

Problems and Countermeasures in the Development of Transport Logistics in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

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Abstract— As the flagship project of the "Belt and Road Initiative", the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor aims at promoting the interconnection between China and Pakistan. It is of great significance to expanding the economic and trade cooperation and promoting the economic integration between the two countries. At present, the construction of the economic corridor between China and Pakistan has proceeded smoothly and has gradually entered the stage of full implementation from the previous stage of planning. It focuses on the integrated planning, Gwadar port, energy, transport infrastructure and industrial cooperation to form the "1 + 4" economic cooperation layout. This article intends to sort out the main risks and problems of the transport and logistics industry in the current corridor construction, with a view to making concrete and feasible reference for the construction decision of corridor.

Index Terms— The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor(CPEC); transportation and logistics industry; problems; countermeasures and suggestions

I. INTRODUCTION

In May 2013, Premier Li Keqiang visited Pakistan to propose the strategy of "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor"; In February 2014, the two countries issued the Joint Statement of China and Pakistan on Deepening the Strategic and Economic Cooperation between China and Brazil, proposing to speed up the construction of the "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor"; In April 2015, President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan and promoted Sino-Pakistani relations to an all-weather strategic partnership. During the visit, China and Pakistan signed more than 50 bilateral cooperation documents on economy and trade.

The Kashi Economic Corridor runs from Kashgar in the north to Gwadar in Pakistan to the south and is located at the junction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. It is a major project of the "Belt and Road Initiative". The recent progress in the construction of the economic corridor in China and Pakistan mainly includes five aspects: comprehensive planning, Gwadar port, energy, transport infrastructure and industrial cooperation. In the aspect of transportation and logistics, the backwardness of infrastructure construction is one of the

major bottlenecks that have hindered the economic and social development of Pakistan for a long time. In order to enhance the level of interconnection between China and Pakistan, improve the traffic conditions in the region and promote the economic and social development of Pakistan, both sides should maintain close communication and cooperation so as to start the early transport infrastructure projects as soon as possible. At present, a number of projects have made breakthrough progress. Such as the Orange Line project in Lahore Rail Transit, the upgrading project of the Karakoram Highway II (Harvey-Tacot section) and the Karachi-Lahore Expressway (Sukkur-Multan section) project. After the above project is completed, it will greatly improve the local traffic conditions in Pakistan and play an active role in the interconnection between China and Pakistan.

II. THE MAIN PROBLEMS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT LOGISTICS INDUSTRY IN THE CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

Undeniably, the risks facing the economic corridor in China and Pakistan are all-encompassing. They include not only the macro-level political, security and economic risks and potential social and cultural conflicts, but also operational and management risks as well as commercial legal risks. That is to say, at present, the construction of CPEC faces many practical problems in the full implementation of logistics development.

A. Pakistan's domestic political constraints led to project implementation efficiency is less than expected

The most serious challenge now facing the construction of transport infrastructure in CPEC is the weak implementation of the project. The underlying reason is that the Pakistani government is subject to domestic political struggles and institutional constraints.

Firstly, the obstruction of opposition parties based on the domestic political struggle. Although all Pakistani parties at various political parties have agreed on the CPEC, the opposition parties are still trying every means to obstruct the actual implementation of the project. Almost every project faces the opposition boycott. After Chairman Xi concluded his visit to Pakistan, there was a dispute over the east-west line between the Pakistani Economic Corridor in Pakistan. After the all-party meeting, the opposition proposed the so-called dispute over the west line with the early harvest project.

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Secondly, there is fierce competition between the central government and the provinces and local tribes. Some clandestine families and localities in Pakistan are full of colors. The dispute between East and West is a typical example of the dispute over interests. In addition, the disputes over the power and interests of different departments and their leaders are involved and the coordination costs are high. Each project of CPEC needs to involve 20 or 30 ministries and commissions in its implementation. It is necessary to coordinate the interests of all parties from the central government to the localities and from local people to international organizations. There will undoubtedly also be a large number of such interferences in the future construction of transport logistics projects under the CPEC.

