



中國傳媒大學
COMMUNICATION UNIVERSITY OF CHINA



Institute for a Community
with Shared Future
人类命运共同体研究院



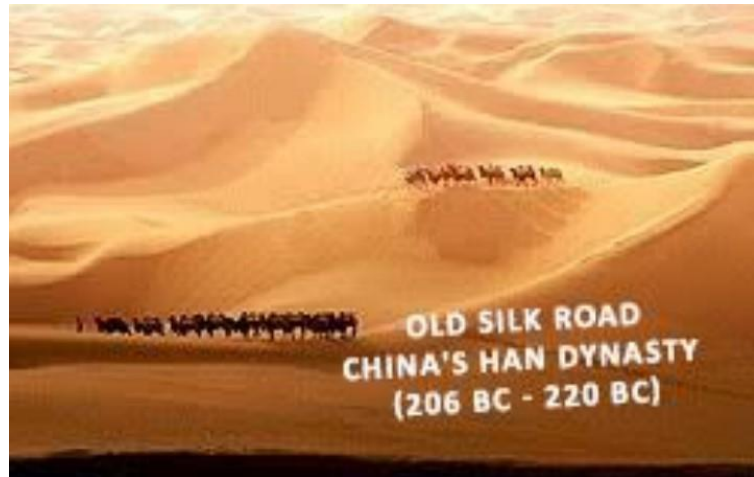
Silk Route: A Path Towards Regional Connectivity from Ancient Centuries till Contemporary Era

Ms. Naema Ali, BS Student from Department of History & Pakistan Study, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar has won the **1st position** of the University based Article Writing Competition on the theme “Decade of Transformation: Celebrating Ten Years of Belt and Road Initiative Success” jointly organized by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar & Institute of Community with Shared Future, Communication University of China (CUC), Beijing, China held in October 2023

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Background:

The Han Dynasty established Silk Route in 130s B.C and started trade with the West. China was the important trade center at that time due to Silk because at that time silk was the only produced by China. China had monopoly on silk as a trading leader. Moreover, world traders used to go to china for bringing silk and selling in other countries. The route name was kept Silk Route because from 4th century B.C to 2nd century A.D the main item which was carrying



through this route was silk. Due the craze for silk European used to send spies to China for spying about the production of silk. The byzantine also started producing silk but the quality of Chinese silk was far better than theirs, and then a pop succeeded in smuggling of silk insect from china, and thus the secret of silk production revealed to the world. Later, the silk route became the means of exchanging cultures and goods, and the trade of fruits, vegetables, livestock, grain, artworks, lather, tools and precious stones begun. In addition some other important things which were sending from china to the West were gunpowder and paper as these things were invented by china. Paper was important as the paper led to the invention of printing press, books and newspapers. Hence, Silk route promoted political, religious and economic interactions between many countries. It also played great role in the development of science, art, technology, literature and other fields of study. It also provided way for the propagation of Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism. It



connected Asia, South Asia, Persia, Arabian Peninsula, East Africa and Southern Europe. It had also connection with Great Trunk Road. Beijing and Shanghai, cities of china were its eastern end points and at west Constantinople was its choke point. There is selenium deficiency in Chinese soil which cause muscular disorder in their horses and thus they had to import horses from other countries which was done through Silk Route, to get superior quality horses china also made attacked on Central Asia. China brought Gold from Central Asia with the help of Silk Route. China had also trade relations with Middle east and European countries. The Maritime Silk route was established in 1st century. The maritime route begun from modern day Vietnam ,which was at that time the part of china, and goes toward India, Sri Lanka, Red Sea and eventually reached to the Roman empire. There were guests houses and inns along with silk route in which travelers and caravans stayed to took rest, on the maritime route there were ports in which the travelers stayed for fresh water and trade opportunities. The silk rout in different eras was influenced by the rise and decline of dynasties, such as when Western Roman Empire declined the silk route was maintained and control by Kushan Empire of Northern India and its promoted its relations with other countries. In 7th century the Tang Dynasty revived the silk route and during this time period the Silk Route reached to its Golden Age , the maritime route was also developed during this time period and it included Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Mesopotamia and Africa in its sea routes. In 13th A.D the Mongol Empire came to its end which caused political, cultural and economic disunity due to which many small kingdoms arose and the unified powers, which maintained Silk Route declined which eventually led to the disintegration of Silk route. The establishment of Suez canal restore the trade between Asia and Europe But during the

world war I and world war II again the silk route was blocked. In 1990s China succeeded to made connection once again with Central Asia, Central Europe and Africa and its maritime route played crucial role to get 40% of trade.

Belt and Road Initiative:

The Belt and Route initiative is introduced by the Chinese president Xi Jinping on 7th September 2013, to restore the historic Silk Trade Route. Initially it started with the name of One Belt and One Road but later its name converted to Belt and Road initiative.



Belt and Road initiative have two parts, “Silk Route Economic Belt” and “21st Century Maritime Silk Road”. Belt and Road Initiative have many projects but some of them are Turkmenistan and China gas pipeline, the international North-South transportation corridor, China-Pakistan economic corridor, Jakarta-Bandung High-speed railway, Gwadar port, China-Laos Railway, China-Kazakhstan Logistics Terminal and China-Europe Land-Sea express Line.

The major goals of Belt and Road initiative are policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity through roads and railways, unimpeded trade, financial integration and to connect the people of various regions.

Regional Connectivity:

The basic aim of the Belt and Road initiative is to make a network between countries and use that network for trade. As for 2023 155 countries signed the memorandum of understanding with Belt and Road initiative and this project will interconnect more than 60 countries. Different countries are connecting through ports, railway lines and roads. The Silk Road Economic Belt connect China with South East Asia, South Asia and Central Asia, Russia and Europe.

China invested a lot of money in the Africa to connect East Africa with China and link North and Central Africa with Southern Europe. A



railway network will establish between China, Russia, Mongolia and Kazakhstan which starting point will Urumqi, Chinese city and will make link with Almaty and Nur sultan, Kazakhstan. The China-Pakistan Economic corridor aims to connect china with Pakistan, it will link the Chinese city of Kashghar to Pakistani port Gwadar and will pass through various regions of Pakistan which will make furthermore connection with other countries.

The maritime route at the East connect Hanoi with Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta and Colombo district, Male`. At the west the maritime route connect Djibouti and Red Sea,



with the help of Suez canal it will link Haifa, Istanbul, Athens, Italy and Adriatic Sea. In the present time more than half trade of the world occurred through this maritime route.

China announced that she will complete all the projects of Belt and Road initiative till 2049 as the Chinese revolution occurred in 1949 so china want to revive its country in the same year to their revolution.