

'Economic Belt along the Silk Road' and 'Maritime Silk Road of the 21 century': Great opportunity for Bangladesh



West Lake in Hangzhou

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of "One Belt and One Road" initiatives are designed to achieve mutual benefit and common development in the region. China will follow the right approach of upholding justice first and pursuing justice and interests simultaneously, provide developing countries and friendly neighbors with assistance as its abilities permit, and earnestly help them to achieve speedier growth. China will step up its input in the neighborhood, actively enhance connectivity there, explore the establishment of a regional infrastructure investment and financing platform, and strive to turn the neighboring land and sea area into those of peace, and prosperity.

3. 'One Belt and One Road' initiatives will bring great opportunity for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is sandwiched by South Asia, East Asian and Southeast Asia and locates at the north of Bay of Bengal. In ancient times, Bangladesh was one of the most important destinations of Southern Silk Road and Maritime Silk Road. Nowadays Bangladesh could be the one of the link points of "One Belt and One Road". And the implementation of the initiatives will help Bangladesh to transform its geographical advantage into economic benefits:

- Regional connectivity network will help Bangladesh to emerge as the transportation hub in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Energy cooperation will ease Bangladesh from energy and power insufficiency.
- Establishment of industrial zones in Bangladesh will attract huge investment and could contribute to more balanced trade for Bangladesh.
- Free trade facilitation will help Bangladesh get access to huge market in China, India and

elsewhere.

• Furthermore, it is estimated that in the next five years, China will invest an additional \$500 billion in other countries, import over \$10 trillion of products and send 400 million tourists abroad. Bangladesh, as China's close neighbor and trusted friend, shall take an even more favorable posture to make good use of "Chinese opportunities".

4. BCIM Economic Corridor is on the top agenda of "One Belt and One Road" initiatives.

China, Bangladesh, India and Myanmar are connected by the Southern Silk Road and Maritime Silk Road since ancient times. The proposed BCIM Economic Corridor is located in the intersection of the "Belt" and "Road" and will be the priority direction to materialize the "Belt" and "Road" initiatives.

Since 2013, the initiative of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM-EC) has maintained good momentum of development with collaboration of the BCIM countries. The first inter-governmental Joint Group Meeting took place in Yunnan of China in December 2013. The BCIM countries are expected to present their country reports in the forthcoming second Joint Group Meeting, which is scheduled to be held in Bangladesh in October 2014. China and India are two largest emerging economies and Bangladesh and Myanmar boasts rich natural and human resources, this economic corridor could enable the four countries to work with each other's advantages, accelerate economic growth, and open wider to the outside world. We can dream of a world where one can have breakfast in Kunming, lunch in Dhaka, and dinner in Kolkata.

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