

# Nepal - China Relationship During the Period of Chinese Cultural Revolution

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## Abstract

*The topic of this article is placed "Nepal - China Relationship during the Period of Chinese Cultural Revolution". The Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) is considered the biggest revolution after the Russian October Socialist Revolution in 1917. It was powerfully unfolded throughout China under the guidance of Mao Tsetung, the chairperson of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC). It has affected all sectors of society such as education, culture, politics, party, government, agriculture, industry, foreign affairs and so on. This was not a struggle against the political power of the opposite political party. Rather, according to Mao, the Cultural Revolution was carried out against the capitalist roaders who were sneaked into the Chinese Communist Party and its government and its bureaucracy.*

*The objective of this article is to study the relationship between Nepal and China within the period of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. In this study, the qualitative method is used. Nepal has received huge aid from China. Araniko Highway was built. Indian Security Forces were removed from the northern border. Khampa Uprising was solved. So this period was a fruitful period for the Nepal - China relationship.*

**Key words:** Relationship Communist, Congress, Revolution and Culture

## Introduction

China lies to the north of Nepal. Approximately 1,400 kilometres of border divided Nepal and China. Mostly Himalayan range is divided between Nepal and China. We know an aphorism, "One can afford to choose a friend but not a neighbour." China has been our neighbour from ancient times. Even at present China is Nepal's close friend.

In 1911 Qing dynasty was dissolved under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen and China became a republic country. In the leadership of Mao, the chairman of the CPC established New Democracy on 1 October 1949. The CPC took the regime into its hands. Its foreign policy was dependent on a theory of proletarian internationalism. The Proletarian Internationalism is an important component of the Marxism. Proletarian Internationalism emphasizes on unity of the working people of all over the world. The theory supports the unity of suppressed countries from imperialist powers. About the same time as the new democratic revolution in China, on the other hand in Nepal, the Rana regime was thrown in 1950. In

2015 B.S. the constitution with limited monarchy and multi-party democracy was promulgated. By the first parliamentary election of 2015, the B.S. Nepali Congress the prime ministership of Bisheshwar Prasad Koirala's first elected government was established. But in 1960 (2017 B.S.) King Mahendra dissolved the elected government and started the Panchayat regime. The Panchayat regime encouraged nonalignment, emphasising on five principles (Theory of Panchashil) in the context of foreign affairs.

The history of China from 1966 to 1976 is known as the history of Cultural Revolution. Mao said, "The current Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is necessary and most timely for consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, preventing capitalist restoration and building socialism." In this quotation, the theme of the Cultural Revolution is drawn. By this quotation there are mainly three aims of cultural revolution-1, consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, 2) preventing capitalist restoration and 3) building socialism. During the period of the Cultural Revolution China had made its foreign policy as per the aim of Cultural Revolution. In the period of Cultural Revolution, China adhered the proletarian internationalism in the context of foreign affairs.

Stalin, the leader of the Soviet Communist Party died in 1953. Then, in 1956 the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party was held and the congress under the leadership of Khrushchev changed the basic theory of the communist party. The decision created a new debate in the international communist movement. Soviet line and China line, two lines occurred in the communist movement. In the leadership of Mao CPC opposed the Shoviet line saying Revisionism. In 1960 an international gathering of communist parties of all over the world was held in Moscow. The International Communist movement is divided into two factions. The Soviet impression came into even in CPC. On the other hand within CPC, some leaders of the CPC including Liu Shao Qui asserted to remain in China a New Democracy for a long time, not to go quick into socialism. In such an international and national situation Mao had to carry out a cultural revolution. The debate was not limited only to theoretical debate but also to border debate. China asserted Soviet Russia as Social Imperialism. Even in such a situation, the relationship between Nepal and China was normal at the government level.

In that period China held the perception that Nepal and China both were developing countries. The oppressed and third-world countries should be united. In this theoretical base, China was keen to keep good relations with Nepal through different political systems. Nepal also wanted to elaborate on international relations. To make good relations with neighbours was necessary For Nepal.

