



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Geo-Political Dimension and CPEC: Implications for South Asia**

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**ABSTRACT**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a significant development in South Asia, enhancing economic ties between China and Pakistan. It involves energy projects and infrastructure development, fostering collaboration and altering power balances among neighboring nations. The CPEC's dual nature, involving economic interests, security considerations, and geopolitical alliances, shapes the future of South Asian geopolitics, promoting competition and cooperation. Emphasizes the geostrategic dimensions of CPEC and its implications for the region, Further this study Analyse the CPEC and Convergence among the South Asian States This paper, drawing on qualitative data from diverse secondary sources. It is concluded that the CPEC's success could significantly impact South Asia's economic and geopolitical landscape by fostering regional cooperation and competition, potentially influencing the region's larger dynamics. Advocating for a comprehensive partnership, the study suggests that transparent implementation and inclusive policies involving all stakeholders can positively impact the economic conditions of Pakistan and the broader South Asian region, promoting recovery and cooperation amidst regional challenges.

**KEYWORDS**      China, CPEC, Geo-political, Pakistan, Regional, South Asia

**Introduction**

China and Pakistan have long been close allies, but their economic dynamics have been shaky. China is rising to prominence and investing globally under the "One Belt One Road" plan, which aims to transform the traditional Silk Road into a new one connecting regions and developing underdeveloped areas. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is another project initiated by the Chinese government (Dastaghir et al., 2017). Geographic position significantly impacts a nation's foreign policy, affecting political stability, economics, and strategic manoeuvres. Pakistan's advantageous position allows access to Central Asia, Middle East, Iran, China, and India, influencing its strategic manoeuvres (Shah, et. al., 2020 & Dastaghir et. al., 2017). China and Pakistan have been close neighbours since their founding, with a deep, courteous, cooperative relationship that is expected to strengthen further. Their initial trading was beneficial for both imports and exports (Muzaffar, et. al., 2021; Rahim, et. al., & Sial, 2015).

In 1950, Pakistan recognized the People's Republic of China and ended diplomatic relations with Taiwan, establishing formal relations between the two nations. Since then, maintaining this close and beneficial relationship has been crucial. (Salman, 2008) Pakistan and the PRC have established close strategic partnerships through frequent high-level visits, financial, military, and technical support, and a mutual view of each other as a strategic partner ("China, Pakistan joined in bonds of brotherhood", 2011). China's relationship with Pakistan has evolved from neutrality to military support, strategic alliance, and economic cooperation. Since 1950, diplomatic relations have been established, boundary disputes resolved, military support started in 1966, strategic alliance formed in 1972, and China now

serves as Pakistan's third-largest economic partner ("Pakistan wants China", 2011). Pakistan's foreign strategy focuses on maintaining strong ties with China, with President Zia-ul-Haq visiting China in 1986 to strengthen diplomatic ties. Pakistan and China maintain strong military ties, providing Pakistani defence forces with advanced weapons. Pakistan supports China on Kashmir, Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang, and has increased military cooperation through guided missile frigates and fighter jets. (Yoav, 2020). Pakistan's ambassador to China praises the dynamic relationship between the two countries, despite their divergent societies and politics. Scholars argue that realpolitik drives foreign policy within the international system. The relationship between China and Pakistan demonstrates how state power can determine foreign policy behavior, rather than culture, ideology, economic interest, or ruling elite composition (Yaseen, et. al., 2017 & Amin, 2019).

During the Cold War, the Sino-US rivalry and Sino-Soviet split shifted power in the region. Tensions between China and India increased after the Dalai Lama's 1959 flight. Pakistan and China signed a boundary treaty in 1963, but border talks failed, leading to a 1962 border battle. The 1963 treaty increased mutual trust, and Pakistan started operating flights to China in 1964. In 1965, Pakistan condemned the US's "Two China policy," making it a reliable South Asian ally. This marked a significant change in Pakistan's foreign policy, and their relationship was set to take a significant turn by the mid-1960s. China's support of Pakistan during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan conflict strengthened relations, boosting China's reputation. However, the US's retaliatory response to stop military supplies to Pakistan cost its goodwill, causing a significant loss of Pakistan's inventory. China compensated by providing essential military supplies. The Friendship or Karakoram Highway, established in 1966, connected Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan with China's Xinjiang region, enhancing ties. It now serves as the primary route for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). From 1955 to 1965, the two nations worked to establish confidence. The US-Pakistan relationship became strained after Pakistan's withdrawal from the West after the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war. In the late 1960s, Pakistan forged ties with the USSR, which provided Pakistan with its first steel mill and military hardware. Despite being a member of the Central Treaty Organization and SEATO, US-Pakistan relations improved only between 1970 and 1971.

