

## China, India rise of 'revolutionary significance'

The Chinese media has generally welcomed Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's three-day visit to China this week, describing the rise of the two nations of 'revolutionary significance' and a 'strategic partnership' between them the need of the hour.

The People's Daily, with close links to the Chinese Communist Party, observed that 'the two Asian nations have had a frequent, high-level exchange of visits from the entry of the new century.'

The article by Hu Shisheng, a researcher and director of the South Asia Studies Center at the China Institute of Contemporary Relations, said that people-to-people exchange was the need of the hour.

'The only pity is that the people-to-people exchange between the two nations is not smooth enough,' Hu wrote. 'Indians are reported to have made a total of 629,947 trips to China in 2006, whereas there were only 46,805 trips made by Chinese visitors to India that year.'

In 2007, which was named as 'the Year of Friendship through Tourism,' India only received 67,600 Chinese, while China had 35 million outbound tourists in the year.

Hu stressed that frequent visits bring friends closer -- quoting from a popular Chinese saying.

'Closer bilateral ties are attributed to an exchange of visits ... Without any contact, there will be practically no personal experience and direct understanding to speak of and; without any people-to-people exchange of visits, erroneous views and even misconception or misunderstanding could be prevalent.

'To a greater extent, a negative influence from bias, prejudices and disparities in mutual recognition of each other's nation is not inferior to that inflicted by the border issue.'

Hu said that he hoped both the countries would aspire ``to have a growing, bilateral exchange of visits at the high level and make it a regular practice, or even on a yearly basis, and turn it into an extensive education on bilateral ties."

Hu said in his commentary that the rise of the world's two most populous nations ``was of a revolutionary significance."

``The two Asian neighbors will have an ample capacity for changing the overall global outlook. In this sense, bilateral relations should overstep the limits of geopolitics and the scope of bilateral relations, and should especially exceed the security predicaments and grudges against each other in history."

Wu Yongnian from the Shanghai Institute For International Studies said sound foundation was essential to boost strategic cooperation between the two.

Writing in Shanghai's Jiefang Daily, a large circulated Chinese language paper, Wu said that good Sino-India relations have significant strategic meaning to the world. ``We are partners, not opponents," has been a common ground for leaders of both the countries while making policies."

Wu went further in saying that good ties between the two nations can help keep world peace, implying that both the nations should play a bigger role on the world stage.

“A deeper Sino-India strategic partnership is the common need of the two countries, as well as a call of the time. It is high time that China and India take a step forward to improve their relations,” Wu wrote, adding however that the present bilateral trading was relatively restricted and investment into each other's countries was still limited.

Xiaoxiang Morning Post, a Chinese language newspaper in distant southeast province of Hunan, said that while most Chinese see India as a neighbor developing nuclear weapons “due to the alleged threat from China,” they were “blind to the fact” India is a young country full of vigour and energy.

“Apart from its hugely successful IT industry, it is big in bio-research and development and pharmaceuticals.”

It said that people in India have shown respect for knowledge.

“The population in India is no smaller than in China, but it is young country with abundant human resources that would last as long as 20 years.”

It mentioned that Manmohan Singh's reforms over “international cooperation and adjustment of industrial structure is a good example for the industrial reforms in China.”

It is understandable why a visit of this stature arouses jealousy from other developing market economies, it said.

*Bivash Mukherjee ( © IANS / India eNews)*