



INSTITUTE OF
CHINESE STUDIES

‘China and Its Quest for Water’

Chair: Amb. Ashok K. Kantha

Speaker: Mr. R.N. Bhaskar

Date: 15 May 2019

Venue: Seminar Room, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi

The talk by Mr. R.N. Bhaskar was an amalgamation of facts, numbers and his personal analysis. He began his talk by providing some factual information on how China is a water deficient country with only 2% of its land under water. He also asked the audience “How to satisfy China’s thirst of water?” which he tried to address later in his talk. He stated that China will face water deficiency given its drastic growth in industrial water usage. However, he acknowledged China’s capability of having enough solutions for the water deficiency.

Mr. Bhaskar, in his talk drew comparisons between India and China, to analyze similarities and dissimilarities between the two nations. He further explained how both the nations share similar history, cultural similarities which go long back in time, the size of population, to attaining independence parallelly. He pointed out that India and China were original wealth creators; however, the decline of the economies began with the emergence of Colonial rule in their respective territories. He added that India and China have strong economies that can shift the

centre of gravity of Global trade from West to East. He pointed out that water is the driving force behind geopolitics and drew comparison between India and China on the same point.

India is a water abundant country with high water density; however, it lacks efficient technology and approach for handling its water resources which leads to gross misuse and depletion. China on the other hand has a very high standard of infrastructure and technology that leads to efficient energy usage but it has a very less water footprint. He constantly emphasized on how China manages its production in a systematic way which minimizes water usage.

The presentation primarily focused on the role Russia can play in satisfying China's thirst for water. He highlighted the fact that Russia has the second highest volume of water resources in the world, which makes it capable of satisfying China's thirst for water. He also included few graphs on the data available on water usage in agricultural, industrial and household sector in Europe, Africa, India and China in his presentation to do comparative analysis. . He stated that even though Europe comparatively uses fewer amounts of its water resources on agricultural activities, one should not underestimate its capacity of Agricultural production. Europe uses its technological advancement to minimize water consumption in the agricultural sector. Whereas India on the other hand exploits maximum portion of its water resources in the agricultural sector due to lack of advanced technology.

Mr. Bhaskar in the final segment of his talk highlighted the fact that Chinese industrial sector is going to grow but it does not have enough water to support this increasing industrial growth. According to Mr. Bhaskar China should turn to Russia to fix this gap of water deficiency. He also added that there will be security threats involved if Russia gives access to Chinese to enter its territory for building canals. Case in point is Chinese settling in Russia and claiming Russian territory. He concluded his talk by stating that India, China and Russia are the future of the new World order. Also, he provided reasons for future interdependence of these three nations. According to him China will increasingly depend on Russia for defence technology, water and

energy and will need India for its market and IT innovation. Russia will depend on China for currency and on India for labour and market.

The lecture headed towards its conclusion with a very interesting interaction session wherein several questions were raised by the audience.

The Report was prepared by Vasvi Saini, Research Intern, Institute of Chinese Studies.

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