

NATIONAL SEMINAR

THE SILVER LINING BEYOND PREVALENT PERCEPTIONS



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The Silver Lining: Beyond Prevalent Perceptions

Theme of the Event:

The Centre for Peace, Security and Developmental Studies (CPSD) reached the final conclusion of its “Silver Lining” series by conducting a national level seminar on 30th March 2018 at the Movenpick Hotel in Karachi. The seminar explored evolving opportunities in various domains such as the economy, environment, culture, diplomacy, and others in order to identify space for development and progress. The main goal was to project positivity beyond prevalent perceptions dominating the mainstream narrative about Pakistan.

CPSD had previously held two round tables on the same theme of Silver Lining and this national seminar was a culmination of all previous discussions and ideas about the optimism that is found in Pakistan’s future. Through this seminar, CPSD aimed to boost optimism among the masses and galvanize the efforts of Pakistani entrepreneurship to reap the benefits of emerging geostrategic alliances and burgeoning economic opportunities.

The panel consisted of seasoned practitioners, diplomats, armed forces personnel, politicians and academics with a diverse audience comprising of civil society members, entrepreneurs and members of the business community. The following key themes were highlighted:

Changing World Order and Emerging Opportunities & Challenges for Pakistan –by the Chief Guest, President AJK Sardar Masood Khan.

Geostrategic Alliances in South Asia: Pakistan’s Economic & Human Resource Opportunities and Development – Presented by Senator Mushahid Hussain.

One Belt One Road: Translating CPEC for Socio Economic boost with safeguards for domestic trade and industry

Presented by Dr. Salman Shah, Former Finance Minister.

Pakistan: How to Tap the Silver Lining

Presented by Dr. Sania Nishtar, Former Federal Minister.

Pakistan's Sustainable Economic Growth: Missing Piece of the Puzzle

Presented by Dr. Ashfaque Hasan Khan, Dean of Social Sciences NUST.

Quagmire of Narratives, Mind Control and Information Age: Perception Management towards Optimism

Presented by Javed Jabbar, Former Federal Information Minister.

Restructuring Administrative and Governance Structure in Pakistan

Presented by Asad Umar, Member National Assembly and Vice President, PTI.

Transforming Infrastructure for Pakistan's Socioeconomic Development

Presented by Lt. Gen Muhammad Afzal, Comdt FWO.

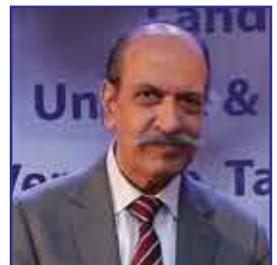
CPEC logistics: Opportunities, challenges and way forward

Presented by Major General Mushtaq Ahmed Faisal, DG NLC

Formal Proceedings of the Seminar:

Opening Remarks by Abdullah Dadabhoy Chairman CPSD

The Chairman welcomed the panelists and participants of the national seminar with his opening remarks. He elaborated upon Dadabhoy Foundation's higher educational pursuits and highlighted CPSD as a proud achievement of the



Foundation's commitment to academic excellence and critical thinking. Furthermore, he discussed the vision, mission and long-term objectives of the organization. The Chairman stated that CPSD will continue such seminars in order to highlight socio-economic opportunities presented to Pakistan with the aim of projecting hope and optimism as a way forward for the nation.

First Session

Sardar Masood Khan

President Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)



The chief guest of the event President AJK, Sardar Masood Khan enlightened the distinguished audience on the subject of **'Evolving World Order and Emerging Opportunities and Challenges for Pakistan.'**

President AJK asserted that we are living in an age of revisionism, which is cultivating a volatile strategic environment. The upsurge of emerging nations, including rising China and an assertive Russia are altering the international balance of power through global finance, international trade and authoritative diplomacy. In this age of global revisionism, the diminishing internationalist role of the United States fosters a power vacuum which is being increasingly saturated with the prominence of China coupled with Russia in global affairs. The increasing cooperation in defense and technological terms between the United States and India is altering the strategic balance of the region.

