



*Negotiating Change for  
Sustainability: Horizons of CPEC in  
Gilgit-Baltistan.*

*6th and 7th August, Passu Hunza,  
Gilgit-Baltistan*

*Conference Report*

**Aga Khan Rural Support Programme**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This report summarises the proceedings of conference “Negotiating Change for Sustainability: Horizons of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Gilgit-Baltistan” held in Passu, Gojal Hunza from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2017. The conference also incorporated AKRSP’s vision, among other areas, of fostering debate on key issues faced by stakeholders in the context of CPEC and how, the link between academia and the community will be tapped to explore further avenues. AKRSP feels indebted to the researchers, participants and community members for their interest and support in successful completion of the conference. Also, the complementing role of Government of Gilgit-Baltistan and local community is commendable.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to Mr. Muzaffar Uddin, General Manager AKRSP, for his unflinching support and strategic guidance for this initiative. We are also thankful to colleagues at Core and Regional offices of AKRSP whose efforts made this event successful.

Aziz Ali Dad

Specialist Knowledge Management and Communications

## ACRONYMS

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| AKCSP   | Aga Khan Culture Support Programme                         |
| AKRSP   | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme                           |
| AKU-IED | Aga Khan University- Institute for Educational Development |
| ATM     | Automated Teller Machine                                   |
| CEO     | Chief Executive Officer                                    |
| CKNP    | Central Karakoram National Park                            |
| CPEC    | China Pakistan Economic Corridor                           |
| DRR     | Disaster Risk Reduction                                    |
| DJ      | Diamond Jubilee  |
| FACE    | Foundation for Arts, Culture and Education                 |
| FCR     | Frontier Crimes Regulations                                |
| GBLA    | Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly                      |
| GBC     | Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral                               |
| GBPI    | Gilgit-Baltistan Policy institute                          |
| GCU     | Government College University, Lahore                      |
| HRCPP   | Human Rights Commission Pakistan                           |
| IBA     | Institute of Business Administration                       |
| KIU     | Karakoram International University                         |
| KKH     | Karakoram Highway  |
| KMC     | Knowledge Management and Communication                     |
| M.Ed.   | Masters of Education                                       |
| MICS    | Multi Indicators Cluster Survey                            |
| MOU     | Memorandum of Understanding                                |

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| NGO    | Non-Government Organization                                      |
| PHD    | Doctor of Philosophy   |
| PM-GAD | Programme Manager Gender Department                              |
| SEEDA  | Socio Educational Enterprise Development Academy                 |
| SSPL   | Sustainable Solutions Private Limited                            |
| SSR    | State Subject Rule   |
| UN     | United Nations   |
| UNCIP  | United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan                 |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| YRGB   | Young Reformers Gilgit-Baltistan                                 |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its inception Aga Khan Rural Support Programme remains sensitive to the broader changes occurring at socio-economic domains in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. With the opening of Karakoram Highway, the region got exposed to exogenous ideas, lifestyles and market forces. It was the period when Gilgit-Baltistan witnessed a shift from traditional mode of governance and economic structure to modern ones. The cumulative result of these developments appeared in the shape of new ways of seeing things and economic arrangements for livelihood where market plays an important role. KKH has expedited this process. After the 35 years of opening of KKH, the governments of China and Pakistan embarked upon a mega project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The CPEC is hailed as the game changer for the economy of Pakistan. This project will transform Pakistan economically. To reap the benefits from CPEC it is imperative to change the modus operandi and strategic shift in managing the economy. With the drastic change in economic outlook expected due to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, a network of roads, railways and telecommunications linking Western China with Gawadar port in western Pakistan, the community is not yet fully prepared to embrace these changes. To tap these potential gains, a combined approach is needed, specially input from the academia and researchers is of core importance. AKRSP, being one of the partners in the development of the area, aims at starting a dialogue process among the academia and development practitioners with local communities to set the course of formulating a clear guideline for the masses to adopt.

The Passu conference is one such step in a series of steps that AKRSP is planning to organize. This report encapsulates the proceedings of the conference. The themes of conference ranges from Social Transformation, Migration and Urbanity, Economy, Indigenous Rights and Leadership in Gilgit-Baltistan Region, Tourism and Music, Culture, History, Society, Linguistic diversity, Human Rights, Personal Case Studies, Gender, Environment, Social Issues, Identity, Politics, Education and Law to police. To shed light on these themes, a group of diverse researchers and academicians were invited to the conference.

In the conference, the presenters laid great emphasis on understanding the CPEC holistically because it is a mega-project with long term impact on the society and economy of the country as well as Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. The CPEC is going to bring more benefits yet at the same time more challenges. For that purpose, it is indispensable for local people to prepare and plan well. If local people are not mentally prepared, then they may not be able to harness anything except harm and this harm will be to culture, languages, literature and values and it will be long term effect.

The conference also covered interface between economy and politics. For the economic success of CPEC and sustainability, it is also important to ensure social and political rights of the people. Although CPEC provides an opportunity for integration of regional economies, it is also important to address the local, national, regional and international actors and factors that may influence its implementation. For the successful implementation of CPEC, the government should ensure meritocracy at public sector and transparency in the projects related to CPEC. One of the repercussions of economic boom is widening of the gulf between haves and have nots. To tackle the issue of unequal distribution of economic dividends of CPEC, a system of collectives and common property should be introduced in Gilgit-Baltistan.



During the last few years, the region of Gilgit-Baltistan has witnessed surge in domestic tourism. CPEC is going to attract large number of tourists. Therefore, it is mandatory for the government to regulate tourism through new policies and laws and their promulgation in the region.

The tunes of traditional music of Gilgit-Baltistan are dying with the vanishing of that cultural set up, which gave birth to the artist and their art. This is happening because of the rapid transformation of our cultural system, superseding of traditional music by exogenous music. With the CPEC the region will be exposed to bigger cultures. To retain arts and crafts of the region there is a dire need to preserve the music by using modern technology. In terms of language preservation, the biggest challenges to local languages is the absence of any written script and tradition, although the oral script remained very strong, and globalization, CPEC is one element of regional globalization. Therefore, people must consider the effects of CPEC on the already endangered cultural and linguistic diversity.

The participants of the conference had realisation that the social issues specially issue of youth have reached to alarming situation. To understand the problems in the society of Gilgit-Baltistan, there is need to identify the shortcomings or absence of institutions. As these are mainly responsible for the problems in our society. There is imbalance in our social institutions. To address social issues and institutional imbalance, the speakers favoured a multi-dimensional strategy focusing on local context.

Personal case studies from gender lens in conference revealed that because of parochial norms and mindset men have been more power than women in Gilgit-Baltistan. Whether it is marriage, education, property or professional perspective, men are independent as compared to females. The cultural and social stereotypes, and traditional notions of family and solidarity can be challenged by developing professionally. Gender inequalities can be minimized through educating about the realities of human identity.

The issues of suicides in Gilgit is discussed in the conference. The research supports the view that the values of autonomy, freedom, personal space, individualism and liberal education are in conflict with existing pervasive patriarchal setup. The urge of young generation for a new social order stems from the weakness of the existing social order that is the educational and patriarchy system. The youth who harbours suicidal thoughts are more engulfed with new thoughts i.e. the new social order. Therefore, the collision of these two mindsets is the reason behind most of the conflicts related to youth.

The conference also dealt with the issues of identity in Gilgit-Baltistan. In the particular context of Gilgit-Baltistan the multiple origins of identity are being reduced to monolithic identity. This has created narratives that only addresses the subjective notions of language group, tribe and family. The problem with these ideas are that inter-race and inter-lingual connections are ignored in the process. Actually, cross lingual, cultural and ethnic interactions form the ideas and identities of people. Unfortunately, the cultural exchange and assimilation process has been ignored by the people. The people of Gilgit-Baltistan do not associate themselves with the land owned by them. This trend creates uprooted identities as the body inhabits the space of GB, but the soul is present elsewhere.

Shedding like on conception of natural disasters in the particular social milieu of GB, it is found that unlike most of the world where risks are tackled scientifically, this approach faces

difficulties in implementation especially in rural areas like GB. The main hurdle is the religious influence on the perceptions and opinions of local people. Another problem identified was the absence of local input in the policy formulation and implementation. It is recommended to deal with disasters with DRR take the charge in the matters related to disasters not mythical ideas.

The research on perception of people about police department in Gilgit-Baltistan concluded that peoples' personal and contextual variables have significant effect on their perception of police in terms of their roles and responsibilities, performance, transparency, and monitoring of police performance. The session on evolution of education in Hunza showed interesting finding and stories. This research highlighted the local history related to the early steps taken for the development of education in this area. It is emphasised that the early teachers were important actors in the process of evolution. The study attempted to seek their views on how education evolved.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) pioneered the socio-economic development discourse in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral region. With the drastic change in economic outlook expected due to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, a network of roads, railways and telecommunications linking Western China with Gawadar port in western Pakistan, the community is not yet fully prepared to embrace these changes. To tap these potential gains, a combined approach is needed, specially input from the academia and researchers is of core importance. AKRSP, being one of the partners in the development of the area, aims at starting a dialogue process among the academia and development practitioners with local communities to set the course of formulating a clear guideline for the masses to adopt.

The Passu conference is one such step in a series of steps that AKRSP is planning to organize. The vision of AKRSP is to mobilize the community for the second wave of the changes CPEC will bring in the Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). These intended changes are to bring a broad set of challenges and opportunities to the local community; the economists argue for more avenues for income generation to local populace, yet at the same time may alter the socio-political fabric of the society which is entrenched in local norms and values. Citing this change, challenges and opportunities in the near future, this conference will bring together local/national scholars and development practitioners to stir the process of critical thinking, through engaging in listening, probing, agreeing, disagreeing and negotiating in order to embrace this emerging reality among the local community. It is expected that this conference will serve as a platform to bring up local sentiments in open and may serve as a catalyst to introduce required participation from the community.

This report includes the lessons learnt in the conference in a precise and clear manner, which will be reached upon through analysis of the interactions occurred during the conference.

### 1.1-Objectives

It is to help *prepare society for some of the second wave of changes facing Gilgit-Baltistan after 30 years* of the completion of the KKH and building on the socio-economic development brought in by the works of Gilgit-Baltistan Government, AKRSP, and other civil society organizations.

### 1.2-Structure of the convention

The conference was comprised of six sessions covered in two days, each session focussed on specific area that CPEC might influence. These include CPEC, tourism, climate change, culture, gender, society, environment, education, and governance. These sessions were moderated by an expert on the theme to be discussed and the panellists presented their papers followed by questions and answers from the participants. The presentations were *formatted as dialogues* between national and local scholars/practitioners and local scholars, development practitioners and community members.

## 2-INAUGURAL SESSION

The first day of the conference started with the participants' registration and formal proceedings took place after the recitation of Holy Quran by Mr. Afiyat Nazar. The Chief Guest of the conference was Mr. Zafar Waqar Taj (Secretary Public Works Department Gilgit-Baltistan).

### 2.1 WELCOME SPEECH

To set the tone of the conference Ms. Yasmeen Karim (Programme Manager, Gender and Development AKRSP) welcomed all the distinguished guests and particularly thanked researchers, development practitioners and members of the community for their presence. She, in her speech, briefed the audience about the basic philosophy of AKRSP, which takes into consideration the views from the periphery and bring the voices from the margins into the centre stage of the development discourse. Focusing on the participatory development model of AKRSP in the mountainous communities of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral, she explained the belief in the very process of development that is not isolated one, rather it is linked with the socio-economic realities of the region. Yasmin hoped that participants' invaluable views and ideas would enrich the discourse of development in the particular settings of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.

She argued that the region of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral has undergone drastic changes with the opening of hitherto isolated region to the outside world. Yasmin further said that with the abolishment of traditional governance structure, transformation in society and shift in economic base, the mountainous communities of the region have undergone drastic changes and these have exposed them to new realities which need new ways of seeing. To remain in sync with the emerging changes, AKRSP has kept its hand on the pulse of the change. Therefore, it aims at devising a strategy by incorporating the inputs from the stakeholders with regard to major developments in the shape of CPEC in terms of education, quality of life, economy and other spheres of life in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.

### 2.2 HORIZONS OF CPEC IN GILGIT-BALTISTAN:

Building on the introduction from Ms. Yasmeen, Mr. Aziz Ali Dad (Specialist Knowledge Management and Communications-AKRSP) gave an insight about the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the challenges and the opportunities it poses. Comparing Chinese economy with an elephant, he explained that to survive we should understand the Chinese mind and locate ourselves in and align our interests with the interests of China, given the position we have.

Giving an insight, he further said that the historical linkages of Gilgit-Baltistan with China stretches back to old silk route times where Gilgit-Baltistan served as a conduit through one of the many arteries of ancient Silk route linking Central and South Asia. Like current political situations, the old silk route was also affected from the political upheavals across the route. The Russian revolution and later the Chinese revolution ended this historical passage between the two populous regions of Asia. This resulted in suspension of formal trade through this route till the opening of Karakoram Highway, which was sponsored by Chinese. Karakoram Highway has ideological and strategic purposes. Despite this, the informal trade

remained between the people of border areas i.e. Chipurson, Brughil, Kilick Mintika, Ladakh and Darmendar with people inhabiting the borders areas of High Asia.

Explaining the CPEC, Aziz informed the audience about the 57 billion dollar, road and energy investment initiative of China under the broader web of One Belt One Road plan and termed it as the expansion of Chinese version of capitalism. This signifies increased connectivity, investment opportunities, collaboration of industries in finance, agriculture, tourism, educational sector, human resource, health care, cultural exchange thus enhancing economic growth not only in Gilgit-Baltistan but in the whole region. In this context, rather relying on old reactive methods of decision making, AKRSP is focused on developing proactive strategy, as a partner in the development discourse of this region and for this purpose it is partnering with diverse stakeholders including government, civil society organisations and local communities to develop an evidence based planning mechanism. Due to the lack of any credible information sources in Gilgit-Baltistan on CPEC, the vacuum has been filled up with conspiracy theories and to stop this trend from further escalating the poor decision-making capacity, this conference is one such initiative to fill the information, knowledge and coordination gap among multiple stakeholders of Gilgit-Baltistan.

