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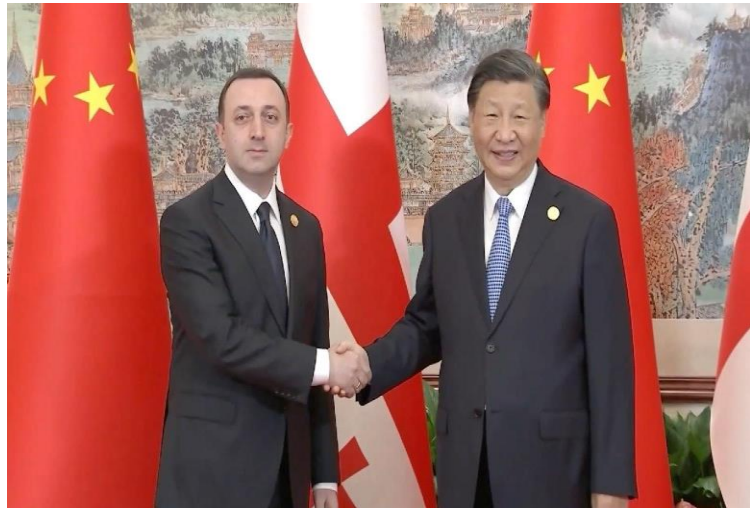
China-Georgia Relations and the role of BRI in promoting cooperation

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The recent developments in the political dynamics of BRI have brought new dimensions in the 31 years old relations between China and Georgia. Georgia being at the crossroads of Europe and Asia provides route for BRI “a Chinese network of Trade and energy links”.



The recent joint statement for the establishment of strategic partnership between China and Georgia by the Georgian administration sheds light on the importance of south caucas region for BRI. China and Georgia have been involved in bilateral relations spanning political, economic and cultural fields since 1992 and have been working on expanding this cooperation. This recent recognition of shared interests and objectives is done on the factors of changing geopolitics especially in the South Caucasus region which provides land bridge for the Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor and is important for geopolitical influence enhancing the counterbalance capability of China against other powers. Georgia is playing the role of a middle corridor connecting China to the strategic ports of Black Sea and is providing logistic hub for its flagship project BRI. Georgia also hosts the three main projects in South Caucasus which are: BTK railroad, construction of new deep water seaport and the expansion of East-West Highway. These new political developments are an onset of emerging political dynamics that not only includes the economy but also span to deeper political implications such as bilateral relations with Russia considering the

ongoing Russian Ukrainian War and the aims of Georgia joining EU. To analyze the strategic importance of Georgia for China two main aspects are important to discuss: the economic importance and the geopolitical importance of Georgia.

Economic Importance

China and Georgia both have been involved in strong economic ties since signing up the free trade deal in 2017, the first ever deal of its kind in the region. Georgia has also become the third largest market for Chinese products and attracted investments from several Chinese companies for infrastructural projects. Despite of all the international donors China is the largest investor and has been helping Georgia in securing funds from all these international donors.



Georgia on the other hand provides

an alternative route to Europe bypassing Russia making the country an important strategic point providing ways for investment in the region. The existing shipping routes threatened by the recent Russian-Ukraine war are prone to a big scale conflict between international players therefore China has adapted ways for peaceful developments without getting involved in any international conflict. China's aim of cultivating more options have made it to advance its relations to strategic partnerships which can benefit both sides and can help in providing peaceful passages for all the development projects.



Geopolitical Importance

The geopolitical paradigm of China- Georgia relations is set on the parameters of Georgia's geographic location and its political importance. The geographic location in terms of relations with China is primarily concerned with the flagship project of China as discussed above. The direct link of Georgia with the China-Central Asia- West Asia corridor provides sea as well as land routes. The overland route to Turkey combined with Yavuz Sultan Selim Koprosu Bridge provides a direct link from Europe to Asia. In addition to that it also provides maritime routes to Europe via its ports in Batumi, Poti and Anaklia. Georgia has also established its links with Ukraine by participating in the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route which enhanced the trade between China and Ukraine.

While the ongoing war with Russia makes Georgia an important political hotspot for China. China aims to promote peace in the region by using the tools of diplomacy and to expand its development projects. China has helped Georgia in improving its position in the region by easing the pressure on Georgia and by making it a more self-sufficient state. The changing Calculus of Russian Influence in the region improved the sovereign status of states and has helped them acquire more options for the regional as well as international cooperation.

China continuous efforts for interconnectedness coincides with its aim for promoting mutual benefit of all which focuses on the approach of win-win cooperation as can be seen through its Flagship project BRI. This underscores its commitment for global development while maintaining the narrative of peaceful coexistence.