

CHAPTER: 2

INDO-MYANMAR RELATIONS: FROM 1947 TO 1962

This chapter is focused on the Indo-Myanmar relations in early phase of independence, and critically observes on how far have it entrenched the relations on bilateral level. It also explores the extent both countries have embraced the spirit of good neighborliness and dealt on issues that have predominant chances to marred long term relations. Equally the chapter also lucidly studies and explores to unearth the depth of profound relations both shared at the global forums. With the enactment of Government of India Act, 1935 the suzerainty of British India was formally separated in 1937 into two parts viz. India and Myanmar (Burma). This separation was made without a proper demarcation of boundary line but merely on the bases of imaginary boundary line created by the British colonial power. Soon India and Myanmar got sovereignty in the mid 1947 and early 1948 respectively; the first priority was to resolve the boundary among others as it may escalate uncertainty along the demarcated borders. Later, the two countries, like other countries, worked together to build better relations through different means. Myanmar became a geostrategic centre after the independence and it has equal importance for all the regional and non-regional actors. Of which India's interest does not denigrate in building relations with Myanmar despite whatever situation marred the Myanmarese from other actors. In reciprocity Myanmar also responded its interest to her western neighbours, particularly India as the expansion of socio-economic development become her main strategy in a globalize world.

2.1. Determinants of the Indo-Myanmar Relations

From time immemorial, India and Myanmar has had a very strong relation and this continue to endure by both sides even after the independence. Generally, Myanmar was an extended province of India under the colonial ruled from 1886 to 1937 thus India and Myanmar shares a common heritage. Apart from that, both suffered the same trounced under the imperialistic yoke of British till the achievement of independence. In the post independence, there are many determinants which led India and Myanmar to continue its relations and some of the factors are enunciated below:

Historically, the Indo-Myanmar relation is a very old one and it preceded the British colonial rule in the sub-continent. As seen in the first chapter, the relations started during the reign of King Asoka the Great, when two propagators of Buddhism were send to Myanmar. The interaction is furthermore strengthened in the medieval period with different dynasties of Myanmar came into contact with the Indian and built trading activities. Largely it expanded in eighteen century when the British colonial master

brought India and Myanmar under one administration. Since then India and Myanmar remains contact to each other and this embarkment push and pull the both sides to remain in cordiality sharing the strong historical values over the two civilizations.¹⁹¹ It is through this integration both sides learned each other values and system, which further led to the continuity even after the separation from each other in 1937 and finally with achievement of independence from the clutches of British hegemony.

Geographically, India and Myanmar are neighbours and it is border by both continental and maritime route. The continental route has a common border of approximately 1463 km – the Indian states of Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram touched the border of Myanmar.¹⁹² Whilst the maritime is connected through the Bay of Bengal and Indian ocean down to the extreme end of Andaman and Nicobar island. This geographical proximity gives advantage for both the countries to continue its relations. Though politically Myanmar has been a part of India from 1886 to 1937, yet nature has separated the two states by a horse shoe of hills that are offshoots of the great Himalayas. Generally, Myanmar is very rich in natural resources and produces minerals like silver, tin and tungsten etc. Further the amount of rice, timber and oil it produce was more than sufficient for itself and the surplus is exported to India. For that matter India practically depended on Myanmar on rice and other productions for its domestic consumption.¹⁹³ In accordance with that, India and Myanmar continues its relationship even after the achievement of freedom and this was much guided by the geographical connectivity.

Ethnically, large numbers of Indian diaspora were in Myanmar prior to the independence. They migrated to serves the British India's administration as well as in search of employment. As discussed in the previous chapter, largely Indian diaspora in Myanmar were gone to work due to high salary and wages as well as better opportunity for employment in comparison to India. Thus in record breaking approximately over three lakhs have entered Rangoon annually since the 1941 and these workers do not

¹⁹¹ Maung Htin Aung (1965). *The stricken peacock: Anglo-Burmese relations 1732-1948*. Hague, p. 96.

¹⁹² Renaud Egretreau (2003). *Wooing the Generals: India's New Burma Policy*. Delhi: Authorspress.

¹⁹³ Peter Ady (1951). Economic basis of unrest in Burma. *Foreign Affairs*, XXIX, p. 469. See also at Uma Shankar Singh (1979). *Burma and India: 1948-1962*. New Delhi: Oxford, p 54.

returned India even after the independence. In aftermath, the diaspora become a pillar of bonding relations between the two countries. On other hand, there are large numbers of ethnic minorities in the continental border such as the Nagas, Meiteis, Chins and Shans etc. The governments of India and Myanmar have to deal with these trans-border ethnic groups.¹⁹⁴ Unlike the China and Myanmar ethnic groups, this side of ethnic minorities do not want to be either side but assert autonomous freedom and it has made difficult for India and Myanmar's state machineries to resolve the problems nor impossible to undergo different route of ties for India and Myanmar. Thus it made a compulsive determinant to follow the same path as it feels that without collaboration it would aggravate violence and face unexpected tragedy even to the chance of breaking the state. Knowingly thus India and Myanmar remains in cordiality with each other.