Literary review Researchers have undertaken research on the relationship between Nepal and China. The authors have written many books on Nepal- China relationship. To study on the topic the below books are consulted.

\*LUMBINI: This book was written by Dr Gita giri. It focuses on the pilgrimage, Lumbini. It was published in 2017 by Nepal-China Friendship Society. The book is written to promote the tourism in Nepal. It has emphasized on culture of Nepal. The book does not have the issues of detailed political relations between Nepal and China.

\*Important Documents on The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China- This book was published in 1970 by Peking Foreign Language Press. The political report of ninth congress of Communist Party of China is main document of collections. The ninth congress was held in 1969 in Peking .The congress had highly evaluated the 3 years cultural revolution from 1966 to 1969. The book is not related with Nepal - China Relation. Only one place in the political report it mentions that Nepal, Bhutan, Vietnam and other neighbouring countries should have good relations with China. In addition to that some speeches of Lin piao and some communiques are also incorporated in this document. In this book the former president Liu Shao Que is criticised.

16 points decision of the central committee of the Chinese Communist Party concerning the great proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) is the important document of GPCR. The decision was taken at the meeting of august 8, 1966. It is a kind of manifesto of the GPCR. What is the aim of GPCR? What are the party cadres'role in this movement? All those things are written in this document. On the documunt about scientists, technicians and ordinary members of working staffs it is wriitten, "As regards scientists, technicians and ordinary members of working staffs, as long as they are patriotic, work energetically, are not against the party and socialism and maintain to illicit relations with any foreign country, we should in the present movement continue to aply the policy of "unity, criticism, unity". "(Imporarant documents of GPCR) From these lines we can say that in the period of Cultural Revolution CPC had given great importance on the question of patriotism.No doubt, the patriotic outlook determines the policy of the international relation of the country.

\*Sixty Years Dynamic Partnership: This book is written by Hiranyalal Shrestha it was published in 2015 by Nepal China Society. The book has given a very vivid description of very unique Nepal-China relations of the past 60 years. The book provides many informations about relationship between Nepal and China. But the analytical side is weak in this book.

\*Strive to Build a Socialist University of Science and Engineering: This book was published in 1972 by Foreign Language Press, Peking. In this book two documents are compiled. One is report of Shinghua Engineering University and two is a report of an interaction programme about the education in Cultural Revolution. The book Shows about how the Cultural Revolution was implemented in the sphere of education. The book does not deal with Nepal - China relationship. But it provides China's outlook on foreign relation.

The tenth national congress of the communist party of China (documents): This book was published in 1973 by Foreign Language Press. The documents adopted by the tenth national congress of the communist party of China are incorporated in this book. For example political report presented by Chau En Lai and constitution of the communist Party of china.In this document the CPC has made clear its policy on its international relation. This book does not deal with Nepal China relationship.

## Methods

To make ready this article authentic documents adopted by Communist Party of China within the period of Chinese Cultural Revolution are studied. It helps researcher to know the foreign policy of China in that period.

The magazines on which the relation between Nepal and China within the period of Chinese Cultural Revolution are found out and studied. Library visit, a tool is used. In this writing, the historical method is used. The events of interrelations between Nepal and China are placed chronologically.

## Results

### The Important Events between Nepal and China

The formal diplomatic relation was established in 1955 between Nepal and China (Shrestha, 2015, p.11). China was the fifth country with which Nepal had established diplomatic relations until then, whereas China, Nepal was the twenty-second country to establish diplomatic relations after the People's Republic of China was founded. (Ibid.p.12) During the period of the Cultural Revolution, very important events occurred in the context of the relationship between China and Nepal. At this time the Araniko Highway came into operation. The Khampa uprising on the northern border of Nepal was solved in this period. The Indian security forces were removed from the northern side of Nepal. China restored its membership of UNO in 1971. Nepal favoured that. King Birendra's proposal of "Nepal as a Zone of Peace" was at once accepted by China.

