

Locate Complex South Asia's Geo-Political Courtyard: (A Security Perspective)

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ABSTRACT

South Asia has grown into a horde of multifarious concerns ranging from India-Pakistan rivalry, Kashmir dispute, complex Afghan instability, terrorism, poverty, under-development, climate change, drug and human trafficking, unpredicted security environment with growing nuclear arsenals and mounting involvement of Major powers. Apart from the USA & Russia, China's upward influence in South Asian wardrobe has on & off impacts. In the international relations, South Asia has distinguish geo-strategic geo-political and geo-economics exceptionality & prominence on the face of earth as there is group of four nuclear "have" states in and in the locale of South Asia. Thus, rising nuclear uncertainty in south Asia and growing influence of multiple powers in South Asia regional wardrobe have definitely made the regional geopolitical courtyard more intricate. This present study in hand highlights the rising strategic goals of major powers in the changing complex geo-political structure of the South Asia region.

Key Words: South Asia, Instable Afghanistan, India-Pakistan Skirmish, USA VS China

A BRIEF PREAMBLE

Undoubtedly, Sino-Pak relations are quoted as most cordial and cooperative in the region. However, both sides relationship has created some apprehensions in the regional countries, especially in the views of India. Large scale economic activities together with extensive defense and military ties are viewed with conservative eye. China's assistance to Pakistan in the nuclear program sector is probably the most pinching for India. In the given regional settings, China's cooperation with Pakistan is somewhat contradictory to stakes of India, being regional country and

the US, being sole super power. Enhanced Sino-Pak affiliation has distressed regional scheme of living peacefully. China has been supporting Pakistan in an aim to tackle Indian influence as well as a mean to encounter rising Indo-US ties. Let's discuss briefly how this relationship is offsetting South Asian security. Relations between Pakistan and China are certainly budding, nonetheless requisite be deliberated vogueish a broader framework to realize their likely implications for the India and United States. Adjacent Sino-Pak associations are not innovative. Exclusively by means of reverence to nuclear and military connections, dragon and pak have been responsive subsequently the early 60s (Khan, R.M, 2011). In up-to-date eons, two-sided craft besides venture devour improved. Beholding to the forthcoming time, dragon's intensifying sway in CARs & this one curiosity in entrée to the AS Sea may well inspire unfluctuating sturdier contacts with Pak (Pradhan, R, 2017). Commencing that preliminary plug, augment the succeeding: Pak's profoundly ingrained resentment en route for eastern country, eagle's wooing of elephant, and the prospective for a impending international mandate categorized by antagonism stuck concerning the China & US. Unknown quantity solitary fragments of the county enigma, it rational to imagine a modest 2-pillar establishment to yield figure in South Asia: Pak-China in contrast to elephant & the eagle. Nonetheless the conundrum is essentially abundant thornier. 4 predispositions blue-penciled cross-coalition.

- 1st, dragon-elephant line of work is at this instant greater than mutually craft amongst dragon and Pak & line of work concerning elephant & the eagle. Whereas throughout the twilight 20th Century china partook decent motivations to pledge thru Pak in dejecting elephant. At present Beijing wages supplementary on or after local solidness and conventional employed associations with elephant..
- 2nd, elephant is not utterly certain that it poverties to put all hers spawns in the dragon nest; enduring impartial propensities perish durable, & deliberate independence is additional prevalent in Delhi is frolicking for pentagon's team.
- 3rd, Pak's imminent prospect is a factual barren-valentine. Happening a vilest occasion situation, inside vehemence & uncertainty would uniform shock off its sino acquaintance. Happening a finest circumstance, pak would turn to grasp hers peculiar pecuniary benefits from side to side standardized affairs with elephant.
- As a final point, yet to come eagle-panda ties are obliging supplementary than rivalry-prone, at that moment China participation in land of pure bids slight to terror; it may well straight encourage soothing pecuniary growth that assist individual's commitments (Kumar, 2006).