In view of the recent shift in power dynamics, the isolationism pursued by President Donald Trump with his repeated castigation of the non-productivity of previous American geostrategic alliance is significantly consequential for an emerging multipolar world order. President AJK then spoke on the changing nature of war. He said that the concepts, doctrines and technologies of war are diametrically changing with asymmetrical warfare having transformed the very nature of war.

He further explained how international trade has undergone a dynamic

change with the Chinese initiative of One Belt One Road (OBOR), which remains a point of contention even if mutual trust is ensured across international borders. Sardar Masood Khan further recommended that Pakistan should pay attention to its maritime economy and services industry, adopting a dual development approach for a viable and vibrant economy. It is also imperative for Pakistan to cultivate a triangular relationship by developing alliances with Russia, China and the United States. Despite political turmoil, Pakistan must continue to invest in its relationship with the U.S. and seek modernization of its economy and technology. Finally, Pakistan needs to build win-win partnerships in a contemporary world.

Senator Mushahid Hussain
Chairman Pak-China Institute



He emphasized the positive shift in Pakistan's traditional foreign policy outlook by delivering a speech titled **'Geostrategic Alliances in South Asia: Pakistan's Economic & Human Resource Opportunities and Development.'** The region which was once under the influence of the West is reorienting its approach now towards a new power nexus, namely one with China and Corridor (CPEC) is a prime example of Pakistan's liberation from a Western-centric foreign policy.

Quoting Allama Iqbal– Pakistan's national poet and ideological founder, he further emphasized that the 21st century belongs to an emerging Asia, which will become a leader and trail blazer in international affairs. He also focused on the recent developments in the region which could be seen as a positive trend indicating a future regional harmony. These instances include the summit between North Korea and South Korea due to take place in April 2018. Another example of a looming regional shift is Prince Muhammad Bin Salman of Saudi Arabia buying arms from Russia, despite his country's historical alliance with the United States. He then shifted his focus towards CPEC and the Gwadar port which he claimed would become the largest port of Asia in the next five years. Furthermore, the prospects of a people to people exchange through an interaction of Pakistani and Chinese nationals would in the long term, further the cause of regional harmony.

The senator's speech focused on Pakistan's geostrategic importance and its standing in the region. According to him, Pakistan will be instrumental in the consequent developments in the region. He concluded with the quotation of Quaid-E-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in which the founder of Pakistan proclaimed that "Pakistan is the pivot of the world, placed on the frontier on which the future position of the world revolves."

**Dr. Salman Shah,
Former Finance Minister**



Dr. Salman Shah delivered a presentation on: '**One Belt One Road: Translating CPEC for Socio Economic boost with safeguards for domestic trade and industry**' Dr. Shah initiated his presentation indicating the need to transform Pakistan's demographic resource to better utilize the untapped skills and talent of youth by way of job creation. He expressed his concern over the challenges posed by Pakistan's youth bulge and recommended that the government should adopt an outward looking economic policy to accommodate the Working-Age population (WAP) for a sustainable pro-job economic growth.

Dr. Shah added that the urbanization trend is going to continue and be a prevailing feature of Pakistan's economy in future. Pakistan's urban population is about 40% but the rural to urban migration rate is already the highest in the world. To manage continuing influx of people in major cities will remain a challenge for the ruling government. In this respect, effective urban planning should derive maximum benefit for the economy from urbanization. If Pakistan revitalizes its agricultural industry, it would benefit far more from local income generation than CPEC.

In his view, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has the potential to become a game changer for Pakistan's socio-economic makeup, but for this to happen the government needs to create an outstanding transport and logistics system with the cooperation of the private sector. This will require a massive amount of investment and it will be incumbent

upon the government to produce 'conducive regulatory environment' for the stake holders. He suggested establishing the National Integrated Logistics and Transportation Authority (NILTA) to advance a strategy based upon a 5 year plan and with powers to warrant implementation.