Finally, the bureaucracy is corrupt and inefficient. The Pakistani civil service system has many negative and serious drawbacks, such as lack of rewards and punishments. The more serious corruption and the prevalence of bribes have severely restricted the progress of the project.

B. Security problems along the route have become more serious

In the past two years, the Pakistani military has made great efforts to combat terrorism and rebel forces and achieved some results. The number of Pakistani terror attacks in 2015 dropped markedly. However, during the first three months of 2016, the wave of terror has resurfaced. Although the Pakistani government has set up a special security force of 10,000 people in order to guarantee the safety of Chinese engineers in Pakistan, the security situation in some areas along the China-Pakistan economic corridor is still not optimistic.

Firstly, the situation in Baluchistan is crucial for the construction of transport infrastructure in the CPEC. Gwadar Port is located in Baluchistan Province, and the east, middle and west lines of CPEC have a long way to go through Baluchistan. The success or failure of CPEC, to a large extent, depends on the attitude of the local forces in Baluchistan and the ability of the Central Government of Pakistan to maintain the stability in Baluchistan. The armed groups such as the People's Liberation Army in Baluchistan have always been hostile to the Chinese enterprises and Chinese engineers and technicians, and oppose the relevant projects in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It is foreseeable that once the construction of the transportation and logistics project is officially launched, the local separatist forces under the secret support of a third country will also become the source of security threats to the facilities and employees of Chinese-funded companies.

Secondly, Pakistan's Taliban issue involves India, Afghanistan and other parties. Behind this issue is the question of the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan and the relations between India and Pakistan. Pakistan needs security assurances. China and Pakistan should further communicate and coordinate on this issue.

Finally, the safety factors that affect the transport logistics of CPEC are also threatened by the Xinjiang region

of China. In recent years, the three forces have risen in Xinjiang. Some extremist separatists have fled to the border areas of China and Pakistan and lifted their cooperation with the extremist groups in Pakistan. All of these have posed serious threats to the investment environment and projects under construction in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor passing through this region. The transport logistics project of the CMBC is still facing operational safety challenges after it is completed, which will adversely affect the logistics development of the two countries.

C. Weak economic growth, less construction investment and poor financing

Firstly, economic growth in Pakistan remains sluggish. Although the current government has maintained a growth rate of over 4% in the three years since its inception, reaching the best of 4.71% since the financial crisis in 2015, it is still weaker than the growth of neighboring emerging economies such as India, Bangladesh and Myanmar. This reflects the objective reality of inadequate competition, poor economic conditions and sluggish industries in the Pakistan's domestic market, which has led to a downturn in the Pakistan's exports and foreign inflows, thereby aggravating the sluggish growth.

Secondly, Pakistan's macroeconomic environment is fragile. From an internal perspective, there is a risk of falling into a "liquidity trap." Externally, the debt risk is on the rise. With the progress of the construction of CPEC, Pakistan's import demand and debt to China will all continue to grow. Some analysts believe that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will also add 3 billion U.S. dollars in debt to Pakistan. Pakistan is about to enter a new round of debt repayment. The debt crisis may once again drag Pakistan into the "circular model" of the economic crisis.

The related infrastructure projects of CPEC rely mainly on the financial support of the state and the autonomous regions and have achieved rapid development in recent years. However, the construction of Pakistan's transport logistics lags behind and there is a huge demand for funds. It is very difficult to meet the actual needs of the state finance alone. Pakistan's economic development is relatively backward and the state has limited financial resources so that it cannot support the funding needs for improving the channel construction and more needs assistance from the Chinese side.

D. The interference of external forces is long-standing

Some Western countries uphold the Cold War mentality and used to view the construction of the economic corridor between China and Pakistan from the perspective of geopolitical and geostrategic competition, rather than looking at the issue from the perspective of geo-economic cooperation. As a result, these countries may create trouble through their agents in Pakistan and in the region.

