Major General Mushtaq Ahmed Faisal, HI (M) is a graduate of the National Defence University, Command & Staff College Quetta and Staff College Tehran. The General holds Masters’ degrees in War Studies & Science of Warfare with a diploma in Persian language. He has served as the staff officer transportation at the United Nations Mission in Cambodia and is a Member of Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport (United Kingdom). He has been actively involved in the setting up of new border terminals, dry ports, trucking stations and tracking & monitoring initiatives. Under his leadership, the NLC hosted an international forum on CPEC Logistics in 2017, which was attended by large number of Chinese & Pakistani Logistics companies.
Introduction

Major General Mushtaq Ahmed Faisal elaborated on the role of National Logistics Cell (NLC) as a strategic crises management organization which is being overseen jointly by military and civilian authorities. It has been operating on self-financed basis since 1981. It possesses the most dynamic and diversified manpower comprising of both military and civil personnel.

There has been an accentuated congestion at Karachi Port since 1973. This issue was escalated further in 1977-78 which caused a waiting time of 50 x days for ships. It costs the government of the time $12.5 mln per annum in demurrage. Thereafter, it was recognized that there must be a state-owned crises management organization to cope with such circumstances. Thus, NLC created in July 1979 as a strategic crises management organization through a Presidential Order in the form of a Special Autonomous Cell in Ministry of Communication.

The NLC was later attached with planning, developing and reforms division for administrative purposes. It functions under National Logistics Board (NLB). NLC’s have various strategic units which are as follows: Tolling (1999), NLC Engineers (1978), Freight Services (1978), Dry Ports and Border Terminals (2003), Tracking and Monitoring (2002), NLC Locomotives (2011), Applied Technology Institutes NLC (2005), Vehicle Assembly Plant (VAP) (2018) and Driver Emergency and Rest Area (DERA) (2018).

The outreach of NLC can be gauged from its existing and planned setups. Under its existing setup, the NLC operates 10x Trans-Freight Stations, 5x Project Directorates (PDs), 5x Manned Border Terminals, 4x Dry Ports, 30x Toll Plazas and 1x Container Terminal. In the context of its planned projects, the NLC aims to construct and operate 16x Trucking Stations/Rest Areas, 3x Border Terminals, 6x Dry Ports and 6x Warehouses.

In terms of revenue and profit, NLC had attained a revenue of Rs.46, 737 mln in 2017-18, which is an increase from its revenue in 2016-17 when NLC had achieved a revenue of Rs.32, 609 mln. The state of manpower in NLC comprises...
of Retired Army Personnel which are around 751, Serving Army Personnel which are around 1389 and the Civilians make up around 7054, collectively which totals to 9194 which makes up the organizational manpower of the institution.

Roles of NLC

NLC functions as a crises management organization, amongst its various roles are strategic crises management organization at national level, supporting national defense forces during times of peace and conflict and serves as a national logistics organization.

Representation of NLC in National Committees

The NLC as an institution is also represented at various national committees which are following:
1. Commerce and Trade committee
2. Essential Supply Committee on Defense Planning
3. Food Supply Committee
4. Petroleum and Natural Resources Committee on Defense Planning
5. Ports and Shipping Committee
6. Railways Transport Committee on Defense Planning
7. Road and River Transport Committee
8. Road and River Bridges Committee

Moreover, NLC ought to perform significant duties in war and emergencies. Some of the duties are providing prime movers to Army during mobilization stage, Assisting Army in provision of 4th line transport for establishment of Central Mobile Reserves (CMRs), NLC engineers under command FWO for Rear Area Maintenance Plan (RAMP), supporting NDMA, ensuring continuity of national logistics and continuous operations at Dry Ports/Border Terminals. NLC had also provided logistical support to Pakistan Army during Zarb-e-Momin exercise (1989), escalation (2001/02), Sabit Qadam exercise (2006) and Azm-e-Nau (2010 and 2013).

On logistics performance index, Pakistan is at 68th rank whilst Iran at 96th, India at 35th and China at 27th. Metrics involved in gauging logistic performance index are border control, infrastructure, logistics services (trucking, ease of shipment, timeliness) and tracking and monitoring.

Actualization of CPEC
China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has the potential to unravel a transformative change in logistics and international trade and exceptional ease the burden of cost on the Chinese to trade their goods through trade and assist them greatly in connecting to Central Asia, Europe and Africa. Currently, the sea route from port of Shanghai to Dubai is around 10,383 Dist(km), take 20 days and cost around $1,500 while sea route to Jeddah from Shanghai has a distance of 12,093 km, takes 20 days and cost around $1,300. Additionally, the trade from Shanghai to Karachi/Gwadar have distance of 9,500 km and takes 19 days. Moreover, the trade through Shanghai to the rest of the world also compound the Chinese strategy because of Malacca dilemma – the littoral states of Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam etc may attempt to block Chinese access in an event of war.

![Map of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor](image)

Therefore, the trade route from Kashgar, Xinjiang province of China to Gwadar Port, Karachi will significantly ease the strategic and financial cost of trade and give undeterred access to China to continents of Europe and Africa. Through Kashgar, the cost of trade would be as follows: from Kashgar to Dubai, it will
take a distance of 4,007 km, taking 9 days and costing around $5,650; from Kashgar to Jeddah, distance would be reduced to 7,830 km, taking 10 days and costing $5,650; from Kashgar to Karachi/Gwadar, distance would be 3,140 km, taking 8 days and costing around $5,300.

Major General Mushtaq Ahmed Faisal concluded his address by emphasizing upon the imperative for significant reforms in our governance structure to take full-spectrum advantage of the CPEC and its dividends bearing positive results to the socio-economic development of the country.