Aziz, identified a set of challenges that are faced by Gilgit-Baltistan in particular. Among them the language barrier is of crucial. Overcoming this barrier will help out in reading the Chinese mindset, how they operate their economic and political system. The other challenge may be the ideological clash due to dominance of western political thought among the masses of Gilgit-Baltistan and total ignorance about the Chinese philosophy. Another challenge is to the cultural and linguistic diversity of Gilgit-Baltistan from the expected economic and cultural onslaught of the Chinese. Exposure to the market forces and Chinese civilisation with the oral culture of ours might end up in dilution of our culture with rapid adoption of bad elements from that culture, as historically this phenomenon was witnessed around the world. Besides above mentioned, challenges to different sectors, environment is also of serious concern too, due to the global warming and the relative high volatility of our region to this phenomenon. Increased industrialisation and migration in this region can threaten our ecology and environment and may result in glacier melting and landslides. Thus, affecting the tourism sector of our economy which is the backbone of the economy of the region.

As a way forward he emphasized on a set of recommendations including: a policy on government level to sponsor and support the cultural exchange although the current ratio of student exchange is on a lesser scale. To express our interests and reservations our political leadership must play a significant role. In order to safe guard environment and tourism sector of the region, there is a need to develop an Environmental Management Plan and introducing a standardization and certification program for tourism. To reap the economic benefits, we should focus on skill development plans. Safe guarding our culture and languages should also be on our agenda and for that institutions should be established to protect and preserve these assets.

Aziz concluded his speech repeating the purpose of this conference: that is to identify those areas and sectors where we can invest and benefit from the CPEC initiatives and at the same time help the government to develop policies which encompasses some of the above-mentioned challenges emerging from the CPEC in collaboration with the academia and practitioners. He said that the sessions in this conference are designed to get input on the

multi sectoral challenges which our society in general may face from CPEC and how to model our approaches to get benefits from it.

#### *KEY NOTE SPEECH:*

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest Mr. Zafar Waqar Taj (Secretary Work and Power, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan) congratulated AKRSP for organizing such an important conference on CPEC given the socio-economic and cultural changes both in terms of opportunities and challenges it is set to bring in.

He mentioned the languages and the cultural diversity in the region and how the political and economic events throughout the history has affected them. The dress code, festivals and the interaction patterns were unique to this isolated area. But as the interaction through trade emerged, so does the challenges the region faced. Before pre-partition Gilgit-Baltistan has managed to retain these rituals and norms. The small principalities, till their abolition, had their separate governance structure and the role of clans in it. Another major event was the building of Karakoram Highway which opened the doors for trade and interaction. Thus, brought with itself a new set of challenges to our local traditions. This change manifested in increased infrastructure investments and robust economic activity resulting in better standards of life, more education and health facilities yet at the same time increased weaponization. Learning with this past experience, he suggested to be better prepared for the CPEC which is going to bring more benefits yet at the same time more challenges. He said if local people are not mentally prepared, then they may not be able to harness anything except harm and this harm will be to culture, languages, literature and values and it will be long term effect. Unfortunately, the language has no access to the national media and we might lose the media war due to this fact. The other sectors which need attention in the context of CPEC are the tourism and the human resource sectors. Our lack of capacity to handle the large inflow of tourists will put pressures on our natural resources and lacking skill will restrict us from benefiting CPEC.

These challenges were the result of over reliance on government institutions and absence of any belief that individual's role towards society is also important. With no constitutional status and lack of political maturity coupled with inability of local government left the people wondering how to benefit from Karakoram Highway. But now, he argued, we are moving sensibly yet slowly and we are aware that government cannot by itself handle these challenges. Therefore, every individual and institution must work together if we want our society to retain its unique identity.

Briefing the participants about the steps government has taken in the recent past, he said that for the first time the government is ready to make evidence based planning through Multi Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) of 121 indicators that highlights each areas' needs and 100 percent utilization of our development funds and based on this performance our development fund for this year has been doubled. Thus, strengthening policy formulation side in Gilgit-Baltistan. To reap the economic benefits and reduce the unemployment rate among the youth, the government for the first time has established a technical and vocational college and many are in the pipeline. To protect the indigenous language a curriculum revising project till class fifth grade in regional languages is in its near completion and in its first phase 5 local languages are included. And after that other languages will also get incorporated. Coupled with it a 50 million PKR project for the 'establishment of academy for promotion and

research of regional language' is also in the pipeline. The GB government has signed an MOU with Sujo university, China, which will give admissions to 20 students of Gilgit-Baltistan in automobile sector.

He concluded that the inputs from surveys and conferences like this help us out to bring real change in the society, and expect such conferences serve as a platform to trigger a dialogue on how to meet the challenges of future, with political leadership, government machinery, academia, development practitioners and the community on board.

### **Foundation for Arts Culture and Education (FACE)**

Dwelling on the importance of art and culture and how to preserve it, Mr. Zeeja Fazli (Director FACE) mentioned using art as a medium to connect different cultures not only within Pakistan but also with cultures outside Pakistan and to strengthen and empower communities through universal language of Arts and through cultural interactions. He said FACE use local music and art nationally and internationally. He said organizing such a musical festivals and conferences in this region is a major step to promote local artists and music. In the context of CPEC which aims to increase the trade will also provide the opportunity to help the tourism industry to flourish. Tourism around the world has been used to build bridges and bring people closer to each other. Sharing face motto, he said its aim is to use the platform of art to further this goal in Pakistan. Art and music serves as universal language for better understanding the different cultures and thus building better relationships through celebrating each other's festivals. The economic aspect of this festival must also be highlighted specially for the local hotel industry and other livelihood opportunities.

He thanked AKRSP for all the support to organise this event.

Mehnza Parveen (Director at FACE) spoke about the AKRSP sponsored Passu Mela and termed it a first step in promotion of local art and culture of Gilgit-Baltistan as it would also provide opportunities for the youth through interaction with pioneers of entertainment industry, embracing new cultures and developing acceptability, collaboration among artists and creating fusions in music is also on the agenda of this festival.

### 3. CONFERENCE SESSIONS

#### 3.1 SESSION I: CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (CPEC):

**Moderator: Ali Ahmed Jan**

The first session of the first day of conference dealt with the CPEC and three researchers presented their papers. The session was moderated by Ali Ahmed Jan. He emphasized the importance of credible information in the context of CPEC to direct the course of future direction towards a stable development.

##### *3.1.1 Social Transformation, Migration and Urbanity in Gilgit-Baltistan: An interpretive phenomenological study of CPEC:*

Mr. Zaigham Abbas started with the example of French revolution and how its repercussions have still influence the international political arena. The same situation goes for CPEC as it will always be unfolding its results in Gilgit-Baltistan and the rest of the Pakistan for the generations to come. These unfolding results will have multi sectoral affects in Gilgit-Baltistan, but the constitutional and political orphanage coupled with the non-representation in the decision making of CPEC related projects have further created a vacuum regarding dispersion of information in the region. He said that his paper tries to figure out the local perception of “Development”? Whether it is roads or buildings or what? Are they suffering from the miss guided perception of infrastructure? How does it differ from the State-led, positivist version of building roads and infrastructure? And What are the social and cultural ambivalences arising out of social mobility, migration and cross-cultural contact? His research tries to find out the answers to above mentioned questions. For the analysis, he relied on the interpretive phenomenology.

He argued that the constitutional liminality and underdevelopment go hand in hand and that no economic initiative is sustainable without the political structures to hold and support it. Political structures generate initiatives for economic development, it is through these structures that a consensus to a certain initiative can be generated. Unfortunately, these are absent in Gilgit-Baltistan. The law induced exclusion exacerbates, political and economic marginalization has a direct bearing on the resource allocation. This stands true for GB, as only 2 MOUs in CPEC relate to projects in Gilgit-Baltistan. Yet the local narrative of development revolves around education, school, college, university and other community spaces, not with roads and industries– contrary to what CPEC brings. Therefore, the common perception about CPEC is alienated/ignorant and stems from the constitutional disempowerment.

He expresses that historically the inter-principality migration was a hall mark of Gilgit-Baltistan but the arrival of British led to the imposition of State Subject Rule (SSR), which forbade selling the land to non-locals. This law remained till the Bhutto regime abolished it and with its abolition came the huge inflow of migrants. The UNCIP resolution calls for re-enactment of SSR but now the non-locals are gaining strong hold in the region. He highlighted that the migration trend specially from Chinese investors might gain momentum and in a foreseeable future the local people might turn into minority.



Therefore, the local support for the re-enactment of SSR is overwhelming and has resulted in protests and demonstrations. As this rule also protects the rights of local people over commerce and trade. Law-makers of the area were of the opinion that, the current political setup is incapacitated to negotiate with Federation on the issues of autonomy, royalties and public welfare. The upper house of legislative assembly, comprising mainly of federal representatives has overriding powers. Most important subjects of legislation pertaining to tourism, minerals and resources are decided by non-local, unelected officials, which keeps the local interests at stake for the federal one. Devolution of legislative power on important subjects to the lower house of Gilgit-Baltistan is the popular demand.

With this in the background the common perception about CPEC is marred by indifference and is only synonymous with Karakoram Highway, primarily because it is coming from top to bottom with minimal say from elected representatives of the region.

He gave recommendations including the political development rather than economic, taking the center stage. Institutions (Political and Social) must be developed and empowered rather than a misguided obsession with infrastructure and roads. The SSR, in compliance with UNCIP resolutions must be re-enacted. Since provincial status is a far cry, a transitional Kashmir like setup, where internal autonomy is ensured, can be a best practical solution, for which there is a popular demand as well. And at last establishment of formal institutions like high-court with equal powers of legal enforcement at par with the other provinces must be established.

### *3.1.2 CPEC a coincidence of Economic Expedience and Political Deviousness: Mr. Mohammad Idrees*

Idrees briefed the audience about the CPEC, a 46-Billion-dollar investment from China, which aims to connect the western part of China to Indian Ocean through Gawadar port. CPEC paves the way for regional integration as it opens road windows to 5 big countries: China, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. It connects Middle East and Central Asia through Gwadar deep sea port. No other corridor connects so many countries along with a deep-sea port with in so short distance in the world. International political and economic alliances have three basic reasons attached to it namely; to access energy rich sources of Central Asia, warm waters of Middle East and goods markets. With so much connectivity brought in by the CPEC, it will also bring more international players and new political alliances to counter it. That is visible in the US-Indian influence, in Afghanistan and Iran to marginalized Pak-China influence in the region. Also, India – Iran agreed on 12 agreements including an investment of \$500m on Chahbahar port to counter the influence of Pak-China through Gwadar port. US deal with India in civil nuclear indicates their cooperation. The Russians are also intervening and this time as they are partnering with China unlike US which is countering it. The reason attached to it is that, Russia is the major supplier of Gas (45%) and oil (30%) in Europe.

Idrees further said that the current sea route of Strait of Malacca is not safe in case of conflict of big powers, and US has already built military bases in the surroundings and India has also armed its navy with nuclear weapons. In this case, China needs the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean security for its energy supply line and cargo. Therefore, China's stance in international politics would be under pressure unless it would not safeguard its trade and energy supply routes. To insure supply chain, China has two options: strengthening its navy and building

CPEC as an alternative route. The economic imperatives of CPEC are many folds. Today China is spending million (\$18m) every day on importing oil through the existing route of Malacca and China could save \$6 million per day as transportation cost even half of its oil were imported via CPEC.

At the same time, the economic imperatives for Pakistan must also be explored, for CPEC provides the highest share of investment to energy sector (74%) and the infrastructure investment is (13%). These energy projects will foster currently shrunken private investment and the estimated transit fee will exceed \$20 billion per year with in 20 years. Building new Economic Zones will develop several industrial units. Therefore, trade, tourism and economic zones help economy to grow. This is a Win-Win situation for Pakistan as CPEC impacts the country both politically and economically as it will strengthen the country politically and Pakistan will serve as a trade corridor for neighboring countries and expected to collect approximately \$1 billion of transit fee in this regard.

Muhammed Idrees concluded that CPEC is the result of Pak-China all weather highly trusted friendship. It provides an opportunity to benefit from inter economic, political and social integration among Pakistan, China, India, Afghanistan and Iran and intra socio-economic and political ties with central Asia and Middle East. However, the optimal utilization and its repercussions on the region will depend on the factors - 1) Pak-China policies, the behavior of neighbor countries toward CPEC, 2) role of international players and comparative advantage of Gwadar vs Chahbahar. There is need to assess the comparative advantage of trade via Gwadar over Chahbahar. The most desired effects could be obtained by using the project for highly economic purpose.

### *3.1.3 Indigenous Rights and Leadership in G.B region. Dancing on the music of CPEC: Mr. Fazal Ameen Baig*

He pointed out that there is a crisis in socio-political leadership in Gilgit-Baltistan and due to this reason, the emerging issues cannot be handled by existing leaders. Highlighting the fact that the geo strategic location of Gilgit-Baltistan from the very beginning has been important, it remained at a junction point between the Chinese civilization at one side and on the opposite, we had Indus civilization. Apart from these the Babylonian and the Egyptian empires all these civilisations have connection thorough trade and other means. In that period, Gilgit-Baltistan played a critical role to serve as corridor yet at the same time showed exposure of region to outside cultures which is reflected in the carvings, aa district Diamer only has 35000 carvings alone. The current leadership lacks vision that is evident form the silent approach adopted by these leaders on the submersion of historic carvings under the Diamer Bhasha dam.

Our ancestors have handed over this region to us, who despite in small number fought with big empires. So now we should be brave specially the youth who are equipped with information so they are now charged with responsibility to use it properly. Youth need to organise themselves which is lacking to face the challenges of the future. At the end of his paper Amin emphasized that all these problems emanating from ambiguous status in the context of unclear future are due to the lack of socio-political leadership in the community. The vacuum in leadership emerged when the NGOs influx resulted in brain drain and the public sector was filled with incompetent people who destroyed the society. Therefore, in public sector people must be selected based on the basis of merit. Eligibility criteria must be

ensured in the political leadership area according to the emerging scenario around the world. This disputed territory may become a blessing for us if our leaders turn it into opportunities. Youth must be apolitical and come out to raise awareness.

#### *3.1.4 Question and Answer session:*

Ali Ahmed Jan (moderator) while answering one of the questions about investment share of Gilgit-Baltistan in CPEC, elaborated that 56-billion-dollar investment is private investment and it has different projects mostly in energy area. In Gilgit-Baltistan's context, there is not any investment and only the vision statement exists that argues that GB will be developed on the patterns of Xinjiang.

Zafar Waqar Taj questioned the basis to suggest that there is overwhelming demand from the people to restore State Subject Rule (SSR)? And the constitutional right issue how can it be achieved without affecting Kashmir cause?

Zaigham while replying mentioned that throughout his research he encountered these suggestions and it was overwhelming demand from the people. As far as Kashmir is concerned, both issues should be dealt with adjustments on both sides.

One of the participants Khalid inquired about the State Subject Rule as it is against human rights and globally is treated that way how could it be aligned with these issues in the region?

