## ⇒ Silence of the US on Gaza's humanitarian crisis:-

The silence of the US on Gaza's humanitarian crisis has significant implications for its relations with the Muslim world:

### 1. Eroding credibility:-

The US inability to address Palestinian suffering undermines its claims to promote human rights and democracy.

## 2. Perceived bias:-

The US is seen as complicit in Israel's actions, perpetuating a narrative of bias and hypocrisy.

## 3. Anti-American sentiment:-

The silence fuels anger and resentment towards the US, potentially ~~radical~~ radicalizing some individuals.

## 4. Regional instability:-

The ongoing crisis exacerbates regional tensions, making it challenging for the US to promote stability and peace.

## 5. Damage to US interests:-

The perception of US complicity in Israel's actions harms US interests in the region, making it harder to achieve its goals.

⇒ To address this, the US could:

1. Critically evaluate its relationship with Israel.
2. Support independent investigations into alleged war crimes.
3. Advocate for a ceasefire and humanitarian aid.

4. Engage in genuine dialogue  
with Palestinian representatives.

5. Rebalance its approach to  
prioritize human rights and  
international law.

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