The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road is a development strategy adopted by the Chinese government. The intention is to create a global trade infrastructure that will open the participating countries to economic development, trade and prosperity. The 'belt' refers to the overland interconnecting infrastructure corridors; the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) component. The 'road' refers to the sea route corridors; the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (MSR) component. The initiative focuses on connectivity and cooperation between Eurasian countries, primarily the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Until 2016 the initiative was known in English as the One Belt and One Road Initiative (OBOR) but the Chinese came to consider the emphasis on the word "one" as misleading. The Chinese government calls the initiative "a bid to enhance regional connectivity and embrace a brighter future". Independent observers, however, see it as a push for Chinese dominance in global affairs with a China-centred trading network.

The Belt and Road Initiative addresses an "infrastructure gap" and thus has potential to accelerate economic growth across the Asia Pacific area and Central and Eastern Europe: a report from the World Pensions Council (WPC) estimates that Asia, excluding China, requires up to US$900 billion of infrastructure investments per year over the next decade, mostly in debt instruments, 50% above current infrastructure spending rates. The gaping need for long term capital explains why many Asian and Eastern European heads of state "gladly expressed their interest to join this new international financial institution focusing solely on 'real assets' and infrastructure-driven economic growth.

China sees the initiative as a "Win-Win" strategy for all participants. They believe the connectivity projects of the Initiative will help align and coordinate the development strategies of the countries along the Belt and Road, tap market potential in this region, promote investment and consumption, create demands and job opportunities, enhance people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and mutual learning among the peoples of the relevant countries, and enable them to understand, trust and respect each other and live in harmony, peace and prosperity.

Strategists in the West fear that China’s Belt and Road initiative is a vast, well-laid and finely orchestrated plan to extend Chinese hegemony over much of the developing world. What many outsiders have missed is that the Belt and Road is a vision, not a plan. When Chinese President Xi Jinping laid out the scheme five years ago, he proposed an ambitious transcontinental effort to link the economies of some 80 countries, covering two-thirds of the world’s population, through improved trade and transportation links. How to translate Xi’s vision into concrete deals was left to other parties, both within and beyond the Chinese government.

This modus operandi is typical in China, where the central government often issues broad directives and expects lower-ranking officials to figure out how to fulfil them. The hallmark of such communist-style mass campaigns is that everyone pitches in with frenzied enthusiasm and little coordination. Vast resources and human capital are mobilized toward one goal. Banks, businesses and officials across the country participate en-masse, rather than dividing up responsibilities, as local governments rush to meet what they see as their superiors’ wishes (or, at least, to sneak through their pet projects).

As Belt and Road expands in scope so do concerns it is a form of economic imperialism that gives China too much leverage over other countries, often those that are smaller and poorer. It is portrayed as an attempt to win friends and influence people, but it is a very grand initiative which has frightened people. Rather than using their economic power to make friends, they seem to have drummed up more fear that it will be about influence.”

Some worry expanded Chinese commercial presence around the world will eventually lead to expanded military presence. Last year, China established its first overseas military base in Djibouti. Analysts say almost all the ports and other transport infrastructure being built can be dual-use for commercial and military purposes.

---

2 Source: Bloomberg Opinion.
China to rebuild ancient Silk Road

President Xi Jinping’s $1 trillion plan – known as One Belt, One Road – will see two trade routes to Europe. The plan will bind China’s economy to 60 countries, home to 4.4 billion people, half the world’s population.

Government funds invested in Belt and Road project

- **$890bn.** China Development Bank
- **$50bn.** China-based AIIB
- **$40bn.** Silk Road Fund
- **$10bn.** New Development Bank

Belt and Road projects

1. **Moscow-Kazan high-speed railway:** $375m, 770km line is first stretch of 7,000km high-speed rail link to Beijing.
2. **Khorgos Gateway:** Cargo hub on China-Kazakh border will handle one million containers per year.
3. **Tehran rail line:** First freight train from China arrived in Tehran in February 2016.
4. **China-Pakistan highway:** Under construction at cost of $46 billion. "Economic corridor" between China and Pakistan will link China to port of Gwadar on Arabian Sea.

Map showing trade routes and key cities.

- Rotterdam, Netherlands
- Moscow, Russia
- Istanbul, Turkey
- Dushanbe, Tajikistan
- Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- Almaty, Kazakhstan
- Urumqi, China
- Xian, China
- Fuzhou, China
- Kolkata, India
- Colombo, Sri Lanka
- Gwadar, Pakistan
- Karachi, Pakistan
- Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Jakarta, Indonesia
- Venice, Italy
- Athens, Greece
- Tehran, Iran
- Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- Nairobi, Kenya
- Venice, Italy
- Athens, Greece
- Tehran, Iran
- Nairobi, Kenya
- Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Jakarta, Indonesia

Key:
- **Red:** Silk Road Economic Belt
- **Blue:** Maritime Silk Road
The Matrix Game Construction Kit

The ultimate matrix game design kit

In a “matrix game” there are few pre-set rules limiting what players can do. Instead, each is free to undertake any plausible action during their turn. The chances of success or failure, as well as the effects of the action, are largely determined through structured argument and discussion. This process allows for imaginative game dynamics that are lively and open-ended, and yet also grounded in reality.

Matrix games are particularly well-suited for complex conflicts and issues involving multiple actors and stakeholders, varying interests and agendas, and a broad range of (diplomatic/political, military, social, and economic) dimensions. The game system crowdsources ideas and insight from participants, thereby fostering greater analytical insight.

First developed by Chris Engle, matrix games have been played by hobbyists for years. They have also been used as serious games for training at the US Army War College, National Defense University, the Central Intelligence Agency, and elsewhere; for defence planning, capability assessment, and acquisitions in Australia, Canada, the UK, and US; for security planning for the Vancouver Olympics; as a research and analytical support tool at the UK Foreign Office; and as an educational method in various universities. They are particularly well-suited for multi-sided conflicts or other issues that involve a broad range of capabilities and interaction.

MaGCK contains everything that is required to play two different matrix games, or to design your own matrix games addressing almost any aspect of modern conflict:

- A core set of matrix game rules.
- Player briefings and supplementary rules for ISIS CRISIS, a matrix game that explores the rise and decline of the so-called “Islamic State” insurgency in Iraq. Two scenarios are included: "The Caliphate Reborn?" (set in September 2014) and “Road to Mosul” (starting January 2016).
- Player briefings, map tiles, and supplementary rules for A RECKONING OF VULTURES, a game that explores coup plotting and political skullduggery in a fictional dictatorship.
- 255 large blank game tokens in eight colours, together with over 700 stickers depicting various unit types, other assets, capabilities, and effects. The stickers are used to customize the game tokens, offering enormous flexibility for matrix game designers.
- 80 smaller discs in the same colours as above, which can be used to indicate damage, supplies and resources, political influence, or other characteristics.
- 10 two-sided tracking mats, with various scales (+/-3, 1-3, 1-10, days, months, and so forth)
- Assorted dice.

In addition, purchasers of MaGCK gain access to templates so they can print additional stickers using readily-available sticker sheets and any laser printer—thus making it possible to produce an unlimited number of games and scenarios. See: https://www.thegamecrafter.com/games/magck-matrix-game-construction-kit
Abbreviated Matrix Game Rules

How to Play a Matrix Game

In a Matrix Game, actions are resolved by a structured sequence of logical "arguments". Each player takes turns to make an argument, with successful arguments advancing the game, and the player's position. There are a number of ways you can do this, depending on the size of the game and the purpose (each has their own strengths and weaknesses), but the one recommended for this game is:

The "Pros and Cons" System

In this system, each argument is broken down into:

- The active Players states: Something That Happens and a Number of Reasons Why it Might Happen (Pros).
- The other Players state: A Number of Reasons Why it Might NOT Happen (if they can think of any) (Cons).