Answering this question Zaigham replied that this is not him who favours SSR but the UN says. He said we may look at UNCIP resolutions on Gilgit-Baltistan. Pakistan always refers to the UN resolution for the settlement of Kashmir issue and UNCIP favours SSR in the area. SSR is not against basic human rights. Actually, it is a human right tool that is why it has been incorporated in the UNCIP resolutions, which states that whenever there is a plebiscite in Gilgit-Baltistan, the local people should be able to hold their opinion about it. We may not implement this rule in its original shape but we can sit together with all the stakeholders and come up with a modified version of SSR. It is very important as it protects trade, commerce and indigenous rights.

Salman asked a question that the state has been active in changing the demographics of the area and now the CPEC. How will this be tackled, the mass migration and change in demographics?

Zaigham replied that the demography has been changed after the Iranian revolution in the GB and it is done deliberately. SSR is subtler than the land rights. It is not that it should be changed based on the couplet of poetry between two religious leaders.

Sultan Abbas asked: "You say political development should precede economic development, if you are to benefit in any meaningful way from the coming social transformations on CPEC. And you said that political development is not robust here, therefore, it must be encouraged rather than on focusing on the economic development. What do you mean exactly by political development, do you see it as a network of civil society institutions or do you see it as masses aware of its rights and resists social change which goes against their social norms?"

Replying to Sultan's question Zaigham said that Gilgit-Baltistan is a virgin market and territory and big economies will whisk away every mineral, resources and everything. So, he argues for the political development.

One of the participants asked, "I seriously supported student politics and this is need for whole country. Many of the prominent politicians of the country are product of student politics and it was Zia-ul-Haq who maligned it and gave it a militant shape. Given the vibrant civil society at our disposal we should introduce student politics at school, college and university level. And this way we can avoid the unworthy people in assemblies. Student activism in campuses and by the political development means constitutional empowerment and that comes from the top."

Irum asked:" How can we make this CPEC intellectual talk applicable and understandable for the public? The second question focuses on the remarks of a renowned economist who argued that for CPEC to be successful Gilgit-Baltistan must compromise on certain matters like its culture. So, do you think CPEC will bring some constitutional changes to the Gilgit-Baltistan or it will affect it otherwise?

Zaigham replied, "to make the CPEC comprehensible to the general population we should initiate a discussion like this. Gilgit-Baltistan is lacking resources to initiate such type of discussions. CPEC is the burning question of the day in every school, college and university. Even in Lahore everyone is talking about the CPEC. There people are talking what Punjab is getting out of it and what other provinces are getting out of it. We have a very vibrant university here in Gilgit and also a very vibrant civil society. Let us generate a discussion this is what we need."

## 3.2 TOURISM AND MUSIC

**Moderator: Mr. Zubair Torwali**

Initiating the debate on tourism he described the situation of his home town Swat which is also the nearest tourist destination to Islamabad and Peshawar. Due to the huge influx and lack of capacity, locals could not able reap the benefits. Because of lack of capital among locals, locals invited non-locals to build the hotels and around 1990s, and most of the hotels in the region are built by Pashtuns. Due to this they ascribe Kalam as the Palestine of Swat. Kalam and Swat are inhabited by non-Pashtun speakers and the tourist inflow has created economic opportunities, and mostly Pashtuns benefitted from them. The result is local music is dominated by the Pashtuns, and also tourism is affecting the ecology of area, the forests and the water resources.

On music, Mr. Zubair said that one can't contain music in a specific container because music is without borders and the influences it gets usually is from every other music it interacts with. The music dominates if it has powerful material cultural on other music. Like in our non-Pashtun area of upper Swat we have around 70% women poetesses yet the Pashtuns do not allow their women. This session deals with the tourism impact on the culture and music of Gilgit-Baltistan.

### *3.2.1 Effects of Tourism on Culture of Gilgit-Baltistan: Mr. Safi Ullah and Ms. Seema Karim*

Speaking on the occasion Ms. Seema Karim briefed the audience about her work and what led to this. She said that the tourist influx in our area would widen the economic divide. According to Seema, within 10 years the rich of the region would control almost every hotel and business, while the poor will be suffering. So, the income gap will increase and it is alarming. With this in her mind she suggested to engage poor communities with home spaces, and turned them into guest houses. She proposed establishing a proper filter system for the tourists to get selected for the residence. This way she argues that the poor will get benefit and the damage if any from the tourist inflow to local norms may be prevented. Currently, there are 50 households enrolled in this initiative and there is a plan to increase the numbers. She requested the elders to support the youngsters in such work as youth face many hurdles in order to realise their dreams.

Mr. Safi Ullah Baig from Aga Khan Cultural Services, Pakistan (AKCSP) in his presentation focused on the negative impacts of tourism on Gilgit-Baltistan based upon his experience. He gave example of how many tourists visited Hunza this season and what benefits the region accrued and what potential negative impacts people are going to face? Safi Ullah said this year 38000 tourists visited Baltit fort and 21000 visited Altit fort. The reason for the visit

seems to see both the natural heritage and cultural heritage. But these tourists do not just come in to see the natural beauty but also to look for opportunities for the business. And with the growing trend, it is predicted that CPEC will bring the second most tourist inflow in the region. Considering China which proclaims to be socialists, but in its heart, is capitalists, it always looks for trade and profit opportunities. And capitalists are not concerned about the culture and the environment.

Safi Ullah argued that tourism is the emerging sector of the economy of Gilgit-Baltistan, and it is important to manage it. For that there is a dire need for the collective development of the society. The huge inflow has put enormous burden on the nature specially the oxygen supply, given the climate change impact already hurting the ecology. Nature is a public good and the way it is being harmed is beyond imagination. It needs to be preserved so that we hand it over to our off springs in good shape.

Another problem according to him is the increased interest of major investors in the tourism sector in this region which according to him is not a good omen because it will lead to natural resource exhaustion and may force locals to sell their land. This is a treat, because till now the collective living system is retained intact. This system is absent in other parts of the country like the water distribution system. So, in order to survive, people have to choose between neo-liberal system or collective economic system but to adopt collective system we have to develop a political base which is absent now. The current civil society is unfit for the system as it is more oriented towards neo-liberal capitalist model. The need is to develop a genuine political movement from the grass root level. Only after doing this people can be able to speak about their indigenous rights. For example, if people decide not to build hotels having capacity above 50 rooms through political consensus.

Giving solution, he divided the response of our society bifurcated it into two. The first reaction is of the public and the second is the administration. If we look at the administration it is failed in providing water, sanitation and even parking space for tourists. It only tries to fix the room rents, and asks fee in the name of registration. This means that the economic benefit from this tourism is hard to achieve and in return this means that poor people will seek economic opportunities and they may sell their land like the first ever land sold was from Baireshal. And if people do not prepare themselves politically, then they may be included in the peripheries and the capitalists will assume the role of core. He requested that the tourist industry must be approached through the socio-political angle. And people should be discouraged to sell their land and for that SSR seems the right choice now. And the perspective of the global economic should be used to move forward rather than NGO sponsored perspective. Because CPEC is turning this region into global centre. This capitalist development model cannot save the world because it supports accumulation of wealth in few hands. This requires us to develop responsible tourism.

### *3.2.2 Reviewing Tourism and Technology as a sustainable Rural Development Strategy: A case study of Hunza: Mr. Faheem Baig*

Mr. Faheem Baig presented his paper which revolved around the development in Hunza that may come due to increased tourism and new technological advancements. He argued that in most of the rural areas tourist activities lead to improvement in infrastructure, economic stability, restoration of heritage sites and architectural monuments, and promotion and preservation of natural environment. But in the case of Hunza, which is also a rural area,



presents somehow a different picture. The caring capacity of the land is shrinking day by day due to increase in population and unplanned construction. Despite these challenges, the local administration and community are still not prepared to assimilate the expected tourist inflow in the future. He believed if use technology both at overall and local level we can develop a better human capital.

His paper concludes, based upon the interviews from the stakeholders of tourism industry, that the urbanization of rural areas is made without any prior approval from the administration and for the commercial construction except Serena hotel none of them were constructed without following legal processes. Another phenomenon is the growing income inequality as the hotel owners earn lot more money but their contribution towards society is minimal, even their employees during winter work without any salary.

The standard of health services is also deteriorating as there is no hospital in Gulmit, a major town, and other hospitals lack any proper lightening system. All these problems have many reasons behind it. He asserted that that traditional models are unable to recognize unexplored facets of rural development. technology for sustainable development it is important to explored technological options. Currently, very limited research and development is going on in harmonizing technological and tourism resources. He proposed to make academia a part of it. In the end, he said valuing local culture and importance to human and natural resources are key variables for sustainable development.

### 3.2.3 Music History of Gilgit-Baltistan

An insight into the evolution of music of Gilgit-Baltistan using Puniyal region as a case study, was provided by Mr. Ali Ahmed Jan. Shina music has three types. The first is ceremonial; the *bakshwar*, *punawar* and *Galawar* are among these tunes. This type is played on the occasions of both arrival and leaving home. Every ruler of the area, whoever ruled brought with him his own tune. The second type is *Dani*, which is the dancing tune played both at the war and after victory. The third type is called *Alghani*, it is the song music which is comprised of the contemporary songs.

Ali Ahmed Jan linked how the history of the area influenced the music evolution over the time. The pastoral *Shina* music mostly deals with the fairies and the conversations with them. This is mostly performed by the shepherds. There is a myth also that when they played flute the fairies would come down to listen it. This pastoral music often called as classical music but it is rare now. The next phase of agro-pastoral period signifies inclusion of instruments in the music like the drum which was borrowed from the Tibetans. In this period people started to settle down and villages were formed. The settled period brought in with the principality system and each had a ruler. So, in this period each ruler had his own musical tune. Upon victory, the new ruler would have brought his own tunes. There is a myth that the existing rulers were forced to adopt the profession of musicians. British era saw a new change as these brought with them the pipe bands and the people of *Puniyal* who were soldiers in their army also shared their music and later it got influenced from that music. The technological revolution through, radio, TV, VCR and now the internet changed much of the local music as many tunes were copied from sub-continent and later Pakistani and Indian music industry by local musicians.

Ali Ahmed Jan also gave details about the influence of *Hunza* music on the *Shina* music. The early poets of *Shina* music used Hunza tunes for their songs. The most famous among them was the poet Malang dado. The poet was *Cheq Mehtar*, the royal whose wife was from Hunza. Upon the demise of his wife he composed songs based on the tunes of Hunza.

He concluded that the expression of music has lost its traditional picture and it was related to the traditional kingship but due to its abrogation this status also ended its importance like the event of *Ginani*. The collective behaviour of expressing these events through music is lost now. Similarly, other events also lost their value. They are now practiced as symbols of our culture and not trusted any more.

### 3.2.4 Question and Answer Session:

Mr. Israr Uddin Isar asked question about the role of women in the evolution of music in Puniyal? How they contributed and performed, were they musicians?

Replying to the question Mr. Ali Ahmed Jan said that most of the local music is oral and very little written notes are available. In fact, none has documented it with proper inventory or listing. Even the tune or music dies with the death of the creator. It is very unfortunate that in this period of internet no such initiative has been carried out for archiving it. Women sang praising their husbands, but they only played sitar. He stated that “my own grandmother was a singer and a poetess. Our women sung for their brothers when they went to fight wars like in 1947, 1952 (war against FCR) and even some sang for Zulfikar Ali Bhutto but that period was natural. Now its symbolic more commercialized.”

Tauqeer Kazmi asked Safi Ullah Baig about the commodification of culture in neo-liberal age, as he talked about the effects of neo-liberal economy on the culture. He queried, “Is this commodification having a positive or negative effect on the culture? So, does the culture needs to be commodified in a true sense or not? And to what extent CPEC will commodify our culture and to what extent it will further damage our culture?”

While answering the question Mr. Safi Ullah highlighted the reaction of local people in response to the mass tourism. He said that there are unregulated constructions going on, with poor material and no design. And some locals are partnering and even in some cases selling their lands to non-locals. He explained that the commodification is happening but we as a people are yet to get ourselves out of the mentality. People have to organize themselves, and for that they have to regulate the tourism industry first. The first step in this regard is not sell the property but make cooperatives. AKRSP has given us the concept of collective work therefore, we should not divide our lands in bits and pieces rather make them collective lands and think for the future. And for the domestic tourists, people need to educate about local culture and force them to eat our local food rather than serving the burgers. Make them responsible for 100 kilometres within the boundary, and force them to eat local food and soft drinks should not be encouraged. He referred to an initiative in Altit in which domestic tourists loitering around are stopped and properly briefed about the proper disposal. Bins are the responsibility of the government and annual budget for cleaning the Hunza region is about 25 million. Now take the example of Khunjerab, where ATM has been installed but no system of garbage collection and parking has been introduced yet. Therefore, he suggested



that community and collective action is important to regulate this. Without it we cannot regulate the industry.

### 3.3 CULTURE AND SOCIETY

This session was moderated by Mr. Sultan Ahmed, Head of department, Media and Communication at Karakoram International University Gilgit. He briefed the audience about the threat to local culture and language and how we audio-visual tools can be used to turn the challenge into opportunity and make our language accessible to our younger generation and other people around the world. He also emphasized on educating youth about the human rights and how youngsters collectively can force the structure into better functioning. He invited Mr. Zubair Torwali to present his paper.

#### 3.3.1 Challenges to the linguistic diversity of Northern Pakistan

Mr. Zubair Torwali presented his paper on indigenous languages. He has extensive experience of working on indigenous and minority languages in an advocacy perspective.

Zubair said that he belongs to Swat region which is contrary to public perception belonged to Dardic people but gradually it has been inhabited by Pashtuns mostly Yousafzai who came soon after the invasion of Mehmood Ghaznavi in 10 century AD and now turned the indigenous people into minority. These northern areas of Pakistan, home to mostly Dardic people, have a diverse linguistic presence with 28 languages spoken there. These languages face a series of challenges and his paper deals how to address these.

Explaining the presence of these languages, Zubair mentioned that in Chitral region there are 12 languages spoken including khowar. And these languages have close resemblance with *Shina* and other Dardic languages. These include, *Damili*, *Kalasha*, *Palula*, *Gawarbat*, *Yedgha*, *Shaikhani*, *Katviri*, *Madakhlasti*, *Persian*, *Gojri*, *Wakhe* and *Pashto*. These languages are classified into Indo-European, Indo-Iranian and Indo-Aryan. The population of these small communities is not known due to absence of any column in the census to be counted. Khowar, the dominant language of the Chitral region is also a Dardic language but it is much influenced by the Persian language due to historical linkage and therefore, is different the normal Dardic languages.

