



For Better Understanding on
**China–Pakistan and
CPEC**
Gleanings from the
National & Chinese Press

February 01-15, 2026

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February 01, 2026

The Express Tribune

China firms eye agri investment in Pakistan

BEIJING: The first China-Pakistan Symposium on Education, Science and Industrial Cooperation was held on January 20, 2026, at COMSTECH headquarters in Islamabad, marking a renewed and more integrated approach to bilateral collaboration.

The meeting was chaired by Senior Professor Zhang Lixin of Northwest A&F University, Chairman of the Silkroad Biohealth Agricultural Industry Alliance and Chief Scientist and Director of the Shaanxi Belt and Road Joint Laboratory on Dryland Biological Resources and Green Smart Agriculture, China. It was attended by Pakistan's Ambassador to China Khalil Hashmi, who delivered the keynote address. More than 50 representatives from government agencies, universities, research institutions and leading enterprises from both countries participated.

In his opening remarks, Professor Zhang Lixin welcomed the diverse delegation, which included representatives from Shaanxi province, Chinese national media, faculty members and students from Northwest A&F University, as well as officials from Pakistan's science and technology authorities, universities and industry.

Discussions focused on agriculture, higher education and industrial cooperation. Representing Pakistan's Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, Shakil Arshad outlined ongoing collaborations in space science and traditional Chinese medicine with Chinese universities, including Nanjing University and Xian Jiaotong University.

Agricultural experts emphasised the urgency of collaborative innovation. Professor Muhammad Azam Khan, former director general of Pakistan's National Agriculture Research Center, said more than 700 crop varieties developed by the council now cover 80% of Pakistan's farmland. He called for enhanced cooperation with China in precision agriculture, smart machinery and sesame value-chain development. Professor Shah Nawaz Marri, Chairman of the Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics at Sindh Agriculture University, announced plans to establish Pakistan's first China-Pakistan Agricultural Cooperation Center and expressed hope for joint research with China in areas such as pepper variety improvement and the exchange of germplasm resources for high-value crops.

Business representatives outlined specific investment opportunities. Sun Lianfeng, General Manager of Baoji Haisheng Modern Agriculture, said the company plans to introduce high-density apple cultivation technologies to Pakistan, which could increase yields by 30% while reducing water usage by 80%. Feng Lianying, General Manager of Xianyang Kangda Modern Agriculture, confirmed that preparations were actively under way to invest in modern poultry farming facilities in Pakistan.

Educational cooperation has already yielded tangible results. More than 260 Pakistani students are currently enrolled in agriculture-related majors at Northwest A&F University, while over 510 participants have completed training programmes. Last year and this year, a total of 10 Chinese Silk Road graduate students came to Pakistan University for exchange

studies, while two Pakistani graduate students will go to China for training in smart agricultural technology.

In his closing remarks, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi described agriculture as a cornerstone of high-quality development under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, emphasising the strong complementarity between Pakistan's resources and China's technological strengths. He also said that a major international cooperation programme, approved in December 2025, would provide a new platform for future collaboration.

The symposium was followed by a 10-day series of visits by the Chinese delegation across Islamabad, Lahore and other regions. Activities included participation in a Pakistan-China agriculture investment conference, site inspections of farms, food processing and poultry facilities, and meetings with research institutions such as the Pakistan Academy of Sciences and the Ayub Agricultural Research Institute. Several cooperation agreements were signed and roadmaps were established for joint laboratories, technology transfer centres and demonstration parks.

Together, the forum and follow-up visits transformed dialogue into practical cooperation, strengthening people-to-people ties and laying a foundation for a deeper China-Pakistan partnership as the two countries approach the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2590183/china-firms-eye-agri-investment-in-pakistan>

February 02, 2026

Business Recorder

Pakistan, China agree to collaborate in intelligence sharing, cybercrime to enhance security

In a significant move to fortify the bilateral strategic partnership, Pakistan and China have agreed to bolster collaboration in intelligence sharing and cybercrime to counter terrorism, following a high-level meeting at the Ministry of Interior.

During the visit of Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong to the ministry in Islamabad on Thursday, Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi announced the formation of a dedicated Special Protection Unit designed exclusively to ensure the safety of Chinese nationals and projects.

The minister emphasised that protecting Chinese citizens is a top priority and noted that the integration of modern Chinese technology would be instrumental in future counter-terrorism operations.

The meeting involved a detailed discussion on counter-terrorism, internal security, and security cooperation.

The Chinese ambassador thanked the interior minister for the security measures taken, while Naqvi expressed gratitude for China's unwavering support for Pakistan at every turn.

Ambassador Zaidong condemned the recent orchestrated attacks in Balochistan, reaffirming China's "unwavering support" and solidarity with Pakistan in its fight against terrorism.

Minister Naqvi briefed the ambassador on the “timely and effective” response by security forces in Balochistan, asserting that the strategic partnership between the two nations remains resilient against any attempts by enemies to undermine it.

The discussions, which included Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, the interior secretary, the special secretary for interior and senior embassy officials, concluded with a mutual commitment to deepen the Pak-China strategic partnership through enhanced internal security cooperation and more robust digital surveillance.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40405775/pakistan-china-agree-to-collaborate-in-intelligence-sharing-cybercrime-to-enhance-security>

The Express Tribune

Is this China's moment?

