

INDIA MYANMAR RELATIONS



Eastern Asia: China, (Hong Kong+ macau), Japan, North Korea, South Korea, , Mongolia, Taiwan

Northern Asia: Russia

South-eastern Asia: Brunei, Myanmar, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos,

Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam.

Southern Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.



SOUTH EAST ASIA CONSIST OF

❖ 11 States:

Malaysia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, East Timor, Laos, Singapore, Vietnam, Brunei, Burma and Thailand. 8.5% of the world's population.

❖ Third most populous geographical region in the world after South Asia and

East Asia.

- ❖ The Andaman and Nicobar Islands of India are geographically considered part of Maritime Southeast Asia
- ❖ Singapore and Brunei (Crude oil and natural gas production account for about 90% of its GDP.) are affluent developed economies. Indonesia is the largest economy in this region. Newly industrialised countries include Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines.
- ❖ SEA rich source of hydrocarbon resources—Natural gas and Petroleum. region notably manufactures textiles, electronic high-tech goods such as microprocessors and heavy industrial products such as automobiles

Southeast Asia practice many different religions

1. By population, Islam is the most practised faith about 40% of the entire population, concentrated in Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, Southern Thailand and in the Southern Philippines
2. Buddhism is predominant in Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Burma and Singapore
3. Christianity is predominant in the Philippines, eastern Indonesia, East Malaysia and East Timor. In the world's most populous Muslim nation, Indonesia, Hinduism is dominant on islands such as Bali

Each of the languages have been influenced by cultural pressures due to trade, immigration, and historical colonization as well. There are nearly over 800 native languages in the region



The Philippines is divided into three island groups of Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao. Indonesia: 17504 Islands,

- Importance of South East Asia was recognised by one of the India's First Strategic Analysts, K.M Paniikkar during Nehra Tenure.
- Look East Policy was mentioned for first time in Annual report of Min of External Affairs I K Gujral, in H. D. Deve Gowda Government in 1996.
- Shri Inder Kumar Gujral became the 12th Prime Minister of India on April 21, 1997 and was in office till March 19, 1998.

Gujral Doctrine:

- Guide relations with immediate neighbors only.
- Recognize Importance of Neighbors for regional development
- In addition to taking neighbours into confidence, the country should have strengthened cultural, economic and political relations with neighbours.

Gujral Doctrine is a set of five principles: recognises the supreme importance of friendly, cordial relations with neighbours.

1. With neighbours like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka not Pakistan, India does not ask for reciprocity, but gives and accommodates what it can in good faith and trust. Or Asymmetric favour/ Unilateral Concessions.
2. no South Asian country should allow its territory to be used against the interest of another country of the region;
3. no country should interfere in the internal affairs of another;
4. all South Asian countries must respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; and,
5. Finally, they should settle all their disputes through peaceful bilateral negotiations.

APPLICATION OF GUJRAL DOCTRINE

- 1977 Ganga water Sharing Agreement revised with Bangladesh in 1966
- Freezing Some Border dispute with China
- Focus on North East of India
- Easing Visa norms for some neighbours countries and People to People contacts

- Gifting Mahakali river project to Nepal
- Cooperation Agreement with Sri Lanka

Main Criticism/ Failure Because Of Political Instability in India's Neighborhood. And due to Cordial relations approach weak intelligence operations in near countries.

Gujral Doctrine is a process and not an objective. It aims are changing mindsets, Confidence Building, having Procedures and issues in a larger perspective of National Interest.

