

The ASEAN Maritime Silk Road---- in the Perspective of Transportation & Construction Fastener Business

by Sharareh Shahidi Hamedani

The Silk Road Economic Belt focuses on bringing together China, Central Asia, Russia and Europe (the Baltic); linking China with the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea through Central Asia and the Indian Ocean (see the right graph).

The following are major events in the development of China's "Belt and Road" Initiative so far.

The Silk Road Economic Belt concept was introduced by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to Kazakhstan in September 2013. President Xi proposed building a close-knit China-ASEAN community and offered guidance on constructing a 21st Century Maritime Silk Road to promote maritime cooperation in October 2013. In his speech at the Indonesian parliament, Xi also proposed establishing the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to finance infrastructure construction and promote regional interconnectivity and economic integration.

Xi and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, reached a consensus on construction of the Belt and Road, as well as its connection with Russia's Euro-Asia Railways in February 2014. In May 2014, the first phase of a logistics terminal jointly built by China and Kazakhstan went into operation in the port of Lianyungang in east China's Jiangsu Province. The terminal, with a total investment of 606 million yuan (98 million U.S. dollars), is considered a platform for goods from central Asian countries to reach overseas markets. In October 2014, Twenty-one Asian countries willing to join the AIIB as founding members signed the

从交通和建筑螺丝产业观点看东盟海上丝路



丝路经济带着重在整合中国、中亚、俄罗斯和欧洲(波罗的海)区域,透过中亚和印度洋把中国与波斯湾和地中海连结起来。下述是目前中国「一带一路」政策发展的主要重点。

丝路经济带的概念最先是由中国国家主席习近平于2013年9月访问哈萨克时提出。接着2013年10月习主席提议建构紧密交织的「中国-东盟共同体」,并在建设二十一世纪海上新丝路以促进海上合作的政策上进行指导。他在一次印尼国会演讲中也提出,增设亚洲基础建设投资银行(AIIB)提供基础建设融资和推动区域相互连结和经济整合。

2014年2月习主席与俄国总理普京在「一带一路」政策以及俄国所提出的欧亚铁路建设上取得共识。2014年5月由中国和哈萨克在中国东部江苏连云港所共同兴建的第一期物流站已经启用。投资总额达6亿600万人民币(约9,800万美元)的站体被视为中亚国家货物出口海外市场的平台。2014年10月,21个有意加入亚洲基础建设投资银行的国家共同签署理解备忘录。北京为该银行总部所在,并预计于2015年年底正式设立。2014年12月,泰国也批准中泰双边铁路理解备忘录。

东盟是海上丝路发展关键

东盟的大联结计画(AMPC)及中国的「一带一路」政策都有类似发展方向。两者皆想透过交通上的密切联结让彼此距离更加靠近,借此促进贸易、投资、观光和人民交流。与「一带一路」政策相同,大联结计画想创造出整合的道路铁路系统并将周边东南亚国家联结在一块,另外也想建构出一套车辆可直接开上开下的短程海运线来把东南亚国家的海岛以及南亚联结在一起。从这共享观点来看,这两个计画该如何彼此互补以及一路上将遇到甚么问题将是令人感兴趣的部分。

Memorandum of Understanding on Establishing AIIB. As agreed, Beijing will be the host city for AIIB's headquarters. The AIIB is expected to be formally established by the end of 2015. In December 2014 Thailand approved a draft memorandum of understanding between Thailand and China on railway cooperation.

ASEAN is a Key Part of the Maritime Silk Road

The ASEAN Master Plan for Connectivity (AMPC) and China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative share striking similarities and parallels. Both envisage transport connectivity as a way to bring member or participating countries closer to one another, facilitating better access for trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people exchanges. Like the "One Belt, One Road" project, AMPC calls for a system of roads and railways to link contiguous Southeast Asian countries with one another, as well as a system of ports for RoRo (roll-on roll-off) vessels and short sea shipping to link insular Southeast Asian countries with one another as well as with mainland Southeast Asia. Given this shared vision, it is interesting to consider how the two could complement one another and what issues could stand in the way.

