

Ready to alter economic corridor route: China

Luo Zhaohui

China may consider alternative routes through Jammu and Kashmir to address India's concerns regarding the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

In an interaction with experts on Chinese affairs and students, Beijing's envoy Luo Zhaohui suggested the alternative routes, and said he was keen on accomplishing a bilateral friendship and trade treaty during his stint in India.

"We can change the name of CPEC [China Pakistan Economic Corridor]. Create an alternative corridor through Jammu and Kashmir, Nathu La pass or Nepal to deal with India's concerns," said the envoy in a speech at the Centre for Chinese and South-East Asian Studies in the School of Language, JNU, on Friday.

The Ambassador made a detailed presentation of the expectations on both sides and said that while the Dalai Lama's presence and activities remain an issue for China, Beijing recognised that India's expectations on the CPEC and Masood Azhar were also issues that both sides need to be deal with.

Dynamic situation

Referring to the dynamic situation in the world, Ambassador Luo said, "There is widespread change in world affairs since the coming to power of President Donald Trump of the U.S."

"President Trump sealed \$250 billion worth of trade deals with China. Would that be possible if China was a threat," he asked, arguing that China and India as growing economies must cooperate with each other.

"One of my goals is to have a treaty of friendship and free trade with India," he said, elaborating that both sides need to find more areas to collaborate like the Delhi smog. "Beijing also has smog and two sides can jointly deal with this issue."

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