

US-China Rivalry and Strategic Position of Pakistan

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Abstract

Tussle between US and China have got implications on global politics. This competition to attain global and regional hegemony is changing the world's political dynamics and the need for adjustments in Foreign Policies of allied countries is being strongly felt. Pakistan being located at strategically important location and due to its regional political dynamics is also impacted by the confrontation of China and U.S. This paper discusses some important determinants to evaluate the effect of US -China confrontation on Pakistan. China is vital for Pakistan in terms of its defense, economy and international support. Similarly prospects of US cooperation in Pakistan's economy, defense and its policy have been discussed in detail in this paper. The importance of both superpowers cannot be ruled out. In this qualitative study, descriptive, exploratory, and analytical research methodologies have been used.

Key Words: China, Pakistan, US, Foreign Relations, Strategic Cooperation, Security & Peace

INTRODUCTION

China and U.S are becoming confrontational mainly due to security and economic concerns. China has evolved to a new global position where it can challenge US hegemony in global political dynamics. Surging Chinese exports and its increasing regional and global foothold specially after initiating BRI, ambitious belt and road drive aimed at enhanced regional and global connectivity, has sparked deep concerns in the US Policy makers. BRI envisages connecting the region including Asia and Europe for smooth transportation of imports and exports. China foresees a great potential via this arrangement to boom their industry and surpass U.S. in economy. Chinese funding to different countries specially development of their ports will enable Chinese maritime stronghold alongside economic benefits. Chinese maritime activities in South China Sea are also point of worry for American (Jabri, 2017). Two major concerns of US are security and economy, China will directly challenge their interests and US economy dependency on China will continue to increase. Trump administration started open policy to contain China by taking various domestic and external steps.

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They imposed sanctions on Chinese companies, increased tariffs on goods banned Chinese individuals, formed different alliances to include Japan, Australia, struck defense deals with India to challenge China in the region. In response China also countered US with similar steps (Hass, 2021). The BRI project is also aimed to counter American containment. US and Chinese policymakers positively address their economic interdependence built for long time on financial association but now clasping under the heaviness of their hostilities, somewhat the aftereffect of President Donald Trump's economic sanctions and the continuation of strategies under the Biden organization (Schlesinger, 2011). CPEC is a flagship project of BRI. It provides China an alternative shorter and secure route and enables China to deal with Strait of Malacca geographic concerns. On the other hand, it addresses Pakistan's economic concerns by bringing in huge investment in the country. Due to its geostrategic significance, the complicated dispute between the US and China has a significant impact on Pakistan's national interests.

A strong defense cooperation and foundation in BRI-focused economic connections, the best way to characterize Pakistan-China relations as a strategic partnership (Mardell, 2020). The strategic cooperation between Pakistan and China was formed when China and India had a special relationship and Pakistan was tightly associated with the US in the fight against communism (Khalid, 2021), but now the shift in alliance was seen as US was looking towards India in its aims to check Chinese expansion and China-Pak cooperation that evolved into a strategic long term relationship based on shared regional and political interests.

China and Pakistan are engaged to upgrade Pakistan's military and weaponry frameworks, China has planned tailor-made progressed weapons for Pakistan, making it a solid military power in the South Asian locale. Joint military exercise to produce joint response in case of threats from India. Counterterrorism cooperation continue alongside (Lalwani, 2023). Apart from support in military and defense, China has now become the largest investor in Pakistan with initialization of CPEC. China is managing and contributing to function Gwadar Port. It is seen watchfully by both the India and U.S. as a potential platform for the Chinese Naval force, empowering them to send off submarines and warships in the Indian Sea (Mishra, 2023). Major areas of this investment will be utilized on building rail and road infrastructure, energy sector including renewable energy projects, establishment of special economic zones and transfer of technology alongside human capacity building.

Pakistan joined US block by signing SEATO and SENTO in 1950,s, US provided support in its establishment of defense against adversary India. America supported Pakistan in 1965 war with India by providing diplomatic and financial backing. During the cold war both countries remained close ally, both helped Afghanistan against USSR invasion, Pakistan helped US to build diplomatic relations with China. But in 1990,s Pakistan nuclear tests against American wish, led to economic sanctions on Pakistan (Karp, Robbins & Pope, 1998). However, after 9/11 attack, both countries again came closer on counter terrorism narrative.

Implications of tense relations between the US and China worldwide and specially on foreign policy of Pakistan are significant. Both the countries want Pakistan to act in line with their interests. It is important for Pakistan to prioritize its interests and deal with the situation without getting involved in others tussle. Relations of Pakistan with China and the US needs thorough investigation for onward adjustments in its foreign policy

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding the implications of U.S.-China relations on the foreign policy of Pakistan involves applying International Relations theories to analyze the dynamics at play. Realism, specifically the structural realist perspective, also known as neorealism, can be applied here. Neorealism argues that the international system is characterized by anarchy, states' pursuit of power and security, and the distribution of power among states. Here's how neorealism can be applied to the U.S.-China-Pakistan triangle.

Balance of Power

Neorealism emphasizes the significance of the balance of power in shaping states' foreign policy decisions. Pakistan, situated in a region with a complex security environment, perceives the U.S.-China power competition as a critical factor. Pakistan historically maintained close ties with the United States during the Cold War, primarily for security reasons. However, in recent years, as China's influence has grown, Pakistan has sought to balance its relationships between the two superpowers to secure its own interests. This includes strengthening economic and military ties with China while maintaining a cooperative relationship with the United States.

