

The Silver Lining-Beyond Prevalent Perceptions

1st Round Table Discussion



1st Round Table Discussion on “The Silver Lining”

1st ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION KARACHI, 2017 WAS HELD AT DADABHOY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION KARACHI, ON ‘THE SILVER LINING - BEYOND PREVALENT PERCEPTIONS’, WAS ORGANIZED BY ‘CENTRE FOR PEACE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES’(CPSD) KARACHI.

The Centre for Peace, Security and Developmental Studies (CPSD) hosted a Round Table discussion ‘The Silver Lining-Beyond Prevalent Perceptions’ as the first of three roundtables to be held on the topic on the 20th of November 2017. The proceedings included one presentation and were presided by Justice Sarmad Jalal Osmany. Participants at the event included members of the academia, experts and policy practitioners.

PARTICIPANTS:

The proceedings included one presentation and were chaired by Justice Sarmad Jalal Osmany. Participants at the event included members of the academia, experts and policy practitioners. The speakers and topics were as follows:

- 1. Justice Sarmad Jalal Osmany**
Transparency and Accountability: Pathway to Social Justice
- 2. General Agha M. Umer Farooq (Retd)**
The Silver Lining as I see it
- 3. Dr Muzaffar A Isani**
Reintegrating EthnoSocial divide through wheel of economy and Opportunity
- 4. Rear Admiral Pervaiz Asghar (Retd)**
Reinvigorating Karachi’s Socio-Economic Dynamism
- 5. Col Maqbool Afridi (Retd)**
Leveraging CPEC For and By Karachi

Lt Gen Agha Muhammad Umer Farooq (Retd):

President of CPSD Lt Gen Agha Muhammad Umer Farooq (Retd) in his opening remarks highlighted the emerging opportunities under the specific context of CPEC. He stressed that the path of development of Gwadar passed through Karachi. He focused on the misconceptions about CPEC and underscored the fact that there was not much factual discussion on CPEC despite its importance. In order to remedy the prevalent weaknesses in Pakistan's academic think tank circles, CPSD had been launched with a nontraditional approach equipped with an added focus on the grassroots.

He further highlighted that CPEC project is a part of a wider Belt and Road initiative which has the potential to change global economic trends. He linked the cities of Pakistan with the cities in China, that Karachi can complement Gwadar in the same way as Xinjiang was complemented by Shenzhen. Karachi's vast human resource potential can develop Gwadar and augment its success to a larger percentage. He talked on Gwadar and tried to make the audience realize the connection of Gwadar and Karachi.

He highlighted that Gwadar will be the "base of heavy and chemical industries, such as iron and steel, petrochemical, chemical, iron and steel, harbor industry, engineering machinery, trade processing and auto and auto parts (assembly), but all the development depends on the proximity of Karachi and its ports. 76% of the entrepreneurs who succeeded in the last 15 years in Karachi were of the age 30 to 44 years, this proves the potential and validates that new avenues of investment can bring innovative ventures in Karachi that will ultimately result in growth and development.

Effective utilization of human capital and other resources can turn Karachi city into one of the fastest growing economy of the world. He also mentioned that we at CPSD aim to highlight the importance of Sindh in the emerging regional dynamics and our mission is to conduct research that leads to new ideas for solving problems facing society at the local, national and global levels. We are a nontraditional think tank that aims to connect to the grassroots utilizing the tools of social media and a focus on multilingual interaction.

Justice Sarmad Jalal Osmany:

Justice Sarmad Jalal Osmany chaired the Round Table Discussion, he stated that there was a need to reform in the justice system. He opined that a restructuring of the judicial system should take place with a robust financial system. He stressed on the importance of pressure groups as a means to regulate social justice in society. The lack of such groups had been detrimental for the courts as they had been delegated the responsibility of regulating mundane issues such as oil prices without consent.

He further emphasized that judicial system is very complex in Karachi and there is a need of more civil judges in the city. In modern world approximately the ratio to population is 1000 per judge, but we have the population ratio approximately 1 lac per judge. Unless we give proper room to judges, they would not be able to deliver the services as per the need. He suggested that we must create pressure groups to pressurize the government to increase the number of judges and to give them good pays.

Dr Muzauar A.Isani:

The first speaker was renowned economist, Dr Muzaffar A.Isani who discussed 'Reintegrating Ethno-Social Divide through Wheel of Economy and Opportunities'. He explored the dynamics of Karachi, the basic conflict that is rooted in society and the threat of a massive unemployment occurring in rural areas within the next decade. He highlighted the demographic change in 1940 and 1947 that result in changes and changes are continuously occurring. Our society in Karachi will remain uncertain for some years because of the demographic changes. He also emphasized on urban development and infrastructure development by government. He added only economic measures cannot resolved the problem of city.

Rear Admiral Pervaiz Asghar (Retd):

The second speaker was Rear Admiral (Retd) Pervaiz Ashghar. He spoke on the topic of "Reinvigorating Karachi's Socio Economic Dynamism". He first elaborated on the topic by discussing the demographic history of Karachi and its consequences. He emphasized the fact that Karachi had no shortage of skilled labor and that was an asset in itself that could end several of Karachi's problems.

He lamented the fact that the political leadership had failed in giving Karachi its rightful place in history. Despite the fact that the city's decaying infrastructure and civil services, it has not only maintained a lively facade, but has lived up to its reputation as a city of lights. He underlined that resilience is one thing, but the fact remains that for the city to realize its full potential, the state has to own up to its responsibilities. What Karachi needs is what most big cities take for granted which includes a clean environment, security, efficient public transportation system, availability of adequate health, educational and recreational facilities, public utilities, a public administration responsive to people's' needs and an enabling business and social climate. For this to happen though, the state would need to be convinced to take on responsibilities it has never seriously undertaken before.

Col Maqbool Afridi (Retd):

The third Speaker of RTD was Col Maqbool Afridi (Retd), He talked on 'Leveraging CPEC For and By Karachi'. He elaborated on the hidden potential of Gwadar. He stressed that Gwadar was unique and its potential was not being properly realized by policy circles. Gwadar would be the link between the sea and the future economic center of the world. He stated that African countries were looking towards Gwadar due to its strategic importance. He further emphasized that Gwadar has a potential to become a new Dubai.

Each Speaker was followed by a twenty minutes discussion. The debate was very lively with all the participants including all intellectuals. Participants stressed on the fact that while there was much discussion on the ethnicities and sects of Karachi but there was no focus on the shared value system of the people of Karachi.

The conference ended with a note of thanks from the Chairperson who stressed that similar conferences were needed to bring forth the viewpoints of a common citizen of Karachi. Such feedback was necessary to solve the varied problems of the great metropolis of Karachi and can contribute in policy making and future development.







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