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Genshin Impact: Chinese Gaming Impact;

A Chinese gaming phenomenon taking the world by storm

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The "Genshin" Impact

Even a layman on the internet has heard of games like PUBG, Crossfire, Clash of Clans and Overwatch. Originating from China, these games have accumulated a major fanbase locally and globally in the past two decades. September 28th, 2020 brought another one of the titles that took the world by storm, Genshin Impact. With 23 million downloads a week of its release, within two weeks the game grossed over $100 million, recouping its entire development and marketing budget. Grossing over $1 billion by the end of March 2021, ranking 3rd behind Honor of Kings and PUBG in that time frame, Genshin Impact became the highest grossing mobile games of all time and the fastest to reach that milestone on Google Play and the Apple App Store. By October 2021, it grossed over $2 billion, making it

the highest grossing mobile game of 2021.

Genshin Impact's newly released area on the map Fontaine resembles France and the United Kingdom closely in the 4.0 patch.

Video games have become a tool for cultural and diplomatic diffusion in recent days and Genshin Impact has served the role pretty well. Mihoyo's increasing support of the Chinese Communist Party can be seen in their promotion from a party branch to a party committee. While the game is distributed by miHoYo in Mainland China, the global distribution is handled by their subsidiary Cognosphere, based out of Singapore. The developers have participated in several game, cosplay and several other conventions globally, now holding official concerts in USA, EU and South East Asian countries. Genshin's music, produced by their in-house

studio HOYO-MIX under producer Chen Yupeng (also known as Chen Zhiyi), has gathered a vast interest of the music experts due to its top notch quality.

The roleplay model and maps based on various geopolitical areas have significantly helped the game's popularity in several regions like Japan, South and South-West Asian regions.

The storytelling has incorporated several intricate and well thought out religious and cultural elements which played a significant role of representation in media, an effective audience engagement tool. While that did not come without controversies, the reception has been mostly positive. The world building and lore has also managed to captivate a huge audience, but the major earning of the game has been due to its gacha system. The gacha system of games where players wish for characters and items through in-game currencies have skyrocketed the revenue significantly. The players can also buy those currencies with real money and wish for characters although that does not guarantee the desired items, treading very dangerously close to gambling territory.

The game enjoys a massive popularity in Japan due to its similarity to the Japanese game The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild which also incurred Genshin plagiarism accusations. The game became a phenomenon in the United States, Singapore and Hong Kong regions with almost 40% of its revenue being generated from these areas alone.

The game in itself features seven elements and several characters attuned to it. The story takes place over seven nations so far with two more regions, Celestia and Khaenri'ah, being speculative.

● Their first region Mondstadt is based on traditional fantasy with Germanic influence, serves as the nation of Anemo, Wind Power;

● The second region Liyue combines several eras of Chinese history and culture into one nation, serves as the nation of Geo, Earth Power;

● The third nation Inazuma is portrayed to be a closed off archipelago in far south of the sea, inspired by the Japanese Shogunate era, serving as the nation of Electro, Electric Power;

● The fourth region Sumeru with its rainforests and deserts are based off South Asia, Middle East and North Africa, serving as the nation of Dendro, Wood Power;

● The fifth region Fontaine, also the main attraction of the latest update, features French, English and other 17th century steampunk European influences, serving as the nation of Hydro, Water Power;

● The sixth nation is Natlan is inspired by pre-Columbian Mesoamerica, which is yet to be released by the developers, serving as the nation of Pyro, Fire Power;

● The seventh nation of Snezhnaya is based on Soviet-era and Imperial Russia is also a region yet to be released, serves as the nation of Cryo, Ice Power;

The story telling has also become a source of speculation of the Chinese world viewpoint for a huge audience. The internet has several videos of content creators dissecting the lore and relating it to the real world geopolitical situations. While the game itself bans any kind of political discussions including the censorship of words like "Hong Kong", "Taiwan", "Stalin", "Putin", and "Hitler". To cater to the Chinese censorship rules, the game had some

major contents regulated in the Mainland Chinese version including the redesign of several female character outfits. They also faced criticisms due to the largely pale complexion of the characters from Sumeru, despite being inspired from Middle Eastern, North African and South Asian cultures, drawing accusations of whitewashing and colorism.

The game has otherwise helped the dissemination of Chinese culture beyond politics and socialism with its depiction both visually and through the stories. The playable as well as non-playable characters are reimaginings of several cultural, mythological and historically important figures of each region. There are several Taoist symbols in the game as well as a Gnostic system of deities in every region.

What does it mean for India?

India, under the Asia server, has also contributed to the game's player base. While the growing popularity may come as a good news for the fans, the hostility between the nations have brought fear among many

players due to the decision of the Indian Government to ban apps. The ban imposed on PUBG has induced anxiety among players in

case of the popularity of any other Chinese apps. While the game was never officially launched in India and rode the waves of the general global release, there is a steady increase in its popularity since the release of Sumeru which features Indian elements in the story. The future of this game in India is a phenomenon to be observed.