Security Predicament

Neorealism argues that one state's efforts to enhance its security can be perceived as a threat by others. Pakistan's foreign policy is heavily influenced by its security concerns, particularly related

to India. The U.S.-China rivalry adds another layer to Pakistan's security calculus. Pakistan's deepening military and economic cooperation with China can be seen as a response to its security dilemma, as it seeks a strong partner to counterbalance India, which has been strengthening its ties with the United States.

Lobby vs. Harmonizing

Neorealism suggests that states may either balance against a rising power or lobby with it, depending on their assessments of the power distribution. Pakistan's foreign policy reflects elements of both strategies. While Pakistan balances against India by strengthening its alliance with China, it also seeks to benefit economically from China's rise through the CPEC, which can potentially boost Pakistan's economic development.

Economic Interdependence

Neorealism acknowledges the role of economic interdependence in shaping state behavior. Pakistan's growing economic ties with China through CPEC have significant implications for its foreign policy. While this economic partnership offers Pakistan potential benefits, such as infrastructure development and increased trade, it also makes Pakistan more economically dependent on China, potentially limiting its policy autonomy.

Strategic Hedging

Neorealism allows states to engage in strategic hedging, which involves maintaining multiple partnerships to hedge against uncertainty in international relations. Pakistan's foreign policy, in the context of U.S.-China relations, can be seen as a form of strategic hedging. It maintains a cooperative relationship with the United States while deepening ties with China, allowing Pakistan to navigate the shifting dynamics in the international system. In short, applying neorealism to the U.S.-China-Pakistan relationship highlights the role of power, security concerns, and economic factors in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan's efforts to balance its relationships with the United States and China reflect its response to the changing power dynamics and its pursuit of security and economic interests in a complex international system.

CHINA-US TIES: PAST & PRESENT

The year of 1949 turned out to be a crucial year in terms of U.S.-China ties when US sided with nationalist's government in Taiwan which China considered a threat. To counter American threats to the USSR, China and the USSR signed a friendship pact on February 14, 1950 and decided

to support each other if attacked by either US or Japan (Gleason, 1976). The 1950–1953 on the Korean Peninsula, a devastating three-year conflict between China and US, heightened tensions and uncertainty and jeopardized efforts to normalize US-China bilateral relations and since then, China has been the target of harsh economic sanctions, and the nationalist government of Taiwan received a lot of support from the US (Goswami, 2019). The US prevented China from joining the UN and tried to cut China off entirely from domestic and global politics. Increase of US military assistance to Taiwan was one of the key outcomes of the Korean War. US and Taiwan signed a U.S.-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty in 1954, putting a stop to China's ambition of Taiwan's unification with the mainland. Along its eastern and southern borders, China formed an alliance of naval and armed forces (Chieh-cheng ,2010). In 1960s significant progress was made. The U.S. interactions with communist Asian countries were impacted by the intensification of the Vietnam War (Connolly, 2006). Nixon expressed interest in enhancing relations with China by removing travel and trade restrictions. Nixon created a secret border crossing into China. The opening ceremony was overseen by Yahiya Khan, president of Pakistan, who played a significant role in resolving it. By the end of the year, the alliance moved more quickly. China made it clear that it wishes to cooperate with the US more closely (Dutt, 2017).

Henry Kissinger conducted his first trip to China in 1971. China was given a positive nod that US may alter its voting policy to offer China UN membership. The US first lobbied for the presence of both the delegates from China and Taiwan at the UN, but this arrangement failed (USC, 2011). The US opposed China joining the Taiwan delegation, but after Taiwan's attempt to have it expelled from the General Assembly was unsuccessful, UN member states agreed to do so. But they were convinced to attend and speak at the Security Council by the Chinese Communists (Lippman, 2015). China launched a number of economic and social changes in the 1980s, consented foreign investment, decentralized agriculture and public ownership of businesses to give Chinese corporations access to new market opportunities, which is bringing in a tone of international competition.

In 1989, China was allowed to join the WTO in September 2001. After Canada, China was the US's second-largest commercial partner in 2006. China surpassed Japan to become America's biggest creditor in September 2008. Economy of China is predicted to exceed the US by 2030. Political differences between US and China remain prominent despite economic cooperation. In 2011, Secretary of US State, Hillary Clinton predicted that the US has shifted the "Pivotal point"

from the Middle East to Asia. This draws US keen attention in regional political, military, and economic challenges. A meeting between the heads of both states was held in California, where Chinese officials coined the phrase new superpower partnership. However, a number of significant issues were still deteriorating US-China relations. China disputes with Taiwan, Japan and South China Sea are few most important factors to consider. Others claim that relations are deteriorating due to growing rivalry and interdependence, notwithstanding China's greater involvement in regional and global issues. It will establish the impact on US-China relations which is more crucial than ever for preserving the economy and stability of both nations given China's rising prominence and position in the world.

