

Would've been unwise to keep India out of SCO: Chinese daily

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Beijing: It would have been politically unwise to keep India out of the SCO and push it towards other groups, "especially given India's increasing role in global affairs", said an opinion piece in a state-run Chinese daily on Tuesday.

The opinion piece "New members help drive SCO momentum" that appeared in the Global Times said that the inclusion of India and Pakistan as full-fledged members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is the first attempt for the bloc to expand its official membership

"It is alleged that China was reluctant to grant its full support to India's application, and the theory goes that there was some trading behind the scenes between the two," said the piece by Xie Chao, a PhD candidate in the Department of International Relations, Tsinghua University.

What makes such anecdotal stories believable to some was the speculation that India's promise to accept China into the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was in exchange for China's final consent. However, such theory is not tenable.

"The opinion piece said that the SAARC is a sub-continental cooperation grouping "dominated by India, but the association's influence has been entangled and jeopardized by the internal competition between India and Pakistan".

It noted that if this were the "trading that the theory is talking about, it would be the worst deal a state can ever make and certainly it is unfair to expect China would do so". "All in all, an open SCO is better than a closed one."

It went on to say that "a simultaneous worry has arisen that the SCO might become dysfunctional, as happened to the SAARC, if India and Pakistan bring their differences to the forum. While this is a reasonable concern, such a worry is overstressed".

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