Silk Road and Its Effect on Fastener Industry

The new Maritime Silk Road has connected about 60 developing and developed countries; it means more potential fastener buyers in 60 countries. The question is; do not ASEAN fastener producers export their products to these countries? Moreover, cooperation between ASEAN and China can prevent the disputes between Beijing and some ASEAN members from creating obstacles for the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. This is important especially because the two sides have agreed to use dual tracks to deal with the South China Sea disputes to maintain peace and stability in the region.

Although one of the most important subjects that Silk Road helps ASEAN suppliers is facilitating the banking services. For example, as soon as AIIB starts its services, The AIIB can facilitate fastener producers financial processes, allocate funds for these producers; danger always exists, which means "Chinese fastener producers grow sharply and they can merge with ASEAN producers easily, therefore catching the market lonely". Chinese producers have known that their benefits come through collaborating among different companies. By the way, ASEAN fastener producers can get the maximum benefit from China's initiative by becoming part of it as early as possible, for that would give it greater access to the infrastructure development funds.

Knowledge of other nations is always helpful for doing business in a better way, if sellers know the favorites, cultures and etc. of buyers, then they can do the sale process better, fastener producers in ASEAN are no exception in this rule. So another point that should be noted in Maritime Silk Road is a cultural exchange road that will link many nationalities, ethnic groups, religions and customs, which is important to increase people-to-people exchanges so as to promote greater understanding between the peoples of Asia and consolidate the cultural and social foundations of regional cooperation.

Last Word

Over the past decades, ASEAN has maintained its independence and centrality in East Asia through its multilateral diplomacy and regional frameworks such as the East Asia Summit, Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the ASEAN Regional Forum. Some ASEAN members are worried that the new Maritime Silk Road could compromise ASEAN's centrality in the region. But that will not happen given ASEAN have successfully built a regional economic community and is leading it toward broader East Asian integration. □

丝路对紧固件产业的影响

新的海上丝路已经把约60个开发中和已开发国家联结在一起。这意味着在这60个国家中将出现更多有潜力的扣件买家。不过目前的问题是：东盟扣件制造商本身不出口产品到这些国家吗？此外，东盟与中国的双边合作是否可预防北京与某些东盟会员国出现争端时，不造成二十一世纪海上新丝路的障碍呢？这点尤其重要，因此两边同意以双轨道运行来处理中南海争端并维系区域和平与稳定。

虽然丝路可以帮助东盟相关供应商最重要的部分之一是促进银行业务服务。举例来说，一旦亚洲基础建设投资银行开始提供服务，该银行将可促进扣件制造商的融资申请以及贷款发放。危机当然也存在其中，那就是「中国扣件制造商成长非常快速」，且他们可轻易并购东盟制造商，并主导该区市场。中国制造商已经相当了解他们的利益来自于与不同厂商之间的合作。因此，东盟扣件制造商可以尽快透过成为他们的一份子来获取最大的利益，因为这可以让他们更容易取得基础开发所需资金。

认识其他国家一直以来都是帮助生意运作的好方法，如果卖家能深知买家喜好和文化背景等，那么做生意时就会更顺利些，东盟的扣件制造商也不例外。因此，另一项值得注意的重点是连结各国人民、种族、宗教和风俗的海上丝路，也是一条文化交流之路，对于增进人与人之间交流相当重要，可以促进亚洲区域人民相互的了解并透过区域合作建立紧密的文化设计基础。

结论

在过去数十年，东盟一直透过多方外交和区域架构(例如：东亚高峰会、东南亚区域全面经济伙伴协定和东盟区域论坛)在东亚保有其独立性和向心力。一些东盟会员国担心的是新的海上丝路可能连累东盟的区域向心力。不过这并不会发生，因为东盟已经成功建立起区域经济共同体并持续朝向更宽广的东亚整合道路发展。 □