RISING GROWTH OF CHINA IN ASIA & SOUTH ASIA

The rising power of China poses a threat to the US. The US also increased its focus on the region of Asia which accounts for half of the world's twenty fastest growing economies. This is the primary driver of the world economy, responsible for a whopping 60% of expansion and 40% of GDP. Sixty percent of the global population resides on this continent. There will be 2.3 billion people on Earth by the year 2030, with 65 percent of that total residing in China and India. Asia is home to seven of the world's top ten strongest armies and six of the world's eight nuclear-armed states (Altschul, 2018)

SECURITY CONCERNS AND STRATEGIES

The larger framework of bilateral competitiveness with China has a considerable influence on the security relation between the US and China. It includes ideas from security, technology, economics, and politics. Security and economy, two longstanding points of contention between the US and China, are becoming more competitive. Chinese and American interests have historically had disagreements over security issues.

Nuclear weapons and missiles not being disseminated, the stability and state of affairs in Taiwan, as well as the military buildup of US and its allies in South China Sea. There are occasionally problems with marine territorial conflicts and regional security. Both states have always managed to compromise their opposing security interests while responding to disparities in evolving behavior, demands, and expectations (Bhutta, 2013) But China's expanding capabilities and increasing readiness to employ them has raised a security competition

China's military modernization made significant advancements with the goal of enhancing national security and showcasing its military prowess, China has invested heavily in cutting-edge commercial and military technology such as supersonic weapons, and artificial intelligence. China's military modernization programmer has the aim of undermining American power in the western Pacific.

Previously, China would tolerate activities that were deemed to be against its interests, but today, it is ready to take them on. China has continued to exert pressure on the allies of the US in its diplomatic confrontations with the Philippines, Australia, South Korea and Japan. Tensions between China and Taiwan remained high as these problems got worse. It makes sure that the Taiwan conflict, which has kept Taiwan's diplomatic allies at bay since 2016, would continue to play a big part in the security competition between the US and China. To engage in Taiwanese politics, US expanded marine and aerial military action in the area. China was concerned about continuous supplies of weapons to Taiwan by the US.

In response to Chinese demands and the increasing importance of capabilities, maritime territorial issues have surged to the forefront of the US-China security competition since 2010. China has taken several steps to fortify its territorial sovereignty and claims in the East and South China Seas. The U.S. is pressuring China to reduce its use of violence in response to perceived coercion. China has created seven military sites in the South China Sea through reclamation and the gradual deployment of armaments, which has frightened the United States and other countries in the region about the likelihood of future confrontations and limits on freedom of navigation. Operation Gray Zone is the name given to the usage of sub-military personnel by Chinese military and civilian ships that is below the war threshold. The competition became fiercer as a result. The development creates brand-new, challenging problems for the United States and its friends and partners for which there are no quick fixes. Because of the continuous controversy over Taiwan, China and the US remain conflicting each other (Luo, 2021).

Economic Strategies

The economic strategy of China has traditionally been cyclical. Thus, the topic of structural determinants' impact on economic rivalry is raised. The Communist Party is in charge of managing the economy; the strategy ensures the strength and security of the country. Private sector and foreign investors were given room by Xi to prepare for the impending economic calamity.

Increased level of innovation-driven competition in bilateral commercial agreements has made bilateral engagements more competitive. China and the US's level of export correlation, increased competition between large company groupings.

A contributing reason to China's increased competitiveness is its stronger and more comprehensive industrial policy. Billions of dollars have been invested by the government in Chinese companies. The importance of specializing in high-tech industries like semiconductors, quantum computing, and artificial intelligence is emphasized. As a result of this plan, the full Made in China 2025 policy was presented in 2015. Due to industrial policy, foreign enterprises are discouraged from operating in China. Foreign trade restrictions, such as those that affect the Chinese companies, they recently invested in. This raises the issue of China's extensive use of opaque and discriminatory policy instruments (such as laws, rules, and administrative measures) that disadvantage domestic businesses on the market in comparison to international competition. China's significant investment in industrial policy, and the blatantly discriminatory rules once implemented have all had an effect on how the Chinese and American economies are today. Due to the size of the Chinese economy, any changes to Chinese policy have a considerable impact on global supply and demand. Association of financial markets worldwide for global supply chains Market participants today, especially those in the US, should pay attention to the subtle adjustments China is making to its economic policies (Hillman and Sacks, 2021).

The most recent driver of economic competition is national security, or Chinese economic practices that endanger American security, such as China's attempts like automatic vehicles. Maintaining military preparedness and superiority in technology in many forms has the potential to upset US military superiority. It is bought on the foreign market and is not governed by any law. A highly integrated industrial supply chain for US technologies gives US obvious advantage, but if it is controlled by governments then US is at disadvantage. China may also undermine the US defense industry's very base which mostly rely on these supply networks.

The securitization of international corporate deals is arguably the most worrisome recent economic development. Diplomatic influence led to port developments in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Myanmar, and Djibouti navy bases. China has made considerable investments in military bases and sizeable infrastructure projects in nations across Africa, Latin America, Europe, and the Pacific Islands as part of its long-term objective to expand the size of its military base (Zhang, 2019).

Technological Rivalry

The underlying technology required for future development has been the subject of a protracted rivalry between policymakers and corporate executives in the US and China. Among them are semiconductors, quantum computing, supercomputers, robots, 5G, and intergenerational communication. This technology is essential for innovation, productivity, and national security. The US national security is impacted more broadly. The development, production, and research of these technologies worries corporate US.

China has given technology attention even though it is not a novel concept in China's national strategy. China's economic modernization and societal renewal put technology at its core. The phrase cyber superpowers is rather general. China's private companies have made significant high-tech sector advancements, especially in information and communications technologies.

