**Of Sino-Pak Business and Brotherhood**

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A well-worded joint statement is out after Prime Minister Imran Khan’s meeting with President Xi Jinping, and the Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang. Once again, many hopes for the people of Pakistan, and many more promises by the visiting premier and eight of his top ministers. Brush aside the hopes of immediate cash aid or loan. Sorry, China is not known for cash grants but partnership-based development projects for a win-win result. Nevertheless, Pakistan’s gesture of solidarity to Beijing Winter Olympics 2022 is meaningful at the moment when boycotting countries were led by the US and the UK leaderships. At least we have started learning to live with the neighbours.

The spokesmen of the Pakistan government have termed the visit ‘very successful’. Yes, it may be termed so if a photo of the meeting with President Xi was the objective. Pakistan’s promises to China in the meetings have surfaced. Anything for Pakistan has yet to appear. Wait and see for what comes out of the begging bowl. Unfortunately, we could not learn the difference between business and brotherhood or a link between the two. There is no brotherhood without any meaningfully significant business. States are rung on independent strategies – the outcome of a strong economy that depends on the business models we opt. Unfortunately, Pakistan has been a victim of its own leadership whether political or in uniform. CPEC has given Pakistan new hopes for stronger ties based on the business models. But we have yet to see any business models coming out of the public genius. We shall think beyond leasing out land to Chinese companies or facilitating the construction of road networks and coal-fired power plants. Don’t we have any able leadership to convert the CPEC opportunities into business models?

China-Pakistan joint statement to keep up the CPEC and other economic cooperation is crucially important at a time when a new cold war is picking up in the region. Despite conspiracies hovering over China, the Chinese leadership, once again, has shown its development commitment to Pakistan – the longtime US ally. The US and NATO powers know well that Pakistan overshadows India strategically in such types of conflicts. So, they all are conscious about the stronger Sino-Pak ties. Both China and Pakistan have no option but to strengthen each other against the unreliable powers pretending to behave friendly. It’s a fact that the present and future international and regional landscape depends a lot on the Sino-Pak relations. That is why different Indian organizations and individuals keep on trying to create misunderstandings between Pakistan and China.

In a recent move, India spread a cartoon of Prime Minister Imran Khan showing its empty pockets, faking that it was published in the Chinese newspaper. The Indian social media post did not carry any link to the Chinese media where it was (said to be) published. But, many social media junkies from Pakistan played their role too in making the post become viral. The unwise friends. Even if it was published in the Chinese media, we should have underplayed it to save grace. The Indian government, their think tanks and media junkies are trying to overplay in the region. It is chiefly to cover-up and defuse its internal conflicts and criminal realities of victimization of minorities including Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir. Well-wishers of the Sino-Pak friendship strongly believe that their enemies will not succeed in creating misunderstandings between the two countries.

After the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, the economic and political landscape is on the move from Europe and the Middle East to South Asia and the South China Sea. Some major ripples in the past year or so were experienced. The uncertainty in Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover, and the tug of war between Nato and Russia are just two manifestations of economic and geographic tensions. In the given circumstances, Sino-Pak recent agreements play reinforcement of trust on each other. The joint statement inevitably spoke about the significance of CPEC. Surely and as promised, Pakistan has to take extraordinary measures to guarantee security for Chinese personnel that is genuinely a real concern for China following the recent security situation in Balochistan. As the Gwadar Port has been noted as the central emphasis of the CPEC, Pakistan has promised to carry out the development work required to ensure the timely completion according to the agreed terms of reference.

The stakeholders shall welcome the three-state dialogue, involving the foreign ministers of Pakistan, Afghanistan and China, to improve the situation in Afghanistan to continue efforts for peace in the region. Additionally, Pakistan has promised China of its support at all diplomatic levels to gain back its claimed territories including Taiwan, Tibet, Hong Kong, and several others. Will Pakistan be able to do so?

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