Look East Policy of India

- Was launched in 1991 by the Government of India led by the former Prime Minister Narasimha Rao.
- The objective was to develop political, economic and security co-operation with countries in Southeast Asia.
- After the cold war, in 1991, India wanted to act as a counterweight to China in Southeast Asia.
- Providing enhanced connectivity to the States of North Eastern Region

Act East Policy was launched in 2014 by the Government of India led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Act East Policy of India succeeded Look East Policy. India's Act East Policy is based on 4 C's – Culture, Commerce, Connectivity, and Capacity Building. As described by PM Modi, India's vision for the region is SAGAR – Security for All and Growth for All. SAGAR recognizes the role played by the seas and the oceans around us in promoting sustainable economic progress in a secure and stable environment

DIFFERENCE:

1. The main objective was to have greater engagement in all spheres with countries in Southeast Asia as well as with far Eastern countries like Japan, South Korea, and countries in the Pacific region like Australia.
2. Act East Policy not only focussed on developing political co-operation but also a cultural and strategic relationship between India and extended neighbourhood of Asia Pacific region
3. India has upgraded its relationship to a strategic level with many Asia Pacific countries
4. There is continuous engagement with these countries at regional, bilateral, and multilateral level. And people to people contacts, involvement in infrastructure projects of India & enhanced co-operation in Maritime security-related issues.

ACT EAST POLICY:

- Launched in 2014
- launched Prime Minister of India – Narendra Modi
- India is in good position in world politics in 2014.
- Focus on South East Asia and East Asia and Pacific Region or Indo Pacific Region
- Focus is more on boosting economic co-operation, building infrastructure for greater connectivity, importantly strategic & security ties
- Initiated to tackle the changing Geo-political scenario due to dominance by China, in the South China Sea and its increasing influence in the Indian Ocean Region.

- Focusing more on historical, cultural, linguistic, and religious ties through more people-to-people exchanges.
- Heavy focus is being given to the development of the North East region. India believes that the North East region of India can be the gateway to East Asia and Southeast Asia.
- Greater focus on defense cooperation
- Recently India described the Indo-Pacific strategy as a further advancement of its Act East Policy and said Russia can make its full contribution in the strategically important region.
- India advocates a rules-based Indo-Pacific with freedom of navigation, open connectivity, and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states.

Look East Policy: launched in 1991, launched by PM of India Narasimha Rao

- Weak Position due to slow economy, 1991 Economic Crisis and India was in transition Phase to a liberalized Economy.
- Focus on SE Asia. And boosting economic co-operation and not on strategic ties like QUAD in 2007. Quad is an informal strategic dialogue between India, Japan, USA, and Australia
- Historical ties between India and ASEAN were not given much prominence and therefore not capitalized in its Policy
- North East of India was neglected in its plans of forging deeper ties with East Asia.
- India did not focus on developing infrastructure in other countries.
- Not much focus on defense cooperation
- Support from the successive administrations of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Manmohan Singh, and Narendra Modi,

Challenges to Act East Policy:

India and ASEAN neighbours have been facing new challenges, not only in economic areas but also in the areas of security and environment.

- Regional Security Architecture - China assertive approach and Chinese Diaspora controlling economy
- China Huge Investment in this Area
- US-China trade war
- South China Issue
- Islamic Radicalism and IS influence
- Weak governance Structure, Poor Institutional Mechanism in some countries
- Russia and China growing synergy.
- non-traditional security threats such as cyber security, terrorism, natural disasters

Other forums, regional groupings or platforms that have supported India's look east policy are mentioned below:

- BCIM – Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar Economic Corridor
- BIMSTEC – Bay of Bengal Initiative of Multisectoral Technical and & Economic Cooperation

- SAFTA – South Asian Free Trade Area which created a free trade area of 1.6 billion people in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, came into effect in 2006.
- ASEAN – Association of South Eastern Asian Nations
- EAS – East Asia Summit
- MGC – Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, 2000 Six countries Initiative India, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam
- IORA Indian Ocean Rim Association : 1997 start is an international organisation consisting of 23 states bordering the Indian Ocean

Several governmental initiatives that boosted India's Look East Policy are:

- Trans Asian highway starting from Singapore to Istanbul passing through India
- Trans Asian Railway from Delhi to Hanoi
- 800 km long Trans-National Gas Pipe Line between Myanmar, Bangladesh and India

Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 8 August, 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand with the signing of the Bangkok Declaration or ASEAN Declaration

- Is an economic union comprising 10 member states in Southeast Asia, which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic, political, security, military, educational and sociocultural integration between its members and other countries in Asia.
- The body is headquartered in Jakarta, Indonesia.