While China and the US are increasingly competing with each other in technology, policymakers are concentrating on US recent actions. It is particularly crucial now that the US is suing ZTE and Huawei, two significant Chinese ICT companies. With Trump's opposition to Chinese tech firms as well as that of other senior government figures, China has recently doubled emphasize the significance of technological independence (Geller, 2019). Concerns also exist regarding China's potential use of these technologies for domestic purposes. This entails utilizing Chinese technologies to strengthen domestic political control, such as facial recognition and online surveillance. In the US, this sparked a contentious debate. Another problem is the management of technology. The supply chain is the final driving force behind technological competition. Many Americans have a supply chain, and some businesses in the ICT industry are heavily dependent on Chinese suppliers. These supply routes could be used by Chinese spies to access US industrial or military technology. A source of supply may also be reduced by the Chinese government during the US-China crisis. To lessen this exposure, encourage US businesses to shift their supply chains away from China (Mark and Roberts, 2023).

Structural Concerns

China is the center of relations with the US for a unique and unsettling combination of long-term structural concerns and short-term cyclical factors. The rivalry between the two takes place simultaneously with a larger and more substantial number of players, the material advantages and military power of both countries suggest more confrontation between both nations.

Intense rivalry and its structural foundations force U.S to consider more creative solutions to problems to control the formation and spread of Chinese superiority.

To maintain a balance between competition and cooperation, U.S and China can find areas of cooperation to balance strategic objectives and value differences. The US needs to improve intergovernmental, corporate, and academic cooperation. The best chance for defining China's options in the economy, security, technology, and governance globally is with like-minded nations. It is important to revisit prior theories used by American policymakers to manage relations with China that have the potential to be competitive structurally because they include the same value as strategic conversations.

POWER STRUGGLE IN SOUTH ASIA & CENTRAL ASIA

US strategy is a reflection of power politics. The US strategy aims to rebalance or political turning points in Asia in order to strengthen its regional connections with India. India is in focus, due to the size of the South Asian market and the significance of the region's economic, political, diplomatic, and strategic relations. In the South Asian national security architecture for the US, which is based on strategic data processing, India has been a key player due to its favorable geographic location and naval might in region. Pakistan's national security is being weakened by the China-US power struggle in South Asia. Both show strong power dynamics that have exacerbated regional polarization. Chinese Americans are pragmatists who strive to develop a strategy that benefits both parties.

China and the US controlled the South Asian territory closest to the resource-rich MENA and Central Asian nations in their security conflict. In terms of the Middle East's main energy sources, Pakistan is the smallest canal in the Arabian Sea. As the response to the rising cooperation between India and the US, Pakistan is pushed towards China's camp. The growth of Pakistan's diplomatic and commercial relations with China has been facilitated by its deteriorating connections with US. China's covert diplomatic plan and Pakistan's reforms are at odds with the US concern.

Pakistan is crucial to achieving US security objectives in South Asia. China wants to keep Pakistan and India in an equal power position. China's levelling strategy aims to support Pakistan strategically and economically. Power struggles between China and the US have given South Asia's a new level of geostrategic significance. Worldwide politics South Asia is becoming increasingly significant for energy-intensive economies like Indo-China due to the rise in global energy consumption

China has increased its multilateralism in its diplomatic strategy and involvement in response to US efforts. It is obvious that a wide competitive base is implied by the BRI and the businesses that comprise its membership. Sustained growth would ensure china's rise to global superpower status. The US's desire to have a global influence is directly threatened by China's rising importance. Pakistan faces both opportunities and challenges as a result of the China-US security conflict. Southwest Asia is equally intriguing as Central Asia because it supports American political goals. China's balancing act before Iranian revolution in Middle East undercut the traditional spheres of US strategic interests. A frequent illustration of a region where the US has influence is South Asia. In this respect, Pakistan has a significant regional impact on the United States.

The US-Pakistan alliance is one of the pillars of geopolitical strategy. Comparing this strategy to defending Western Powers' interests in the MENA is very different. China is concerned because Pakistan is now less able to protect Western energy interests in the Middle East than because of the US revised Middle East Policies.

China is focusing to limit American influence. By starting a covert response to regional engagement in Pakistan and India, China looks to contain US present interest in the region. China and India's trade increased significantly in recent years. The US's and India trade is China's main trading rival. American influence has a greater chance of spreading as China's trade with other South Asian nation's increases. Pakistan and China are significantly impacted by the evolution of bilateral ties between the US and India. Chinese territorial and ideological conflicts with India have a great impact on China and Pakistan's shared interests in the region

AMERICAN INFLUENCE ON CHINA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

Relations between the US and Pakistan, however, were established during the Cold War to stop the Soviet Union from expanding its territory. Pakistan had to defend itself against Indian threats, security support was also necessary. Thus, the two countries united in their mutual interest. (Bindra, 1988)

Pakistan similarly sided with the West in 1954 by joining SEATO and Baghdad pact, two military alliances that would later combine to form CENTO. As a result, economic and military cooperation between the two countries grew, and Pakistan became one the largest recipients of American military and economic aid. In the years that followed, Pakistan's relations with the US deteriorated when US supported India and showed concerns on Pakistan's nuclear program. China and Pakistan collaborated with each other due to shared regional interests. A new disagreement

resulted from Pakistan and the China' joint nuclear cooperation. The US has persisted in denouncing China and Pakistan's nuclear cooperation during the Afghanistan War. China and Pakistan worked more frequently together. May 28, 1998, nuclear missile test by Pakistan near Chagi, showed nuclear cooperation between Pakistan and China. China's nuclear weapon proliferation was also a point of concern for US. The US has continued to impose sanctions against Pakistan and China many times. With US open support to India in the events which followed, China and Pakistan came closer to each other. China is said to have funded Libya, North Korea, and Iran and provided nuclear technology and even nuclear know-how, particularly to Iran and North Korea. Because of the disagreements between Japan and China, the US supports Japan against China and also India seems to help India against Pakistan interests.