There are many international organizations in Pakistan, due to the weak management power of Pakistan Central Government and the great influence of international organizations, some Western countries will interfere with the construction of China-Pakistan economic corridor by

virtue of their influence on international organizations such as human rights, environment and labor and also set up a special think tank to study countermeasures against the CPEC project. It is foreseeable that in the future, the key logistics projects of the CPEC will experience a high probability of being disrupted by a variety of apparent or implicit interference from a third country.

E. potential social and cultural conflicts

All along, the relations between China and Pakistan have been mainly concentrated in the political and military arena. Only a few central enterprises have operations in Pakistan. Even though overseas employees at central enterprises have received more training on basic assignment, there is still a precedent that Chinese managers of some central enterprises still lead to mass incidents because they do not understand the taboos of local religious culture. With the gradual launch of the CPEC projects, a large number of local state-owned enterprises, private-owned enterprises and even individual traders are planning large numbers of visits to Pakistan and planning to invest and operate in Pakistan. These business managers and employees lack general understanding of Pakistan's Islamic traditions, complex ethnic relations and taboos, and lack experience of cross-cultural management and operations. Therefore, the inadvertent and lack of respect for local religious traditions led some people to violate the local ethnic religious taboo frequently. The transportation logistics construction project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has great help to the countries and people in Pakistan. However, if these sensitive details are not paid attention and rectified earlier, a general negative perception in the hearts of Pakistan's people will poison the public opinion base for the entire China-Pakistani relations and such negative incidents will provide a direct excuse for possible third-party impediments and terrorist attacks by Pakistani extremists.

F. Specific operational and operational risk

Pakistan is a developing country that has not been baptized by industrialization. People generally do not establish the concept of occupation and time in the industrialized era and lack corresponding vocational skills. Now we can basically foresee that there will be a large number of projects in the transport logistics construction project of CPEC delayed in the future due to unclear logistics nodes or due to imperfect management system, low level of information infrastructure and lack of skilled personnel. This undoubtedly will be an ongoing problem for Chinese companies that have to assume the responsibility and cost of commercial contracts.

Firstly, the logistics nodes in the various states of Xinjiang and the Pakistani side are not clear and the industrial planning is not coordinated. Since the "One Belt and One Road" strategy was put forward in 2013, various states in Xinjiang and Pakistan have formed "nodes" in different senses, and logistics companies have also been established. However, due to the lack of planning, the serious problems of homogeneous competition and repetitive construction have formed in the spatial layout,

which not only hinder the overall development level of the area, but also affect the overall situation of the surrounding states and even the overall economy in a coordinated manner. At present, various prefectures in Xinjiang and Pakistan do not have a macroscopic understanding of the development of the logistics industry and an overall regional demand analysis. The division of functions of all kinds of points, axes, lines and planes as well as logistics industry in the regional logistics activities are not clear, which is not conducive to the formulation of relevant industrial plans by the states and Pakistan.

As a result, the freight forwarding and consignment departments of logistics companies in various localities in Xinjiang and the Pakistan's logistics company were repeatedly built, and formed the characteristics of small, weak and scattered in logistics operations and the uncoordinated situation of socialized logistics demand and supply.

Secondly, the logistics industry management system is not perfect and needs to be guided correctly. For example, the logistics management system in Xinjiang is divided into departments under the management of industries, and the consequences of this management system, one is the management department is numerous, the coordination of ministries are not in place. The standards of cross-sectoral management content such as traffic department, information department, customs and business tax are quite different, resulting in many management links and poor coordination. The second is too many levels of management, and serious local protectionism have hindered the development of the logistics industry. The third is the segmentation of management, the entire social logistics process will be cut off, affecting the functions play and coordinated development of logistics service, resulting in waste of logistics resources, increasing the integration difficulty of the logistics industry.

