

Question 1

12/20

INTRODUCTION

The China - Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a vital component of China's Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI), it symbolizes a strategic Partnership between the two countries who aims at enhancing connectivity, fostering economic growth and strengthening the bilateral relation. It was launched in 2015 during the period of Nawaz Sharif, with the promise of transforming the Pakistan's infrastructure, energy sector and industrial sector. The project is divided into multiple phases, initially focused on energy and infrastructure development moving on to socio-economic development and industrialization. However, despite its promising start, CPEC encountered various challenges, particularly in starting its Phase II. The slow progress has raised many concerns about its long term viability, requiring a careful analysis of the major reasons and possible solutions to restore its energy and progress.

Factors Contributing to CPEC's

SLOW PROGRESS

1- Regional and Global Political Dynamics

One of the key obstacles to CPEC's progress is the impact of geopolitical factors - India strongly opposes the project, citing sovereignty issues over Gilgit-Baltistan causing regional tension - India's efforts to discredit CPEC internationally, making it harder to get regional support - With that the growing tension between China and USA has put Pakistan in tough situation - Also, the instability in ~~Afghanistan~~ Afghanistan and insurgent activities in Balochistan have increased security risks -

2- Economic Constraints in Pakistan

Macroeconomic challenges are having great impact on the country's growth - At the moment Pakistan is facing severe economic challenges including increase in fiscal deficit, high inflation and a depreciating currency -

The growing debt ~~has~~ including the CPEC repayments, has raised concerns about the country's financial ability. Furthermore, the energy sector, important project is burdened by circular debt exceeding PKR 2 trillion, resulting in delay in project implementation and further investments.

3- Administrative and Governance Issues

CPEC's progress has been slowed by inefficiencies in Pakistan's governance, including bureaucratic delays, inter-agency conflicts and inconsistent policies. The slow development of regulatory frameworks for projects like special economic zones have created uncertainty. Additionally, corruption and mismanagement allegations have reduced trust and discouraged both foreign and local participation.

4- Security Concerns

Security is a major challenge for CPEC's success. Insurgents, especially in Balochistan, have attacked infrastructure and Chinese workers, fostering fear and uncertainty. Although the SSD was created for project, but security gaps remain resulting in increase in costs and cause delays due to risks to investors and workers.

5- Changing Priorities in China

China's changing domestic and strategic priorities has slowed the progress. Economic

issues like, slower GDP growth and higher debt, have led China to rethink its investments. With quicker gains in short-term projects, China has become less interested in long-term, capital heavy projects like CPEC.

6. Public Perception and Lack of Transparency

Public mistrust and lack of transparency in CPEC's planning and execution have hindered its progress. Local communities feel left out of the benefits, as job creation and economic growth promises have not been met. The absence of clear processes in financing and decision making has increased skepticism, reducing public support and making implementation more difficult.

Recommendations for Revitalize CPEC

Strengthening Pakistan's economic foundations

Improving Governance and Policy execution

Enhancing security measures for CPEC

Encouraging local participation

Adopting flexible investment strategies

Addressing Geopolitical and Regional Challenges

1- Strengthening Pakistan's Economic foundation

Pakistan needs to stabilize the economy, by focusing on fiscal reforms, boosting revenue and reducing dependence on external ~~referrals~~ loans. Resolving issues like circular debt in the energy sector is key to ~~the~~ restoring investor trust and ensuring the financial sustainability of CPEC projects, creating favorable environment for CPEC's growth.

2- Improving Governance and Policy execution

Improving governance is crucial for CPEC's success. Establishing a dedicated CPEC authority with clear decision-making powers can help resolve bureaucratic delays. Consistent policies for Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and trade facilitation are needed to attract investments.

3- Enhancing Security Measures for CPEC project

Another measure is enhancing the security measure. Expanding and modernizing the SSD with sufficient resources will help mitigate risks. Collaborating with local communities on security efforts can reduce insurgent activities and China's support in strengthening Pakistan's security framework will boost safety and investor confidence.

4- Encouraging local Participation and Awareness

Promoting inclusivity is crucial for gaining public support for CPEC. Pakistan should engage local industries, workers and communities to ensure they benefit equally.

Public awareness campaigns highlight the economic and social advantages of CPEC can counter negative perceptions and foster a sense of ownership.