It is hard to miss the optics. Western leaders, once at the forefront of efforts to "contain" China, are now lining up to engage Beijing, openly and pragmatically. US President Donald Trump's disruptive approach has shaken the foundations of the so-called rules-based international order and China appears to be quietly stepping into the diplomatic vacuum.

Following a recent visit by the Canadian prime minister, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer undertook a trip to China, the first by a UK premier in eight years. Not long ago, Starmer himself had described China as a "national security threat," echoing a bipartisan consensus in the West that viewed Beijing primarily through the prism of rivalry and risk. Yet in Beijing, the tone was markedly different. London and Beijing signed a series of agreements aimed at resetting ties, expanding economic cooperation and reopening political channels that had largely frozen.

The reaction from Washington was swift and sharp. President Trump publicly warned that the UK doing business with China was "very dangerous," reinforcing that engagement with Beijing amounts to strategic folly. UK, however, brushed aside the criticism, stressing that US had been kept informed of the visit and that Britain would pursue its national interests independently. That response speaks volumes about the shifting mood among America's closest allies.

The bigger question is why US allies, who once readily followed Washington's lead in branding China an adversary, are now looking to Beijing with renewed interest. The answer lies less in China's sudden transformation and more in the West's growing uncertainty about American leadership.

Trump's return to the White House has accelerated trends already underway. His transactional worldview, disdain for multilateral institutions and willingness to pressure allies as much as adversaries have left Europe, Canada and parts of Asia uneasy. Trade wars, abrupt policy reversals and a selective approach to international law have collectively undermined confidence in the predictability of the United States. For allies accustomed to a relatively stable American anchor, the message has been unsettling: US commitments are conditional, and loyalty does not guarantee protection from tariffs or political pressure.

Against this backdrop, China is presenting itself as a power that can be relied upon. Beijing may not share Western values, but it offers continuity, long-term planning and respect for state-to-state engagement. Chinese leaders emphasise non-interference, economic partnership and a commitment to global trade when Washington appears confrontational. For countries grappling with slow growth, energy transitions and fragile supply chains, that message has undeniable appeal.

This does not mean Western capitals have suddenly become naïve about China. Concerns over human rights, technology security and strategic dependence remain very much alive. But there is a growing recognition that isolating the world's second-largest economy is neither realistic nor desirable. Engagement, many now argue, is a way to manage competition rather than deny reality.

Moreover, China has learned to exploit the chaos without overplaying its hand. Unlike the United States, Beijing is not demanding ideological alignment for cooperation. It is offering markets, investment and diplomatic attention often without public ultimatums. In an era of uncertainty, that restraint can look like stability.

So, is this China's moment? In a narrow sense, yes. The current global disorder has created space for Beijing to expand its influence and recast itself as a pillar of order. Western leaders visiting China are hedging against an unreliable world.

But China's rise as a trusted global power will ultimately depend on the reassurance that its strength will not translate into coercion. For now, however, as allies recalibrate and the old certainties fray, Beijing is benefiting from a simple contrast: where Washington looks unpredictable, China looks steady. And in today's fractured world, that alone can be a powerful advantage.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2590281/is-this-chinas-moment>

February 04, 2026

Pakistan Observer

Securing CPEC Through Inclusion and Stability

Zahid Maqsood Sheikh

Pakistan stands at a defining moment where economic ambition and internal stability are tightly bound together. Nowhere is this more evident than in Balochistan, where the future of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will be decided not only by roads and ports but by public trust and inclusion.

The recent resurgence of insurgent violence in early 2026, including coordinated attacks and the abduction of a senior district official attributed to the Baloch Liberation Army, should not be viewed as isolated security incidents. These actions represent a direct challenge to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor at a time when Pakistan is attempting to move the project into its next and most demanding phase. This phase focuses on industrialisation, logistics and value added economic activity rather than physical construction alone.

The initial stage of CPEC was intentionally focused on visible infrastructure such as highways, power projects and port development. These projects were easier to execute and easier to defend politically. The next stage is more complex. Industrial zones and logistics networks depend on stable administration, safe movement of people and goods and confidence that projects can operate without constant disruption. Factories do not function in uncertainty. Investment decisions are delayed or abandoned when risk becomes unpredictable.

This is why disruptions to key routes feeding Gwadar and other corridor assets carry consequences beyond their immediate impact. A port or highway does not become strategic merely because it exists. It becomes strategic when it functions reliably every day. When connectivity is reduced to heavily guarded movement rather than predictable commercial flow, the economic promise of the corridor weakens.

Pakistan is justified in treating corridor security as a matter of national priority. A military administered security framework for strategic routes, protected convoys and dedicated oversight for key assets is necessary in the short term. However, security alone cannot deliver long- term stability. It can contain threats but it cannot generate legitimacy. In Balochistan, legitimacy is the decisive factor that will determine whether CPEC evolves into a sustainable economic platform or remains a permanently securitized project.

The success of CPEC in Balochistan is inseparable from the relationship between the state and the people of the province. If industrialisation is perceived as extractive, benefiting distant centres while local communities remain marginalized, the project will face continuous resistance. This resistance increases security costs and fuels narratives used by anti-state elements to justify violence. If, however, local communities see clear benefits and meaningful participation, the environment changes. Public support becomes a stabilizing force.

This is where policy choices matter more than rhetoric. The most effective way to weaken militant recruitment is not through slogans but through visible economic inclusion. Groups that carry out such attacks rely on frustration and exclusion. Their message is that development occurs without local benefit. That message loses credibility when people experience direct improvement in their daily lives.

