

The Rekodiq Agreement: Examining Its Past and Gauging Balochistan Future Prospects

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Abstract: This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the Rekodiq Copper-Gold Projects Agreement and its implications for Balochistan's future prospects. The objectives of the study are To assess the socio-economic impacts of the Reko Diq project on Balochistan, including employment generation, local business opportunities, and revenue generation. To analyze the factors contributing to the controversies and legal disputes surrounding the Reko Diq project, including the governance and regulatory frameworks and to provide recommendations for ensuring sustainable and equitable development in Balochistan. To ensure a thorough analysis of the Rekodiq Copper-Gold Projects Agreement and its ramifications for Balochistan's future prospects, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in this study. This mixed-methods approach, which incorporates both individual viewpoints and factual data, enables a deeper comprehension of the intricate dynamics around the project. The study provides an overview of the project's historical context, the natural resources of Balochistan, and the project's implications for the province's future.

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Introduction:

Due to its major ramifications for Balochistan's future prospects, the Rekodiq Agreement, which was signed between the Balochistan government and a group of foreign mining companies, has been the focus of intense attention and discussion. Discussions on economic development, environmental sustainability, and social well-being have been spurred by this agreement, which aimed to access the significant copper and gold reserves in the Rekodiq region. This paper explores a variety of scholarly works and research papers that offer insightful analysis into the complex elements of the Rekodiq Agreement in order to review the historical events and evaluate the prospective ramifications for Balochistan. Tareen (2012) claims that "the Rekodiq project has the potential to bring immense economic benefits to Balochistan, including revenue generation through royalties, taxes, and profit-sharing." Ahmed and Sajjad (2013) go into more detail about the project's economic ramifications and claim that "Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) resulting from the RekoDiq Agreement can

stimulate economic growth, job creation, and enhance the region's competitiveness."

Environmental impact and resource nationalism, however, have also become hot topics of discussion. According to Bajwa (2014), "The Rekodiq Agreement has been a case study for resource nationalism, with debates centering around the balance between economic development and national sovereignty." Environmental protection is important, and Iqbal and Sajjad (2015) emphasize this by stating that "The Rekodiq project must ensure sustainable practices to minimize the negative impact on the environment."

In their 2016 article, Siddiqui and Ahmed address the difficulties of development and its socioeconomic ramifications, writing that "The Rekodiq Mining Project has raised concerns about displacement, loss of livelihoods, and the need for inclusive development." The sustainable development issue is explored by Hafeez and Ahmed (2017), who write that "Balochistan's natural resources, including those in the Rekodiq region, need to be managed in a way that

ensures long-term socio-economic benefits for the local communities."

According to Rasool and Akram (2018), "The Rekodiq Copper and Gold Mine Project must implement responsible mining practices, ensuring the preservation of natural resources and ecological balance." they emphasize the necessity to strike a balance between commercial interests and environmental sustainability. The economic and environmental ramifications are critically studied by Mahmood and Shah (2019), who emphasize the value of a comprehensive approach to decision-making.

Malik and Hussain (2021) examine the socio-economic ramifications and future prospects for Balochistan, whereas Naseem and Mahmood (2020) present a case study on the utilization of natural resources in Balochistan, focusing on the Rekodiq project. These studies let us fully comprehend how the Rekodiq Agreement affected the course of Balochistan's development.

Material and Methods:

Experimental Design:

To ensure a thorough analysis of the Rekodiq Copper-Gold Projects Agreement and its ramifications for Balochistan's future prospects, both qualitative and quantitative research methods used in this study. This mixed-methods approach, which incorporates both individual viewpoints and factual data, enables a deeper comprehension of the intricate dynamics around the project.

The qualitative component entails a thorough investigation of stakeholders' viewpoints, including those of elected officials, residents, businesspeople, and environmental activists. To acquire detailed, contextualized information on their perceptions, experiences, and expectations connected to the Rekodiq project, semi-structured interviews and focus groups

were held. A part from these research articles consulted to get a clear view of historic background and the controversies this agreement had faced.

In order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the project's economic, social, and environmental implications, the quantitative component of the research design entails the collecting and analysis of numerical data. Surveys conducted from a sample of residents who live close to the project area as well as to important stakeholders who are involved in the decision-making process. To find trends, patterns, and correlations, statistical methods were also used to analyze the survey data.