a) The Araniko Highway was opened for vehicular traffic in 1967. In 1961 construction Araniko Highway agreement between Nepal and China was placed., though opposition of India and other Western countries (Ibid.p.16). Until the Araniko Highway was not built, the road connecting the outside world had to depend only on India for Nepal. The opening of this road to the North side minimized Nepal's dependence on India.

b) The Nepalese National Panchayat Goodwill Delegation, under the leadership of Ramhari Sharma (the chairman of Nepal National Panchayat) visited China in 1971 march (Peking Review 1971, no. 13). Such visit made relations deep between the two countries. The later Chinese team also visited Nepal.

c) After prolonged negotiations, the Indian Government withdrew its military mission and Indian Army communication personnel from the northern border areas of Nepal in 1969. They had been posted there since 1951. The withdrawal of the Indian military mission and army communication personnel served as a removal of a fundamental obstacle between Nepal and China. (Shrestha, 2015, p, 16) The Indian check posts were not removed easily. For that, Nepal had to have very much diplomatic exercises with both sides India and China.

d) Prime minister of Nepal, Kritinidhi Bista made a friendly visit to China in November 1972. On 15 November 1972, the Chinese Prime Minister gave a banquet in honour of Nepal's Prime Minister Bista and his team. On the occasion both Prime ministers delivered

speeches. The speeches of both of them were very important. Prime Minister Chou:" The Asian, African and Latin American peoples have won a series of new victories in their struggles to win national independence and safeguard state sovereignty. The countries of the third world are playing an increasingly important role in international affairs. China and Nepal are both developing countries and both belong to the third world. The Chinese Government consistently holds that countries, big or small, should treat each other as equals and that it is impermissible to carry out aggression, control, interference, or subversion against other countries under any pretext. We are firmly opposed to big nation power politics and hegemonism of the big bullying the small and the strong bullying the weak. We resolutely support the people of Nepal and the other peoples of the world in their just struggle against foreign interference and in defence of national independence and state sovereignty." Prime Minister Bista: "Nepal is a a country with monarchy and China is a socialist Republic. History and a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation have made us good neighbours and we live together in peace and harmony. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations and the signing of the treaty of peace and friendship, the five principles of peaceful Coexistence have guided the relations between our two countries. ....Having different economic, political and social systems can live together as good neighbours. It is our firm belief that peaceful Coexistence should be the guiding factor in the determination of relations among nations." (Peking review, 1972: no. 47) Before this Bista as minister for foreign affairs visited China in 1965 and as deputy prime minister in 1968 (Shrestha, 2015, p.17).

e) After King Mahendra's demise in Nepal his eldest son Birendra became king of Nepal. King Birendra, in 1975, put forth a proposal before the international community asking them to recognize "Nepal is a Peace Zone".China immediately supported Nepal's proposal. (Ibid, p. 18)

f) In the northern side of Nepal there emerged a problem Khampa uprising. They were challenges for China and Nepal. Khampa rebels launched hit-and-run operations against China, misusing the Nepalese territory. Nepal army was then quickly mobilized to launch counter operation against Khampa in September 1976. Nepalese armies successfully disarmed the Khampas. The leader of the Khampa rebels Wangdi was killed in the operation. This was a good neighbouring and friendly response and cooperation of Nepal to China, which served as an important milestone in friendly cooperation between Nepal and China. (Ibid.p.19) Khampas were Tibetans. Their religious leader Dalai Lama had fled from Tibet to India. Americans were helping them to attack China. King Birendra in 1973 and 1976 visited China. Such visits built an environment to control Khampa's revolts. In the 1960s the relationship between China and America was very bad. But in the 1970s the relationship between China and America was improved. President of America, Richard Nixon visited China in 1972. Due to the improving China-American relations might be easy for Nepal to solve the Khampa uprising.