ASEAN Members:

Thailand (founding member)

The Philippines (founding member)

Malaysia (founding member)

Singapore (founding member)

Indonesia (founding member)

Brunei (joined in 1984)

Vietnam (joined in 1995)

Lao PDR (joined in 1997)

Myanmar (joined in 1997)

Cambodia (joined in 1999)

There are two observer States namely, Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste (East Timor).

ASEAN + 6: the other six countries outside ASEAN countries are China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and India

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership/ RCEP is a Free Trade Agreement between the ten member states of the ASEAN and those Five countries which have existing FTAs with ASEAN – Australia, China, Japan, Republic of Korea and New Zealand.

5 member countries account for about 30% of the world's population (2.2 billion people) and 30% of global GDP as of 2020, making it the biggest trade bloc in history.

The objective of launching RCEP negotiations is to achieve a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement that will cover trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic and technical cooperation, intellectual property, competition, electronic commerce, dispute settlement and other issues

India preferred opting out of RCEP and the reason was predominantly

- **The flooding of cheap Chinese goods in the Indian market which might make the local industry suffer**
- **Include the cheap imports may further ruin our dairy and agriculture industry.**
- **India has FTA with ASEAN, however, RCEP should have to increase India's competitiveness in the global market. Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) was not a balanced agreement as it would have hurt India's farmers, our MSMEs, dairy industry and therefore it was prudent for India not to join RCEP.**
- **Chinese domination in the grouping**
- **Threat of circumvention of Rules of Origin due to Tariff Differential once India becomes an RCEP member, China may use lower tariffs than India's offers to Vietnam or Malaysia for dumping its products in India.**
- **Request for Change in Base rate of Customs Duty from 01.01.2014 to 2019 Even if RCEP is signed now, after legal ratification from all countries it will become operational in 2022. Therefore, customs duties of 2014 will get applied in 2022, when the market dynamics will have changed significantly. Its implications can be like this: Suppose India has become a big success in electronics and mobile phone manufacturing because of the increase in tariffs introduced in recent years. India will have to reverse its tariff rates to 2014 level once it joins RCEP. This will take away the current competitiveness of India's electronics industry.**
- **India's past experience with FTAs has not been very positive as it had led to huge import surges leading to injury to the domestic industry. To ensure that no domestic industry in any of the 16 RCEP countries suffers due to malpractices, India had proposed an auto trigger mechanism which has not been accepted.**
- **Exclusion from Most Favoured Nation (MFN) obligations in Investment Chapter**
- **Carve out of sensitive sectors from Ratchet obligations in Investment Chapter**

Under this head, any benefit that India may give to a third country for investments would automatically be applicable to RCEP countries. This was not acceptable as benefits given to France, the USA, Sri Lanka or Nepal will have to be offered to Chinese investments too.

MFN: status is an economic position in which a country enjoys the best trade terms given by its trading partner. MFN status is critically important for smaller and developing countries for several reasons: It gives them access to the larger market. It lowers the cost of their exports since it lowers trade barriers as much as possible.

As a result, their products become more competitive and businesses have more opportunities for growth. It also cuts down on red tape. Different tariffs and customs don't have to be calculated for each import since they are all the same. The downside of MFN status is the country must also grant the same trade benefits to all other members of the agreement or the World Trade Organization. This means they cannot protect their country's industries from cheaper goods produced by foreign countries

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), formerly known as the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative and the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), established in 1997. is an international organisation consisting of 23 states bordering the Indian Ocean. regional forum, tripartite in nature, bringing together representatives of Government, Business and Academia, for

promoting co-operation and closer interaction among them. The Coordinating Secretariat of IORA is located at Ebene, Mauritius.