CHINA- US COMPETITION AND STRATEGICAL POSITION OF PAKISTAN

U.S-China contention is significant in the South Asian security climate; the U.S. has put resources into India to offset China and Pakistan has grown close connections to China. U.S- China strains entangle Pakistan's endeavors to keep cordial relations with both of these nations. It is difficult for Pakistan keeping up with expanded monetary and security participation with China and teaming up on these issues with the U.S. A strengthening rivalry brings significant dangers for territorial conflicts in South Asia, including expanded conceivable outcomes of contention across borders, a raising atomic weapons contest, and an unfavorable effect on adjustment objectives in Afghanistan (Singh, 2016). Pakistan faces significant challenges in balancing its relationships with both the United States and China due to the ongoing tensions between these two major powers. The U.S. has historically been a key security and economic partner for Pakistan, while China has increasingly become a vital ally, particularly in military and economic sectors.

The U.S.-China rivalry complicates Pakistan's foreign policy. The U.S. has imposed sanctions on Pakistani entities for their alleged involvement in missile technology transfers, reflecting broader geopolitical dynamics and efforts to curb proliferation (Rushmeen, 2024). At the same time, the U.S. has strengthened its strategic ties with India, aiming to counterbalance China's influence in the region. This alignment with India exacerbates Pakistan's security concerns, particularly given the historical and ongoing conflicts between India and Pakistan (Iqbal, 2020).

China, on the other hand, has been a consistent military and economic partner for Pakistan since the 1960s. China supplies a significant portion of Pakistan's military hardware and has collaborated on various projects, including nuclear technology and infrastructure development under

the CPEC (Afridi and Bajoria, 2010). This deep military and economic bond is critical for Pakistan, which relies heavily on Chinese support to maintain its strategic balance against India and address its economic challenges.

The growing U.S.-India partnership and the simultaneous deepening of China-Pakistan relations could potentially heighten regional tensions. Increased U.S. support for India could lead to a more aggressive stance by India towards Pakistan, risking further conflicts and instability in South Asia. Moreover, the nuclear arms race in the region could intensify, with both India and Pakistan continuing to expand their arsenals in response to perceived threats.

In Afghanistan, the strained U.S.-China relationship might undermine stabilization efforts. Both countries have stakes in Afghanistan's future, but their rivalry could impede collaborative efforts essential for the region's peace and development. Pakistan's endeavor to maintain balanced relations with both the U.S. and China is fraught with difficulties. The intensifying U.S.-China competition poses significant risks for South Asian security, including potential cross-border conflicts, a heightened nuclear arms race, and adverse impacts on regional stability initiatives.

Pakistani policymakers are attempting to keep their choices open as they anticipate the verbalization of the approaching U.S. new government policy towards China and the South Asia. This US china new confrontation comes at a troublesome time in Pakistan, where the economy stays on tenterhooks for a long time to come. Pakistan was placed on the "grey list" by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in 2018. This settlement raised potential further economic difficulties for the country. This status meant increased monitoring and scrutiny of Pakistan's financial activities to ensure compliance with anti-money laundering and fighting the financing of terrorism regulations (Kiani, The Dawn, Oct. 24, 2020).

Current mainstays of Pakistan's relationship with the U.S. focuses on Pakistan's continuous collaboration for Afghanistan. While military and financial assistance has fallen, America stays the biggest product market for Pakistani merchandise. On the other hand, China has turned into Pakistan's biggest provider of arms, and it has started remarkable monetary participation by means of CPEC. Pakistan depends on China for help to fight with rival India and moral help in internationalizing the issue of Kashmir — help the U.S. doesn't provide does not provide in raising Kashmir issue. This rationale recommends Pakistani policymakers ought to take on a well thought strategy in overseeing two-sided relations with both decisively essential nations, and not be influenced into picking sides

Pakistan has desires of recovering its job as a facilitator state and an unbiased party to stop the strains between the two powerful states and turning into a blend pot of joining Chinese and American interests to advance regional growth also catering for Afghanistan. All the while, Pakistan would remain to profit security and financial advantages related with saving commonly gainful cooperation with the two driving worldwide powers, without expecting to turn out to be excessively relying on both of them.

