

A Study on Status Quo and Problems of Cultural Exchange of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor from the Perspective of Soft Power

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논문요약

소프트 파워는 국제 교류 및 지역 협력에서 중요한 역할을 하고 있다. 방글라데시·중국·인도·미얀마 지역은 지리적으로 보면 서로 인접되어 있으며 역사적으로 왕래가 빈번하다. 2013년 중인 양국이 방글라데시·중국·인도·미얀마 경제회랑 건설을 제의한 후에, 방글라데시와 미얀마가 이 제안에 적극적으로 호응하면서 4국 간의 교류는 더욱 밀접해진다. 방·중·인·미 경제회랑 지역은 중국 서남과 방글라데시·인도·미얀마를 연결하는 중요한 통로 될 것이고, 이를 통해 관련지역의 문화교류도 많아질 것이다. 하지만 4국 간에는 문화교류는 중국과 인도의 소프트 파워에 의해 불균형한 상태로 보인다. 중국·인도는 방글라데시·미얀마에 대해 문화 제품이 더 많이 수출하고 있고, 이는 많은 분야에서 방글라데시와 미얀마에게 영향을 주고 있다. 향후에 이 경제회랑은 문화교류 및 협력 가속화하는 배경 하에, 지속 가능한 발전 체제를 구축해 나가야하며, 이를 통해 4국의 소프트 파워 영향력을 균형화시켜서 지역문화의 백화齊放(百花齊放)를 달성할 것이다.

주제어 : 방글라데시·중국·인도·미얀마, 경제 회랑, 소프트 파워, 문화 교류

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The initiation, Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor, became a national strategy in 2013. In promoting the practical cooperation of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor, great importance should be attached to cultural recognition and people-to-people communication rather than to hardware construction. With the development of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor, a greater number of cultural exchanges appeared, but there was in imbalance due to different soft powers of these four countries. It is a time-consuming, complicated and systemic task to construct the economic corridor, demanding meticulous studies on every fields, on cultural exchanges of economic corridor from the perspective of soft power, which will greatly contribute to cultural prosperity in regions and areas along the economic corridor as well as sustainable cooperation that is mutually beneficial and equal. Therefore, it is of great significance to strengthen the studies on cultural exchanges, basic investigation of this region, the improve mutual trust in politics, the reinforcement of friendly connections within these nations and investments of enterprises of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar.

I. Soft Power and Cultural Competition of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Cooperation

1. Background Information

The concept of “Soft Power” was first put up by Joseph Nye, the world-known international political scholar of Harvard University in 1990. In his mind, territory, population, natural resources, economic scale, military power and political stability, etc. should be regarded as “Hard Power” while technologies, education, economic growth, cultural attraction and ideology should be defined as “Soft Power”. Compared to hard power, soft power is more likely to be a Power of assimilation or attraction of

influence nation and the nation being influenced, so that it is of little direct influence of software to national relationships. As soft power is becoming an important element in global intercourse, active advancement of Soft Power Diplomacy featured with cultural exchange has gradually become a critical diplomatic content for major powers to cultivate international and regional influence and to have a say in international and regional affairs.

International power resources are easy to be evaluated in early stage, and traditionally, “Great Power” regarded by international politics is the “combat capacity” of a nation. Yet in a world that is highly developed with globalization, it is costly to promote political course with hard powers, and that is why it is now replaced by soft power when it comes to international relationships. Compared to hard power, soft power is more likely to be a power of assimilation or attraction of influence nation to the nation being influenced, so that it has little direct influence to national relationships. Some of the foreign scholars hold that: it is because when you mention soft power, you are trying to persuade people by means of rationality, that the influence of it is actually a power of morality. So, the soft power should be embodied with moral connotation. As soft power is becoming an important element in global intercourse, active advancement of Soft Power Diplomacy featured with cultural exchange has gradually become a critical diplomatic content for major powers to cultivate international and regional influence and to have a say in international and regional affairs.

Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor was developed on the basis of cooperation of Bangladesh, China,

India and Myanmar. The first meeting was successfully held with joint efforts of four countries in Kunming with scholars from BCIM regions participate, reaching a consensus on Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar cooperation, which gave birth to Kunming Initiative that put forth the blueprint of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor. In 2013, Premier Li Keqiang paid a visit to India, and during his brief stopover, Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Initiative was officially advanced and was responded positively by India, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Then in 2015, the initiative was written into *Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road*. Since then, the construction of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor entered a new stage, being an important part of “Belt and Road” Initiative. On 14th, Jun. 2019, the First Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce Cooperation Alliance of the BIMC Economic Corridor was held in Kunming with “Cooperation with Chambers of Commerce and Promotion of Corridor Construction” as its theme, negotiating on detailed commercial cooperation and construction of BIMC Economic Corridor. As one of the six economic corridors included in “Belt and Road” Initiative, BIMC Economic Corridor is very critical to connection between Southwest regions of China and the Indian Ocean as well as the connectivity of East Asia and South Asia.

2. Cultural Soft Power and Foreign Strategy of China

As pointed by Joseph Nye, national soft power mainly consists of cultural and political values and diplomatic policies (Wu Xiaohui, Qian Cheng 2005). Civilization, political system and

development. Foreign policies and strategies can be analyzed to interpret China's soft power.