The game needs a Facilitator to adjudicate on the arguments, but if you have a limited number of players, you can take it in turns to be the Facilitator – this works out much better than you might imagine and helps reinforce the idea that your role in the game might be in conflict with others, but you are all working together to generate a credible narrative.

The advantage of this system is that you formalise the Pros and Cons of an argument and the role of the Facilitator becomes that of ensuring that the Pros and Cons carry equal weight - perhaps making compelling reasons worth two Pros and two or three weaker reasons against only worth one Con. You need to ensure you don't end up with a laundry list of trivial reasons, or the player restating a reason already accepted in a slightly different way in a desperate attempt to gain points.

One very useful benefit of the "Pros and Cons" system is that it provides reasons for failure should the dice roll not succeed. You can also more easily run the game with very knowledgeable players.

Notes about arguments

The important thing to remember in a Matrix game is that arguments can be made about anything that is relevant to the scenario. You can argue about your own troops or about the enemy, the existence of people, places, things or events, the weather, plague, disease or public opinion. The actions and consequences of arguments are reflected in the placement of the generic counters on a map (examples are enclosed below), forming narrative markers for the game; or by writing the results on a whiteboard or flipchart so the players can keep track of what is going on.

Some things can seem a little odd to new players – "how can he argue about my troops?" – It is true, he can't give them orders, but he could argue that their morale and motivation are low because they haven't been paid in months. The only criteria for judgement is the likelihood of the event taking place. With a bit of imagination, common sense and rational thinking, it is possible to present persuasive arguments as to what should happen in any scenario - from traditional military campaigns to the strange world of defence procurement.

A common error in Matrix games is for a player to argue about another player being influenced by something or them agreeing to a course of action. The player is present and can simply be asked - so that a little time between turns to allow the players to negotiate with each other (in secret if necessary) makes for a better game. It might be that a player wants to argue that all parties come to negotiations – in which case let them state their case, then ask the other players if they want to come along. If they agree then the argument is an automatic success.

Arguments are for measurable actions – if the players want to negotiate with each other, they can do that in between turns.

Sometimes players get carried away with their arguments and try to do several different things. This isn't allowed in a Matrix game – you only get to do one action a turn because part of the insight comes from deciding what the highest priority is. The action itself could be large (like a general mobilisation of the Militia), but it must be a single action, so mobilising the Militia and providing the Police with heavy weapons would be two separate actions – which one do you want to do first?

If two arguments are in direct opposition ("This happens" - "No it doesn't") they represent a Logical Inconsistency since they cannot both be true. The earlier argument has already happened, so it is impossible for it not to have happened. The later player may argue that the event is reversed, but this tends to make for a poor narrative in the game and should be discouraged.
**Reasonable Assumptions and Established Facts**

It is important that the Facilitator understands the difference between "reasonable assumptions" in the game, such as the proposition that well trained and equipped Special Forces soldiers are going to be much more effective in combat than untrained protestors; and "established facts" which are facts that have been specifically mentioned in the game briefings or have become established during play as the result of successful arguments.

The former can be deployed as supporting reasons (Pros and Cons), but the latter need to have been argued successfully in order for them to be included. Many inexperienced players will make vast all-encompassing arguments full of assumptions that are not reasonable. For example: It is not a reasonable assumption that an unarmed Protestor counter could fight off trained Police. It is reasonable to assume that the Police are trained, armed, equipped and quite capable of dealing with a group of protestors (after all, that is their job). It would be necessary to argue for large number of Protestors, argue that they had weapons of some sort or argue that they were especially devoted or fanatical about their cause, for them to have a reasonable chance of beating the Police.

Of course, you might argue that your Protesters undergo special training, get access to firearms, or are simply fired up with enthusiasm by the powerful and impassioned speech from their leader, so they get a bonus. In this case, you should mark the counter with a +1 or something similar (depending on the strength of the argument) to show their improved status.

**Game Length and Turn Length**

The game should last a minimum of 6 turns as it is essential that sufficient turns are allowed to develop the narrative and force the players to have to live with the consequences of their actions from earlier in the game. Each turn represents a deliberately vague period defined by the game Facilitator and the arguments are the "headline events" that took place in the period.

**End of Turn "Consequence Management"**

At the end of each game turn (a cycle of player arguments) the Facilitator should go over those successful and failed arguments that have generate new "established facts" in the game. They should also review situations that are on-going, such as the generation of refugees from fighting or the arrival of new recruits to a popular cause. If these have not been countered during the turn by a successful argument, the Facilitator should make them continue until someone does make an argument to stop them.

It might also be that some of the arguments, when considered as a whole, will have additional or even unintended consequences that are reasonable to expect to arise. It is therefore worth taking time to consider the consequences of the players' arguments beyond their immediate results. Invite the players to consider the events of the turn, suggest possible consequences and then agree on the most likely that should be taken forward to the next turn.

In some games, it is worthwhile having an individual (if you have one to spare) who is particularly experienced about the sort of subject that the Matrix Game is focussed on, make “the law of unintended consequences” arguments at the end of a turn. This can help to formalise the process and provide good examples to widen the players' understanding of the consequences of their actions.

**Inter-Turn Negotiations**

As we have already said, the actual “arguments” of the Matrix Game are about actions that take place in the course of the game. In most cases, the actors represented by the players may well want to engage in face to face negotiation with each other in an effort to strike a deal. Players attempting to make Arguments saying that they want to “influence the Prime Minister” are essentially pointless if the Prime Minister is represented by another player. If they want to strike a deal, then they had better head off to a quiet corner of the room and try a little influence in real life. Of course, if a player wants to make an argument about a position or group not represented by another player, they are welcome to do so in the normal way.

In analytical games, it is important to record the essential elements of these discussions. What was suggested? Was agreement reached and why? If no agreement was reached what were the private and public reasons why the negotiations were unsuccessful? Analysis of these "off-table" negotiations and the reasons the players felt why they were successful or failures can provide important insights.
Secret arguments

There will be some cases where you want to hide from the other players the thing you want to argue about. It could be that you have booby trapped a piece of equipment you think your opponent will use, or that you have swapped the vital blueprints for a set of fake ones in case the safe is broken into. In this case, you simply write down your argument on a piece of paper and present it to the Facilitator announcing to the other players that you are making a secret argument. The Facilitator will make a judgment and you will roll the dice normally, but the other players have no idea what it is about.

You should be careful, however, that the players don't make too many secret arguments. This can ruin the game's atmosphere and reduce the focus, so that the game drags on unnecessarily. They also depend on the judgement of the Facilitator as to their success or failure, rather than being decided on a consensual basis from the participants. They must only be permitted when they refer to quite specific things or events. An argument about gathering information from a spy, in most games, will be quite a generic argument and should be argued openly. Similarly, arguing about the placement of an IED to catch forces moving down a route should be made openly as the results will take effect the same turn. It is only really for secret things you need to establish several turns in advance.