Thirdly, the overall level of information infrastructure needs to be improved. As two important elements of economic development, there is an interdependence and complementary relationship between logistics and informatization. The infrastructure networks, business service networks and information networks in Xinjiang and Pakistan are relatively backward. All prefectures and all enterprises just put a large area on the physical entity, and there is almost no public logistics information platform shared in the area. Due to the lack of communication between each other, their respective operations are independent, so the relevant logistics information is only transmitted internally, and important order information and demand information cannot be shared. All this hinders the development of regional logistics industry to a certain extent.

Finally, lack of technical personnel plaque cannot be ignored. The logistics industry in Xinjiang and Pakistan is a new industry. The logistics industry lacks not only high-end talent but also low-end talent. There is a serious shortage of qualified personnel in logistics knowledge and basic skills. At the same time, the lack of training institutions in this field has resulted in a gap between technology and

education. Far from the current and future market demands for logistics industry, technical personnel have become the fundamental obstacle to speeding up the construction of a large-scale logistics network between the two countries.

III. DEVELOPMENT IDEAS AND COUNTERMEASURES OF TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS INDUSTRY IN CHINA - PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

A. *Development Ideas*

Under the background of "Belt and Road", guided by the concept of modern logistics, guided by the market and using information technology as a means, the transportation and logistics of CPEC should promote logistics infrastructure construction with the objective of reducing logistics costs and enhancing logistics efficiency, cultivate modern logistics enterprises, and realize the socialization, specialization and large-scale operation of logistics so as to serve the relevant construction of the economic corridor in China and Pakistan.

B. *Development Strategy*

The construction of an economic corridor between China and Pakistan is an important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries and also enjoys broad-based support from the peoples of the two countries. At present, the construction of CPEC is proceeding smoothly and has entered a stage of full implementation. However, it is also affected by many unfavorable factors such as traditional geopolitical risks, structural political contradictions in Pakistan, economic policy risks and security risks, as well as a series of practical problems that cannot be ignored. This is manifested in the fact that domestic political constraints in Pakistan have led to the project implementation efficiency is less than expected, and more serious project safety problems along the line, sluggish economic growth, long-standing interference by external forces, potential social and cultural conflicts, and specific operational and operational risks.

Nonetheless, we should still fully understand the important exemplary and leading role of the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as a flagship project to the smooth implementation of the "Belt and Road Initiative". Maintaining its strategic strength and eliminating the interference from unfavorable factors both inside and outside Pakistan and unswervingly pushing forward the full implementation of corridor construction. To this end, the following countermeasures and suggestions are put forward:

(1) Establishing a system of monitoring, early warning, analysis and judgment of political risks for the transportation logistics projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

To put it simply, in view of the different stages of transportation logistics projects in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the possible sources of threats are analyzed, and a conflict risk model and monitoring indicator group suitable for Pakistan is designed. For example, what are the potential stakeholders involved in a given project? What are the positions of central and local governments,

communities, NGOs, clans and sects? Who will resist and how to resist? Is it isolated or linked in tandem? What concrete steps may be taken by the parties to the conflict? Through online and offline monitoring, we can analyze and evaluate the types of risks and levels that may be faced by the key logistics projects in the CPEC and put forward corresponding measures to play an early warning, prevention and control role. On the other hand, various concrete political risks they face will be sub-contracted by commercial contracts to a group of risk management companies, security companies and private intelligence companies that have the corresponding strategic vision and game ability in the complex geo-political environment to deal with them in a concrete way. This is an effective model for "professional people to do professional things." In fact, the governments and enterprises in developed countries in Europe and the United States have always done the same and have worked well.

At the same time, carrying out comprehensive and in-depth research and assessment on the stakeholders in logistics projects. The work to be done here consists of two aspects. One is to study the position and behavior prediction of the major interest groups in Pakistan that are related to the logistics projects in the CPEC. The other is to identify and analyze the attitudes and risks of stakeholders in the communities where the CPEC Logistics Project is located.