Member Countries of the Indian Ocean Rim Association

Australia	Madagascar	Seychelles
Bangladesh	Malaysia	Singapore
Comoros	Maldives	South Africa
India	Mauritius	Sri Lanka
Indonesia	Somalia	Tanzania
Iran	Mozambique	Thailand

Kenya	Oman	Yemen
United Arab Emirates		France
Dialogue Partners of the Indian Ocean Rim Association		
China	Germany	United States
Egypt	Japan	Turkey
France	United Kingdom	South Korea

Consider the following Statements about IORA

1. It is a regional tripartite forum that gathers government representatives, academia and business leaders for encouraging cooperation and greater interaction between them.
2. The IORA was formed in March 1997 and the idea for the IORA was formed by India and South Africa.
3. France is the recent country to join the Indian Ocean Rim Association. It joined the organization on 18th December 2020
4. Pakistan is member of IORA.

Select the code

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| a) All of the above | c) 1, 2 and 3 |
| b) 1 and 2 only | d) 1 only |

1. What are objectives and priority areas of IORA and its importance in Ocean Geopolitics. 200 words.

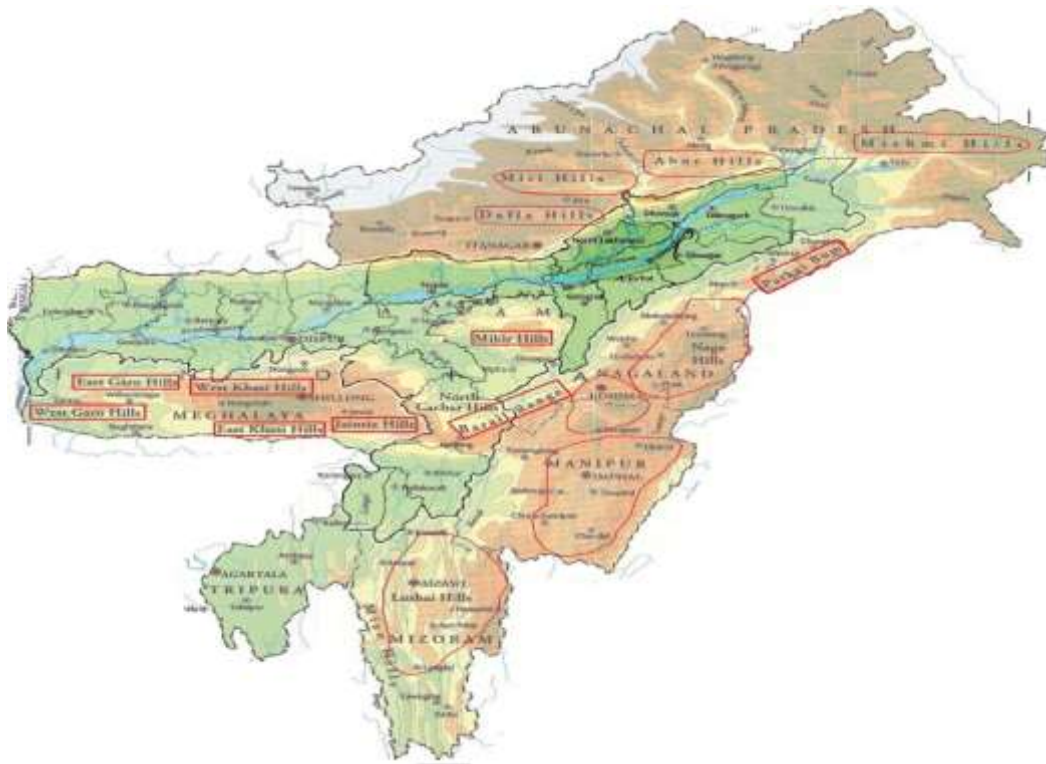
A salient is an elongated protrusion of a geopolitical entity, such as a subnational entity or a sovereign state.

While similar to a peninsula in shape, a salient is not surrounded by water on three sides. Instead, it has a land border on at least two sides and extends out from the larger geographical body of the administrative unit.

In Geopolitics Politics, the term panhandle is often used to describe a relatively long and narrow salient.

- Ex: Wakhan Corridor- Afghanistan , Chittagong- Bangladesh, Sikkim-- India, Jerusalem corridor- Israel

Seven Sister States, India (largest in the world)



North East:

➤ The North-eastern region shares only 2 per cent of its border with the Indian mainland and

➤ 98 per cent with the international border of India with Bangladesh, Myanmar, China and Bhutan.

