



AN ANALYTICAL REVIEW ON SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOME GEOSTRATEGIC AND GEO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

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ABSTRACT: *China is a growing economy with huge population and military power in East Asia. On the other hand, India is also a growing economy with vast population and substantial military power in the South Asia. Both China and India have long borders. Geographically, both countries are very important to the world. These two countries have been confronting each other along the borders for several decades; and both countries are claiming sovereignty over each other's administered territories as their respective land. Besides, Indian Ocean's geostrategic location for trade and safe navigation purposes has drawn global attention. Both China and India are very active in the South Asian, South East Asian, African and Middle East countries to expand their geostrategic and geopolitical influence. But, without a peaceful and stable co-existence of these two neighbors, sustainable development is impossible in the entire region. This study has discussed some geostrategic and geo-economic issues of the relationship between China and India. The study has found that the relationship between the two countries is not very good. The main aim of this study is to find a political solution through trade and investment, regional connectivity and people to people contacts between the two countries. In the conclusion part of this study, there has been provided with some policy recommendations to improve the relationship between China and India. Methodologically it is a qualitative study. Moreover, it has carried out some field surveys to know the people's perception on Sino-Indian relations. We have exchanged views with the different people on Sino-Indian relationship. Therefore, there has been mixed both types of methods in carrying out this study.*

KEYWORDS: China, India, Geostrategic Relations, Indian Ocean, Border, Security, Trade, BRI, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

China and India are two neighboring countries sharing long borders; and both countries have fought several times regarding border disputes. Besides, these two countries are now confronting in the Indian Ocean for strategic, geopolitical, navigation and exports and imports purposes which according to many observers will not stop. Moreover, positional competition in the Indian Ocean Regime (IOR) and along the China-India border areas is likely to intensify in the coming years (Ozguret al, 2017). Both China and India want to control over the Indian Ocean regime, India doesn't tolerate China's presence in the region, because India thinks that Indian Ocean geographically and traditionally belongs to India. Here China is a foreign country, and unlawful intruder. But China doesn't care about India's



position over Indian Ocean that it has already gained a strong presence in the IOR through making friendly relations with some IOR countries, and through constructions of ports and military bases along with regular naval patrolling in the region (Ozgur et al, 2017). However, the existence of a Sino-Indian strategic rivalry in the IOR has not been officially accepted by both parties. Though China identifies India as an influential partner in the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), some of the connectivity infrastructure projects within the framework of the BRI disregard Indian national interest and sensitivities like the CPEC (Ozgur et al, 2017).

In addition, China's proactive diplomacy towards the countries in the IOR and bordering both China and India are a clear indication of its bid for expanding its influence and ultimately dominating the strategic environment of the IOR. Other contender, India, which feels uncomfortable with Chinese growing strategic and economic influence in its immediate neighborhood, launched alternative initiatives during the premiership of Narendra Modi, such as 'Act East Policy' and 'Neighborhood First Policy'. Both strategies aim to balance Chinese growing strategic and economic influence and to consolidate Indian strategic and economic weight in South Asian countries and in the IOR (Ozgur et al, 2017). As a part of these policies, Modi has tried to strengthen political, economic and military ties with neighboring countries and also launched some connectivity infrastructure projects like the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. To conclude, despite Chinese rhetoric of a Sino-Indian partnership, Indian strong criticism about the BRI and its alternative regional initiatives demonstrate that the current Sino-Indian relations are not so good (Ozgur et al, 2017).

Moreover, India through BCIM wants to connect its northeast region with Southeast Asia but China is also keenly interested in connecting BCIM with BRI, India thus thinks that already the advancement of BCIM is unenthusiastic and unification would further slowdown the progress. In addition, the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) attempts to develop and enhance China's presence in both South Asia and the Indian Ocean region, which is already happening through the so-called 'string of pearls strategy'. China has continued to argue that more than 70 per cent of its oil imports go through this region, hence its aims are for refueling, commercial purpose and sea lane security, rather than to contain India. However, India is not convinced by these arguments as it threatens India's future naval power projects and its influence in the region. In this context, during the 2018 BOAO Forum for Asia, President Xi stated: "BRI is not a Chinese plot, neither is it the post-World War II Marshall Plan, nor is it a Chinese conspiracy" President Xi assured that he and his country, China, is committed to resolve the problems of other countries pertaining to BRI, the project has not been taken to do any harm to any nation. But India doesn't believe this statement that the BRI might be used against Indian interest in South Asia and Indian Ocean.