In short, we should adjust our attitude and rationally view the problems that have emerged in the construction of the China-Pakistan economic corridor. The recent controversy over the planning of corridors in Pakistan is only a concentrated manifestation of long-standing structural political contradictions in Pakistan and is not directly related to the construction of CPEC. Pakistan's domestic political contradictions and even the political crisis that led to political turmoil are not caused by us, and would not disappear completely with the successful construction of the economic corridor. Therefore, we should correctly and objectively look at the problems that arose in the construction of the current corridor. We should not only avoid impulsive impulses, but also prevent the gains and losses.

(2) The preparatory work for contingency plans based on the domestic security situation in Pakistan should be implemented

We should objectively analyze the security situation in Pakistan, keep a clear understanding of the complexity and long-term nature of security threats, and fully prepare for contingency plans. We should strengthen close communication and coordination with the Pakistani military and law enforcement agencies, and step up cooperation in counter-terrorism mechanisms and equipment construction. In the meantime, among the four-tier security measures that have been set up by the army, paramilitary forces, police and security companies for the construction of the China-Pakistan economic corridor, we must give full consideration to the bad records of security companies in extra-territorial countries in Pakistan and Pakistan's personal concerns, and give the Pakistani military and law enforcement agencies full trust and cooperation. In addition,

giving full play to the role of the Quartet's mechanism in Afghanistan, working with Pakistan to promote the process of peace talks in Afghanistan, striving for the early realization of security and stability in Afghanistan and Pakistan and improving the security environment for corridor construction.

In the aspect of cracking down on the terrorist forces in the region, separating their organizations and safeguarding the security of the China-Pakistan economic corridor, China and Pakistan should try to establish a joint anti-terrorism security force and safeguard the economic corridor of China and Pakistan as well as deter all hostile forces that undermine their economic cooperation. And carrying out sharing and deep-rooted cooperation in counter-terrorism intelligence. The northern part of Pakistan is also an important camp for training "East Turkistan" terrorists. For a long time, Pakistan has killed many important leaders of the "East Turkistan" terrorist organization in the anti-terrorist operations in the northern Pakistan. Anti-terrorism between China and Pakistan should establish a more cooperative and unified cooperation mechanism with the economic development of China and Pakistan as an opportunity, not to rule out cross-border anti-terrorist operations.

(3) Maintaining a stable economic growth and opening up diversified financing channels

The China-Pakistan economic corridor is an important part of the "One Belt and One Road" strategy as well as a new economic growth point for Asia in the future, which will open up new room for growth for the world economy. Corridor construction deserves to receive the key attention and strong support of beneficiary countries, regions and international organizations. The construction of transport logistics infrastructure in CPEC is a new key area for infrastructure construction in Asia, which should become the focus of financial support for the Asian Development Bank, Silk Road Fund and Asian Development Bank. Energy-exporting countries in the Middle East and the countries and economic organizations that benefit from the commercial import and export of Europe should also actively participate in the corridor construction. Coupled with the innovative support of the domestic financial markets and capital markets of China and Pakistan, they will comprehensively meet the funding needs of infrastructure construction for the passageways.

(4) Strengthening publicity in Pakistan so as to minimize the interference from external forces

Increasing the transparency of the planning and construction of the China-Pakistan economic corridor, and stepping up the outreach work in Pakistan. To expand the influence of our voices in the mainstream Pakistani media and take regular press briefings and other briefings to timely and objectively introduce the latest developments in corridor construction to the local people in Pakistan. At the same time, both Chinese and Pakistani experts and scholars are invited to conduct non-governmental exchanges on hot issues in the construction of corridors in columns or interviews with mainstream media in Pakistan, in order to achieve the purpose of increasing trust and dispel doubts. In addition, in response to the questions and media discouragement of individual countries in and outside the

region, we can actively cooperate with the mainstream media in Pakistan to report on the social and economic benefits generated by the corridor construction projects and the corresponding social public welfare undertakings that we are carrying out in Pakistan.