➤ Cover an area of 2,63,179 sq. Km

➤ Apprx- 8 % of India geographical area

➤ Around 4 % India population

- Around 98% of the boundary of these states has international borders
- Region houses over 200 of the 635 tribal groups in the country. Multi ethnic character
- Region isolated due to location and terrain, resulted into socio-political disturbances and unrest .low level of industrial and eco dev
- Abundant forest resources: petroleum and tea are imp resources
- Agriculture + handloom + horticulture: main activities
- Border trade with Myanmar and Bangladesh is thus especially important.

The North-eastern region and Myanmar have similar economic structures where agriculture dominates. Manufacturing activities contribute a small proportion to total production. Thus, it may be concluded that the resource base and production compositions in the two regions are competitive rather than complementary which limits the scope for trade between them



Chicken Neck / Siliguri Corridor is a narrow stretch of land, 60 km Long and 22 km wide, located around the city of Siliguri in West Bengal, India.

❖ Central transfer point that connects Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sikkim, Darjeeling, and Northeast India to one another.

❖ High Sensitive Territory, Siliguri Corridor was created in 1947 after the partition of Bengal.

- ❖ As a sensitive area amidst three countries, the strip is heavily patrolled by the Indian Army, the Assam Rifles, the Border Security Force and the West Bengal Police.
- ❖ Siliguri is the gateway to North East India.

Siliguri city is located at span areas of the Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri Districts.

Siliguri is situated at the banks of River Mahananda, a Trans boundary river at the foot hills of Himalayas.

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Tetulia Corridor. Proposed 4 km long India to India passage through Bangladesh in northern West Bengal that is in public demand for last 40 years.

This corridor can connect Chopra sub division of North Dinajpur district to Mainaguri in Jalpaiguri district, both in Indian state West Bengal, through Tetulia Upazila in Bangladesh over 85 km cutting down transportation cost significantly. Eventually, this is a major public demand in entire northern West Bengal as well as NE Region



Borders: India, Bangladesh, Thailand, Laos and China

Coastline: 1930 km -Bay of Bengal + Andaman Sea

14 States, Longest River Irrawaddy drain Gulf of Martaban

Myanmar is bounded by the Andaman Sea in the south and by the Bay of Bengal in the southwest.

Naypyidaw – the capital and the third-largest city of Myanmar, located in Mandalay area

Yangon (Rangoon) is the largest city of Myanmar

In the far south, the Mergui Archipelago contains over 800 islands, most of them completely uninhabited.

Ethnic group 68 % Bamar, 9% Shan 7 % Karen 4% Rakhine

Religion: 88% Buddhism, then Christian and Islam

1937: Separated from British Rulers and got independence, On 4 January 1948, the nation became an independent republic

Myanmar is critical link of India look East Policy: Not only share National Borders, but also Historical, Cultural and civilisation linkages.

India shares 1643 km long border with Myanmar. The States of Arunachal Pradesh (520 km), Nagaland (215 km), Manipur (398 km) and Mizoram (510 km) have common border with Myanmar.

The Assam Rifles is guarding the IndoMyanmar Border.

Out of 1643 km, demarcation of 1472 km has been completed. There are two undemarcated portions along Indo-Myanmar border:

- (i) Lohit sub-sector of Arunachal Pradesh – 136 km.
- (ii) Kabaw valley in Manipur – 35 km.

Political Factors: 25 % of legislators appointed by military and rest elected, No amendments to the Constitution are possible without a 75 per cent majority. The Constitution also disqualifies persons with foreign spouses from becoming president. This provision automatically excluded Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Two Major Party: National league for Democracy and Union Solidarity and Development Party

On 1 April 1937, Burma became a separately administered colony of Great

On 4 January 1948, the nation became an independent republic, under the terms of the Burma Independence Act 1947.

