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INDIA–CHINA RELATION: FRIENDSHIP AND CO-OPERATION ZONE

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Abstract –

India and China are two fastest growing economic giant of world which comprise almost one third of its world population area major powers of Asia. Both countries are separated by the geographical obstacles of the Himalayan Mountain but this factor has not stopped interaction between two countries altogether. Both the countries have been sharing historical and cultural relations in the past. Attainment of independence by India and the advent of communist region in China in 1949 were the events that afforded new opportunities for both the countries to renew their age old friendly ties. These ancient ties even continued to thrive during the middle, modern and colonial era. After independence this age old relation developed further in form of co-operation and support to each other.

Key word – Economic giant, geographical obstacles, communist region, co-operation Independence.

Introduction –

India and China are the emerging superpower of Asia which had made a significant mark, in the recent decade, in various fields of human activity. They have shared very noteworthy glorious past and civilization. Both had been colonial and were in grip of European dominance. The strategic emergence of both the neighbouring countries has shifted the attention of world politics in to Asia and turned the vision of “Asian Century into reality. Despite multiple socio-economic engagements, both the neighbours stayed connected in various international and regional issues. For almost century India and China shared very cordial and co-operative relations. Both the neighbours have their religious and economic ties for the first century A.D. when trade and pilgrimage were flourishing through the ancient Silk Road corridor. A lot of Buddhist monk travelled to China to spread the message of Buddhism whereas hundreds of Chinese pilgrims travelled to India to study Buddhism in India in the Nalanda University. These were some of the ancient ties

which reveal the real bond between the two nations. This bond continued during middle, modern and colonial time. After this colonial period this relation developed further, when India offered its unconditional co-operation to Chinese freedom movement and also extended its diplomatic organization to China.

Objective of study –

- ❖ To compile India and China's historical co-operation.
- ❖ To analyse age old civilization homogeneity
- ❖ To summarize the area of co-operation between the countries.

Research Methodology

Historical and analytical theory –

Historical connections between India and China -

Both the countries being the oldest civilization of world, bilateral relationship between India and China are considered to be dating back to ancient times. Before the establishment of any kind of political relations, both the countries had wide range of economic trade and cultural ties. Trade relation between both the countries was flourished through ancient Silk Road which later on became vital link of India and China cultural exchanges.

Perhaps due to the historical links the reference of China can be found in the Indian epic of the “*Mahabharat*” likewise evidences of relations of India and China can be also found in Koutilya’s “*Arthshastra*”. Indians were among the earliest foreigner to know about the Chinese silk and also to engage in its international trade long before the Silk Road between Luoyang and Rome became a thriving International phenomena. Apart of from this Silk Road India and China also shared the maritime links for trade and commerce in Indian Ocean region. The historical and cultural ties were flourishing between India and China for 1st to 10th century mainly because of spread of Buddhism in China through India. These links finally became the vital force of India and China dialogue process which continued for centuries. Many Indian monks visited China and Chinese monks visited India to establish their cultural tires and some of them returned China with rich text volume and knowledge of Buddhism from Nalanda University known famous centres for Buddhism. This era of cultural exchanges and religious interaction called golden period of Buddhist influence in China. These economic and cultural ties continued for centuries between India and China.

Political Relations of India and China –

Although India and China has been sharing century old friendship but there has been hardly any political contacts between two neighbours till mid 18th century, because of physical barrier of Himalayas on one hand for flung ocean expansion on the other.

Since the fall of Soviet Union, as the new World order emerged India and China both improved the scope of their relation. Excellent power relations were maintained by regular visits by top leaders from either side. Both undertook a comprehensive review of bilateral relations in area of political strategic, economic and cultural domains. India and China relations at bilateral sub regional and regional level provide an opportunity to both to restructure their partnership with encouraging benefits after the collapse of Soviet Union and the end of cold war. India adopted Look east policy in tune with era of globalization in which New Delhi sets great store on her relation with China. Look east policy later on renamed as Act east policy by Modi Government in India.

As the world largest developing countries China and India share number of interests, chief among them was domestic development and economic reform. Both the countries are experiencing a period of exceptional economic growth. India increasingly looked China as an economic model to emulate especially given its achievements in poverty reduction, urban development and attracting foreign investments.