Dr. Sania Nishtar, Former Health Minister

Dr. Sania Nishtar addressed the on the following topic: **'Pakistan: How to Tap the Silver Lining?'**

She asserted that the Government of Pakistan has to formulate policy and take initiative for technological and human development. She emphasized the importance of human development

over capital development. She observed that there is a paucity of planning and reform in the government's development vision. The Government of Pakistan needs to fill this planning and reform vacuum urgently. She warned about the impending population crises if Pakistan do not institute checks on its population control.



She underscored that most of the nations in the developed world are sustained by strategic vision and long-term planning. The current era belongs to sustainable development goals and the Government of Pakistan is seriously lacking in implementing these developmental goals. Dr. Sania Nishtar stressed the need for public policy reforms which Pakistan must embark upon to revitalize its economy and development.

Dr Ashfaq Hasan Khan, Principal and Dean, School of Social Sciences & Humanities, National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

He gave an insightful presentation on the subject **'Pakistan's Sustainable Economic Growth: Missing Piece of the Puzzle.'**

He lamented the government's dependence on IMF loans. From 1988, Pakistan has witnessed nine separate engagements with the IMF owing to which Pakistan lost its financial sovereignty. He added that every time Pakistan approaches the

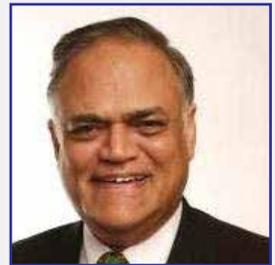


IMF for a bailout package, the IMF imposes stringent austerity measures inducing internal shocks to our financial system.

He warned of an impending population explosion in Pakistan that would overwhelm the country's existing socio-economic resources. However, the same population could become one of its greatest strength only if we invest in human capital, through investment in health and education. Pakistan can have sustainable economic development by reorienting its economic policies toward investment in human capital and physical infrastructure.

He concluded by saying that Pakistan also needs to restructure its expenditure priorities. There is a stark need for a new economic paradigm to gain independence from the economic smothering of the IMF.

**Javed Jabbar,
Former Federal Information Minister**



Javed Jabbar, former Federal Information Minister addressed the audience on the **'Quagmire of Narratives, Mind Control and Information Age: Perception Management towards Optimism.'** Mr. Jabbar stressed the significance of existence of plurality of narratives in a nation. He asserted that there cannot be a single narrative about any country or the world at large. Therefore, a plurality of perspectives with regard to Pakistan reflects the richness and heterogeneity of our society.

He stated that social media had given extraordinary power to individuals and their narrative can reach millions. This medium is very anarchical in nature as broadcasts multifarious narratives in real time. Due to an unprecedented amount of information inflow, the idea of a unified perception of the masses neither exists nor can be managed in its entirety. He further said that it is necessary for Pakistan to dedicate a concentrated effort into building a positive international image. He recommended that a separate budget must be dedicated to this national effort. He suggested the use of the local film industry as a lucrative tool

to project a vibrant image of the country. Instead of relying on Indian cinema for entertainment, we should focus on supporting our local industry – a move that is not reciprocated by the Indian state.

In conclusion, Mr. Jabbar identified three parallel systems of education; the public, the private and the madrassah. Pakistan needs a dedicated investment towards perception management. One such recommendation is to empower Pakistani embassies abroad to project soft power of the country through cultural diplomacy.

Asad Umar, Member National Assembly

He pointed out the problems inherent in Pakistan's political structure in his speech '**Restructuring Administrative and Governance Structure in Pakistan**'. He labelled the current system as being sub optimal and unrepresentative of Pakistan's social or ethnic makeup. He referred to Pakistan as a 'multi ethnic' democracy in shambles due to multiple administrative failures. He condemned the absence of meritocracy in Pakistani politics and recommended there should be a reexamination of political issues to initiate reforms.



He, however, saw a ray of hope in the form of CPEC which would bring a much needed infrastructural development to the country. There is a dire need for the restructuring the administrative system to empower locals.