Pakistan's extending military and defense relationship with China, by means of CPEC, which has turned into a significant part of China's aggressive Belt and Road Drive (BRI). The current U.S. Government has rather taken a negative perspective on CPEC and over and again condemned CPEC and its future effects, saying that its absence of straightforwardness can expand CPEC expenses and cultivate defilement bringing about a considerably heavier financial obligation trouble for Pakistan. China has disproved these cases. During Covid-19 pandemic, for Pakistan, the conceivable danger of BRI projects giving influence to Chinese vital firms were effectively moved aside by the urgent requirement for US funding

The arrangement of the three-year \$7 billion IMF credit to battle Coronavirus in 2020, (IMF, March 9, 2022) decreased Pakistan's need to depend solely on China. Yet, Pakistan's situation on the FATF watch list— and its chance being minimized to the black listed country — was a significant danger to the monetary security of the country. Any monetary restriction posed by potential black listing would perpetually propel Pakistan to rely all the more vigorously upon China.

Regardless of Pakistan's developing economic reliance on China, it has not been without organization while managing its strong benefactor. The general thought of fostering a profound seaport at Gwadar was, to be sure, Pakistan's thought as opposed to a Chinese drive to expand its string of pearl strategy by which China will further its presence across the Indian Ocean. While Pakistan's continuous participation with China gives it chances to help to strengthen its economy and its relevance in relation with a rising superpower, it has presented new difficulties for Pakistan's relations with adjoining nations, as well as questioning its reciprocal relationship with the US (Yousaf, Zia and Ali, 2014).

IMPACT ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PAKISTAN

The U.S- China competition is affecting Pakistan's relations with other key local players. The developing collaboration among India and the U.S. in the Indo-Pacific to check Chinese impact has not ignored by Pakistan, nor is this cooperation without ramification for Pakistan. A developing

U.S - China contention could worsen the extended India-Pakistan struggle by competing on arms, while simultaneously decreasing possibilities for U.S. and Chinese collaboration on overseeing following developments. The denial of the independent status of Kashmir and Ladakh by Indian Head of the state Narendra Modi in August 2019 elevated pressures among India, China, and Pakistan along challenged borders inside the Himalayan ranges (BBC News, August 6, 2019). China's continuous boundary deadlock with India in eastern Ladakh gives Pakistan a valuable chance to stand up against India close by China through more decisive posing along the challenged lines of control, without depending on the utilization of cross-line hostility to help the Kashmir insurgency. This has uplifted Indian worries of a two-front danger in which it could confront with China and Pakistan at the same time.

U.S. have speed up and develop its coordinated ties with India with regards to India's continuous boundary debate with China. Yet, while India's assurance to check Chinese power might be solidifying, its ability to do so is by all accounts questionable. India's monetary burdens, impulse to redirect military assets to its borders with China, and developing reliance on Russia are among the variables restricting possibilities for collaboration with America's Indo-Pacific approach (Wu, 2021)

Indo-Pacific plan is essentially founded on naval participation, to extend to assist India with tending to mainland challenges presented by China, the ramifications could be serious for Pakistan. US intends to share geospatial knowledge and complex rocket innovation with India have caused caution in Pakistan. Pakistan had unequivocally communicated worry over a multibillion-dollar military arrangement inked during US President Trump's visit to India in February 2020 (The Dawn, February 26, 2020)

Pakistan's policy makers are probably going to keep improving the nation's traditional and (hostile and cautious) atomic capacities because utilization of freedom fighters has got repercussions and the danger of worldwide restrictions (through FATF). While deterrence in security has so far held regardless of a few late low-level contentions among India and Pakistan, the danger of a heightening atomic weapons contest in the region stays an issue of concern. The U.S. has worked with Pakistan to reinforce its order and-control structures, and the most recent Atomic Security File recognized Pakistan's determination in this regard, positioning Pakistan the "most improved" nation, especially as far as its security and control measures. Nonetheless, South Asia's atomic weapons contest is being impacted by what has been named a "essential chain," by which Pakistan answers

decisively to India, India answers both to Pakistan and China, and China thusly answers the two India and the U.S. Notwithstanding a heightening atomic weapons contest in South Asia, U.S and China could be unsuccessful to coordinate as outsider emergency manager in South Asia assuming that one more clash among India and Pakistan were to escalate.

The U.S China competition is likewise affecting Pakistan's relations with gulf countries. Pakistan has seen some new rubbing with customary U.S. partner Saudi Arabia because of its hesitance to help Pakistan's position on Kashmir (The Hindu, August 13, 2020). China even stepped in to give Pakistan another \$1 billion credit to reimburse the Saudis, yet a total break among Pakistan and Saudi Arabia appears to be improbable as of now, even as Saudi Arabia and other gulf states foster nearer financial connections to India. Any exceptional shift by Pakistan away from U.S. adjusted states like the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain to a China-upheld arrangement including Iran, Turkey, and Malaysia would be an excess and not with regards to Pakistan's essential advantages. Muslim states differ in their perspectives on various issues including incorporating their relations with China. As opposed to picking sides, Pakistan will be ideally served by keeping its choices open, and constantly arranging to reconcile regional grey areas, as it means to connect CPEC with the more extensive BRI project and draw in differentiated investment.