Administratively, India and Myanmar had many things in common, and when the two got independence, they chose the same parliamentary democracy as form of government. Similarly, Myanmar drafted the constitution based on the constitution of 1936 as a model provide for a democratic form with parliamentary system of government at the national level.¹⁹⁵ The new Myanmar constitution was parliamentary in form, liberal democratic in political orientation, welfare socialist in economic outlook and federal in structure. The original constitution of Myanmar does not include, however, any reference to 'socialist' state but provisions in Chapter II, III and IV of the constitution held various socialist conviction.¹⁹⁶ This constitution is in fact a striking similarity with the constitution of India. The Indian constitution also does not refer India as a socialist state but has many provisions like national planning, industrialization and others which favour a socialist pattern of economy.¹⁹⁷ It appears that the Myanmar constitution makers had been more or less influenced by the ideas of the Indian constitution makers. This has to some degree push and pulls the two to follow the same path as it were in the past.

¹⁹⁴ Bandana Misra (1975). *India's Military help to Neighbouring States: A Case Study of Burma (1948-49)*. (M.Phil Dissertation, SIS/JNU), New Delhi, p. 37.

¹⁹⁵ Kahin (1964). Op.cit. p. 115.

¹⁹⁶ Russell Thirgood (2002). The State: Enemy of the People - Suppression of Human Rights in Burma. *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 8(2), p. 27.

¹⁹⁷ K.P. Krishnashetty (1961). Some Aspects of the Constitution of India, Burma and Ceylon: A Comparative Study. *The Indian Yearbook of International Affairs*, 9 (10), p. 92.

Another important determinant in Indo-Myanmar relations is the personal relationships of leaders. Prior to independence, particularly during the self-determination period, some of the Myanmar leaders and Indian counterparts have developed very strong and friendly relationships with each other guided by similar school of thought. For instance, the friendship of Ba Maw and Subhash Chandra Bose are very interesting - both of them became not only personal friends but also had the same leaning on fascism as their political aim during the Second World War and had supported the Japanese in their war against the British.¹⁹⁸ At the same breadth, the relationship of Pandit Nehru and U Nu has its uniqueness and both have emerged as undisputed leaders of their respective countries immediately after independence also were heroes of their national revolutions.¹⁹⁹ Hence the personal camaraderie was very significant and contributed to the cordial relations between India and Myanmar in post independent time too.

2.2. Indo-Myanmar Relations: *Initiatives to Consolidate Border Security*

Immediately after the independence, Myanmar encountered lots of internal problems and it has chances of reverberation to Indian side too for being the problem of Myanmar was quite similar to the problem of India's northeast. This has high tensity because the frontier on either side is porous and there have been no mechanism to observe the situation. Thus India was worried about the situation occurring in Myanmar particularly due to the secessionist movement. Soon the internal instability harvest across the north and central Myanmar leading to a civil war,²⁰⁰ the Indian government has taken the conflict into serious account and alarmed to counter any spillover has been initiated besides deep concern for the Myanmar. In actual term, India had reasons to be worried about Myanmar Civil War but the huge presence of homogenous ethnic minorities across the border was a concern to India's security. Keeping in view of its own security, India did not want the Myanmar crisis to continue for a long time.²⁰¹ The solution was necessary lest it could serve as a source of inspiration and incitation for the borderland

¹⁹⁸ Ba Maw (1968). Op. Cit. p. 124.

¹⁹⁹ Leon Maria Guerero (1958, February 20). An Asian on Asia: The cult of personality, *The Listener*, 59 (1), p. 305.

²⁰⁰ Bandana Misra (1975). Op.cit. p. 43.

²⁰¹ Tinker, Hugh (1967). *The Union of Burma: A Study of the First Years of Independence*. London, Oxford University Press, p. 251.

minority groups such as Nagas and Mizos. As a result, without getting directly involved in Myanmar domestic problem, India extended all necessary support to the Myanmar government to tackle their internal problems through the financial and military assistance.²⁰²

Although India did not directly involved in the Myanmar internal crisis, it has plays a critical role to resolve it. The Government of India took a lead role and call for the commonwealth conference concerning the proposal for financial aid to Myanmar.²⁰³ Since the pre-independence period, India and Myanmar has been known for mutual relation and as far as mutual security was concerned both the countries had no such border problem with each other as they had with communist China. But there had been evidence of some resistance in 1951 in the fault line where the tribal groups are home. The tribal group to have first started an agitation with the aim to form a separate homeland was the Nagas. It is difficult to speculate who engineered the agitation but there is account that the Nagas started its movement since the colonial period, which mean contemporary to the Indian and Myanmar freedom movement. In 1926, a man who was once part of the British sepoy by the name Jadonang Malangmei²⁰⁴ of Puilon (Kambiron) village from present Tamenglong district had first started revolt against the British rule by asking to stop collecting house tax from his kingdom called ‘Makaam Guangdi’ meaning kingdom of the Nagas. The revolt is largely called by the British administrators and politicians as Naga Raj movement – as this movement disturbed the normal functioning of their administration in the region, he was arrested on false case of murdering four Manipuris betel leaf traders and hanged on 29 August 1931.

On other hand, the Eastern Nagas, who are in trans-border, also lately started its movement and it was widely believed to have the backing of white flag communist from Myanmar and they succeeded in one significant way by boycotting the general election of

²⁰² Ibid, p. 252.

²⁰³ Ibid, p. 252.

²⁰⁴ He along with his lieutenant Rani Gaidinliu formed ‘Riphian’ meaning cadres of approximately 500 Zeliangrong youths to fight the colonial hegemony. Interviewed with Mr. Disinriamang Malangmei, the only son of Jadonang Malangmei in 23 May, 2012.