5- Adopting Flexible Investment strategies

China should consider more flexible investment approaches, like public private partnerships, to ease Pakistan's financial burden. Focusing on sectors like agriculture, technology and renewable energy can better align CPEC investments with Pakistan's needs and priorities.

6- Addressing Geopolitical and Regional Challenges

Pakistan and China should actively engage with regional stakeholders. Reducing opposition, particularly from India and promoting CPEC as a regional economic initiative can improve its acceptance.

CONCLUSION

The slowdown in CPEC projects is result of blend of geopolitical, economic, governance and security challenges. To overcome these obstacles a joint effort is needed, with Pakistan prioritizing economic stabilization, improving governance, and engaging with public, while China embrace acceptable and

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inclusive investment strategies - By following these proposed actions, Islamabad and Beijing can restore CPEC's momentum, facilitating a smooth transition to phase II and unlocking its potentials to drive regional development and prosperity.

Question 3

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Russia and China have been strengthening their economic, strategic and geopolitical ties marking a major shift in global power dynamics. This growing power partnership is more than simply personal benefits, but a way to challenge US led world order that has been in power since the cold war ended. Both countries influential in their regions, share a common opposition to western, especially American influence - They face similar issues, such as economic sanctions, foreign interference and global dominance of the US dollar. As a result they have increasingly deepened their cooperation in

areas like trade, military and efforts to influence global institution like United Nations. By strengthening the ties, Russia and China are not only boosting the position, but also ~~aiming~~ to aim to create multipolar global system.

1- Economic Collaboration

1- Trade and Investments

Russia and China have intensified trade, with bilateral trade volume crossing \$190 billion in 2022. Energy is a cornerstone of this relationship, as Russia supplies China with natural gas and crude oil through pipeline like the Power of Siberia a key example of this growing energy cooperation.

2- Belt and Road Initiatives and EAEU

China's BRI and Russia's Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) complement each other, helping both countries expand their economic influence. The BRI focus on infrastructure development while EAEU is designed to enhance regional trade ties.

3- Reducing dependency on US Dollars

Both the countries have worked to reduce

their reliance on US dollar in international trade. They have increasingly used their local currencies for bilateral transactions and are exploring alternative financial systems.

2- Strategic Collaboration

1- Military cooperation

The countries regularly conduct joint military exercises such as the Vostok drills, enhancing their military coordination and strengthening their defense ties. These exercises not only improve their military preparedness but also send a clear signal unity to the West.

2- Defense Technology Sharing

Russia has become key supplier of advanced military technologies to China, including fighter jets, missile defense systems, and other high tech-military equipment. This collaboration reduces China's dependence on Western defense technologies.

3- Geopolitical Collaboration

1- Alignment in Multilateral forums

Both the countries have increased their

cooperation in international bodies such as United Nations, BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organization - In these forums they often align their positions, particularly when it comes to opposing Western-led interventions and positions -

2- Expanding influence in global South

Russia and China have worked together to expand their influence in Asia, Africa and Latin America. By offering development aid, infrastructure projects and military support, they position themselves as alternatives to Western powers, increasing their geopolitical sway in these regions -

4- Implications for the US Led World Order

1- Shift towards multipolarity

The growing partnership challenges the unipolar world order led by the United States - Their collaboration is a step toward creating a multipolar world where global power is more evenly distributed and no single country can dominate international affairs -

2. Declining Western Influence

As Russia and China deepen their cooperation, Western influence will decline mainly in Asia, Africa and Latin America - Both countries are offering alternatives to Western led economic and political systems, which may shift the global balance power.

3. Impact on Global Governance

Russia and China's joint efforts to reshape global governance are creating a challenge to US-led institutions - They aim to push reforms in organizations like the United Nations, where they seek to increase and counter the Western dominated decision making processes.

4. Potential Economic and Military Alliances

The collaboration may lead to stronger economic and military alliances, potentially forming a bloc that rivals the influence of Western powers - This could lead to new trade networks, military agreements and international agreements.

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Conclusion

In conclusion, the growing partnership between Russia and China marks a break from the US-dominated world system. By working in trade, defense and shared political goals, they are positioning themselves as key players in global affairs. This collaboration is not only a reaction to Western dominance but a strategic push towards more balanced, multipolar world. They are likely to challenge the power of US in regions like Asia, Africa and Latin America. The impact could reshape the trade, military and international governance. The rise of this Russia-China alliance shows that the world order is changing, and the future of global politics will likely be influenced by how these emerging powers cooperate and compete.