Apart from the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC policy), BCIM has also serious security concerns for India, as attempts are made to connect China's Yunnan province with India's Northeastern region and it is assumed that China will enhance its influence in the northeastern region, which has already created a major security concern for India. In the response to the plan of BRI by Chinese authority, India did not even send any representative, indicating its position over BRI. However, India's noninvolvement of BRI continues to be extensively argued. But excluding India, other South Asian countries are optimistic and confident towards the BRI of China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Afghanistan welcome the BRI in the hope of being benefitted economically



and geo-strategically through various economic development and infrastructural development in the South Asian countries by the Chinese investment. But India is confused about the BRI, AIIB and other economic and strategic initiatives of China. It is because of security implication on the Indian side. One of the foremost concerns of the Indian government's opposition to the BRI is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is a large investment scheme, for which China has promised US\$54 billion till 2030 (Small, 2017: 81).

This corridor has an attempt to attach China's Xinjiang, self-ruling area, with Pakistan's Baluchistan Province. Though, this is a good passage, but the corridor goes through the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), which Pakistan claims as 'Azad Kashmir'. Then, it is supposed that, it is partially, in addition to Pakistan's 15,000 security forces, China is expected to deploy around 30,000 security forces for the CPEC, in a way a big security alarm for India (Singh, 2017a:). Besides, the Line of Control (LOC) is not yet acknowledged by both India and Pakistan as transnational boundary, therefore by providing permission to CPEC would logically be dangerous for India. China and India should come ahead to resolve the geostrategic issues between them to ensure, peace, security, stability, justice and development in the whole region of China and South Asia instead of fighting each other along the borders and Indian Ocean. This Study is based on secondary data along with focus group discussions and observation. Therefore, both primary and secondary data have been used in carrying out this study. After discussions on some strategic issues, some policy recommendations have been provided with to mitigate the tensions through which friendly relations could be retained in the region. And all South Asian countries and China will be able to contribute equally in the development projects.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

This research work has been conducted using qualitative research method. The qualitative data have been collected by using an unstructured and open-ended questionnaire. This study has involved the use of primary data through field survey and focus group discussions. And secondary sources of data like books, journals, magazines, archival materials, official documents and letters have been used to make an in-depth analysis. Besides, we have observed the Sino-India relations in the last few years; and we have exchanged views with several people on Sino-Indian perception as both countries are rising very rapidly which has substantial implication for the South Asian countries including Bangladesh. The research is descriptive and explanatory. We have mixed both kinds of methods, primary and secondary data to carry out this study with qualitative interpretation.

Sino-Indian Relations in the Context Border Conflicts

The first Sino-Indian war occurred in 1962, but it was ended with withdrawal of Chinese troops from the occupied border of India. Since then there were many skirmishes along the border areas between the two countries. Another war was occurred on 20 October 1975, four Indian soldiers were killed at Tulung La in Arunachal Pradesh (Hindu, 1975). According to the official statement by the Indian government, a patrol of the Assam Rifles comprising a non-commissioned officer (NCO) and four other soldiers were ambushed by about 40 Chinese soldiers while in an area within Indian Territory, which had been regularly patrolled for years without incident. Four members of the patrol unit were killed by the Chinese troops;



and their death bodies were later given back to India. At that time India had shown a strong objection regarding the killing (Press Information Bureau of India, 2020). India government claimed in April 2013, that Chinese troops had established a camp in the Daulat Beg Oldi sector within 10 kilometers of the line of control. According to Indian media, Chinese military carried out an attack on the Indian army entering into the territory of India. But the Chinese authority denied the incident (Hindustan Times, 2013).

These two nations, China and India, had a stalemate along the line of control, when Indian labors protested against Chinese activities along the border with support of Indian army. It ended after about three weeks, when both sides agreed to withdraw troops (Kumar, 2014). The Indian army claimed that the Chinese military had set up a camp 3 km inside the territory claimed by India. An article on the BBC website states that, China gains territory with every incursion (BBC News, 2014). The disputed territory of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir is administered by Pakistan (green), India (blue) and China (yellow). In September 2015, the military of China and India confronted each other in the northern Ladakh, when Indian army destroyed a watchtower of China, which was being built to ensure Chinese patrolling in the border. The decision of watchtower construction was taken mutually by both sides. (The Economic Times, 2018).