India held in 1952.²⁰⁵ Disturbed by this incident, Pandit Nehru visited the frontier in October 1952 and felt the gravity of the Nagas problem. Therefore, the need for Indo-Myanmar action to resolve the Naga impasse was discussed during the meeting with his Myanmar counterpart U Nu at Imphal on 29 March 1953, and conducted a joint tour to the Naga tribal areas.²⁰⁶ In course of the visit, the two premiers assured the Nagas of the welfare activity in the areas. For the creation of a better understanding and harmonious relations between the Nagas of both the border areas, U Nu emphasized upon the need for joint visits by Naga Party for friendship and goodwill and vice versa.²⁰⁷ However, it did not result to any settlement but one significant aspect was that for one full year thereafter the Naga tribal areas of either side did not pose any serious threat. To challenge the falls promised, in December 1954, the Nagas formed 'People's Sovereign Republic of Free Nagaland' in the unadministered areas of Indo-Myanmar border by named Hong Khin and started indulging in hostile activities. Simultaneously the Naga National Council in the Naga hill district of Assam also prepared for the final showdown with the Indian government.²⁰⁸ Thus the Indo-Myanmar border were notified as disturbed areas by the Government of India and immediately Nehru had informed to the Lok Sabha on 25 July 1955 that 'the disturbed areas were the small part of territory on the Indo-Myanmar border and not the North-East Frontier'.²⁰⁹ The Indian government also requested assistance from Myanmar to quell the Naga uprising in other side of the border. However, it has been the common concern of both the countries to ensure economic progress and social welfare of this tribe inhabiting in the border area.

Moreover, these tribal areas constituted part of north-east frontier had been a significant line for defence to both India and Myanmar. Therefore whatever measures were to be taken for the benefit of these tribal areas had to be on the basis of Joint Co-ordination of India and Myanmar. The year 1957, however, saw a new development on the border; there were some incidents of violations in the Myanmar territory by the Indian

²⁰⁵ Subir Bhaumik (1996). *Insurgent Cross Fire: North-East India*. New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, p. 81. See also at *The Hindu*, 18 March 1953.

²⁰⁶ *Burma Weekly Bulletin* (1953, April 8). Nehru and Nu toured in Naga inhabitant areas, Vol. 2 (1), Rangoon: *Burma Weekly Bulletin*, p. 2.

²⁰⁷ Dorothy Woodman (1962). *The Making of Burma*. London: Cresset Press, p. 27.

²⁰⁸ Amit Kumar Nag (1956, September 24). Naga Intransigence. *The Guardian*, 3 (9), p. 24.

²⁰⁹ India Parliamentary Debate, 25 July 1955.

army. It occurred at Langua Tingha village on Indo-Myanmar border.²¹⁰ Though Myanmar made no official representation to India, attention was drawn to criticism in Myanmarese press reports. As a result, India assured the Myanmarese government that there can be no border dispute between the two countries and lack of clarity can be settled through friendly discussion or joint local inspection. Referring to the incident at Langua Tingha, it was said that Pandit Nehru informed U Nu and was prepared to accept his own arbitration in the matter even without a team. In the Parliament debate, Nehru further reiterated that our relations with Burma are not such that we should get excited over such matters, but we should decide them in a friendly way.²¹¹

In course of time, border trouble occurred again in 1961 and it started due to subversive activities by the Nagas who operated from the Myanmar territory. When India made a representation to the Government of Myanmar regarding the Nagas hostilities, the latter responded favorably with foreign office in Rangoon immediately issued a communiqué saying that Myanmar would take every measures open to them to deal with the hostile Nagas reported to be operating from our territory.²¹² To implement this assurance the government officials in Myanmar were reported to have given immediate orders to take strict actions against Naga trouble makers. Thus U Nu's government cooperation in dealing with Naga problem won wide appreciation from the Indian government. In spite of this cooperation there continue an irritant in bilateral relations between India and Myanmar with the menace of Naga insurgencies in the border.

2.3. Cooperative Engagement: *India's Military Assistance to Myanmar*

Soon after the independence Myanmar witnessed an episode of internal conflict leading to bloodshed and chaotic conditions. The numerous groups that fought for the national independence now found themselves on different roads. During the freedom movement the conservatives, liberal capitalist, labour, communist, landed gentry and the landless peasants had fought for common cause against the British rule and foreign vested interest but unfortunately the ambition of individuals, rivalries of the groups, clash

²¹⁰ V.T.K. Sarin (1980). *India's north-east in flames*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, p. 99.

²¹¹ Parliamentary Debate (1957, March 17). Pt. 2, Vol. 3 (3), Col. 1697.

