

CHAPTER: 7

CONCLUSION

The Indo-Myanmar relation is not new but has a long historical one inherit through share ties over civilizations. In course of relations, the two countries commensurate the value, tradition and institutional systems of each other – although there are, some time, phases of animosity the two countries endured and overcame those shortcoming to build an intimate and unique relation until date. This amiable relationship is a time-tested one and an extraordinary trend that is treasured by the populace of either side. The present intercourse of India and Myanmar earmarked to re-strengthening the bilateral relations that both endures from the ancient time to colonial era and early phase of independence under the astute leaderships of Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru and Myanmar counterpart U Nu. In an interdependent world, India and Myanmar relations stood a high potential of aggravating not only for the two countries, it can bridge the gap between South and Southeast Asia or to extent of bringing the Asian world under one umbrella.

In the introductory chapter, it is seen that Indo-Myanmar relations began as early as the reign of Asoka the Great when he send his two revered Buddhist monks with a mission to spread in Myanmar. Thereafter the Indo-Myanmar relations got, slowly and steadily, intensified in diverse areas – political, economic, linguistic and socio-cultural relations. This relation persisted in harmony until India and Myanmar were brought under the one administration by the British imperial power. Many scholars observing the rapport describes that the friendliness of India and Myanmar was a result being the two wedded as an extended family and either side endurance to relative peace following the principles of love, peace and compassion. The Indo-Myanmar relations, in ancient and medieval period, took place through two routes viz. continental and maritime. The continental route has again two main points of interaction between India and Myanmar – one passes through the frontier of Northeast India and other is said to have passed across the present Bangladesh until it entered in Rakhine state of Myanmar. However, it is said to have sparsely used the continental route due to porous and densely forested area with

danger to lives from wild animals, deadly diseases, mountainous and big rivers etc. After crossing the Ganges Plains and prior to entry in Myanmar, in borderland of Indian and Burmese civilizations, mosaic of ethnic groups with Tibeto-Burman origin, partially intertwined with the Aryan race, are richly flourishing unknown to others. For example, the Ahom, Kachari, Tripuri and Meetei kingdoms along with numerous ethnic groups which practically had system of village autonomy existed as old as twenty-fifth century. Many historians have an opinion that the Northeast was a confluence of both Indian and Burmese civilizations with many commonalities to either side. But the northeast frontier was uniquely protected by its geophysical nature viz. Brahmaputra River in Indian side, Irrawaddy River from Myanmar, great Himalayas in north and by Bay of Bengal in the south. Thus there was hardly an attempt of invasion from either side except occasional attempt to the Meetei and Ahom kingdoms by the Upper Burmese kings. This unique geophysical location of the northeast was ruined only by the British imperial force in the 19th century and made an integral part of the larger British India Empire. Even thereafter the people remained aloof from the great civilizations of India and Myanmar. These two civilizations normally contact each other in the ancient time through the maritime route because it was easier and safer despite long distance.

The major exchange of relations was on trade and commerce because during the time Myanmar was known for rich resources and, Indian merchants were interested with those luxurious resources. Although the Indo-Myanmar relations began during the time of Asoka the Great, the normal and frequent interaction began to establish much later. It suggests that Myanmar being felt in the corridor of the Indian sub-continent, has been greatly influence by the Indian civilization. The foremost was the religious influence of 'Buddhism' and spread to different activities like trade and commerce. The most glorious Pagan dynasty, it is said, was partly due to the influence of Indian civilization. This affinity is proved by the archeologist after thoroughly studied the ruin dynasty and its culture. In that context, India and Myanmar are centers of interaction in the south and Southeast Asian's sub-region, and through this posit assimilation to each other culture was very strong since the ancient and medieval times. An attempt of marriage between the prince and princesses of South Indian and Myanmar was also occurred, it was mainly

due to the Myanmarese king madness on the richness of Indian civilization. But it was strange to know that there was no much influx of population from one country to the other. The inter-change of culture and trade are mostly in a very standard and formal form, which in other words, visiting one country was for a specific time and work. Despite the growing relations of the two countries, widely Indian influence, there was not a single attempt from each side to invade each other kingdom. In truer sense, the relationships were congenial and mutual with only aiming toward sharing of each other culture and religion. The enormous influx of population, mostly Indian to Myanmar started only after nineteenth century following the British subjugation of India in 'Indian War of Independence in 1858' and the three 'Anglo-Burmese Wars'. After India and Myanmar was brought under one political administration by the colonial power, Myanmar became part of the province of British India and thus the relationship between the two grew stronger than ever.