Measures of Success

In many arguments success or failure may not be a simple "Yes" or "No" proposition. There might well be a sliding scale of success or failure in terms of numbers or the quality of the outcome, which is usually represented by the score on the dice. If you needed a 7+ to succeed and rolled a double-six (12), this can indicate an especially notable success. Conversely, a roll of a double-one, it could represent a disastrous failure.

More information

There has been quite a lot of discussion about Matrix games, including links to example games on the “PAXsims” Blog that are worth reading: https://paxsims.wordpress.com/?s=Matrix+Game

Professor Rex Brynen was also interviewed by the GrogHeads “GrogCast” Podcast, a copy of what he said about Matrix Games is here: http://grogheads.com/?podcast=grogcast-season-2-episode-12 with the discussion about Matrix Games starting at the 31-minute mark.

Conduct of the Game:

The players should be formed into teams around the Actors in the game. They should be provided with the introductory background (above) and their Actor brief; and provided with a short period in which to study the brief. They should then write down a few (3 or 4) short, pithy, objectives they would wish to achieve in the game in accordance with their briefs. One of these should be a longer-term objective, with a reach of a minimum of 20 years in order to ensure that the players address something other than short-term goals and reactions to other player’s actions in the game. Play should then commence in the normal way. The final turn should be followed by a discussion of the objectives, and comparison made with the Actor’s achievements during the game.


Game Turn Length:

The length represented by a game turn will be variable during the game. My preference is to set the game 3 years in the future, with the first turn as that period, then with 3-year turns, with the option to modify the turn length to deal with the actions and reactions to the changes proposed as the game progresses.

Actors in the Game and Order of Play:

- China.
- USA (and Allies).
- Russia.
- India.
- ASEAN States
- Japan.

Optional Player:

- The European Union (if not played directly, this role should be represented as the last action of each turn by collective agreement from the participating players).
Matrix Game Checklist

Game Start

- Explain the game type and how arguments work, as well as any special rules for the scenario.
- Allocate roles (making sure the roles are typecast to the character of the role), get the players to read their briefs and write down their own objectives for the game (based on the briefs), including long term goals.
- Explain the turn order and how long a “turn” is (game time) and how long you expect a turn to take (real time).

Game Turns

- **Role Play**: Each turn the Actors will make an argument, in order, about a single Action.
  - The arguing player gives an Action and a measurable Result, along with reasons Why or How (Pros).
  - The other players give reasons Why Not (Cons): "Can anyone think that argument won’t work?"
  - The Facilitator works out the chance of success by asking the participants (all of them) to “vote” using the estimative probability cards (below).
  - If unopposed or simply a really good argument – there is no need to roll the dice, it just happens.

![Estimative Probability Cards](image)

- **Crowdsourcing Argument Resolution**: Roll the Dice (based on the mathematical Mode of the cards used).
  - A score equal to or less than the number required is a success. A higher number is a failure.
  - Extreme results, and narrow successes and failures, also indicate the scale of success or failure.
- If random event cards are used, the Actor with the event card makes a second argument about the event.
- Note successes and failures down (It can help if you use a flip chart or projector where everyone can see it).
- Resolve any additional actions by non-actors by consensus (or voting if necessary) at the end of the turn.
- Summarise the successes/failures at the end of the turn.

In Between Turns

- The players should be given a short time to conduct diplomacy between the Actors.

Post-Game

- Have the Actors read out their objectives and comment on how well they think they did.
- Always allow time for a discussion about what went well, less well and ideas for better ways of working.
- Make immediate notes to help you later. There will be a great many observations coming out, so try not to miss anything.
Complex and profound changes are taking place in the world. The underlying impact of the international financial crisis keeps emerging; the world economy is recovering slowly, and global development is uneven; the international trade and investment landscape and rules for multilateral trade and investment are undergoing major adjustments; and countries still face big challenges to their development.

The initiative to jointly build the Belt and Road, embracing the trend toward a multipolar world, economic globalization, cultural diversity and greater IT application, is designed to uphold the global free trade regime and the open world economy in the spirit of open regional cooperation. It is aimed at promoting orderly and free flow of economic factors, highly efficient allocation of resources and deep integration of markets; encouraging the countries along the Belt and Road to achieve economic policy coordination and carry out broader and more in-depth regional cooperation of higher standards; and jointly creating an open, inclusive and balanced regional economic cooperation architecture that benefits all. Jointly building the Belt and Road is in the interests of the world community.

The Belt and Road Initiative aims to promote the connectivity of Asian, European and African continents and their adjacent seas, establish and strengthen partnerships among the countries along the Belt and Road, set up all-dimensional, multilayered and composite connectivity networks, and realize diversified, independent, balanced and sustainable development in these countries. The connectivity projects of the Initiative will help align and coordinate the development strategies of the countries along the Belt and Road, tap market potential in this region, promote investment and consumption, create demands and job opportunities, enhance people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and mutual learning among the peoples of the relevant countries, and enable them to understand, trust and respect each other and live in harmony, peace and prosperity.

China’s economy is closely connected with the world economy. China will stay committed to the basic policy of opening-up, build a new pattern of all-around opening-up, and integrate itself deeper into the world economic system. The Initiative will enable China to further expand and deepen its opening-up, and to strengthen its mutually beneficial cooperation with countries in Asia, Europe and Africa and the rest of the world. China is committed toshouldering more responsibilities and obligations within its capabilities, and making greater contributions to the peace and development of mankind.

On land, the Initiative will focus on jointly building a new Eurasian Land Bridge and developing China-Mongolia-Russia, China-Central Asia-West Asia and China-Indochina Peninsula economic corridors by taking advantage of international transport routes, relying on core cities along the Belt and Road and using key economic industrial parks as cooperation platforms. At sea, the Initiative will focus on jointly building smooth, secure and efficient transport routes connecting major sea ports along the Belt and Road. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor are closely related to the Belt and Road Initiative, and therefore require closer cooperation and greater progress.

Investment and trade cooperation is a major task in building the Belt and Road. We should strive to improve investment and trade facilitation, and remove investment and trade barriers for the creation of a sound business environment within the region and in all related countries. We should expand the scope and scale of bilateral currency swap and settlement with other countries along the Belt and Road, open and develop the bond market in Asia, make joint efforts to establish the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and BRICS New Development Bank, conduct negotiation among related parties on establishing Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) financing institution, and set up and put into operation the Silk Road Fund as early as possible.

There are problems, however, despite being the second largest economy in the world after the United States. There are growing difficulties with a falling growth rate, converting an export driven economy to a consumption driven one, internal investments and the viability of manufacturing and banking, corruption, falling tax revenues and increasing expenses, an aging population, and regional imbalances from the coastal regions to the huge internal areas.

---

3 Source: The State Council of the People’s Republic of China
USA and Allies (Australia, and South Korea)

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) illustrates the transformative geopolitical implications of China’s rise. Despite its changing contours and the fact that it partly recycles pre-existing plans, this series of major infrastructure and development projects designed to connect Eurasian regions together is a coherent enterprise of unprecedented scale: $4 trillion of promised investments in 65 countries representing 70 percent of the world’s population, 55 percent of its GNP, and 75 percent of its energy reserves. The BRI aims to stabilize China’s western peripheries, rekindle its economy, propel non-Western international economic institutions, gain influence in other countries, and diversify trade suppliers/routes while circumventing the U.S. pivot to Asia.

Of course, the BRI’s prospects of success are subject to many unknowns, including the possibility of foreign resistance, China’s domestic economic travails, political turbulence, aging population, and environmental problems. On the other hand, the U.S. still possesses enormous assets to maintain its predominance, including military primacy, multiple alliances, powerful Western-led international organizations, and an unmatched soft power.