In the Swat district including Madian, Kalam, and Behrain, there are four languages spoken apart from the Pashto language. These are *Torwali*, *Gojri*, *Osojo Oshojo* (a variety of *Shina* Language spoken by about 5000 people) another language *Badeshe* (a variety of *Wakhe*

language) it is now extinct and no body speaks that anymore. Going further east we reach the Koshistan area of Pakistan, the languages spoken there include, *Kohistani*, *Shina* and its many dialects, other language include *Batairi*, *Goaro*, and *Chilso* language also spoken there. *Khilocha* is the dialect of the Koshistani language.

Focusing on the Gilgit-Baltistan region he said that the languages include *Balti*, *Brushaski*, *Shina*, *Wakhi*, *Domaki* (now named as Dawudi due to social Stigma) also Khowar in the Ghizer region. The language of Balti is Sino-Tibetan language or Tibetan-Burman language also. Brushaski is a language isolate and is not categorized in any of the language groups.

All these languages face many challenges. In 2013, a UNESCO report titled '*Endangered World Languages*' mentions that there are 28 Pakistani languages which are endangered and if no action has been taken then these languages may get extinct from the scene. The further categorisation of languages put these into critically endangered, definitely endangered and endangered, as a matter of fact all the above-mentioned languages are included in this list.

The biggest challenge to these languages, according to Mr. Zobair, is the absence of any written script and tradition, although the oral script remained very strong. Shina and Khowar languages have been written using Urdu alphabets but there is difficulty in pronunciation of sounds. The second challenge they are facing is of the identity, due to marginalization. The third challenge is of globalization, CPEC is one element of regional globalization. Therefore, according to him, people must consider the effects of CPEC on the already endangered cultural and linguistic diversity. The absence on the national media and even in the education sector is deeply affecting local people of Northern Pakistan. And this onslaught on our language is hard to resist as local people lack capacity to resist it. The last challenge is common to all the northern Pakistani languages that is the mountainous terrain which has resisted any interconnectivity among these languages.

He gave following recommendation to resolve the above-mentioned challenges:

- a) Introducing local languages into mainstream education or even introduce these as medium of instruction in schools. It will ensure inclusive and equitable education in mother tongue especially the initial education
- b) The onslaught of Urdu both in print and electronic media must be resisted.
- c) Romanizing of these languages

Sharing the experience of preserving Torwali language, he said that they have established eight schools where the children study for initial two years in mother tongue then they are connected to Urdu and English medium. The model is trilingual, local language, national language and then international language. This helps in building the cognitive ability of the students and they outshine others in later stages.

### *3.3.2 Social issues of new generation in the perspective of Human rights & way forward*

Mr. Israr Uddin Israr presented his topic on social issues of new generation. He believed the dialogue skills are lacking in the society of Gilgit-Baltistan, and people usually tend to engage in a non-research based dialogue process through informal means of communication. He thanked AKRSP for providing this opportunity to trigger the process of dialogue among stakeholders.

Explaining the concept of ‘human right’ he said that these include the rights which are bestowed upon every human being by the virtue of their existence. These are derived from the inherent *dignity* of the human person and are defined internationally, nationally and locally by various law making bodies. And are interlinked, indivisible and interdependent. Like the right to education, health and job are interlinked. The basis of state formation is the provision of human rights to its people.

Moving towards the issues in Gilgit-Baltistan society he argued that in order to understand the problems in our society, we have to identify the shortcomings or absence of institutions. As these are mainly responsible for the problems in our society. There is imbalance in our social institutions. Like moving forward in education but lacking behind in family, strong in religion but weak in politics. There is also a set of problems with our society specially the nature of being an oral society which poses different risks as it is unable to understand the issues it is facing and lacks any deep understanding of any of them. The male dominated society lacks any researched based approach to problems and is in a state of transition to modernization. These sets of challenges have infested the minds of our youth which are in a state of array and need special attention to avoid any catastrophic trend of drug abuse or suicide. In addition to above reasons the socio-economic problems of society, identity crisis and domestic violence among other factors is aggravating the already bad condition. There is a growing fear among the civil society that if these are not properly addressed the youth may show extreme signs of rebellion, poor relationship with parent and no participation in political, social, economic and cultural activities. Thus, hurting the overall fabric of the society.

Mr. Israr favours a multi-dimensional strategy to address these issues. This strategy must include the parenting responsibility of providing a conducive environment for the children at home, also the role of civil society is of much importance because it forces the government to perform and to raise awareness about this issue in the society. The role of government is also important in this strategy; therefore, it must formulate effective mechanisms for promotion of human rights, introducing youth protection policy, capacity building of social institutions, inclusion of human rights in education and update the curriculum. It is present in the constitution but the masses are not aware of these, so awareness must be spread across the population.

Ending this conversation, the important point he raised is that; the fight is with the thinking/mentality and the problems in our society are based on this irresponsible mentality. Every history has a particular thought behind it. When this thought is applied, it transforms into history, take the example of suicide, it was a mere thought but when applied that thinking resulted in the death. Therefore, the battle is with the thought, and to change it we need justification, and that is supported by knowledge generated by the research. This research based thinking in the society will induce new experiments based upon the researched data and thus creating new history.

### *3.2.3 Question and Answer session:*

Tauqeer Kazmi, one of the participants, asked the panel about promotion of a specific mindset in our educational institutions, which has affected in sustaining a homogenous version of history that is the invaders like Mehmood Ghaznavi brought new culture, religion and language thus removing the old, we can’t digest this changing phenomena. So how our

culture or language will sustain? Secondly we are talking about the human rights lessons to be included in the curriculum, does giving education about human rights will fulfil the desired goal of achieving rights based society?

Zubair commented that languages don't die so easily that's why they remain alive. About the invasion of Mehmood Ghaznavi in 10<sup>th</sup> century of Swat, that it was a brief attack but later the Yousafzai immigration turned the local people into minority. That resulted in political isolation of not only Torwalis but also other indigenous people. The homogenous concept of nation-state died along with the end of colonialism and now the world is focusing on the diversity within states. And on the global stage the concepts of multi culturalism and multi ethnics are prevailing now. The invasion of technology is bringing both challenges and the opportunities, therefore, we must use these audio, video technologies to preserve our language not to be placed at a museum but to promote it and also highlight the importance of language as a human rights issue.

In Pakistani society, the language is Islamised therefore, scripting it other than Arabic is challenging specially in our society. Therefore, we are working two sets of scripts both Arabic and roman.

Israr responding to why it is important to include human rights in curriculum, he said that the HRCP is working for last 3 decades, and throughout our course of working we came to the single point that the abuse of human rights is due to the absence of its existence or information about it. Therefore, to spread awareness among the youth the only thing we can do is to include this in the curriculum so that our youth is informed. And these educated youths sensitized about the human rights will later represent many government and private institutions. Therefore, their performance will be guided by the standards of human rights. Another thing also, education in human rights and human rights in education, therefore just educating won't help instead schools must provide opportunities to children so that they apply the knowledge also. It is a global practice all around the nations which are leaders in human rights.

Zaigham inquired about the latest trend of suicides in GB are 90% honour killings, how much truth is in this argument? Secondly it has been argued that suicide is the tool of highly intelligent people which they use once they are unable to achieve their full competence or success in the society, what is your experience in this regard?

Responding to the question Mr. Israr said that their studies in the area of suicide shows that honour killings constitute only 10 percent of the suicides. There are problems with the law also specially relating to the suicides, killing a person within a family is usually handled domestically because unless you become complainant in the case the state does not pursue the case. Another main hurdle lies in the *Diat* Law, if it becomes clear that the suicide is actually honour killing, and mostly relative or brother is the one who murders the victim, the family pursues the case and after some time through *Diat* Law he is pardoned by the family. This phenomenon is widespread across Pakistan, the Civil society specially the film maker Sharmeen Chinoi have argued about including honour killing as a crime against the state and the state must work as a complainant. As the terrorism, related cases are dealt by military courts. Therefore, state once becoming the complainant will reduce the misuse of loopholes in *Diat* Law.

For the other part suicide has many reasons and it depends upon case to case with multiple cases like poverty, drug abuse, domestic violence, child marriage. For the case of suicides in Gilgit-Baltistan, the Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly has formed a committee and we the civil society have put recommendation that an in-depth study/research should be carried out to find the causes of it. The expanses are huge so that the state should lead the way. And another recommendation put forwarded was to prepare a suicide prevention policy and fund must be created for this purpose and that should work to remove or address the causes of suicides.

### **3.4 SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF GILGIT-BALTISTAN**

The session has been moderated by Mr. Aziz Ali Dad, he is currently working as specialist at Knowledge Management and Communication KMC-AKRSP. Opening up the session he elaborated the formation of self in a particular society. He argued that the Gilgit-Baltistan society is in transition but in addition to that it is also involved in a state of confusion and almost every indicator of the society shows that we as a whole society are in a state of split personality situation. This kind of society require us to do more soul searching, those societies which are weak in this context look inward and the often develops Sufi inclining. But those societies that are courageous enough to question their existence will lead to develop philosophy and knowledge. The purpose of this conference is that we don't want to create a mystic but create knowledge at least create a debate regarding social issues of Gilgit-Batistan. Gilgit-Baltistan society in terms of research on social issues traditionally remained a poor society, he handed over the platform to Ms. Noor Bano, the owner of SEEDA, to present her paper.

#### *3.4.1 From Growing Seed to Flowering Plant: A Journey Through Gender, Self and Society*

It is a reflective paper; it focuses the life of Ms. Noor Bano about her upbringing in a gender discriminated society and under a specific stereotypical situation. She took the analogy of a growing plant and tried to relate it to different stages of her life, linking gender, self and society.

She said gender, a socially constructed concept, biasness has given men have more power than women in Pakistan's rural context be it marriage, education or professional perspective, men are independent as compared to females. Another social stigma, according to her, is that parents prefer their sons over daughters in providing resources and opportunities. Which she faced personally as her younger brother was sent to Lahore for further studies and she was married soon after her high school. Females have to live their lives according to the demands and wishes of the family and the community where they reside. The roles assigned to a woman as a mother, sister, wife or as a home makers in a family headed by male member are still widely practiced despite their taking on roles outside their home.

Discussing her birth to a male dominated society was the first instance of discrimination she faced, because contrary to wishes of the family for a son, a daughter was born. She feels lucky that after her marriage, her in-laws supported her in achieving her dream of higher education. She attributes the support to her was her first child, a boy. The more grew independent and started earning more she was assigned the role of a son not of a daughter due to the earning as societies like this usually ascribe to sons. The realization of male dominated society was getting stronger until her appointment as a teacher trainer changed her perception about the role women are ascribed with, as frequent travel outside her home station created a role ambiguity as she would perform all the domestic chores once she is at home. This also increased challenges as she had to assert her role both inside and outside the family and to be included in the decision-making process. She thinks the 2 years at AKU-IED for M.Ed. made her into a confident woman.

She concluded that the traditional notion of family type activities for women can be challenged by developing professionally. Gender inequalities can be minimized through educating about the realities of human identity.

**Conclusion:** Summarising the presentation Mr. Aziz, reflected upon the suppression of the self in our society and to actualize our self-there is not a single space exist in it. Instead our culture and society in order to suppress women has created new ideas and these new constructed ideas to suppress women results in not realizing the dreams women carry along. The male dominated society has influenced the society in ascribing roles to men and women and therefore women have ideologically internalized the ideology of men and when they speak out usually they speak of ideas of male dominance. The deconstruction and reconstruction of the self is the sole purpose of the knowledge. He said, “As a society we have closed ourselves in our cocoons, and do not want to break its comfort.”

He then invited Mr. Muddabir Ali, who is a member at Young Reformers Gilgit-Baltistan (YRGB) a professional body working for youth, to present his paper.

#### *3.4.2 Discourse Analysis of the Perceived Causes of Suicide Deaths in Gilgit*

Mudabir's paper was about the Suicides in Gilgit-Baltistan. He claimed that the causes highlighted were not researched based instead everyone perceives a different set of reasons for the suicide. Due to the social stigma, the families of the victims are reluctant to speak. He stated that his paper tries to correlate the perceptions of people in a traditional patriarchal setup in the light of theories of Emile Durkheim on suicide. At the outset Mudabir made it clear that the paper does not account for the individual dynamics of suicide deaths, and focuses rather on the vast social changes to come up with a plausible explanation for the increase in suicide rates. The other focus of the paper was on generational gap and the role of social media and education to fill or widening of this gap thus analyzing the reasons for this generation gap and its impacts on the suicide ratio.

He said that it is widely perceived that whenever one becomes alienated from the society and remain distant to it, it results in suicides. But in the society of Gilgit-Baltistan the problem is opposite, because we see that our society has a well-connected communal life and is comprised of educated people but still we face this problem suicide. So far, no authentic data has been collected regarding the suicides of young women and most of the cases are not filed

in police stations because these cases are considered private and people do not want to entangle themselves in legal battles besides, culturally and religiously a stigma is attached to these acts and people therefore, try to disassociate themselves.

He claimed that the literature supports the sources prevalent among youth of GB that the influx of liberal values, autonomy and freedom through modern education are in conflict with existing pervasive patriarchal setup. It is argued that Gilgit-Baltistan has 98% literacy rate but it needs careful analysis as most of the students prefer going to big cities for further education but the curriculum they get exposed to the study imbibe the western ideals of liberty and freedom of expression and movement. Now upon returning to the Gilgit-Baltistan they are faced with the conflicting system as the system in Gilgit-Baltistan is mostly patriarchal. And this stands evident mostly for the girls as they get a short span of freedom and once tasted find it hard to adjusting back in the cage. The example of forced marriage is one in this situation. And often girls are suppressed limiting their wishes, and then they decide to suicide. Education is becoming a manifestation of lust of power and rearing of children rather than becoming source of enlightenment. The lack of economic opportunities and non-existence of private sector, people have only choice of joining the government which of course needs a certain educational qualification. Students do not prefer social sciences because of the insecurity attached with it and adopt medical and engineering universities instead. This puts a competition growing as there are lack of resources and almost every student is competing for them. Thus, education becomes the decisive factor for his or her career. So, in a sense patriarchy not only victimizes women but also men equally. And children failing to opt for any of the above fields are usually termed as 'wasted child', the societal role assigned in this regard is very dangerous and sets the tone for further suppression.

The other set sources originate from the family institution because it offers a unique set of anxiety to the suicide, as at one point in time the parents seemed to be oppressors for the children. The reason is that relationships are based upon emotions but parents usually take decisions based on the rationale and then this conflict results in anxiety among children. Struggling between two consciousness creating split personalities.