(5) Cleverness and localization

In Pakistan, no matter dealing with the risks of political security or resolving the incoherent problems in social culture, there is no doubt that we should all rely more on the power and influence of the various stakeholders in the Pakistani side. From this perspective, we should strongly encourage the Chinese media, research institutions, and even Chinese professional risk consulting firms and security companies to exchange and cooperate with their counterparts in Pakistan. The Chinese and Pakistani governments provide corresponding docking communication platforms and early policy support funds. At the same time, we should strengthen the preliminary investigation and research work in key areas and key projects, listen to the opinions of experts and scholars both at home and abroad and scientifically plan and carry out the project of transportation and logistics construction step by step.

A great deal of practice has proved that this method can both effectively utilize the professional and network resources within the framework of the rule of law in the market, solve the huge number of routine threats faced by overseas enterprises in their own country, meet the overseas information support and risk control of enterprises. On the other hand, it can also enable its own diplomacy and relevant departments to concentrate their energies and resources in areas that better reflect the overall strategic interests of the country so as to make the protection of the overseas interests of the state more flexible and hierarchical.

(6) Strengthening the distribution of logistics nodes in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the functional orientation of the government, the construction of Information platform, and the training of talents in logistics

Firstly, it is necessary to clarify the layout of logistics nodes in various regions of CPEC. If our country wants to open this market in Pakistan and Central Asia and South Asia, it is far from enough to rely on the current logistics and transportation. It is also necessary to make a comprehensive study of the Middle Route between Hami from the east and Horgos from the north and Kashi from the south, so as to determine the layout of each regional node in the economic corridor of China and Pakistan, construct a network of regional logistics nodes, determine the levels of logistics nodes, and improve the efficiency of cargo handling through the improvement of logistics nodes. Only in this way can better and faster get through this channel of Pakistan and lay a solid foundation for the future development of our country.

Secondly, clearing the functional orientation of the government to make it play an active guiding role. As a leader, the government should identify its own position in the development of the logistics industry and rationally guide the development of the logistics industry according to the local resources. The development of logistics industry in Pakistan and even in all parts of Xinjiang is in a weak

position. It is impossible to develop the logistics industry solely by the spontaneous forces of the market. Combined with the successful experience of the development of logistics enterprises in the mainland, the government should provide assistance and services to the development of the logistics industry under the premise of a market economy. The government should have a global perspective and find opportunities to rationally plan the logistics industry in Pakistan and other parts of Xinjiang, pay attention to the coordinated development of all sectors in terms of division of labor, and avoid double construction and the emergence of unscrupulous companies. By encouraging logistics enterprises to strengthen their foreign economic and technological exchanges and cooperation, it will provide a good policy environment for the development of the logistics industry.

Thirdly, speeding up the construction of information platform. In the process of organizing the transportation of road goods, the information of goods transportation resources plays an important role, and its rational use can greatly improve the efficiency of road freight transportation. Information platform is funded by the government to build and operated by the company responsible for the actual operation, which will not only overcome the drawbacks that the government operation platform cannot create economic benefits when it is out of the market, but will also overcome the financial pressure on enterprises to build an information platform. In actual operation, by introducing the industry access mechanism and membership management, the government mainly exercises macro-control functions in the public information platform and is responsible for guiding the formulation of the service price for sharing information in the public logistics information platform, and introduces the guiding policy.

Finally, strengthening the personnel training in logistics. The development of the logistics industry along the corridor started relatively late. In particular, the Pakistani logistics industry lagged behind. The shortage of logistics professionals and the scarcity of high-end professionals with international experience have become a major bottleneck restricting the rapid development of the logistics industry. The logistics construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor needs a large number of high-end logistics personnel, therefore, at this stage, we must attach great importance to the training of logistics personnel, improve the overall level of logistics personnel in various ways and promote the healthy and sustainable development of the logistics industry in China and Pakistan. One is to strengthen the exchange of logistics industry between the two countries to enhance mutual trust and understanding. The second is to increase systematic training of logistics practitioners, establish logistics management associations, increase supervision, to avoid malicious competition. The third is to open logistics and foreign language specialized compound courses in colleges and universities of logistics nodes in cities, carry out specialized training and cultivate complex logistics talents to meet the needs of the integration development of logistics industry in China and Pakistan.

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