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President of Society for Promotion of Science and Society Studies)

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## History of Cultural Interactions: Lesser Known Features and Links

### 日印文化交流小史 ～知られざる特性と絆

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**Abstract:** *The paper is an analysis of cultural interactions between India and Japan during the period from eighth century AD to nineteenth century AD. These interactions have been succinctly summarised in the opening paragraph of History of Japanese-Indian Relations on Ministry of External Affairs (MOFA) web site as ‘Indian culture, filtered through Buddhism, has had a great impact on Japanese culture and thought, and this is the source of the Japanese people’s sense of closeness with India’. The objective of the paper is to seek some understanding of processes and agencies that enabled Indian culture to filter through Buddhism, and make the stated ‘great impact’ on Japanese culture and become a source of ‘sense of closeness’. The aim of analysis is to decipher distinctive features of processes and agencies that made their functioning effective. It is noted that the aim of the programme ‘enhancing people-to-people contacts (an important component of India-Japan bilateral programme)’ is also to create a ‘sense of closeness’ and, therefore, the findings of analysis may inform that programme too.*

**【要旨】** 本稿は、8世紀から19世紀までの期間を通じての日印文化交流について分析するものである。こうした交流については、外務省ウェブサイトに掲載されている日印関係史の最初のパラグラフにおいて、「インドの文化は仏教の浸透を通じて日本の文化・思想に対して多大な影響をもたらしており、このことが日本人のインドへの親近感の源泉になっている」と簡明に要約されている。本稿の目的は、仏教を通じてインドの文化を浸透させ、それによって日本の文化にまさに「多大な影響」をもたらし、さらには「親近感」の源泉をなしたプロセスと担い手についての理解を深めることにある。ここでの分析の主眼は、そうしたプロセスと担い手を有効に作用させた特徴を抽出することにある。留意されるべきは、「人的交流の促進」プログラム（日印二国間プログラムの重要な構成要素）もまた、「親近感」をもたらすことを意図したものであり、それ故、ここでの分析結果はそうしたプログラムに息を吹き込むことにもなるかもしれないということである。

## I .Introduction

Dialogues between India and Japan usually begin by referring to historical connect between the two countries going back to initial contacts through Buddhism in 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. The preamble to Japan-India relations on the web site of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOF) of Japan formulates the historical connect as: -

*Indian culture, filtered through Buddhism, has had a great impact on Japanese culture and thought and this is the source of Japanese people's sense of closeness to India'.*

The above formulation evokes an enquiry into the following questions:

How did Indian Culture starting with initial contacts of Japan with India through Buddhism create an impact on Japanese Culture? What were the channels that facilitated permeation of impact in Japanese culture?

This article attempts to provide some insights into the above questions by analysing information on history of cultural interactions between India and Japan contained in i) Series of lectures on India -Japan Relations delivered in New Delhi and Chennai (hereafter referred to as Lecture Series)<sup>i</sup> and ii) papers presented by international scholars on Lesser Known India-Japan linkages at a recently organised conference in New Delhi. <sup>ii</sup> Both events were organised on special occasions, the former during the Japan-India Friendship Year and the latter to mark the 50 years of Mombu-kagakusho (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) Scholarship in India.

The relevance of the article based on historical information to contemporary programmes through which India-Japan relations are rapidly expanding may be mentioned. Several bilateral programmes are being carried out. Enhancing 'people-to-people contacts' is one of the important programmes. Strengthening of closeness amongst people is often articulated as the aim of this programme. Insights from analysis of past cultural interactions that are stated to act as 'source of closeness' may thus provide useful inputs to the current programme of 'people-to-people contacts' aimed at strengthening closeness.

## II. Sense of Closeness: the Buddhism Connect : Japan's Protohistory Period

Though initial contacts of Japan with India through Buddhism are well-known and researched, a somewhat detailed description of this period is given in Sections 1 and 2 to bring out special features in the history of that period.

## **1. The Connect and Its Spread effect**

Wide spread adoption of Buddhism in Japan and the emergence of an image of India amongst Japanese people can be traced to policies adopted by Emperor Shomu (enthroned in 724) of Nara Period. The Emperor, to rescue his people from miseries and to take the nation forward towards prosperity, adopted the Buddhist ideology and code of conduct based on a synthesis of two main Buddhist Sutras, the golden light sutra meant for the ruling class and the decorated flower sutra meant for prosperity of all life forms, people, animals and flora and fauna. The synthesised form of Sutra (the Lotus Sutra)<sup>iii</sup> and its commandments were to guide the behaviour of common man, the ruling class and the Emperor himself. Under the court-sponsored Buddhism, temples were built across the country, including one at Todaiji Temple in Nara, for monks and nuns to study Sutras and spread its message. To impart deep and correct knowledge of Sutras to them, the Emperor assigned Japan's emissaries and priests sent to China to seek a high-ranking priest with deep knowledge of Sutras. (Buddhism had by then spread in China). They located Bodhisena, a 33-year-old priest from southern parts of India who had acquired deep knowledge of Sutra in India. Bodhisena was requested to visit Japan and he sailed from China in 736. On reaching Japan, he was made head of the working team to construct Todaiji with complete command on the priests. In 743, by an imperial proclamation, a giant statue of Lord Buddha was constructed in Todaiji. The construction started in 745 and was completed in 752.

Bodhisena was accorded the privilege of performing the eye-opening ceremony of the statue of Lord Buddha on September 752.

Bodhisena remained in Japan until his death in 760 and taught philosophical thoughts of Sutras and Prakrit to the Temple disciples.

Japanese people during that period did not know India as a geographical country (that understanding came much later)<sup>iv</sup>. They associated Bodhisena and Buddhism to a land where Buddha was born. As Bodhisena came from that holy 'land' and was accorded the honour of performing the eye-opening ceremony, the land of Buddha caught the popular imagination of masses; attraction to the land of Buddha had generated seeds of emotional admiration to Tenjiku (ancient name of India, in Japan).

## **2. Rooting of Sense of Closeness: Image of Land of Buddha (India) amongst Japanese.**

During the long years of construction of Todaiji Temple and the Great Buddha, over 2.6 million Japanese were involved (50% of Japan's population). Over ten thousand Priests attended the eye-opening ceremony. Traditional Japanese musical and dance performances as well as performances from other regions of Buddha followers such as China, Central Asia, Korea were held.

Building on the large-scale spread of emotional affinity to Buddhism, a structured approach was adopted for unraveling all aspects of Buddhist knowledge and philosophy. Gradually, Todaiji Temple with around 1000 disciples from all over Japan emerged as a most vibrant centre of learning for various aspects of Buddhism and also logics, Japanese Language, and knowledge systems that, in modern terms, relate to science, engineering, architecture, medicine etc. In a sense, Todaiji Temple became what we now call a University. Other temples created across Japan also became teaching and education centres. Thus educated people spread in Japanese society and engaged themselves in all types of occupations.

As their teaching and learning derived from ethos of Buddhism-oriented thought and philosophy (often called spiritualist), Buddhism and the land of Buddha (Tenjiku) got embedded in them. Almost every one carried a feeling of closeness and affinity to Tenjiku and its people.

### **3. Summary**

In summary during this period, an image of the land where Buddha was born and where people had adopted knowledge of Sutras for happiness and prosperity spread amongst the people of Japan. In a subtle way, an emotional link and a sense of closeness of Japanese people to Buddha's land and its people took roots in Japan.