UNDERSTBINDG COMPLEX SOUTH ASIA & BEYOND SECURITY COURTYARD

Natural and energy resources in Central Asia have always global powers, but "balance of power" enforced the peace in the region during the Cold War. However after the Soviet disintegration for contact to (or control of) these assets, there has been no direct confrontation, but strife aroused due to the amazing interest of home and international powers in the region, in turn, the whole region

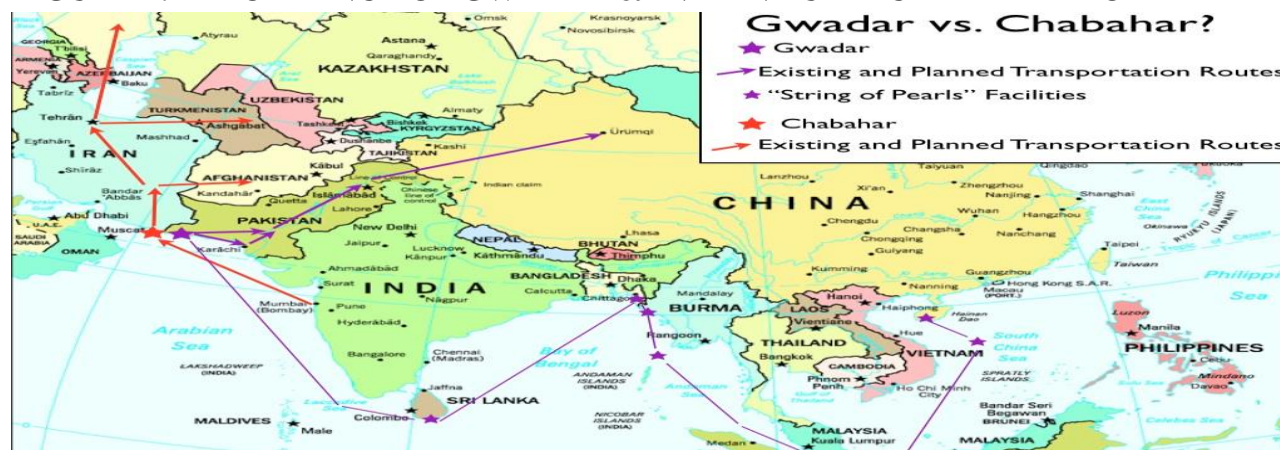
was plunged into instability. For most of the last decade this was the important factor of Afghan imbroglio (Gul, I, 2008). Although global issues are the extremism and terrorism, not limited to any particular region, but in view of the prolonging turmoil in Afghanistan they assume sensitive proportions in this region. Trained and organized armed groups have been produced in the region and ready to extent to achieve their goals due to global powers adopted policies during cold war and power struggling to ensure their interests in the region for the last 30 years (Akhtar, N, 2008). The mater of threat to regional peace and world security is the underground network of these groups. There are moderately a scarce glitches in the county correlated to sanctuary; significance of the Afghan problem is underlined by a chronological focus on common border of China and Pakistan, sustaining instability in Central Asia, extremist trends along with the lingering issue of Kashmir along and competition between two or more states in the region. Fourth arises due to the first three, by maintaining the status even inflaming the problems, state or states with hegemonic designs develop the situation (Khetran, 2016).

South Asia is vital in the world not just because it has enormous opportunities together with working force and unique strategic location but it is equally significant due to two nuclear capable states i.e. Pakistan and India. Both the states have not signed Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) so far (Lee & Nacht, 2020). After 1998 Islamabad and New Delhi confronted numerous sanctions from West and from US. However, later developments eased sanctions on both the countries. Pakistan got leverage due to its enthusiastic support in WOT and being a Non-NATO ally of US whereas India was given room in respect to tackle China threat. It is since then that both the sides have opted every means to enhance the nuclear capabilities (Mir, 2019) keeping in view each side's potentials and likely emerging global threats (singh, 2015).

In 2008, India signed nuclear deal with US and Pakistan was not awarded with same facility despite it is facing tremendous power outrageous. The Indo-US deal not only put Pakistan in a sort of anxiety but it also observed stern response from Beijing. China didn't welcome this deal and considered it a threat for regional peace and perceived that it will accelerate the pace of arm race in South Asia. It is true that Beijing backed up Pakistani nuclear program and facilitated to upgrade missile program also. However, after 2008, the pace of Sino-Pak nuclear cooperation further increased. Pakistan has been negotiating with China for attaining civil nuclear technology (the same technology was given to India by US) for the sake of recusing its depleting energy needs and to maintain the balance of power. So far this demand has not been fulfilled by China but instead another nuclear deal is concluded by which China to build two more nuclear energy hubs in Chashma. This deal is solely aimed at maintaining the balance of power and to encounter energy deficit but India and US feels that Pak-China nuclear cooperation is not well suited to the dynamics of South Asia (Akhter, 2009). Chinese assistance in construction of Gwadar sea port is also a project which is primarily considered lethal to Indian interests. Gwadar is located at a very vital juncture of international oil trade and it has capability to offset the current oil trade by offering cheap and liable distances to merchant ships. Initially Pakistan handed over the port to Singapore but Singaporean authorities failed to utilize the productive use of port and therefore in 2011

