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INDIA AND CHINA RELATIONS ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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Abstract:

India and China, The two largest Developing countries in the world share a number of Interest, But since the formal establishment of diplomatic relations with people's Republic of China in 1950, Indo-China relations have been rather volatile, lacking in confidence with unresolved issues hindering the relationship.

The last six decades of India – China relationship have seen more mutual mistrust and suspicion than friendliness and cordial atmosphere. Attempts have been made to bridge the differences. Both the Nations today have growing economics and their bi-lateral relationship to a great extent has assumed global and strategic relevance. If bilateral relationship has to improve then many domestic problems have to be solved in a coherent manner. There are many issues between China and India which still impact their relations like the border and the Tibet issues which are prominent issues. There are many positive and negative connotations of their bilateral relationship.

Key words:

Bi-lateral, civilizations, nuclear device, Line of Actual control, String of posits, Silk route, corridor.

Introduction:

India and China are the only countries in the world, which have legacy of ancient culture and civilization. Both the nations are under developed and are most popular countries in the world. But both nations have many contentions issues even though they have co-operated on a number of areas. The element of trust and confidence is lacking between these two countries. India was one of the few countries which recognized the “People’s Republic of China”. The history of initial years of India – China relations especially during 1949-1958 depicts an era of friendliness. Both India and China were able to reach consensus and signed the Panchasheela Agreement which basically included the trade and relations between India – China bilateral relationship. Hostilities grew during 1959-1967. Hindi – Chinni bhai bhai period changed into Hindi – Chinni bye bye period. The growing mistrust and suspicion led to war in October 1962. It was an essay victory for China over India. This conflict reflected its policy towards India during India – Pakistan Wars 1965 and 1971.

The period during 1976-1988 has been an era of dispelling doubts and misunderstanding. In 1988 after Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to China, the India and China relations took a new – turn. The period during 1988-1998 saw new atmosphere and trust in India – China bilateral relations. However after India detonated a nuclear device in 1998, the relationship deteriorated. China opposed India’s nuclear test and made strong criticism saying that it was against the international trend. The nuclear issue was an irritant in India – China relations. However, the situation changed after both the nations realized about each others contribution in the global economy and tried to improve the bilateral ties, the relationship improved during the first decade of twenty first century which has been an era of co-operation in economic spheres even through the misunderstanding continued on political fronts.

Issues and concerns between two countries:

1. **Border Disputes:** The border disputes between the two countries have existed since many years which are unsolved. The two main unsolved issues remain Aksai-Chin and Arunachala Pradesh. In 1962 the two nations fought a brief war in Aksai – Chin is administered by China, it remains an Integral part of India as it is the part of Jammu and Kashmir (Ladakh). But for China it is a the part of Xinjiang province and is of strategic importance since it connects China with Tibet. The other border dispute between the two countries involves the North – East Indian state of Arunachala Pradesh which the Indian side claims Arunachal Pradesh to be the Integral part of the territory of India. China refers to it as South Tibet, mainly because of its Tibetan Buddhist affiliations; Chinese maps include a major part of Arunachal Pradesh (around 90,000 Sq. Km) as part of their country which is causing strained relationship between India and China.

The border dispute is historical one. It is rooted in the disputed status of the Mac Mohan Line which defines the border between India and Tibet. India recognizes this agreement as the basis for its territorial claim whereas China has objected this as it was not party to the convention. India is today claiming 43,180 Sq.kms of Jammu and Kashmir occupied by China including 5,180 Sq.kms ceded to Pakistan under the 1963 China – Pakistan Agreement. China on the other hand is claiming 90,000 Sq. Kms of territory held by India in Arunachal Pradesh. Arunachal Pradesh is crucial to India for maintaining the stability in India's North – Eastern insurgent affected areas.

India's grant of statehood to Arunachal Pradesh in the late eighties caused the hostility on the bilateral relations to such an extent that another border was seemed likely. China claimed the major territorial concession in Twang because claim it to be central to Tibetan Buddhism since the 6th Dalai Lama was born there. India in the same way demands the return of the sacred mount Kailash manasarovara in Tibet, as it is the sacred place for Hindus. Border agreements of 1993 and 1996 improved the bi-lateral relationship between two countries. Mutual troop cut, regular meetings of the local military commanders, appointment of special representatives to address the border issues were two steps undertaken to resolve the issues.

In recent years, China has shown aggressive policy towards the border issue with India. In May 2007 the Chinese government denied a visa to an Indian official to visit China on the grounds that he was from Arunachal Pradesh which it considered as its own territory. Apart from this there are reports of the encroachments across the Line of Actual Control (LAC). In March 2009, China attempted to block 2.9 billion dollars loan to India from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on the grounds that it was destined for the development of Arunachal Pradesh. Arunachal Pradesh is regarded as an integral part of India as it has merged with Indian Union in 1987 constitutionally. Thus border issue between China and India is one of the issues and concerns which requires to be resolved amicably between the two nations.

2. **Border Incursions:** Border Incursions have been a major stumbling block to improving relations between Indian and China. Both countries have been strengthening their military presence along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). India and China have not considered these incursions seriously saying that they occur due to a difference in perception or Interpretation about the boundary i.e. the Line of actual control (LAC).