- 1) Chinese civilization is the most fundamental and critical essence of China's soft power differentiated from other civilizations

The power of assimilation and central force of soft power are realized through cultural transmission. China has given the world rich cultural, and ideologically progress heritages for human beings with her distinctive civilization and continuity. Like India, China is an ancient Suzerain, and Chinese civilization is the most valuable soft power assets of China. It is a resource of national strength just like economy and military power. Meanwhile, centered on Confucianism, Chinese civilization has also created a comprehensive value of political governance, which will probably become a leading role in reshaping Asian values in its soft power development.

- 2) Political system and development mode—the second aspect to demonstrate China's soft power

Different from free democratic politics and political governance like “separation of powers”, a complete set of socialist political systems, including the System of People's Congresses, Regional Ethnic Autonomy, Grassroots Autonomy and Multi-party Cooperation and Political Consultation adopted by China after learning the lessons from Chinese history and politics has greatly improved political efficiency in its governance and has promoted innovation in the development of democratic democracy. As also admitted by Joseph Nye: the political system of a country can earn respects from other countries, and contributes to the

development of its soft power. In terms of developing pattern, China has created a leaping development socialism road with Chinese characteristics after gradual reformations of “crossing the river by feeling the stone”, and has obtained great achievements, which is known as “Beijing Consensus”. Nowadays, the development path of China has been followed widely in Asian and African countries, bringing along developments of many developing countries.

3) Foreign strategies and diplomatic policies—the third aspect of China’s soft power

This aspect is the most representative one of China’s soft power. Once said by Joseph Nye, “the diplomatic policies are the booster of soft power sources.. and a comprehensive foreign policy can exert great influence on the expansion of national soft power”. For a long period, China has been adhering to foreign strategies, policies and ideas like “The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence”, “Peaceful Rise of China” “Harmonious World”, “neighboring diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics”, which convey the idea of “co-existing and co-winning” and lessen the worries from neighboring counties of China’s rise. When it comes to policies implementations, Confucius Institute, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank were all successfully advanced and promoted. Forum on China–Arab Cooperation and Forum on China–Africa Cooperation were also held by China, which have witnessed active engagement of China in the building of international governance and systems, making the influence of China’s soft power deeper and wider worldwide.

3. Cultural Soft Power and Foreign Strategy of India

The characteristics of soft power and cultural influence of India are distinct from those of China. To conclude, the features of Indian soft power generally, culture, politics and foreign strategies are to be discussed according to Joseph Nye.

- 1) Traditional values and ideas like “in pursuit of mental consolation rather than materials perfect sacrifice that emphasize harmony of body and spirit”

Unlike Chinese cultures which hold the beliefs of Benevolence and Righteousness as well as engaging in worldly affairs, Indian cultures are more inclined to emphasize the pursuit of mental consolation as the world has had profound changes, and there is an increasing number of people who start to follow the idea. In terms of cultural development, India has suffered foreign invasions for many times, which hued Indian cultures with diversities. And in almost every period of Indian history, there was always a new cultural element being absorbed, enriching Indian cultures and boosting its development. Besides, as the center of civilization, long and close connections of Indian cultures and other ones can be found. Until now, Indian cultures can be widely spread through its cultural products like Bollywood and Indian Yoga, playing an important role in the advancement of its cultures. A solid foundation has been laid for soft power expansion duo due to its profound cultures.

- 2) The democratic politics and systems of India are recognized by western world

As in politics, Joseph Nye has noted in his published book in 2002 that: the construction of soft power of modern countries would be easier if three conditions are reached. The first one is that the mainstream cultural values of a country are similar to that of the world (namely Democratic Politics, Liberalism, multiculturalism), and India confirms to all these three conditions. As one of the largest developing country, India was deeply affected by Britain in political system and development mode. The western democratic political system runs smoothly in India, and had been deemed by the western countries as an example of the promotion of democratic mode, which was rarely in re-construction of a nation after World War II, and this has greatly promoted the development of Indian soft power under the current international system.

- 3) Foreign policies of India have greatly pushed the expansion of its soft power

The foreign strategies and foreign policies of India have been very clear since the beginning of the Cold War, “nonalignment” policy was adopted by India, and nonalignment movement was also led by it. During this period, India actively advocated the unit of Asian and African countries, the world peace and disarmament. With that, India became one of the leading countries in the third world; meanwhile, India has been adjusting its foreign strategies and policies with the development of international situation. Judging from current situation, India is the only country that can keep good relationships with the rest. Just like the comment made

by Joseph Nye, "If the foreign strategies and policies of a country are legal, moral, and can find its place in multiple mechanisms with many communication and connections with the international community, the national soft power will be surely strengthened (Joseph S. Nye Jr. 2002)."

4) There are competitions of national soft power in cultural exchange and cooperation of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor

The most obvious charter of soft power is that the influential nation can realize its aim by exerting influences on other nations secretly rather than by violent and compulsory measures like military forces. In regional cooperation, all countries will actively or unconsciously show their soft powers in order to increase trust and confidence and clear up uncertainties, to build a good international image to further reinforce their national influences and demonstrate their values in regional cooperation. Actions taken by countries in increasing national soft power in regional cooperation, or cultural intercourse among countries in folk customs have pushed the development of regional cooperation forward.