²¹² Dorothy Woodman (1955, November). The Nagas at home. *The Guardian (Rangoon)*, 3 (11), p. 27.

of ideologist or differences to the mode and pace of nation building has created stresses and strains to the newly elected Government of Myanmar and they expressed in open dissension.²¹³ This dissension took the form of crises when on 28 March 1948 the communist revolted against the government and just after four months of communist insurrection, the 'white band' of People's Volunteers Organization (PVO) led by Po Kun and Lu Ya Yuang took arms in open rebellion against the government.²¹⁴ Taking advantage of the governments' preoccupation in engaging with the 'White' and 'Red' flag, an anti-government organization of PVO, the insurgent groups such as Karen National Defence Organization (KNDO) and Mon National Defence Organization (MNDO) became more subversive in their activities. In late December 1948 and early January 1949, the KNDO launched an armed campaign against the government, when the joint menace of communist and white band PVOs was about to be curbed, and this insurrection of KNDO and MNDO assumed formidable and their rebellion put the government into unprecedented straits.²¹⁵

Broadly speaking, there were two major groups leading the insurrection one by the communist and the other the Karens, because the PVOs shares ideologically and practically with the communist and MNDO and other groups were very minor groups.²¹⁶ The PVO like the communist party strong by repulsed against the financial and arms support extended by the British government.²¹⁷ On other hand, the Burma Communist Party (BCP) started showing hostile attitude towards the AFPFL after a treaty was signed between U Nu and Attlee accepting either side to remain cooperative to each other.²¹⁸ The BCP dislike so much that it calls for an armed revolution to change the system because for them 'independence' means to secure freedom from the capitalist, expansionist and imperialist power thus denounced U Nu and his government as another

²¹³ Thakin Nu (1949). *Towards Peace and Democracy*. Rangoon: Ministry of Information, p. 92.

²¹⁴ Ibid, p. 93.

²¹⁵ Maung Maung (1969). *Op.cit.* p. 217.

²¹⁶ Uma Shankar Singh (1979). *Op.cit.* p. 54.

²¹⁷ Ibid, p. 54.

²¹⁸ Bernard Fergusson (1962). *Return to Burma*. London: Collins, p. 102.

form of localize imperialism to suppressed the freedom and democracy.²¹⁹ It further criticized that AFPFL policy is a band of colonial slavery embarking to unleash civil war.

To counteract AFPFL policies, the BCP called for a united front as the basis of national uprising to bring people's government through the democratic mean.²²⁰ Similarly, the Karen also threatened the Government of Myanmar and within few months formed a militant group called Karen National Union (KNU) under the leadership of Saw Ba U Gyi and started demanding the right to secede an autonomous Karen state. But under the constitutional provision it was rejected due to an inadequate recognition of their territorial and political demands. Hence in 1947 another group called the Karen National Defence Organization (KNDO) was established and made it clear their demand is fulfilled.²²¹

Generally, it is interesting that these insurgent groups started co-operating with each other against the government though there was nothing in common among them except one point agenda was to overthrow the AFPFL government. The exact strength of all these insurgents was not certain but in October 1951 U Nu estimated it to have approximately between 3000 to 4000 whereas New York times highlights to have approximately 15000 to 20000 of 'white band' forces and few hundred others, including large number of dacoits who took advantage of the political disorders to carry out criminal activities in many rural areas.²²² The chaotic conditions encouraged the tendency of crime and in this impasse some Indians as well as Myanmarese were kidnapped and released only after the ransom money was paid.²²³ Myanmar in 1949 was in complete disorder and in a state of civil war. The major anti government militant groups were all jointly operating and occupied many areas especially in North and Central Myanmar. This insurrection had badly affected Myanmar's internal condition especially the whole economy got disrupted. The Prime Minister U Nu describes that;

²¹⁹ Maung Maung (1969). Op.cit. p. 201. Also see at Nu, Thakin (1949). Op.cit. p. 51.

²²⁰ Frank N. Trager (1966). *Burma: From Kingdom to Republic – A Historical and Political Analysis*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

²²¹ Thakin Nu (1951). *From Peace to Stability*. Rangoon: Ministry of Information, p. 70.

²²² Keesing (1950-52). Contemporary Archives for the years 1950-52. London.

²²³ Walter S. Desai (1954). *India and Burma: A Study*. Calcutta: Orient Longmans.

“the cult of gun in Myanmar had cause death more than 30,000 Myanmarese and over 500,000 people homeless and destitute, and brought fear and insecurity to millions who were not directly affected. In financial terms, the insurrection had caused a loss of more than 3,000,000,000 rupees to the public exchequer”.²²⁴

In his address to the nation on 27 February 1950 U Nu further appealed the insurgents for a cessation of the terrorist activities. In this way, the lawlessness and terrorism in Myanmar had reduced the country in the eyes of the world.

The crisis created in Myanmar by the insurrection was naturally a matter of great concern for the Indian government owing to intimate and extensive ties between the two countries. Thus to help Myanmar come out from the chaotic situation, Pandit Nehru initiated a commonwealth conference by inviting the Great Britain, Pakistan, Australia and Ceylon on 25 February 1949. Subsequently, on 26 February 1949, the Conference of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers issued a joint communiqué which called for an early settlement in Myanmar through conciliation and suggestion was sent to U Nu to overcome the impasses.²²⁵ As a follow up another Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference (CPMC) was held in London in May 1949 and agreed that law and order could not be restored in Myanmar unless the government is sustained thus the ambassadors of India, UK, Pakistan and Ceylon to Rangoon were appointed to a committee to advise the Myanmar government in the form of money, consumer goods and arms.²²⁶

To consider the reports of the committee another CPMC was held at Colombo in January 1950, in which a grant of six million pounds loan was sanctioned to Myanmar. Besides the financial and diplomatic support, India also rendered some military help to the Myanmar government however the nature of military support extended to Myanmar is

²²⁴ Keesing (1950-52). Op. Cit. p. 11095.