The urge of young generation for a new social order stems from the weakness of the existing social order that is the educational and patriarchy system. The youth who harbours suicidal thoughts are more engulfed with new thoughts i.e. the new social order. Therefore, the collision of these two mindsets is the reason behind most of the conflicts related to youth. And in this regard the theory of Durkheim helps to explain this phenomenon, through the points of integration and regulation. In the society where one lives, at the first step you get integrated into the society and in the next step you move towards regulation. Individual in a society cannot survive living alone as he/she attaches himself with a group in a society and draws meaning out of that interaction for her or himself. Now if an individual finds it difficult to integrate him/herself in the society that leads to suicide. This case relates to the above theory that individuals find it difficult to integrate in the society once he/she gets exposed to more liberating society he/she cannot find any middle way in integrating the with the social structure and norms.

For an established society, it has developed mechanism to preserve its social structures and norms, which the Durkheim names as 'regulation'. The moral code of conduct in this regard



is one such example of regulating function of the society. Therefore, Durkheim argues that for a meaningful life in strongly united society, social integration and regulation process are flexible to accommodate the society but Gilgit-Baltistan's society has a more rigid response to the new changes causing a sense of alienation among the youth of the society. So, these non-conformists are side-lined in our society from the institution of the family and religion. This side-lined business is usually employed at the institutional level of norms and values. The surge of the guilt in young men and women for not qualifying, set standards provokes suicidal tendencies and it is assumed that this results in suicides.

He concluded that our society is bifurcated into an old rigid society and new liberal society. There are no efforts done to harmonize these two sets which create conflicts among these institutions and the weaker side the youth face the consequences.

**Conclusion:** Aziz Ali Dad shared his thoughts on the phenomenon of suicide. He said that our old social structures are dying but new society is not replacing it and in such cases monsters appear in society as described by Antonio Gramsci. The ambivalence Muddabir mentioned is defined by Jean Paul Sartre as "Nauseating Condition" when one cannot swallow and nor able to vomit at the same time. In our society, the 'failure' is constructed as an institution and our mindset works on that causes suppression and will lead to depression thus culminating on suicide. And this paper highlights the phenomenon that education is not the solution to the problem instead it is a part of the problem. Therefore, he urged to look at education from a different perspective and change the role of the society.

GB society has also developed inclination towards power and power structures but less paid attention to the knowledgeable lot of the area. Most of the researchers in the region working on suicide focus their work on Durkheim but he does not explain our society as such because our society is closely knitted and individual is not finding space in it. Aziz laid great emphasis on rethink the issue of suicide from a new perspective, and one way of looking at it is through existentialist psychology.

#### *3.4.3 Question and Answer Session:*

Zobair Torwali asked Muddabir about the dichotomy discussed here between the old values and the liberal values. He said similar situation is prevalent mostly in Pashtun society, but the rate of suicide is not as high as we see in Gilgit-Baltistan. He asked, "Is there any missing link in the study which is contributing to suicide in Gilgit-Baltistan? Because suppression is more than from this society, patriarchy is also more influencing there as compared to this society."

Answering the question, Muddabir argued that comparing Pashtun and Gilgit-Baltistan society, he personally feels that in Gilgit-Baltistan society the dichotomy of different set of values is contributing towards these suicide incidents. When analysing the Gilgit-Baltistan society, the existence of Ismaili community in Ghizer district, which is more liberal, in comparison with the Sunni or Shia community in the same area which is more conservative is important because one side feels that he is more restricted than the other side, creating a sense of deprivation in the young minds. The second reason for not comparing each society is the integration and disintegration in both the societies with Gilgit-Baltistan more integrated and higher education levels. Now Pashtun Societies have differing cultural values varying across different areas of inhabitation.



Mr. Israr inquired from the panellist that suicide is a complex phenomenon and it requires an interdisciplinary approach to handle the situation. What do you think about the extremism in all its shapes, being political, economic and religious etc. responsible for suicides and suppression in the society?

Mudabbir replied in affirmative that the extremism in our society of different faces is contributing towards suicide. As far as the current economic system prevails and we don't have any alternative in practice we wouldn't be able to curb the economic extremism.

Ahmed Ali Jan, one of the participants, spoke on gender biasness specially in our society where women are seldom given share in the property and have been traditionally treated as a medium to perform the labour. Know the concept of empowerment actually shifted the burden, as before she would perform home chores but now earns. Therefore, this empowerment is merely a change in the role of women with no representation in political circle, decision making and other spheres of life.

### 3.5 ENVIRONMENT

The moderator of the session was Mr. Zaigham , he is a lecturer of political science; at Government College University, Lahore. He invited Mr. Aziz Ali Dad, to present his paper on the identity debates in GB.

#### 3.5.1 Identity Debates in Gilgit-Baltistan

One of the problems in GB, according to him, among academics and writers is the use of vocabulary without realizing the in-depth meaning of it. Therefore, such meanings are localized in the society which is an interesting phenomenon. The same is the case with the local identities, where people are influenced by global ideologies and localised them to create a hybrid identity and a hybrid political system. There is not any consolidated identity present among the masses. Identity, in this region, is the biggest issue because the definition of identity is very complex thing to conceptualise. In his opinion, the definition of identity emerges out of the socio-cultural context of the society. The socio-cultural discourse generated due to this phenomenon also influences the identity of the people. The historical identity of the people of this region is a kind of liquid identity. He had extended the thesis of 'liquid modernity' into GB. Liquid identities mean that identities of people of GB were fluid, even they remained fluid after the arrival of the British but in the last 50 years these identities got consolidated. The effect of this consolidation is that 'monolithic' identities are forming on the one hand, and the multiplicity of identities within a single identity has been vanishing on the other. Aziz Ali Dad's talk shed light on the process through which this consolidation of multiple identities into a monolithic identity is occurring.

Rejecting the idea of minority in local context, Aziz stated that its definition changes with the change in space. Citing an example, Aziz said that as a Shina speaker one is considered a minority in Hunza as these are almost 11% and *Wakhi* speaking people are 23%. Basing the

identity on the language in Hunza region has turned Shina speaker to a minority. And going with this argument the *Brushaski* speakers are in majority. Contrary to this introducing oneself by sect as an Ismaili in the Hunza region then the same Shina speaker becomes majority, and the Shia community which speaks *Brushaski* becomes minority. When the same Shina speaker identifies him or herself as an Ismaili in Gilgit, he or she becomes minority though he/she enjoys majority status in Hunza. If he/she bases his identity on Shina language he becomes part of majority unlike his status of minority in Hunza. The same phenomenon goes with other areas as well based on religion, caste, language and clan. Therefore, the space is very important in the identity context. This case of multiple and fluid identities is prevalent among the residents of GB, due to the diversity in language, religion and ethnicity.

The identification of *Wakhi* speaking people or the *Brushaski* speakers based on language or race is of prime importance here. In Gilgit-Baltistan, there is a confusion regarding the bases of identity. An interesting phenomenon is occurring after the dissolution of traditional structures. In the post principalities period, a new set of discourses are emerging in Gilgit-Baltistan. The people of *Sheen* ethnicity claim to be descendants of Abu Jehal. In reality, they are Aryans invaders and they do not have any historical linkage with the Arabs. This affiliation of identity is affecting the psychological make up of their mind. Taking the example of *Brushaski* speaking people, being a language isolate, some claim that *Brushaski* speakers are the indigenous people of the area. But *Brushaski* too trace their forefathers to multiple ethnicities or areas outside their homeland. Some link them to the Macedonia. Another group claim that their forefathers came from Mesopotamia - modern Iraq. Also, another theory emerged about linkage with the Hungry, based on the prefix *Hun* meaning one in *Brushaski* and suffix *Gari* meaning lamp.

The problem with these ideas are that inter-race and inter-lingual connections are ignored in the process. Actually, cross lingual, cultural and ethnic interactions form the ideas and identities of people. Unfortunately, the cultural exchange and assimilation process has been ignored by the people. The example of Balti people linking themselves with the Tibetans is one such case, but in reality, the people of Tibet actually under the Buddhist flag murdered and swept away the identities of Balti people. But Balti people still call themselves as Tibet e Khurd, surrendering their identities with the Tibet, and letting their *Palay* identity vanished away.

According to Aziz, history of Gilgit-Baltistan, which is mostly oral and not written, therefore provides a good platform for people to insert their figment of imagination and settling themselves in the imagine space, and create imagined community. Unfortunately, absence of trained historians has given opportunity for everyone to interpret the history. In his words, a new trend in the identity realm is taking place in this region as people are writing their family and tribal histories. Most of these writers are either retired officers or influential people. And most of these writers portray their forefathers as heroes and this trend is found almost in every clan.

The disappointment is that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan do not associate themselves with the land owned by them. This trend creates uprooted identities as the body inhabits the space of Gilgit-Baltistan, but the soul is present elsewhere. In the whole Gilgit-Baltistan area, the only people who love their land and language, to some extent as compared with the other areas, are the *Khowar* speakers. And the multiple identities present among *Khowar* speakers are

consolidating due to the identity debates and this phenomenon is spreading to the rest of Gilgit-Baltistan. And the identities created through the cross interaction among different people of the Gilgit-Baltistan are also vanishing. The debates on the identities have shaped the consolidated identities of different people of the area but the biggest problem it is creating is that not a single collective identity is created on the whole Gilgit-Baltistan level. The absence of any centre at the Gilgit-Baltistan level is letting the peripheries to act independently. This disintegration of collective identity has turned each separate identity to consolidate itself. And the division at the top is going to the bottom. In order to avert further disintegration from this division, there is a dire need to develop a discourse at Gilgit-Baltistan level that would give us a collective identity and at the same time acknowledge the multiple identities within us.

### *3.5.2 The Conception of Disaster Risks in the Central Karakoram National Park (CKNP)*

Sultan's paper deals with the phenomena of Disaster and the local perceptions to it. He started highlighting that disasters on the global scale are on the rise and how the word 'disaster' is used as a blanket term. The hazards contributing to it are present in the environment and the interaction or vulnerability to these hazards once exceed the bearable limit results into disaster. Traditionally disasters were handled through a response based approach, waiting for a disaster to occur and act according to the intensity of the disaster but now there is a change happening in the thinking about the disaster handling techniques.

Sultan explained that the emerging concept of 'Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)' is now applied across the world in identifying the risks before any disaster happens and reducing those risks to minimal level. This approach is based upon the scientific grounds, and the scientific knowledge is used as tool to address the concerns. This approach has also faced difficulties in implementation especially in rural areas like Gilgit-Baltistan. The main hurdle is the religious influence on the perceptions and opinions of local people. Another problem identified was the absence of local input in the policy formulation and implementation. The scientific experts deem that they possess the scientific knowledge, so there is not any need for the local knowledge to be included. His study tries to fill this void created between the experts and the local people. And will try to explore what local people think about the disasters and what approaches traditionally they had employed to overcome these in their area. The study has been conducted in the four districts of *Central Karakoram National Park (CKNP)*, for two years between 2013 and 2015. Field work has been carried out with participant observation, in-depth interviews and focus group discussion were employed to collect the data, and also be categorised as ethno-graphic study.

Speaking about perception regarding disasters, the interpretation has mostly been performed by their spiritual leader *sheikh*, as people think that the interpretation duty rests with him not only for the disaster related interpretations and their causes, but for other matters as well. Based on the responses from the interviewees the dominant response among them was that disaster is the '*Act of God*'. This main response has also a varied number of sub themes in it. The first sub-theme was 'wrath of god' which according to *sheikh* is due the fact that God is angry because sins are on the rise, the social order is not according to the Islamic teachings and people are more inclined towards western ideals, thus, culminating in the disasters.

The second sub them under the '*wrath of the God*' is the 'will of the God', which translates into the mood of the God. The third response categorised into sub theme is, 'test from God'

terming it as a blessing upon them and that once they successfully pass this test they will be rewarded. Fourth sub category is ‘to teach Lessons’ as people are not doing the things right therefore, God teaches them a lesson. The second dominant response among the people was the of ‘Human made or Anthropogenic’ and the third most repetitive response was ‘natural phenomenon’. This third view was endorsed by the youth and educated people of the area although they do relate to some extent the concept of ‘Act of God’ in their response. He explained that the predominant thought was that it was a blessing from Allah and that we all should be thankful to him. The respondents even told not to interfere in the matters dealt by Allah and in some instances questioned the researcher’s belief in Allah. Sultan said that he fears it may become a taboo in the years to come if he did not deal it appropriately.

Sultan was of the opinion that this mentality in the region, prone to many disasters, has to be dealt with, with the concept of DRR taking the charge in the matters related to disasters. The challenge is hard one because despite the work done by many NGOs in this field it failed to change the narrative of the people and they still perceive the disasters as an act of god. The need of the hour is to make people aware about the teachings of Allah regarding the self-help concepts and need to develop a strategy which focuses on the contributions of individuals that are necessary to bring the desired changes in the environment. The CPEC should also be considered in this regard as the development it brings with it will also bring destruction of environment and exploitation of natural resources with it. Therefore, the steps should be taken with all the stakeholders on board and focus should be made on the individual actions that lead to disasters and the level of contributions they can make to address the issues. The first step in this regard is to spread mass level awareness about the concepts of DRR this may be achieved through inclusion of DRR in the curriculum and using audio video tools to spread the message across the population. Resulting in preserving our environment and protecting the ecology we inherited.

### *3.5.3 Question and Answer session:*

Tauqeer questioned Aziz Ali Dad about the multiple identities. He said that this has confused the young people of our region. Therefore, in order to remove this confusion what is the role of nation-state and religion and can play in defining a collective identity? In the context of Gilgit-Baltistan what method should be employed to reach to the stage of collective identity through religion or through politics? He said in Pakistan, people have seen that political collective identity is not given across the board, which resulted in ethnic minorities to be further marginalized. What type of collective identity should we have in Gilgit-Baltistan?”

Aziz explained that before involving politics and religion, a culture at the initial level makes its identity, and it expresses itself through politics and even through religion. Our identity was based on culture. With the dissolution of princely states and subsequent development, the identity base shifted from culture to religious/sectarian based identity. The book “The Divided Self” by R.D. Laing talks about two things; individual identity and collective identity. The individual identity mostly relates to individual psychology and further builds to make a collective identity. When the collective identity fails to shape itself, the individual becomes embroiled in existential anxiety or ontological insecurity, and searches for a collective identity. Now in GB, the sectarian identity is dominating, collective identity refers to I being a *Hunzai*, *Ismaili*, Shina speaker, Gilgit-Baltistani and Pakistani. Therefore, within oneself there are multiple identities. It does not mean to destroy all the identities within oneself, but in Gilgit-Baltistan the sectarian identity is destroying all other identities even the

professional identity has been sectarian. This is because the individual has suppressed all other identities and let the sectarian identity prevail. He said that if we have same cultural identity, then we can collectively express our identity.