In the construction of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor, the comprehensive national strengths of China and India are more potent, and their soft powers are relatively stronger, so the rest are in disadvantaged situation. Due to China and India's differences in characteristics and connotations of soft powers, they are actually competing with each other in regional cooperation of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar. With great differences of civilizations, the disadvantages of folk public diplomacy and short

supply of cultural products worsen the soft power strength of China in competing with India, bringing certain resistances for the construction of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor.

II. Characteristics of Cultural Exchange of Bangladesh -China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor Under the Influence of Soft Power

Cultural exchanges of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor include the connections of cultural products and cultural activities, and in the process of cultural exchanges, mutual influences of soft powers of BCIM are well-demonstrated. In general, the cultural foundation and economic strengths of China and India are strong, which will affect Bangladesh and Myanmar deeply; while in exchange and cooperation of cultural products and activities, there have been frequent and wide cooperation in areas covered in Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor. Yet, the output of cultural products and activities of cooperation are more dominated by China and India, for most activities has are held by them.

1. Exchanges of cultural products

The broad sense of cultural products includes material products and spiritual products, they refer to all the language, literature, art and ideological products created by human beings, as well as the materialistic products containing people's spiritual achievements. Cultural products in this paper mainly refer to the exchanges of films, television, newspapers, books, internet and other products.

1) The most influential products of India—Films and Yoga

The films and Yoga of India are influential in the world, and the transmissions of these two products have contributed to the development of its soft power. In recent years, films made by Bollywood of India have obtained a large number of fans around China, South Asia and Southeast Asia. In quantity, the largest film industry can be found in India with more than 1,600 products coming to world, overtaking China and the United States in 2013. In 2017, there were almost 1986 films spread in China, Bangladesh and Myanmar. The cooperation between China and India in the film industry has increased, and India's film industry now attach great importance to exploring Chinese market, and agreement of co-producing of visual-audio programs has also been signed by China and India. Kongfu Yoga, produced by India, has gained great popularity in China, surpassing American film Guardians of the Galaxy, which generated \$ 686 million. In recent years, Indian films have proved a big success in Chinese market with tremendous public praises and high box offices, which means that the Chinese have accepted and appreciated Indian films to a larger extent.

Yoga is another successful case of the spread of India cultures. As a practice of Buddhism originated from Classic Indian philosophy, the primary purpose of Yoga is to reach a harmonious state of body and mind by improving mental cultivation with many kinds of practices. After noticing the globalized and commercial trends of Yoga, it created a public data base of Yoga styles in 2008. The promoter of Yoga diplomacy, Modi has not only mentioned Yoga in diplomatic situations but also actively

advanced the establishment of “International Yoga Day”. Finally, in 2014, the proposal of Modi, Premie minister of India, was reviewed and approved by the United Union, making 21st, June the “International Yoga Day”, and there will be grand activities annually. Yoga Academies set up by joint efforts of China and India are going to be established in 50 different sites nationwide with 100 Teaching centers and some Yoga Gyms to gradually develop 4 non-academic education frameworks of headquarter, branches, teaching centers and Yoga Gyms. India wants to spread its culture by promoting Yoga (“Indian Treasure”), the healthy exercise that is modern and popular in the world. In July, 2019, the first attempt of the establishment of Yoga College was done in Yunnan Minzu University, and expanded it from Kunming to Beijing. Modern Yoga is not only one of the most important part of Indian government’s soft power diplomacy, but also an advancement of the popularization of healthy lifestyle and pursuits of friendly environment and healthy body in new-emerging and developed markets.

Apart from film and Yoga, pharmaceutical industry of India has also developed rapidly in recent years, its kinds and quantity enough to meet domestic demands, and its quality is also considered to be good in international market, fostering a large number of large companies that can compete against multi-national companies. In 2013, according to the statistics of India Brand Equity Foundation, the export quota of Indian pharmaceutical products has increased by 24% year-on-year. And nowadays, India has become the largest export country of generic drugs, and India is marching toward the aim of becoming the “World Pharmaceutical Base”

2) Internet products of China are preferred by India and Myanmar

With the popularization of Internet, fundamental changes have taken place with regards to how information comes and how it spread such that books, newspapers, magazines, television and broadcast are no longer the main channel for people to get information and express themselves. And now, the development of internet of China is far more advanced than India, Bangladesh and Myanmar, which is mainly manifested in three aspects:

The number of netizens in China is TOP one in the world. The development of internet of India is late, and it was not until 1995 that the first internet operator VSNL (Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited) was officially opened. Then the internet technology of China developed rapidly with its netizen overtaking India. At present, China is the largest internet country globally, large in population, wider in networking area. In Dec. 2017, netizen of China reached 727 million (NDRC 2018), while 80.48 million for Bangladesh, and today, 20% of the population of Myanmar know have access to the internet.

TikTok from China has gone viral in India and Myanmar. The short video APP TikTok has become popular quickly since it was launched in Sept. 2016. This APP can provide users with short video-making and special effects, preferred by the young people. By Jun. 2018, there were 500 million users of TikTok in almost 150 markets worldwide among which 150 million users came from China. In the first half of the year 2018, there were over 104 million downloads of TikTok in iOS. APP store, surpassing Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, ranking first in downloaded

APPs of iOS. In India and Bangladesh, TikTok is also welcomed by young people. The users of TikTok from India were 30 million in Jan. 2019. The downloads of TikTok in India had over 240 million by Apr. 2019. The popularity of TikTok in India also grabbed the attention of the Indian government. In 2019 Indian election, some politicians took advantage of TikTok to gain supports of young people, they also spread songs and videos against the opposite parties or propaganda actively in rural areas during the election. In 2018, users of Wechat reached more than one billion among which are Chinese, foreign students studying in China, foreign employees working in China invested enterprises etc. Wechat has become an important media for social communication. Among young people of Bangladesh, India and Myanmar, Wechat is a popular social APP, and Wechat pay, Alipay are important payment methods in those countries.