Pakistan decided to handover the port to its old friend China. In a recent statement by Shipping and Port Minister Kamran Micheal in National Assembly unveiled that China to make Gwadar fully operational and functional, according to its purposes and potentials (Khan, & Kasi, 2017). As the port is offering liable and cheap route to China for its trade with Gulf States, it has decided to invest more (other than investment in the construction of the several births of the port) in the basic infrastructure of not only the port but in the entire Gwadar city. The port in Indian eyes is a threat to its stakes in the region. India had an edge to offset Pakistan's naval power (Khan & Khan, 2019) before the construction of Gwadar because Pakistan was using Karachi port for its naval exercises and thus having only one port could have disturb her during war times and enhance Chinese regional connectivity (Faisal, 2019). However now with Gwadar, Pakistan has an opportunity to expand its naval capabilities away from Indian costs and threats. Other than defence perspective, India was manufacturing Chahbahar port in Iran so as to transport its goods to CARs bypassing Pakistani territory. India wants to counter China via Chahbahar (Haidar, 2018). The figure below shows clearly the importance of Gwadar and Indian effort to counterbalance it by constructing Chahbahar in Iran

FIGURE 1: IMPORTANCE OF GWADAR & INDIAN BUILT CHABAHAH PORT



Source: <https://allabtafghanistan.wordpress.com/2016/04/21/chabahar-vs-gwadar-what-it-means-for-afghanistan/>

Other than having stern reservations, India also has following threats from port.

- It muddles the India's Armada's strategic maneuvers and preparation. Pak Navy customs the Karachi harbor but there partake constant terror that in war spell, a loaded India Armada might definitely bout Pakistan's possibilities might be circumscribed. Consequently, constructing of Gaawadar port is principally studied in India as a preemptive move.
- Building of Gwadar and its related riling connections, infrastructures, airdrome & vigor conduits means to noticeably reinforce Pakistan's coaxing in Afghanistan & CARs (Wirsing, 2008).

- India also realizes harbor as accumulative China dominion in the area. It distinguishes China protagonist in making Gaawadar as a device of encompassing it in Afghanistan and Iran.
- New Delhi ponders port as stretched portion of China's 'Sop'. China nautical leeway in heartfelt liquids, definitely at Gaawadar would threaten greater India's reliefs in the county.
- The Chabahar harbor in Iran is basically executed to enhance Indian trade with Iran and thus to Afghanistan and CARs. (Haidar, 2018)

India partakes helped Iran in the creation of Chabahar harbor likewise China abetted Pak in Gaawadar. Since India senses that Chaahbahar canister be the staunch reaction to Pakistan's Gwadar harbor. Chaahbahar venture is at the heart of the common vision that India and Iran have for Afghanistan and the county as a entire, of augmented & calmer movement of belongings, & creation of constancy, affluence and peacetime" (Roy,Lela, 2011). So, if India enables itself to completely furnish port in Iran it may have an opportunity to expand its trade with CARs as well and for this it would have no need of using Pakistani soil. In this respect, Indian threats from China are large. Chinese interests in Gwadar and India's move in Iran will not going to make the relationship between the two good neither for the region. However, if Beijing, New Delhi and Islamabad come to one page i.e. using both the ports for the prosperity of the region, things may change dramatically. But so far this notion is out of reach of both the side and equally not acceptable to Iran and Pakistan.

ENDEMIC ARM RACE VIS-À-VIS SECURTY DILEMMA IN SOUTH ASIA

It is a vivid fact that since independence, New Delhi has enhanced its defense budget and military spending. It gained weapons from USSR and US throughout the taciturn warfare period and also in the post-cold war era. India has been buying traditional arms as well as arms capable of nuclear and biological weapons. On the other hand, Pakistan is also compelled to do the same by greater Indian stock of weapons and principally to keep the minimum deterrence vis-a-vis India. In pursuit of this objective and to secure itself from any startling Indian assault, Pakistan joined CETO and SENTO in 1950s and sheltered under American umbrella. During 1965 war the protection under CETO and SENTO didn't come to rescue Pakistan so it started to look towards other options (Jabeen & Mazhar, 2011). USSR and China were the other available possibilities and out of them China was most appropriate option. So Pakistan improved relations with China and got enough military assistance in establishing home based ordinance and weapons production units as well as modern technology in the defense field. This practice (of attaining weapons) is largely practiced by both the countries and at the moment India is the largest arms buyer from the world as compared to Pakistan's number is on 3rd position. (Pizzi, 2014). Many theorists believe that South Asia is vulnerable due to extensive funds usage on military sector and on nuclear arsenals. Pakistan is going to increase defense budget by 10% this year (the preliminary meetings have proposed increased defense budget) whereas it is not hidden that India almost every year enhances its