Yet over time the BRI could threaten the very foundations of Washington’s post-WWII hegemony.

First, its naval dimension works in synergy with overland projects that span regions of critical geostrategic value, taking advantage of China’s central position along the Eurasian rimland. While U.S. leaders have focused on Beijing’s maritime build-up in East Asia, and while most analyses have derided its massive investments in poor and unstable parts of continental Eurasia, those initiatives are mutually reinforcing, part of the same grand design, which is to push the U.S. toward the periphery of the Eurasian rimland, thereby marginalizing its geostrategic influence.

Second, Beijing seeks to offset the United States’ military primacy. Its build-up in maritime East Asia and the South China sea is worthy of attention but it is also designed in response to the U.S. naval presence and to the alliances that American leaders have nurtured along China’s southern flank since the early years of the Cold War. Regardless, this specific challenge should not absorb the bulk of the United States’ resources. For all of its military initiatives, Beijing’s key priority is to make strategic gains by leveraging its superior geo-economic assets: vast and fast-growing market, full state control over the economy, and massive financial reserves.

Third, to advance its interests, China exploits the cracks in U.S. post-Cold War hegemony. Washington’s interferences in Russia and Iran’s respective spheres of influence, and its military interventionism in the Middle East, triggered a nationalist and Islamist backlash that significantly diminished its resources and credibility. The unending global war on terror and misguided attempts at forceful democracy promotion only compounded this strategic overreach, while the militarization of Washington’s national security apparatus reduced its ability to tackle the deeper roots of those multi-dimensional challenges.

In the meantime, China has emerged as a near-peer competitor and began to project geo-economic influence beyond its vicinity. This strategy has started to yield results in key regions of Eurasia.

The Trump Administration’s recent National Security Strategy endeavoured to “help South Asian nations maintain their sovereignty as China increases its influence in the region.” Among other initiatives, Washington upgraded the profile of the Quad, a partnership that includes the United States, India, Australia, and Japan. However, the United States still reels from military overreach, relative economic decline, and domestic political gridlock. By contrast Beijing has used its considerable geo-economic leverage to assert its strategic influence over Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and other states. As some experts noted, this could ultimately allow China to become a “resident power” in the region.

---

Source: The Diplomat
The 2014 Ukraine crisis changed the Kremlin’s economic calculus. Confrontation with the West and Russia’s deteriorating economy due to US-led sanctions and falling oil prices have left Moscow little choice. Without Ukraine, the second-largest post-Soviet economy and a market of about 44 million people, Moscow’s hopes to create an integrated bloc that would be on par with the European Union and other centres of global economic power were essentially dashed. Lacking a market of sufficient size to create its own viable geo-economic area, Russia was left with the only option of moving into another nation’s economic orbit.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that Russia has always been a firm supporter of China’s Belt and Road Initiative. “President Xi’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) incorporates concepts of the economy and humanity. The essence of the Initiative is to develop both the economy and infrastructure,” Putin noted. “It matches our efforts to establish an alliance in the Eurasian economy,” Putin said, noting that the Belt and Road Initiative is beneficial and promising.

This agreement involves important matters, including policies on trade and technology, as well as plant quarantine measures, according to Putin. “In fact, it was a significant step for further eliminating restrictions on economic development and cooperation,” he stressed. “And we believe that President Xi’s Initiative has a wider global vision in boosting cooperation and development for all countries and continents,” Putin said.

Russia’s initiative is focusing on integration in Eurasian economic development, Putin said, adding that the two initiatives will produce better results if working together. “For instance, in infrastructure, we know that our Chinese partners are very interested in the Northern Sea Route and we welcome that,” he said.

The Northern Sea Route is a strategic shipping passage between Asia and Europe that runs along Russia’s Arctic coast. It is seen as a fundamental part of the “Ice Silk Road,” which the two sides agreed to jointly build last July. “But that is only one of the directions in our cooperation. China and Russia have great plans in industrial cooperation as well as constructing railway infrastructure,” Putin said. “The cooperation prospects are tremendous and promising. They will also lay a sound foundation for boosting future cooperation,” he added.

China is Russia’s biggest trading partner. The total trade volume between the two countries reached 87 billion US dollars last year. The bilateral trade relationship has enjoyed very good momentum, as the growth of the trade volume in the first quarter of 2017 was equivalent to the total growth of 2016. “We need to maintain it and boost it,” Putin stressed.

China and Russia have formed a strategic partnership since the mid-1990s. Driven by their shared interest in opposing what they characterize as power politics and US hegemony, Beijing and Moscow have formed a united front on many important issues such as global governance and the respect for sovereignty and pledged support to each other’s diplomatic initiatives. They have also benefited from close cooperation in the areas of arms trade and military technology transfers, anti-terrorism, energy development, and stability in Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). This partnership appears to have been further strengthened by the particular personal bond between Presidents Putin and Xi over the past years. In this context, Putin’s praise of BRI is to be expected.

Indeed, the fact that Russia remains a dominant force in Eurasia means that Beijing must seek Moscow’s endorsement of China’s economic and diplomatic initiatives, including BRI. Indeed, even though Beijing wields enormous economic power and is increasingly extending its presence in Eurasia, its ability to pursue and promote BRI projects can be impeded should Moscow choose to undermine Chinese endeavours. Indeed, prior to the launch of the BRI, China’s interest in expanding the SCO’s mandate to include trade, finance and energy development were met with resistance from Moscow.

Russia’s insecurity and concern over China’s growing influence make it a hesitant supporter of BRI, its rhetoric notwithstanding. Perhaps that explains the way the BRI was launched, which appeared designed to make Eurasia a vital link to Europe for China by largely bypassing Russia.

Source: China Global Television Network, theasiadialogue.com and managementstudyguide.com
India only began to debate the implications of the BRI when China deepened its infrastructure engagements with India’s neighbours in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region. As New Delhi continued to debate its political calculations on the Belt and Road, there were significant voices on both sides of the political dilemma surrounding whether India should participate in the Belt and Road and the initiative’s May 2017 forum.

On the one hand, some proponents of Indian participation pointed to specific ways that India could benefit from the BRI. The most obvious example is that the BRI would provide a way to help finance the country’s domestic infrastructure projects. The economic benefits India could accrue might be especially pronounced in the northeastern part of the country, which has traditionally been geographically distant from the rest of India and from major cross-border trading routes. To those sympathetic to Indian participation in the BRI, the sense that connectivity is gaining momentum throughout the Indo-Pacific further underscores that New Delhi should consider ways to enhance its own economic standing on trade and transportation issues so as to avoid being left behind.

Yet despite these potential benefits, Indian opposition to the BRI has grown. India’s misgivings about Chinese-funded projects through the BRI ultimately come down to a few key concerns. New Delhi is worried that Chinese-funded infrastructure projects may: 1) run afoul of accepted international standards and norms; 2) undermine Indian sovereignty claims on disputed border territories and other security interests, especially vis-à-vis China and Pakistan; and 3) grant China greater geopolitical influence and undue economic and diplomatic leverage over the policymaking decisions of India’s neighbours in ways that disadvantage India.