3. **Stapled Visas :** stapled visa were issued to the residents of Jammu and Kashmir and Arunachala Pradesh in 2009 by China which caused strong protest from India. This practice by China amounted to questioning India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Therefore in 2011, China stopped issuing such visas for people from Jammu and Kashmir.
4. **Water disputes:** In case of China and India, water issues are becoming major areas of concern between the two states. China's plan of constructing big dams and diverting the water of rivers to its own advantage has led to discontent in India. As there are four rivers which flow from China to India. The two countries must have a better understanding relating to water sharing and other benefits out of these rivers. However, China's strategic advantage over these rivers makes it possible for her to counter – balance India on many other issues. China's plan to build several dams on the upper reaches of the Brahmaputra have not been appreciated by New Delhi. The Brahmaputra which originates in Tibet is one of the major water resources in India's north – east, especially as a source of irrigation and industry.

China has a unique exclusivist policy on natural resources which originate from its soil. India on the other hand is planning to build 25 hydropower plant in Arunachala Pradesh before China. Completes its project. India is also concerned about a decrease in the flow of the river water and destruction of the Himalayan eco-system. China has not played the role of a responsible upper riparian state which has hurt interest of not only India but also Bangladesh. In the absence of international law on shared waters, the problem tends to get more complicated. India and China have entered into agreements on sharing of hydrological data for flood control but the Chinese have not been consistent in sharing of the information. The Chinese have also built a number of water projects in Tibet including dam on Brahmaputra.

The strategic advantage of China on water resources combined with the differing positions on Line of Actual Control (LAC) and China's claim on the territories that are part of India further complicate the water issues between the two.

5. **Tibet :** The unsolved issue of Tibet is one of the central issues and concerns of India in its relation with China. In 1950, the Chinese troops invaded Tibet to re-claim and re-assert its sovereignty over the region. Following this, the seventeen points agreement was signed which further re-asserted its control. In the uprising of 1950, the 14th Dalai Lama fled to India. With many of his followers joining him in exile wherein he established the central Tibetan Administration (Commonly known as the Tibetan government – in – exile). During this uprising India was accused of aiding the rebels and maintaining Tibet as a buffer zone to restore Tibet with an Independent status. In 2003 India recognized the Tibet Autonomous Region as an 'Integral' part of the people's Republic of China. India's official position the

Dalai Lama is that it consider him as a spiritual leader and an honoured guest. But China opposed any country which provides a platform for his (Dalai Lama's) anti – China activities in any form China views that India is treating Daki Lama in India as government in exile where as China is just 200 miles away from Tibet and considers Tibet as part of China. India's willingness to provide shelter to Dalai Lama is a continued source of irritation to India – China relationship. China accused Dalai Lama of being behind the self immolation protest by a Tibetan exile in India and said that he is openly encouraging Tibetans with in Chines border to carry out self immolation. So the presence of Dalai – Lama and his anti – China activities in India have negative Implications for India – China relations.

6. **Imbalanced Trade:** India and China formally resumed Trade relations in 1978. After six year, the two countries signed the most favoured nation (MFN) agreement. In 2000 India's trade with China was as low as 2.92 billion Dollars but by 2010 it has increased to 73.9 billion Dollars. Despite China being the largest trade partner, concerns about trade imbalance remain. During 2013-14, the trade deficit between the two countries was as 36.22 billion Dollars. Strong Chines regulatory systems have put off exports from India especially from sectors like information Technology (IT), meat and pharmaceuticals, where India is belived to be superior. India is an exporter of raw materials to China, and imports finished goods from China. Traders prefer to buy finished goods from China as they are better in quality and cheaper than Indian goods. This has affected the market of some goods in India therefore there is trade imbalance in India.
7. **Geographical Influence of China:** One of India's growing concerns in the last decade is China's ever expanding sphere of Geo-political influence in the Indian Ocean. It is known as the "string of pearls" and involves the development of commercial ports in various countries as part of its new 'Silk route' the route is an important trade corridor extending from its naval base in Hainan Islands (South China Sea) to Begamayo in Tanzania, Africa. Many ports are en circling mainland India, China is the only other country apart from India to have a fully functional embassy in male.
8. **Lack of trust in China:** One of the important issues facing both the countries is the lack of trust in China and its intentions. More Indian have an unfavorable view of China than a favorable view in a recent lowly institute poll 60% indicate that China would be a major threat over the next decade 73% of those surveyed Identified 'war with China' as a big threat over the ten years. Almost three quarters claimed that China wants to dominate Asia. 58% felt that China's growth has not been good for India overcoming this mistrust is a major challenge

for India. This is due to the lack of the transparency in Chinese decision making which has led to the uncertainty about Chinese behavior and motivation.

9. **2017 Doklam standoff:** On June 2017 Chinese troops with construction vehicle and road building equipment extended an existing road southward in Doklam, a territory which is claimed by both China as well as India's ally Bhutan. On June 18, 2017 around 270 Indian troops with weapons and two bulldozers entered Doklam to stop the Chinese troops from constructing the road. China accused India of illegal intrusion into its territory across mutually agreed China – India boundary and violation of the territorial sovereignty and UN charter. India accused China of changing status quo in violation of a 2012 understanding between the 1000 governments regarding the boundary points and causing security concerns. This is widely understood as its strategic Siliguri corridor on August 28, 2012. China and India have reached a consensus to put an end to the border standoff. Both China and India agreed to withdraw troops from Doklam.

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