Tasawar Baig asked the impact of globalization on human societies and their existence in solid state, liquid state and now in gaseous state along with the reconfiguration of space happening in the world. He asked, “How do you see identities both at individual and collective level in gaseous state?”

Aziz responded that he deliberately excluded the term gaseous state. According to Aziz, the latest theories argue that today the human identity has moved beyond gaseous state and entered into virtual identity. And these virtual identities are dominating the solid identities. Now the virtual identity is dominating. The problem with this virtual identity is that it is also creating new truths. He said that we are living in a post truth age manufactured by the virtual reality. In the virtual state the solid identities are dissolved and many fake identities are evolving. “All that is solid melts into virtual reality” he said.

Dr. Sadiq to Aziz: “You talked about integrated identity. According to your study and opinion what are those commonalities which can work as a source for integration as a single identity in the context of Gilgit-Baltistan?”

Aziz replied that as far as integrated identity is concerned, we have a diverse area both in terms of language, race and region. Looking through anthropological view, the underlying structure of GB culture is similar despite apparent diversity. He said our ways of thinking and seeing is similar. The case holds true for the music and tunes and world view across Gilgit-Baltistan. But now the traditional worldview held by people is disintegrating and we as a collective society could not give a single common worldview and due to the exposure to globalization we will have hybrid identities in us. He said that we should accept this hybrid identity of our age.

Zubair questioned Aziz, “how one can live having a sense of nationhood, with the sectarian, cultural and other identities within us? Second question is about your focus on the self, for me it’s a bundle of impressions, perceptions and labels given by other people to me. So, what is self?”

Aziz said that national identity is very a dangerous one because we have embraced the European model. Our national identity is pushing towards this nation state but the question here is how we can create our identity without the nation state or nationalism? For us the challenge is how we should introduce ourselves as a distinctive cultural identity to the world? The identity of nation state is either based on the religion or race. He said that we can define our distinct identity while living within this nation state.

The self-impression exist as our self is constructed by the society i.e., our home, clan, religion, language even our architecture also helps to form our self. But the self is different from persona. To interact with different people and situation we adopt different personas. But the self is the inner person. In the society and culture of Gilgit-Baltistan, the persona is dominating every sphere of life and personality. For example, we look towards people who hold powerful positions in the society. And due to this dominance of persona, the self is absent in the social space. The sources of the self in Gilgit-Baltistan according to Aziz have been either dried or polluted.

Abuzar inquired Aziz about his ending note about the synthetic identity needed by us and the discourse needed for it. He asked, “Taking it to further levels, how can we find a homogenous discourse as our area was divided into different areas. The existence of nation-state will allow us to make such a common discourse for building a synthetic identity? Or we have to live in pluralist society as it exists?”

Aziz replied that the problem with the identity starts when you give importance to one identity and suppress others. Like when we placed religion at the core we saw sectarian violence in our area. Same goes for other identities as well. And also, the American model of melting pot does not apply to the context of Gilgit-Baltistan. As an alternative he favoured the idea of salad propounded by the Indian cultural Critique Asish Nandi. He gives the example of a salad where every ingredient maintains its identity without melting. Therefore, we need to be like salad not melted soup. In developing a discourse, we should have this imagination of a salad maker or musician, thus retaining all the identities we have and live collectively.

Israr said that the religiosity is the biggest problem of this country. He asked Sultan, “the way you linked this mindset with the disaster is appreciated but I think all the areas within Pakistan are facing same problem. The curriculum that was prepared by the Zia’s regime put this religiosity in our curriculum. So we need to put the element of scientific methodology in our curriculum. Do you agree with it?”

Sultan answered, “I have seen this element of religiosity in the insurance business too. And I too have seen challenging voices from within communities to this dogma. In researching, I came to a solution that the money collected as donation can also be used in the activities of the disaster risk reduction. But the clerics do not allow these to occur as they have established faith based enterprises which collect this money. Awareness must be made through curriculum designed to include these.

### 3.6 GOVERNANCE

The session was moderated by Mr. Israr Uddin Israr. He is the Provincial Coordinator of Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCPP) in Gilgit-Baltistan. He in his introductory remarks highlighted the importance of owning the governmental institutions and making them accountable as they run on the tax money. He said that the civil society version of self-help with the state intervention has set a dangerous trend with government remaining off the hook for most of the times. For more elaboration on the performance of state institutions particularly of the police in the eyes of the public he invited Dr Sadiq to present his research on it.

#### *3.6.1 Personal and Contextual Determinants of Police Perception in Gilgit-Baltistan*

This paper was presented by Dr Sadiq who heads the Department of Behavioural Sciences in KIU-GB. His focus was on the security front that Gilgit-Baltistan is facing due to the CPEC implementation. Therefore, in order to meet the challenges of security one has to rely on the state and state has certain institutions to protect all the elements within the state according to the constitution of the land. Police is one such important institution in our society.

When the term police are discussed in the society the first thing that comes into peoples’ mind is corruption, nepotism and sectarianism among other thoughts in Gilgit-Baltistan Police. In order to find out whether this perception is pervasive if yes, then what are the

factors either personal or contextual that lead to such thinking? The personal factors of gender, education, occupation and sect are included for the research purpose. And for the contextual elements the past interaction, availability of social welfare organisations, socio-economic status, rural/urban status and the residence of the district were considered for the inquiry. He deplored the scarcity of the research in Gilgit-Baltistan and that a handful of people have conducted the research. He suggested to appoint an enabled and neutral police chief in Gilgit town followed by much-needed police reforms, particularly revamping the police policies and practices.

Speaking about the factor on gender, his research concluded that men and women participants perceived police differently i.e. men have somewhat positive attitudes toward police in terms of roles and responsibilities, performance, transparency, and monitoring of police performance as compared to women. The results indicated that participants' perception of police in terms of police performance, transparency, and monitoring of police performance was influenced by their educational level. Simply, the more educated the respondents, the more positive perceptions about the police in the region.

Based on the occupation of the respondents the results showed that participants' perception of police was varied in police performance, and monitoring of police performance. Government employees and self-employed participants reported significantly more positive police performance as compared to unemployed participants while self-employed participants also reported more positive perception of police performance than students. Government employees perceived that police performance is being monitored highly but unemployed participant and students were not perceiving so. Regarding the sectarian division, the only difference in perception of police performance was found between Ismaili and Noor Bakhsh sects where people belonging to Ismaili sect reported significantly higher police performance as compared to people belonging to Noor Bakhsh sect. People belonging to Ismaili sect reported significantly higher transparency in police as compared to people belonging to Ahle-Sunnat sect.

On the contextual front, Dr. Sadiq's results mentioned that those having past interaction with police perceived that police performance was adequate, and there was relative transparency in police, and police performance compared to those with no prior interaction. Unlike the second group which had negative perceptions about the police. Now the second contextual factor is availability of social welfare organizations in their region. Participants who said 'yes' for "the availability of social welfare organization in their localities" reported significantly higher scores on monitoring of police performance as compared to those participants who reported non-availability of social welfare organization in their areas. The different socioeconomic statuses based on the income level; upper, middle, and lower have insignificant influence on the perception of police. On the other hand, the rural/urban divide; people from rural areas have reported more negative perception of police in terms of roles and responsibilities, police performance, and transparency as compared to people from urban areas.

District wise, the people from Gilgit district perceived significantly higher transparency in police as compared to people from Astore, Skardu, and Ghanche districts, and people from Hunza-Nagar reported significantly higher level of transparency in police as compared to people from Astore district.



The study concluded that peoples' personal and contextual variables have significant effect on their perception of police in terms of their roles and responsibilities, performance, transparency, and monitoring of police performance. Therefore, it is recommended that by improving public image, police can earn public trust and cooperation. It is suggested that Gilgit-Baltistan police department should design and implement strategies to improve police image among common people to acquire institutional legitimacy.

### *3.6.2 Evolution of Education in Hunza: Views of early Teachers in Hunza*

Afiyat Nazar, Area Manager Pakistan Reading Project, presented his paper on “Evolution of Education in Hunza”. He explained the terminologies used in that time in Hunza, which were, *Pir* meaning guide in Persian. This is the title bestowed by the *Imams* to his *Murids* (followers) for performing extra ordinary service to the *Imam* and his *Murids*. *Khalifa*: In this study, the term refers to the *Mullah* or priest like position, usually leading different ceremonies and rituals such as *Nikah*, death and others, amongst the Central Asian Ismailis. *Mir* in Persian and Wakhi languages refers to lord or leader. In this study, the word refers rulers of Hunza state, who are also called *Tham* in Burushaski language.

Afiyat said that his research tries to highlight the local history related to the early steps taken for the development of education in this area. The challenges to this heritage are multiple among them include, the diminishing trend of oral transmission of history, media influence, rare description of education and related issues and documentation of the educational history of Hunza. The early teachers were important actors in the process of evolution. The study attempts to seek their views on how education evolved. The scope of the study is based on the perceptions of the teachers about education in the pre-and post-Diamond Jubilee school era all over Hunza. As the objective of the study was to gain insights about how early teachers experienced the evolution of education in the research setting, Afiyat intended to interview teachers who taught between 1912 and 1960. However, none of the teachers who taught from 1912—1945 are alive. Therefore, the accounts in his study are based on the interview of 12 teachers who taught between 1946 and 1960. Some of these teachers continued their teaching after 1960. Therefore, the description about the pre-DJ school era is based on the views of the DJ teachers who had been students then.

The history of Hunza has for long been transmitted orally about various aspects of life, such as: origin of the people, their genealogy, agrarian knowledge etc. The long winter nights and cool summer evenings provided residents the time and opportunity to share the local histories with younger generation. While there have been efforts to document history in written form, oral transmission of history is still part of everyday life of the mountain communities. The developments in media, economic and other activities, as well as migration of people, nevertheless, has affected the wide spread public practice of oral transmission of the history. Creating the historical account from the memories of the early teachers was just like putting the mosaic together to paint a whole picture. Majority of the teachers told their stories for the first time and that too happened in just one meeting of around one hour each. Therefore, for majority of them it was quite challenging to travel back in time and bring out all the related stories and experiences.

Based on his research he concluded that:



- Prior to establishment of formal school(s) few people from Hunza traveled to parts of Central Asia where they learnt some religious literature in Persian such as poetry and prose of Nasir Khusraw, Rumi, Saadi and the Holy Qur'an and became *Khalifas*. Some of the *Khalifas* even visited the neighbouring State of Nagar to learn the Holy Qur'an as in Hunza it was not allowed.
- Initially access to education was limited to only few families which one of the participants termed as —*Khandani log*. The data suggest that while the children of the *Khandani log* were attending school, the endeavors to make education available for the masses continued on the instruction of Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, the Aga Khan III, *Imam* or spiritual leader of the Shia *Ismailis* Muslims. As a result, co-education in Gulmit were initiated in 1923, after the visits of the representatives of the Aga Khan III: Aga Abdul Samad and Sabz Ali (Hunzai, n.d., p.382). The exact content of Samad's delivered message is unknown. Nonetheless, only one respondent mentioned that he had advised people —to teach their children English language (DA, Int., Feb., 2009). While the later was specifically sent by Aga Khan III to assess the needs of his followers. Sabz Ali brought *Baghdadi Qaeda*: Arabic beginner's book containing alphabets (also see Ali, 2005).
- It can be argued that poverty may have existed for a few, yet the categorization of the era, as an era of poverty by all participants is significant, whereby they also discussed the meaning of the term. For example, the lack of shoes would have limited students' admission and/or attendance in schools from faraway places as some of them had to even cross glaciers to reach schools. Similarly, sitting for long hours on the floor without any mat or cloth piece would have diverted their attention to the state of coldness.

He recommended that the role of Khalifa's in the post 1960's era needs to be explored and similar study needs to be undertaken in other contexts.

**Conclusion:** Concluding Israr Uddin Israr said that the governmental institutions including the police, judiciary, intelligence departments are responsible to maintain the writ of law in the society. Therefore, the image and perception of these among the public should be maintained to make them more public oriented. The role of women in these institutions is very much important and the absence of these has created hindrances for better performance. Where the civil society is vibrant, police feels accountable to people.

On the educational history of the region, Israr commented that the right to education under Universal Declaration on Human Rights has provided a globally accepted definition of the education. It promotes the purpose of education to make a person independent, responsible citizen of the society and who believes on the humanitarian values. And if this definition is followed, then we realise that many things in our society are not working properly. Like in our curriculum, if we target a specific population based on their religious beliefs, then the purpose of education is not achieved. Also, the purpose of education in our society is limited to gain power and access to resources rather than to produce a good human being.

### 3.6.3 Question and Answer Session:

Ali Ahmed Jan inquired Afiyat about the mobile schools that the British never kept a school in its place for more than three years as was practiced in the Ghizer district. Because of this, the elite had travelled to get education are mostly middle pass, and the poor remained only

educated for three years. He questioned, “Do this strategy is employed by the *Mir* in the Hunza region too?”

Afiyat answered that there were many factors behind this concept of mobile schools. Foremost among them is the issue of power struggle between the *Mir* of Hunza and the *Mir* of Punyal to gain favours of the British. He said, “My focus was the period between 1912 to 1946. Because there was a great amount of confusion regarding the benefit of education as it will only yield the post of *khalifa* in this period and this perception prevailed even after 1960s when the girls’ education was started. Before 1946, the school were mainly for the elite. It is only after the establishment of Diamond Jubilee schools in 1946, the mass education drive started.

Ms. Memona Abbas asked Dr. Sadiq, “how the perception of Ismaili community regarding the transparency in police is different from her as she is an Ismaili and her real observations and experiences are somehow different from his findings. So, what indicators you had placed in your questionnaire regarding the transparency variable?”

Dr. Sadiq answered that he had used psychometrically sound questionnaire, that is valid and reliable. And before completing the questionnaire he had followed the steps to form a comprehensive questionnaire. The first source was the concept generation and second was the literature like police manuals which define the term transparency. He had performed tests on the questionnaires like confirmative analysis and exponential analysis.

## 4-GIFT DISTRIBUTION TO PARTICIPANTS

Token of appreciation on given by Mr. Akhter PM-ID on behalf of AKRSP to distribute among the participants. The names were:

Israr ud din, Zaigham Abbas, Ali Ahmed Jan, Zobair Torwali, Faheem Baig, Mohammad Idrees, Fazal Amin Baig, Mudabir Ali, Afiyat Nazar, Dr Sadiq, Aziz Ali Dad.