Revenue sharing, therefore, becomes a strategic tool rather than a fiscal debate. A fixed and legally guaranteed share of mining and port related revenues should flow directly to the districts of origin. This allocation must be automatic, transparent and publicly auditable. When communities can see new schools, functioning health units, clean water systems and vocational training centres funded by corridor activity, the appeal of violence diminishes. Development becomes tangible rather than abstract.

Employment is equally important. Industrial growth that does not integrate local labour risks deepening alienation. CPEC related industries must institutionalize local hiring, technical apprenticeships and skills training aligned with corridor needs. When young people see realistic career paths linked to industrialisation, they are less vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups.

At the same time, Pakistan should frame CPEC as an expanding economic platform rather than an exclusive partnership. The objective is not to replace Chinese investment but to complement it by including additional investors alongside Chinese partners. A broader investor base strengthens resilience, improves standards and reinforces confidence in the corridor. This approach benefits all stakeholders including China.

However, attracting additional investors requires more than security assurances. It requires governance credibility. Investors evaluate whether administrative systems function beyond the capital, whether officials can operate safely in the field and whether local grievances are addressed through policy rather than force. These considerations matter equally to Chinese partners and to any new participants.

Representation is, therefore, a critical missing element that deserves greater emphasis. Balochistan cannot be expected to support rapid industrialisation if its people feel excluded from decision making. Credible representatives from the province, including elected leaders, local professionals, youth and business voices, must be meaningfully included at the highest forums shaping CPEC related policies. Participation fosters ownership. Ownership reduces resistance.

This inclusion is not symbolic. It is practical risk management. When concerns about land use, employment, displacement and resource sharing are addressed early, the space for misinformation and militant exploitation shrinks. When those concerns are ignored, the resulting vacuum is quickly filled by hostile narratives.

The state must also clearly distinguish between peaceful dissent and violent separatism. Demands for fairness and inclusion are part of democratic governance and should not be conflated with militancy. Violent groups thrive when peaceful channels appear closed. Expanding legitimate channels of participation isolates violent actors and reduces their influence.

CPEC-II will not succeed through security measures alone. Nor will it fail because of one wave of attacks. Its success will depend on whether Pakistan can balance enforcement with legitimacy, protection with participation and investment with inclusion.

If the people of Balochistan come to see industrialisation as a pathway to dignity and opportunity rather than a threat to their identity and resources, the corridor will not require constant defence. It will be defended by public support. That outcome represents the strongest and most sustainable security strategy Pakistan can pursue for its most ambitious economic vision.

The author is a Pakistan-based writer with an interest in CPEC, governance reform and security linked development.

<https://pakobserver.net/securing-cpec-through-inclusion-and-stability/>

The Express Tribune

Chinese agribusiness delegation signs MoUs

FAISALABAD: A delegation of Chinese agricultural experts and industry leaders has concluded a visit to the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), with the signing of several memorandums of understanding (MOUs), paving the way for enhanced technological collaboration and market integration between the two countries.

The visit, hosted by the Confucius Institute at UAF (CI-UAF), brought together a broad cross-section of China's agricultural innovation sector. The delegation comprised 12 senior executives from leading Chinese agribusinesses, along with a senior professor from Northwest A&F University (NWAUFU) and representatives of the Silk-Road Biohealth Agricultural Industry Alliance.

The visiting entities showcased expertise spanning the full agricultural value chain, including the sesame and chilli industries, smart hen breeding technology, fruit tree cultivation and processing, advanced agricultural machinery, rapeseed improvement and vegetable seed breeding.

The delegation held detailed discussions with Prof Dr Zulfiqar Ali, Vice Chancellor of UAF, and Dr Saddam Hussain, Local Dean of CI-UAF. Talks focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation and on accelerating the translation of academic research into practical, market-driven solutions tailored to Pakistan's agricultural development needs.

Facilitated by CI-UAF, the core of the visit involved targeted business-to-business matchmaking sessions. Chinese delegates held face-to-face meetings with more than ten major Pakistani companies operating in poultry, fruit processing, fertiliser and precision agriculture.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2590660/chinese-agribusiness-delegation-signs-mous>

Pakistan medical exports to China cross \$11.4m

data shows medical, veterinary instruments, appliances remain largest export category

BEIJING: Pakistan's exports of medical, surgical and precision instruments to China exceeded \$11.41 million in 2025, reflecting steady expansion in higher-value manufacturing segments, according to data released by the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC).

GACC data showed medical and veterinary instruments and appliances remained the largest export category. Shipments totalled 9.02 million units valued at \$6.65 million in 2025, compared with \$7.97 million in 2024.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2590665/pakistan-medical-exports-to-china-cross-114m>

The Nation

China strongly condemns terrorist attacks in Balochistan

BEIJING - China on Tuesday strongly condemned the terrorist attacks carried out in Balochistan last Saturday and reiterated its unwavering support for Pakistan in the fight against terrorism.

Speaking at a regular press briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian expressed deep condolences for the victims and extended sincere sympathies to the injured and the bereaved families.

He emphasised that China firmly opposes all forms of terrorism and reaffirmed that it will continue to resolutely support Pakistan in counterterrorism efforts, maintaining social harmony and stability, and ensuring the safety of its people.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/04-Feb-2026/china-strongly-condemns-terrorist-attacks-balochistan>

February 07, 2026

Dawn News

Two Pakistani Candidates Shortlisted to train for China space station mission

Two candidates have been shortlisted for Pakistan's Human Spaceflight Programme by the Astronauts Centre of China (ACC), the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Saturday.