## **Economic Support and Development**

During the period of the Cultural Revolution, China provided financial support and helped in development. According to the agreement on economic cooperation, technical and economic support was the main support which was signed by the authorities on December 21, 1966. One hundred fifty million Nepalese rupees was provided to Nepal in agreement. It was a free grant of aid without any conditions. In the agreement, a trolley bus line from Kathmandu to Bhaktapur, brick and tile work, a cotton spinning, weaving, printing and designing mill and highway from Gorkha to Narayanghat have been mentioned to operate proper action. (Giri, 2017, p. 42).

The agreement of trade intercourse and related questions between Nepal and Tibet autonomous region of China signed in Peking on May 2, 1966. The main purpose of the agreement was to develop a traditional friendly relationship, particularly between the inhabitants of the Tibet autonomous region of the People's Republic of China and the people of Nepal. It is provisioned in the agreement that religious believers of either country who travel for the pilgrimage need not have passports, visas or other certificates, but should be registered at the border check post or the first encountered duly authorized pilgrimage agencies of the respective countries. Terms and conditions of the luggage, protection and departure have also been incorporated in the document. In the agreement, it is also written that local officials should settle the disputes arising in the intercourse between the border inhabitants holding meetings as soon as possible between them. (Ibid, p. 45) On the construction of the Kathmandu-Bhaktapur highway, an agreement was signed in Kathmandu on September 27, 1968, by the authorities on behalf of Nepal and the People's Republic of China. During the period of Ring Road construction, more than 300 Chinese workers came to Nepal. (Ibid, p. 49) China signed the protocol for the power station on the Sunkoshi River and the building of a power transmission line from the station to Kathmandu on May 25, 1967. The capacity of the power station was about 10,000 kilowatts and the transmission line. Nepal's government has heartily thanked the government of the People's Republic of China for rendering help from time to time by showing interest in the economic development of Nepal. At the signing ceremony, the Chinese ambassador to Nepal Yang Kung Shu vice chairman of the council of Minister Kritinidhi Bista and other ministers had also presented there. The stone foundation of Sun Koshi hydroelectric station was organized on June 9, 1969. On the occasion, Prime Minister Kritinidhi Bista expressed that China is developing a satisfactory relationship based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. The project is a symbol of the growth of the economic and technical cooperation and friendship between Nepal and China. (Ibid, pp.50- 51)

### **Game Diplomacy of China**

The first Congress of the Asian Table Tennis Union was held in Peking during the first Asian Table Tennis Championships from September 2 to 13, 1972. Participating in the congress are the delegates and observers of table tennis associations sports organizations from 31 countries regions in Asia. One of them was Nepal (Peking Review, 1972, no.37) In this way in this period, Nepal's relation to China was added from the sphere of game.

## **China's Relation with Parties of Nepal**

Nepal communist party was the first party among Nepali parties which kept relation with China. Before that Dr. K. I. Singh had gone to China after Singh durbar uprising. His trip to China was not as party to party relation but as political refugee. (K.C., 2065) Nepal Communist Party had decided to send Gauribhakta pradhan to take party education and training. In 1951 Gauribhakta Pradhan had gone to China through Mustang or crossing the Himalayan region. How to run party? He took training from Chinese Communist Party. He took gorilla training. Pradhan was first envoy from Nepal as party representative to China. In the context of 8th congress CPC in 1956 had invited three representatives of Nepal Communist Party. Manamohan Adhikari, Shambhuram Shrestha and Kamar Saha had gone to congress of CPC. But Manamohan Adhikari had to stay some years in China because of his treatment of leprosy. In 9th and 10th congresses of CPC (the congresses in the period of cultural revolution) the representatives of Nepal communist Party did not go China because on the one hand very strict Party opposite Panchayati system was in Nepal so it was difficult to go to congress of communist party. On the other hand Nepal communist Party was divided into many factions. The Russian Block parties like Keshar Jung group and Tulsilal group used to oppose Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese Block parties like Pushpalal group, Mohan Bikram group, Jhapali group also did not go. After Mao's death Chinese Communist Party left the cultural revolution. To the decision of CPC in Nepal Mohan Bikram group adopted a proposal "Counter Revolution in China" from enlarged meeting in 2038 B.S. (1981 A.D.).