*Importantly, the sense of closeness to Tenjiku was nurtured and spread by temples and priest-scholars, which encouraged a large scale involvement of people in an emotional activity of construction of Great Buddha and the eye opening ceremony.*

## **III. Intellectual Nourishing of the Roots (Closeness): Ancient Period**

To further strengthen political authority of the emperors, Confucianism was harnessed

along with Buddhism. A new capital was set-up in Nara. More cultural and technical influences came from outside, mainly from China. As time passed, the stability of social and political structure came under strain, and as an attempt to restore order, a new capital was established under the name Heiankyo (Capital of Peace and Tranquillity) at a place that subsequently became known as Kyoto. A period of tranquillity followed.

This 'tranquil' period (Heian period 794-1185) was ripe for the flourishing of an elegant culture along with intellectual pursuits.

It is under this environment, one can conjuncture, that the philosophical aspects of spiritual thoughts prevalent in society received attention of Japanese priest-scholars and thinkers.

Following references in literature may be mentioned as manifestations of these intellectual pursuits: -

- Visits of Japanese monk-scholars to places of learning like Nalanda in India
- Recognition in Japan of a strong Vedic tradition and philosophy in India (often called Hinduism) along with sects of Buddhism.
- Reflections of legends of Indian gods and goddesses in images of idols worshiped in Japan
- Influences on Indian religious rituals and practices in Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples
- Influence of Sanskrit on Japanese syllabary and vocabulary

*The intellectual pursuits at temples facilitated creative and selective amalgamation of Indian religious and philosophical thoughts with related practices in Japan's own Buddhist and Shinto thinking and practices. And teaching centres spread the amalgamated understanding amongst people. The intellectual nourishment strengthened and deepened the already existing spiritual and emotional bonding and sense of closeness of Japanese people with the 'land of Buddha'.*

#### **IV. Closeness through Culture: Textiles, Arts and Crafts: Early Modern Period**

##### **1. Facilitating Conditions in Japan**

During this period, opening up of sea routes and other changes in Japan diversified the scope of interactions between Indian and Japanese cultures. Conditions in Japan that were conducive for diversification and cultural interactions may be briefly noted:

- Expansion of Indian Ocean routes linked India to Southeast and East Asia and Europe and through these to Japan
- A desire amongst Japan's powerful nobility and the rich emerged for grandeur, novelty, and variety in attire material and for openness to products from outside.
- Consequent emergence of a merchant class engaged in expansion of commerce and trade in cities around Edo, Osaka, Kyoto (in addition to those in Ruykyu group of islands).

## **2. Textile:**

### (1) Sarasa<sup>v</sup>

Presentation made in New Delhi Conference relating to Indian hand-painted cotton fabric called Sarasa in Japan is an example of cultural interactions through textile.

The Dutch merchants who had established trade connections with India and Japan brought Indian hand-painted cotton cloth painted in various designs from markets in Indonesia to Japan. Fascinated by exotic colours of the fabric, masters of tea ceremony used these as wrappers (furoshiki) in tea ceremony utensils in pouches for tea containers. Due to cottons' comfort in summer, tailors used the fabric for making short-sleeved coats. Market for Sarasa expanded in Japan and in response, the Dutch trained artists /artisans in Petapoli (India) in painting Japanese style designs on Indian cotton. Taking note of the popularity of Sarasa, Japanese designers tried imitating Sarasa but in the absence of knowledge, without success. However, using Japanese dyeing techniques, they innovated a way of making Sarasa-like fabric 'Wasarasa' or Japanese Sarasa. In due course, Kyoto and Osaka emerged as centres of commercial production of fabric.

It may be noted that Sarasa was also used extensively in several East and South-East Asian countries.

### (2) Indigo<sup>vi</sup>

India was known for cultivation of Indigo and its use for dyeing cotton. Indigo as dyeing material was used in several East and South East Asian countries. Development of making indigo-dyed cloths, glossy and waterproof, had led farmers in Japan to use it for making umbrellas and because of its flame-resistant quality, the cloth was also used by fire fighters in



Japan. Indigo was also used for dyeing paper and the covers of the religious books as a protection from moth.

Indigo had also entered into life styles of people in East and South East Asia and continues to be so.

### (3) Craft<sup>vii</sup>

With reference to cultural interactions through 'craft techniques', a lesser known example of reverse cultural flow from Japan to India was mentioned in the New Delhi Conference. It was reported that expensive lacquered-decorated items such as shields used in battle fields and palanquin were brought from Japan to India during the 17<sup>th</sup> century by Dutch traders. They were made by artisans in Japan exclusively for Indian elites and aristocrats.

*In summary, as hand printed or handmade products (crafted products) and techniques of natural dyes necessarily were embedded, internalised or personalised form of cultural specificities of societies where items are made and used (unlike industrial products), they indirectly create a sense of closeness between peoples of producing and using societies.*

## **V. Contacts through Travellers:**

By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Japanese had started venturing to foreign shores including India. Just two examples out of many available in literature are included to highlight a few features of cultural interactions.

Tokubei Tenjiku's visit to India is one of the most well-known and extensively referred. In New Delhi Conference, the following aspect of his visit was raised. <sup>viii</sup>

It was pointed out that up until the medieval and early modern periods, Japanese viewed the whole world as consisting of three parts (a world view called 'Sangoku- Sekaikan' or three 'country' view), Honcho (their own country Japan), Shintan (China), and Tenjiku (India). Japanese had by then recognised Shintan as a country outside Honcho, but the rest of the world was associated with the land of Buddha and Buddhism called Tenjiku. When in 16<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit missionaries such as Francis Xavier arrived, he was initially called Tenjikujin (people of Tenjiku) and Christianity was considered as a sect of Buddhism. As new geographical information arrived with the Portuguese, the world view got modified as consisting of five continents (not countries) which were Asia, Europe, Livia (Africa), America and Magallanica. This division of the world into continents was perhaps based on sea trade

routes. The land until then imaged by people in Japan as of Tenjiku acquired identity of a separate country 'Indo' in the Asian continent. The New Delhi Conference thus raises the following important issue that may be worth researching further:

*With what do people of Japan have a sense of closeness created through impact of Indian culture filtered through Buddhism on Japanese culture, with a land imaged as 'Tenjiku or the Nation state Indo/ India?'*

## **VI. Modernisation & Impact: Late 19<sup>th</sup> to Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

### **1. Interactions in Technology**

Two not so well-known cases presented in New Delhi Conference under the sub-theme of Seismology and Architecture (in the session on Technology) are mentioned below as they bring out special features relating to creating closeness amongst people by appreciating and understanding mutual cultures.

(1)<sup>ix</sup> In 1897 Shillong, a city in North-Eastern part India was completely devastated by earthquakes (referred to in records as the 1897 Great Earthquake). The British Government of India invited experts like Dr Fusakichi Omori, Professor T. Nakamura and Dr T. Koyama from Tokyo Imperial University (present University of Tokyo) to advise on post-earthquake reconstruction of Shillong and again in 1905 for after-earthquakes in Kangra . Reports of these experts provided inputs to Japan's Earthquake Prevention Committee (*Shinsai Yobo Chosakwai*). This led to the introduction of a distinct type construction system called 'Assam Type' in seismology-related literature and in practices of architects and builders. The term 'Assam Type' succinctly captures a deep sympathetic involvement of University scientists with people of the region to understand their living culture under hard conditions; an understanding without which the construction system could not have been developed.