In 2013, Pakistan decided to transfer the management of the Gwadar seaport from Singapore's PSA International to China's state-owned China Overseas Port Holding Company (South China Morning Post, January 6, 2020). This strategic move, coupled with Pakistan's joint maritime exercises with China in the Arabian Sea, heightened suspicions and concerns among regional and global powers about the increasing Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean and its potential implications for regional security dynamics

Pakistan is probably not going to afford such an arrangement, as a Chinese maritime presence in Gwadar could kindle pressures among Pakistan and a few Gulf States, which have a critical U.S. military and maritime presence. The January 2019 declaration (Gulf News, January 13, 2019) that Saudi Arabia would finance a \$10 billion petroleum processing plant project in Gwadar probably offers a consolation to the U.S. given its nearby connections to the Saudis. A detailed China-Iran draft economic agreement adds a startling layer of intricacy regarding adjusting Pakistan's now problematic local relations. The Iran-China arrangement could enormously eclipse Indo-Iranian collaboration at the profound seaport of Chabahar. Notwithstanding the publicity created by media reports about the aggressive arrangement, the financial practicality of working with

a state like Iran stays in uncertainty, and Iran has its own concerns of falling in to prey by Chinese debt traps.

Pakistan is mindfully inviting an expanded Chinese presence in Iran, considering it to be a method for broadening its financial reach. While a possible Chinese endeavor to imitate CPEC in Iran may not supersede India completely, such moves could offer Pakistan the valuable chance to be engaged with shipping lanes to Afghanistan by means of Iran too, particularly in the event that the Biden organization relax the ongoing U.S. approach in light of most extreme tension (Mir, 2020)

Eminently Afghanistan is one region in which strong U.S-China rivalry appears to be probably not going to affect Pakistan's regional relations. Pakistan's role in Afghanistan has been defined by possible terrorist's threat from Afghanistan versus Indian threat in the east, and these essential interests inside Afghanistan have been influenced by extensive U.S.-China rivalry. The future of Afghanistan is an issue that the U.S. and China are going to settle on regardless of their more extensive contest. China has shown little interest in settling Afghanistan through military means.

China has to arrange coming to fruition in Afghanistan. Gwadar's vicinity to southern areas of Afghanistan has made it feasible for Afghan brokers to import products by means of the Gwadar port under a recently inked extended exchange settlement, which incorporates the launch of another exchange door Badini, Balochistan. Such improvements give a reassuring point of reference to the monetary adjustment of Afghanistan, utilizing existing CPEC foundation. Pakistan would invite this strategy, especially should the U.S. and other nations put resources into related projects in light of a legitimate concern for Afghan network and dependability, possibly close by Chinese ventures.

IMPACTS ON PEACE AND SECURITY OF PAKISTAN

An increasing collaboration between China and Pakistan is directly influencing US to get closer to India. This state of affairs between the two superpowers in the region to support developing countries against each other to acquire their interests to achieve regional dominance, results in different violent activities in the region. India and Pakistan already differ with each other on various territorial points, involvement of US and China is more likely to result in more aggressive behavior. Terrorist attacks in Pakistan on Chinese workers on CPEC is attributed to US China confrontation. Some analysts say that US and India are backing these attacks in an effort to subvert CPEC (Siddiqi, 2022).

Pakistan's participation in the GWOT (Global War on Terror) with the US had made the nation's domestic security issues worse. To confront the threats presented by terrorist organizations, China and the military are increasing their cooperation. India is disturbed and alarmed by the defense cooperation between China and Pakistan. This issue has a bearing on US-China interests since it relates to preserving Pakistan's security and fending off the menace of extremism. Pakistan's nuclear arsenal needed to be kept secure. The US has always been concerned about Pakistan's nuclear security. US has declared many times that concerns over Pakistan's nuclear weapons would keep the US military alarmed (Lalwani, 2023). On the other hand, with China's backing, Pakistan had boosted its naval capabilities. Pakistan wanted to purchase larger, more dangerous ships from China. This shows that American policies were substantially influencing Pakistan's and China's strategic relationship. In varying degrees, it seeks to develop military relationships. Chinese cooperation in the creation of highly equipped vessels enhances Pakistan's naval capability

IMPACT ON ECONOMIC SECURITY OF PAKISTAN

Cultural change, rivalry between China and the US, and Pakistan's lack of regional integration and prosperity have all contributed to a decline in GDP of Pakistan. Both human and financial capital have vanished as a result of power competition and uncertainty. Together with the expansion and development of the industrial sector, foreign direct investment has decreased in Pakistan (FDI). \$10 billion was lost when Pakistan joined the GWOT in line with American foreign policy (Lourens, 2019). Insurrection and violence were promoted by the coalition with US in GWOT, which greatly impedes the development of the social and economic sectors. It widened the civil military gap and fueled ethnic sub nationalism in Pakistan. The consequences are even worse when Pakistan's fragile economy was hurt by economic sanctions by FATF if in case country is blacklisted. Due to terrorism and militarized policies, Pakistan's prospects for foreign direct investment remained uncertain.

The BRI agenda of China aims to strengthen Pakistan economically and geographically. The southern BRI component, CPEC, exemplifies China's larger regional and international ambitions. CPEC is a direct result of China's growing influence in Pakistan. In an effort to counter US focus on South Asia, the BRI also emphasizes economic recovery through border diplomacy by building infrastructure that will promote regional economic integration. China is working to strengthen its political connections, social ties and security cooperation in the region. This BRI might connect Asia with China. Taijin to France via Moscow, passing through the northern suburbs of

Helsinki and the western outskirts of Rotterdam. The southern endpoint of the new Silk Road commercial corridor is created in China. Kashgar in Xinjiang is a crucial hub in China's west development strategy (Preeti, 2013)