Since the Myanmar became an integral part of British India, there was an unprecedented scale of Indian immigration to the province of Myanmar. There are many factors for this immigration of large Indian population in Myanmar – some are sent by the British India government to carry out administrative, military and commercial purposes while many are in search of better life. India thus became the most convenient reservoir for the supply of manpower in Myanmar. The Indian played a very important role in the development of colonial economy of Myanmar. For example, the Chettyars who are moneylenders plays a tremendous role to the British Indian government in Myanmar in the field of raw material production, mostly in agriculture production. But the excessive exploitation of Indian to the local populations created differences among the Myanmarese because the Indian labour, capital and enterprise which in the beginning helped in the development of Myanmar's economy had gradually came in the way of the economic progress of the Myanmar themselves, the feeling of further suppression by Indian has been created largely among the local population. This demand has led to the separation of Myanmar from the British India in 1937, through the Government of India Act 1935. In spite of the separation there was no total cut off of relations between the Myanmarese and Indian, particularly among the leaders who were fighting for the

freedom from the imperialist power. The demand of integration, from intellectual section, was widely seen because of the great influence of Indian nationalist leaders in their pursuit to their national movement. For example, Mahatma Gandhi has an admiration across the Myanmar and his teaching was adopted in implying on the Myanmar's freedom movement. The mass movement and farmers' rebellion are of similar tactic adopted by the Myanmarese in search and demand of their freedom movement. The non-cooperation and non-violence are main form of protest against the British colonial rule, which was in fact adopted from the Indian freedom struggle. The frequent adoption of Indian tactic is nothing new but was a result of being together in the British India administration for quite a long time.

Even during the Japanese colonization, the Myanmar and India share a deep concern and work together in movement against any form of suppression by the colonial power. Whether one talk about the extremist or moderates form of movement, India has always been part to walk the talk and win over the subjugation of indigenous people by the foreign invaders. In case of extremism, Indian hero Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was closely walking together with the 'thirty comrades' of Myanmar in pursuit of freedom. The Myanmar has even allowed the Indian National Army to have a base camp in Myanmar. This exchange is unprecedentedly a unique boon of relations existing between the two countries. India and Myanmar was no longer accepting idea of suppression thus strategizing to set up indigenous nationalism for the rights and freedom of their population. When the World War II broke out, being experience the bitter treatment of British imperial power, the extremist join with the Japanese side as they were talking about constructing a 'Greater Asianization' in the Asia-Pacific region. However, with the end of the World War II, the British reoccupied both the country in 1945 and political developments began to move rapidly. From the middle of 1945 to the end of 1947, Myanmar experienced a series of new developments which culminated in the achievement of independence on January 4, 1948. This period marked the growth of nationalism for the gaining of independence under the leadership of dynamic leader of General Aung San and his AFPFL, which is an anti-fascist organization, formed after the colonization of Japanese power in Myanmar. It was about time for the granting of

independence in 1946 under the leadership of Aung San, but unfortunately he was assassinated along with six other AFPFL members, who were the architect of Myanmarese unity and integration. During this tragic phase, the Indian nationalist leaders share the grieves together with Myanmarese people, the Indian leaders particularly advise and wishes the best luck in pursuit of their freedom struggled, particularly during the time of negotiating with the British government under the Prime Ministership of Clement Attlee. With the dead of Aung San, U Nu became the head of the Executive Council of Myanmar and start leading the talks with British government. The trust of leaders of the two country is significant with this gesture that when U Nu and his team was on way to England for the negotiation, he stop-by in New Delhi and had a consultation with the Indian leaders about the process of negotiation. The result of negotiation with Clement Attlee was positive and asked to draft a new constitution under the aegis of a Constituent Assembly. Even during the drafting of the constitution, Myanmarese leaders had a detail consultation with Indian counterpart. As a result of a final settlement negotiated and signed by U Nu and Attlee in October 1947, and after passage of the Burma Independence Bill by the British Parliament, Myanmar became an independent sovereign republic on January 4, 1948. It is remarkable to remember that during the British India colonial ruled, Myanmar was no separate international entity but after the separation from British India and further after the Japanese subjugation fallen and new constitution came into being, the Myanmar began to have separate international status. Thus it shows that India and Myanmar are not only close neighbour but share a bond of family relationship in all courses of works. In the period of British reoccupation (1945-1947) the AFPFL and its acknowledged leader Aung San clearly visualized the role of Myanmar as a free nation and maintained India a cordial one.

The policy of non-violence adapted by Myanmar and India since the pre-independence was more favored by the new leaders, particularly U Nu who succeeded the AFPFL after the death of Aung San. This policy pushed and pulled the Myanmarese leaders to choose the principle of neutralism that was enunciated under the auspicious of the Non-Alignment Movement. Myanmar along with India became a strong supporter of non-involvement in any of the power blocs but rather chose to evangelize the principle of

peace and security in the world. Under this guidance, the foreign policy setting of India and Myanmar was also asymmetric to each other. Thus the non-alignment became a cornerstone of Myanmar's foreign policy.