(2)<sup>x</sup> A Mission for Indian History and Archaeology at University of Tokyo required field studies by Scholars for documenting in detail Dargahs (Islamic Structures) in Delhi City. Surveys were conducted in 1959-60, 1961-62 and again in 2015 and 2018. This involved understanding of changes over time in the living cultures of people coexisting with historic monuments under compulsions of Government regulations on preservation of the latter. Intensive interaction of experts with large number of people living in stressful conditions generated a sympathetic and emotional closeness with that strata of society and its people.

*The above examples are mentioned not as an example that usually would fall under 'technological' cooperation but as an example of science and technology cooperation with special feature of cultural and emotional understanding between experts and common people.*

## **2. Education during the Meiji Period**

Japan envisaged India as an important partner in the resurgence of New Asia. After all, despite the political upheavals and changes, India was known for, in addition to possessing unparalleled reservoir of spiritual wealth, its enormous economic wealth. (for example in the 18<sup>th</sup> century India contributed about 24% to world economy<sup>xi</sup>). As at that time, base of prevailing understanding of India in Japan was mainly traditional temple-institutions, the Meiji government deemed it essential to re-study India using modern approaches in a modern university. As authentic sources on Indian philosophy and Buddhism on which India's image was built were mainly in Pali and Sanskrit, a chair in Sanskrit and Pali was established in 1899 in Tokyo Imperial University. Subsequently as studies on multilingual and multi-religious contemporary India were necessary, a chair of comparative religion in Tokyo University was established in 1903 and Urdu was introduced in University of Foreign Languages of Tokyo in 1911 and of Osaka in 1921. Gradually interest of scholars in studying contemporary India expanded in more universities.

*The importance of continued study and research on all aspects of India by scholars in Japanese Educational Institutions is recognised by Japanese government as a necessity.*

## **VII. Reverse flow: from Japan to India**

By late 19<sup>th</sup> century and up to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century (the period covered in this paper), impressed by Japan's modernisation and military might demonstrated by its military victories over China and then Russia, travels from India to Japan increased by Indian political leaders, nationalists, business men and others. Important visits from India to Japan are mostly well known and considerable literature is available on them. Here It is considered sufficient to only point out that literature can be read and referred to in the following contexts: -

- India's nationalistic effort for independence
- Industry and trade (economic context)

- Thoughts on development and modernisation (simply put: dominantly materialistic and industrialised or dominantly for ethical and universal harmony and peace)
- Alignments for New Asia
- Learning from Japan's academic and education system

As role of scholars and educational institutions have emerged in the above sections as important in seeding a sense of closeness, a lesser known example of interactions in the context of learning from Japan's education system was presented in New Delhi Conference and summarised below: -

In 1922<sup>xii</sup> the State of Hyderabad, enthused by developments in Japan and attributing it to a large extent to Japan's education system, sent a mission to study Japanese education system under Syed Ross Massod leadership. The purpose was to derive lessons for imparting higher education in Osmania University (in the State) in vernacular language, like in Japan. However, due to political compulsions and constrains of British rule, lessons learned from Japan were not implemented. Understanding *and learning of private university system in which Japan has good experience may be useful.*

## VIII. Conclusions from the Past

Sense of closeness of Japanese people to India took roots and flourished for centuries (from 8<sup>th</sup> century to about early 19<sup>th</sup> century) without direct people-to-people contacts between Indians and Japanese. Therefore, relationship of people-to-people contacts with sense of closeness is not clear. Contacts through tourism do not involve personalised interaction in an open and free environment and hence do not generate 'closeness' nor is tourism meant to promote closeness'. The motivation of tourists is mainly enjoyment and to see another country. And for receiving people, it creates county's awareness amongst people and economic returns.

Trade in hand-crafted products (as opposed to industrially-manufactured products) indirectly generates a subtle sense of closeness of the user towards the craftsmen or maker of the product. Several Japanese scholars through their almost life-long studies on India have played a critical role in creating sustainable sense of closeness to India amongst Japanese. Such scholars are little known to Indians. They need high recognition. Science and technology

programmes that involve interaction with common people to acquire understanding of culture promotes emotional bonding.

(1st April, 2019)

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- i Path from India – Path from Japan: Lecture Series on Japan -India Relations. Lectures delivered by scholars from Japan and India in New Delhi and Chennai during the India Japan Friendship Year 2007, Compiled by Sengaku Maeda. English translation of book by Shuppan Sinsha 2008 published by Northern Book Centre, New Delhi
- ii New Delhi Conference. India-Japan: Unearthing Lesser Known Linkages, New Delhi November 15-17, 2018
- iii Lotus Sutra is specifically mentioned here as it has an estimated 150,000 followers in India and the number is growing. This is an indication that the one sees a reverse flow of a version of Buddhism from Japan to India. This may indicate that Japan has over the years Japan internalised Buddhism so deeply that it now ready to announce ownership of its version Nichiren.
- iv Historically, new Geographical Information of the world as we know it today reached Japan in parts starting with through the Portuguese in the 16<sup>th</sup> century
- v Yasuruha Oyama: New Delhi Conference, Abstracts: page 2
- vi Padmani Tolat Balaram: New Delhi Conference, Abstracts: page 7
- vii Timon Screech: New Delhi Conference, Abstracts: page 3
- viii Takahiko Ishizaki: New Delhi Conference, Abstracts: page16
- ix Anuradha Chaturvedi: New Delhi Conference, Abstracts: page 19
- x Naoko Fukami: New Delhi Conference, Abstracts: page 18
- xi Angus Maddison: Historical Statistics of World Economy: 1-2003 AD
- xii Sushila Narsimhan: New Delhi Conference, Abstracts: page 13

**Bio-brief** Dr. Ashok Jain

Dr. Ashok Jain obtained a PhD degree in Physics from University of Delhi and been a researcher at University of Kyoto as Mombusho Scholar, University of Bristol, U.K. as Commonwealth Scholar and International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Trieste, Italy, as a visitor.

He was Science Attaché, Indian Embassy, Tokyo, Director in the Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India and retired as Director of National Institute of Science Technology and Development Studies (NISTADS), a multidisciplinary think tank on interaction of science technology and society.

He has published over 150 research papers and edited several books. He is an elected Fellow of National Academy of Sciences, India and recipient of Emperor of Japan's medal. He is President of Mombusho Scholars Association of India (MOSAI) and of Society for Promotion of Science and Society Studies.