The Indian government’s view is that the BRI is not based on principles such as good governance, rule of law, and transparency. It also suggests the initiative creates unsustainable debt burdens in some recipient countries. For example, Colombo’s increasing Chinese debt is a cause for concern on unsustainable debt burden. Furthermore, news reports and studies have shown that China’s approach to BRI carries some risk of unsustainable loan practices that could leave some nations saddled with high levels of debt. Hambantota is a glaring example of such unsustainable loans, which ultimately are allowing China to gain significant economic and strategic advantages in the Indian Ocean region.

As with its dealings with neighbours on India’s northern borders, China is aggressively pursuing India’s maritime neighbours and offering unmatched commercial investments. The port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka is the newest concern. The strategic location of the port and Sri Lanka’s geography in relation to key sea lines of communication strengthens India’s perception that Beijing is building infrastructure for its own strategic interests in the Indian Ocean region. China’s control of Hambantota and access to Gwadar, its other investments in the Maldives and Mauritius, and its base in Djibouti are only the beginning of Beijing’s apparent efforts to secure a maritime military edge. One March 2018 study showed that the BRI has heightened debt risks among at least some borrowing countries due to poor lending practices, a conclusion that gives greater credence to India’s view that China is using unsustainable debt burdens for its own strategic gains.

New Delhi should probably seek help from partners like Japan when necessary to build and upgrade its infrastructure and create an alternative to Chinese-led connectivity corridors and infrastructure projects. India should have a blueprint to identify specific projects, mechanisms, and goals for its connectivity initiatives. Other countries like Australia, France, Germany, the UK, and the United States are keen to see India play a leading role in the region. These nations have technical expertise and are already present in the region to some degree. Together, India and these countries could coordinate their use of resources to address common goals such as peace and security.

While India seems to have identified partnerships as a way to address its connectivity challenges, it must now be deliberate about the nature and scope of relevant projects in the region. So far, New Delhi’s response has been reactive and inadequate. If India continues to pursue a reactive policy, it will exhaust its limited resources chasing China as Beijing strives to become a regional and global power. India must take stock of its strategic priorities; create a sensible, coherent policy framework in response; and move toward a burden-sharing model with its partners to secure its strategic interests in the region.

---

Source: Carnegie India
ASEAN States Overview

ASEAN was founded on 8 August 1967 with five members: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. It is headquartered in Jakarta. The ASEAN Master Plan for Connectivity (AMPC) and China’s Belt and Road Initiative have major commonalities. Both envisage transport connectivity as a way of bringing countries closer to one another, facilitating better access to trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people exchanges. Similar to the BRI project, AMPC calls for a system of roads and railways to link contiguous members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations with one another, as well as a system of ports for vessels and short shipping routes to link Southeast Asian countries with one another. Given this shared vision, it is evident that this would pose a great benefit to developing ASEAN. Also, the Chinese initiative is sure to support the ASEAN nations in advancing regional connectivity.

China has been seeking the advancement of trade and investment with its economic partners. Through the BRI initiative, China aims to trigger the demand for its products by investing intensively on strategic infrastructure projects internationally, developing economic ties along its old Silk Road to Europe and along newer maritime links in and around Asia and as far away as Africa. Since 2009, China has been ASEAN’s largest trading partner, and since 2011 ASEAN has been China’s third-largest trading partner. Given the vitality of the economic stability of the ASEAN states to China, considering the geographical proximity of the region, a key priority of the BRI is ASEAN’s burgeoning economies. Also, ASEAN is a prominent developing economic partner of China and is a top destination for Chinese businesses and corporations. The BRI holds a crucial role in bridging ASEAN and China, two of the world’s most dynamic economies. This will also help the growing ASEAN region improve its internal connectivity among the 10-member states by continuously developing their economic zones in Asia and beyond.

However, the BRI also raises concerns for the ASEAN states, in particular that China may make use of economic incentives to lead participating states into broader cooperation with itself, threatening the regional body’s unity. This may eventually increase Chinese economic might and strategic pathways in the region, pressuring ASEAN members to recalculate their strategic alliances and re-evaluate their relations with China and their global interests. The implementation of the Belt and Road agenda requires a high level of cooperation and understanding between and among ASEAN states and China. Alongside the strict enforcement of policies and analysis of risks, this would lead to bolstered economic development and linkages between Southeast Asia and China.

The most critical issue confronting ASEAN is how to balance the traditional ASEAN style of respecting state sovereignty, with aspirations of new ASEAN that proactively advances regional cooperation and integration. The old style powered much of ASEAN’s success, in that it allowed for slow integration while respecting the domestic politics of member countries. Yet the Association must transform itself into a body capable of cooperating on issues that have traditionally been defined as matters of state sovereignty, including reforms to domestic economic structures, if it is going to move forward with integration in real terms for economic growth. Achieving this balance will be an issue ASEAN cannot afford to ignore going forward.

Source: Asia Times
ASEAN States Sub-Briefs

One of the issues facing the ASEAN states is cooperation between the individual states, so if possible the ASEAN Actor should be represented by 4 players. The 4 players below must all agree for the ASEAN block to make an Argument, otherwise nothing happens.

Phillipines

China’s BRI has given rise to discussions and speculations as to what BRI is all about, how it works, and who could participate. The ambiguity of the Chinese government in explaining the ins and outs of the project has led people to have the notion that BRI is a blueprint to pursue its geopolitical interests and emerge as a dominant power in the region. BRI has stirred wariness among the public especially concerning the risks on commercial and operational viability that may be affected by volatile and uncertain conditions in economic markets. There are also fears that engaging China in these large infrastructure projects could put participating countries at debt risk. Many argue that this debt will then be used by China as leverage to gain access to resources and pursue its strategic interests.

The Philippine government, in engaging China through the BRI, should be mindful of these risks. It is always best to conduct risk planning and feasibility studies before entering a particular project. It could also be noted that government support alone will not always translate to the success of the projects. Other actors such as the private sector, local government units, and the citizenry play key roles. Addressing geopolitical, financial, and operational risks, altogether, will always be crucial to the success of the project undertaking, as demonstrated in the case of Colombo Port City in Sri Lanka.

Nonetheless, BRI still poses impressive prospects for the Philippines. The scale of the project is unprecedented and exudes so much potential. First, the aligned infrastructure goals will bring both China and the Philippines to a higher level of engagement. Knowledge exchange and access to huge, potentially profitable projects will be attained by both countries. In the end, what is clear is that the success of BRI projects will surely impact not just China but also participating countries, with implications spanning economic, political, and sociocultural aspects.

With the potential of the initiative to become a catalytic project that would change the geopolitical arena, the Philippines would be amiss not to take part in it. However, it is always good to be equipped with a comprehensive understanding of the initiative and each specific project under it to be able to balance the risks and benefits. It is important for the Philippines, with its direction toward a “golden age of infrastructure,” to not just see the agenda but also be cautious of the risks.

Vietnam

There is a huge demand for infrastructure investments in Vietnam and the country stands to benefit from the BRI. Nevertheless, Vietnam’s reaction to the BRI is ambivalent at best because of the complicated political, economic, and strategic relationship between the two countries. A good example of this would be the South China Sea dispute.

Although Vietnam might consider the possibility of tapping into China’s BRI as a source of funding, the country is well aware of what happened to Thailand in April 2016. At the time, Thailand dismissed the 2.5 percent interest rate offered by China for the high-speed rail line project because the rate was deemed too high. Subsequently, Vietnam has another alternative for its funding. The Official Development Assistance (ODA) from Japan that offers services and equipment has more credibility than Chinese funding. This has pushed China to work even harder to convince Vietnamese authorities to accept the BRI.