In his opinion, social, economic and political mobilization is necessary to pave the path for a fair and independent political system which allows the inclusion of the masses in a local government setup.

His speech was based on Pakistan's internal political dynamics and how its shortcomings have been neglected. He saw a silver lining in the search for a better political structure with infrastructural transformation.

Commander FWO, Lt. Gen Muhammad Afzal

He addressed the topic: '**Transforming Infrastructure for Paki-**

stan's Socioeconomic Development.'

Commander FWO focused on how sustainable socio-economic development is only possible if Pakistan's geostrategic location is harnessed to bring tangible development in order to benefit the country's economy in the long run.



He then highlighted the key facets of infrastructure which included, transit systems, human resource, energy and education. A fundamental flaw in basic infrastructure will inevitably lead to a slowing down of socio-economic development. In context of CPEC, he emphasized the need for transparency and a clear vision, in the absence of which there is a probability of an unfavorable impact on Pakistan.

In one particular example, the presentation demonstrated that problems with the road network led to a loss in GDP demonstrating how essential infrastructural security is for economic development. The presentation also focused on issues concerning energy, showing it as a major reason of economic downturn. Education was also discussed and the Commander of the FWO further recommended that more educational institutions should be established to teach technical skills to the Pakistani youth.

Major General Mushtaq Ahmed Faisal, Director General National Logistics Cell (NLC)



Director General National Logistics Cell (NLC) Major General Mushtaq Ahmed Faisal addressed the audience on the topic '**CPEC logistics:**

Opportunities, Challenges and Way Forward.' He commended NLC in being instrumental in construction projects, such as, Dry Port and Border Terminals, bringing relief to traders by providing facilities like easy custom clearance and safe/accessible warehousing and for updating toll-tax collection on highways. He highlighted the contributions of NLC in the development of logistic sector of Pakistan, specifically pertaining to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project by identifying initiatives to establish logistic centers along major CPEC

routes and supporting joint-ventures for setting up of truck assembly lines.

He deplored the existing traditional transportation infrastructure and emphasized on the need for an improved transportation infrastructure and network for quick movement of cargo from the port to cities to gain maximum benefits from the mega project.

Interactive Sessions:

Both sessions were followed by an interactive discussion engaging in critical debates on the questions of governance overhaul, reform of education, opportunities of CPEC, impact of OBOR and the future influence of Gwadar. Questions were more focused on the viability of the CPEC which reflects the audience were still skeptical regarding the transparency of CPEC projects.

Vote of Thanks and Concluding Remarks Lt. Gen Agha M. Umer Farooq (retd)

Lt. Gen Agha M. Umer Farooq (retd) concluded the event by enlightening the audience on the changing nature of peace and conflict in modern century by discussing modern challenges facing the nation.



This changing nature of peace and conflict, which can be termed as ‘non-kineticism’ includes modern nation states combining instruments such as information, diplomatic, economic, political and cyber warfare to subvert an enemy without an application of hard power. The tactics employed by nation-states to confront each other range from sabotage, infiltration, terrorism, mind control, perception management and economic strangulation.

There is a need to explore the disastrous consequences of unabated capitalism. Contemporary conflicts from East Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe inherit an underlying notion of supplementing capitalism by proliferation of conflicts where capitalists play on both sides of the conflict. Similarly, in the case of India-Pakistan’s protracted conflict – an

analysis can identify the necessity of Pakistan's strategic deterrence and the imperative need to continue the upgrading of its nuclear program against an ever-increasing threat matrix.

Moreover, the North-South Transport Corridor between India and its neighboring countries is directly competing with CPEC therefore it can serve as a potential source of future conflict. Amidst these intricate challenges, nation-states must strive to attain capabilities to form their policies accordingly and craft their national framework in terms of sustainable governance, socio-economic development and national security in order to prepare themselves for a continuous set of challenges.

In conclusion, it can be stated that despite a myriad of challenges and obstacles, Pakistan is on its way to reemergence in the future. There is indeed a silver lining on the horizon.

