



**SESSIONAL ASSIGNMENTS
PAKISTAN STUDIES**

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BSSE-2nd Semester

ASSIGNMENT # 1

“A critical Analysis of Pakistan’s Foreign policy post 9/11”

Summary:

The 9/11 terrorist attacks changed the dynamics of world politics and posed serious security challenges to many nations. In the wake of these attacks Pakistan joined the US- led “War on Terror” and found itself caught up in a quagmire, as its involvement in “War on Terror” resulted in domestic challenges in the form of terrorist attacks on its own soil by different groups. Pakistan perceives existential threat to its territorial integrity from India and this consideration has always essentially influenced its foreign policy and behavior.

We attempt to look at the various challenges Pakistan faced in post 9/11 era and analyses Pakistan’s foreign policy towards the US, India and other important countries of the World.

Analysis:

Pakistan’s foreign policy like any other country has been expanding its sphere of influence not only in the region, but in the world politics as well. Its foreign policy has for the most part been Indo- centric which has thus impeded its growth in relationship with other countries.

Pakistan perceives existential threat to its territorial integrity from India and this consideration has always essentially influenced its foreign policy and behavior. The country’s backing of non-state actors in its proxy war against India has backfired as is evident from the mounting attacks from TTP (Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan) and other elements on its own soil.

The precarious security situation in the country has posed serious challenges to its existence and the elements hell bent upon seeing Pakistan in chaos should be tamed by taking every stakeholder on board. So the need of the hour is to have better relations with the neighboring countries, more particularly with India which is in the mutual interest of both the countries.

The need to initiate dialogue and negotiation for resolving the pending issues is only the best way forward. Moreover, Pakistan has excessively relied on the US that no doubt has helped the country to boost its economy and defense capability, but it has also brought miseries of unprecedented magnitude to the country and thus alienated the large section of its society, which does not augur well for any country.

It is the time for Pakistan to stand up to face the mounting challenges and try to address its spiraling internal issues, rather than to remain obsessed with India. Unless and until Pakistan doesn't have a good relationship with its neighboring countries, more particularly with India and Afghanistan, the more problematic it becomes to pursue its own national interests and to bring about stability and peace in South Asia.

ASSIGNMENT # 2

“CPEC: Prospects and Challenges”

CPEC could foster socio-economic development in Pakistan if materialized timely. It can pave the way for regional economic and trade connectivity and integration between the region of South, Central and East Asia but that needs a change in the existing attitude of India and Pakistan toward more economic and trade relations. The regional economic integration through CPEC could be a harbinger to resolve the political differences through economic cooperation. The states of South Asia, Central Asia and East Asia need more regional economic connection to make the 21st century the Asian century setting aside the perennial political issues to start a new beginning. The CPEC as a flagship of OBOR can be a catalyst to begin regional trade and economic integration.

However, some potential threats could hamper the CPEC to be transformed into a reality, namely the worsening security situation in Afghanistan and its spill over to Pakistan, political controversy in Pakistan regarding the selection of routes in various provinces of Pakistan and the trust deficit among certain regional states. In a longer perspective the CPEC can foster an economic community in the entire region of Asia and beyond if its vision is materialized in its true sense.

Strategic Significance of CPEC:

- The CPEC connects China directly to the Indian Ocean and the region of the Middle East from the deep Gawadar Port reducing its existing dependence on the South China Sea as the latter is becoming a contested territory between various regional and global actors and can be choked any time by the competing powers in the Asia-Pacific region. The Gawadar port in Balochistan under the Chinese control is only 400 km away from the Strait of Hormuz and is strategically pivot for China in transporting its energy and oil needs from the West Asia reducing its current maritime transportation distance from 12000 km to 3000 km. Accessing the Indian Ocean from the Gwadar Port is inevitable for China as it makes China less vulnerable to its existing Malacca Dilemma and provides the economic security to China to access the West Asia at a time when the Strait of

Malacca is increasingly becoming a contested territory among various players including China.

- Geopolitically Pakistan is the most suitable economic corridor for trade and transit activities providing a gateway to Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia and West Asia. Its role has remained important both during the cold-war and post-cold war era due to its geostrategic location and is neighbor to the rising economies of the region namely China and India. It can act as an important economic geography for regional trade. However, Pakistan failed miserably to take economic advantage of its strategic location and geography in the region. The existing bilateral trade volume between China and Pakistan is miserably low. The CPEC if extended to India will further enhance trade between China, India and Pakistan. Inclusion of India to the CPEC will further enhance the bilateral trade between China and India to new heights.
- The CPEC passing through the regions of China and Pakistan bordering many states could be extended to the countries Central Asia, Afghanistan and West Asia and India. The landlocked and resource rich countries of Central Asia have always set their eyes to access regional markets including Pakistan, China, India and the countries of West Asia Both Afghanistan and Tajikistan have transit agreements; CPEC will provide them the opportunity to transport their goods and market them more competitively to the regional and global market fostering regional economic and trade connectivity.
- Central Asia via Afghanistan to meet its energy needs and transports goods to Central Asia. The area through which the CPEC passes is at the crossroad of Asia, South Asian and Central Asia. For the greater benefit of the region and regional integration, the CPEC could be extended to Central Asia including Afghanistan and India opening them to the regional and global market. President Xi Jinping has already made a reference to such an arrangement in future during his address to the Pakistani parliament on his first visit to Pakistan in April, 2015. The changing geopolitical environment demands Pakistan to reorient its trade policy to more export oriented and must search for new markets in its neighborhood including India to boost its economy and the CPEC seems to be the best opportunity for Pakistan to expand its trade with the region of South and Central Asia including China and India.

Challenges to CPEC:

- Despite its strategic significance both for China and Pakistan, the CPEC is not without challenges. It is surrounded by regional security and political challenges for its smooth execution.
- Regional security could be the biggest issue to the CPEC as it passes through some of the areas facing the biggest security challenges.
- The biggest challenge to the CPEC is the regional security environment; specifically the Afghanistan conundrum. China's huge investment in the region is hinged on the peace and stability both in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Western parts of China. This is why China is actively pursuing to bring the Taliban to negotiating table within the quadrilateral framework between China, Pakistan, US and Afghanistan.
- The security situation in Afghanistan is getting worse day by day and even could be devastating after the withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan as the Taliban have refused to come to the negotiating table initiated by the quadrilateral forum comprising.
- After the killing of the Mullah Mansoor, the Taliban leader there seems to be few chances that the Taliban could come to the negotiations. Moreover, Pakistan has recently stated that after the killing of the Taliban leader in Pakistan, it cannot guarantee to bring the Taliban to engage in peace talks.
- With the refusal of talk by the Taliban in their recent statements it seems that it will take time to prevail peace in Afghanistan. Stability in Afghanistan is of utmost importance as the spillover effect can further destabilize the regional security environment, particularly Pakistan and Western parts of China.
- This could create security issues for the mega projects namely TAPI and CPEC in the region. Within Pakistan the situation is not good equally. The long lasting insurgency in Balochistan and FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) could hinder further to materialize the CPEC.