Myanmar had closely watched the Indian independence movement especially in its last phase and a parallel transition period had occurred in India from the middle of 1945 to September 1946, when Jawaharlal Nehru like his Myanmar counterpart Aung San had assumed the controlled of the Executive Council as its Vice-president. This event marked a significant change in the general international situation of Myanmar and India, and their mutual relations in particular may be said to have acquired a new meaning since then. However, formal diplomatic relations were established between Myanmar and India when the Myanmar left the commonwealth on January 4, 1948. Thereafter in spite of various issues like immigration, citizenship, property of Indian capitalist in Myanmar, questions of war damages and money transfers, and debt settlement under the separation agreement of 1937 etc. Myanmar and India closely cooperated with each other. On the diplomatic and political level, the Myanmarese government maintained intimate and informal relations with the Indian government. The Myanmar government has occasionally sought advice of the Indian government and asked for arms and ammunition vis-à-vis financial support when Myanmar was reeling against the separatist and communist groups which were threatening the unity and integrity of the independent Myanmar. Besides, the help and support of India to the Myanmar government, it also signed a Treaty of Friendship in order to maintain close and understanding relationship between the two countries. Thereafter the relations have gradually developed to a warm friendship. The Myanmarese Prime Minister U Nu and his Indian counterpart Nehru contributed more than others to bring about a cordial and intimate relationship. It was due to this friendship that many obstacles which might have marred the relations were removed although some other factors were also responsible for it. As noted earlier cultural similarity had also been reinforced by geographical contiguity and historical experience. This historical affinity, in many ways, appears to have been of some importance as links in the evolution of friendly relations. For instance, U Nu often referred to the common colonial past of Myanmar and India. Without a doubt, the

friendship was also furthered because from the political point of view, both pursued a policy of socialism at home and non-alignment abroad. The similar attitudes and policies in world affairs like Non-Alignment, Colombo Powers' Conference and Afro-Asian gatherings, contributed to the growth of India-Myanmar friendship. Both believed that peaceful co-existence are the most ardent need toward maintaining a close ties in the course of future journey. The first decade of post-independence was rather a very mutual relationship. Many people of Myanmar, prior to the 1962 Chinese invasion, believed that India would pose a counter-balance of great Chinese design in Myanmar.

India and Myanmar were motivated by a strong desire to foster close links among the countries of Asia. Even during the nationalist movements, both the countries had expressed sympathies with other nations of Asia which were struggling for independence. In this way, both turned to be great advocator of Asian solidarity and whenever they felt the need of Asians coming together for achieving their ends, they actively cooperated with each other. In their avowed desire to foster a peace area in south and Southeast Asia, India and Myanmar pursued a form of regional integration. Such a promising development was the formation of the Colombo Power Groups in 1954 consisting of Myanmar, India, Ceylon, Indonesia and Pakistan. The Bandung Conference of 1955 marked a high tide of Asian solidarity. However with the China's emergence as a respectable member of the Asian community and gradual understanding with Myanmar grew with growing influence in Asia, India influence on Myanmar's foreign policy began to wane. This waning began when the General Ne Win became a caretaker government of Myanmar in 1958. Unfortunately there occurred an unexpected situation both in India and Myanmar in 1962 – the Myanmar is overtaken by the military junta under General Ne Win and India faced the brunt of Chinese invasion in the same year. Thereafter, the India-Myanmar relations have undergone a total shift in the approach of the two countries.

The Revolutionary Council under General Ne Win took a u-turn of bilateral relationship with India and slowly became the ally of China. Though it did not change the basic principle of neutrality and socialism, the way policies were formulated does not intermittently on the same path with India. Many scholars describes that this shift of

power from popular democracy to totalitarianism, changes the Myanmarese foreign policy setting vis-à-vis relations with India. Many describes that the problem of economic backwardness, political instability and national disunity were key factors of this paradigm shift in Myanmar. The most important objective in foreign policy of India and Myanmar was non-alignment, aiming to preserve peace and avoid war. A subsidiary purpose was to maintain friendly relations with all countries and to secure help from all quarters without any string attached. For a decade or so the India and Myanmar's effort met with a large measure of success. This raised its status in world politics. This however did not prove to be permanent when Myanmar withdrew its membership from non-alignment movement and the Chinese incursions into India territory in 1962. Soon after experiencing this tragic invasion and threats from neighbours, India has practically shifted her position of non-alignment and began to assert a realistic approach. India, at the same time, approach with Myanmar also negative to the formation of military junta and had supported with the demonstrators of democracy. India even gives refuge to the pro-democracy activist in the embassy in Rangon and in the border states of Manipur and Mizoram. Though the sympathy of India with Myanmarese public still exists, a formal state to state relation was totally cut off.