Currently, Vietnam is still awaiting the outcome of the first batch of BRI projects before making any further decisions. Likewise, nations around the region and beyond are looking on to see if there are indeed significant benefits from working with China as it continues to steamroll the BRI.

---

8 Source: The Republic of the Philippines Foreign Service Institute.
9 Source: The ASEAN Post.
Malaysia

The circumstances around Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad’s first trip to China following his re-election were far from auspicious as allegations of corruption and fiscal mismanagement plagued several Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects. Following the five-day visit, Mahathir announced the cancellation of three BRI projects: the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) and two gas pipelines, the Multi-Product Pipeline (MPP) and Trans-Sabah Gas Pipeline (TSGP).

The cancellation of these projects should come as no surprise. Mahathir has continually chastised his predecessor Najib Razak for embarking on these ventures, as he deemed them to be detrimental to the country and its fiscal health. Throughout his campaign, Mahathir pledged to reduce the state’s rising debt levels and the BRI project would only increase such debt. While scrapping the projects represents a blow to China’s BRI ambitions in Malaysia and the region, the Malaysia–China bilateral relationship will not be adversely affected and instead will provide Beijing with an opportunity to learn valuable lessons and reassess project evaluation and implementation.

With China as Malaysia’s top trading partner, ensuring cordial relations was a top priority during Mahathir’s trip to China. A number of memorandum of understandings were signed, in which China agreed to purchase more palm oil and facilitate the export of durians, and secured a commitment from automaker Geely to start selling Malaysia’s Proton cars in China.

So despite the negative press around the cancelled BRI projects, it is clear that China has an opportunity to learn from the Malaysian case. In progressing forward, Beijing should begin to implement international best-practices in infrastructure development so that it can construct much needed infrastructure in its partner countries which can contribute to their economic development and regional integration.

Singapore

For Singapore, taking part in the BRI development project has become vital to economic growth as the city-state struggles to remain an Asian trade hub and attract international companies. Singapore was initially slow to get involved in the initiative. Prime Minister Lee, unlike many Asian leaders, was not present for the first international conference hosted by China on the project in May 2017. To shore up relations, Lee visited Beijing and met with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The following month, Singapore sent Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat, who is seen as a contender to become Singapore’s next prime minister, to sign an important trade MOU. China is Singapore’s top trading partner, with bilateral trade amounting to S$137.1 billion in 2017. Since 2009, the value of exports exceeds imports for Singapore’s merchandise trade with China.

However, China has also financed a number of ports around Indo-APAC that could threaten Singapore’s primacy as a maritime centre, with Shanghai set to emerge as a major competitor to the city-state. Chinese investors are backing the development of a shipping centre in Malacca set to rival Singapore, with predictions that it will impact Singapore’s shipping sector thought the city-state maintains a competitive edge on its neighbour for the time being.

With Singapore tending to be perceived as a neutral destination a possible alternative to the BRI exists in the form of the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC), a geo-economic initiative backed by Japan and India. What seems to differentiate the AAGC from the BRI is the bilateral nature of much of BRI, versus the more multilateral approach in the AAGC, reducing the risk of “Debt Trap Diplomacy”.

There are additional risks in becoming too cozy with China, however. The Singapore has been careful to maintain its relationship with the U.S. With Beijing continuing to build artificial islands in the South China Sea, Singapore cannot afford to alienate Washington, which it relies on for security.

10 Source: The Diplomat
11 Source: Nikkei Asian Review and Medium.com
In June 2017 the Japanese government suddenly reversed its original position on China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and announced that Japan would cooperate and provide financial backing for the US$1 trillion cross-border infrastructure development project. The extent of Japan's cooperation remains to be seen, but this move may help Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe realise his 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy'. Engaging with the BRI allows Tokyo to pursue some of its important economic goals through greater overseas infrastructure investment. The Initiative may also motivate Japanese companies to seek greater business opportunities along the BRI route. Japan's own regional connectivity projects can complement the SRI and strengthen regional integration in the Indo-Pacific.

Japan's support for the BRI is likely to enhance the efficiency of both China and Japan's ongoing infrastructure projects due to their overlapping functional areas like energy conservation, the advancement of industry and the distribution of goods. There is huge potential for cooperation between Tokyo and Beijing to help deliver more rapid and sustainable growth given the region's high demand for infrastructure. Japan and China may also be able to use this opportunity to improve their bilateral relationship, including by resuming high-level visits and winding down existing tensions in the East and South China Seas.

But it will be difficult for Japanese companies to compete with their Chinese counterparts, which can offer cheaper prices and quicker delivery of infrastructure projects. The BRI also poses political challenges for Japan. Countries in the Indo-Pacific need to avoid trade wars, but trade and economic cooperation with China must remain governed by the rules of the existing liberal order if the benefits are to be shared.

There are additional issues, where the two sides appear unable to bridge their rift on security. Japan continues to express concerns over China's militarization of the South China Sea; even though the Chinese insist the situation was "stabilizing." Japan's Senkaku Islands, which China claims and calls the Diaoyu, and Beijing's resource development in the East China Sea remain sticking points as well.

A number of countries including the United States, Russia, Australia and India have already become sceptical about Beijing's intentions. New Delhi sees the SRI as likely to contain India's own regional ambitions and security. Countries such as Nepal, Myanmar, Indonesia and even Pakistan have started to turn down major BRI projects offered by China due to concerns over their validity and project delays.

Japan must focus on the quality and affordability of the various infrastructure projects it funds. Tokyo can seek stronger international support in shaping economic public goods like the BRI by supporting the involvement of likeminded countries in regional groupings — India's membership of APEC, for example.

Tokyo must also continue strengthening relations with like-minded countries to demonstrate their opposition to any attempt to change the status quo by force. The 'Quad' countries — Japan, the United States, Australia and India — have been discussing the establishment of a joint regional infrastructure project as an alternative to the SRI. Yet the four countries each have different geopolitical calculations, as indicated by their failure to produce a joint statement during their November 2017 dialogue.

Japan must be pragmatic and continue strengthening its bilateral strategic partnerships with Australia and India rather than becoming overly focused on the Quad. Japan—ASEAN relations require improvement, as these countries are also deeply involved in the BRI. Tokyo also needs to increase domestic support for its involvement in the BRI.

Whether or not Japan's decision to support the BRI will bear fruit depends on how deeply Tokyo chooses to engage with the Initiative. This will largely be determined by how well its members, especially China, can manage the challenges that the BRI faces.

Source: East Asia Forum and Nikkei Asia Review.
It was recently reported by Handelsblatt that 27 out of 28 EU ambassadors to China signed a report criticizing China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The Hungarian ambassador was the only exception. It is unclear when the report will get published, however, but if the claims turn out to be true, it will mark one of the biggest setbacks the BRI has seen to date.

Europe is the final frontier of the land routes central to the BRI. Every day trains from the Chinese trading hubs begin epic three-week journeys to Europe – ultimately arriving at distribution hubs in Europe. Moreover, the 16+1 Initiative between China and 16 Central and Eastern European countries is heavily linked to the BRI. Yet the success of further opening up of trade routes into Europe, Chinese infrastructure projects in the region, and the entirety of the 16+1 Initiative are threatened by Europe’s increasing reticence with Chinese involvement in the region. This latest report focusing on the BRI is merely the tip of the iceberg.