## 2019年下院総選挙を控えた印内政状況

### Indian Domestic Political Situation Towards the General Elections 2019

在インド日本大使館二等書記官

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***Abstracts:** Narendra Modi-led BJP with its strong agenda for development and reform swept the last general elections in 2014. Since then, Modi government enjoyed wide and strong support of the electorate, and held 19 state governments in the country at one time. However, BJP lost 3 major state elections held in December 2018. It is generally considered that BJP would have quite tough fights in the coming general elections due to be held from April to May this year.*

*And then, "Pulwama terror attack" took place by cross-border terrorists from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. This attack and following military encounters between India and Pakistan have turned the relations between India and Pakistan into heavy strains, which may gravely affect the coming general elections in India.*

## はじめに

本年4月から5月にかけて連邦下院総選挙が実施される。前回2014年では、モディ首相率いるインド人民党（BJP）が、ガバナンスの強化等を掲げ、汚職問題等で国民の支持を失っていた国民会議派（ कांग्रेस党、以下国民会議派と表記）を破り、単独過半数を獲得する歴史的な大勝を飾った。その後もBJPは高い支持を受け、主な州議会選挙で勝利を続け、2018年3月には、北東部の3州で勝利し、29州と7連邦直轄地のうち地域政党との連立政権含め、19州で州政権を握るに至った。

しかしながら、昨年12月に実施された5州議会選挙において、主要3州で政権を失うという結果に終わり、モディ首相のカリスマ性の陰りも指摘され、次期下院総選挙は、BJPにとって決して楽観視できるものではないと見ら

れていた。

このような状況の中、2月にインド北西部のジャンム・カシミール州プルワマにおいて、パキスタンに拠点を置くイスラーム武装勢力ジャイシェ・ムハンマド（JeM、「ムハンマドの軍隊」の意）により40人以上のインド治安部隊が死亡する爆弾テロが発生した。これに対し、インド軍がパキスタン領内のテロ組織施設を空爆、さらに報復としてパキスタン戦闘機がインド戦闘機を撃墜したことで、インドとパキスタンの関係は十数年来経験しなかったような緊張状態となった。これにより、総選挙情勢はまた大きく変化の様相を見せている。

## I. ラジャスタン州等3州議会選挙

### 1. 選挙結果概要

はじめに、昨年末にラジャスタン州、マディヤ・プラデシュ州、チャッティースガル州、テランガナ州、ミゾラム州、5州で実施された州議会選挙を振り返ってみたい。各州における獲得議席数は表のとおりである。

表：2018年12月州議会選挙結果

ラジャスタン州	
政党	獲得議席数
国民会議派	99議席(+78)
BJP	73議席(-90)
大衆社会党	6議席(+3)
その他	21議席(+8)

マディヤ・プラデシュ州	
政党	獲得議席数
国民会議派	114議席(+56)
BJP	109議席(-56)
大衆社会党	2議席(-2)
その他	5議席(+2)

チャッティースガル州	
政党	獲得議席数
国民会議派	68議席(+29)
BJP	15議席(-34)
大衆社会党	2議席(+1)
その他	5議席(+4)

ミゾラム州	
政党	獲得議席数
ミゾ民族戦線	26議席(+21)
国民会議派	5議席(-29)
BJP	1議席(+1)
その他	8議席(+7)

テランガナ州	
政党	獲得議席数
テランガナ民族会議	88議席(+25)
国民会議派	19議席(-2)
全印ムスリム評議会	7議席(±0)
テルグ・デサム党	2議席(-13)
BJP	1議席(-4)
その他	2議席(-7)

※選挙管理委員会発表のデータをもとに執筆者作成。括弧内の数値は前回選挙からの増減数。

(注) 括弧内の数値は前回選挙からの増減数。

(出所) 選挙管理委員会発表のデータをもとに執筆者作成。



## 2. BJP の敗因

5 州議会選挙結果の特徴として、5 州の内 4 州で政権が交代したことが挙げられる。ラジャスタン州及びミゾラム州における定期的に政権交代が起こる伝統的な傾向、マディヤ・プラデシュ州及びチャッティースガル州における 15 年という長期政権に対し変化を求める感情が強く作用したことが今回の選挙結果の大きな要因と考えられる。ヒンディー・ハートランドとも呼ばれ、BJP の支持基盤の強いラジャスタン州、マディヤ・プラデシュ州、チャッティースガル州、3 州全てにおいて BJP が州政権を失う結果となったのも、各州それぞれにおいて変化を求めた民意が示された結果と考えられる。

一方において、これらの州に共通する要因も挙げられる。モディ政権による道路、電力網等のインフラ政策、住宅整備、トイレの普及、調理用ガス設備の支給等の農村部における堅実な発展政策は評価を得ているものの、農作物の価格低迷や中間業者による搾取構造の改革の遅れにより収入が増加していない農民は不満を抱えている。事実、この不満を解消できていないとされる BJP は農村部で広く票を失った。なお、農民の不満の燻りは、2017 年 12 月にモディ首相の牙城であるグジャラート州議会選挙で、BJP が過半数を維持するも議席を減らして以来指摘されてきていた。

BJP は、大勝した前回州議会選挙と比較し、ラジャスタン州農村部では 6.8% 減の 36.9%、マディヤ・プラデシュ州農村部では 3.6% 減の 39.6% と、両州全域で軒並み得票率を落とした。加えて、BJP は、都市部における得票率も落とした。前回と比較し、ラジャスタン州で 14.9% 減の 39.8% (前回は 54.7%)、マディヤ・プラデシュ州で 6.7% 減の 47.2% (前回は 53.9%) (数値はヒンドゥー紙によるもの) となっており、両州の農村部における得票率下落の 2 倍の下落率が記録された。BJP の伝統的な支持層である中小企業者は、旧高額紙幣廃止や物品サービス税 (GST) 導入によりダメージを受けたとされ、雇用機会不足に苦しむ若者の不満もあり、BJP が都市部において大方の予想よりも大きく票を失うことにつながったと見られる。

## 3. 国民会議派の取り込み戦略

国民会議派は、農業債務の即時免除、電気料金の 50% 値下げ、雇用創出等の公約を掲げ、不満を持つ州民の票の取り込みを図った。ラジャスタン州及びマディヤ・プラデシュ州においては、選挙を決定付ける程の効果があつたとまでは言い難いまでも公約の効果が一定程度認められ、また、チャッティースガル州においては投票直前に農民債務免除の公約を掲げたことが、国民会議派の勝利に大きく

寄与したと見られる。国民会議派のポピュリスティックな公約は、全般的に功を奏したと言えよう。

#### 4. 得票率は僅差

以上のような要因により BJP はこれら州議会選挙で議席を減らすこととなったが、ラジャスタン州及びマディヤ・プラデシュ州においては、過半数には僅かに至らなかったものの第一党となった国民会議派と BJP の得票率の差は、ラジャスタン州で 0.4%、マディヤ・プラデシュ州で 0.1% という非常に僅差であった。僅差で勝敗の分かれた選挙区が多い中、主に BJP 政権への不満を示すと見られる「支持候補なし」(NOTA=none of the above) 票がラジャスタン州で 2.0%、マディヤ・プラデシュ州で 1.4% を占め、接戦の勝敗に小さからぬ影響を及ぼした。

## II. 3 州議会選挙以降の動向

### 1. 国民会議派及び地域政党の動き

上記州議会選挙の結果は、それまで強者 BJP の一方的な勝負であるとの見方が多かった下院総選挙が、BJP にとって決して楽観視して良いものではないことを示した。一方、3 つの大規模州の政権を獲得し、存在感を大幅に増強したばかりでなく豊かな資金源を得て党勢の回復に大きな弾みをつけた国民会議派は、待望論の強かったカリスマ性の高いプリヤンカ・ガンジー（ラーフル総裁の妹）の国民会議派幹事長、ウツタル・プラデシュ州選挙責任者就任、貧困層対象のベーシック・インカム導入の約束等を矢継ぎ早に発表した。