Chairman of Nepali congress B.P. Koirala as Prime Minister visited China. The visiting made relation between Nepali congress and CPC. In 1990 after the restoration of multiparty democracy many parties of Nepal added relation with China and CPC.

### **Mao's Tribute to King Mahendra**

King Mahendra died at Diyalo Banggala in Chitawana 1972 January 31. In Peking the Nepali embassy to China had organized a tribute programme for late King Mahendra. The chairman of Chinese Communist Party, Mao Tse Tung attended in program and offered deep sorrow to late King Mahendra. In addition to Mao, Prime Minister Chou En Lie, the vice-chairman of army commission Chen Ying and many other Chinese leaders came to Nepali Embassy and offered tribute to late King Mahendra. (Gorkhapatra, 1972, February 4) To come at tribute programme Mao himself shows the China's deep relation with Nepal.

### **Discussion**

Nepal's relations with China have remained warm and cordial during the period of Chinese Cultural Revolution. The very big historical and unforgettable events occurred in the context of Nepal - China relationship during this period. For instance, Nepal supported China for entry into the UN and China supported Nepal's sovereignty, similarly construction of Aranaki Highway, China's support for the resolution 'Nepal is Peace Zone' from King Birendra and so on.

Nepal has always remained sensitive and supportive of issues that are of vital interests to China. During the cold war days when the western world was not even willing to recognize the new regime in China. Nepal was consistent and forceful in its articulation of China's entry in the United Nations. Similarly Nepal has steadfastly maintained that Tibet and Tiwan are integral parts of China. One, the Chinese side the support of the Chinese leadership to Nepal's sovereignty and independence has remained firm as ever. What we observe is a relationship of mutual trust and confidence based on a clear understanding and consensus on vital issues of national interests that are of concern to both nations. (Lohani, Nepal- China relations, 2013, pp.243-244)

The construction of Kodari Highway (Araniko Highway) was an important aspect of this period.

King Mahendra had made 18 days visiting to China from 1961 September 28. At that time an agreement was made about the construction of a linking Highway between Nepal and China. Instead of being opposed by India and America Kodari Highway (Araniko Highway) was constructed. (Shivakoti, the treaties between Nepa - China, 2066, p. 473) India wanted Nepal as a buffer state. But King Mahendra wanted to expand the relation with other countries of the world. The road connection between Nepal and China should have decreased the dependancy upon India. Kodari Highway construction was completed in the period of Chinese cultural Revolution.

After it was certain that Tibet would be occupied by the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Dalai Lama, the religious ruler of Tibet, left Tibet and went to India. He reached Delhi in 1951. Surendra KC has written quoting Prem Singh Basnyat, "Scattered troops and followers who did not accompany the Dalai Lama rebelled against the communist rule. The rebels organized themselves in the Nepal-Tibet border region of Olangchung Gola, Rasuwagadhi, Keshangpas, Tinker Lipu, Byas Ghati region. Their main base was Keshang of Mustang. They were receiving huge material and military support from America. They had built a helipad in Mustang's Tangemyu." (KC, 2061) According to the official data of Nepal, 9 thousand Khampas lived in different parts of Nepal in an organized manner. They did looting, arson and violent activities from both Nepal and Tibet. Nepal Government was successful in suppressing the Khampa rebels in August by starting an attack from 1974 June 15 (Ibid). The Khampa uprising was a threat to the peace and security and national sovereignty of both Nepal and China. As it was a common problem of both the countries, it was resolved with the consensus of both countries. America might reluctant to help Khampas long time.