During this phase, Myanmar has started closer ties with China and was fully depended on every aspect of her needs – be it economic or military development. When the bonhomie of Myanmar and China started, the northeast also become another threat for India due to unprecedented rise of insurgent groups with direct and indirect support of the Chinese and military junta of Myanmar. India applies different mechanism to resolve the northeast issue but it grew stronger beyond the reach some time in 1980s. The insurgent of Naga ethnic group called NSCN and it further led to the formation of many other insurgent groups in the region. As a result the continental route of India and Myanmar was totally scrappy and no Indian leaders gave enough effort to re-establish the northeast in same pace as other regions. The Indian government, particularly during the Indira Gandhi regime, tried to bring back a mutual relation with Myanmar. How there was trust deficit on both side and all attempts of rapprochement was failed. Subsequently there was another military takeover in 1988 under the General Shaw Maung and during this time

India and Myanmar reached to a lowest point as India support the pro-democracy demonstrators vis-à-vis the insurgent group formed by the student community of Myanmar along with anti-junta groups. Both sides accusing each other for sponsoring to attack against the internal affairs of each other country – India blame Myanmar for sponsoring and sheltering India's northeast insurgent groups and Myanmar accused India of sponsoring the Democratic Alliance of Burma. However, India and Myanmar are not ready to withdraw their allegation and a strong force of animosity was prevailing between them. For instance, India even allowed anti-junta radio broadcasting in New Delhi and campaigned the international community to enforce economic sanction over Myanmar. Without a doubt, Myanmar suffered to a great extent due to the positive response of India's campaigned for imposition of economic sanction. The only country that protected Myanmar was China. Taking advantage of weak and isolated Myanmar military regime, China continued to expand her regime in Myanmar and presumably taking Myanmar as an extension of Chinese civilization. The military regime seeing this overriding Chinese action felt insecure and wants building up of relations with the international community.

On the other side, India also became worried of Chinese penetration across Indian Ocean. Moreover, after the collapse of Soviet Union the Indian foreign policy with the west crumpled and she want to look toward the Southeast Asia, which at the time, were growing at a rapid speed in economic paradigm through ASEAN. Thus, India extended a hand of rebuilding friendship with the Myanmar in 1989 by the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi but with his short live, that negotiation could not could the light. But a sense of understanding began among the leaders of both sides to have a mutual term at the earliest. It was when Narasimha Rao became the Prime Minister of India that relations was brought back normalcy between the two countries. This rapprochement has served the interest of India and Myanmar. For India, the rapprochement was a great success of re-constructing relations both bilateral and multilateral with the Southeast Asian countries. Many experts view this as landmark of India's foreign policy toward integrating the south and Southeast Asia. It is clearly mentioned in the chapter four that this rapprochement of relations between the two brought vast improvement in different aspects – diplomatically, geostrategically, militarily and economic development. Some

skeptic argues that the India-Myanmar relations of the 1990s were not enthusiastic because it does not come with an interest to search new ground of progressive development in between the neighbours, yet it came about as a result of apprehensiveness of the Chinese influence in the region. There is huge impact of the Chinese on the sub-region and both India and Myanmar were very cautious of the harms being exploiting the regional security. By the time, Chinese in Myanmar has already been a threat already. Myanmar is already became as a 'pearl' of the Chinese 'string of pearl and India was worried of the maritime security because the capacity Chinese pose threat is largely known to every global leaders and India does not want to be in that situation risking her security to an arch-rival. Thence the Indian government presumably to stand up a counter-balancing act as much India's feel strategy being taken behind the carpet by the Chinese would be harming the legitimate freedom of India in her Ocean. In order to strengthen India pushed forward the strategy to equally undermine the Chinese from random assertion of Indian Territory thus rebuilds relationship with Myanmar. The post-cold war era's Indo-Myanmar relation is purely a new tactical form of relations with multi-faceted and multi-pronged relations. When one looks through the prism of realism, the northeast India history is also phenomenal and lots of unimagined changes takes place. It is rather a turning point for the northeast region because the long isolated region is made a centre of confluence between India and Myanmar. The northeast has also observed dramatic change in aspect of infrastructure development and securing peace. Categorically, there are numerous projects of development being undertaking by the Government of India in order to materialize the long Indo-Myanmar relationship goes smoothly. Some of the infrastructure development which is seen widely around the northeast linking with Myanmar are the India-Myanmar friendship road, border trade centres and Kaladan multi-modal project that is linking the northeast India to the Myanmar's deep sea port and reach to different destination. Meanwhile, during this phase India and Myanmar also jointly work together to strengthen the weak areas of understanding vis-à-vis building security, economic and energy cooperation. In the process the Government of India, in response to Thailand look west policy, enunciated a policy of look east policy. The India's Look East Policy is pushing for the India-

Myanmar bilateral relations and emergence of BIMSTEC as a sub-regional cooperation to bring the two countries together through the multilateral cooperation.