また、各地域政党の動きも更に活発化しつつある。インドの各州の中で下院での最大議席定員数（80 議席）を有するウツタル・プラデシュ州では、長年の宿敵同士であった大衆社会党（BSP）及び社会主義党（SP）が国民会議派を排した連合を発表した。西ベンガル州の全印草の根会議派（AITC）主催の大規模野党集会には 20 以上の主だった野党が参加した。テランガナ州のテランガナ民族会議（TRS）とアンドラ・プラデシュ州の YSR 国民会議派（YSRCP）は、BJP も国民会議派も排した第三勢力による連合組織のための協力をして行くことで一致した。

国民会議派は、アンドラ・プラデシュ州におけるテルグ・デサム党（TDP）との連合、デリー準州における庶民党（AAP）との連合の否定、ラーフル総裁の上記 AITC 主催の大規模集会欠席等、各地域政党と一定の距離を置き、独自に選挙を戦う姿勢を強めた。国民会議派の 3 州議会選挙勝利は、国民会議派の野党諸派への妥協姿勢を弱めたところがあり、国民会議派と野党諸派が足並みを揃えた強

力な反 BJP 連合の成立を却って困難にしたとの見方もある。

## 2. BJP の選挙戦略

BJP は、州政権を失った 3 州に加え、ウッタル・プラデシュ州、グジャラート州等、前回 2014 年に大勝し飽和状態とも言える議席数を保有する州で不可避とされる議席減の抑制を図り、さらには、伸びしろのある北東部、西ベンガル州、オディシャ州等での議席増に注力している。BJP は、3 州議会選挙で示された有権者の反発を解消するため、様々な方策を打ち出した。農民及び小規模事業主の不満の解消を迫られているモディ政権は、農民対策、中低所得者層の支持拡大を目指し、下院総選挙前の暫定予算案は新規政策を含まないという慣例を破り、2 月 1 日、低所得農民への年 6,000 ルピーの直接支給、非組織部門労働者への年金制度の創設、所得減税や控除拡大等、選挙を意識した広範な経済政策を含む暫定予算案を発表した。また、BJP の伝統的な支持基盤である上位カースト内に燦る、下位カースト優遇の留保制度に対する反発を解消するため、上位カースト内の経済的弱者に対する留保枠を新設する憲法改正を行った。さらには、アヨーディア問題の審理を先送りにする最高裁の姿勢を受け、治安維持のために収用されていた係争地周辺の土地をヒンドゥー教団体含む所有者に返還する請願を最高裁に提出した。ラーマ寺院建設を後押しする姿勢を明確にすることで、ヒンドゥー至上主義団体であり BJP の支持母体である民族義勇団 (RSS) の支援を固めることにも成功した。

それでも、なお、国民会議派の復調や各地域政党等による野党連合の形成の活発な動きに加え、モディ首相の求心力の低下が指摘され、BJP が総選挙において相当苦戦すると見られていた。この時点では、BJP の予想獲得議席数は全 545 議席中 200 議席程度との見方が多く、200 議席を割り込むようであれば、モディ首相の退陣或いは野党連合による政権樹立もあり得ると見る向きもあった。

## Ⅲ. 選挙情勢を一変させたプルワマにおけるテロ事件

上記のような状況の中、2 月 14 日にジャンム・カシミール州プルワマにおいて、ジャンムからスリナガルに移動中だった治安部隊の車列に爆発物を搭載した車両が突撃するテロ事件が発生、犠牲者は 16 州の出身者 40 名以上にのぼった。犯行声明を出した JeM 及び JeM の拠点となっているパキスタンに対する激しい反発が北インドを中心に起こり、政府による強硬な対応を求める声が高まる中、26 日にモディ政権がパキスタン国内のテロリスト拠点への空爆を実施した。強い指導者、モディ首相への強い支持を表す国内世論が巻き起こった。

総選挙を約 2 ヶ月後に控えたタイミング発生したプルワマにおけるテロ、及び

モディ政権による対応は、BJP の苦戦が予想された選挙情勢を一変させるものとなった。BJP は、それまで攻防ラインと見られていた 200 議席よりも相当数多くの議席を獲得することになると現時点で見られている。空爆後に India TV-CNX がウッタル・プラデシュ州において実施した世論調査では、プルワマ以前の調査結果と比較して BJP の大幅な議席拡大の可能性が示されている。

## IV. 今後の注目点

### 1. BJP

BJP は、プルワマにおけるテロによって沸き起こった強いナショナリズムの大波に乗って、モディ首相の強いリーダーシップのイメージを最大限活用しヒンドゥー教徒票を固め、支持の維持強化を進めて行くことが想定される。同時に、モディ政権は、パキスタンに対する強硬姿勢を貫きつつも、印パ対立が拡大し過ぎて各国からの批判を浴びたり、国内における宗教間対立が深まり大きな混乱を招いたりする事態にならぬように慎重な舵取りも求められる。インド軍による空爆以降もパキスタン軍による空爆や両国戦闘機の撃墜、地上部隊の小規模な衝突等のニュースが継続しており、引き続き注視が必要である。

### 2. 野党と大連合

プルワマにおけるテロによって一変した選挙情勢は、国民会議派を含めた野党各党の選挙戦略、動向にも影響を与えるものと見られる。

国民会議派は、再び窮地に立たされることとなったとも言え、3 州議会選挙での勝利後に強めていた自党主導の方針を転換し、各地域政党と足並みを揃えた野党大連合の形成を目指す可能性もある。

他方、各地域政党が、国民会議派との大連合を目指し BJP と徹底抗戦するのか、再度一方的な強者となったと目される BJP への迎合姿勢に傾いて行くのかも注目される。モディ政権は、かねてから問題とされてきたプリヤンカ・国民会議派幹事長の夫であるヴァドラ氏の海外不動産に係る資金洗浄疑惑、西ベンガル州の AITC による汚職疑惑に加え、ウッタル・プラデシュ州の BSP 及び SP の汚職疑惑、ハリヤナ州における国民会議派の汚職疑惑捜査等もそれぞれ強化してきている。モディ政権による強い追求から逃れるためにも選挙前あるいは選挙後に BJP に近寄る地域政党が出てくる可能性も排除されない。

## おわりに

上記のとおり昨年末の州議会選挙の結果を踏まえ、現時点での下院総選挙情勢を述べたが、実のところインドでの選挙予測は非常に困難であり、特に投票直前の数日間で選挙動向が大きく変化する傾向が強いとされる。当地各機関が実施する世論調査や出口調査も大きく外れることが多い。プルワマにおけるテロのように、一つの事件、一つの 이슈が選挙情勢を劇的に変化させる可能性も常に存在し選挙の行方を予断することはできない。投票完了までの今後約 2 ヶ月間で、周辺国との関係等対外 이슈、ヒンドゥー・ムスリム等宗教 이슈、各地域やカースト等民族 이슈、原油価格等経済 이슈等、選挙に影響を与えうる様々な動きに引き続き注視していく必要がある。

総選挙終了後の 5 年間は、日本にとっても世界にとっても益々重要性を増すインドの行方を決定する非常に重要な 5 年間である。インドの人々が国の舵取りをどのような政権に委ね、その政権が何を目指すのか。総選挙とインドの行方は、引き続き注目すべきところである。