Requested Aziz Ali to give the gifts to participants:

Akhter, Altaf Hussain and Sultan Ahmed.

Now for gifts distribution to women Ms. Yasmeen was invited. Noor Bano and Maimoona Abbas were given the gifts.

## 5-NOTE OF THANKS

Concluding the conference, Yasmeen Karim, PM-GAD, stressed on the objective of this conference. The objective was to generate a debate among the scholars, researchers and community through this forum on issues relating to sustainable solutions for the change and developments in GB due to CPEC. This will also help to build upon the existing knowledge base through recommendations of the scholars.

Elaborating the role of AKRSP, she said that it has a history in the socio-economic development of community. Realizing its position and the expectations from community, AKRSP aims to bring the community and the academia to exchange knowledge and to

determine a future course of action through policy support to the government so that they can be able tackle the challenges the region will face in the context of CPEC.

She said that this gathering would prove to be a milestone for the future endeavours on the process of generating and sharing knowledge to cater to the needs and to lead the people in a better direction. And the goal of sustainable development cannot be achieved by AKRSP alone. It needs partnerships with the government, academia, civil society and community. She hoped that such events will be held in future and will generate much need debate.

On behalf of AKRSP and GM-AKRSP, Yasmin Karim thanked Zafar Waqar Taj and all the scholars who travelled from different corners of Pakistan for their participation and sharing their knowledge and experience. And announced that AKRSP has plans, in future, on using the chain of LSOs to disseminate the findings of the conference to communities across Gilgit-Baltistan. Yasmin expressed her hopes to continue this process through organizing conferences in the future.

## 6-RECOMMENDATIONS

This conference provided an opportunity for the academia and practitioners to assemble on a single platform and provide their valuable inputs regarding opportunities and challenges faced by the community in the backdrop of CPEC related development projects. Following are some of the recommendations suggested by the panellist in conference:

- An authentic information disseminating platform in the shape of a think tank led by academia and supported by government is the need of the hour to cater the demand for knowledge generation for decision making and to fill the knowledge vacuum to overcome the conspiracy theories.
- More opportunities for cultural exchanges to scale down instances of cultural and language threat perceptions among populations. Building institutions on the collaboration model to preserve and protect historical assets. These institutions must be people owned and government sponsored.
- An Environmental Management Plan, designed through multiple stakeholders input, focusing on managing environmental degradation and introducing a standardization and certification program for tourism.
- Enacting legislation to provide a provincial like setup to Gilgit-Baltistan including establishing formal institutions like high court with equal powers of legal enforcement at par with other provinces and devolving legislative power on important subjects to the lower house of Gilgit-Baltistan will empower the political and social institutions, providing a sound base for the economy to develop on modern lines.

- The recruitment policies for the public-sector organisations must incorporate merit based selection criteria to retain best minds of the society. Simultaneously, legislation to attract youth in the political sphere must be made on emerging scenarios.
- Engaging the people at the grass root level, as cooperatives, in the political developments will help to mould the society in general and civil society in particular to develop a collective economic system. Thus, responding to the current issues through invoking customary laws related to land, water and customs as their basic rights in the legislation.
- Research and development in harmonizing technology for sustainable development prioritizing local culture, capitalizing human and natural resources and overcoming the traditional models to recognize unexplored facets of rural development.
- Organizing and celebrating local events will help in expressing the collective behaviour through different means promoting the symbols of the inherited culture.
- Implementing tourism policy that responds to the challenges faced by this sector on multiple fronts including preserving local culture and language, traditions, food, tourism generated pollution, environment and ecology.
- Designing curriculum to introduce local languages as medium of instruction in schools. Ensuring inclusive and equitable education in mother tongue especially the initial education to preserve the local languages. Additionally, all the local languages must Romanise their languages to preserve their identity as a different script other than Urdu to survive in the age of globalisation. Promoting language should be taken as a human right issue and using technology to preserve and promote it.
- Ensuring human rights issues including youth and gender rights. These to be incorporated in legislations, policies and rules, and their implementation across the board in every institution of the society. Also, strengthening these institutions and spreading awareness through mass media and curriculum will contribute to the accountability of these institutions.
- Promoting a single collective identity discourse within the broad set of multiple identities at Gilgit-Baltistan level through common symbols and heritage averting any disintegration from intra lingual, regional and ethnic division.
- Spreading mass level awareness about the concepts of Disaster Risk Reduction through inclusion in the curriculum and using audio video tools to spread the message across the population. Resulting in preserving our environment and protecting the ecology we inherited.
- GB police department should design and implement strategies to improve police image among common people to acquire institutional legitimacy. Thus, turning them into more public oriented, accountable and trusted institutions.

## ANNEXES

### *A-Conference Program*

#### **AGA KHAN RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAM (AKRSP)**

#### ***NEGOTIATING CHANGE FOR SUSTAINABILITY: HORIZONS OF CPEC IN GB***

Venue: Passu, Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan

**6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2017**

#### **Conference Program**

| <b>Day 1: Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2017</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Time</b>                                      | <b>Programme</b>                              |
| 9:00-10:35                                       | Inaugural Session                             |
| 9:00   | Registration of the Participants              |
| 9:30-9:35  | Recitation of Holy Quran by Mr. Afiyat Naza   |
| 9:35-9:50  | Welcoming remarks:<br>AKRSP (Yasmeen Karim)   |
| 9:50-10:05                                       | Presentation on CPEC: <i>Aziz Ali Dad</i>     |
| 10:05-10:20                                      | Speech of Chief Guest: <i>Zafar Waqar Taj</i> |
| 10:20-10:35                                      | Introduction to FACE                          |
| <b>Tea Break</b>                                 |   |
| <b>Conference Sessions</b>                       |   |
| <b>China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)</b>   |   |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Social Dimensions of Gilgit-Baltistan</b> |
| <b>Moderator: Mr. Aziz Ali Dad</b>           |

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Moderator: Mr. Ali Ahmed Jan</b>  |   |
| 10:40-11:00                          | Zaigham Abbas: <i>Social Transformation, Migration and Urbanity in Gilgit-Baltistan: An interpretive phenomenological study of CPEC</i> |
| 11:00-11:20                          | Mohammad Idrees: <i>CPEC a coincidence of Economic Expedience and Political Deviousness</i>   |
| 11:20-11:40                          | Fazal Amin Baig: <i>Indigenous Rights and Leadership rights in G.B. Dancing on music of CPEC</i>  |
| 11:40-12:00                          | Q&A Session   |
| <b>Tourism and Music</b>             |   |
| <b>Moderator: Mr. Zobair Torwali</b> |   |
| 12:00-12:20                          | Seema Karim and Safi Ullah: <i>Effects of Tourism on Culture of Gilgit-Baltistan</i>  |
| 12:20-12:40                          | Ali Ahmed Jan: <i>Music History of Gilgit-Baltistan</i>   |
| 12:40-1:00                           | Fahim Baig: <i>Reviewing Tourism and Technology as a sustainable Rural Development Strategy: A case study of Hunza</i>                  |
| 1:00-1:20                            | Q&A Session   |
| 1:20-2:20                            | Lunch Break   |
| <b>Culture and Society</b>           |   |
| <b>Moderator: Mr. Sultan Ahmed</b>   |   |
| 2:30-2:50                            | Zobair Torwali: <i>Challenges to the linguistic diversity of North Pakistan</i>   |
| 2:50-3:10                            | Israr Ud din: <i>Social issues of new generation in the perspective of Human rights &amp; way forward</i>                               |
| 3:10-3:20                            | Q&A   |
| <b>End of Day 1 Session</b>          |   |

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 9:30-9:35                          | Recitation of Holy Quran  |
| 9:35-9:55                          | Noor Bano: <i>From Growing Seed to Flowering Plant: A Journey Through Gender, Self and Society</i>        |
| 9:55-10:15                         | Noor Ur Rehman/Mudabir Ali: <i>Discourse Analysis of the Perceived Causes of Suicide Deaths in Gilgit</i> |
| 10:15-10:35                        | Q&A Session   |
| <b>Environment</b>                 |   |
| <b>Moderator: Mr. Zaigham</b>      |   |
| 10:40-11:00                        | Aziz Ali Dad: <i>Identity Debates in Gilgit-Baltistan</i>   |
| 11:00-11:20                        | Sultan Ahmed: <i>Conception of Disaster Risks in the Central Karakoram National Park (CKNP)</i>           |
| 11:20-11:40                        | Q&A   |
| 11:40-12:00                        | <b>TEA BREAK</b>  |
| <b>Governance</b>                  |   |
| <b>Moderator: Mr. Israr Ud din</b> |   |
| 12:00-12:20                        | Dr. Sadiq: <i>Personal and Contextual Determinants of Police Perception in Gilgit-Baltistan</i>           |
| 12:20-12:40                        | Afiyat Nazar : <i>Evolution of Education in Hunza: Views of early Teachers in Hunza</i>                   |
| 12:40-1:00                         | Q&A Session   |
| <b>Concluding Session</b>          |   |
| 1:00-1:10                          | Gift Distribution among the participants  |
| 1:00-1:10                          | <i>Note of Thanks: Ms. Yasmeen Karim</i>  |
| <b>Lunch Break</b>                 |   |
| <b>End of the Conference</b>       |   |

### *B-Participants' List*

| Conference on CPEC-2017   |                      |                           |  |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Negotiating Change for Sustainability: CPEC Horizons in Gilgit-Baltistan</i> |                      |                           |  |
| S. No.  | Name of Participants | Designation               | Institutions                                     |
| Paper Presenters  |                      |                           |  |
| 1   | Afiyat Nazar         | District Program Manager  | Pakistan Reading Project                         |
| 2   | Ali Ahmed Jan        | Director                  | Gilgit-Baltistan Policy Institute                |
| 3   | Dr Sadiq Hussain     | Assistant Professor       | Karakoram International University               |
| 4   | Faheem Baig          | Youth Development Officer | Hashoo Foundation                                |
| 5   | Fazal Amin Baig      | Researcher                | Aga Khan Rural Support Program                   |
| 6   | Israr ud din         | Provincial Coordinator    | Human Rights Commission of Pakistan              |
| 7   | Mehnaz Parveen       | Director                  | Foundation for Arts Culture and Education        |
| 8   | Mohammad Idrees      | Lecturer                  | Karakoram International University               |
| 9   | Muddabir Ali         | Member                    | Young Reformers Gilgit-Baltistan                 |
| 10  | Noor Bano            | CEO                       | Socio Educational Enterprise Development Academy |
| 11  | Safi Ullah           | CEO                       | Aga Khan Cultural Support Program                |
| 12  | Seema Karim          | Entrepreneur              | Institute of Business and Administration         |
| 13  | Sultan Ahmed         | Assistant Professor       | Karakoram International University               |
| 14  | Zafar Waqar Taj      | Secretary                 | Public Works Department                          |
| 15  | Zaighma Abbas        | Lecturer                  | Government College University Lahore             |
| 16  | Zeeja                | Director                  | Foundation for Arts Culture and Education        |
| 17  | Zubair Torwali       | Executive Director        | IBT  |
|   |                      |                           |  |



| Participants |                 |                    |   |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| 18           | Altaf Hussain   | Executive Director | Gilgit Baltistan Policy Institute       |
| 27           | Kamal Ud Din    | CEO                | Karakoram Area Development Organization |
| 28           | Lal Bano        | CEO                | WEEI                                    |
| 29           | Mustafa         | Chairman           | Karakoram Area Development Organization |
| 30           | Sajid Ali       | Lecturer           | Karakoram International University      |
| 31           | Tasawar Baig    | Director IR        | Karakoram International University      |
| 32           | Waseem Samad    | CEO                | Rupani Foundation                       |
| 33           | Ali Qurban      | Member             | Passu Development Organization          |
| 34           | Haider          | Member             | Chipurson Development Organization      |
| 35           | Raza Mohammad   | Chairman           | Gulmit Rural Support Organization       |
| 36           | Rohila          | Student            | Education College Gilgit                |
| 37           | Memona Abbas    | Teacher Educator   | College of Education, Gilgit            |
| 38           | Tauqeer Kazmi   | General Secretary  | Young Reformers Gilgit Baltistan        |
| 39           | Abuzar Ghaffari | Member             | Young Reformers Gilgit Baltistan        |
| 40           | Aftab Ahmed     | Program Manager    | IBT                                     |
| 41           | Khalid Jan      | Manager MER        | Aga Khan Rural Support Organization     |
| 42           | Aisar Bano      | Chairperson        | G.D.O                                   |
| 43           | Sahib Hayat     | Chairman           | Chipurson Local Support Organization    |
| 44           | Muhammad Qurban | Secretary          | Chipurson Local Support Organization    |
| 45           | Karim Raza      | Member             | Chipurson Local Support Organization    |
| 46           | Rahim Ullah     | Member             | Chipurson Local Support Organization    |
| 47           | Sher Ahmed Khan | Member             | Chipurson Local Support Organization    |
| 48           | Haider Murad    | Member             | Chipurson Local Support Organization    |
| 49           | Abdul Waheed    | Manger             | Bulbulik Music School                   |
| 50           | Saleem Ullah    | Artist             | Bulbulik Music School                   |
| 51           | Sidra Kanwal    | Artist             | Bulbulik Music School                   |
| 52           | Maira Kiran     | Artist             | Bulbulik Music School                   |
| 53           | Naila           | Artist             | Bulbulik Music School                   |
| 54           | Tajida          | Arist              | Bulbulik Music School                   |

|                             |                |   |                                       |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 55                          | Sultan Madad   | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 56                          | Israr Karim    | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 57                          | Abdul Wajid    | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 58                          | Fazal Hussain  | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 59                          | Ibrar          | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 60                          | Danyal Waheed  | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 61                          | Saif Rumi      | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 62                          | Azhar Rozdar   | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 63                          | Rozi Shah      | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 64                          | Didar Ali      | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 65                          | Sartaj karim   | Artist  | Bulbulik Music School                 |
| 66                          | Noor Khan      | Chairman  | Baltit Rural Support Programme        |
| 67                          | Nasr Ullah     | General secretary                                 | Baltit Rural Support Programme        |
| 68                          | Musa           | Senior Member                                     | Altit Rural Support Programme         |
| 69                          | Awais Ali Khan | Member  | Young Reformers Gilgit-Baltistan      |
| 70                          | Ghulam Haider  | Vice-Chairman                                     | SADO                                  |
| 71                          | Mirza Hussain  | Chairman  | Shahi-Khyber youth Organization       |
| 72                          | Safdar Ali     | Manager   | Baltit Rural Support Organization     |
| 73                          | Fatima Bano    | BOD member  | Altit Rural Support Organization      |
| 74                          | Zahida Ameen   | BOD member  | Haiderabad Rural Support Organization |
| 75                          | Meherban       | Manager   | Mountain Area Support Organization    |
| <b>AKRSP Representation</b> |                |   |                                       |
| 76                          | Yasmeen Karim  | Program Manager-Gender and Development            | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme      |
| 77                          | Akhter         | Program Manager-Institutional Development         | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme      |
| 78                          | Aziz Ali Dad   | Specialist Knowledge Management and Communication | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme      |
| 79                          | Sumaira        | Knowledge   | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme      |

|               |                            |  |  |
|---------------|----------------------------|--|--|
|               |                            | Management and Communication           |  |
| 80            | Amjad                      | Manger Admin                           | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme           |
| 81            | Naeem                      | Manger IT                              | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme           |
| 82            | Amin Posh                  | Social Mobilizer                       | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme           |
| 83            | Ibrahim                    | Manager-Hunza Region                   | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme           |
| 84            | Anees Abbas                | Knowledge Management and Communication | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme           |
| <b>Others</b> |                            |  |  |
| 85            | Ali Ahmed                  | Reporter                               | GEO News Islamabad                         |
| 86            | Qawalistan Band            | Music Band                             | Islamabad                                  |
| 87            | FACE team                  | Organizers                             | Foundation for Arts, Culture and Education |
| 88            | Malang Party               | Music Band                             | Islamabad                                  |
| 89            | Ali Ashraf and Crazy Vibes | Music Band                             | Karachi                                    |
| 90            | Altit Music School         | Music Band                             | Aga Khan Cultural Support Programme        |
| 91            | Photo Team                 | Photographers                          | Foundation for Arts, Culture and Education |

## C-Media Coverage of the Conference

1.



