**The infallible friendship**

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Brazilian lyricist, an eminent literary figure and winner of several international awards Paulo Coelho de Souza describing friendship said, “Friendship is not about whom you know the longest. It is about who came and never left”. What he said is a quintessential fact about the friendship between Pakistan and China which is far beyond and above the realm of normal diplomatic relations between two states. The epithet of ‘iron brothers’ proudly claimed by the two countries reflects the impregnable nature of relations between the two countries which have withstood the vicissitudes of time.

Prime Minister Imran Khan was right on the money when in an interview with China Global Television Network he said, “It is very unfair of the United States and Western powers to force countries like Pakistan to take sides and downgrade their ties with China. The relationship with China is very deep. It’s not a relationship between governments, it’s a people to people relationship. To sum up, whatever will happen, the relationship between the two countries, no matter what pressure is put on us, is not going to change.”

[NAB summons CM Buzdar's principal secretary on July 8](https://nation.com.pk/02-Jul-2021/nab-summons-cm-buzdar-s-principal-secretary-on-july-8)

Pakistan is surely under pressure from the US and its western allies to take sides in their snowballing rivalry with China. However Pakistan understands the hazards of the rivalry between these two giants and would like to have good relations with everybody, as rightly pointed out by the Prime Minister. To be honest, the US has always been an unfriendly ally of Pakistan while China is not even a formal ally but has done more than any ally could do.

Notwithstanding the fact that Pakistan was a US ally, the development of relations with China has been the cornerstone of its foreign policy. Pakistan has been supporting China on all issues of importance to the latter, especially those relating to China’s sovereignty over Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet and other sensitive matters such as human rights.

Similarly, Pakistan is also greatly indebted to China for her continued and unflinching support on Kashmir. It was with Chinese support that the issue of Kashmir came up for discussion in the meeting of UNSC after fifty years in the backdrop of the unilateral action by the Modi government to end the special status of IIOK.

[India still trying to derail Afghanistan peace push: President Arif Alvi](https://nation.com.pk/02-Jul-2021/india-still-trying-to-derail-afghanistan-peace-push-president-arif-alvi)

China has played a significant role in the economic progress of Pakistan. The construction of KKH Highway, Heavy Mechanical Complex at Taxila, Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC) and Chashma Nuclear Plants are the monuments of the ever-spiking relationship. In the backdrop of the US-India deal for transfer of civilian nuclear technology which Pakistan regarded as discriminatory act, China exhibited the strength of the friendship between the two countries by agreeing to help Pakistan in building Chashma IV and V. It has also been extending support to Pakistan regarding its stance for criteria-based admittance of new members to the prestigious Nuclear Suppliers Group. It has also helped in saving Pakistan from being pushed into the black list by FATF. It is pertinent to mention that Pakistan was put on the grey list in 2018 as a result of a US-sponsored resolution. That surely was not a friendly gesture.

Pakistan and China also have very strong defence ties. In early March 2017 Chinese-built low to medium altitude Air Defence System was inducted into the air defence system of the Pakistan Army that would considerably enhance its response capability to the current and emerging threats as the Chinese Mobile Air Defence system is capable of tracking and destroying a variety of aerial targets at longer ranges flying at low and medium altitudes.

[Denmark to vaccinate children on immediate basis; paediatricians remain sceptical](https://nation.com.pk/02-Jul-2021/denmark-to-vaccinate-children-on-immediate-basis-paediatricians-remain-sceptical)

CPEC, a flagship project of BRI, has undoubtedly added eternity to the infallible relations between the two states and their people. By becoming part of the CPEC, Pakistan is poised not only to make up for the lost opportunities but also to become an economic powerhouse within the next two decades.

China has also shown remarkable flexibility by expanding the scope of CPEC to the social sectors, particularly alleviation of poverty in consonance with the PTI manifesto. The development occurred during the visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to China. Chinese leaders pledged to make increased investments in those sectors besides extending $2 billion financial support to tide over the financial crisis confronting the country. China also made a commitment to rectify the trade imbalance between the two countries by taking steps to enhance Pakistani exports to China, proving her credentials as a time-tested friend of Pakistan.