The report’s primary critique of the BRI is that it “runs counter to the EU agenda for liberalizing trade and pushes the balance of power in favour of subsidized Chinese companies.” This critique is not new; there has been concern for some time that the projects that make up the BRI, particularly in the infrastructure space, are often being discussed on a bilateral basis, while flouting international trade and investment rules. Indeed, China might be using its financial muscle to force smaller recipient countries to negotiate in this way.

Whilst this narrative undoubtedly hides a deeper insecurity that Western multinationals now fear Chinese competitors more than ever before, there still remains considerable truth to it. The Belgrade-Budapest Railway is a case in point; in the early discussions of the project, Chinese financiers and their Hungarian partners wanted to keep bidding closed and non-transparent, in doing so circumventing EU regulations. The project was ultimately stalled by EU authorities until a more transparent bidding process was adopted.

This approach is reflected in the fact that 89 percent of projects that are labelled as part of the BRI have been implemented by Chinese companies. Foreign companies complain about their lack of access to the BRI, and combined with China’s reluctance to welcome foreign investments, it casts doubt on whether the BRI is a two-way street. Even though Chinese rhetoric around the BRI has international aspirations and calls for enhanced international participation, it remains effectively a Chinese initiative. To become truly international, the BRI needs to be more than just a vehicle for Chinese investments overseas. It needs to promote idea sharing and evolve by adopting international best practices through an inclusive consultative process with partners, both Chinese and non-Chinese.

The positive for China is that the EU ambassador’s report is not an outright rejection of the BRI. Indeed, it still leaves open the prospect of European collaboration on the BRI – but if and only if Europe’s concerns are addressed. As one senior EU diplomat stated, “We shouldn’t refuse to cooperate but we should politely yet firmly state our terms.”

Chinese policymakers are doing their utmost to brand the BRI as epitomized by “win-win cooperation.” Clearly, this report shows that there is a marked disconnect between that rhetoric and the perception of policymakers in the world’s largest trading bloc. It should serve as a warning to Chinese policymakers as to what the consequences might be if the BRI continues to lack inclusiveness, fails to invite foreign participants, and does not act as a two-way street.

It’s not inconceivable that, following in the footsteps of Europe, other economic blocs could begin to band together to voice their concerns surrounding the BRI. For the sake of the BRI’s success, it would be better for Chinese policymakers to pre-emptively address those concerns, as opposed to continuing to create the impression that the initiative remains a panacea.

In addition, the impact of Brexit on the European Union (EU) will result in economic changes to the Union, but also longer term political and institutional shifts. The nature be extent of these effects remain somewhat speculative until the precise terms of the United Kingdom’s post-Brexit relationship with the EU become clear. However, Brexit has been cited already as a factor leading to the establishment of the PESCO initiative (cooperation between the armed forces of 25 member states) and to the prospect of a decrease in the voting blocs which favour economic liberalism.

Source: The Diplomat and Wikipedia
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomatic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonus Player</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Debt Trap Diplomacy

Debt trap diplomacy is a type of diplomacy based on debt carried out in the bilateral relations between countries. It involves one creditor country intentionally extending excessive credit to another debtor country with the alleged intention of extracting economic or political concessions from the debtor country when it becomes unable to honour its debt obligations. The conditions of the loans are often not made public and the loaned money used to pay contractors from the creditor country. He term was first used by Brahma Chellaney to describe a number of loans given by China to countries in Asia.

China

The term has been used by critics of the People's Republic of China to describe the country's loan practices with some developing countries. Critics of Chinese lending practices allege that many loans associated with China’s Belt and Road Initiative to build infrastructure projects in strategically located developing countries are a type of debt trap diplomacy.

Wang Se in the Chinese state-owned daily Global Times argues that debt trap diplomacy does not exist and accused Western governments of hypocrisy by ignoring Japanese-owned Sri Lankan debt. Carnegie-Tsinghua scholar Matt Ferchen argues that the concept of debt trap diplomacy symbolizes a backlash against assertive Chinese international economic policies that assumes China of practicing neomercantilist trade policies. Rwandan President Paul Kagame has stated that "talk of "debt traps" were attempts to discourage African-Chinese interactions."

Sri Lanka example

One of the most cited examples of alleged debt trap diplomacy by China is a loan given to the Sri Lankan government by the Exim Bank of China to build the Magampura Mahinda Rajapaksa Port and Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport. The state-owned Chinese firms China Harbour Engineering Company and Sinohydro Corporation were hired to build the Magampura Port at a cost of US $361 million which was 85% funded by Exim Bank of China at an annual interest rate of 6.3%. Due to Sri Lanka's inability to service the debt on the port, it was leased to the Chinese state-owned China Merchants Port Holdings Company Limited on a 99-year lease in 2017. This caused concern in the United States, Japan,[3] and India that the port might be used as a Chinese naval base to contain China’s geopolitical rivals.

Other Chinese examples

Other examples given of alleged debt trap diplomacy by China are:

- US$2.5 billion to state-owned South African electrical utility Eskom arranged during the Jacob Zuma government. As well as a R370 billion loan during the presidency of Cyril Ramaphosa.
- Chinese loans to the Venezuelan governments of Nicolás Maduro and Hugo Chávez.
- Chinese loans to the Malaysian government of Najib Razak.
- Loans to Djibouti to develop a strategic port.
- Loans to Kyrgyzstan.
- Laos.
- The Maldives.
- Mongolia.
- Loans to build a national highway in Montenegro.
- US$ 19 billion worth of loans to Pakistan.
- Tajikistan.

A tale of two economies

The United States has had the world’s biggest economy for 160 years and accounts for roughly 22–44 per cent of the gross world product. It remains top in nominal GDP but, in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), the International Monetary Fund now ranks China as the world’s largest economy. This is because PPP enables you to compare how much you can buy for your money in different countries. As money goes further in China than in the US, the figure for China is adjusted upwards.

Energy

Last year China and the US announced new targets for greenhouse emissions as part of a deal to help global climate change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2.25 Gt</td>
<td>5.04 Gt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2.39 Gt</td>
<td>2.55 Gt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2.44 Gt</td>
<td>2.56 Gt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2.46 Gt</td>
<td>2.57 Gt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2.48 Gt</td>
<td>2.58 Gt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2.50 Gt</td>
<td>2.60 Gt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2.52 Gt</td>
<td>2.62 Gt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2.54 Gt</td>
<td>2.64 Gt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2.56 Gt</td>
<td>2.66 Gt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Energy consumption in China and the US 2012-2020

- China: 2.7 million Gtce
- US: 3.0 million Gtce

Energy consumption:
- China: 2.7 million Gtce
- US: 3.0 million Gtce

Power generation:
- China: 2.5 million Gtce
- US: 2.8 million Gtce

Clean energy:
- China: 2.2 million Gtce
- US: 2.5 million Gtce

Education

Thirty percent of US adults aged 25 and over had at least a bachelor’s degree in 2021. The Chinese government has launched a nationwide program to ensure access to primary and secondary education.

Primary education: 175.4 million

Secondary education: 17.65 million

Health care

Health care has long been in issue in the US. In 2010 the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, was enacted.

Inpatient hospital stays per 1,000 population:
- China: 2.8
- US: 2.5

Outpatient visits per 1,000 population:
- China: 1.8
- US: 1.6

Emergency department visits per 1,000 population:
- China: 5.6
- US: 6.0

Bang for your buck

Social security agencies pay the national average wage for American workers in 2013 at $44,800.