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1999 年より約 20 年間にわたり、インド在住。インド国立バナラスヒンドゥー大学 (BHU) 文学部ヒンディー語学科アドバンスディプロマ修了。BHU にて外国語学科非常勤講師を務めつつ、2001 年 J A I COLLABORATIONS Pvt. Ltd. (ヴァラナシ) を設立。2016 年より任期付き職員として現職を務め、インド国内政治分析や国会議員交流等を担当している。



< 著書 >

『インドで「暮らす、働く、結婚する」』2010 年 ダイヤモンド社

## Japan-India Relations from the Perspective from South Korea

### 韓国から見た日印関係

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**Abstract:** *South Korea is closely observing the upward trajectory of Japan-India relations as many regional issues which are driving them are also affecting South Korea's strategic thinking. One of the major factors that has influenced South Korea's shifting attitude toward regional issues is China's rising power and its growing assertiveness. Indeed, China's aggressive posture toward the region, including the Korean issue, has compelled Seoul to re-calculate its strategy. This development has brought South Korea closer to Japan and India. It is evident as South Korea, like Japan and India, has adopted a strategy to reject China's assertiveness by promoting a rhetoric of maintaining of the existing rule-based order. Seoul is also shifting its stance toward the Quad, an arrangement for cooperation among Japan, India, US and Australia, by demonstrating a clear inclination toward this regional grouping. Equally significant, South Korea's recent maritime strategy also suggests that Seoul is preparing itself to deal with its mighty neighbor, China, by providing naval support to its allies in case of contingency. All these developments underlines that South Korea is moving closer to the democratic alliance system in Asia, which includes Japan and India.*

【要旨】韓国は、自国の戦略思考にも影響することから、地域的な諸問題がもたらした日印関係の緊密化を注視している。韓国がこれら諸問題への対応を変化させている主因には、中国の勢力と自己主張の増大がある。実際のところ、中国が朝鮮半島などの地域に対して攻勢的なスタンスをとっているため、韓国はその対外戦略を再検討せざるを得ない。こうした状況が韓国の対日・対印接近の誘因で

ある。韓国は、日印と同様、現行ルールに基づく秩序維持というレトリックを主張することで、中国の独断的な主張を拒否する戦略を明らかにとってきた。韓国は、日印米豪の協力措置である4カ国枠組み(Quad)に明白に前向き姿勢を示すなど、Quadへのスタンスを変えつつある。加えて、最近の韓国海洋戦略、すなわち、韓国が有事に際しては同盟国に海洋支援を提供することによって、強大な隣国・中国への対処を始めつつあることは重要である。こうした新事態は、韓国が日印を含むアジアの民主主義同盟システムにより接近しつつあることを浮き彫りにしている。

## I. Introduction

The upward trajectory in Japan-India relations in the recent decade is being closely observed by other powers in the region, including South Korea. One of the major reasons behind this development is that many issues which are driving Tokyo-New Delhi relations are also affecting Seoul's foreign relations with major powers. These issues include dealing with China's growing power and its assertiveness, maintaining the rule-based order (RBO) in the region, securing the freedom of navigation (FON) and so on.

South Korea, which has been a strong pillar of the US-led security system in Asia, is particularly paying keen attention toward the development of bilateral and multilateral alignments in the region. This is because the policy communities in Seoul believe that these emerging security dynamics will directly influence the future direction of the Korean Peninsula security dynamics and South Korea's relations with the major powers. Accordingly, South Korean government is closely examining regional security environment and designing a new type of strategy to meet the new challenges, which in turn seems to be closer to Japan-India-led liberal alliance network.

Indeed, a new type of challenges are emerging in Asia as China's power and assertiveness are rising and directly affecting foreign policy strategies of many Asian powers, including South Korea. As this article will show, South Korea which remarkably improved its relations with China in the post-cold war era and saw the rise of China as an economic opportunity until recently is shifting its stance: that is, Seoul now views the rising China as a threat for its economic and national security. Accordingly, South Korean government is

designing a new type of foreign policy which is closer to Japan-India-led liberal democratic alliance in Asia.

## **II. Factors which Bring South Korea Closer to Japan-India-led Liberal Order**

One of the major factors that is bringing South Korea closer to Japan-India-led liberal order is South Korea's shifting relations with China. It is significant to note that after China's economic retaliation policy over the THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) controversy between Beijing and Seoul, South Korean policymakers now come to believe that their future lies in strong relations with liberal countries in Asia, such as India. It is evident in the words of Trade Minister Kim hyun-chong, who openly said that South Korea will seek to deepen its relations with India at the expense of its relations with China, because Beijing has created serious problems for South Korea over the THAAD issue.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the government run-trade body, KOTRA, has also announced that it will facilitate India-South Korea relations to reduce its economic dependence on China as Beijing's THAAD retaliation is a serious concern for South Korean economy.<sup>2</sup> Above all, South Korea's top business establishments are now in opinion that as Beijing's assertiveness is growing, their businesses are not safe in China and hence they should develop relations with another regional power, India.<sup>3</sup>

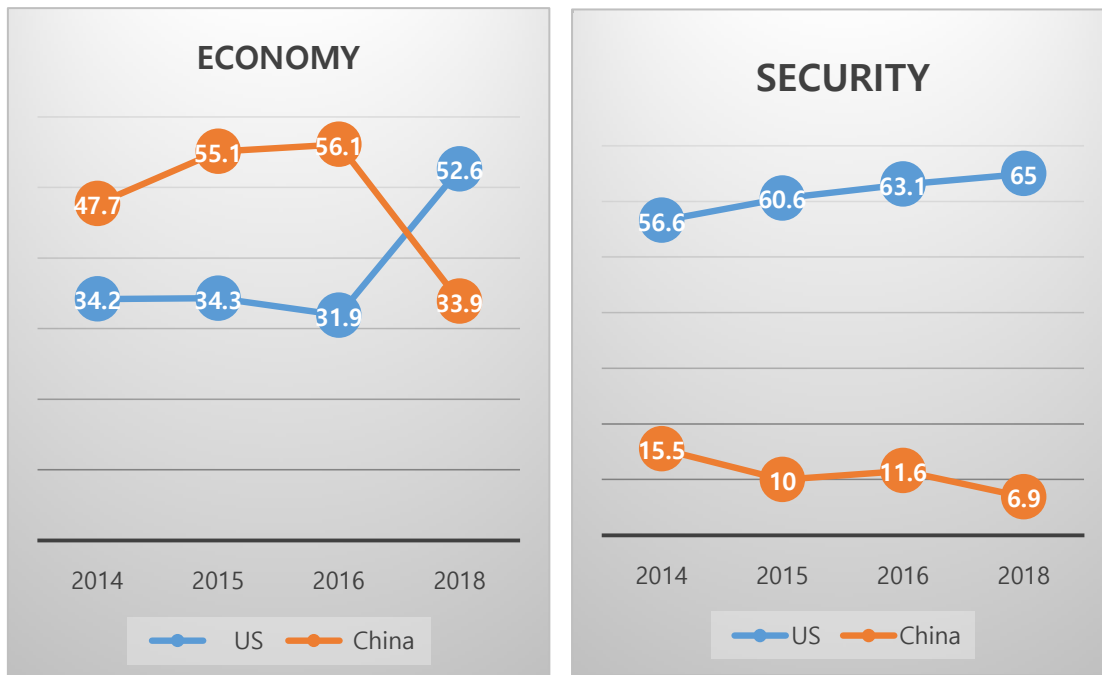
Equally significant, South Koreans are now more favorable toward Japan than China, as China has begun to create problems for South Korea with its economic power. It is important to mention that until recently, Japan has consistently been South Koreans' least favored country, with the exception of North Korea. However, such situation is now changing as China's assertiveness towards South Korea grows. It is evident in an opinion survey published by the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, whose major conclusion underscores that "the favorability of China among South Koreans dropped precipitously to a level even below to that of Japan's."<sup>4</sup> This deteriorating perception was a result of Chinese retaliation against the deployment of THAAD on the Korean Peninsula, this report suggested. A group of scholars and policymakers in Seoul are also of the opinion that South Korea should enhance its relations with Tokyo, as China's economic and military rise is



