

20. As the balance of power in the region continues to shift fast, India and South Korea need to deepen their engagement like never before. Analyse.

Asia/pacific region has been turned from Zone of Conflict to Zone of

turnaround from a Zone of peace into Zone of Conflict recently was evident from geopolitics around South China Sea and open conflicts between China and US.

India was in stage of becoming a active player in the region because USA used the terminology of "Indo-pacific" to mention the region rather than Asia Pacific. Thus a deep engagement with the potential partner "South Korea" will be a favour for India.

India - South Korea :-

→ India and South Korea entered into the special Strategic Partnership since 2015, but the trade value stands at meagre \$ 22 bn shows there was a vast gap (potential gap) to fill by both parties.

→ In defense sector, the contribution from the South Korea has a great significance was evident from the procurement of K-9 Vajra T gun (howitzer) by India. But still India can learn more from the defense of South Korea because of the similarity in surrounded by hostile neighbours.

→ Both parties lags much behind in the cultural aspect (people - people relations) because of the unexploredness of cultural richness by them. Since India has the presence Indian cultural centre in South Korea, it can easily expand the program and bring the scene of enhanced cultural relations which can be brought only when citizens of both nations mutually respect their culture of one another.

→ India has much to collaborate with South Korea to develop the health sector, even in controlling the current pandemic COVID-19. in which the South Korea achieved success.

India's Act East policy and South Korea's Southern policy shows much divergence convergence in their objectives, thus a cooperation between the two will aid greatly for the regional development and goodness.