In February 2025, Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) and China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) had signed a cooperation agreement. Under the pact, two Pakistanis would train in China, with one joining a mission on the Tiangong space station operated by Beijing.

In a press release, the ISPR said Suparco had "achieved yet another significant milestone in Pakistan's Human Spaceflight Programme with the successful completion of the secondary phase of astronaut candidates' selection".

"Following an initial screening process in Pakistan, the candidates were shortlisted after undergoing comprehensive medical, psychological, and aptitude assessments conducted at the Astronauts Centre of China (ACC), in accordance with international human spaceflight standards," the statement read.

As per the bilateral agreement, the two shortlisted candidates will undertake "advanced astronaut training" for six months at ACC. Upon completion of the training, one candidate will be selected for a spaceflight mission aboard the Tiangong space station in October.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1971638/two-pakistani-candidates-shortlisted-to-train-for-china-space-station-mission>

February 08, 2026

The Express Tribune

Pak exhibitors shine at Sichuan festival

CHENGDU: The 29th China (Sichuan) New Year Shopping Festival, one of the nation's premier annual trade and cultural events, is currently in full swing in Chengdu from January 30 to February 11, with a parallel session taking place in Chongqing.

This year's festival features an expansive 50,000-square-metre main exhibition area in Chengdu, attracting over a thousand enterprises from 36 countries and regions, as well as nearly 30 Chinese provinces, showcasing more than 100,000 varieties of high-quality New Year goods. Among the diverse international participants, Pakistan is represented by eight companies operating across 12 exhibition booths. They are showcasing a wide range of authentic Pakistani products including furs and leather goods, handicrafts and textiles to offer Chinese consumers a taste of Pakistani craftsmanship and cultural heritage. Consul General of Pakistan in Chengdu Tanvir A Bhatti attended the tour ceremony of the imported goods pavilion on February 4. During his visit, he highlighted the significance of Pakistan's participation. "The Pakistani exhibitors at the spring festival fair represent the quality, diversity and cultural richness of Pakistan's products," he stated. "Their participation is a strong reflection of our commitment to enhancing trade and people-to-people ties with China, especially in Sichuan province." The diplomat highlighted the value of the platform, noting that it allows Pakistani businesses to connect directly with Chinese consumers and buyers.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2591353/pak-exhibitors-shine-at-sichuan-festival>

China, Pakistan to develop livestock sector

ISLAMABAD: Substantive cooperation outcomes have been achieved recently between Jinan Animal Husbandry Industry Craftsman College and Pakistani counterparts after a visit to Pakistan from January 19 to 24, held in conjunction with the 2026 China-Pakistan Agriculture Investment Conference.

The collaboration injects new impetus into bilateral livestock industry development, aligning with the advancement of CPEC 2.0. During the visit, two key cooperation documents were signed to solidify consensus, the college revealed. It inked a Framework Agreement on Industrial and Technological Cooperation and Talent Training with Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce & Industry (PCJCCI) to jointly establish the China-Pakistan Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Industry Technology Cooperation Centre, which will undertake technological R&D, standard-setting and customised talent training.

A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed with GO Dairy Private Limited, focusing on the transfer of sheep in vitro fertilisation and dairy cow breeding technologies, alongside tailored solutions and on-site expert guidance to address the enterprise's breeding bottlenecks.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2592108/china-pakistan-to-develop-livestock-sector>

February 10, 2026

Daily Times

China-Pakistan boost citrus industry for changing climate

Pakistan's citrus growers, scientists and students have gathered for a two-day international workshop aimed at strengthening one of the country's most important agricultural sectors.

The event, titled "Prospects of Climate Smart Citrus Production: Adaptive Strategies for a Changing World," was held at the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF), from February 4 to 5.1, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Monday.

The workshop was jointly organized by UAF's Institute of Horticultural Sciences and the Huazhong Agricultural University (HZAU)'s China-Pakistan Horticulture Research and Demonstration Center in Wuhan.

The second annual event builds on last year's successful workshop and focuses on practical knowledge sharing to help Pakistan's citrus industry grow and compete globally.

Citrus is Pakistan's leading fruit crop, making the country the world's 15th largest producer and 6th largest exporter. However, with less than 1.3% of the global export market, there is significant room for growth.

A major exhibition at the workshop showcased 25 different varieties of citrus, including mandarins, sweet oranges and grapefruits, highlighting the potential for diversity and quality improvement.

A key focus of the workshop was the transfer of practical agricultural knowledge. Professor Liu Yongzhong from HZAU led hands-on training for local growers on advanced pruning techniques aimed at maintaining tree health and boosting annual yields.

He also highlighted the successful introduction of nine high-quality Chinese citrus cultivars into Pakistan last year, which have been propagated and will be transplanted during the upcoming monsoon season.

Professor Dr. Zulfiqar Ali, Vice Chancellor of UAF, expressed appreciation for the ongoing collaboration, stating that such exchanges are essential for modernizing Pakistan's agriculture and enhancing the competitiveness of its citrus sector.

The event builds on multiple existing agreements between the two universities, including the establishment of the China-Pakistan Horticultural Demonstration Center and a joint laboratory focused on germplasm innovation in Wuhan.

