**Seminar: - China Pakistan Economic Corridor: Prospects and Reservations.**

Arranged by BSc. Social Sciences Program (IMSciences) in collaboration with Peshawar Policy Group (PPG)

A veteran journalist Salim Safi visited IMSciences to address the students about the burning issue of China Pakistan Economic Corridor. The allegedly change of CPEC original route towards only Punjab and Sindh, bypassing Kyber Pakhtunkhwa and a greater part of Baluchistan, by the present govern of Nawaz Sharif made this whole project very controversial. Mr. Safi started his speech by giving the example of western China (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China_Western_Development>) how it got development by the Chinese government in a very short span of time by pouring billions of dollar, creating huge economic opportunities, constructing roads and railways, establishing industrial zones, encouraging foreign investment etc., to overcome the economic inequalities and reservations of the already troubled area of [Xinjiang](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xinjiang). He emphasized over the point that the present government should learn from China by investing more in the underdeveloped areas of Pakistan, but tragically, rather than investing in the underdeveloped areas the Nawaz government has changed the route of the corridor thus depriving the already backward areas from foreign investment.

Moreover, the original route (DI Khan, Zhob) is at a small distance as compared to the 1000 km long new route via Punjab. Also, the new route via Punjab is not all weather friendly due to floods and fog this route cannot be operational all over the year

He told the students that, Gawadar port is a need of China as it would reduce a 5 weeks long journey of ships to a 5 days short passage through road to reach goods to China. Gawadar is a natural deep sea gateway to the world, including Gulf countries, Europe and also to the Central Asian countries and Russia. This old route would benefit in a sense that it would expand the trade with Afghanistan in a large scale by connecting with Afghanistan on fifteen different routes. The changed route would just connect it trade only on one route of Torkham. China has invested in Copper reservoirs in Lugar province of Afghanistan that would be feasible only through the old route.

On a question regarding the future Chinese role in the region, he said that China is a good friend of Pakistan due to its cooperation and peace based policy with its neighbor countries especially Pakistan. China has supported all types of governments in Pakistan, i.e. dictatorship and democracy. China foreign policy is economic based and non-interference in other countries internal issues.

He denounced the immature act of politicians using this mega project of national interest a matter of their party and politics interest. They are going to make this project a Kala Bagh Dam. We the people of KP, FATA and Baluchistan should have one slogan, which should be that we want this project completed at any cost. Political gatherings, sit in, and road blockade isn’t the solution of this issue. A resolution passed by the provincial assemblies is worth a lot**.**

**(Courtesy to Saddam Wazir, BSc. Social Sciences Program)**

**Note:** The Social Committee at IMSciences had also arranged a seminar on the same topic. For further reading the Pakhtunkhwa Ulasi Tehrik website can be consulted. < <http://ulasi.org/>>