

China is a Detrimental to Indo-South Korean Relations

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Abstract

The significance and wide-ranging impacts of Indo-Korean connections have increased. It is logical to believe that the growing bilateral partnership is the result of their altering tactics and the dynamic global political and economic environment. It was their common colonial history that served as the main point of comparison between Korea and India. India's "Act East" policy is a diplomatic initiative to strengthen connections with the vast Asia-Pacific region on a variety of fronts, including economic, cultural, and geopolitical. India is growing in importance for South Korea, especially in light of the latter's complex strategic alliance with China. The way South Korea now views its economic ties to China has an impact on the strategy it has chosen with regard to other Asian superpowers. India and Korea are justifiably concerned about China's strategic links to Pakistan, which India finds troublesome, and North Korea, which South Korea finds alarming. China now seems to be in a position to dominate the Asia-Pacific region politically and economically, which may not be good news for India and Korea.

Keywords: Detrimental, Geo-politically, Strategic, Superpower.

Introduction

Indo-Korean ties have grown in importance and have had far-reaching consequences. The dynamic bilateral relationship can reasonably regard as a result of their shifting tactics and the ever-changing global politico-economic circumstances. On the political front, high-level cooperation is critical to improve Indo-Korean relations. The political willingness to enhance relations helps to kick-start the major process of creating confidence and trust in numerous domains and at various levels. Both India and Korea have vowed to contribute to bilateral and international collaboration as fast-growing economies and emerging powers. Over the last decade, vibrant economic and commercial ties have been a vital aspect of the bilateral alliance. The economic impetus will continue, but the supportive effects of economic engagement on a credible partnership must be verified. The common colonial experiences served as the main point of comparison between India and Korea. Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore are two prominent leaders of contemporary India in the political and cultural sectors, respectively, who struck a spark in the bilateral connection between India and Korea during the early decades of the twentieth century.

The acquisition of Korea by Japan in 1910 was a tragic situation that infuriated India's nationalist leaders. Leaders of the Korean and Indian national movements were linked by deep bonds of mutual inspiration. Thus, internationally known Gandhi was at the heart of interest in Korean print media in terms of Indian affairs, with editorials and news stories in Korean language media routinely reporting on him and his activities. Gandhi symbolized the Korean media's connection with India, leading readers to sympathize with India's liberation fight and nearly adopt it as their own. India played a beneficial role in Korea's freedom after the Second World War, chairing the United Nations committee entrusted with overseeing elections in Korea in 1947. During the Korean War (1950-1953), New Delhi dispatched a medical unit to aid the injured and, in 1953, a 6,000-strong Custodian Force to care for prisoners of war. Politically and diplomatically, India also played a role in preventing various events from catalyzing a dangerous escalation of the war, working to ensure commitment to great powers working collectively in the UN Security Council to reach mutually agreeable resolutions, opposing demonization of opposing sides, and chairing the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission after the 1953 Armistice was signed.

Summits between Korean President Moon Jae-in and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the summer of 2018 in New Delhi and February 2019 in Seoul, the bilateral relationship appears to be strengthening on the surface, as the two leaders expressed a "shared vision for peace and prosperity for the people of the two countries." A vision that reaffirms the mutual intent to strengthen the strategic partnership by, among other things, upgrading the India-Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), increasing cooperation on national security and technology, and speeding up talks to improve the strategic partnership, with both leaders vowing to increase bilateral trade from \$21.5 billion in 2018 to \$50 billion by 2030.

The India and South Korean Relations

With the elevation of bilateral relations to Special Strategic Partnership (SSP) status in 2015, India-South Korean relations have seen an uptick. Explaining the context and recent trends in bilateral ties. Korea has expressed its readiness to work with India to protect maritime lines of communication (SLOCs) in the Indian Ocean. In October 2017, the fleets of the two countries staged a combined practice in the Indian Ocean, with a squadron of South Korean warships visiting Mumbai. This was followed by a combined drill in Chennai in April 2018 involving the coast guards of the two countries.

The 'Act East' strategy of India is a diplomatic endeavour to enhance strategic, economic, and cultural links with the large Asia-Pacific region at various levels. Since 1992, the country's eastward push has highlighted the region's significance in the country's modern foreign affairs. 'Act East' and its earlier incarnation, 'Look East,' are not diametrically opposed; rather, they are two sides of the same coin, marking two distinct but ongoing periods in the evolution of India's strategy toward the Asia-Pacific region.