- ❖ Since 1962, the military coup in Myanmar: coup (ku) a sudden, violent, and illegal seizure of power from a government. Junta means :a government, especially a military one, that has taken power in a country by force and not by election

Myanmar's army-drafted constitution was approved in a referendum in May 2008, its third since independence

The military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party declared victory in the 2010 election

General elections were held on 8 November 2015. These were the first openly contested elections held in Myanmar since 1990. The results gave the National League for Democracy an absolute majority of seats in both chambers of the national parliament, enough to ensure that its candidate would become president, while NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi is constitutionally barred from the presidency Htin Kyaw was elected as the first non-military president since the military coup of 1962. On 6 April 2016, Aung San Suu Kyi assumed the newly created role of State Counselor, a role akin to a Prime Minister

Suu Kyi's NLD won the 2020 Myanmar general election on 8 November in a landslide, again winning supermajorities in both houses. The USDP, regarded as a proxy for the military, suffered a "humiliating" defeat

In February 2021, Myanmar military declared a one-year state emergency

- ❖ Military rule in Myanmar lasted from 1962 to 2011 and resumed in 2021.
- ❖ in February 2021, the Tatmadaw detained State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, President Win Myint, and other government leaders
- ❖ Tatmadaw: is the official name of the armed forces of Myanmar, It is administered by the Ministry of Defence and composed of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force

Myanmar Basic Needs: Skill Development, Education and Universities, Infrastructure and Institutional Set up, Financial and Judicial knowledge, Electricity Transmission lines, Improvement in Agriculture.

Myanmar Suffering From:

- ❖ Decade of Stagnation

- ❖ **Mismanagements and isolation**
- ❖ **Lack of adequate Infrastructure**
- ❖ **Lack of an educated workforce skilled in modern technology hinders Myanmar's economy**
- ❖ **Weak Institutional Mechanism, High level of Corruption**
- ❖ **Human rights situation deteriorated dramatically**
- ❖ **The army committed extensive violations of international humanitarian law**
- ❖ **The military retained significant political power and remained independent of civilian oversight**
- ❖ **Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fled crimes against humanity in Rakhine State to neighbouring Bangladesh; those who remained continued to live under a system amounting to apartheid**
- ❖ **More than 655,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh as a result of the violence. Other ethnic minority communities were also affected, with an estimated 30,000 people temporarily displaced to other parts of Rakhine State. There were reports of abuses, including killings of informants and the enforced disappearance of ethnic Rakhine and Mro villagers**
- ❖ **Restrictions on freedom of expression remained.**
- ❖ **There was increased religious intolerance and anti-Muslim sentiment. Impunity persisted for past and ongoing human rights violations.**
- ❖ **Economic reforms stagnated, while the peace process – aimed at bringing an end to decades of internal armed conflicts – stalled.**
- ❖ **world's second largest producer of opium, accounting for 25% of entire world production and is a major source of illegal drugs**

Common Issues of Bilateral relations

- ❖ **Border Management and Border security**
- ❖ **Physical Connectivity**
- ❖ **Training and Capacity Building**
- ❖ **Lines of Credit and trade and Investment**
- ❖ **Development linkages: Cooperation in Remote Sensing , Banking and IT, Oil and gas exploration, Hydropower and Defence, Construction of port and Buildings , Health care and education Infrastructure.**

Loc: is not a grant but a 'soft loan' provided on concessional interest rates to developing countries, which has to be repaid by the borrowing government. LOCs also help to promote exports of Indian goods and services, as 75% of the value of the contract must be sourced from India. The projects under LOCs are spread over different sectors (Agriculture, Infrastructure, Telecom, Railway, Transmission/Power, Renewable Energy, etc.)

Kaladan Project: joint venture which is initiated by India and Myanmar. In April 2008, gateway to the Southeast Asia

- It is a huge project which will connect the Indian port of Kolkata with the **Sittwe port of Myanmar in Rakhine State** via the **Kaladan River**.

- It will also link Myanmar with Mizoram. India and Myanmar will be joined at ease and the **Chicken's Neck** would be saved approximately 1328 kilometres for which the transportation need through **Chicken's Neck** or **Siliguri Corridor** will be reduced.



