

## Headlines:

- **Pakistan's CPEC Concerns**
- **Iranian Subversion**
- **Drilling begins in Pakistan's Large Gas Deposits**

## Details:

### Pakistan's CPEC Concerns

The Pakistan government has told China to remove the Punjab Rahim Khan power plant project from the CPEC deal, as part of a review, which will shelve further projects. CPEC was launched with much fanfare back in 2017. CPEC is a major aspect of China's broader Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It self-launched back in 2013. But 5 years on many nations who were initially enthusiastic about the project have doubts due to China's wild assessments on profitability and the debt it will create.' Pakistan has already cut the size of a number of projects such as a reconstruction of the main rail line between Karachi and Peshawar in the northwest by \$2 billion, citing government concerns about the country's debt levels. Sri Lanka was forced to hand its main seaport to China for a 99 years lease after it fell behind on payments. In Malaysia, the new Prime Minister cancelled its BRI projects citing the terms as the main issue. Whilst China has attempted to present itself as a friendly nation different to the imperial powers, it is quickly falling into 'the same acts as them.

### Iranian Subversion

Iran's attempt to launch a satellite failed to reach orbit, the country's telecommunications minister has said. The rocket carrying the Payam satellite failed to reach the "necessary speed" in the third stage of its launch, Mohammad-Javad Azari Jahromi told Iranian state television. It came after Iran ignored US warnings to avoid undertaking three planned rocket launches Washington said would violate a UN Security Council resolution because they use ballistic missile technology. The US is concerned that the long-range ballistic technology used to put satellites into orbit can also be used to launch missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Ever since the US was bleeding to death in the Iraqi insurgency and then the uprising in Syria, the US needed a regional power to extricate it, Iran had no problem lending the US a hand. But as the US no longer needs Iran now, it is looking to reverse the gains Iran made and contain it within its own borders. These satellite tests are merely to fool the people and deflect their attention from the truth of the reality of the clerical regime.

### Drilling begins in Pakistan's Large Gas Deposits

ExxonMobil has begun drilling for oil and gas 143 miles off the coast of Karachi in the Arabian Sea, Daily Pakistan reported Jan. 10. The operations mark the first time an energy company is conducting offshore exploration along Pakistan's coast. An ExxonMobil executive has said the company has been considering launching operations in the region because of Pakistan's growing energy demand. Only 15 percent of Pakistan's energy consumption is met by domestic production. The offshore region is estimated to have an estimated nine trillion cubic feet of gas deposits, which would aid Pakistan's energy problem significantly. But decades of mismanagement and a complete lack of strategy has seen what resources Pakistan have not used for the benefit of the public. It remains to be seen what really develops from this find and if the government in Pakistan can use it to pry is immense demand of energy from foreign sources.