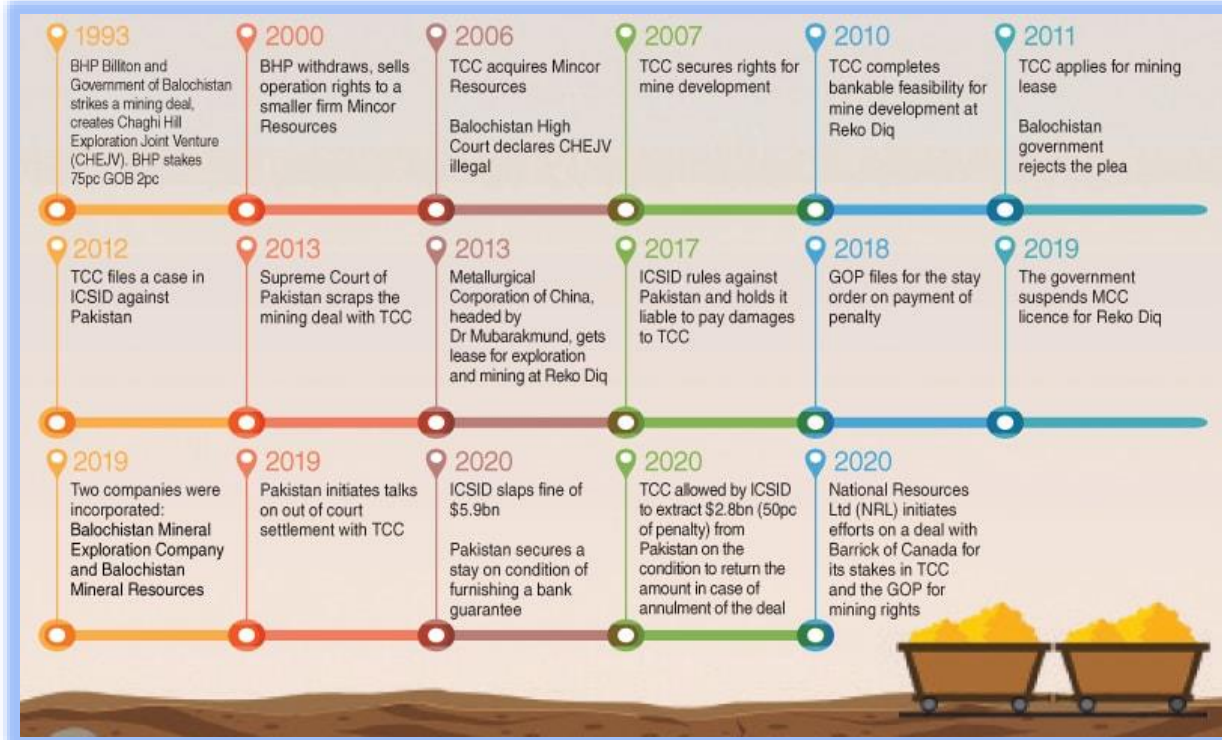
Study Area:

Geographical and Geological Overview of Rekodiq:

Rekodiq, located in the Chagai district of Balochistan, Pakistan, holds immense significance due to its rich mineral deposits. This chapter provides a geographical and geological overview of the Rekodiq area, highlighting its geological composition, topography, and strategic importance.

Geographically, Rekodiq is situated in the western part of Balochistan, bordering Afghanistan and Iran. It lies within the Tethyan Metallogenic Belt, a region renowned for its mineral wealth. The area is characterized by rugged terrain, arid climate, and sparse vegetation.

From a geological perspective, Rekodiq is situated in a mineral-rich zone known as the Chagai Magmatic Arc. This arc is formed by the collision of the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates, resulting in the formation of diverse mineral deposits. The region hosts significant copper and gold reserves, attracting attention from mining companies and investors worldwide.

Historical Background:**Results:****Economic Benefits:**

The Reko Diq project's development had a big impact on Balochistan's economy. The advantages and economic opportunities that might result from the mining of the copper and gold reserves are examined in this section.

1) Revenue Generation:

Exploiting copper and gold reserves can generate significant revenue through royalties, taxes, and profit-sharing, enabling investments in infrastructure and social services.

2) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):

The project can attract substantial FDI, promoting economic growth, job creation, and enhancing competitiveness.

3) Infrastructure Development:

Robust infrastructure development, including roads, power plants, and water supply systems, supports mining operations and attracts further investments.

4) Skill Development and Capacity Building

Reko Diq project empowers local workforce through skill development, training, and

education, fostering employability in diverse industries.

5) Job Creation and Employment Opportunities:

- Direct Employment:** The project offers direct employment to a skilled workforce, improving the economic well-being of local residents.
- Indirect Employment:** Supporting industries benefit from the mining operations, creating additional job opportunities for the community through the multiplier effect.

Socioeconomic Benefit:**1) Infrastructure Development:**

Infrastructure development for Reko Diq project includes roads, power plants, and water supply systems, facilitating mining activities and fostering regional growth and quality of life improvements.

2) Local Communities and Stakeholder Engagement:

Engaging local communities and stakeholders through meaningful consultation and transparency ensures sustainable development, shared benefits, and the implementation of social development programs, capacity-building initiatives, and local entrepreneurship promotion.

3) **Income Distribution and Poverty Alleviation:**

Reko Diq project can contribute to income distribution and poverty alleviation through revenue generation, employment opportunities, skill development, entrepreneurship promotion, and stimulating local markets and economic well-being.

