

How Indian Media depicts BRI?

Abstract

The One Belt One Road (OBOR) or Belt and Road initiative (BRI) is unveiled by Xi Jinping in 2013. He first announced the setting up of a Silk Road Economic Belt on his visit to Kazakhstan and later formalized the 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR) policy in his later visit to Indonesia. Bringing together the former and later announcements, China launched a grand OBOR project that proposes to connect China with South Asia, South West Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, Europe and Middle East. Through OBOR China framed a new neighbourhood interdependence pattern with an inherent objective to enhance its strategic diplomatic relationships. The OBOR plan has been written into the ‘Decisions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Major Issues of Comprehensive Promotion of the Reform’- it was adopted at the Third Session of the Eighteenth Central Committee convened on November 12, 2013 which vowed to ‘set up development-oriented financial institutions, accelerate the construction of infrastructure connecting China with neighbouring countries and regions, and work hard to build a Silk Road Economic Belt and a Maritime Silk Road, so as to form a new pattern of all-round opening’.

When China looks forward for the peaceful participation of countries like India, this paper looks at the portrayal of BRI through the lens of Indian media. *The Economic Times*, an important newspaper reports, “The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passing through PoK violating India's sovereignty has changed equation in the subcontinent, increasing Beijing's stakes in Pakistan more than ever before and compelling the Chinese leadership to overlook Islamabad's use of terror as state policy”. Pakistan factor plays as an impediment in moulding friendly partnership with India. The Indian media also look at the infrastructure construction initiative under BRI as “debt trap”. The media in India plays an important role in creating public opinion and public diplomacy. Thus, analysing how media perceives the prospects of Indo-China relationship when it comes to BRI is worth full.

Athira Anand

PhD scholar

IIT Madras

Chennai, India-600036

+918129919977