In 1971, Pakistan faced a significant dilemma due to the Indo-Soviet alliance's involvement in its East Pakistan dispute with India. Despite China's military and diplomatic assistance, Pakistan's fragility and political turmoil, including the passing of Marshal Lin Biao, prevented collapse. Pakistan's leadership issue was too serious for China to heed. US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's 1971 covert visit to China led to rapprochement between the two nations. Pakistan opposed dual representation and supported China's entry to the UN. China exercised its first veto in support of Pakistan in 1972, demanding the release of Pakistani prisoners of war from India. Huang Hua, the Chinese Permanent Representative, and his Soviet counterpart, Huang, had a heated disagreement over the 1971 UN Security Council issue, with the Soviet delegation siding with India. In 1972, China exercised its first UNSC veto in support of Pakistan during the debate over Bangladesh's admission to the UN, imposing a condition on participation: the safe release of Pakistani prisoners of war held by India. China's veto was a significant step towards resolving the ongoing tensions between the two nations (Khalid, 2021).

## Literature Review

Hussain, et al. (2021). Discuss in his articles, *Challenges to China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC): The Indian Perspective*: The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) poses significant challenges for India, as it passes through Pakistan-administered Gilgit-Baltistan, escalating existing tensions. India fears CPEC could enhance China's influence in the region, creating a strategic imbalance. Pakistan's economic impact raises concerns about falling into a debt trap and becoming heavily dependent on China. Careful monitoring and consideration of CPEC's broader implications are crucial for regional stability.

Khetran and Khalid. (2019). Discuss in his Paper, *The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Gateway to Central Asia*. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a strategic infrastructure project aiming to establish a direct trade route between Pakistan's Gwadar Port and China's Xinjiang region. As part of China's Belt and Road Initiative, it aims to boost economic collaboration, create new trade opportunities, and promote regional stability by connecting Central Asian nations to the Arabian Sea.

Javaid, (2016). Discuss in his Research Paper, *Assessing CPEC: potential threats and prospects*. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has both advantages and threats. It could enhance Pakistan's economic growth by improving infrastructure, creating jobs, and enhancing regional connectivity. However, geopolitical concerns and debt sustainability concerns arise, especially in Balochistan. A balanced assessment is needed to ensure CPEC's positive contribution to the region's development.

Xiaolu, (2015). Discuss in his Research Articles, *A Chinese Perspective on CPEC: Background, Benefits and Risks*. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a key component of the Belt and Road Initiative, aiming to enhance economic ties and regional connectivity. China plans to invest in Pakistan's infrastructure, energy projects, and industrial development, creating new trade routes and reducing transportation costs. However, security risks in volatile regions like Balochistan pose challenges.

The above literature describes the evolution of the challenges to the China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) and, from an Indian perspective, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Gateway to Central Asia. Assessing CPEC, potential threats, and prospects A Chinese Perspective on CPEC: Background, Benefits, and Risks. The current study emphasizes the geostrategic dimensions of CPEC and its implications for the region. Further, this study analyzes the CPEC and convergence among the South Asian States. These are the areas that are not covered in the above-mentioned literature.