India and China both promote the notion of multi-polar world in which they each sere as major international player like USA.

Both India and China were colonial countries and are developing countries likewise both share similar opinion on many international issues.

India and China have co-operated in the creation of G-33 (Developing World) block at WTO to promote more equitable international system.

India and China both are the members of ambitious International group BRICS. India had become member of Shanghai co-operation organizations.

There are number of favourable conditions and solid foundation for India to improve and strengthen its relation with China. They both hold similar position on many International issues. For South Asian region both India and China are putting their efforts towards peace, stability and prosperity.

Further SAARC will be able to make progress and make substantive breakthrough in promoting the region economic development raising the people's living standard.

There has been a high level of visits of leaders in both country dialogue process is always at great level.

India support to China's admission in United Nations –

Although India struggle to get permanent membership UNSC but in past India was one of the frontline advocate of Chinese admission into United States and UNSC, while most of the western countries including USA opposed China's entry into UN. India China agreement on trade in Tibet 1954 (Pansheel Agreement) Four years after the Chinese incursion into Tibet, India and China signed a historical agreement on trade and intercourse between the Tibet region of China and India.

Although this agreement helped to improve India's bilateral relation with China for many scholars it was major setback for India's overall foreign and strategic policy. The treaty of Panchsheel did provide the channel to bring the two Asian neighbours closer and provide a plate form to strengthen their age-old relationship further.

High Level Diplomatic visits and emergence of “Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai –

As a sign of growing India China proximity the Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai visited India in 1984 where he has receive a warm welcome. The visit of Chinese Prime Minister gave a new direction to India China relationship and helped to ease Indian worries about Chinese Tibet policy as well as Chinese suspicion towards India's involvement in Tibet crisis.

Then Nehru's visit to China re-affirms the trust between the two. After that successive high level diplomatic visits, India China relations touched a new milestone and spirit of 'Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai' was its peak.

Commercial and Economic Relation –

Trade and economic relationship has seen rapid progress in the last few years. India-China bi-lateral trade is touching new heights and making China India's largest trading partners in goods. Apart from trade India is also one of the largest markets for project exports from China. Currently projects under execution are estimated at over US \$63 billion. Now India has become the largest market for Chinese goods and products.

Cultural Relation –

China and India are not mere societies but they are civilizations. Both countries grew in parallel and shared their cultural ties since the beginning of human history and this tradition of sharing has continued ever since. India epic of “Mahabharat” has also a reference of China which is even before the advent of Buddhism. Visits of pilgrim from China to India and India to China spread Buddhism all over the region. Nalanda was study centre of Buddhism in India. Since then till now Chinese premier Wen Jiaha visit to India in December 2020 was sign of cultural exchange.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid 3 days visit to China from May 2015 prior to the visit, Prime Minister launched his own Weibo handle to connect with the Chinese people. On 23rd October 2015 an Indian modern art exhibition titled “the eye and the mind was inaugurated at Beijing Minsheng art museum. Both India and China have their own vibrant cultures and vibrant people. Buddhism, Zuan Zhang, Tagore, Dr. Katnis, Nalanda yoga and cinema are only symbol of our long tradition of exchanges. They are testimonies of our shared heritage. The momentum has been set and pace can only increase in the 21st century.

Concluding Remarks –

Relation between India and China, the oldest living civilization of the world had been long friendly and co-operative long before their Independence. India and China has established their greater linkages in field of trade, commerce, cultural exchanges and pilgrims throughout the history. However this moment does not last long.

Emergence of Tibet worsening 1934 and China allegation of Indian involvement in own struggle put these two neighbours apart. India decision to grant political asylum to Tibet spiritual leader and its permission to run Tibet government in exile in the Indian soil further increased the Chinese suspicion towards New Delhi. This gap was even becomes wider when Chinese annexed Tibet to their own territory and India shares common unsettled border with China. Even after decade this saga of mistrust is continue even today. But it will be a win-win situation for both the countries to look back in century old friendship, co-operative and friendly relation with each other and materialize their shared vision of Asian supremacy. The leaders of both the countries have to create conclusive environment to facilitate greater trade and economic exchanges, people to people contact and resolve boundary disputes. But undoubtedly, the age of friendship and co-operation was the highpoint of India China relationship.

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