

INDIA AND SRI LANKA RELATION IN PRESENT ERA

Prof. Vijay Devidas Wakode

Assistant Professor

Head of History Department

Shri Dnyanesh Mahavidyalaya, Navargao

Tah. Sindewahi, Dist. Chandrapur

Abstract:

The relationship between India and Sri Lanka is more than 2,500 years old both countries have ligancy of intellectual, cultural; religious and linguistic interaction in recent years the relationship has been marked by close contacts at all levels. Trade and investment have grown and there is cooperation in the fields of developments education, culture and defense, both countries share a board understanding on major issues of international interest, significant progress in implementation of development assistance projects for internally displaced person (IDPs) and disadvantage section of the population in Sri Lanka has helped cement the bonds of friendship between the two countries.

India's Sri Lanka policy since 1991 is one example of how India foreign policy imperatives redefined by the end of the cold war and the introduction of liberal economic reforms have impacted relations with an unstable neighbor instead of relationship focused on conflict intervention. India's policy has pushed economic engagement into the lead role in bilateral relations. The success of the shift in policy suggests that a policy emphasizing economic relations and backing away from the highly contentious political issues of conflict intervention, helped India push past the mistrust and resentment upon which India – Sri Lanka relations floundered in the late 1980s and early 1990.

Today India and Sri Lanka have a friendly diplomatic rapport mutually benefit from a economic cooperation in both trade and investment and the bilateral relationship appears to be moving towards a strategic partnership.

Introduction:

India's involvement in Sri Lanka ethnic conflict transformed from one of heavy meddling with both state and non-state actors starting in 1983 on the 'boots on the ground' intervention in the late 1980 on the early 1990 two years before the end of the cold war in 1989 then Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa started pushing Indian peace keeping forces out of Sri Lanka.

Embarrassing India on the world stage and pushing Indo – Sri Lankan relation to new low in 1991 after the IPKF withdrawal was complete and the life has assassinated former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, India brought its involvement on Sri Lanka's internal ethnic conflict to a complete halt. After 1991 India reversed its policy of active involvement, distancing itself from an internationalist role that in the past it had felt compelled to play.

Two major influences pushed India policy response to the Sri Lankan conflict, the active engagement of foreign influence by the Sri Lankan government and demands of India own Tamil population for India to act on behalf of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Sri Lanka pushed for a military Solution to the conflict by seeking external support from countries that India was not comfortable having a presence so close to its southern border.

Sri Lanka decline of strategic importance to India reflected much stronger Indo-us relations in the past cold war 1990s the us accorded India a prominent place in American foreign policy initiatives in South Asia. Subsequently indo-us relations becomes highly developed and close today India and the U.S. have coordinated their respective policies on Sri Lanka.

Political and Commercial Relation:

Political relations between the two countries have been marked by high-level exchanges of visits at regular intervals. 26th September 2020 also attended by senior minister / official's prime minister are both sides. India and Sri Lanka enjoy a vibrant and growing economic and commercial partnership which has witnessed considerable expansion over the years to entry enforce of the India Sri Lanka free trade Agreement (ISFTA) in 2000. Contributed significantly towards the expansion of trade between the two countries economic ties between the two nations also include flourishing development transportation housing, health livelihood and rehabilitation, education and industrial development.

Development Cooperation and Cultural Relations:

Sri Lanka is one of India major development partner and this partnership has been an important pillar of bilateral ties between the two countries over the years. With grant alone amounting to around USD 3.5 billion. The overall commitment by GOI is to the tune of more than USD 3.5 billion. Demand driven and people centric nature of India development partnership with Sri Lanka have been the cornerstone Sri Lanka has long been a priority destination for direct investment from India. Sri Lanka is one of the India's largest trading partner is SAARC Trade between the two countries grew particularly rapidly after the cultural cooperation agreement signed by the Government of India and the Government of Sri Lanka on 29th November 1977 at new Delhi from the basis for periodic cultural. Exchange programmers between two countries the Indian cultural center in Colombo actively promotes awareness of India culture by offering classes in Indian music, dance Hindi and yoga on 21st June 2015 the First International Yoga was celebrated at the iconic ocean side promenaded Galle Face Green. 550th Birth Anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was commemorated with a talk documentary screening and soulful rendition of kirtan .

People to People Ties:

Buddhism is one of the strongest pillars connecting the two nations and civilization s from the time when the Great Indian Emperor Ashoka sent his children Arhat Mahendra and theri Sangamitra to spread the teaching of Lord Buddha at the request of king – Devanampiya tissa of Sri Lanka understanding the deep people to people connect and shared Buddhist heritage between India and Sri Lanka the venerated relics of Lord Buddha from Kapilawasthu discovered in 1970 in July 2020 the Government of India declared the Kushinagar Airport in India the place of Lord Buddhas Mahaparinirvana, as an international airport. To allow to visit the revered site associated with Lord Buddha with ease givin the pre-emlence of India – Sri Lanka Budhhist ties. A special Indian Air force C-17 aircraft was deployed to Colombo to transport 160 Armed Forces personnel and their families to BodhGaya and back on 11th November

2019 Alliance Air started regular service between Jaffna and Chennai.

Covid-19 Pandemic:

In May – June 2021 a series of special prayers and ceremonies were held by people of different faiths across Sri Lanka for the wellbeing of people of India in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic. A multi-religious country-side “Vishwa Ashirwada Horawa” was organized by ministry of Buddhasana cultural and religious affairs headed by prime minister in the occasions. Due to the covid-19 restrictions in 2020 551st anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev was celebrated via virtual mode. A Kiran by Gyanyi from Guru Nanak Darbar Gurudwara, Colombo, was organized and webcast live on the social media site of SVCC.

Summery:

India now offers about 710 scholarship slots annually to Sri Lankan student in addition under the Indian Technical and Economic cooperation (ITEC) programmer. The LTTE came to an end in May 2009 during the course of the conflict India supported the right of the Sri Lankan Government to act against India's consistent position has been infamous of a negotiated political settlement, which is acceptable to all communities within the framewoek of a united Sri Lanka and is consistent with democracy pluralism and respect for human rights India needs to focus more on its traditional and cultural ties to improve relations with Sri Lanka.

References:

1. *Ceylon Daily News – 23 April 1949*
2. *Ceylon Senate, Parliamentary, Debates Val. 19 c24415*
3. *UN First Committee – 1834 meeting 23 November 1971*
4. *The Sunday Times, 9 August 1987*
5. <http://www.mfa.gov.lk/index.php/>
6. <http://www.fpri.org>
7. <http://www.ipcs.org>
8. <http://www.foreignpolicy.com>
9. <http://www.mea.gov.in>
10. <http://www.journals.sagepub.com>