## **Regional integration and the status of CPEC**

International relations have been practiced by humans since ancient times, with monarchs and kingdoms forming relationships based on internal issues and public opinion. The state, based on sovereignty, state, and nationalism, is the main actor in the contemporary international system. The 1648 Peace of Westphalia led to the modern international system, with the state demonstrating authority over its territory through administration and a monopoly on force. To maintain law and order, the state must balance external relations, which focus on protecting the state's sovereignty and viability, with domestic politics, which focuses on the state's internal sustainability and governance. Both internal and external factors have an impact on one another, highlighting the interconnected nature of international relations. (Matheswaran & Matheswaran, 2016). Cooperation is the flip side of international relations, while international conflict is one of them. Usually, international conflict results from disparities in governments' interests (Tanious, 2018). Regional integration is crucial for reducing disparities and disputes between states, enabling the movement of people, capital, goods, services, and ideas. Economic growth is hindered by geographical, inadequate infrastructure, and ineffective policies. By integrating markets, nations can facilitate the flow of these elements, promoting economic growth. The theory of economic integration defines economic integration as a process that includes actions taken to end discrimination, such as tariffs, quantitative limitations, and limits on the flow of factors between various states or national economies. (Ernst, 1971). Regional integration is influenced by both political and economic factors, with political factors influencing the initial stage and political unification becoming necessary later. Post-World War II, economic benefits drove integration progress. The resolution of significant economic issues is linked to political methods and procedures, such as decision-making based on regional economic potential exploration and utilization.

The European model of integration, which emphasizes tight integration or close regionalism, can provide valuable lessons for Central and South Asia. Each nation must commit to coordinated efforts for regional integration through interdependence on European models and connected infrastructure. The development trajectory of each region is determined by various circumstances, including resource endowment. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would connect regions with abundant hydrocarbon resources and in-demand agricultural products. Regional governments must work together to integrate these regions and establish political will for both intra- and regional economic integration. The Marshall Plan is not necessary, but a safe and peaceful atmosphere through interdependence growth is necessary. All states in the region would benefit from such initiatives. The successful transformation of resources into sustainable development requires collaboration among various regional and intraregional players. The Central Pacific Economic Corridor (CPEC) facilitates market connection between resource-rich and resource-poor regions, lowering transaction costs and facilitating investment and commerce. Regional integration fosters interdependence, preventing conflicts and enabling the learning of new conflict resolution strategies. CPEC also promotes economic growth, trade integration, and enhances regional interactions with the world. This model helps maintain the coherence of constituent nations and maintains the region's economic prospects. Regional advancements should include enhanced infrastructure connectivity, competitive logistics, production value chain integration, regulatory policy convergence, and efficient support for trade and trade-related policies (Khan and Khan, 2016).

### **CPEC and Convergence among the South Asian States: An Analysis of Inter-State Relations**

The modern period emphasizes robust economic interdependence, reciprocal exchange, and regional collaboration, rather than trade blocs or economies. Geo-economics should be prioritized over geopolitics, as the development of industrialized economies in countries like the US, Europe, Japan, and South Korea was facilitated by a combination of national government intervention, regulation, protection, and access to supply and demand markets. Regional states like China, Pakistan, Central Asia, Afghanistan, India, and Iran can create an unrivalled growth impetus for Asia by building unity and creating mutual economic integration. CPEC offers a level of regional and intra-regional integration that goes beyond simple trade or economic blocs, allowing developing countries and established economies to communicate through a complex network of channels. CPEC offers a more open model for regional integration, focusing on trade emancipation and addressing variety in geographic, political, linguistic, and economic sense. This outward-oriented paradigm aims to increase regional and intraregional trade and facilitate global trade by addressing geographic, political, linguistic, and economic differences. This approach goes beyond closed regionalism, promoting a more organized and progressive approach to regional integration (Nawab, et. al. 2021; Muzaffar, et. al., 2018 & Niekerk, 2005).

With its vast supply and demand markets, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would be the ideal supply route for the hitherto unconnected or poorly connected regions of Afghanistan, Iran, China, and the Middle East. In the end, CPEC may serve as the cornerstone for integration amongst the many areas, especially for the developing economies of China and India with other nations in the area, to maintain their rapid rates of economic growth. (Hussain, 2016). "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has not only set up the strategic framework for increasing cooperation between China and Pakistan, but it would also contribute to development and prosperity of the whole region," stated China's Assistant Foreign Minister (Ahmad, 2015).