defense budget and spending. Collecting large stockpiles of nuclear and conventional weapons are not going to guarantee the safety and harmony of the South Asian region. Rather this exercise will put the entire region in jeopardy as a whole. Already the proliferation of nuclear technology has taken place in this region. Pakistan is alleged to have acquired missile technology, initially, from North Korea via Dr. Qadeer Khan network and in return it provided substantial assistance to North Korea in revamping her nuclear program. It was also said years ago that Pakistan is transforming nuclear technology or technicalities embedded with making nuclear bomb to neighboring country Iran. Pakistani officials and foreign office has negated all these claims several times however, later in 2003, Dr Qadeer has confessed of sending/selling sophisticated nuclear technology to North Korea. But reports related to Iran are not endorsed by any one. After Iranian Saudis turmoil period in the recent years, some voices were again raised that Pakistan is selling its nuclear bomb to Saudi Arabia (Dipnakar, 2006).

This notion emerged after Pakistani government got \$ 10 million dollars from Saudis in 2014 along with cheap oil and other assistance. Some reports in foreign media outlined this story but still no confirmation has been made by either side. Rather Islamabad has called this news baseless and pointed them just to create Pak-Saudi relations controversial. Unlike Pakistan, India has not transferred nuclear technologies to other countries but some documented proofs are available regarding nuclear proliferation from Indian soil. All these matters and both side's profound ambitions to have maximum of weapons has made South Asia vulnerable to nuclear arms race as well as it has put the region under constant threat of nuclear war. Therefore Beijing succor to Pak in upgrading fissionable aptitudes is seen in this regard (Saighal, 2015).

TALE OF INSATBLE-COMPLEX AFGHANISTAN

It is by nature of its location that Afghanistan has been the central point of ancient super powers and contemporary authoritative or hegemon states. Anglo-Russian incursion in 19th century and American inroads of 21st century are the salient examples in this respect. However, the current trends are more dynamic than the earlier ones. Afghanistan is now not only a hub for super powers, rather it has turned into a vital place for regional and extra regional states. China and Pakistan are also the main stakeholders in Kabul. China in a way that it has poured millions of dollars for reconstruction and renovation other than soothing economic ties with Afghan government whereas Pakistan is adjacent to Afghanistan and thus any turmoil or unrest there ultimately disturbs Pakistan by and large (Iqbal, 2003, p.15). Now Chinese and Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan is also considered frosty as well. Because both the countries, especially China don't want to see the restoration of Taliban led government in Kabul. China also doesn't want the flow of migrants from Afghanistan to its territory. Another important Chinese objective embedded with Afghanistan is that Beijing perceives culprits and radicals may move to Chinese Xinjiang province (Read & Raschke, 2010, p.106). On its part Pakistan has also somewhat same objectives. It neither wants Taliban government neither wishes to bear more flow of migrants to its land. In order to deal with these problems, Islamabad and Beijing has opted different tactics and techniques i.e. aiding to

favorable factions, supporting linguistic groups and financing for desired outcomes. All these activities further deplete the current state of affairs of Afghanistan. Therefore Islamabad and Beijing has to take measures in a way that they don't disturb the socio-economic fabric of Afghanistan (Basu, 2007). Huge amount of natural reserves in CARs are in a profound look of China and Pakistan because both are lacking energy tools to keep the wheel of economic development moving. China invested there with full potential whereas gradually Pakistan is making inroads just as to meet his energy needs. In attaining this goal, both countries have taken some steps which are not in favor of Afghanistan, the United States and India alike. Though transportation of oil/gas from CARs to South Asia and China carry equal opportunities, but Chinese and Pakistani efforts to securities the proposed supply lines has some apprehensions in a way that securing only few areas would create chaos in Afghanistan. Another point is that India will be fearful of joint Sino-Pak ventures of supply lines because it fears that China has the potential to stop its supply at any time when relations will be in sort of trouble.