Through continued partnerships in research, training and technology transfer, China and Pakistan are working together to strengthen food security, improve farmer livelihoods and foster sustainable agricultural development in the region.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1448822/china-pakistan-boost-citrus-industry-for-changing-climate/>

February 11, 2026

Pakistan Observer

Balochistan's CPEC Pivot: Balancing Promise, Challenges and Progress

Engr Qaiser Nawab

As the sun sets over the rugged cliffs of Koh-e-Batil, casting long shadows across the deep-water berths of Gwadar Port, the silhouette of Balochistan's future appears both imposing and intricate.

Data released by the Planning Commission and the Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) indicates that the port's cargo handling capacity has seen a year-on-year increase of 22 percent, bolstered by the full operationalization of the Eastbay Expressway and the completion of the New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA), which commenced full-scale international flight operations last quarter. Yet, the discourse in the tea stalls of Quetta and the boardroom meetings in Islamabad remains centered on a singular question: How can this "Game Changer" be felt in the kitchens of the common Baloch?

The Economic Horizon: Industrialization and Connectivity

The primary allure of CPEC for Balochistan has always been its ability to bridge the infrastructure deficit that has historically isolated the province from the national and regional mainstream. The completion of the M-8 Motorway segments and the upgrading of the N-25 highway have effectively reduced travel time between the coastal belt and the northern hubs by nearly 40 percent. This connectivity is not merely a matter of convenience; it is the prerequisite for the industrial "take-off" that the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) promise.

The Hub Special Economic Zone and the initial phases of the Gwadar Free Zone have now attracted a committed investment of approximately \$2.4 billion as of January 2026. These investments, primarily in the sectors of metal processing, food packaging and logistics, represent a shift from purely infrastructure-led growth to production-led growth. According to recent provincial treasury reports, the revenue generated from transit fees and local taxes in CPEC-related nodes has contributed a 12 percent boost to the provincial exchequer in the current fiscal year.

Beyond the macro-level figures, the energy sector remains a cornerstone of this transformation. The 1,320MW coal-fired power plant at Hub and the solar initiatives in the provincial capital are now feeding over 1,800MW into the national grid, significantly reducing the crippling load-shedding that once stymied local industry. For the first time in decades, the coastal towns of Jiwani and Ormara are witnessing the birth of small-scale cold storage facilities, powered by this stabilized grid, allowing local fishermen to preserve their catch and access international markets directly, bypassing the exploitative middlemen of the past.

The Human Capital Deficit and Social Integration

While the hardware of CPEC—the roads, ports and power plants—is largely in place, the "software"—the human element—remains the subject of intense debate. The challenge of

integrating the local workforce into a high-tech industrial framework is perhaps the most pressing hurdle facing the provincial administration in 2026.

Statistics from the Balochistan Bureau of Statistics (BBS) suggest that while over 45,000 jobs have been created directly through CPEC projects in the province over the last decade, a significant portion of the high-skill positions are still occupied by technical experts from other provinces or overseas. To address this, the Pak-China Vocational and Technical Institute in Gwadar has ramped up its enrollment, graduating its largest cohort of 1,200 students this January.

The “Early Harvest” projects focused heavily on physical capital; the current phase must pivot toward social capital. There is a growing consensus among policymakers that for CPEC to be sustainable, it must foster a sense of ownership. This requires more than just employment; it requires the development of local entrepreneurship. The recent launch of the ‘Balochistan SME Support Program,’ backed by Chinese technical expertise, aims to provide low-interest credit to local start-ups that provide ancillary services to the Gwadar Port. If successful, this could transform the local economy from a passive recipient of transit rent into an active participant in the global supply chain.

Furthermore, the “Green CPEC” initiative has gained momentum. As of late January 2026, the ‘Clean Green Gwadar’ project has successfully desalinated over 5 million gallons of water per day, addressing one of the most persistent grievances of the local population. By solving the water crisis, the project addresses a fundamental human right, thereby reducing the friction between the development apparatus and the local community.

The Security Paradigm

No discussion on Balochistan’s potential is complete without acknowledging the security architecture that guards these investments. The “Securing the Corridor” strategy has seen a sophisticated evolution. In 2026, the reliance is shifting from a purely kinetic military presence to a “Smart Security” model, utilizing drone surveillance, AI-integrated checkpoints and community-led policing.

The challenges, however, are not merely internal. Balochistan’s long borders with Iran and Afghanistan make it a theatre for regional geopolitical maneuvering. The stability of the corridor is inextricably linked to the stability of the neighborhood. The recent tripartite dialogues between Islamabad, Beijing and Kabul regarding the extension of CPEC into Afghanistan offer a glimmer of hope for a regional “pax-economica.” If Balochistan becomes the gateway for Central Asian minerals and Afghan transit trade, the volume of traffic could triple, making the current infrastructure not just useful but indispensable.

As of the January 28 update, 65 percent of the labour force currently employed in the Gwadar port expansion belongs to the Makran Division—a statistic aimed at dispelling the notion of local exclusion.

With a projected provincial GDP growth of 5.8 percent for the upcoming fiscal year—outpacing the national average—the economic indicators are pointing in the right direction.

However, the “Balochistan Potential” will only be fully realized when the macro-economic gains are translated into micro-level prosperity. This requires a steadfast commitment to meritocracy in job placements, environmental stewardship in industrial zones and a political will that prioritizes the welfare of the province’s residents.