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has significantly benefited Sri Lanka and neighboring countries, enabling China to operate in the Indian Ocean with diverse naval capabilities and create deep seaports in the country due to its strategic location and topographical features (Tonchev, 2018). China's intention to establish oil refineries in Sri

Lanka may strengthen the port's role as a checkpoint between China and its Western source countries. China has contributed \$15 billion to Colombo Port City and other infrastructure projects. The Hambantota agreement, which has improved relations between China and Sri Lanka, has invested almost \$15 billion since 2013. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) could benefit countries in the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia, and Bangladesh has the right to use the initiative for its own benefit (Hasan, 2021).

China's increasing influence in Afghanistan and investments since 2014 have shifted neighboring strategies towards the country. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has initiated the establishment of an aviation corridor between Kabul and Urumqi, Afghanistan, and Afghanistan joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in October 2017, providing funding for BRI projects. The importance of the BRI to President Xi Jinping's foreign policy and the CPEC makes China committed to facilitating better ties between Kabul and Islamabad. The Taliban's swift takeover in Afghanistan has led to a focus on the region's players and their potential to handle or mediate the rapidly developing situation. China stands out among big nations due to its cordial links to all major players in the conflict and its ability to act as an impartial mediator without the reputational risks faced by the United States and Russia.

### **CPEC: Stability in Baluchistan, and Xinjiang**

The entire conversation about minorities, particularly Muslims, and the problem of terrorism has drastically changed since the events of 9/11. As genuine as the threat posed by al-Qaida and its global ties is, other regimes across the globe have exploited the US-led Global War on Terror to justify their own persecution of minority groups, both Muslim and non-Muslim. This has been observed in China and Pakistan, two friendly states. The majority of the states with diverse populations are made up of several ethnic groups. Various ethnic identities have various voices and demands, and there is a constant struggle to achieve these goals, which has an impact on national politics. Similar to other developing nations, China and Pakistan are facing identity crises in several of their key federating units: China in Xinjiang and Pakistan in Baluchistan. Their worries are distinct. Occasionally, these issues include ethnic nationalism, power decentralization, province autonomy, and economic disparities (Akhter, et al., 2017).

Every activity centers on the economy, and its strategic significance is increased when it ensures international cooperation, has a developed infrastructure, prevents social and political instability, and has borders that are connected to economic prosperity. In a similar vein, CPEC is a massive, multifaceted enterprise that is evident from its map. As the One Belt One Road (OBOR) or new Silk Road Economic Development Corridor (SRED) vision makes clear, China-West Asia is providing a guarantee of full-fledged collaboration through the Silk Road Economic Development Corridor (CPEC). It will result in the creation of industrial zones, wind and thermal power projects, thousands of jobs, and employment prospects. Building of roads, railroads, and other contemporary communications from the Chinese Province of Xinjiang to the Gwadar Port has cost billions of dollars. (Xiguang, 2015). Xinjiang and Baluchistan, both China and Pakistan, have the largest geographical areas, smallest populations, and poorest socioeconomic developments despite being rich in mineral resources and having nominal political representation. Baluchistan is a gateway to Central Asian republics, Afghanistan, China, Europe, and Western Asia due to Gwadar Port and other mega projects. Rule of law, peace, development, and political and economic stability are priority areas for both countries. Beijing is uneasy about Xinjiang, as the main ethnic problem is violence, bombings, and terrorist activity due to Chinese government restrictions on Uyghurs' freedom of religion. Uyghurs, being Sunni Muslims, claim that Xinjiang was an independent state, not part of China. Beijing must act harshly against the upheaval in Xinjiang to prevent threats to China's sovereignty. (Akhter et al., 2017).

The project aims to connect Gwadar port in Baluchistan province to China's Kashgar region via road and train, aiming to develop the western regions of Xinjiang. This will help both countries emerge and progress via the CPEC, as Baluchistan is also economically backward in Pakistan. The port, which started in 2007, will rank among the busiest ports globally and enable China to trade with the Middle East and Africa across 4,000 kilometers on land (Dastaghir et al., 2017). China's peaceful rise and strong economy are attributed to its nonviolent policies and industries. The growing demand for Chinese goods in European and non-European markets has led to the construction of pipelines for gas and oil to supply China's energy needs. Marketplaces are also needed for purchasing raw materials and selling goods. The CPEC aims to develop Xinjiang, China's Western Province, to provide more opportunities and reduce discontent (Akhter, 2017).