China's online shopping has influenced its neighboring countries. As shown by statistics, the number of online shopping users in China has reached 533 million with an increase of 143% compared with that of 2016. It should be noted that the total transaction volume on Nov.11 Online Shopping Day in 2018 was 213.5 billion, with year-on-year increase of 27%. 225 countries and regions have joined in this shopping carnival. Payments through Alipay in 2017 reached 1.4 billion, with year-on-year increase of 41%. YTO Express has operated an international voyage from Changsha to Dacca, Bangladesh, boosting the development of air cargo.

- 3) China and India are more concerned about active translation of foreign books

Classical books can withstand the test of time and history, and to read books is the most important way to learn about the history, culture and ideology of a country. In communication of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar, they all support translation activities of domestic materials with China and India more active. Translation activities of books of four countries involve joint translation studies, active translation of others' classics and to recommend domestic classics after translation. The first one include *the Encyclopaedia of Sino-India Cultural Exchange*, edited and published by China and India, *Collected Poems of Rabindranath Tagore*, *Ramayana*, *Chin Kavita, India and China: A Thousand Years of Cultural Relations*, *Four Classics* in Hindi language and *Core values of Chinese Civilization* for the second one; while Xi Jinping: the Governance of *China*, published by China and Myanmar (Burmese), *Collections of Essays of Mao Zedong and Mao Zedong*, etc., translated and proofread by Professor Su Xiuyu, the master of Burmese fall into the third category.

- 4) Myanmar and Bangladesh are receiving countries of Chinese and Indian cultures, and they output a bit to China and India

Compared to active output of cultural products of China and India, both Myanmar and Bangladesh are receiving countries of cultures and they output a bit. Thus, cultural exchange of China and Bangladesh is characterized by one-way exchange. Seeing

from exchange directions of the projects between China and Bangladesh, the projects initiated by China are more than those of Bangladesh. This is due to some object factors like lacking financial support and lower literacy of Banglali, and mostly it is because of the lagging development of the cultural industry in Bangladesh. Besides, there is no influential cultural brand formed in Bangladesh.

The situation of Myanmar is quiet the same like that of Bangladesh; less cultural output. Taking sports as an example, traditional sports of Myanmar include Chinlone and Lethwei which are all popular in their state. However, these two sports haven't been widely spread to other countries like Taiji in China and Yoga in India; they are just shown in places where Burmese are more, for example, labors of Burmese, in Ruili District, China, will play Chinlone on weekends, dividing themselves into two teams with the rest watching their competition.

2. Exchanges of Cultural Activities

Cultural activities are broader in scope and are culturally relevant, aiming at enriching the cultural life of groups. Common cultural activities are: artistic performances, calligraphy and painting exhibitions, academic exchanges, language learning and various forms of traditional or modern cultural publicity, promotion or learning activities.

- 1) Mutual cultural exchanges are conducted within Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar, and cultural exchanges of Bangladesh and Myanmar are fewer

Although there are fewer multilateral cultures between Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar, we can tell from the bilateral cultural agreements signed, the exchange visits of literary and artistic groups and the visits of young people to school, as these four countries are close to each other, having similar cultures and frequent cultural exchanges at the bilateral level. First, in terms of the cultural agreements signed, there are cultural cooperation agreements between these four countries. Second, from the performance of the literary and artistic groups, these four countries have frequent bilateral cultural exchanges, but mainly dominated by China and India.

On 7th, Jun. 2019, college students from China and Southeast countries took part in Lancang-Mekong river friendly sports meeting for College Students as well as Investigations of culture and sports of College students from Southeast Countries. Claimed as sports competitions, these activities have successfully provided a platform for young students all over the world to interact and communicate with each other; a platform of friendship is of great importance to contribute people-to-people exchange and mutual understanding, which further will enhance mutual-benefits and cooperation. But because of weak national comprehensive strengths, it is costly to have cultural performance exported, so there are fewer cultural groups sent out by Bangladesh and Myanmar.

2) Cultural exchanges are mainly think tank exchanges, academic exchanges and artistic exchanges, and mostly held by China

There are also multilateral cultural exchanges activities held by Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar with think tank exchanges,

academic exchanges and artistic exchanges as main ones. These cultural exchanges are mostly not restricted within these four countries, rather, they are advocated or organized in wider ranges, and often held by China. This reveals that China, as a regional great power, has engaged in regional affairs in active.

In think tank exchanges, China-South Asia Southeast Asia Think Tank Forum and China-South Asia Expo were held at the same period, gradually becoming important platforms for communication between China and neighboring countries and being actively responded by more and more think tanks from other countries. The aims of China-South Asia Southeast Asia Think Tank Forum are to deepen mutual benefits cooperation in every fields, to benefit more people practically and to form a win-win situation. This forum is the platform for Yunnan to make more contributions as a center. Every year, there are nearly 200 scholars, politicians and representatives of business from more than 20 countries and regions like China and southeast Asia who participated in the forum. The topic of the forum varies with hit events that year. Now, there are already 7 forums held successfully in succession, highly recommended and prized by think tanks all over the world. By holding China-South Asia Southeast Asia Think Tank forum with top topics discussed, cultural exchanges and cooperation are greatly enhanced.