CPC had organized its two national congresses, that ninth congress in 1969 and tenth congress in 1972 during the period of Cultural Revolution. In the time of ninth congress the Cultural Revolution had passed three years. The ninth congress had evaluated and summed up the three years cultural revolution. In the political report adopted by the the ninth congress it is written that " China has satisfactorily and successively settled boundary questions with neighbouring countries such as Burma, Nepal, Pakistan, the people's republic of Monggolia and Afghanistan". So far as the relation with Nepal, the boundry treaty was



worked out between Nepal and China in 1961."All imperialists and all reactionaries are paper tiger." It was Mao's quotation. According to him, theoretically they are paper tiger but in practice it should be taken seriously.

On the political report adopted by tenth national congress of CPC it is written, " In the international sphere ,our party and government have firmly implemented the foreign policy laid down by the nineth congress.Our revolutionary friendship with fraternal socialist countries and with genuine Marxist ,Leninist Parties and Organization of verious countries and our co-peration with friendly countries have been further strengthened.Our country has established diplomatic relations with an increasing number of countries on the basis of the five principles of peaceful Coexistence. The legitimate status of our country in the united nations has been restored."(Report of tenth congress of CPC)

Nepal -China relationship should not be limited in official and political level. The relation should be enlarged to many spheres like people to people, businessmen to businessmen, artists to artists an intellectuals to intellectuals.

In the period of Cultural Revolution in China there was a policy,"Making the past serve the present and foreign things serve China." (Strive to build..., 1972, p.29) It means they emphasised the old knowledge, skill and technology should be used in the new way to build New China.Similarly the foreign knowledge, skill and technology should serve China. Mao's vision was how to make the country self-reliance.Their foreign relation was dependent on the base that self reliance .After Mao's death China did not forget this theory so today China is a prosperous country. Nepal should adhere the theory of self-reliance .It is in favor of Nepal's interest.

Gauri bhakta Pradhan was the first man from Nepali communists to visit China. Later, Manamohan Adhikari Shambhuran Shrestha, Kamar Shah, Keshar jung Raymajhi, Niranja gobinda Baiddha and others visited China and met with Mao. In the period of Chinese Culrural Revolution no one communist met Mao because in Nepal the King's autocratic rule was existing that's why no chance to visit China.

## Conclusion

During the period of Chinese Cultural Revolution very important relationship was developed between China and Nepal. At that time Nepal had got important sucesses in the field of diplomacy.For instance, returning back the Indian check post from the northern region of Nepal, acceptances of Peace Zone to Nepal by many countries as well China, the control of Khampa rebels, these sucesses were due to the fact that the government of Nepal at that time was firmly in favour of the national interest and was able to display diplomatic tact.

Now, Nepal's national sovereignty is in crisis.Indian Government had issued its political map incorporating Nepali land Lipulek, Kalapani, Limpiyadhura area after when India dissolved the Kasmir state and made central government controled territory in november 2019.The parliament of Nepal also unanimously adopted the map of Nepal incorporating Lipulek, Kalapani Limpiyadhura on june 2020.India is having the construction of the road in

Kalapani area. But Government of Nepal has not forwarded seriously the issue of Kalapani Area. From many years Indian Armies have been staying at Kalapani in Nepali territory. Nepal needs firm decision, clear vision and diplomacy as it was in the period of 1966 -1976. After the restoration of the multiparty democracy in Nepal its foreign policy is weak. Party leaders are not standing firmly in favour of the national interest. The political parties should learn from the period of 1966-1976. The patriotic Nepali peoples must put pressure the political parties and the government to stand firmly in favor of the national interest. The researcher should have taken interview with resource persons but it has not done. The quantitative data are not used so no need of statistical tables and graphs. These are the limitations of study.

The situation is different from that time .The trade between Nepal and China in 1966 to 1976 was limited but now enlarged. The sectors of relation are enlarged; culture game ,media,artists,tourism in many sectors Nepal - China relation is being grown. In new era new challenges are occurred. The countries should face new challenges mutually. The researcher offers the suggestion to study the impact of Chinese Cultural Revolution in the Nepali Communist movement.

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