In June, there was a military skirmish along the territory of Doklam, which is very to near the Doka La pass. The Chinese military started to construct a road in the Doklam area on June 16, 2017 (Joshi, 2017). Earlier, China constructed a road at Doka la where Indian soldiers used to be positioned (Joshi, 2017). Bhutan states that the Chinese government has dishonored the written pacts between the two countries which were agreed in 1988 and 1998 afterward a series of negotiations (Joshi, 2017). These agreements have been violated by China through the construction of a road at Doka La. In June 2020, Chinese and Indian military forces again engaged in a fighting in the Galwan River valley, where twenty Indian soldiers were died. There was news in Indian media that 40 Chinese troops were killed in the battle, but it was denied by the Chinese authority (Gupta, 2017).



Map: 1: Map of Kashmir Controlled by India, Pakistan and China

Source: www.arcgis.com

Kashmir is the main source of border conflicts among India, Pakistan and China. Several times China-India, Pakistan-China and China-Pakistan clashes occurred regarding the control of resource abundant Kashmir which is also very beautiful place in the world.



Map 2: Map of Kashmir Showing the Line of Control

Source: Indo-Pacific News @ IndoPac_Info

The recent deadly clashes in June 2020 that occurred between China and India are shown in the map that it was Pangong Tso Lake in Ladakh along the line of control between China and India. In the battle twenty Indian troops were died and China has denied of any death from their side.

Sino-Indian Relations in the Context of Some Geostrategic Issues

There are factors within and outside between China and India that still impacts their relations. The Legacy of the 1962 War, India's Defense Minister George Fernandes (1998-2004) remarked in 1998 that "China is India's ideal enemy". There are enormous mistrusts between the two nations. Many within the Indian strategic community regard China as a significant security threat (Li, 2010 & Rahman, 2020). For several Indians, the short border war in 1962 was a national insult. When Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore visited China in 1924, China's leading scholar Liang Qichao remarked that from India-China relationship he had learned a lot. He called India China's "big brother" (Tan & Geng, 2005 & Rahman, 2020). Today many Chinese are contemptuous of India for its messiness, inefficiency, and indecisiveness while overlooking the benefits of democracy which has caused more balanced sustainable development in India. Many Chinese, who only study India from media, consider India an unclean, third-rate style of place. The presence of quite 1, 00,000 Tibetans refugees in India and India's continued willingness to produce shelter to the Dalai Lama could be a



continuous source of irritation in China-India relations. Therefore, the presence of Dalai Lama and his anti-Chinese activities in India have negative implications for India-China relations (Dar, 2014 & Rahman, 2020).

China and India, water issues are getting a significant area of concern between the two states. In fact, many strategic thinkers are arguing that disputes referring to water are going to be a significant source of conflict between the two countries in future to come (Dar, 2014). China and India are experiencing the "close neighbor syndrome". Old disputes remain unresolved; ones have risen to complicate the link. As an example, any irresponsible Chinese activity in Tibet could accelerate the shrinking of Tibetan glaciers change the climate that sustains many countless inhabitants in Asia. Lack of mutual trust ends up in misinterpretation of economic activities as strategic competition (Zhu, 2011 & Rahman, 2020).

The ongoing security dilemma within the China and Indian maritime relationship is that the proven fact that China and India are hybrid powers, meaning they are countries that are both major continental and emerging maritime powers (Kennedy & Parker, 2015). The foremost remarkable evidence of this is often that China's near-simultaneous unveiling of the twin concepts of a "Silk Road Economic Belt" and "21st Century Maritime Silk Road," that are integrated into the One Belt, is One Road initiatives. These concepts promote greater infrastructure connectivity, economic integration, and strategic cooperation across China's land and maritime frontiers, respectively (Smith, 2011 & Rahman, 2020). Several third parties have contributed to the profound mistrust between China and India. India's dubious relations with the Dalai Lama and China's "all-weather" friendship with Pakistan are other major assets of tension for China and India respectively. In fact, during the 1960s and 1970s, China-Pakistan relations were deeply rooted, and still both countries have strong relations, as an example, Pakistan served as a critical conduit between the U. S. and China (Zhu, 2011).