EAGLE-DRAGON-ELEPHANT TRIANGULAR RELATIONS

A key strategic triangle encompassed by India, China and Pakistan. In modern world India is the most persuasive developing state; in the prevailing hierarchy of key powers; China is the most formidable communist power and among the realms of Islamic world, Pakistan is the largest of all. Collections of nuclear weaponries and missiles are preserved by these countries; only China is a renowned nuclear power in the UN (Brand, 1990). Each country of this triangle bonds mutual borders. Pakistan remains in the economic remote place of Asia while dragon and elephant are the global profligate mounting frugalities. China and Pakistan, two flanks of this triangle, share a history of bitterness with the third side that is India. Last but not least, three nuclear powers sharing boundaries and primordial hostilities with one another nowhere else one can find. The relations have advanced in exclusive customs among these nations. As an outcome of a historic legacy marked by the bleeding effect of India's divide and birth of Pakistan, in a non-hostile political condition, India and Pakistan have hardly cooperated. While there were four wars, yet they are to make good in founding pleasant and helpful political setting. After the founding of PRC, based on the values of Panch Sheel, very attired and decent beginnings of bilateral associations have been going by India and China (Brooks & Wolhforth, 2008). Yet, two nations regulated towards a boundary war in 1962 because of border disagreements, reciprocal disbelief and upshot of the Chinese intercession in Tibet then up to the second half of the 1980s an provoked epoch of non-cooperation extending was shaped. A natural alliance between Pakistan and China against India advanced and the two partners described this connection as an "all-weather friendship" (Chaudhuri, 2018).

FUTURISTIC STRATAGEMS

The region has been suffering from instability because of the proxy wars of international powers and conflicts between states of the region. This area is the most backward in the world. Hence, it

is important to concentrate on economic and social development. It has become impossible to attain stability without preventing the danger of hostility from any country. China and Pakistan have exhibited exemplary cooperation; exertions ought be thru to contain added republics of the county in making ready of collaboration. Relationship between Pakistan and Russian has improved and China Russia relations have become stronger (Kaura, 2019). Instability is being created in the whole region due to instability in Afghanistan. It is a shocking challenge but there is the need for Afghanistan's neighbors to come together and work out a common strategy. Instability in Afghanistan is subjugated by presence in the region and the outsiders for their own interference. Furthermore, India's efforts for acquiring its own nuclear and missile programs and latest military weapons along with developing as Pakistan as its first enemy and China as the second target, but the defence strategies among these two countries stops India from committing any aggression. Besides the hegemonic designs of India the Kashmir issue poses a great threat to the regional security, all efforts have failed to produce substantial results China can play an effective role in resolving the issue, it can play a better role than any outside power. Palestine issue is another symbol of injustice committed in past. Doubts in excess of the pentagon provide backing fighting alongside terrorism convey power: it is more about egocentricities who have increased danger to world peace rather than eliminating terrorism. The need is to make international institutions stronger before these suspicions become true. While terrorism is condemned everywhere, but proper attention to its causes is not being paid. Terrorist activities do not express height of frustration which is due to suppression of their genuine freedom struggles nor do their leaderships represent their sentiments.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Pakistan and China do not link at any regional forum, notwithstanding their profound and solid bilateral associations. Furthermore, for convinced reasons the forums present for regional collaboration are not efficient. SAARC has been made fruitless owing to Pakistan-India stiffness ongoing for years. Similarly, in spite of its growth, a barricade in the system of an operative role of ECO, fighting and constant volatility in Afghanistan for more than two decades. Deficiency and poverty is being confronted by the societies of all the nations of the region as a whole caused by lack of teamwork at the regional level. According to estimations, the number of people breathing below the poverty line in the region has touched over 650 million. To tackle this issue, all countries have to work closely and friendly (Hassan, 2012).

Natural resources are plentiful in the region. Republics of the counties are likewise ironic in reserves i.e. copper gold, and others. 171 natural resources have been revealed in the land of China, which interpretation for approximately twelve % of the globe's total. Wholly the nations of this region are hallowed with productive agricultural terrestrial. Furthermore, best irrigation arrangement is available in Pakistan and India. The area is talented of achieving self-sufficiency in eatable foodstuffs and foreign exchange can be produced by disseminating them. Not only an inclusive opening for closer commercial and trade collaboration among the nations of the region

are providing by the profusion of these natural capitals but also at regional level the need for concentrated support is enlarged by the deficiency of their people. Among the countries of the region the current state of economic teamwork is not optimistic. In exacting, the two countries are observed as robust associates and colleague at the global level as well as on strategic and foreign policy staples, in term the trade between Pakistan and China (Jlali, 2007).