²²⁵ Ademola Adeleke (2003-2004, Winter). *The Strings of Neutralism: Burma and the Colombo Plan. Pacific Affairs*, 76 (4), p. 598. Retrieved from <http://www.pacificaffairs.ubc.ca/files/2011/09/adeleke.pdf>
Also see at *Hindustan Times*, 29 February 1949.

²²⁶ Keesing (1948-50). Op. Cit. p. 10625.

not known. Hugh Tinker (1967) has mentioned the Indian arms aid to Myanmar and the excerpt describe as;

‘somehow the desperate months from February to April 1949 were endured and the government was able to rally its scattered forces. Reinforcement of arms and equipment were provided by Britain and India’.²²⁷

This point is substantiated in the writing of Ton That Thein that India send arms and ammunition to Myanmar and aircraft to Air Burma Limited and gave loans to cover some of the losses caused by the insurrection.²²⁸ India’s explicitly support to Myanmar was cleared from air when Pandit Nehru said ‘our government and our people are interested in the present and the future of Burma. It is not our purpose and it is not right for us to interfere in any way with other countries but our friends. We have ventured to do so in regard to Burma too without any element of interference’.²²⁹ India’s area assistance to Myanmar was confirmed in Delhi on 6 March 1949 when Pandit Nehru said that India had supplied arms to the Myanmarese government.²³⁰ This timely concern shown by India to Myanmar at the critical time shows an act of good neighbourliness.

India’s obsessive interest on the internal issue of Myanmar rather than focusing on the national issues which equally faced hurdles of economy, infrastructural development and more so an integration issue from the provincial and princely states to be part of ‘Union of India’ or chose to have identical entity. Later it is found that this

²²⁷ Hugh Tinker (1967). *The Union of Burma: A Study of the First Years of Independence*. London, Oxford University Press, p. 323

²²⁸ Ton That Thein (1963). *India and South East Asia, April 1947-1960: A Study of India’s Policy towards the South East Asian Countries*. Geneva.

²²⁹ Sanamani Yambem (1973). *Indo-Burmese relations upto the emergence of military rule in Burma*. Dissertation, M.Phil./SIS/JNU, New Delhi.

²³⁰ Though it is not known the nature of request but it inferred from the fact that important cabinet ministers were present at the talks between U Nu and Pandit Nehru. It is latter known that U Nu’s obtained armed from India is beyond doubt, in spite of official reserved and secrecy about it. Subsequently, U Nu disclosed it several years later in a speech to AFPFL members of Myanmarese Parliament on 24th September, 1955 that on two occasions he had asked for arms from India. First time about 5000 small arms had been sent to Myanmar but was seized by Myanmarese army mutineers when they went underground. The second time was when Myanmar was on the verge of collapsed India conceded to the request and without asking any questions gave the required arms it needed. India gave the arms and ammunitions without seeking any guarantees that further arms to be given would not suffer the same fate as the previous 5000 guns. See at Ton That Thein (1963). Op. Cit. p. 170.

involvement has certain reasons: firstly, Myanmar is only nation of Southeast Asia that borders by continental and maritime to India thus it occupies a very strategic position in terms of economic, diplomatic, strategic, military and socio-cultural linkages for India's relation to Southeast Asia. Normally, Myanmar is the weakest link in the defence system of the Southeast Asia and the control of Bay of Bengal by an enemy power imperils the security of India. The defence of Myanmar is the defence of India, and it is India's primary concern no less than Myanmar's to see that its frontier remain inviolate. That is why India to be concerned about the happening in Myanmar and obviously it was in India's interest not to allow Myanmar going into pieces.²³¹

Secondly, the Government of Myanmar under U Nu had very friendly relations with India. It was a popularly elected government and was of the same nature as was the Government of India – both followed parliamentary democracy with socialism as their ultimate goal.²³² Moreover, in context of foreign policy the two countries are guided by the principle of non-violence and work hand-in-glove to promote world peace through the non-alignment. Thirdly, the insurrection was of a mixed nature and all the groups that tussled the government has differed their ideology on various point and it was very much clear that they could not have formed a stable government because if any of these forces had got power the other would tried to overthrow it.²³³ In that case only AFPEL, the ruling party, only was in the position to provide a stable government in Myanmar. Above that it has always been India's consistent policy to have a friendly stable government.²³⁴ Fourthly, India at that time was the largest consumer of the Myanmarese rice. From the period 1948 to 1953 the flow of rice from Myanmar to India was 90 per cent of India's rice imports.²³⁵ While the rice was the important and most prominent item of India's imports from Myanmar but India was not getting her normal quota due to the insurrection.

²³¹ Maung Maung (1957). *Burma: In the Family of Nations*. Amsterdam: Djambatan.

²³² Thin Thin Aung & Soe Myint (2006). *India-Burma Relations*, Singapore: Royal Publication, p. 87.

²³³ Rajiv Bhatia (2016). *India-Myanmar relations – Changing contours*. New Delhi: Routledge, p. 90.

²³⁴ James Ciment ed. (2007). *Myanmar (Burma): Civil wars and Coups since 1948*. Encyclopedia of Conflicts Since World War II, Vol. I-IV. New York: Routledge, p. 647.

²³⁵ Hugh Tinker (1967). *The Union of Burma: A Study of the First Years of Independence*. London, Oxford University Press, p. 252.