Income tax:
- China: 14.84%
- US: 14.84%

Salaries earned in China and the US:
- China: $1,44,900
- US: $1,44,900

International tourism

Number of inbound tourists:
- China: 125 million
- US: 60.4 million

Income from tourism:
- China: $7,992,900
- US: $5,467,600

Scenic spots in China and the US:
- China: 1,002
- US: 1,002

Comparison of prices in China and the US:
- Car rental: $32.00 vs $31.00
- Free Wi-Fi: $99.00 vs $19.00
- Two nights in hotel: $180.00 vs $180.00
- Rent in pub: $31.00 vs $91.00
- Sports drinks: $4.00 vs $4.00
- Public transport: $1.60 vs $1.60
- Public transport: $4.00 vs $4.00
- Public transport: $25.00 vs $25.00
- Public transport: $12.00 vs $12.00
- Public transport: $30.00 vs $30.00
- Public transport: $75.00 vs $75.00

Sources:
- SCMP Graphic: Brenna Wong
China’s Private Army: Protecting the New Silk Road

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) requires a wide range of security services, along both the maritime as well as the land routes. Chinese corporations acknowledge that the risks associated with foreign direct investments in emerging economies carry a potentially high failure rate due to many factors, from economic crises to intrastate conflicts.

Most analysts tend to measure Chinese influence along the BRI in economic and/or political terms. However, security and proper risk management are becoming major factors that may determine the success or failure of many elements within the larger BRI project. One of the answers to this problem is that in mainland China there are more than 5,000 private security companies (PSCs) that employ almost 3 million security officers.

The debate over whether the BRI is a form of Chinese state-sponsored power projection is still raging, as is the question of whether the BRI is a form of soft power or sharp power. In this contest the PSCs with “Chinese characteristics” play a dual role. The first option is plausible deniability; in case of failure Beijing is not responsible because it was a private undertaking. But on the opposite side of the coin, Chinese PSCs can be perceived as an extension of the PLA. Most of the PSC contractors are former military officers and the CEOs are former officials from the PLA or PAP. This situation creates the perception of a possible Chinese hidden agenda. The killing of innocent civilians by U.S. contractors in Iraq — incidents like the Nisour Square massacre perpetrated by Blackwater employees in 2007 — severely undermined the U.S. Army’s efforts to win the heart and minds of the local population. Similarly, the killing of innocent civilians by a Chinese PSC will compromise the BRI’s win-win narrative.

Today, Chinese PSCs are neither an extension of the PLA nor an armed wing of the Chinese Communist Party. Beijing is quite clear: Chinese PSCs are not some sort of Foreign Legion that can be called upon by the PLA when required. Other concerns include whether the Chinese PSCs will take orders from the government and whether Beijing is going to produce a clear code of conduct and rules of engagement. Assume, for the sake of argument that some sort of crisis occurs in a far-off country that involves dozens of Chinese nationals. In this hypothetical case, assume that a local terrorist organization has kidnapped Chinese workers and is threatening to kill them unless Beijing pays a ransom or provides political support for the terrorists’ cause. If a local PSC is operating in the area, is it going to negotiate on behalf of the Chinese government or undertake kinetic action on its own authority?

The current use of international and Chinese PSCs along the BRI has several implications for US foreign policy and national interests. Considering the decades of experience that the US Department of Defense and the State Department have developed in the use of security contractors, the US government could promote international standards and clear guidelines that the Chinese PSCs would be required to follow in a way that would align them with the U.S. security private sector. In this respect, other international actors such as the International Code of Conduct Association and the International Committee of the Red Cross are at the forefront of this cooperation model.

Ignoring the problem could still result in increased professionalism of Chinese PSCs, but not according to standards established by Western companies. Instead, the role model may be established by new actors that perceive the BRI market for force as a very lucrative opportunity, namely Russia’s private military security companies.

---

15 Source: The Diplomat.
Random Event Cards

The game includes a number of “random events”. This is because with a game taking place over a long period of time and starting from a position of relative equilibrium, it is necessary to provide additional “seeds of dissent” into the narrative that is developed by the players over the course of the game.

There are two schools of thought with regard to “random events”:

- The events should be chosen at random, with random degrees of severity, and applied to the participants at random during the game.
- The events should be chosen at random, but given to a different player, in turn, throughout the game. They introduce the event as an “additional argument” that they can apply as they wish in order to contribute to the game narrative.

My view that because a Matrix Game is deliberately short, with a limited number of actions possible throughout the game, having “random events” happen completely at random is problematic. An Actor may be disadvantaged purely by chance, more than once during the game, which can reduce their immersion and engagement. The narrative develops during the game based on the decisions of the players and their reactions to the decisions of other players. Having random events imposed on them by chance breaks this “cause and effect” cycle and degrades the game flow.

The alternative is to give the random event to the participants, in turn. They will then make a decision as to how this can contribute to the narrative being developed by the players. They will need to make a suitable Matrix Argument as to who it affects and the severity, but it becomes part of the player decision process and so preserves the “cause and effect” cycle of game play. They also know that everyone will have an opportunity to exploit a random event, so this is a fairer method in a game with limited numbers of Actors and game turns.

An example: During the game the Chinese and Russian players have worked together to exploit the melting ice pack and establish a trans-Arctic “Road” from China to Europe. This will disadvantage the ASEAN and Indian Actors by reducing trade in their areas. The Indian player receives the “Extreme Weather” card and elects to argue that, despite the ice pack receding in the Arctic, global warming leads to more extreme weather events, and there is a shipping disaster where two huge Chinese container ships are lost in a storm in the Arctic.

This is perfectly reasonable and it is likely to succeed – but of course opens up the possibility that another Actor may argue later that extreme weather and rising water levels could affect low lying areas of Bangladesh, causing loss of life, famine, migration and exacerbate regional tensions with India.
**Random Events:**

Random events will take place each turn. An event will be taken from the deck and allocated to 2 separate actors, each turn. During their turn they will use the event card to make an additional argument within the overall narrative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Tensions</th>
<th>Nuclear Accident</th>
<th>Financial Crisis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rare Mineral Discovery</td>
<td>Toxic Spill</td>
<td>Extreme Weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level Corruption Scandal</td>
<td>Shipping Disaster</td>
<td>Economic Upturn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Random Events:

Random events will take place each turn. An event will be taken from the deck and allocated to 2 separate actors, each turn. During their turn they will use the event card to make an additional argument within the overall narrative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anonymous Hacking Attack</th>
<th>Fishing Dispute</th>
<th>Extreme Weather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Downturn</td>
<td>Political Upheaval</td>
<td>Assassination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Disaster</td>
<td>Military Accident</td>
<td>3D Metal Printing, Artificial Embryos, Smart Cities, Artificial Intelligence, Real-time Translating Earbuds, Supermaterials, Personalised Healthcare, Micro Failsafe Nuclear Reactors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Estimative Probability Cards:

- Almost Certain: 90% Chance of Success
- Almost Certain: 90% Chance of Success
- Probable: 70% Chance of Success
- Probable: 70% Chance of Success
- Chances About Even: 50% Chance of Success
- Chances About Even: 50% Chance of Success
- Probably Not: 30% Chance of Success
- Probably Not: 30% Chance of Success
- Almost Certainly Not: 10% Chance of Success
- Almost Certainly Not: 10% Chance of Success
Example Counters:
Example Counters:
### Additional Counters for the Belt and Road Game:

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Sad]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Happy]</td>
<td>![Hand]</td>
<td>![Factory]</td>
<td>![Microscope]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>