steadily becoming a threat for South Korea.<sup>5</sup>

The THAAD controversy is not the only issue which has influenced South Korea's changing relations with China vis-à-vis other major powers. Other geopolitical issues have also provided an opportunity for South Korea to re-calculate its relationship with China. For example, China's open demonstration of imperialist mindset, which China demonstrates by the claim to the ancient North Korean Kingdom's territory-Koguryo- as ancient Chinese dynasty's territory, the declaration of a new Air Identification Zone (ADIZ) which partially overlaps the zones of South Korea and Japan, and its geo-political motivation to bring South Korea into China-led economic architecture including the AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank), has drastically changed South Korea's positive view on China. According to a survey conducted in 2006, only 41 percent of South Koreans considered China as a threat. However, as China's assertiveness grows, this situation had changed drastically in 2014's survey, with 72 percent of South Koreans viewing China as a threat<sup>6</sup>. What is more, most South Korean are also of the opinion that their future lies in strengthening its relations with the US-led liberal order vis-à-vis China-led tributary system, as one survey suggests that South Koreans' consideration of the United States as future economic and security partner has enhanced whereas China's rate has significantly dropped (See figure 1).

**Figure 1: South Korea's Views on Most Important Country for its economy/security**



Source: Prepared by Author based on data from ASAN Institute for Policy Studies.<sup>7</sup>

What is more, for the first time China has emerged as the top security threat to South Korea. It is significant to note that North Korea for the long time has been the top security threat for South Korea. However, as China's is taking aggressive posture, it has now replaced North Korea as the biggest security threat for South Korea. According to a survey by the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies (IPUS) at Seoul National University, South Koreans for the first time cited 'China – not North Korea – as the biggest threat to the Korean peace'.<sup>8</sup> Another crucial survey also found that China has replaced North Korea as the most threatening country for South Korea<sup>9</sup>. In addition, some scholarly studies also suggest that the South Korea-China relations have got into an unprecedented level of "new normal", as Beijing has adopted a hostile stance toward Seoul.<sup>10</sup>

Against that background, there is an emerging debate in the country that Seoul should develop its relations with the liberal countries in the region so that South Korean security can be enhanced. This situation has led South Korea to design a new type of strategy, which in turn seems to be closer to Japan-India-led liberal alliance network.

### **III. South Korea's New Regional Strategy: Moving Closer to Japan and India?**

In the previous section, we have seen that how China factor is influencing South Korea's strategic thinking. Such development, in turn, is pushing South Korea closer to Japan-India-led liberal order.

#### **1. Rejection of Great Power Assertiveness and Emphasis on ASEAN Centrality**

South Korea has now adopted a strategy to reject rising great power assertiveness of China and emphasizes on the existing rule-based order. It is significant that both Japan and India, along with other like-minded partners, are opposing China's growing aggressiveness by promoting a rhetoric that ASEAN should play a central role in the changing security environment in the region. Hence, by stressing on 'ASEAN centrality' they are sending a clear message to a revisionist China that no dispute or issue should be resolved through unilateralism and that ASEAN's role should not be marginalized. It was evident when the 2018 meeting of Quadrilateral grouping comprising India, Japan, Australia and the US stressed ASEAN's centrality in their Indo-Pacific visions.<sup>11</sup>

South Korea has also designed a similar type of strategy to promote ASEAN centrality in its foreign policy rhetoric. And, not surprisingly, China-related fear is a major factor behind this move. For example, according to one report by a government-run influential think-tank, Korea National Defense Academy (KNDA), "due to China's aggressive posture in its One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative and its offensive strategy in dealing with South China Sea disputes, the ASEAN centrality has been drastically weakened in recently years.<sup>12</sup>" Accordingly, South Korean government should actively promote the ASEAN centrality through its New Southern Policy, the report suggests. Other policy reports also raised concerns over the ASEAN centrality in their policy recommendations for the Moon Administration.<sup>13</sup>

'ASEAN centrality' rhetoric also appears in South Korea's bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. For example, when President Moon embarked on an official visit to Indonesia, which is also concerned about China's rising

assertiveness in the region, the South Korea-Indonesia Joint Declaration underlined the ASEAN centrality issue.<sup>14</sup> This issue was also highlighted in a recent summit meeting between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South Korean President Moon Jae-in. What is more, South Korean government extended its strong support for the ASEAN centrality at the multilateral forum such as the 20th Korea-ASEAN summit in Singapore last year.<sup>15</sup> All these developments show that South Korea is moving closer to Japan-India-led liberal order

## **2. Inclination toward the Quad**

A close examination of South Korea's emerging strategy in the region also reveals that Seoul is now inclining towards the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (hereafter the Quad). One of the most significant developments between Tokyo and New Delhi in recent times is that both countries are actively engaged in cooperation for the promotion of the Quad, a formation of democratic countries in the region such as US, Japan, India and Australia. South Korea, a democratic country and US's ally in Asia, remains sidelined on this issue.

However, as the China's aggressiveness grows and the United States becomes more supportive to the Quad, strategic discourses are emerging in South Korea whether Seoul should develop close relations with the Quad members. As one policy report suggests that President Trump's Asia policy will emphasize more on developing the Quad grouping in future as China's aggressive maritime policy is become more apparent. In such a scenario, "South Korean government may participate in the Quad" provided that this security body should be a multilateral security cooperation architecture, rather than a military alliance containing China.<sup>16</sup>

Besides, one recent report of a government-run think-tank, the Korea Institute of Defense Analyses (KIDA) also argues that the emergence of the Quad is a result of the United States' diversifying bilateral security relations in Asia beyond the traditional Hub-and-Spoke alliance system. Against this background, South Korean government may strengthen its alliance with the new security system to maintain the rule-based global order.<sup>17</sup> Even some government officials also share the opinion that South Korea may align with

the Quad. According to a release by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), South Korean ambassador to India Shin Bongkil recently said in New Delhi that “South Korea likes to join the India-US-Japan-Australia Quadrilateral in the future<sup>18</sup>.” His remarks came ahead of President Moon’s crucial visit to India.

South Korea’s recent new approach to India to deepen Seoul-New Delhi strategic partnership can be seen in this regards. It is significant that the Moon Administration has announced that strengthening of South Korea-India relationships is the top priority of its New Southern Policy (NSP). And, for this reason, South Korean government has taken a number of steps to upgrade its relations with India. More importantly, as one study argues, ‘China-related risks’ has played a key role in this new approach.<sup>19</sup> Taken all together, it can be said that ‘China factor’ has pushed South Korea closer to India and Japan.

