**Khalid Mansoor Replaces Mr. Bajwa**

[Munir Ahmed](https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/munir-ahmed/)@EmmayeSyed

August 10, 2021

About a week ago, the government had appointed the energy specialist and former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Hub Power Company Limited Khalid Mansoor as a Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on CPEC Affairs. His appointment took place just a month after his resignation from the Hub Power Company, soon after the company was paid around Rs. 23 billion by the government. Khalid Mansoor, CEO of the first IPP in Pakistan under Power Policy 1995, had played a key role in striking a deal for the IPPs with the government. Next expected notification could be of his appointment as a chairman CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor), the backbone of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Many speculations are also in the air about the resignation of former CPEC chairman retired Lt. General Asim Saleem Bajwa. Several believe that he was in the hot waters after a “scoop story” about his “family business” in the US, amounting to billions. Both the government and the former chairman CPEC waited for the “right time” to part ways.

Most of the insiders denote the resignation to the generally slow and sluggish performance on the “realignment” of the CPEC projects according to the political aspirations of the government. China has been putting up severe reservations on the security of their engineers and workers for quite long, besides worrying about the crawling projects. From the Planning Commission of Pakistan to the CPEC Authority, only China’s woes were increased adding the personal, political and institutional interests of the stakeholders vested in the CPEC projects. The Dasu incident peaked the anger that was reflected in the Chinese government’s statements. The cancellation of the scheduled Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) of both countries was a red signal too. Even the hurried visit to Beijing by the Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and ISI chief Lt. General Faiz Hameed could not serve the desired objective.

Khalid Mansoor has over four decades of experience working with multiple organisations in energy, petrochemicals and fertilizers industries.

Apparently, it seems like changing the game of the ‘Game Changer’ for some personal and vested interests. It has been the top most agenda of all that have been in power. The tradition continues even with the present government, despite them being shouting loud the slogans of transparency, merit and accountability. We all are behaving like fifth generation zombies. In the given circumstances, the point to ponder is if the CPEC would remain a ‘game changer’ for Pakistan or would it largely be an embarrassment?

The CPEC Authority was suggested to get rid of the bureaucratic hurdles and long delays for different departmental procedures and processes. ‘One Window’ for time efficient management of the CPEC projects was the only objective of the authority. Was it achieved as claimed by the outgoing chairman? In his tweet, he said: “I bow my head before Allah Almighty for giving me an opportunity to raise & steer the important institution of CPEC Authority as one window for all CPEC projects, charting the future direction. Would not have been possible without full confidence & support of the PM and his government. The course is set for future progression of CPEC, this journey will go on. My best wishes to Khalid Mansoor sb, who is fully equipped to take it forward. CPEC is the life line for Pakistan, it will transform us into a progressive and fully developed country, Insha’Allah.”

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar has tweeted on the appointment of his former Engro Pakistan colleague: “I welcome Khalid Mansoor to the team as SAPM for CPEC affairs. His vast corporate experience, with extensive work with Chinese companies and his direct involvement in leading some of the biggest CPEC projects makes him an ideal person to lead the next phase of CPEC.”

Khalid Mansoor has over four decades of experience working with multiple organisations in energy, petrochemicals and fertilizers industries. He is expected to lead the second phase of CPEC, which will focus on industrial cooperation. His has extensive experience of working with the Chinese companies and has a deep understanding of joint ventures, project development and execution with Chinese partners.

Mansoor is termed as a well-known business leader and has also served as a President of Overseas Chamber of Commerce of Industry (OICCI). He holds a Degree in Chemical Engineering, and has over 32 years of experience and expertise in energy and petrochemical sectors in leading roles for mega projects development, execution, management and operations.

Being an optimist, I personally believe that the new leadership shall expedite the laid-out CPEC plans and dynamically work on the second phase that focuses on industrialization and sustainable agriculture. The CPEC output and impact is still behind the curtains. Shall the people of Pakistan expect the new leadership to unveil them? The CPEC doors remain closed for unknown reasons. There are no discussions on the reservations of the local communities and stakeholders. Their reservations and conflicting situations remain unaddressed. The Chinese government is frustrated with the “realignment” of the infrastructural projects and deepening personal and political vested interests in the CPEC projects. The Chinese companies have their own woes of playful processes and procedures, and long-pending payments. Many issues upfront for the new CPEC leadership.

*The writer is a freelance journalist and broadcaster. He can be reached at devcom.pakistan@gmail.com*