Infrastructure development and its impact:

1) **Road Networks:**

Construction and improvement of road networks in Reko Diq facilitate transportation, reducing costs, improving access to services, and enhancing mobility for the local population.

2) **Power Supply:**

Reliable and sustainable power supply for Reko Diq mining operations enhances energy infrastructure, attracts industries, diversifies the economy, and improves living conditions for local communities.

3) **Water Management:**

Sustainable water management in Reko Diq project minimizes environmental impact, ensures water availability for mining activities and communities, and involves water conservation, treatment systems, and community engagement for responsible water usage.

Stakeholder Engagement and Social Development:

1) **Community Consultation and Participation:**

Effective stakeholder engagement, including local communities, indigenous populations, and stakeholders, ensures social sustainability through meaningful participation, dialogue, trust-building and addressing needs and concerns.

2) **Social Development Programs:**

Implementation of social development programs in the Reko Diq project focuses on education, healthcare, skills training, and infrastructure development. Initiatives such as scholarships, vocational training, job placements, healthcare facilities, clean water supply, and sanitation infrastructure improve the well-being and quality of life for local communities.

Income Distribution and Poverty Alleviation:

1) **Local Employment Opportunities:**

The Reko Diq project creates local employment opportunities, reducing unemployment and poverty through recruitment, skills development, fair wages, safe working conditions, and job security.

2) **Economic Diversification:**

The Reko Diq project stimulates local markets, promotes economic diversification, and creates business opportunities for local entrepreneurs, reducing dependency on a single sector and enhancing regional economic resilience.

3) **Social Investment and Poverty Alleviation:**

Revenue from mining activities should be strategically invested in poverty alleviation programs, including microfinance, entrepreneurship development, social safety nets, education, and vocational training, uplifting marginalized communities and improving living standards.

Educational Initiatives and Scholarships:

1) **Scholarships:**

Financial support for education, empowering students and fostering human capital development in Balochistan.

2) **Infrastructure Development for Education:**

Construction of schools, colleges, and vocational training centers to improve access to quality education, remove learning barriers, and promote academic and skill development in the region.

Training Programs for Local Workforce:

1) **Technical and Vocational Training:**

Collaboration between mining companies and vocational institutes to provide training in mining-related skills, enhancing employability in the sector and related industries.

2) **Entrepreneurship Development:**

Support for individuals to start businesses through training, mentorship, and resources, fostering local entrepreneurship, economic diversification, and a supportive business ecosystem in the region.

Skill Development and Human Capital Enhancement:

1) **Enhancing Technical Skills:**

Skill development programs focusing on mining-related fields can provide locals with specialized expertise, reducing the need for external professionals and promoting sustainable regional development.

2) Soft Skills Development:

Training programs targeting communication, teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, and adaptability can equip the local workforce with transferable skills applicable in various industries, enhancing human capital in Balochistan.

3) Continuous Learning and Lifelong Education:

Emphasizing ongoing professional development, mining companies can foster a culture of learning, enabling individuals to stay updated, acquire new skills, and adapt to changing job requirements, ultimately contributing to the growth and competitiveness of Balochistan's workforce.

Discussion:

Economic benefits from the Rekodiq project's development in Balochistan are substantial. By way of royalties, taxes, and profit-sharing, the mining of copper and gold reserves has the potential to bring in a sizable sum of money that might then be used to fund infrastructure and social services. Foreign direct investment in the project has boosted economic growth, job creation, and competitiveness. In addition to supporting mining activities, the project's focus on infrastructure development, such as the construction of road networks, power plants, and water supply systems, has drawn further investments. The local workforce has been empowered by skill development and capacity building, which has increased both direct and indirect employment prospects and enhanced the citizens' economic well-being.

Additionally, the Rekodiq project has generated considerable socioeconomic advantages. The construction of highways, power plants, and water supply systems has made it easier to conduct mining operations, which has helped the region prosper and enhance the standard of living. The initiative has placed a high priority on stakeholder involvement, assuring shared benefits and sustainable development through meaningful collaboration, openness, and the execution of social development program. Through revenue production, employment possibilities, skill development, entrepreneurship promotion, and the stimulation of local markets and economic well-being, this strategy has put a strong emphasis on income distribution and poverty alleviation. The development of human capital has also been encouraged through educational initiatives and scholarships, and training program for the local workforce have improved technical and vocational skills, fostering employment and entrepreneurship in Balochistan.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the research findings highlight important policy implications for the future development of Balochistan. These include the need for a sustainable development framework that prioritizes environmental sustainability, social inclusivity, and economic diversification. Effective governance and regulation are crucial to ensure transparency and responsible practices, while stakeholder engagement is essential for collaboration and inclusive development. Environmental management should be a priority, particularly through thorough impact assessments and sustainable practices. Recommendations for Balochistan's future development include economic diversification, human capital development, and community development programs. Finally, future research directions focus on areas such as environmental monitoring, social impact assessments, governance frameworks, economic diversification strategies, and sustainable development practices to inform evidence-based strategies for the region's progress.

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