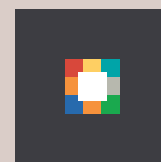


News from Northeast Asia

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One Belt, One Road, and many responses

Kim Chong Min

THE 'ONE BELT, ONE ROAD (OBOR)' initiative can be understood as China's new international economic diplomacy aimed at increasing connectivity and cooperation among countries along China's old maritime and overland trade routes, namely, the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The OBOR initiative involves accelerating outward investment, and shifting industries and infrastructure into Central, South and South-East Asia. In addition to creating new markets, upgrading its industries and stimulating growth, China is creating mechanisms to facilitate investments, as well as engaging with states along the routes.

The Chinese government described OBOR as an "endeavor to seek new models of international cooperation and global governance", but there have been various interpretations of the initiative, in academic, business, journalistic and governmental contexts, since it was first proposed in late 2013 by Chinese President Xi Jinping. Is China pursuing greater roles as regional leader and

provider of public goods? Is it pursuing a new paradigm of international trade, instead of integrating into an existing system? Does it aim to reshape the economic and political order in Asia?

In this issue of News from Northeast Asia, we would like to know how experts in the three Northeast Asian countries assess the current responses of their respective countries to the OBOR. In particular, we would like to hear the expert opinions on the following points: What is the overarching impression of the initiative as perceived by the respective NEA countries in political, strategic and economic arenas? How can such perceptions be evaluated in light of the original intention, primary policy goals and history of the initiative? What changes in business and diplomatic practices and strategies is it likely to bring about?

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