As for artistic exchanges, the normal cooperation and exchange forum of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM) Cooperation Forum has been held for 14 times before the proposal of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, and the one in 2019 is the 13th forum. Economy is, foremost time, the topic of the forum, and gradually expanded to humanity and

social securities, focusing on the connectivity of transportation, trade and investment, tourism cooperation and cooperative mechanism of neighboring areas, which contributes to regional peace, economic prosperity and social progress. What's more, Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Regional Cooperation/Folk Exchanges, People-to-people exchange sand seminar on Economic and Trade Cooperation are held from time to time by BICM. Since the first launching of China-ASEAN Education Exchange Week in 2008, the scale and level of this activity have been greatly improved, changing from a mono-educational platform into a national people-to-people exchange platform; and the cooperation mode has changed from China-ASEAN "10+1" into "10+1+N", the mode that involves countries around the world with ASEAN as its center.

In artistic exchanges, Lancang-Mekong River Friendly Sports Meeting for College Students and Education Cooperation Forum for Yunnan-South Asia Southeast Asia Countries held in June, 2016, thirty-one Educational departments, high schools and institutes from India, Bangladesh, Myanmar have participated in educational forums and exhibitions. With deep implementation of "Belt and Road Initiative", activities of "China-South Asia Southeast Asia Art Week" have become an important platform for cultural exchanges and art exhibitions as well as for their emotional communication and win-win cooperation.

All of these exchanges in think tank, literatures and arts are aimed at improving multilateral cultural exchanges, and in this process, they can learn and absorb excellent literature and art of other countries to evaluate their own soft power and enhance comprehensive national strengths.

- 3) Cultural exchanges in border areas of China and Myanmar, India and Bangladesh, India and Myanmar

Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar are adjoining to each other with their cultural exchanges frequently due to cross-border ethnic groups, Belt and Silk in South area and culture, economy and trade. Indian epic, Ramayana has not only been seen in Bangladesh, Myanmar, but also can be found in ethnic groups in southwest China. Yet, when spread to oriental world, this epic has been slightly changed because of the influences of foreign local cultures. For example, it is absorbed and adopted by Dai, Jingpo and De ang nationalities, and is changed into *Lan Ga Xi Gong* which is known by every household and learned by every generation.

Majority of cross-border ethnic groups living in areas of China and Myanmar, India and Bangladesh, India and Myanmar, belong to the same nationality from ancient time till now. Although they are governed by different countries, the transportation among them is connected, so that friends and family from different countries connect with each other frequently. If it happened to be religious festivals or fairs, people of other countries can be seen walking and enjoying in these activities as well as participating in these activities. Cross-border ethnic groups residing in Myanmar, sometimes, will purchase some videos or records of ethnic languages for entertainment or ceremonies at home. Seminars focusing on history and cultures of “cross-border ethnic groups” have been called on to hold by some organizations with scholars from abroad and home. In 2017, the *Seminar of Zhao Wuding, the Ancestor of Dai and the History and Culture of Dai Nationality* and Seminar of

History and Culture of Jingpo Nationality were held in Ruili City, Yunnan, the border area of China and Myanmar, and hundreds of experts from China, Taiwan, Myanmar, Thailand, Japan and Britain who engaged in studies of Dai, Jingpo cultures took part in, and they remarked and communicated with each other in different columns like locations of Dai and Jingpo nationalities around the world, inherence and protection of dialects, clothing culture, traditional customs and exchanges with other ethnics worldwide.

4) Number of multi-linguistic talents are increasing

It is well-known that language is the core of communication, so cultural exchanges of Bangladesh, India, China and Myanmar lie in language communication. In order to better promote mutual communication and cultural transmission, these countries would set foreign language classes to cultivate excellent diplomatic officers or translation talents. For China, the establishments of Confucius Institute around the world are the best example of transmission of Chinese culture, promotion of Chinese language, and cultural exchanges. There are 539 Confucius Institutes and 1,129 Confucius classes in 155 countries and regions worldwide by June, 2019, eight of them founded in Bangladesh, India and Myanmar, which has promoted cultural exchanges and language communication, contributing cooperation of China together with these three countries. Detailed information is as following:

<Table 1> Locations of Confucius Institutes in Bangladesh, India and Myanmar

Nation	Time of Establishment	Institute/Class	Cooperating University
Bangl	14th Feb(또는)	North-South University	Yunnan

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adesh	14 Feb.) 2006	Confucius Institutes	University
	5th Mar5 Mar.. 2016	Confucius Institutes University of Dhaka	Yunnan University
	14th Feb.(또는 14 Feb.) 2009	Sando Maria Broadcasting Confucius Class	China Radio International
Myanmar	15th Feb.(15 Feb.) 2008	Fuxing Language and Computer Institute Confucius Class	Huaqiao University
	3rd Feb(또는 3 Feb.) 2008	Dexing Language and Computer Institute Confucius Class	Yunnan University
	3rd Feb(또는 3 Feb.) 2013	Oriental Language Business Center Confucius Class	Yunnan Normal University
India	9th Apr.(9 Apr.) 2009	Verol University of Science and Technology Confucius Institutes	Zhengzhou University
	18th Jul.(18 Jul.) 2012	Confucius Institutes of Myanmar University	Tianjin University of Technology

Data source: Confucius Institute Headquarter (Hanban).