Fifthly, the insurrection in Myanmar could also encouraged the Indian ethnic minorities, particularly those living along the Indo-Myanmar border, because at that time the Nagas were very much dissatisfied and wanted to have a separate state and the Karen's insurrection could have inspired Nagas also to revolt in India.²³⁶ Sixthly, the communist victory over China was also of an alarm to India. Pandit Nehru felt that communism was not a suitable system in the given conditions of the developing world.²³⁷ When he visited Myanmar in June 1950, he reemphasized his belief that communism would not succeed in India and denounced the communism in India and other Asian countries²³⁸ which in the given context also included Myanmar. Seventhly, the factor of India's support to Myanmar was on concern of the welfare of 700,000 Indian diaspora in Myanmar at that time²³⁹ was involving with the problems. It is very obvious that when a country faces internal chaotic conditions it cannot guarantee the welfare of the citizens of another country. It may be repeated that some Indians living in Myanmar had been kidnapped by the insurgents for ransom money. For India the question of the welfare of the Indian nationals was of a great concern.

2.4. Indo-Myanmar Relations: Financial Aid and Loan to Myanmar

Despite the huge natural resources available, Myanmar in the early phase of independence faced tremendous hurdles due to economic breakdown and insurrection of insurgencies. Thus the Government of Myanmar apart from trade needed foreign aid and loan to overcome the economic situation. During the insurgency period Myanmar required a good amount of cash to buy arms and ammunition in order to meet the cost of its military campaign against the rebels. Thus on 12 April, 1949, U Nu came to Delhi to sought materials for use against the insurgents. There was no official communiqué was issued over the meeting with Pandit Nehru but later U Nu revealed of being obtained almost all the things as wanted, and the excerpt:

²³⁶ David I. Steinberg (2001). *Burma: The state of Myanmar*. Washington: Georgetown Univ. Press, p. 27.

²³⁷ R. C. Hingorani (1989). *Nehru's Foreign Policy*. London: IBH Publishing Company, p. 41.

²³⁸ Jack Henry Brimmell (1959). *Communism in South East Asia: a political analysis*, 276.

²³⁹ Tarun Khanna (2007). *Billion of entrepreneur: How India and China are reshaping their futures*. Boston: Harvard Bussiness School Press, p. 243.

‘Burma is passing through a different period but I am certain we shall soon emerge to peace and prosperity. With neighborly understanding and friendly cooperation which we seldom failed to receive from India, we shall soon come to the end of our troubles’.²⁴⁰

The Government of India provided Myanmar loans both on multilateral and bilateral basis. These loans were given to maintain its internal instability in the face of insurgent activities. At the instance of U Nu’s request, the Prime Minister of India Nehru invited conference of the representatives of the commonwealth countries on 28th February, 1949 at New Delhi to find out ways and means by which they could extend support to Myanmarese government overcome its difficulties. Representatives of India, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Pakistan, United Kingdom and Australia attended the conference.²⁴¹ It was decided that the commonwealth governments would send a joint communication to Myanmar and offer their good office to assist the government, and particularly, to explore the possibilities of mediation between the Karens and the Government of Myanmar. Later, the mediation proposals were dropped at the instance of U Nu to shun impression of interference in the internal affairs.²⁴²

The matter of assistance to Myanmar was discussed for the second time at the Commonwealth’s Prime Ministers Conference in London in May 1949 and finally four commonwealth countries viz. Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and Great Britain agreed to give whatever support they can to the Myanmarese government to end the impasses and restored peace in Myanmar.²⁴³ Apart from that a Burma Aid Committee comprising all the above countries’ ambassadors to Rangoon was set up to implement the decision. The talks were held for a number of months in Rangoon to decide the amount of financial and military assistance to Myanmar both for overcoming the difficult economic situation and

²⁴⁰ The Hindu (1949, April 16). Burmese Prime Minister’s sensational revelation of the Secret deal. *The Hindu, Calcutta*, p. 1.

²⁴¹ The Hindu (1949, February 28). Nehru invites for the Commonwealth Conference. *The Hindu, New Delhi*. For detail see at Pradhan, Swatanter Kumar (1981). *Indo-Burmese Relations 1948-1962*. (Ph.D. Thesis, SIS/JNU), New Delhi, p. 104.

²⁴² *ibid*, p. 105.

²⁴³ The Hindu (1949, May 13). Commonwealth’s Prime Ministers Conference in London. *The Hindu, New Delhi*.

for suppressing the country-wide insurrections. In December 1949, U.E. Maung, then foreign Minister of Myanmar visited New Delhi to discuss with Pandit Nehru on certain matters concerning commonwealth aid to Myanmar. Finally, in March 1950 a Commonwealth Economic Aid Programme for Burma approved and announced six million pounds loan. Of this total amount, India's share was fixed at one million pound with interest free.²⁴⁴

