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India's Isolation on the Belt and Road Increases

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India has not been persuasive in mustering support of countries against China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). India boycotted a major moot on the BRI in May held in Beijing where as many as 29 world leaders greatly appreciated the initiative. India has gotten further isolated and the BRI has gained more momentum, after the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) decided to enshrine the thoughts of President Xi Jinping in the party's constitution, of which BRI has become a grand strategy. This is a major accomplishment of the BRI within the CPC and Chinese Government.

Chinese policy over the BRI is even much cherished by regional States. India's loneliness is more evident as it could not convince its major allies such as the United States and Japan against the BRI. India also remained unsuccessful in perusing its close neighbors against the BRI. Over populated South Asia faces joblessness. The region is not well connected and lacks a modern infrastructure. Regional integration among South Asian States is stained by India's hegemonic designs. In this realm, China offers most lucrative economic and commercial package to address centuries-old economic worries of the regional States.

Pakistan has quickly jumped to undertake the multi-billion the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the flagship of the BRI. The corridor has been emerging as the symbol of success for all other BRI corridors. The initiative has almost addressed the energy shortage of the country and added around 11,000mw of electricity into the national grid. Gwadar port, a jewel in the crown of BRI, and most other infrastructure projects are rapidly maturing by the end of 2018.

Nepal is a passionate supporter of the BRI. The initiative is a blessing for the country, providing it with an alternative strategy for trade connectivity. Nepal's initiative has signaled its departure from the Indian sphere of influence – something it did in the 1960s under King Mahendra through the Araniko Highway.

Nepal is now keen to connect Kathmandu to Tibet via the Kerung Pass. It can connect to the outside world in case of a repeat of the Indian blockade that happened back in 1989 and again in 2015. This would also decrease Kathmandu's dependency on New Delhi for trade and regional connectivity. For the Himalayan State of Nepal, China is a great opening to address its centuries-long trading woes and improve its out dated infrastructure through the trans-Himalayan economic corridor.

Bangladesh has moved several miles away in support of the BRI. The country realizes that it could be effectively connected with the rest of the world through the BRI. Bangladesh's government well understands India's concerns but is fully convinced to address people's poverty through global connectivity.

The creation of new infrastructure such as transport will ensure new jobs for the local population and provide new opportunities at home to limit the emigration of millions of Bangladeshis into India and outside the region. The country also believes that the connectivity could bring stability and help improve its ties with Myanmar if the BCIM (Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar) is built, which is an important corridor of the BRI. The recent ties between Bangladesh and Myanmar have deteriorated after the fleeing of millions of Muslim refugees from the Rakhine State in Myanmar into Bangladesh. The BCIM has the capacity to address these challenges.

Being an island nation, Sri Lanka could drive huge benefits from the BRI, meeting China's maritime needs in the Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka has initiated a number of agreements with China related to BRI policy, infrastructure, trade, financial, and people-to-people connectivity. Pursuing a common goal, China and Sri Lanka could improve the infrastructure facilities contributing to an international infrastructure network of ports.

Sri Lanka's basic industrial system will be greatly improved if the Hambantota logistic and industrial zone becomes operational. Up till 2016, Chinese companies have completed the construction of infrastructure projects amounting to over US\$15.5 billion and made direct investments of over US\$2 billion, contributing to Sri Lanka's economic growth and social development.

Maldives Islands could be the next beneficiary of the BRI after Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean. BRI is all inclusive and it does not distinguish between a developed and a developing country. This brings enormous interest to Maldives. It was one of the first countries that positively responded to the BRI. In December 2014, Government of Maldives signed an MoU with the Chinese Government to jointly build the 21st Century Silk Road. Maldives has been a part of the ancient Silk Road in the Indian Ocean. Maldives would earnestly welcome investment and financing of its infrastructure by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and by other Chinese financial institutions.

These are strong pledges and commitments by all South Asian countries to change the economic landscape, patterns of investment, enhancing trade opportunities and increasing of people-to people contact. Moreover, it will bring more funds, jobs creation, rapid industrial development and infrastructural development which is a win-win for all to end the instability in South Asia and to bring about sustainable growth.

The support of the BRI is on the rise and obstruction by India will be against the ground realities and the will of the people of South Asia.

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