Defence & Security · GS - III

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is viewed as a cardinal subset of China's larger 'One Belt One Road' initiative. Give a brief description of CPEC and enumerate the reasons why India has distanced itself from the same.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2018	GS - III	Defence & Security

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Belt and Road Initiative; CPEC route; Gwadar Port; connectivity and trade; sovereignty concerns; strategic implications; regional security

Model Answer

Introduction

The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a flagship component of China's Belt and Road Initiative, intended to connect China's Xinjiang region with Pakistan's Gwadar Port through transport, energy and industrial infrastructure.

Brief Description

CPEC involves road and rail links, energy projects, port development and industrial cooperation. It aims to improve connectivity, reduce transport bottlenecks and support trade between China, Pakistan and regional markets.

Why India Has Distanced Itself

1. **Sovereignty:** Parts of CPEC pass through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, which India regards as its territory.
2. **Strategic concerns:** The corridor could strengthen China–Pakistan strategic cooperation near India's borders.
3. **Security implications:** Infrastructure and port facilities may have potential dual-use implications.
4. **Transparency and debt concerns:** India has raised concerns about the terms, financial sustainability and governance of certain Belt and Road projects.
5. **Regional balance:** CPEC could expand China's influence in South Asia and the Arabian Sea.
6. **Unresolved disputes:** India argues that connectivity initiatives must respect sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Way Forward

India can pursue alternative regional connectivity through Chabahar Port, the International North–South Transport Corridor and partnerships with Central Asian countries, while supporting transparent and inclusive regional trade.

Conclusion

CPEC offers economic opportunities but remains politically contentious for India because of sovereignty, security and strategic concerns. Connectivity must respect territorial integrity and regional interests.

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