The BIMSTEC is a sub-regional organization formed at the inception by the four states of South and Southeast Asia with an objective to have a socio-economic cooperation among the member-states. It was ceremoniously formed in the year 1997, after the sideline discussion in the ASEAN meeting, under the aegis of BISTEC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation). But the sub-regional organization is expanded its membership to six with the inclusion of Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan. It was, in fact, the brain child of Thailand to have formed a cooperation that can unite the South and Southeast Asian countries base on the intrinsic historical values; India and other member countries willfully welcomed to promulgate it. With the inclusion of more countries, the organization changed its name to a littoral one called the Bay of Bengal Initiatives for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). Thereafter the formal inauguration, numerous Ministerial Meetings was held at different places to chalk out organizational structures and working programme of the body. In 2004, the first summit was held in Bangkok and policy-makers of the member-states collectively discussed various issues such as to create environment for rapid economic development, social progress, mutual assistance on common interest, and providing assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities etc. After critically observing the priority areas, it has collectively agreed on six priority areas to start with and the areas are trade and investment, transport and communication, technology, fishery, energy and tourism. It is also agreed upon among the members to take a lead on one priority area each to test the effectiveness the working model. India undertook a lead on transport and communication, and similarly the responsible for energy and agriculture is lead by Myanmar. The spirit for progress of BIMSTEC is enormous among all the members and there is tremendous outcome benefitting not only to the lead country but shared of development touched upon all. Thus the High Commissioners of member countries regularly meet in Bangkok and hold ministerial level meetings annually.

After four years, the Second Summit is organized at New Delhi in 2008. This summit is significant for the BIMSTEC because it commemorates the completion of tenth anniversary of establishment. The heads of the state/government participated the meeting and deliberate on the future direction of the cooperation. It also minutely discussed to set up BIMSTEC Secretariat so that it can gear up their priority areas to a successful end for the immediate prosperity, development and more integration of the sub-region. In this summit, other priority areas such as agriculture, public health, poverty alleviation, counter-terrorism and transnational crimes, protection of bio-diversity and natural disaster management, culture and people-to-people contact, and climate change were included to expand the functions. Besides the important landmark of this summit was discussion on finalization of BIMSTEC-Free Trade Agreement. In the year 2013, another summit was held in Bangladesh and in this summit the utmost concern was on counter-terrorism, trade and investment, energy, transport and communication, Free Trade Agreement and people-to-people contact although other issues were also discussed in depth. All the members recommit to strengthen the BIMSTEC and integrate the sub-region in spirit of peaceful co-existence. The BIMSTEC observes up and down toward fulfilling their set goals in the last one and half decade. But it remains a pillar of hope for progress, harmony and integrity for not the members only, yet a symbol of solidarity for the South and Southeast Asian region. In short the BIMSTEC is now at the crossroad and it have long journey ahead. The future is as bright as morning star setting with ideal dream to transform the sub-region.

BIMSTEC is a new milestone for the Indo-Myanmar relations as it embarks the two country to come together and share the value of being friendly by retracting the past values. Although BIMSTEC is a sub-regional organization that comprises larger number of states, India and Myanmar have moved an extra mile toward building mutual cooperation. In the process of BIMSTEC initiatives the leaders of both side discussed the agenda of BIMSTEC priority areas as well as bilateral issues that concern on maintaining peace, security and understanding between the two countries. After a long scratchy relation, this is another avenue that brought leaders from both side to interact each other and exchange idea with vision to chart new roadmap of cooperation. The then Prime

Minister of India Manmohan Singh discussed with his counterpart Than Shwe to reconstruct the relations swop by differences of domestic politics in the last four decades. Much to the surprise of many, Indo-Myanmar relations is recovered and both sides began to discuss on issues of common importance such as terrorism, energy, tourism, trade and investment including border trade, military cooperation etc. and with great laughter delegates from two country start meeting each other both at bilateral and multilateral level. One significant outcome through the rapprochement was a strategic development initiatives undertaken between India and Myanmar – the continental border regions had been open for border trade and the peoples living within 14 km from either side of the border are allowed to cross for social interaction and practices of barter trade. In this way, Indo-Myanmar relations have improved both at the government-to-government level and people-to-people interaction.