The screenshot shows the homepage of 'The High Asia Herald' website. The header includes the logo, navigation links (HOME, LATEST, EDITORIAL, FEATURES, OPINION, HIGH ASIA, GILGIT-BALTISTAN, ARCHIVES), and a search bar. The main article is titled 'CPEC: CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES FOR GB AND CHITRAL'. Below the title is a photo of a conference. To the right, there is a sidebar with a section titled 'High Altitude Callousness' and a map of Pakistan showing groundwater samples.

**CPEC: CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES FOR GB AND CHITRAL**

Breaking News | al census results | Islama... | Mamnoon asks KIU to introduce CPEC-relater

**CPEC: Challenges, opportunities for GB and Chitral**

High Altitude Callousness

0 comment | Read Full Article

Groundwater samples taken from nearly 1,200 sites; study published in Science Advances journal

PAKISTAN Population: 210 - 500

INDIA

Indus River

People who regularly drink water with high

The High Asia Herald made a detailed coverage of the conference. Some of the material from the news is attached below.

## August 16

05:082017

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### NEWS DESK

Globalization



Globalization, particularly the second wave of changes that are taking place in the shape of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) after the opening of the Karakoram Highway (KKH) about three decades ago will

have an immense impact on indigenous people, their culture and ecology. There is a need for political will, research-based information to understand the dynamics of the modern development concept and neoliberal economic agenda of global powers.

This was the crux of discussions at a two-day conference on “Negotiating Change for Sustainability: Horizons of CPEC in Gilgit-Baltistan” organized by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (#AKRSP) at Passu, a small town in Hunza District’s Gojal Tehsil recently.

“China built KKH with an aim to expand its communist ideology as well as for its strategic purposes. Now through the corridor, the capitalist China is entering the region for business and trade purposes”.—Aziz Ali Dad



The participants including academics, researchers, development practitioners as well as cultural and rights activists, also see ‘huge’ opportunities in the ‘game-changer’ multi-billion-dollar project for the Karakoram, Pamir and Hindu Kush mountain regions.

They, however, were in unison in emphasizing on a continuous dialogue between academia, researchers, civil society, political leadership, local communities and development practitioners to generate knowledge and share information to unravel the complexities of socioeconomic issues, understand the challenges and opportunities in the wake of emerging regional and global power dynamics.

## ***DYNAMICS OF A ROAD AND A CORRIDOR***

“We have to understand the dynamics of a road and a corridor,” Aziz Ali Dad, specialist, #Knowledge #Management, said while sharing his research study on CPEC, covering various sectors in the economy which can provide immense opportunities and challenges for Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.

“China built #KKH with an aim to expand its communist ideology as well as for its strategic purposes. Now through the corridor, the capitalist China is entering the region for business and trade purposes. Therefore, it will bring a different set of challenges and opportunities,” Aziz, a subaltern scholar who contributes columns to mainstream English media of Pakistan, said.

## ***KNOWLEDGE DEFICIT***

“There is a lack of knowledge about #CPEC especially in our area and no knowledge generation is currently taking place,” Aziz said.

Where there is a lack of knowledge and information, conspiracy theories fill the vacuum in societies like ours. Conspiracy theories feed most of the information gap in GB, he said, adding that the purpose of the conference is to look at CPEC from a researcher and academics perspective to understand what opportunities it holds for us. But, he put a question: “Who will determine the course of direction?” The traditional societies and structures have not the capacity to do so. “Therefore, academia should build a base for a strong political standing to negotiate it according to the local demands,” he stressed.

## OPPORTUNITIES IN ENERGY SECTOR



Noted poet and bureaucrat #Zafar #Waqar #Taj, who was the chief guest, discussed the steps being taken by the government for safeguarding the interests of the GB in the \$50 billion project. "When we look at both pre- and post 70s eras, we see a rapid development in our region," the secretary power said.

KKH brought in education, money, awareness, business. But at the same time, we witnessed the flow of weapons and narcotics in the region. "These dangers are also associated with the CPEC. If we didn't comprehend what we need and what not we may have only dust in our hands," he remarked. CPEC is bringing huge investment in energy sector in B2B mode like IPPs. If we are not prepared we won't be able to harness anything except harm our selves," he said. It will have far-reaching effects on our culture, language, literature and values, he concluded.

## ENDANGERED LANGUAGES, CULTURE

#Zubair #Torwali, a language activist, also seconded Zafar's views and concerns about the future of indigenous languages.

Speaking on challenges to the linguistic diversity mentioned that all the 28 languages spoken in the northern region from Swat to Gilgit-Baltistan are in danger of extinction, quoting a 2013 #UNESCO report.

"People of the northern region are confused about their identities; the tough terrain of the region also hinders cultural integration to form a collective approach to handle the common linguistic issue." – Zubair Torwali





Giving the reasons for their bleak future, he says these languages have no script or written traditions. "People of the region are confused about their identities," Zubair remarked. "The tough terrain of the region also hinders the communities to form a collective approach to handle the common linguistic issue," Zubair said.

He also blamed globalisation and onslaught of commercial media for this sorry state of affairs.

"It is state's responsibility to take steps for the promotion of endangered languages by making them the medium of instruction in schools, through mainstream media, he recommended.

## **EXPLORING NEW AVENUES**

Earlier briefing about the theme and objectives of the conference, Yasmin Karim, Programme Manager Gender and Development, said: "The regions of GBC have undergone drastic changes with their exposure to the outside world following the abolition of traditional governance structure, transformation in society and shift in economic base.

"The region is now facing new realities which need new ways of seeing things," she said.

"Globalization offers both opportunities and challenges to societies living in margins."—Yasmin Karim

Today we live in a global world where time and space is compressing.

The process of globalization offers both opportunities and challenges to societies living in margins, she cautioned.

The regions of #GBC have remained hitherto at the margins of major economic developments that occurred in the neighbouring regions. Being a corridor of Central and South Asia our region has become a pivotal point. We want to generate a discourse that will ensure a sustainable development in the region, she said.

The speakers said the changes emanating from Chinese interest and investment in Pakistan will soon expand into the larger interactions of the One Belt One Road policy that will involve many cultures, economies and ecologies under a single policy framework.

Others who also spoke on the occasion included Safiullah Baig, Fahim Baig, Zaigham Abbas, Muhammed Idrees, Sultan Ahmed, Israruddin Israr, Fazal Amin Beg, Ali Ahmed Jan, Noor Bano, Afijat Nazar and Dr Muhammed Sadiq.

2.

## **Seminar explored horizons of CPEC in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral**



[August 7, 2017 Pamir Times](#)

Hunza: (PR) Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) held a seminar on "Negotiating Change for Sustainability: Horizons of CPEC in Gilgit-Baltistan" in Passu Gojal in Hunza. The design and objectives of conference supports resilience and good development yet fall

outside the remit of any single development organization. The presentations are formatted as dialogues between a national scholar/practitioner and a local scholar/practitioner/community member. There will be interactions, participation, commentary, and above all practical demonstrations of the art of dialogue, including, listening, probing, clarifying, enrichment, agreeing, disagreeing and negotiating. These skills are part of the ancient syncretic cultures of the Silk Route spanning centuries of sustainable actions and are essential to negotiating the socio-ecological and economic changes that are once again imminent.



Elucidating the theme of conference Yasmin Karim, Programme Manager Gender and Development, briefed the participants about the objectives and context of CPEC in Pakistan in general, and Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral in particular. Speaking on the occasion she said that after the opening of KKH our region is witnessing a major development in the shape of CPEC, which is called game changer for Pakistan. She emphasized that the socio-economic realities of the region have witnessed sea change in terms of education, quality of life, economy and other spheres of life. It is to deliberate upon these changes and explore the horizons of CPEC in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral we all are gathered here.

Aziz Ali Dad, Specialist Knowledge Management, shared study of AKRSP on CPEC. The theme covered various sectors in economy which can provide immense opportunities for the region of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.

The Chief Guest of the conference, Zafar Waqar Taj Secretary Works, presented his views about the literature, culture and society of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. He stressed on focusing soft side of development along with infrastructure development that would be brought by initiative undertaken under the aegis of CPEC project.





The participants unanimously agreed upon expanding the dialogue between academia, researchers, civil society, government, local communities and development practitioners in future. AKRSP reiterated its commitment for participatory and sustainable development in the mountainous region of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.

3.

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## CPEC in Gilgit-Baltistan

Zubair Torwali



**P**assu is a beautiful village about 150 kilometres on the Karakorum Highway from the town of Gilgit. It is at the mouth of the 57 kilometre-long world's fifth longest glacier, Batura. This beautiful village is surrounded by peaks that look like cones and are called Passu Cones or Passu Cathedral.

Passu is famous all over the world because of the features described above. But at the beginning of this month, Passu attracted attention for another reason. A good number of intellectuals and researchers from Gilgit-Baltistan gathered in the village for two days to analyse the impacts of CPEC on the ecology, sociology, cultural diversity, economy and political status of the region which is rightly described by linguist O'Leary "as a mountainous area where the Hindu Kush, the Himalayas and the Karakorams form a knot" and "a land of geographic and ethnic diversity, one of the most multilingual places on the face of the earth."

The Aga Khan Rural Support Program has organised a formal gathering of researchers and public intellectuals of the region to discuss whether Gilgit-Baltistan is ready to exploit and sustain, or repackage, the forthcoming changes on its culture, economy, politics, ethnic and religious diversity etc in the wake of CPEC which starts in Pakistan from this region.

The underlying concept of starting an informed discourse around major projects and the socio-economic changes they can result in was envisaged in one of the core speeches as "the basic purpose of arranging the conference stems from the basic philosophy of [the] AKRSP, which takes into consideration the views from the periphery and bring voices from the margins onto the centre stage of the development discourse". It further states that after the opening of the Karakorum Highway the region is witnessing a major development in the shape of CPEC, which has been called a game-changer for Pakistan. The socio-economic realities of the region have witnessed major

changes in terms of education, quality of life and the economy.

Conspiracy theories aside, the much trumpeted CPEC is still shrouded in mystery. It seems the 'centre stage' in Pakistan deliberately keeps this economic corridor away from public discourse.

The idea behind holding the conference in a village like Passu, a periphery in Gilgit-Baltistan, was to bring voices from the margins onto the centre stage of the development discourse. Whether Gilgit-Baltistan, a periphery in Pakistan, has ever been heard while conceiving CPEC was evident from the key presentation which stated that the greater chunk of the CPEC budget is going to be spent on energy projects and the in-

**Both the players of CPEC – China and Pakistan – need to think of ways in which the educated youth and diaspora of Gilgit-Baltistan can be utilised**

frastructure of roads and railways. The remaining budget is for fibre optic work and the Gwadar Port.

There is no mention of any project for Gilgit-Baltistan apart from the road. Through media reports in June this year, we also found out that the corridor has also focused agriculture in Pakistan in addition to industrial zones in mainland Pakistan. The reports also said that the corridor's master plan document has only been shared with one province – Punjab. This makes things further murky.

Another presentation in the Passu conference revealed that there is only a single paragraph on Gilgit-Baltistan in the CPEC documents; the paragraph vaguely states that the region of Gilgit-Baltistan 'will be developed'.

Gilgit-Baltistan, though overwhelmingly rural, has undergone many socio-cultural changes because of its distinct natural and cultural landscapes, and owing to some rig-

orous but sustained interventions by humanitarian organisations.

It is unique in the way that one sees modernisation manifest itself visibly here despite the region being all the way up in cliffs in the extreme north – away from cities, the centres of modernisation. The urge for higher education is on the rise here.

Education has produced a great bulk of unemployed youth who cannot go along the path their traditional society delineates for them. These youth find themselves disgruntled with their meagre sources of livelihood, lesser means of expression and lack of opportunities of employment in the region. Many of the youth of Gilgit-Baltistan are thus scattered all over Pakistan in search of better education and jobs. They can hardly be retained back at home now.

The present state of cultural and religious pluralism is spectacular. However, undercurrents should not be ignored.

Gilgit-Baltistan is not merely a territory of high mountains and glaciers. It is also host to indigenous and unique languages and cultures like the Indo-Aryan languages Shina, Khowar, Dumaki and Gujarati; Indo-Iranian Wakhi; Sino-Tibetan Balti; and the unique Burushaski language. The area is also the custodian of thousands of rock carvings, inscriptions and petroglyphs.

It is a pity that a region so significant is altogether off the radar of the likely benefits of CPEC. Whether Pakistan just treats the region as a 'route' of CPEC or really wants to expand the promised bounties to this region is still a question worth questioning.

Both the players of CPEC need to think of ways in which the educated youth, existing social capital and diaspora of Gilgit-Baltistan can be utilised; and what safeguards can be applied to protect and promote this unique cultural and natural repository. And internal dialogue – such as the one held in Passu – should be continued.

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