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Japan Should Learn Lessons from India's Sober Realism

By NAKAYAMA Taro

Public opinion in our country is bitterly split over the security bill. Meanwhile, the primary focus of the world today is U.S.-China diplomatic interactions. Chinese President Xi Jinping plans to visit the United States at the end of this month, and there are various news reports about this visit. For example, some sources say, "Senior U.S. officials visit China to tell their critical concerns with cyber-attacks," and things are so boisterous. The Chinese side has released a famous human rights activist who was in custody. Also, at the World Economic Forum (an annual summer meeting in Davos) in Dalian, Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang stated that China did not want to stimulate exports by devaluing the yuan, that such devaluation was contradictory to China's structural reform, that China did not hope for a world currency war, and that the Chinese economy was highly integrated into the global economy. Speaking like this, Li is quelling the tumult of volatile Chinese stock market these days by all means.

Regarding the American side, there are some reports that draw our attention; for example, "U.S. won't impose sanctions on Chinese companies [for cyber-attacks] before Xi's visit," (Washington Post Online) and "Boeing will transfer the final process facility of the 737 airliners to China" (A French source). Globally, Prime Minister Tony Abbott, who was one of the good friends of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and very pro-Japanese, stepped down in Australia, and pro-Chinese Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has taken office. Power rotation took quite the opposite direction in Sri Lanka. Strategically, this implies the collapse of China's string of pearls to encircle India, which inflicts a vital damage to Beijing.

According to an Indian scholar whom I know very well, China provides military aid for India's enemy Pakistan so openly, and their behavior is hardly tolerable for him as India has been in territorial dispute with China (He says that India has been confronting China for fifty years.). However, he says that India welcomes President Xi Jinping's visit (Xi entered India from the capital of Gujarat state, which is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constituency.). India accepts \$20 billion dollars in foreign direct investment from China, and agrees on proceeding with nuclear cooperation

with China at this stage. Furthermore, he points out that India joined the AIIB from the beginning. He argues that any country should be a sober realist for national survival and not fall into a naïve idealist. He says furthermore, “It would be troublesome if China and the United States were to become too close, and India were marginalized. But in my view, China does not want any war or confrontation with the United States, despite their verbal criticism to Washington. Like India, the best and the brightest of this country study in the United States. Chinese leaders are smart enough to make a sound judgment.”

As Professor Kazuya Sakamoto of Osaka University stated, a stauncher US-Japanese deterrence would prevent China’s self-righteous behavior, which would be helpful to promote improved Japan-China relations (in summary). At the hearing of the House of Councilors yesterday, this is the key to everything. As to the matter of the security bill this time, I am concerned that the debate has smoked out anti-Americanism among some Japanese conservatives. According to one Japanese scholar, this is because they are still traumatized with humiliation of the defeat in the World War II and the following occupational rule by the United States, and they have not shed such negative sentiments yet. He says that their anti-Americanism is nonetheless not so resolute as to confront the United States. International politics is driven by so many untrustworthy actors, and therefore, Japan should learn India’s way to live sober mindedly and sturdily in a world like this.

(This is an English translation of the article written by Mr. NAKAYAMA Taro, Adjunct Staff of a Nonprofit Organization, which originally appeared on the e-forum “Hyakka-Somei” of CEAC on September 16, 2015.)