The vast opportunities in South Asia demand mutual efforts to tackle orthodox problems and contemporary challenges. Chinese terms with Pakistan are not the sole solution of regional development. Instead to improve the security atmosphere and to reduce the trust deficit, all countries should engage themselves more energetically. Islamabad, New Delhi and Beijing need to discuss regional issue at one forum and also must let other small countries to participate in it. By doing this activity, distrust would diminish and an atmosphere of friendship would come out. This is necessary because super powers, especially United States have large interests in South Asia but every time US favored one country during critical situations. This resulted in discrimination between the two states. So to negate this problem, China should not only enhance ties with Pakistan or its policy must not be merely Islamabad central (Naseer & Ameer, 2012).

The current era is of bilateral engagements. Trends and fashion of all out wars are now obsolete. Amassing large stockpiles of conventional weapons are no more tactics of winning the hearts of people. States in contemporary world order are tend to cooperate and work mutually so as to prevent any hostility. For achieving this goal, developing states send officials and diplomatic staff frequently to other states. The form joint economic forums and political institutions to deal with the states. Same could be done here. China Pakistan friendship is aimed at intensifying bilateral trade and to create more opportunist atmosphere for the traders and for businessmen but in this exercise other countries may feel deprivation. So need of the hour is to establish some social, economic and political institutions where all heads of states or secretary level talks can be initiated at least annually. By doing this, states with some minute differences and little problems can discuss issues bluntly and the result could be positive.

South Asia has always been vulnerable of terrorist activities by insurgents and from non state actors. Additionally China has bearded the consequences of spillover effects in its Xinjiang province. Pakistan is entangled in brutal terrorism for last one decade in which it has lost more than 60000 lives together with colossal loss to its economy. The social structure and economic fabric is largely disturbed by terrorism. Till now, the menace has not seen any closure rather the challenge is still prevailing. Same is the case in India which has experienced separatist movements in several states. India, despite its enormous and gigantic progress has failed to curb the terror hazard and the threats of radicals exist there. So in order to root out stretched terrorism, all three countries need to draw some joint mechanism. This mechanism could comprise of common security force, anti-terrorism policies and structural improvements to dash this menace.

CONCLUSION

South Asian significance in the world was less imperative to regional (Russia and China) and extra regional (USA, Great Britain & France) super powers before the Indo-Pak competition in nuclear

arms race started. To date, both Pakistan and India are nuclear states with continuous growth in nuclear stockpile however; both are no-signatory of NPT. In order to enhance and safeguard stakes in the region, all the super powers have their own penchants either towards Islamabad or New Delhi. It is irrefutable fact that most of the super powers and states part of Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) are more benign towards India than of Pakistan. In this scenario, it becomes essential for Pakistan to maintain equilibrium in the regional power arrangement and to protect itself from Indian startling moves. Therefore, Pakistan enhanced its bilateral relationship with China for decades. So far, Sino-Pak connection has remained affectionate and convivial. It is also a source of regional balance of power and an obstacle for Indian extended objectives. Though Beijing and New Delhi has elevated the nature of friendly relations between the two sides, the primary contentions i.e. boundary dispute, trade disparity and trust deficit prevails in their attachments. Conversely, Pakistan and China has no such issue (except some Chinese reservation to Pakistan in its moves to curtail terrorist's network operating from FATA to generate unrest in Xinjiang province) and for this reason they have multiplied bilateral ties with every passing decade. These enriched associations are seen with narrow approach and with hawk eyes by India. India believes that Sino-Pak combined ventures are aimed at offsetting its regional standing and a major hindrance in its global quest. India also considers Pak-China engagements as a threat to South Asian stability and therefore it has been extending its arms towards the foes of Pakistan and China alike. Despite Indian reservations, it is understood that Pakistan and China's cooperation is not shaped to trouble any country including India rather both the countries have consumed their energies in making the region economically integrated and to relinquish hostilities with arch rival India. However, substandard Indian response and its efforts to stock huge weapons and security agreements with other major powers expose that India has sole objective of becoming a global power, bypassing Pakistan and China and flouting the likely effects for the South Asian region. It is vital to interpret Pak-China collaboration in optimistic but in a realistic way. Only communal and mutual efforts by Pakistan, China and India can guarantee the stability and harmony of South Asia.

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