The route connects Kashgar with Gilgit-Baltistan via the Kunjerab Pass, which is located south of the CPEC. Along the Karakoram Highway, which connects China and Pakistan, there are substantial contracts in consideration to buy oil from the Middle East. This oil supply will be unloaded at Gawader and will be transferred using CPEC road network to China. This arrangement is widely opposed by India and US because of two main reasons. First it will offer alternative route to China for import and export of goods hence countering encirclement policy. Secondly route passes through Azad Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan areas which India claims to be their part. In 2013, China pushed for strategic maritime cooperation with Pakistan (Syed, 2015), China and Pakistan are collaborating to improve their military, commercial and strategic ties. China's influence in Pakistan is growing with the launch of initiatives in the fields of commerce, energy, trade, and social development

As compared to US-Pakistan bilateral trade, China-Pakistan trade is above average. China is exporting military hardware to Pakistan. Investments in direct funding for telecommunications, electricity production, and infrastructure are the key areas where economic activities saw a spike. China has assisted Pakistan in building a strong industrial base to support its nuclear energy needs. Regarding its naval and missile endeavors, Taxila Heavy Industry Legal Factory, Heavy Machinery Center, and Heavy Forging Factory have been created with support from China. However, Pakistan's domestic textile production has diminished or ceased altogether as a result of commercial imports from that country (Swaran, 2020). The two foundations of China and Pakistan's strategic partnership are joint counterterrorism exercises and maritime cooperation.

CONCLUSION

China-US relations have direct and indirect implications on foreign affairs of Pakistan. Both countries are struggling to battle for global hegemony. Trends of clashes on economic front have consequences for entire world. Both the economies are one of the largest economies of the world. Any notable trend influences the global market at large. China's increasing global reach is thought to have challenged America's hegemony in particular. What worries the US is that China is seen as US alternative by many countries

Pakistan and China have close and balanced relations since 1951. Pakistan was the earliest country to recognize China. Throughout the long term, the relationship has having long term strategic partnership with shared interests. For Pakistan, China is one of its close ally who always stood for it in times of need. Reciprocally, China also treats Pakistan as one of its most important friends with common regional and global interests. The reciprocal connection between the two adjoining nations is described by sensations of common trust, regard and generosity towards one another. Pakistan and China had entered in to new era of strategic cooperation.

China is biggest trade partner of Pakistan and supports Pakistan in financial crisis. Apart from this, investment which China brings to Pakistan is of strategic value. CPEC further signifies the relationship between both countries. Investment in the form of CPEC comes to Pakistan at the time it needed the most, development of Gawadar port is seen as a game changer which is likely to afford huge number of trade vessels. Technical assistance to help in raising qualified manpower is yet another aspect.

To balance out India's dominance in the region, China stepped out to be the most reliable partner for Pakistan. Transfer of technology along with acquisition of sophisticated weapons from China helps Pakistan to keep India at distance. Rising collaboration between US and India has been balanced out by partnering with China. US is an international player and holds central position in world politics, it has its influence over the west in contesting Russia and China. Most of the international organizations including World Bank and IMF are under the influence of America. American economy is still world's largest economy. The US laid out strategic relations with Pakistan in 1947. Both countries work intimately on a wide cluster of issues going from energy, exchange and venture, public wellbeing, clean energy and battling the environment emergency, settlement of Afghanistan issue and counterterrorism. The US enjoys the status of one of the countries who bring foreign direct investment, and it holds the position of being the biggest export market for Pakistan. Both the countries are endeavoring to grow their bilateral trade relations and investment. The U.S. government upholds this relationship by coordinating business to business exchange assignments, giving specialized help, and advancing business valuable open doors for U.S. organizations to foster U.S. - Pakistan business cooperation.

On counterterrorism and interior security, Pakistan has made a few moves against terrorists and militant associations blacklisted by the UN in line with its comprehensive National Action Plan. In any case, the execution of UN sanctions against these elements is feared to be selective against

specific organizations and purposefully sparing some organizations. The US keeps on encouraging Pakistan to make an unequivocal move against these gatherings while looking for potential chances to cooperate with Pakistan in areas of common interest, like counterterrorism and external security.

Pakistan is the fifth biggest country by populace and positioned as the 44th biggest economy in 2022 as per IMF gauges. The US has been a main financial backer in Pakistan for previous 20 years. Major U.S. financial collaborations are in the fields of daily use products, synthetics, energy, farming, transportation, and communication.

The essential focal point of the U.S program is to collaborate with Pakistan in its advancement toward security, peace and success. Working across the U.S. government, and in participation with Pakistan, worldwide monetary managing organizations, U.S. help has been concentrated on projects supporting monetary development and two-sided exchange, energy, administration and law and order, exiles and displaced person facilitating networks, policing, society, individuals to-individuals trades, and countering irresistible sicknesses like Coronavirus.

From the discussion above, the importance of both the superpowers cannot be ruled out. Pakistan is located at important geographical and strategic point due to which it remains the focus of world powers. Pakistan cannot afford to spoil its relations with one for the sake of other. Pakistan's National interest has to be the top most priority of policy maker. The Foreign Policy has to be aligned with our National Interest. Economic progression is vital to survive in the prevailing international environment. And economic independence can only be achieved only by increasing the potential economic benefits from both the China and the US. The focus of Pakistan's Foreign Policy should be on investment instead of loans. A comprehensive, well-thought and sustainable long-term economic and security policy involving all the stakeholders is a necessity of the time.

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