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GRT A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN INDIA AND IRAQ DURING (1869-1914)

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Abstract:- In 1869, after the opening of Suez Canal, there was a major economic development of trade in Iraq and India. Export of products to Europe had begun. Earlier these products were available only to the Arab States. The foreign companies played an important role, especially in the field of river transport and maritime transport of goods, passengers and post. Therefore, there was economic development in the foreign trade. In 1869, Iraq trade was development, the cost of goods exported through Basra became 200 pounds. Fifty two British merchant ships came to Iraq and India, and three of them went to England. This development was reflected in the social life of Iraq and India, Thus, the rank of merchant class had been raised and they belonged to the first social class. Earlier, they belonged to low class in Iraq and India. After Iraq and India opened its markets to the rest of the world, the increased volume of import and export had a great impact on the merchant class. The development of transport in Iraq and India have a major impact on the economic condition of the countries and its development. This led to the revival of Iraq's and India trade. The merchant class in Iraqi and Indian society emerged as the most important layer and became richer. In Iraq The Ottoman government could not develop this important area in Iraq but the foreign companies contributed to the development of Iraq and exploited for the benefit of its motherland.

In India The land and water transport had a great importance until the first half of the 19th century. However, after the establishment of the railway in India in 1853, the road transport became less important and railway dominated the foreign trade and internal trade of India, as it provided a nation-wide network in India. The British governors paid considerable attention toward the development of railway and spent huge funds for the establishment and extension of railways connecting various places in the country, which in turn created a direct access to different ports. This facilitated the transportation of the goods for shipment from distant areas to the port.

Keywords: Transportation, economic development, Export of products

INTRODUCTION:

Iraq plays an important role in the field of transport and communications on account of its geographical location. Such location attracted the attention of the world, particularly Britain. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Britain made attempts to find new ways to connect to India. Instead of the old road that passes through the al-Rachi Al-salih, Britain found that Iraq was the country, which was closest to get access to India and which was the most direct route. Therefore, the British government send missions to Iraq to study the possibility of the Tigris and Euphrates as the sources of navigation. In 1830, Britain sent the first mission under the command of Colonel F. R.

Chesney. This mission continued for three years, however, it did not achieve success because the Euphrates River was not suitable for steam ships.⁽¹⁾

This development was reflected in the social life of Iraq. Thus, the rank of merchant class had been raised and they belonged to the first social class. Earlier, they belonged to low class in Iraq. After Iraq opened its markets to the rest of the world, the increased volume of import and export had a great impact on the merchant class.⁽²⁾

In India, During pre-independence era, there were two means of transport. Goods were mostly transported by road, which were not in good condition having shady trees on both sides. However, there were resting houses (sarai) at regular intervals for the rest of travelers. Drinking water for animals was also provided along the roads. Small towers had also been put up on the road to show the way to travelers. The bhats of Rajputana used to guide and protect caravans on dangerous roads for a suitable charges.

The other means of transport of goods was by river, which was comparatively cheaper. For example, cartage charges from Agra to Multan were Rs.2 per mound while from Multan to Sindh, the charges were only 3/4 of a rupees per mound, though the distance was a little more. River transportation was mostly resorted to in Kashmir, Bengal, Sindh and Punjab. There were about 30,000 boats in Kashmir while Sindh had about 40,000. Bengal had a large fleet of boats and even ships. There was considerable traffic in almost all the navigable rivers, particularly the Yamuna, Gangas and the Jhelum. Some of the barges on the Yamuna were of 100 tons while on the Gangas it ranged between 400 and 500 tons. The boatmen on the rivers received a monthly salary of 100 to 500 dams. From Thatta to Lahore, it took 6 to 7 weeks, while the return journey was completed in 18 days only.⁽³⁾

A Comparative Study of Transportation between India and Iraq:

1. India's geographical location played an important role in the development of transport and communications, particularly river transport.

As India was gifted with a large number of rivers. There was an increasing demand of transportation of people and goods from one state to another during British rule. Another mode of transport was the road transport. The wood available in India was of excellent quality, which was known for its strength and hardness. The Mongols established the first center of the manufacture of ships. This shipbuilding center was the first center in Asia. The Indian ships had a great demand from all over the world. Its reputation also reached to Europe. As a result, the Portuguese bought Indian ships, which were built through a careful manufacturing process. Therefore, it can be said that the river transport had contributed significantly to the revitalization of internal and external trade of India.⁽⁴⁾

1. Iraq's geographical location also played a significant role in the development of transport and communication, particularly river transport. The presence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and suitability of navigation proved the most important means of transporting goods and people and contributed to the development of internal and external trade of Iraq. The foreign companies established in Iraq realized the importance of river transport. The Lunge company was in the forefront, which played an important role in stimulating trade in Iraq in the import and export.⁽⁵⁾

2. Britain had played an important role in transport and communication both in Iraq and India. In India, British Government controlled and dominated the economic side of the country through the British East India Company. In Iraq, since the first half of the nineteenth century, the British rulers intended to search for new ways to link Britain with India by way of Iraq, instead of the old route i.e. the around Africa. Consequently, Britain found that it was possible to navigate through Iraq, which could shorten the distance and time so as to reach India. Therefore, the British government sent its team to Iraq to study the possibility of navigating through Tigris and Euphrates. The first mission under the headship of F. R. Chesney was sent in 1830. However, he did not succeed in his mission.⁽⁶⁾

3. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 helped the development of transportation in the world and contributed to the prosperity of external trade of both Iraq and India. However, the local industries in both countries had collapsed because of the selfish policy of British rulers, who destroyed the domestic markets and flooded them with foreign goods, especially goods manufactured in England.⁽⁷⁾

4. In Iraq, according to its policy, the Ottoman government decided to set up a company to compete with the Lunge company in river transport. However, the Ottoman Empire could not compete with the lunge company because it could not build modern sailing ships and steam engines and failed timely delivery of the shipment.