Nationalistic, hawkish forces, like elsewhere, tend to feature fuel to fireside in their public comments on China-India relations. There are two tendencies within the media and security communities of both countries to either magnify problems between the two sides or overemphasize future opportunities of the connection and deemphasize past troubles and present realities. They often misinform, mislead and provide people false hopes (Shourie & Tellis, 2008 & Rahman, 2020). Despite growing trade and other exchanges, in security perspective, China and India are obviously still stuck within the classic "security dilemma".

India is hyper-sensitive to China's words and deeds and aspires to outperform China in every aspect. Moreover, India is anxious over its trade deficit with China and desires to narrow it by attracting more Chinese investment. However, India suspects that several Chinese companies have military or intelligence links, and it's wary of those companies that Chinese companies are financing in sensitive sectors and regions in India. This is why India is not as enthusiastic as China is for a bilateral trade agreement (Sikri, 2009 & Rahman, 2020).



Map 3: Showing the Major Areas of Strategic Conflicts between China and India

Source: www.mapsofindia.com

The above map shows the major strategic areas of interests and conflicts between China and India. The map has included, Sino-Indian border including Kashmir, Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean, North East Indian border with Myanmar, and strategically located Nicobar Island in the Bay of Bengal. The main sources of border conflicts between China and India are shown



on the map, that are, Ladakh of Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, Tibet, Sikkim, North East India, Bhutan, Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean. It also shows that China has long borders with India along Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakand, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh. In all of these border areas both countries have border claims. Also there have conflicts regarding autonomous states of Xinxiang and Tibet which have direct border with Pakistan and India.

China's Geostrategic Presence in South Asia and the Security Concern for India

Although, China has frequently stated the BRI as open, equal and inclusive, but the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) running through Pakistan, also runs through POK, in a way ignoring India's sentiment. But China is not taking the issue of CPEC seriously that it might be posing a security threat to India in light of geopolitical and geostrategic aspects (Jacob, 2017, & Kumar, 2019). Moreover, Beijing instead of consulting New Delhi on BCIM before proceeding with CPEC, it went ahead with the latter without taking into consideration of India's situation. Similarly, the connectivity projects do provide some benefit for India also, particularly the transport links in Afghanistan; however, Pakistan has refused to give transit access to India to reach Afghanistan and Central Asia. Thus, instead of China taking the initiative in persuading its all-time friend, Pakistan, it continues to emphasize that this is a bilateral issue and it has no role (Kumar, 2019). To ensure that India is also part of the BRI, Beijing can explore possibilities of an alternative route to POK like Kolkata to Gandhinagar and develop a port on the coast of Gujarat, which will take care of India's security concerns. Thus, China needs to consult and also take India on board, particularly wherever there are shared interests.

China's growing interests and active involvement in so many projects are a serious concern for India in the context of security perspective; but in contrast if the Chinese presence in South Asian countries is taken into account according to China's development perspective instead of security threats, it is easy to come up with a sustainable solution to the conflicts between the two nations.

Sino-Indian Relations in the Context of Geo-economics and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

At the same time, there are increasing concerns about feasibility and implementation risks such as whether the profitability of these projects is sufficiently verified or not. It is supposed that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) plan has been taken by the Chinese authority to ensure its economic development, regional integration, and for promoting trade and investment of China in the region. The Chinese government is also committed to expand its BRI project in South Asia, South East Asia, North East Asia, Russian Federation, Central Asia, Europe and Africa, through which China can emerge as an economic super power and global political actor. China is also committed to ensure its dominance and naval presence in the South China Sea, Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean for trade, exports, and imports supplies and for ensuring the transshipment of energy through Indian Ocean where BRI could be used as a maritime connecting route. India is very suspicious about the China's intention of building ports in the South Asian countries, and China has also started to invest a huge amount of money in the various infrastructure projects such as roads and highways, power plantations, constructions of deep seaports, transferring Chinese technology in building river tunnels and so on. With having a geographical proximity of China with the neighboring South Asian



countries, China is very optimistic about the region in the context of economic development and cooperation, but India is considering Chinese presence as a security threat for the South Asian region including India. (Yuan, 2019).