Besides the loan, India and the United Kingdom also jointly decided to offer an advance of rupees 117 lakhs to the State Agriculture Board of Burma. This aid was in fact a goodwill contribution for the Myanmarese government.²⁴⁵ India once again came to the rescue of Myanmar during 1954-55 when the latter faced a financial crisis and looked for foreign loans. In August 1955, U Raschid, a member of Myanmarese cabinet, visited New Delhi to negotiate a loan and credit arrangement with India. On 20th September 1955, it was officially announced that India had agreed to give Myanmar a loan of Rupees 10 Crore. In addition, India had agreed to allowed Myanmar credit amounting to another 10 crore to adjust on purchase in India.²⁴⁶ Later in September 1955, Nehru wrote to U Nu that India was not in a position to offer Myanmar a bigger loan because the India's foreign exchange resources were already overburdened with the requirement of the first and second five year plans. Nevertheless Nehru assured Myanmar of India's fullest sympathy and cooperation in overcoming the economic plight.²⁴⁷ As Myanmar did not draw any part of the loan during the stipulated period, a fresh financial agreement was signed on 12 March 1957 between India and Myanmar in New Delhi to renew the same old agreement. Under this agreement a loan of 20 crore was to be repaid at the rate of 4^{3/7} percent interests in twenty-four half yearly installments beginning from April 1, 1960. Under this agreement if the Government of the Union of Myanmar so desired, this amount was allowed to be transferred to Myanmar or to any sterling area country.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ S.L. Poplai (1959). *Select Documents on Asian Affairs*: Bombay, Vol. 2, p. 90.

²⁴⁵ Eastern Economist (1950, April 28). Vol. 14 (16), New Delhi.

²⁴⁶ Foreign Affairs Record (1955). Vol. 1 (9), p. 175.

²⁴⁷ Asian Recorder (1955). Vol. 1 (38), p. 421.

²⁴⁸ Foreign Affairs Record (1957). Vol. 3 (3), p. 51.

Under the Colombo Plan, Myanmar had not only been a recipient of financial assistance from India but also technical aid, in the form of training facilities.²⁴⁹ Since 1950 India had been sending large technical experts to countries of South and Southeast Asia, two experts were sent to Myanmar too as well as necessary facilities were provided to students, technicians and service personnel in various fields such as education, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering, statistics, forestry, fisheries, agricultural medicine and allied subjects, sericulture, economic planning, power and fuel development, communication, transport and banking, insurance, taxation, handloom products, and budgetary procedures etc.²⁵⁰

2.5. India and Myanmar Bilateral Relations

In a world political system friendly relation among community of states is a necessary evil as the relations not only give advantage towards the socio-economic development but enhance peace and security. To attain this conglomerate world peace, states have to share certain level of trust and builds relations through bilateral or multilateral cooperation. After the World War II there is a concerted effort of all states in order to assert new arena of peace and development under the global security norm. The purpose and value of keeping peaceful co-existence is not just the need of security but a respect to the national integrity of the fellow sovereignty. Likewise India and Myanmar forged to build mutual cooperation and since the early phase of independence, the two countries uphold the spirit of bilateralism and signed many agreements with optimism to maintain cordiality. Some of the areas were on pacifying border issues; socio-economic development; military and other strategic agreements etc. The utmost bilateral agreement was the signing of treaty of friendship in 1951.²⁵¹ All these positive engagement is possible because of the strong friendship of then leaders of the two countries, particularly between Pandit Nehru and U Nu. Besides, India and Myanmar also signed an agreement to quickly resolve the conflicting issues which lies unsolved during the colonial master. It

²⁴⁹ Colombo Plan was materialized at the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Meeting held in Colombo in January 1950, for promoting the economic betterment of South and South-East Asia. Subsequently, Myanmar became a full member of the Colombo Plan at their Consultative Committee Meeting held at Karachi in March 1952. On the other hand, India was an original member of the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee thus India had provided training place to Myanmar.

²⁵⁰ Colombo Plan (1962). Eleventh Annual Report of the Consultative Committee, Melbourne, p. 198.

²⁵¹ See at appendix II.

also affirmed the principle of non-interference to each other internal affairs with sense of peaceful co-existence.²⁵² During this period the leaders consult each other in matters concerning security and foreign policies, and also discussed common issues with intent to build constructive and cooperative relations.

The Indo-Myanmar relation poses a unique one and it existed since the two were under same administration. However, the substance of relations can be clearly seen when the condition of Myanmar is disrupted due to the war damage followed by the economic breakdown in aftermath of Independence. During this period, Myanmar had badly damage of her trade and economy to the tune of approximately 1,780 pound million and subsequently, encountered engrave movement of the ethnic minorities.

Thus India initiated all possible means of assistance and emerged as a custodian of Myanmarese interests. But, popular paper in Myanmar called 'The Republic' has pointed out financial aid that though Pandit Nehru was not prepared to interfere in internal affairs of other countries as shown towards Ho Chi Mink, how himself in the Myanmar affairs. The loan sanctioned by the commonwealth has help to one party involved thus all the contributing nations to the loans were indirectly participating in the conflict.²⁵³ The other plausible reason why the commonwealth countries especially India help the Myanmarese government could be the fear of intervention from another quarter because during the time Chinese communist are reported to have been active in just across the border.²⁵⁴ Consequently, the Indian support at the critical period of Myanmar served as one of the cementing factors in the relations between the two governments. This was an assistance which the Myanmarese Prime Minister U Nu often mentioned when it came to acknowledging the Indian friendship. However, Myanmar did not seem to have figured very high in the priority list of Indian foreign policy though good relations between the two countries were maintained. These generally good relations

²⁵² Frank N. Trager (1966). *Burma: From Kingdom to Republic – A Historical and Political Analysis*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, p. 257.

²⁵³ Meenu Roy (2010). *India and Her Sub-Continent Neighbours*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publication, p. 130. See also at *The Republic* (1950, April 8).