### **CPEC: Pakistan and Countering India hegemony**

Political power has always been formed and accompanied by a robust economy throughout human history, and nations have utilized their financial superiority to impose political dominance over one another. India, home to the second-largest population in the world, has abundant natural resources dispersed throughout its huge landmass. Strong economies have always impacted human history, and despite the fact that 68% of Indians live on less than \$2 per day, New Delhi hasn't refrained from using its economic might to subjugate its relatively little neighbors, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Countries have established political dominance over others by leveraging their financial strength to gain political power. India, home to the second-largest population in the world, has abundant natural resources dispersed throughout its huge landmass ("Is India Following a Hegemonic", 2021).

India's diplomatic and defense policies have shifted to focus on infrastructure development and weaponry expansion, extending its control throughout South Asia. This is particularly concerning as India and Pakistan, historically antagonistic states, are becoming more hostile due to nuclearization. India's policies reveal its imperial ambitions to rule over South Asia, as Pakistan has always faced existential danger from India. India's dominance as the largest land state and its geographical proximity to smaller states like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Nepal, and Sri Lanka support its ambition to become the regional hegemon. Chanakya emphasizes that there are no permanent enemies, friends, or borders in trans-border relations, and all efforts should be made to protect these interests (Jawad, 2016). Nepal and Bhutan, landlocked neighbors, are forced to submit to India's regional leadership. Sri Lanka is too weak to resist India's dominance, while Bangladesh and Pakistan are heavily dependent on India due to Indian-descendant water systems. Nepal, a landlocked nation, is vulnerable and has been viewed as a "Indian-locked" state by some foreign observers. Sri Lanka is too small to resist India's dominance (Hemant, 2015). Due to the large Tamil population in India's Tamil Nadu, the small island state's Tamil population serves as the main source of Indian influence in Sri Lanka (Samrah, 2021).

The ongoing conflict between Pakistan and India is one of the longest-running and unresolved in history. Both countries have faced numerous battles and have poor bilateral ties. Academics and think tanks have identified various causes for the antagonism, including violent divisions that resulted in millions of deaths. Pakistan has expressed grievances with India, claiming that they failed to fulfill the agreed-upon shares and assets in the June 3 plan. The Kashmir dispute was the primary cause of the 1948 first war between the two newly independent governments (Samrah, 2021). India and Pakistan have fought four wars since their split, starting with their first war in 1948 over Kashmir's status. After UN intervention in 1949, a plebiscite was planned to determine Kashmir's destiny, but it was never implemented. In 1965, the two states went to war due to insurgencies in the Rann of Kutch region. A USSR-endorsed truce was enacted, and the Tashkent Declaration was signed in August 1964, allowing the parties to return their soldiers to their original positions (Sridharan, 2005). In 1971, East Pakistan experienced a civil war, leading to a second Indo-

Pak conflict. This resulted in Pakistan's division, and Gandhi and Bhutto signed the Simla Agreement, which aimed to resolve future conflicts through bilateral negotiations and peace. Pakistan began its own nuclear program in response to India's 1974 nuclear test, which it deemed a security threat. Tensions escalated in 1984 when troops were stationed in a part of Siachen not specified in the UN-1949 cease-fire agreement. In 1986, negotiations began between the Indo-Pak governments to resolve the Siachen glacier issue and trade. India conducted its first nuclear test in 1998, and both countries conducted several tests, while the US and other nations imposed economic embargoes (Kamran and Mahsood, 2021).