Multi-modal sea, river and road transport corridor for shipment of cargo from the eastern ports of India to Myanmar through Sittwe port as well as to North-Eastern part of India via Myanmar. It has three different stretches involving: Shipping + Inland Water + Road transport

China's hand seen in Myanmar's insurgent group targeting India-backed Kaladan project.

The Arakan Army, an insurgent group whose activities have severely affected the India-backed Kaladan multi-modal transport project in Myanmar.

One of the reasons for the push against the Kaladan project is that it is seen as a rival to the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) centred around a port at Kyaukpyu in Rakhine state. Kyauk Phyu is important for China because the port is the entry point for a Chinese oil and gas pipeline which gives it an alternative route for energy imports from the Middle East that avoids the Malacca Strait.

Named Operation Sunrise, the strategy is aimed at hitting **militant groups that are impacting both India and Myanmar**. It was carried out by **the armies of India and Myanmar**.

The target of the Operation Sunrise was the Arakan Army, an insurgent group trained by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) which is reportedly trained by China



India's Look East policy--India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway (TH) is likely to be operational by December 2019. about 1360 km/1,400km long highway that would link the country with southeast Asia by land and give a boost to trade, business, health, education and tourism ties among the three countries

challenges in the project: "There are some land acquisition and other problems, Tree felling is a big problem.

Peace in Chin and Rakhine states of Myanmar is essential for the completion of the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project and the Trilateral Highway project.

Political instability and violence in Myanmar would also delay plans

Why Myanmar is Important

- **Gateway to East:** Myanmar is important to India from a geopolitical point of view as it geographically stands at the crossroads of India-Southeast relations.
- For Regional Cooperation : Being the only country that sits at the intersection of India's "Neighbourhood First" policy and its "Look East" policy,
- Strong connection between the two countries. **Buddhism, Business, Bollywood, Bharatnatyam, and Burma teak**— these are the five Bs that frame India-Myanmar relations
- For Connectivity – SE Asian Economy and Cultural Connectivity –link to Buddhism.

- For Security in North East for Border trade and boost to NE States of India: trade in goods, trade in services and investment.
- India exports to Myanmar: Sugar, and Pharma products, followed by Oil-Cake and Other Solid Residue, electrical controls, tractors iron and steel product.
- Beans, Pigeon Peas, Pulses and Rice Other Tropical Wood and Other Wood together constitute 86% of India's imports from Myanmar.
- Granites produced in Myanmar can find a market in North-eastern India where house construction has been a booming activity. As of now heavy and bulky stones like marble and granite used in construction in the North-eastern region come from Rajasthan in western India
- **Precious stones:** Myanmar is also famous for high value stones like jade and ruby. Some quantity of these stones is in any case regularly smuggled into India.
- **Power & Gas:** Myanmar's coastal areas are richly deposited with natural gas. Couple of Indian companies including the ONGC are already engaged in exploration and production in the area. Gas supply from Myanmar can be of great advantage for the Indian Economy

Potential Exports of India:

- A. **Refinery products:** Despite the Northeastern region's overall industrial backwardness, the region has come to acquire a significant capacity for refining crude oil. The four refineries of the region, Bongaigaon, Guwahati, Numaligarh, Digboi, all located in the state of Assam. Exporting these surpluses to neighbouring countries can be a more economical proposition than transporting the same to some distant parts of the country. This will also help diversify India's exports at the border.
- B. Already **kerosene** produced in the region is smuggled across the border to Myanmar as informal export. In a normalised and liberalised trading environment between the two countries kerosene and other refinery products from the North-eastern region can easily find outlet in Myanmar.
- C. **Tea:** India can consider exporting Tea to Myanmar, as there exists demand for it. Currently the tea leaves from tea gardens in bordering states are sent to Assam for processing. So tea processing factories can be setup in North-eastern states especially to cater demand for it in Myanmar.