Under the aegis of BIMSTEC, Indo-Myanmar ties have tremendously improved and some area are evidently witnessed the wave of change. Few to name the collateral transformation are India-Myanmar-Thailand Tri-Lateral Highway, Kaladan Multi-Modal project, India-Myanmar Friendship Road, import and export of energy, improvement on service sector, India-Myanmar Joint Initiatives on Counter-Terrorism, Joint Venture to Control small arms and illicit drug smuggling, tourism, agriculture among many other initiatives. Besides, many infrastructure developments also taking place in both the country with the support of each other in their potential areas. For example, India supported Myanmar towards construction of better road enriching the border areas. The recent permission granted by the two countries to ply bus and air link is utmost re-establishment of relationships. If the BIMSTEC is not acted as a platform, this would be far from reality and not seen light of the day. Thence India and Myanmar have tested the importance of regional cooperation. It is also profound that leaders from either side realize that friendship can be chose but not neighbours, and needs for mutual ties respecting other status quo remained a destiny. This renewed friendship brought excitement, after almost four decades, to all quarters in both the countries. Without a doubt, there are high expectations through this tie not only in term of trade and commerce but social integration as to the status of pre-independence era., because socio-economic

integration can transform borderland areas of either side and the so called development deficit in the periphery can alleviate. With the coming of new regime in New Delhi, efforts were put forward to undo all hindrance and connect the immediate neighbour in every spectrum at the earliest. On this aspect, the Look East Policy has been converted to an Act East Policy. Under the BIMSTEC initiatives, India and Myanmar have many more projects underpinning to finalize. All these could be possible through a meaningful dialogue and trust between the two governments. From the view point of realism, Myanmar closeness with India would also give a counter-balance act to the influence and infiltration of Chinese into the Myanmar hinterland.

In the last two decades, Indo-Myanmar relations have greatly impacted on the India's northeast in diverse aspects; the implication is due to cultural confluence and geophysical location of the region. The Northeast is the only frontier that connects India and Myanmar. However, it has been neglected in development paradigm since India's independence citing various reasons for the regional imbalance. Despite being connected with ninety eight percent of it with international border, Northeast was nowhere in scheme of developmental agenda. After alienation for more than five decades, transformative policy is initiated by Government of India for the region. Undoubtedly the reason was due to changing India's foreign policy in early 1990s with concentration more on the Southeast Asia, and more particularly due to the improvement of Indo-Myanmar relations. Henceforth the Northeast became important partnership in economic cooperation of India with Myanmar as well as in India's relations with the larger Southeast Asia countries. This frontier has about 1463 km directly border to Myanmar and the ethnic groups live across the border with very poor livelihood dependence on farming. There was no facility of healthcare, road, drinking water, electricity and other basic amenities. In short the administration does not reach at all. As a result the borderland ethnic groups of either side falls under the preyed of militants, drug lords, and arms smugglers. But aftermath of Indo-Myanmar relations these ethnic groups started receiving government facilities, though the scheme of development is far marginal and insufficient to support their livelihoods. Impingement of infrastructural development in the Northeast is much ascertained in the urban and semi-urban areas. Many initiatives

such as road and rail network, investment, tourism, education and public health etc. have improved as compare to the last decade. The law and order situation have also improves in the region, it is a result of recuperation of Indo-Myanmar relation. Since India and Myanmar came closer it undertook two pronged methods to deal with the insurgencies who are the main attributor to security crisis; initiative on peaceful means were first applied through negotiation with the insurgent groups, and a hot pursuit is used if necessary as a last resort. Consequently, this tactical strategy force many insurgencies to sign a ceasefire agreement with the concern governments. The northeast have thus experience a peaceful environment in the recent time. Many attributes criticism that India's relations with Myanmar and other ASEAN countries is initiated with propaganda to connect and develop the northeast frontier but there is no tangible change occurred as expected from it. If one look through prism of realism, Indo-Myanmar relations have brought a visionary approach of development for the region and improved not only the infrastructural development within but socially and economically integrates directly with Myanmar and the Southeast Asia. Few years from now, the trade and people-to-people contact would extensively flourish and no longer remain a periphery.

Intermittently there is change and continuity in Indo-Myanmar relations but through it leaders of both countries learned lesson to remain cordial relations with each other as a neighbour. With a time tested experience the two countries recognize that option to maintain peace and security is to maintain mutual cooperation. Though it sometime over-ride by domestic politics and differences of idea, no leaders from either side can afford to sacrifice the strong historical bond of the two countries that share over civilizations. Thus India and Myanmar recommitted to strengthen the cooperation and exert means to expand it in the recent past. On this process, a bilateral meeting is initiated to enhance the bilateral relations and both also finds multilateral cooperation as another platform to come together and deliberate issues of common importance. The BIMSTEC, Mekong Cooperation, and ASEAN are few cooperation both India and Myanmar participate together apart from bilateralism. When Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi visited Naypyidaw in 2014, he deliberated on revivalism of ancient socio-cultural and religious ties, and further says relations of the two in 21st century can be more fruitful

if followed the path of historical past. To a same breadth, General Than Shwe also eager to re-energize the cooperation encompassing trade to military and diplomacy to strategic relations between the two countries. In that sense India and Myanmar are re-establishing a strong foundation for cooperation in days ahead.