The establishment of Confucius Institutes provides an important platform for Bangladesh, Myanmar and India to have an in-depth understanding of Chinese culture. In order to better understand these three countries and conduct all-round cooperation with them, China also offers courses in Bengali, Burmese, Hindi and Sanskrit in universities where conditions allow. For example, Communication University of China, Yunnan University for Nationalities and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies offer courses in Bengali. Peking University, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Yunnan University for Nationalities, Guangxi University for Nationalities, Honghe University and Dehong Normal University offer courses in Burmese. The Bangladesh-India-Myanmar language talents cultivated by these universities have played an important role in exchanges between China Bangladesh, India and Myanmar. Most of the graduates are employed by China invested companies right after

their graduation and work in the target countries for a long time, becoming an important force to promote cultural exchanges among these four countries.

5) Complicated Religious Cultural in Areas of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor

First, the interwoven development of religious cultures. In Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Hinduism have been developed interactively. As the most influential and widely spread religion, Buddhism has exerted great influences on religions of China, Myanmar and India during its spread to East and South Asia as well as its revival, especially to China. It has directly influenced the philosophy, literature, arts, science and technology profoundly since it was introduced into China.

For example, the spread of Buddhism to South Asia has a profound effect on social ideology. Buddhism was first introduced into Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and then into some southeast countries like Myanmar and Thailand, as well as some areas of Dai nationality, China. In the long history of its development, it has gradually developed into Theravada Buddhism which keep the purity of Buddhism and adopts it to original religions of Dai Culture, struggling and developing with local culture of minority ethnic groups. In Myanmar, Buddhism replaced Brahmanism, and then it was widely spread deep down to daily life of the Indian people. The revival of Buddhism, originated from India and it was strongly supported by people from lower classes, especially in Indian states in Maharashtra.

Religious and cultural exchanges are important elements of interaction with China and India as well as with other countries, which has greatly helped to promote the development of regional cultural diversity and cultural exchanges, so that the people of this region are mutually inclusive, culturally influenced. In China and Myanmar, Buddhism is shrouded in Hinduism, in Yunnan and Myanmar and even in the religious patterns in Asia, Hinduism's deities and elements are integrated into the evolution of Buddhism and folk beliefs. The process of the conflicts between Buddhism and native religions as well as local traditions and their integration is the process of the mosaic development of religious cultures.

Next, there are conflicts of religious cultures in borders of Bangladesh and Myanmar (the core area of Economic Corridor). The border areas of Bangladesh–Myanmar are the core areas of the Economic Corridor of Bangladesh, China and India, and Burma. The "Rohingya" problem is the crux. It is well known that Buddhism is of paramount importance in Myanmar, where the majority of the population is Buddhist, and where Rohingyas believe in Islam and want to establish autonomous Muslim states. The failure of the Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh to reach a lasting and effective consensus on these Rohingyas living on the Myanmar borders has also led to ongoing border clashes between two countries, killing 6,700 Rohingyas since the August 2017 terrorist attacks in the northern Mongdu region of Rakhine. Due to 28th September 2018,(or 28 September 2018,) the number of Rohingyas seeking asylum in Bangladesh stood at 1.1 million.

Though as mentioned by some scholars that Rohingya people caused security issues of Bangladesh among whom exiled

Bangladesh faced the problems of insecurity and a doomed future. In addition, exchanges between some Rohingyas and regional Islamic extremist forces, as well as the crowding out of Bangladeshi resources by Rohingyas, have increased Bangladesh's security and economic burdens and created problems in Myanmar's relations with Bangladesh.

Last, there is competition of religious culture in Sino-India. The first god mountain in Tibet in China is a cross religious, cross cultural, cross ethnic mountain. It is a multi-religious belief center or holy place of Bonism, Buddhism (including Tibetan Buddhism), Taoism, Hinduism, Jainism and other religions. India has religious and traditional feelings about the mistakes of the Hindu Shiva and the "center of the world ", and it is the religious duty and the ideal of life for every religious person, As long as they have the ability to do so, they will never stop it. According to Indian media reports, in April 2019, the Ministry of Culture applied for UNESCO to consider Gunn Pozzi (known as Mount Gailash by Indians) in June. The "Indian part" of Mabayoung (Manasarovar Lake, India) is included in the World Heritage reserve list. The landscape declared by India is declared on the theme of Holy Mountain and Lake in China, the main part of which is in China. Taking into account the need for Hindu pilgrims, the Chinese government has facilitated the pilgrimage of Indian pilgrims to the sacred lake in Ali through two routes of the Cholla Pass and the Chandurra Pass since 1982. The number of pilgrims have increased from several hundred in the 80 's of the 20th century to more than 20 thousand in 2018, according to statistics. The application of heritage of "Holy Mountains and Lakes" reflects the concerns of

India to religion. India must know that its application of heritage of “Holy Mountains and Lakes” will be opposed by China, but it still takes actions. There are competitions between China and India in religions.