On the contrary, the Lunge company proved its efficiency through the rapid delivery of post, cargo and passengers to Bombay and London. But the Ottoman government tried to obstruct Lunge company by forcing the company to pay customs duties to the government and other clans.⁽⁸⁾

In India, the British government was not able to control river transport because majority of the people were working in the field of river transport. After the mid-nineteenth century, with the establishment of railways, river transport became less important mode of transport.

5. In India, during the middle of the nineteenth century, especially in 1853, the railway was introduced as an important mode of transport. It made a great impact on the evolution of transportation. Network of railways in India promoted bilateral trade, especially the internal trade. As the network of railway went on expanding, the ground and river transportation collapsed.⁽⁹⁾

Until the beginning of 19th century, Iraq was unknown of the railway. However, after 1912, the German company put the foundation stone for the construction of the railway in Iraq. The company began its work to construct railway tracks, it could not complete because of the First World War. Hence, Iraq adopted the river and ground transportation for trade and delivery of post, cargo and passengers from one state to another. The importance of river transportation had increased in Iraq when the people began to establish companies for navigation in 1897. At the time, one of the Iraqi traders established a river transport company.⁽¹⁰⁾

6. In Iraq and India, river transport was in use more than road transport because road transport was dependent on animals. The road transport had a threat of risks and bandits, therefore, the river transport became more important than road transport in India. However, after the mid of 19th century, British government did not pay attention to the establishment of river transport companies because of emergence and expansion of railways in India.

7. The railway transport became more important in several aspects including the delivery of military equipment to the areas where the revolution or rebellion was carried on against the British government.

❖ The railway proved beneficial in the delivery of goods to the ports and in transporting the imported goods from ports to the markets in the country.

❖ It became possible to carry the aid quickly to the affected areas during a famine.

❖ Moreover, the extended network of railway provided a large number of job opportunities for Indians.⁽¹¹⁾

8. Iraq played a significant role in the field of transportation. Because of its geographical location, land of Iraq was a link between India and the Arab countries on one side and a link between India and African countries on another side. The historian Ibn Battuta has said that “a great many ships of the merchants of India was up to Iraq and Syria, loaded with Indian goods to sell in the Iraqi markets and then going Indian ships to North Africa then to Europe. After that it went back to China, as well as, the ports of India were centers for the influx of Iraqi traders, especially the port of Bombay, the Arabs and Persians ships which tend to carry cargo of dates, horses from Iraq to Bombay and return laden with spices, jewelry, sugar and cotton fabrics.”⁽¹²⁾

9. India had commercial relations with the outside world since ancient times. The direct sea routes connecting India with the West were mainly the Persian Gulf route and the Red Sea route. The latter was rather hazardous due to the existence of a number of rocks, violent winds and thick fog. Therefore, sailors and merchants preferred the Persian Gulf route, which was from Baghdad in Iraq to Canton in China.

10. Before the opening of the Suez Canal, cargo boats departed from London could reach to Bombay within more than three months. However, after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the cargo boats could complete the voyage between London and Bombay in only twenty-five days. Consequently, for the first time in the history, a large scale trade of Indian agricultural products with Europe took place. The Indian coastline was thus linked to the markets of Britain, France, Italy, and Germany while the extension of railways, post, and telegraphs tended steadily to make the whole country one market instead of many.⁽¹³⁾

CONCLUSION :

The development of transport in Iraq had a major impact on the economic condition of the country and its development. This led to the revival of Iraq's trade. The merchant class in Iraqi society emerged as the most important layer and became richer. The Ottoman government could not develop this important area in Iraq but the foreign companies contributed to the development of Iraq and exploited for the benefit of its motherland. The foremost among those countries was Britain. In Iraq, there were two types of transport : a) ground transport, and b) river transport. The first type could not compete with the later, because river transport was of a great significance in Iraq. The river transport contributed in the economic development of Iraq.

In India The land and water transport had a great importance until the first half of the 19th century. However, after the establishment of the railway in India in 1853, the road transport became less important and railway dominated the foreign trade and internal trade of India, as it provided a nation-wide network in India. The British governors paid considerable attention toward the development of railway and spent huge funds for the establishment and extension of railways connecting various places in the country, which in turn created a direct access to different ports. This facilitated the transportation of the goods for shipment from distant areas to the port.

The first railway track between Bombay and Thana was brought in use in the year 1853. Even though the British claimed that the railways were not built for commercial purposes, however, the very map of the railway lines refuted this argument. Railway not only reduced the cost of cartage but it was also the main source of draining out India's wealth. The construction of railways was not taken up by the government. Rather the tracks were built under the system of guaranteed interest on the capital invested for railway construction by private English companies, it was known as private enterprise at public risk during 1849 to 1858. However, the development of railways could not help to develop a modern industrial infrastructure in India. The Indian railway was the result of a vast European scientific movement. The economic implications which inspired the British to launch the movement in India were obvious. It was one of the most memorable enterprises of the British in India. It opened a new industry age and broke down the static character of the economy. Railway made the population mobile and revolutionized the means of transport and modes of trade and commerce beyond the economic purposes. The railways proved as a potential

instrument for social liberalism and national unity.

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