<https://pakobserver.net/balochistans-cpec-pivot-balancing-promise-challenges-and-progress/>

CPEC-BRI and Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan: A Quadrangular Partnership

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

The recent visits of Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to Pakistan have significantly enhanced the scope, strategic importance and utility of linking CPEC and BRI in the days to come.

Successfully combining these initiatives is expected to substantially boost trans-regional connectivity, socio-economic integration, infrastructure development and banking and finance cooperation, while placing the countries, their economies, communities and enterprises on the path of sustainable economic growth. Strong political will, peaceful conflict resolution, private sector participation and appropriate economic and strategic measures will be essential to achieve the ambitious goal of connecting Central Asia with South Asia.

The robust economies of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are pivotal to the prospective integration of CPEC and BRI. The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB), in its “Macroeconomic Outlook for 2026-2028,” reviewed recent developments and projected positive trends for both nations. Uzbekistan’s economy is expected to expand by 6.8 percent in 2026, supported by strong investment activity and favourable gold prices. Inflation is projected to decline to 6.7 percent, aided by tight monetary policy and a stable exchange rate, while the average soum exchange rate is forecasted at UZS 12,800 per US dollar, supported by high remittances and rising metal exports.

According to the Central Bank of Uzbekistan, economic activity in 2025 exceeded expectations, driven by resilient aggregate demand. High investment activity, fiscal spending and increasing remittances are anticipated to continue supporting income growth and stimulating consumer demand. President Mirziyoyev noted that GDP reached a record high as exports rose 23 percent and foreign investment reached €37 billion, reflecting the tangible impact of reforms. International confidence has strengthened alongside domestic growth, with rating agencies upgrading Uzbekistan’s sovereign credit rating from BB- to BB, expected to reduce external borrowing costs by up to €250 million annually. The World Bank’s Technology Readiness Index placed Uzbekistan among the global top 10, demonstrating rapid technological advancement.

Uzbekistan’s economic growth has translated into measurable improvements in living standards. Electricity production rose to 85 billion kilowatt-hours, supporting over 38 million people and a growing industrial base. Irrigation infrastructure now covers 470,000 households, enabling around three million people to generate income from household plots multiple times a year. Housing construction continues at scale, with 135,000 new apartments

delivered in 2025 and more than 210 million square meters of residential and non-residential space commissioned over the past nine years. A trilateral border agreement with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan resolved a long-standing regional issue, while strengthened EU ties through an enhanced partnership agreement positioned Uzbekistan as a platform for regional dialogue.

Uzbekistan has outlined six priority directions for 2026, declared the Year of Mahalla Development and Social Prosperity, emphasizing local governance and community-level growth. More than €715 million will be allocated to strengthen entrepreneurial infrastructure in mahallas, alongside €10 billion in financing for small and medium-sized businesses, including targeted support for women and young entrepreneurs. Funding will be tied to job-creating local projects, with a focus on transparency and civic participation. Other priorities include job creation and labour market reform, expanded social protection, green development and climate resilience and reforms in public administration and the justice system.

Kazakhstan's economy is projected to grow by 5.5 percent in 2026, driven by the National Infrastructure Plan and the state program "Order for Investment," which will mitigate the effects of lower oil prices. Growth in non-commodity exports is expected to stabilize the economy further. Inflation is forecasted at 9.7 percent by the end of 2026, following a peak due to a VAT increase and the average tenge exchange rate is projected at KZT 535 per US dollar, supported by high base interest rates and rising export revenues. Kazakhstan's economy grew 6.5 percent year-on-year in 2025, reflecting a gradual shift from raw material exports to finished goods, signaling progress toward diversification. Industry, transport, construction and trade were key GDP drivers, with industrial production rising 7.4 percent and manufacturing growing 6.4 percent. Positive sectoral dynamics included food production (+8.1 percent), oil refining (+5.9 percent), chemicals (+9.8 percent), metallurgy (+1.2 percent) and machine building (+12.9 percent).

The strong, stable and diversified economies of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan indicate high potential for the integration of CPEC and BRI. Central Asia's long-standing landlocked status is set to change through strategic connectivity facilitated by Pakistan's ports. Both presidents have emphasized that sustainable prosperity in the region depends on reliable, cost-effective access to warm-water ports, elevating Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan-Pakistan relations to a strategic partnership. Pakistan is seen not merely as a bilateral partner but as a gateway to global markets via the Arabian Sea. Karachi and Gwadar are among the closest seaports to much of Central Asia, significantly reducing transportation costs, enhancing export competitiveness and attracting foreign investment in manufacturing, mining, agriculture and value-added industries.

Connectivity is further enhanced through China-Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan and China-Kazakhstan railway systems via the Dostyk-Alashankou corridor. The proposed Karachi-Haripur-KKH-China-Kazakhstan corridor exemplifies this shift, built on economic rationale, logistics efficiency and mutual trust. The writer recommends the establishment of a trilateral maritime transport company comprising Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan to strengthen trans-regional trade, with funding sought from private sector participation. Policymakers

should also consider the Gwadar-Kashgar-Khorgor Middle Corridor as an alternative route bypassing Afghanistan. Additionally, forming a trilateral commercial cargo company could further enhance trilateral trade and connectivity in the region.