Finding of the Research

India and Myanmar, during the seven decades of independence, have encountered change and continuity in its relations, and this has made a mixture of experience in the intercourse of two countries. Some of the findings from the relationships, more vividly in aftermath of the independence are:

1. India and Myanmar has expanded its relations from the trade to security cooperation. This is a result of growing unimagined threats to the status quo of their sovereignty. It is well known that 21st century security concern are deep-rooted and no longer come from the one state to other but the forms of threats become unpredictable and uncertain thus needs strong cooperation among the states. Hence, the leaders of India and Myanmar realizing that circumstance evolve to extend support each other in security concern.
2. India and Myanmar also began to rebuild its connectivity through construction of road, rail, sea and air connectivity. In the colonial period, there was continental linkage between the two via the silk road and sea route but it was defunct after the independence, and that weakened the frequency of people-to-people contact. Lately, India and Myanmar realizes the importance of cooperative competition in trade and commerce, and a necessity of good transport and communication system to facilitate it thus initiatives for better connectivity is set off between the countries through both bilateral and multilateral cooperation. For instance, the trilateral road links between Thailand-Myanmar-India, construction of deep sea port, flight connectivity are few of the noted evident how India and Myanmar is engaging in enhancing better connectivity.
3. The Indo-Myanmar bilateral economic growth is also increased unprecedentedly over the years, and it is the result of opening border trade centers. Since 1994

until date it has opened up six BTC at the frontier. Though it is argue that most BTC are yet to properly functionalize as expected, it has already started exchanging on limited goods and expected further to expand through cooperative engagement.

4. Infrastructure development in the northeast is increased in recent years and many other initiatives are also progressing at a great pace. The construction of transnational rail, road links but port has a potential to harness not only economic but as well to social interaction of either side. For instance, the Kaladan Multi-Modal Project would allow the people of the two countries to easy access with other part of the world because it has shortened the distance, which has been a hurdle for the two nations.
5. There is growing cultural exchange and people-to-people contact in recent years.
6. The increased in cooperation and engagement can lend a hand to deals each other problem and this act can be seen in 2008 when Myanmar faced natural disaster from cyclone Nargis, causing heavy damage in the densely populated, rice-farming delta of the Irrawaddy Division. There were reports that more than 200,000 people were dead or missing, in the worst recorded natural disaster in Myanmar's history. In the immediate days following the disaster, the military regime complicated recovery efforts by delaying the entry of planes delivering medicine, food, and other supplies. A US naval task force carrying much-needed relief supplies, helicopters and other vehicles as well as manpower was denied permission, based on fears that it could be a prelude to a military invasion. But the Government of India stood as a big brother in tackling the disaster menace by rushing needed relief and medical supplies to the affected areas, using two naval ships from Port Blair. This symbolizes the growing of cordial relations.
7. High-level military-to-military contacts began in 2000. In January, Indian Army Chief General Ved Prakash Malik paid a two-day visit to Myanmar. This was followed by the reciprocal visit by his Myanmar counterpart, General Maung Aye, to the northeast Indian city of Shillong. In the aftermath of these meetings, India began to provide non-lethal military support to Myanmar troops along the border. Most of the Myanmar troops' uniforms and other combat gear originated

from India, as were the leased helicopters Myanmar needed to counter the ethnic insurgents operating from sanctuaries along the border. Since then, there has been a steady flow of high level visits from both sides. The junta chief General Than Shwe, visited India in 2004, followed in December 2006 by the third-highest ranking officer in Myanmar's military hierarchy, General Thura Shwe Mann. The latter toured the National Defense Academy in Khadakvasla and the Tata Motors plant in Pune, which manufactures vehicles for India's military. The reciprocity to that has seen many Indian leaders paid visit to Myanmar. In this manner, Indo-Myanmar military understanding and relations has also increased over the years.

8. India has also gearing up its maritime security in the post cold war. It is predominantly to safeguard the security that was mostly exercise free flow of navigation by others during the war period and it has cause a huge insecurity to the nation. Thus the Indian Navy wielding up the maritime zone from others. Previously the Indian Ocean was not merely used by other state actors but widely prevalence of non-state actors such as smugglers of drugs and small arms traders, piracy and underworld groups. India slowly but steadily reformed its policy on protecting and promoting the maritime zone in the post cold war, there are many reasons for this culmination. The utmost reason for this reform is to re-strategize India's Navy strength and become prowess in the region. Other factor which led to this paradigm shift is arisen needs of India's navy to have better collaboration with the Southeast Asian to counter-balance the military preponderance of China. In this mission, Myanmar extended enormous cooperation with India.
9. BIMSTEC plays a significant role to uplift the Indo-Myanmar relations to a greater height. It acted as a medium to strengthen socio-economic cooperation between India and Myanmar. Above that, it also plays a role to fulfilling the national and common interest of India and Myanmar.
10. The Indo-Myanmar relations have reached a new height through the bilateral and multilateral engagement in recent past. Although at the beginning, the rapprochement was at the governmental level but it is expanded to socio-economic and people-to-people level. To realize it, the New Delhi and Naypidaw relaxed the hurdle norms and policies.