Gwadar, located near transshipment facilities and the global Sea Lanes of Communications, offers several benefits. It provides more warning time in case of aerial or naval attacks due to its distance from India. It is better suited for trade with Afghanistan and the Caspian region and offers natural weather protection. Gwadar also offers numerous harbor amenities for regional and extra-regional entities, including the United Arab Emirates and Europeans, as a gateway to the Persian Gulf. Dry goods from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan can be exported, and liquid cargo from Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan can be transported by tanker (Malik, 2012). China is using the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a strategic move to increase its force projection capacity, expand geopolitical influence, and eventually take on the United States in Asia and globally. The primary goal for China in Pakistan is the Gwadar port, which would provide a crucial foothold in the Arabian Sea. China may also build new overland routes from the Persian Gulf to its western provinces, including highways, railroads, and pipelines. India's response to the CPEC has been unfavorable, with New Delhi critiquing Beijing for its direct intervention in the disputed Gilgit-Baltistan regions. India views the tightening China-Pakistan axis as twofold: the risk of China intruding into its traditional sphere of influence and the risk that Pakistan, supported by China, may be encouraged to employ aggressive anti-Indian measures. A closer embrace of Pakistan would alleviate Islamabad's fear and allow Pakistan to focus on its own affairs. China would not threaten India if its CPEC investments in Pakistan served to advance economic stability. However, if an economic stabilization plan for Pakistan promised a more prosperous, secure, and peaceful neighbor, Indian policymakers would likely applaud it. (Daniel, 2017).

CPEC, a key component of China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative, will connect a marine route in Southeast Asia and a land route in Eurasia, benefiting sixty countries in terms of economic growth and integration between Asia, Europe, and Africa, and resulting in unprecedented outcomes in other areas. (China US Forum, 2015). Pakistan needs to reduce political tension with its eastern and western neighbors to improve the future and ensure the project's implementation on schedule. A strong cooperation between China and South Asia can neutralize the US dominance in South Asia and India. China should support the economic growth and prosperity of the South Asian region, and with Pakistan's support, it can expand its influence on Asian and African countries. Both nations must acknowledge their shared interest in economic growth and seize the opportunities presented by the CPEC project. They should adopt impartial political stances, end mudslinging tactics, and engage in constructive talks about their shared destiny. In India, they should resolve their differences through communication to maximize benefits for the region's population of over a billion people. If both Pakistan and India endorse the concept of CPEC, it could be expanded to India via subordinate connections from Punjab and Kashmir, transforming the initial security danger into a mutually beneficial opportunity. Additionally, it could make the IRAN-PAKISTAN-INDIA gas pipeline a reality (Rizwanullah et al., 2020).

## **Conclusion**

The South Asian area will be significantly impacted by the CPEC geostrategic dimension. CPEC, positioned as the centerpiece project of China's BRI, strategically connects China's Xinjiang region to Pakistan's Gwadar Port, offering a substitute commerce route and lowering reliance on sea routes. The corridor has sparked worries about regional power

dynamics, security issues because it passes through unstable areas, and territory disputes—particularly with India—despite its potential for economic growth and connectivity. The success of CPEC, a significant infrastructure project, has the potential to alter South Asia's economic and geopolitical environment by encouraging collaboration and competition among regional powers and affecting the region's larger dynamics.

China and Pakistan's comprehensive and cooperative relationship will undoubtedly be able to overcome the obstacles presented by the local environment. Making them understand that the CPEC will not only improve Pakistan's economic circumstances but also aid in the region's overall economic revival will allay their fears and disprove the hegemonic ambitions of certain regional nations. In order to placate the CPEC's detractors, China and Pakistan must both engage in outside diplomatic manoeuvres and encourage discussions that would deepen regional understanding. It is imperative that we engage with the relevant regional entities in a logical and strategic manner, viewing them as partners rather than adversaries, in order to bring the CPEC vision to reality. Hence, rather than pursuing policies of exclusion, Pakistan and China have to embrace inclusion; involving other stakeholders will be advantageous to the project's success as well as the region's long-term peace and advancement. With open implementation that considers the goals of all relevant parties, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has the ability to improve the region's overall economic landscape.

### **Recommendations**

The study suggests that transparent implementation and inclusive policies involving all stakeholders can positively impact the economic conditions of Pakistan and the broader South Asian region, promoting recovery and cooperation amidst regional challenges. Promote social inclusivity by involving local communities in the planning and execution of CPEC projects. This can be achieved through capacity building, employment opportunities, and the protection of the rights and interests of local populations. Utilize the infrastructure development under CPEC to enhance connectivity not only within Pakistan but also throughout the broader South Asian region. This can promote economic integration, trade facilitation, and overall regional development. Engage in strategic diplomacy to manage geopolitical tensions effectively. By adopting a diplomatic approach, South Asian nations can address concerns and foster cooperation, thereby contributing to regional stability.



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