III. Problems of Cultural Exchange of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor

1. Unsound Cultural exchanges mechanism

Although the opening-up policies of all countries have greatly advanced and cultural exchanges of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar have become more frequent, the unsound cultural exchange mechanism has been in existence for ages, which is primarily shown in the lagging and imperfect construction of exchange mechanism. Compared to bilateral and multilateral exchanges and cooperation such as politics, economy, national defense, it takes long time to cultivate cultural diplomacy, which is also the reason that caused cultural exchange mechanism lagging behind in national diplomatic policies. Besides, we can also tell the unsound function of cultural exchange mechanism in its unsmooth operation, which stresses more on assignments rather than on actions. Apart from that, different cultural mechanisms of these four countries are also important for cultural exchanges. For example, the differences in educational systems of China and India have caused problems for cultural exchanges of China and India; and the recognitions of educational background of four countries should also be strengthened.

2. Bilateral cultural exchanges are more than multilateral exchanges along Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor

Cultural diplomacy, as a way to promote mutual understanding between people from both sides or the multilateral sides, plays an important role in enhancing the soft power of the country with its unchallenged position in cultural exchanges and cooperation. However, in cultural exchanges and cooperation of the Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor, there are more folk cultural activities and bilateral cultural exchanges but less multilateral cultural exchanges, which is a bottleneck for further development of the Economic Corridor among these countries. Due to the current level of development of the four countries in the Economic Corridor, there is less official cultural exchanges and less consensus on cultural cooperation. To some extent, people-to-people exchanges can promote inter-governmental exchanges and cooperation, but the will of the government is important in promoting regional cultural cooperation. In the area of government cooperation, India, Myanmar and Bangladesh need to further strengthen their government cooperation with other countries to better promote the coordinated development of cultural exchanges and cooperation among these four countries and balance the influence of soft powers of them.

3. Imbalanced cultural cooperation of Bangladesh and Myanmar in Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor exchange

In the current cultural exchanges and cooperation among these four countries, the most obvious problem is that the cultural

output of China and India is unilateral, and the cultural exchange deficit between these two countries and other two small countries is obvious. Limited to economic strengths, regional influences and population sizes, cultural exchanges of these four countries are more reflected in the one-way cultural outputs of China and India, and less cultural input from the other two countries.

4. China is in a disadvantage position due to differences in cultural backgrounds in the development of soft powers in that region

Historical and cultural backgrounds of Myanmar and Bangladesh are far more influenced by India than China. There are commons in religions, arts, languages, clothing and dieting of India and Bangladesh in soft power expansion of India; and there are Hinduism and Buddhism as connections of common cultures between India and Myanmar. From the perspective of history and cultural background, Indian civilization does not belong to a nation but to the region. During this process, the subcontinent of South Asia has gradually developed a cultural commonality. Based on this cultural background and relatively convenient geographical factors, cooperation between India and Myanmar is closer than that between China and Myanmar.

5. The Lack of Folk Public Diplomacy makes China receive differential treatment in overseas propaganda and cultural promotion due to Ideology.

In terms of foreign policy, China takes the form of official government diplomacy to promote cultural exchanges and cooperation with other countries, and devotes relatively little effort at the level of

civil public diplomacy, which will make it difficult for cultural exchanges and people-to-people exchanges between two countries to truly communicate with each other; at the government level, India has a competing "monsoon program" with China's "Belt and Road Initiative", and India has actively joined the US "Asia-Pacific Strategy" to curb China's rise. China does not have the upper hand in government-level competitions. At the same time, many foreign scholars and media remain biased against China's development and cultural cooperation, and some scholars believe that "a major part of Beijing's 'going out' strategy" is to subsidize the substantial expansion of its official media (Xinhua, CCTV, China Radio International) overseas in order to break what they call the "Western media monopoly", which constitutes what the Chinese call the main tool of the "discourse war" with the West. In the process of this recognition, China's Confucius Institute is also regarded as another weapon in China's cultural arsenal. However, Yoga and Bollywood films can be described as India's most successful cultural export paradigms in modern times. The development of India's cultural cause provides an opportunity for the development of its soft power. In this field, there are still some differences with Chinese martial arts films, Tai Chi and other cultural symbols.

IV. Suggestions on Further Development of Construction of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor

1. Improve cultural cooperation mechanism to reach consensus

First, to promote the assignment of Agreement on Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar

Economic Corridor; to explore multi-cultural trend in regional cooperation on the basis of agreement of bilateral cultural cooperation; to build an exchange mechanism of four countries to reach cultural consensus; second, to enrich cultural exchange ways, to develop exchange channels with ethical, national, and regional characteristics; third, to strengthen educational cooperation. The establishment of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar universities would improve the recognition of educational background; support higher educational institutes or vocational colleges that are relatively rich in teaching facilities to set up language majors, discipline system and research institute targeted at countries and regions along the corridor; to further encourage studying abroad programs and increase the number of students allowed for scholarship; fourth, to encourage governments at all level, departments, various kind of organizations and societies to build exchange platforms to introduce more excellent cultures into China from Bangladesh, India and Myanmar; fifth, to choose different cultural exchange ways according to their values, preferences, core interests, cultural characteristics and other aspects; sixth, to have special funds built in relative fields; encourage people-to-people cultural exchanges with Bangladesh, India and Myanmar in arts, publication, religions, etc, to contribute convenience in visas. All these measures would contribute the coordinated development of cultural exchanges of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar with their equal soft power strengthening people-to-people ties successfully.