When India adopted its 'Look East strategy' in 1991, its own economic strength, international standing, and external environment were not what they are now. At the time of its introduction, India was striving to move from a state-controlled economic framework to a more liberalized one. It took a long time for the country to acclimatize to the newly developing economic environment. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the Act East initiative in 2014, India's economy was reasonably strong and its worldwide profile was stronger than it had been in previous decades. South Korea's Moon Jae-in administration has implemented what it terms a "New Southern Policy," which is geared, according to most reports, at boosting the country's relations with India.

Several factors could have been implicated in India and South Korea's diminishing interest. South Korean investors have lost interest in India due to the low efficiency of its workforce. The recent collapse of the \$ 12 billion POSCO steel manufacturing plant project, which was billed as the largest foreign direct investment (FDI) in the state of Odisha, was a huge blow to South Korea's ambitions to establish India as a base for producing and exporting steel goods throughout the world (India Global Business, 2021). Another significant project of South Korea's Kangnam Corporation, for the production of 12 minesweepers at the Goa Shipyard Limited at a cost of Rs 32,640 crores, also collapsed owing to pricing disparities.

On the other side, South Korea's unwillingness to take an independent stance on the Sino-India border conflict has hampered the development of relations between New Delhi and Seoul. South Korea has similarly been hesitant to condemn Pakistan's backing for cross-border terrorism in India. At the same time, India has been hesitant to take a stance on the confrontation between South Korea and Japan over territorial claims such as Dokdo/Takeshima.

South Korea's attempts to improve awareness and understanding of Korean culture, as well as increase brand value and demand for South Korean consumer items in India, have not resulted in significant development. Indian consumers tend to be more concerned with price rather than

quality, which has resulted in the increased appeal of lower-cost Chinese items in this country of over 1.25 billion people. In India, there is still a lack of awareness and understanding regarding South Korean society and history.

The China is an Impediment

South Korea's relevance to India is rising, owing mostly to the latter's expanding strategic conflict with China. Its most important economic partner, South Korea's altering perspective of its economic relationship with China has altered Seoul's stance toward other Asian states. Against this backdrop, authorities in Seoul regard India as a critical partner, and their administration is adopting a variety of efforts to strengthen ties under their new policy framework known as the NPS.

India and Korea are understandably concerned about China's strategic ties with North Korea (which is bad for South Korea) and Pakistan (which is problematic for India). North Korea and Pakistan lacked the technological competence and financial means to acquire nuclear weapons and long-range missiles on their own (Rajagopalan, 2014). These missiles, in the case of North Korea, cover the Korean heartland, while in the case of Pakistan, they cover the Indian heartland. It is reasonable to wonder why China is sending these lethal arsenals to failed states like North Korea and Pakistan, both of which are on the verge of becoming "rogue nations."

The solution is apparent. It is plausible to assume that China's aims were to establish strategic pressure points via proxy in South Asia against India and East Asia against South Korea. China now appears to be poised to dominate the Asia-Pacific region, which may be bad news for India and Korea.

Conclusion

Both India and South Korea experienced negative experiences and suffered as a result of colonial domination. The colonial masters of the east and west established institutions and designed mechanisms to assure an iniquitous, unfair, and profoundly differentiated pattern of interaction between alien rulers and their native people. The objective of the British colonial rulers was to guarantee that no Indians posed a threat to the colonial system by placing them in vulnerable situations.

On the other side, the psychological tactic of South Koreans suffering in comparable conditions was to select strong Indians who would pose a danger to the British authorities. Both India and South Korea have extensive cultural ties. Those relationships with time have become stronger.

India and South Korea confront comparable imperatives in determining their strategic equations.

Both countries are under pressure to strike a balance between the United States and China while also cooperating with other regional powers in South and Southeast Asia.

New Delhi and Seoul are committed to promoting strategic stability in the Asia Pacific region.

Both South Korea and India have the ability to work out their issues and form beneficial long-term economic and trade partners in the future. In the current chaotic global landscape, that will be the most effective option for both of these economies.

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