Total 100 countries from around the world have joined the BRI along with some International organizations; it should be mentioned here that some resolutions of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and Security Council (Aoyama, 2016) are linked with BRI project. Even European countries like the UK are keenly interested in engaging with China. In this context, India remaining aloof will be unable to come up with any alternative model of development led by Asia. Taking into account of China's economic capacity, India should join the BRI for the economic progress and betterment of its people which has long been struggling to come out of extreme poverty in the different states. Moreover, India has been pushing for the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) Initiative and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), but still these two schemes could not produce any substantial output in terms of connectivity and development, therefore India should join the BRI, through which India would be able to revive the BBIN and BIMSTEC. India is an influential cofounder of AIIB and is the second largest contributor to the AIIB, which has also allocated US\$100 billion for BRI. According to many scholars, if India join the BRI, it would be good for India and China to cooperate each other in implementing BCIM, BIMSTEC and other regional cooperation programs. And India can regain its credit and strong position on former the Silk Road by joining the BRI, which it has lost over the centuries (Saran, 2017, & Kumar, 2019).

Sino-Indian Strategic and Geo-economic Interests in the Indian Ocean Region

The USA is the prominent strategic partner of India which shares a common concern about Chinese growing presence in the Indian Ocean Regime (IOR). The Indo-US defense partnership is based on common principles and shared national interests and strategic objectives, such as fighting terrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and maintaining peace, security and stability in the IOR. During the last two decades, comprehensive defense agreements have been signed between the two countries which allow them to cooperate in many areas. The most important one is the 'Defense Framework Agreement' of 1995, which covered a period of 10 years and was extended again in 2005 as the 'New Framework for the US-India Defense Relationship'. It provides a general framework for all defense cooperation initiatives between the two actors, including joint exercises, cooperation in multilateral operations, missile defense, and an intensification of the strategic dialogue between the ministries of defense (Wojczewski, 2016; & Özgür et al, 2017).

They also agreed to extend the US defense technology transfer to India and the joint development and production of defense goods, which enables India to have access to sensitive, cutting-edge military technology and to a certain extent balances China's superiority (Wojczewski, 2016; & Özgür et al, 2017). Furthermore, the use and development of common weapon systems increases the interoperability between the armed forces of both countries (Wojczewski, 2016 & Özgür et al, 2017). Within the framework of this agreement, the two countries have carried out joint military exercises regularly, including joint naval, air force, and army exercises as well as joint maritime patrols in the Strait of Malacca, which are implicitly directed against China in the sense that they should prevent China from taking any hostile actions by demonstrating potential alignment options (Wojczewski, 2016; & Özgür et al, 2017).



Sri Lanka, with its geographical proximity and common economic, cultural and historical ties with India and its key role in the Chinese BRI, is another significant country for the Indian balancing policy. According to Indian analysts, Chinese initiatives in Sri Lanka are efforts for containing India strategically. These initiatives prompted India to establish close relations with Sri Lanka. India has supplied economic aid to Sri Lanka for disaster relief in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami and the reconstruction of the country. This assistance has made a significant contribution to the improvement of bilateral relations. Moreover, India signed a Foreign Trade Agreement (FTA) and Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with Sri Lanka to consolidate the Sri Lankan economy and to increase bilateral trade (Berlin, 2006; & Özgür et al, 2017). Defense cooperation, intelligence sharing, warship modification and the provision of defense equipment are other areas of bilateral cooperation. Both countries have also carried out joint military exercises every year such as the India-Sri Lanka Joint Military Exercise 'Mitra Shakti' since 2013 (GKT, 2016).

It is important to mention that geopolitically, strategically and geo-economically Indian Ocean is an important zone for exports and imports purposes. It has also huge amount of oil and gas reserves, thus China, India and other global powers are very interested in Indian Ocean. China's oil imports from Middle East and its exports of industrial products are transported to many Asian and European countries through Indian Ocean. Also, Indian Ocean is connected to Bay of Bengal, and Myanmar, where China has built a seaport to connect its Southern province, Yunnan. Thus, for business and geostrategic reasons, the Bay of Bengal is crucial for China that this Bay is also connected to Indian Ocean through which Chinese businesses can be operated instead of using the time-consuming Malacca strait. But naturally Indian Ocean belongs to India in which India has been maintaining its dominance for hundreds of years. However, Indian Ocean could be used for trade purposes by both countries, but not for war and rivalry.