2. Encourage people-to-people exchanges along the Economic Corridor to realize cultural connectivity led by governments

All of the countries involved in the construction of Economic Corridor should further develop the capability of communications and exchanges of cross-border ethnic groups, think tanks and industries by taking advantage of activity and creativity of people-to-people exchange. Importance should be attached to cultural connectivity in regional cooperation and improvement of national soft power, and advance adjustment of industrial structures according to the reality of cultural exchanges, and quicken the development of cultivation of industrial talents, to integrate industrial resources of cultures, to innovate cultural industrial brand, and realize industrial prosperity and contribute the cultural exchanges effectively. A series of excellent classics, films, TV shows should be created under the instructions of government, and ensure copyright is entitled in favorable condition by coordination; explore cultural heritages along the corridor, and to develop a tourism route that involves natural beauties, history, humanity and local customs.

3. Promote positive effects of religious exchanges to explore the best mode for religious exchanges

Respect the diversity of religions in the sub-region and seek common ground while reserving differences. To exploit the potential of religious identity in the construction of economic corridor of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar through the common ground of Chinese religions and other religions. At the operational level,

different channels of religious exchanges have been opened for major religions in sub-region (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam); on the Rohingya issue, China and India have joined hands to provide economic, technical and intellectual supports to Burma and urge it to solve the Rohingya problem; on the issue of the “Holy Mountain and Lake”, the dispute is put aside, continuing to give and expand the number of pilgrims in India and neighboring countries, promoting “Holy Water Diplomacy”.

4. Insist multi-cultural development of areas along the Economic Corridor, coordinating co-prosperity of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar

To respect differences and diversities of cultures, emphasis should be made that all cultures are equal and excellent to some points. In the development of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, we should explore cultural advantages in these areas, develop and spread our own culture while stressing inclusiveness of culture, absorbing and introducing foreign cultures. Support the development of traditional cultures in different regions and establish Artists Alliance of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar as well as establishing Culture Base of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar areas to exchange and create artistic works, contributing coordinated and multi-cultural development of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar areas and boosting the development of cultural industry of these four countries.

5. Improve the influence of Chinese culture demonstrating a good international image

Explore the common sound points of the construction of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor from three levels, namely the state, society and individual, giving Chinese culture new points in modern construction. . In the aspects of implementation, multi-measures and multi-efforts have been realized. . At the national level, we will maintain the international order, abide by the international system and rules, hold the beliefs of “co-operate, co-build and share” with Bangladesh, India and Myanmar, and to show the openness and tolerance of Chinese culture. At the enterprise level, we actively help Bangladesh, India and Myanmar to develop their economy, to improve people's livelihood, to take social responsibility on their own initiative and show the responsibility of China. If the conditions permit, external publicity posts may be set up in Chinese enterprises. When the project is being built, foreign cultural exchanges can be carried out locally within the capacity of the local people in the host country to promote their understanding of Chinese culture and China's development. Encourage people-to-people exchanges, making sure excellent Chinese culture combined with that of Bangladesh, India and Myanmar, and committed to shaping a good image of China at all levels.

Rich in resources, there is great potential for Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar to further develop though areas of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar are still undeveloped. Even long history and civilizations as well as various exchanges of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar presented in the world, cooperation

among them has been long restricted because of lack of mutual trusts or worries about each other, and non-traditional security issues around border areas of these four countries. In order to promote economic construction furtherly and co-development of Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar areas, we should seize the opportunities of advancement of Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor and the “Belt and Road” Initiative to promote people-to-people exchanges with great efforts, to coordinate national soft power influences of these four countries , to strengthen people-to-people ties and to lay a solid foundation of people’s common will. It is a complicated and time-consuming task to construct Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar Economic Corridor, and it can only be achieved under the condition that all these countries are equally benefited in culture and economy, and then realize sustainable development. The advancement of Bangladesh–China –India–Myanmar Economic Corridor is slow, but cooperation among these four countries is relatively solid with a bright and wonderful prospect.

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투고일 : 2019년 8월 7일 · 심사일 : 2019년 9월 3일 · 게재확정일 : 2019년 9월 20일

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<Abstract>

**A Study on Status Quo and Problems of Cultural Exchange
of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor from
the Perspective of Soft Power**

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Nowadays, soft power is playing a more important role in international communication and cooperation, and as cultural exchange in regional cooperation is deeply influenced by national soft powers, the development is usually unbalanced. Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar are adjacent to each other with a long history of intercourse. In the year 2013, initiation of constructing Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor advocated by China and India was responded positively by Bangladesh and Myanmar. Since then, the world has witnessed an increasing connection of these four countries. Being the critical bond connecting the southwestern areas of China and Bangladesh, India as well as Myanmar, Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor is characterized by multiple regional cultures along with frequent connections in cultural products and activities. However, cultural exchange now is dominated by imbalanced development due to potent soft power of China and India that these two countries export more cultural products to the rest, which has an impact in many fields of Bangladesh and Myanmar. Priority should be given to coordinated development in cultural exchange regarding the construction of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor. Only by developing a sustainable development mechanism for cultural exchange, to coordinate the influences of soft powers of these four countries, then a fine complexion of "all flowers are in bloom" can be created, returning to five original intention of the construction of this economic corridor: "Policy Communication" and "Strength People-to-people Ties", etc.

Keywords : Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar, Economic Corridor, Soft Power, Cultural Exchange