### **3. Maintaining a Rule Based Maritime Order**

There is no doubt that like in Japan and India, China's rise and its growing maritime assertiveness are now viewed in Seoul with uncertainty and anxiety. As a result, South Korea takes a position that a rule based maritime order (RBMO) is critical for its economic survival. Accordingly, South Korea is expanding its maritime strategy and enhancing its footprint beyond Northeast Asia. According to one MOFA release, Korean Government is of the view that it is critical to establish a rules-based order in the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean Region is an indispensable conduit for South Korea’s major exports and energy imports. It is therefore clearly in the interests of South Korea to join other countries to safeguard the peace and stability of the region’.<sup>20</sup>

Equally significant, amid the China’s growing maritime assertiveness, South Korean government is now actively promoting principles such as freedom of navigation and rule-based maritime order. In this regards, South Korean government has decided to join emerging regional fora such as the Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). South Korea’s deepening interest in the Indian Ocean and its active participation in the regional fora with democratic countries, including Japan and India, underline South Korean inclination towards the rule-based

maritime order.

South Korea's recent maritime strategy also suggests that Seoul is preparing itself to the protection of the freedom of navigation in the region. For example, a South Korean warship sailed closer to disputed islands in the South China Sea last September when there was escalation of operations by US allies to challenge China's aggression in Asian water.<sup>21</sup> What is more, amid the China's growing assertiveness in South Korean water recent years, South Korean government last year announced that the country for the first time is ready to build a blue-water naval fleet, capable of conducting global operations. South Korea's both actions underscore that Seoul is preparing itself to deal with its powerful neighbor, China, and in doing so it may provide support to its allies in case of contingency.

#### IV. Looking Ahead

So far we have seen that the China factor is pushing South Korea closer to Japan and India. It is evident in South Korea's new approach toward the region, which includes rejection of China's assertiveness, inclination toward the Quad, and emphasis on the preservation of a rule-based order. Yet, it is important to mention that South Korea's such approach is part of its 'soft-containment' strategy amid the changing balance of power in the region. And, for now, South Korea is unlikely to have a hard alignment with liberal alliance system in Asia, at least for two reasons.

First is economic concern. South Korea's economic overdependence on China will prevent Seoul from joining Japan-India-led grouping, calculating that China will adopt an economic retaliation policy to harm South Korean economy, if Seoul joins the liberal democratic alliance in Asia. It is significant that South Korea, as a trading nation, is heavily dependent on export activities for its economic growth. And its total exports to China is higher than its total exports to the democratic countries, including Japan, India and the US combined (**See Table 1**). South Korea's such economic dependency on China compared to other liberal economy will hamper South Korea's active participation in liberal democratic alliance in Asia.

Table 1: South Korea's Export to Major Powers in 2018 (in US\$ Billion)

Country	Value	Proportion
<b>Total</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>China (Including Hong Kong)</b>	207	34.2
<b>US</b>	73	12
<b>Japan</b>	30	4.9
<b>India</b>	16	2.6

Source: Prepared by Author based on data from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE).

The second reason is security. South Korea understands that China has more leverage with North Korea than any other nation. Hence, Beijing's cooperation is required for any meaningful solution for the Korean Peninsula, including the North Korean nuclear issue. This situation will prevent Seoul from joining any liberal grouping in the region as it may provide a pretext for China to take a strong anti-South Korea stance on the Korean Peninsula issue. Instead, Seoul will seek omni-directional diplomatic relations with all major powers in the region to resolve its own issue. South Korea's strategy toward Japan and India is likely to evolve around this background.

(1st April, 2019)

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<sup>1</sup> "Moon's trip seeks to turn India into 'next China' for S. Korea: official," *Yonhap News Agency*, 9 July 2018.

July 9.

<sup>2</sup> "사드 보복 중국 대신 13억 인도시장 노린다... 코트라 무역관 증설" [[THAAD Retaliation causes South Korea to see India as alternative to China. KOTRA will expend regional trade centers in India](#)], *Yonhap News Agency*, 22 September 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Rajiv Kumar, "South Korea's New Approach to India," ORF Issue Brief No. 263, October 2018.

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- <sup>4</sup> Kim Jiyeon, John Lee and Kang Chungku, “Changing Tides: THAAD and Shifting Korean Public Opinion toward the United States and China,” Issue Brief, (Asan Institute of Policy Studies), March 3, 2017.
- <sup>5</sup> On this issue, Author has conducted a number of interviews in Seoul, South Korea.
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- <sup>9</sup> “한국인 49.7% “최대 위협국 북한 아닌 중국” [49.7% of South Koreans said: The biggest threat is China- not North Korea] *Hankook Ilbo*, July 5, 2018 <http://www.hankookilbo.com/News/Read/201807031894787102>
- <sup>10</sup> Sukhee Han, “사드갈등과 한·중관계의 신장타이(新常态) - 외교·안보를 중심으로 -“ [THAAD Controversies and Post-THAAD New Normal in Korea-China Relations], *Journal of East and West Studies*, 30-1 (2018), pp. 63-81.
- <sup>11</sup> Bhagyashree Garekar, “Quad leaders stress Asean's centrality in their Indo-Pacific visions,” November 17, 2018 <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/quad-leaders-stress-aseans-centrality-in-their-indo-pacific-visions>
- <sup>12</sup> Choe Wongi, “신남방정책의 전략적 환경과 추진 방향” [Strategic Environment and Future Direction of New Southern Policy] IFANS Focus, (Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security), June 29, 2018.
- <sup>13</sup> Lee Jaehyon “문제인 정부의 미래지향적 아세안 외교 정책 제안” [Future-oriented ASEAN Foreign Policy Proposal for the Moon Administration], Issue Brief (Asan Institute for Policy Studies), June 12, 2017.
- <sup>14</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, “한- 인도네시아 공동비전성명,” [Korea-Indonesia Joint Vision Statement], November 14, 2017,



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<sup>15</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations “Chairman's Statement of the 20th ASEAN-Republic of Korea Summit,” November 14, 2018 at <https://asean.org/storage/2018/11/ASEANROKSummitChairmanStatementFinal.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Lee Daewoo, “미국의 인도-태평양 전략” [U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy], *Sejong Policy Brief* (Sejong Institute), July 26, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> Seol Inho, “트럼프 행정부 인도-태평양 전략의 전개방향과 시사점”, [Development Direction of Trump Administration's India-Pacific Strategy and its Implications] KIDA Defense Issues & Analyses no 1740 (Korea Institute of Defense Analysis), January 7, 2019.

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, “신봉길 대사 Indian Express 인터뷰 전면 기사,” [Ambassador Shin Bongkil's Interview in Indian Express] June 27, 2018 [http://overseas.mofa.go.kr/in-ko/brd/m\\_2808/view.do?seq=1336958](http://overseas.mofa.go.kr/in-ko/brd/m_2808/view.do?seq=1336958)

<sup>19</sup> Rajiv Kumar, “South Korea's New Approach to India,” ORF Issue Brief No. 263, October 2018.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, “Remarks by KNDA Chancellor at Session on Peace of Second Indian Ocean Conference”, September 8, 2017.

<sup>21</sup> “South Korean warship sails by disputed South China Sea islands”, *Nikkei Asian Review*, September 28, 2018. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/South-Korean-warship-sails-by-disputed-South-China-Sea-islands>

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