In conclusion, the recent presidential visits have created a historic opportunity to integrate CPEC and BRI, unlocking new avenues for economic development, regional stability and sustainable prosperity in Central and South Asia. Through strategic foresight, enhanced connectivity and collaboration, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan can establish a quadrangular partnership that strengthens trade, infrastructure and industrial growth while ensuring long-term regional integration and access to global markets.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-bri-and-uzbekistan-kazakhstan-a-quadrangular-partnership/>

February 12, 2026

Daily Times

Pakistan's EO-2 satellite successfully launched from China

Pakistan successfully launched its second indigenous Earth Observation Satellite, EO-2, from China's Yangjiang Seashore Launch Centre on Thursday. The milestone strengthens the country's earth observation and high-resolution imaging capabilities, supporting national development and strategic planning. The launch marks another step forward in Pakistan's growing space program.

Developed by the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), EO-2 is designed to provide critical data for natural resource management, urban expansion, and environmental monitoring. Officials said the satellite will also support governance, climate analysis, disaster management, and strategic decision-making with accurate, timely imagery.

SUPARCO highlighted that EO-2 expands Pakistan's satellite fleet, improving continuity, coverage, and precision of earth observation data. The successful launch demonstrates the country's increasing technical expertise and self-reliance in advanced satellite technology. Officials called it a key milestone in Pakistan's space journey.

The launch follows Pakistan's recent steps in human spaceflight. On February 7, two candidates were shortlisted by China's Astronauts Centre (ACC) for training under the Pakistan-China cooperation program. One candidate will eventually travel to China's Tiangong space station, advancing Pakistan's human space ambitions.

Pakistan's space program began last year with the launch of EO-1 from China's Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre. The cooperation agreement signed in February 2025 with the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) continues to strengthen technical collaboration and future astronaut training initiatives.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1450202/pakistans-eo-2-satellite-successfully-launched-from-china/>

Chinese Newspapers

February 03, 2026

Global Times

China will, as always, resolutely support Pakistan in combating terrorism: FM on severe terrorist attacks in Pakistan's Balochistan province

Global Times

When asked to comment on recent statements by the Pakistani military saying that the terrorist organization Balochistan Liberation Army had launched coordinated attacks in Quetta, Gwadar Port and other locations in Balochistan Province, killing 15 security personnel and more than 18 civilians as well as claims by the group that the attacks had resulted in the deaths of 84 Pakistani security personnel, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said on Tuesday that China strongly condemns the attacks, expresses deep condolences to the victims, and extends sincere sympathies to the injured and the bereaved families.

Lin stressed that China firmly opposes terrorism in all its forms and will, as always, resolutely support Pakistan in combating terrorism, safeguarding social unity and stability, and protecting the safety of its people.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202602/1355638.shtml>

Multiple countries reportedly interested in JF-17; Pakistan's questioned production capacity a manageable 'sweet problem' with China's support: Chinese expert

Liang Rui and Liu Xuanzun

Amid Pakistan's remarks that multiple countries have expressed interest in acquiring the JF-17 fighter jets, a Bloomberg report on Tuesday questioned whether Pakistan's production capacity of the China-Pakistan jointly developed aircraft can meet a potential sudden surge in demand. A Chinese aviation expert said that this could be a "sweet problem" for Pakistan, as backed by strong order demand, the country's aviation industry is expected to develop rapidly, and potential capacity constraints are ultimately not a true concern given China's support for Pakistan in manufacturing this type of fighter jet.

Bloomberg reported on Tuesday that in the past month, Iraq, Bangladesh and Indonesia have expressed interest in acquiring the JF-17 Thunder, according to Pakistan's Armed Forces. Saudi Arabia and Libya are also exploring the aircraft, Reuters reported separately, after Pakistan hailed the performance of its Chinese-made jets during its conflict with India in May 2025, per Bloomberg report.

The Bloomberg report claimed that Pakistan makes fewer than 20 JF-17s per year, and almost all go to its own air force. The report claimed that it's not clear whether Islamabad can expand capacity to meet the sudden demand.

"So far it was like whatever Pakistan can make, the capacity was just enough for Pakistan. We had a long view for exports, but you don't build capacity for exports before there are orders," Pakistan's former Air Vice Marshal Faaiz Amir, was quoted by the Bloomberg as saying. While it could be true that Pakistan's current production capacity could face limits, but this could be described as a "sweet problem," Wang Ya'nan, chief editor of Beijing-based Aerospace Knowledge magazine, told the Global Times on Tuesday. First of all, producing additional JF-17s has a positive effect on Pakistan's aviation industry, Wang said. In the past, limited domestic demand from the Pakistan Air Force meant slower production, fewer assembly lines, and lower demand for skilled workers. As export demand rises, however, Pakistan will need to scale up investment, expand production capacity, and cultivate a larger pool of technical talent - further driving industrial growth. The international interest in the JF-17 could represent a key step forward for Pakistan, which has never been considered a major player in the defense industry, Bloomberg claimed. "If Pakistan does face capacity shortages, a likely solution could be Chinese assistance in expanding production. This could include increasing production speed or adding new assembly lines — measures that pose no major technical difficulties," Wang said. Under the current arrangement, 58 percent of the production, as well as the final assembly, is carried out in Pakistan, which makes the airframe, and 42 percent in China, which supplies the avionics, the Bloomberg report claimed. A second possibility would be a deeper division of labor between the two sides, Wang said. China could take on a more significant role in manufacturing major components, while Pakistan focuses on final assembly and delivery. At the Singapore Airshow that kicked off on Tuesday, China's state-owned Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC) showcased a wide range of products including fighter jets, training aircraft, transport aircraft, helicopters and drones, including the JF-17, according to a Sina Weibo post by AVIC.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202602/1354735.shtml>