11. Northeast India, which was largely considered as landlocked, insurgent prone and hurdle of cordial Indo-Myanmar interaction through continental route has been on path of transforming to an integrated corridor. This conversion set a ray of hope by both the countries because without the northeast the vision of India and Myanmar to reconstructing the past glory of sharing intrinsic values and culture is far from possible.
12. The New Delhi and Naypyidaw relax a policy to made easy access for the indigenous ethnic groups on each other side so that this people can exchange social and cultural interaction that has been constricted since 1960s.
13. The border trade also helps India and Myanmar to share each other scarcity goods items through the border trade. It is, in fact, an alternative to normal trade of India and Myanmar.
14. It also promotes pilgrimage tourism. The free border allows easier cultural exchange and people-to-people contact.

Suggestions and Recommendation

1. India and Myanmar has taken a measure on security concern, mostly the insurgency movement of the ethnic minorities in the borderland, but the decision to wisely exploit it further needs more stringent action and this action could be possible only when India and Myanmar exert their sincere attempt to execute the issue. Under the bilateral and BIMSTEC cooperation, India and Myanmar are collectively engaging to find a model of action, however this line of action is most of the time overlapped by mistrust of the two countries. So it would be ideal if the mutual cooperation on security reach the level of bond which can anticipate the issue with sincerity.
2. Energy is another areas India and Myanmar agreed to exploit and harness for the benefit of the two countries. This issue is illustrated in the chapter four of the thesis that cooperation on the matter has undergone deep investment by India, but found out that at final stage India could not acquire the permission and that goes to the Chinese and other nations. One critical pointer was that of Chinese coming in the Bay of Bengal, which would resulted to security concern for India directly

and to Myanmar indirectly because at times China preponderance of power on Myanmar would be difficult for India to immediately come and help due to presence of the Chinese in between the two. So it is wise to immediately take some precautionary steps not to experience any embarrassment in future.

3. Infrastructure development of the borderland on either side is required immediate attention. Until this is exploited with sincerity, India and Myanmar would likely to continue lagging on all round problems. There are high chances of domination by anti-national elements such as insurgency, smugglers and small arms and ammunition trade. This prevalence has potential of not only destruction of bilateral relations but it would destroy the integrity of the nations' status quo. Therefore, it is better to carry out developmental activities at greater pace to overcome those problems. For instance, the attacked of NSCN (K) and coalition forces against the Indian military in 2015 is because of this reason and it would likely occurred again in future if either side are not giving importance on the issue.
4. The BTC which has opened since 1994 continue to confine on limited products. It needs to relook and needs to expand the items of trade so that the frequency of products produce would generate and share scarcity of productions to each other. Normally, India's northeast is also an agriculture region but production produces were very limited and most of the food items were brought from mainland India which incurred high price and unpredictable of transporting in require time due to the long distant. Instead the northeast is allowed to depend on Myanmar it would be very easy and cheaper too. So to fulfill the theme of integration of northeast with Southeast Asia has to imply from this matter.
5. BIMSTEC is one of the cooperations where India and Myanmar jointly exert upon to strengthen the bilateral relations through regional cooperation. Moreover, the objectives of BIMSTEC are also set on the issues members are striving hardly to overcome with it. Thus there is a pivotal role for the BIMSTEC to harness the priority areas so that it will strengthen the economy of both regional and individual member states. Once the BIMSTEC plays its role effectively then the reeling issues of India and Myanmar would be somehow resolve to certain level.

Henceforth it is a necessary evil for BIMSTEC to accommodate the initiatives at the earliest.

6. FTA is another area where India and Myanmar are facing upon for many years now. It is better the BIMSTEC enunciate and strictly followed FTA principle so that trade between member countries could be carried forward any hurdles.
7. India's northeast have somehow encountered infrastructural improvement such as transport and communication, capital investment, healthcare, tourism after the BIMSTEC emerge or in that sense Indo-Myanmar recovered in 1993, but it is still very marginal and it needs to focus more capital investment in the region. On other hand, there are impending or ongoing projects under the auspicious of BIMSTEC or bilateral agreement but the pace of working is snail slow. Unless there is sincere effort to effectively implement those initiatives, it may end without reaping the fruit in time. Therefore it requires a proper timeframe to completion of the projects once initiated.