Some Recommendations to Improve Sino-Indian Strategic and Economic Relationship

To promote the Sino-Indian strategic, trade and economic relations, some measures have been taken by both countries. Though the initiatives have been taken through the increase of trade volume which has minimized the trade deficits between the two countries in recent years; but still the growth is still remaining very slow and lagging behind the target. Particularly there is a huge trade deficit in terms of exports and imports between China and India. The following measures can bring the momentum of trade relations and can increase the trade volume significantly: Common economic zone is very effective to promote the trade and investment activities and develop the business and diplomatic ties between and among regional or global parties. In common economic zone, member states can conduct tariff-free trade and investment activities with one another on priority basis (Rahman, 2020). So, China and India can create a common economic zone which will be helpful to promote their trade, increase the productivity, extend the exports market, enhance revenues, create employment, transfer of technologies and diversify the business ethics and culture. Both countries should come ahead to cooperate each other on various issues to reduce the political gap. Trade relations can play a pivotal role in decreasing diplomatic and geostrategic tensions. In trade relations, both nations might have an opportunity to come across to each-other and can have chance to settle the disputes on the table through business negotiations.



Moreover, trade and investment can play a significant role to strengthen the diplomatic relations between China and India which increase their leverage to solve the regional problems. Bilateral treaties are very effective for market expansion and investment promotion and diversification in the era of global market economy. China and India can create bilateral treaties for certain categories of products and investments. This will, in one hand, increases industrial productivities, investment and economic growth; on the other hand, it will pave the way for diplomatic relations (Rahman, 2020).

Administrative or bureaucratic barriers are one of the most remarkable impediments for business and investment activities in modern times, particularly in the developing countries including India. The factor hinders the economic and investment growth and increases the investment cost, and consumption of huge time for productions. So, both countries should reduce the bureaucratic and administrative barriers through favorable rules, regulation and government strategies for attracting huge foreign investments; and both nations should cooperate on international, geostrategic and geopolitical issues (Rahman, 2020). Competitive advantage in free-market economy is important for productions for low production cost and exports to other countries. It can also create employment opportunities and socio-economic development in these two emerging countries. Also, the competitive advance policy is scientific and gaining popularity throughout the world.

CONCLUSION

The study has examined the Sino-Indian trade and economic relations along with the geostrategic and geo-economic relations. The study has suggested accelerating trade volume and promoting commercial and investment activities as a way to promote diplomatic relations and socio-economic development in both China and India. Particularly, for India, this is a very poor country in terms of distribution of national revenues. It has huge discrimination with regional, religious, ethnic and caste-based exploitation. China has been able to minimize the economic gap in the different provinces, which India has not done for her people through economic development programs and industrialization. India may come ahead to learn from China as to how industrialize a country, and how to transform a labor-intensive economy into an industrial economy. Many scholars believe that industrial development can reduce political tensions, and can create an environment of peace, stability and development.

The study has been conducted based on secondary sources of data. The finding of the study has been represented in descriptive method instead of quantitative approach. The key issues of this study are related to: border conflicts, Belt and Road Initiative of China, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Chinese trade and investment in South Asian countries which is in favor of China, Bangladesh, China, India Economic Corridor, strategic rivalry in Indian Ocean between China and India, trade imbalance between China and India and so on. The existing unfriendly relations could be avoided between the two nations through the promotion of trade and investment and regional connectivity where the people of two countries can exchange views easily visiting each-other's country via land roads built on the basis of mutual understanding and cooperation.



Regarding Indian Ocean, we can say that it is the vital resource of the region, and it should not be made a battleground of any rivalry between China and India. Both countries should come ahead to safeguard the Indian ocean instead of fighting each other. Peace, stability, prosperity and development are more important than geopolitics and geo-strategic interests. Both countries should have equal access to the Indian Ocean for exports and imports, they should be careful so that none can instigate them to awkward situation on account of geopolitics and geostrategic interests. Current rivalry between China and India has been triggered by many regional and global powers. But both China and India have to understand the motive of the geostrategic and geo-economic interests of other countries' provocation. Here it should be mentioned that both Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean are floating on oil and gas, and this zone is very crucial for many countries for exports and imports purposes and particularly for the energy security and imports of oil from Middle East for China. Therefore, many influential countries of the world are very much interested in the region. Both China and India should realize this reality and should come to the table of political negotiations to resolve any disputes regarding the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean, and, of course, the borders disputes.

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