General issues that are hampering India-Myanmar Border Trade

- Illegal checkpoints and tax collection: Due to insurgency, security forces undertake checking of vehicles at checkpoints along Imphal – Moreh highway
- Traders have resentment over harassment and demand for bribe by security forces i.e. Manipur police and Assam Rifles
- Lack of Awareness about trading regimes: It was observed that on 94.6% of items, customs duty has been reduced to 0%. But the information has not yet passed on to border points and they are still charging duties as were there previously
- Stark contrast on two sides of border: Township is substantially developed in Tamu while its counterpart in Moreh is underdeveloped. Overall border area development is thus important

Entrepreneurship Development Programme: Specifically related to border trade issues such programmes should be conducted by the government and other agencies to enhance the capabilities of traders involved in India-Myanmar trade in particular and local population in general.

Defence Cooperation: Defence cooperation between the two countries continues to strengthen. Exchanges of high-level visits, enhanced training cooperation, capacity building and support in provision of specific

equipment and technologies have led to a more wholesome relationship and better understanding of mutual security concerns

- ❖ In 2020, India gifted the Myanmar navy its first ever submarine, a kilo class (INS Sindhuvir) attack submarine which has been refurbished and modernised by Hindustan Shipyard Limited.
- ❖ The two neighbours also conducted joint Army exercises called **IMBAX** since 2017 and are conducting joint maritime patrols since 2013.

Development Cooperation:

- ✓ Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project;
 - ✓ The Trilateral Highway Project,
 - ✓ Myanmar-India Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills, India-Myanmar Industrial Training Centres;
 - ✓ Capacity assistance in public health by supporting upgradation of Yangon Children's Hospital and Sittwe General Hospital and the construction of a 200-bed women's hospital at Monywa;
 - ✓ The Rakhine State Development Programme;
 - ✓ Buddhist heritage :restoration and conservation of Ananda Temple in Bagan and the repair and conservation of 92 earthquake damaged pagodas;
 - ✓ Reconstruction of Yamethin Women Police Training Centre,
 - ✓ RITES is involved in the development of the rail transportation system and in the supply of railway coaches, locos, and parts. **Rail India Technical and Economic Service Limited**
 - ✓ ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL), GAIL, and ESSAR are participants in the energy sector in Myanmar
 - ✓ India's offer to provide medical radiation equipment "**Bhabhatron-2**" for the treatment of cancer patients.
1. Myanmar has been witnessing street protests since the military seized control of the country in a coup on February 1 after detaining Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and other leaders of her National League for Democracy (NLD).
 2. The Manipur government has withdrawn an earlier order against local authorities setting up food and shelter camps for Myanmar citizens entering India due to the ongoing turmoil in the neighbouring country. The Biren Singh government's order for Manipur had drawn a lot of criticism on social media, with many dubbing it inhuman and going against India's long-cherished tradition of hospitality.
 3. New displacements of around 175,000 civilians and some 10,000 refugees have fled to India and Thailand.
 4. The UN General Assembly adopted the draft resolution "The situation in Myanmar" on Friday with 119 Member States voting in favour, including Myanmar while 36 nations abstained, including Myanmar's neighbours - India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Laos, Nepal and Thailand. Russia also abstained.
 5. Belarus was the sole country voting against it.
 6. The resolution expressed "grave concern" at the February 1 coup and called upon Myanmar's military junta to immediately and unconditionally release President Win Myint, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and other government officials, politicians and those arbitrarily detained or arrested

7. The resolution called on the Myanmar armed forces to end the state of emergency and respect all human rights of all the people of the country.

CONCLUSION

- ✓ New Delhi's policy options in Myanmar would depend on the evolving situation on the ground. It remains to be seen if the military can continue in power, in the face of the civil disobedience movement. The nature of the relationship between the Tatmadaw and China will be crucial. If it leads to greater dependence of the military regime on Beijing, it will impact India's security negatively. **India on its part must continue to engage with the Tatmadaw.**
- ✓ Apart from the **civil-military conflict in Myanmar**, the country is a hotbed of **ethnic conflict**. Minority ethnic groups are engaged in a civil war with the **majority Bamar community**. If the country slips into an **extended civil war**, then India will have to be **prepared to deal with** the ensuing implications for its North-eastern states.
- ✓ **Greater policy coordination** between the central government and the Border States **can help avoid** possible alienation of the local communities.



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