Xinhua News

China strongly condemns attacks in Pakistan, reaffirms support for counter-terrorism efforts

BEIJING, Feb. 3 (Xinhua) -- China strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in southwestern Pakistan and reiterated its firm support for Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts, a foreign ministry spokesperson said on Tuesday. According to reports, the Balochistan Liberation Army launched attacks in multiple areas of Balochistan Province, resulting in casualties among both security personnel and civilians. When asked for comments at a daily press briefing, spokesperson Lin Jian said that China strongly condemns the attacks. He expressed deep condolences to the victims, and extended sincere sympathies to the injured and the families of the victims. "China firmly opposes terrorism in all its forms, and will, as always, firmly support Pakistan in combating terrorism, maintaining social unity and stability, and protecting the safety of its people," he said.

<https://english.news.cn/20260203/1bc620dd2fce44a1b90427152657c1d9/c.html?>

February 08, 2026

Global Times

China strongly condemns the deadly explosion in Islamabad, opposes any form of terrorism: FM

Global Times

When asked to comment on the serious explosion that took place in Pakistan's capital Islamabad on the afternoon of February 6 local time and inflicted heavy casualties, a spokesperson from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Sunday that China is deeply shocked by the deadly explosion in Pakistan's capital Islamabad and the heavy casualties it has inflicted. China mourns for the lives lost, and our hearts go out to the injured and those who lost their loved ones.

China strongly condemns the attack, opposes any form of terrorism and firmly supports the Pakistani government in safeguarding national security and stability and protecting the safety of the people.

At least 31 people were killed and around 170 others were injured after an explosion ripped through a mosque during Friday prayers in Pakistan's federal capital city of Islamabad, Xinhua quoted local police and government officials said.

Confirming the casualties, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon said that the explosion happened in the Shi'ite mosque located in the Shehzad Town area of Islamabad, prompting authorities to impose a state of emergency in all the major hospitals nearby.

He said that the injured are being treated in various hospitals in Islamabad and adjoining Rawalpindi city, adding that the death toll might further rise as several people among the injured are in critical condition, per Xinhua.

Following the blast, security forces, police and rescue teams have cordoned off the site and launched a search operation, with the law enforcers investigating the nature of the explosion.

The US is reportedly compiling a large arms sale of Patriot missiles and other weapons for the island of Taiwan, various opposition parties on the island publicly criticized the regional leader, questioning how much more financial burden he intends to impose on the residents of Taiwan.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202602/1354996.shtml>

February 13, 2026

Global Times

At the dawn of Spring Festival, Pakistan renews its resolve to working even more closely with Chinese friends: Pakistani envoy

Dong Feng

On the joyous occasion of the Spring Festival, I extend my warmest greetings to the people of China and to the readers and viewers of Global Times.

The Spring Festival is a time of renewal, reunion and hope. In this Year of the Horse, which symbolizes vitality, perseverance, and forward momentum, we are reminded of the strength that comes from resilience and purposeful progress.

This year holds special significance for Pakistan and China as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic relations. Our two sides have made plans to mark this important milestone befittingly. We began the celebration right in the first week of January this year. This occasion reflects the enduring nature of our all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, built on mutual trust, shared aspirations, and unwavering friendship.

Over the past seven and a half decades, Pakistan-China relations have stood as a role model of stability in an evolving and often turbulent international landscape. Our cooperation has continued to deepen across diplomacy, development, connectivity, and people-to-people exchanges, guided by a shared vision of peace, security and development.

At a time when the global environment is marked by uncertainty, economic pressures, and complex geopolitical challenges, Pakistan and China remain committed to promoting the time-tested values of multilateralism, dialogue, mutual respect and win-win cooperation.

We believe that collaboration, rather than confrontation, is a fundamental pre-requisite to address global challenges and harness opportunities for everyone.

At the dawn of the Chinese New Year, Pakistan renews its resolve to working even more closely with Chinese friends to further foster mutual trust; deepen strategic communication, advance practical cooperation, accelerate economic growth and contribute positively to the shaping of a fairer and equitable UN-centered global order that delivers peace, development and security to all.

I wish the people of China lots of happiness, good health, and much success in the Year of the Horse. May this Spring Festival bring renewed confidence, harmony, and shared progress to us all.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202602/1355300.shtml>

February 14, 2026

Xinhua News

Pakistani president extends Spring Festival greetings to Chinese people

ISLAMABAD, Feb. 14 (Xinhua) -- Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari has extended Spring Festival greetings and best wishes to the Chinese people on behalf of the Pakistani people before the upcoming Chinese New Year.

"Happy New Year!" he said in Chinese in a recent interview with the Chinese media at the President's Secretariat in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan.

He hoped that the two countries would further strengthen cooperation in various fields and pass on the Pakistan-China friendship from generation to generation.

Zardari pointed out that there is great potential for people-to-people and cultural exchanges between Pakistan and China. He hoped that more Pakistani films could be released in China in the future and looked forward to more excellent works jointly produced by Pakistani and Chinese artists for audiences of both countries.

Zardari also emphasized that young people represent the future of Pakistan-China bilateral relations and was delighted to see more student exchange programs between the two countries.

<https://english.news.cn/asiapacific/20260214/3ce7a83c8f644ce8a106785f228375eb/c.html>