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 131.

were more of a governmental level than on a popular level.²⁵⁵ Finally, it is important to explore some of the bilateral relations India and Myanmar had during the first phase of independence.

a. Treaty of Peace and Friendship

The high watermark of understanding which had developed between India and Myanmar was the signing of 'Treaty of Peace and Friendship' on 7th July, 1951. This treaty is a commitment of both the countries to respect each other sovereignty and live in a peaceful co-existence as a neighbour.²⁵⁶ It is in fact for a period of five years but the spirit of the treaty has revives time and again until Myanmar is coup d'état in 1962.²⁵⁷ Since the time of their independence India and Myanmar had come to each other's assistance and the signing of this treaty can be regarded as a logical conclusion of the highly degree of understanding developed between them. In Myanmar, the conclusion of this treaty was hailed by the Myanmarese press, which considered it as yet another chapter added to the Anal of Myanmarese history. The political freedom which both countries received almost simultaneously was not considered by the Myanmarese an event of mere coincidence but the outcome of a liberation movement which ran parallel for years.²⁵⁸ A cross-section of people from both the countries feel that the treaty would fully utilize the five years period of the treaty to repair the ravage suffered by the long period of colonial rule in Indo-Myanmar relations. Subsequently, the treaty, it was hoped, would serve as the foundation of a strong and a lasting relationship between the two countries. Reaction in India regarding the treaty were equally favorable – the Indian press lauds the signing the treaty with a remark that it marked a high degree of understanding.²⁵⁹

In follow up of the treaty, U Nu visited New Delhi on 21 October to 24 October 1951 for bilateral talk with the Indian counterpart. During the visit, it discussed numerous

²⁵⁵ U Nu (1975). *U Nu: Saturday's Son*. Translated by U Law Yone and edited by U Kyaw Win. New Haven: Yale University Press.

²⁵⁶ See at Appendix II.

²⁵⁷ Ibid, Article VIII of Appendix II.

²⁵⁸ New Times of Burma (1951, July 8). Indo-Myanmar treaty of friendship: New landmark of liberation. *New Times of Burma, Rangoon*.

²⁵⁹ The Statesman (1951, July 9). India and Myanmar signed Treaty of Friendship. *The Statesman, Hyderabad*.

issues to enhance the cooperation and engagement under the agreement. In that context, the period from 1951-54 can easily be regarded as one of the most cordial and friendly period in the relations of these two countries.²⁶⁰ Generally speaking, intensity of building cordial relationship and peaceful co-existence has been the chief objective of all the independence nations, particularly among the third world countries in early stage of their independence. The ultimate reason for it was a result of rising unimagined threats. Indeed, it was also a preference of the community of states to maintain peace and security internally as well as externally. This codification of friendship was to respect each other sovereignty base on the principle of international law and treaties. Soon after the independence from the suppressive control of British imperialism, the two countries came forward to pacify all the outstanding disputes. This is, unsurprisingly possible because of the long intimate relations of the two countries not just in political field but at the personal level of the leadership. With immense effort of Pandit Nehru and his moral foreign policy toward the immediate eastern neighbour, border dispute has been resolve without any tensivity and unimagined violence albeit strong contention from the borderland ethnic minority.²⁶¹ However, India and Myanmar wisely controlled untoward movement and strengthened relations by maintaining the principle of peaceful co-existence.

India contribute extensive support for the freedom of Myanmar that sow seeds in 1948 just one year after India's independence. The freedom fighters of Myanmar and U Nu anticipate the great help extended by India. Of which many political leaders of Myanmar embraced the relationship of India and Myanmar at heart. As stated earlier, the main objective of this treaty was to respect each other sovereignty and maintain status quo without non-interference on each other internal affairs but to build peaceful co-existence with vision of promoting peace and security.²⁶² In short, agreement was made to protect and promote intrinsic value of common hope. Some of the political analyst, viewing the exchange of cordiality, opined that relations between India and Myanmar was base on moral principles which is a new type ever seen in rest of the world. Under the banner of this treaty, India and Myanmar also works together in elimination of racial

²⁶⁰ Sanamani Yambem (1973). Op. Cit. p. 25.

²⁶¹ Ibid, p. 26.

²⁶² Maung Maung (1957). Op.cit. p. 128.

discrimination, colonialism and other forms of segregation by few strong over the common rest round the world. This message cordiality has reached out to different parts of the world and extended their full support in bringing this work from words to actions.

In March 1953, the Myanmar premier paid another visit to India and on this occasion, the two leaders Nehru and U Nu made a joint toured to the border areas to acquaint themselves the issues of the frontier.²⁶³ The initiative of boundary demarcation henceforth started under the auspicious of the treaty in early 1960s, it was merely not by the hemmed of Naga movement but around the same time Myanmar and China has signed an agreement of border settlement, which was considered by many to be impossible.²⁶⁴ Thus it strikes the Indian leaders too to find a common ground of Indo-Myanmar border issue. Myanmar shares a longer border to China with a total length of 1500 miles as compared to the Indo-Myanmar border which covers a length of 800 miles. In that context, the frontier between Myanmar and India perceived to find easy solution as compare to that of China – the ethnic groups between them of which none of them whole heartedly committed either to join with Myanmar or China.²⁶⁵ Unlike that the complex ethnic groups of Indo-Myanmar frontier, they do not want to identify either India or Myanmar, and this become a hurdle to bring lasting solution.

On other side, India was very friendly at the time did not want to uttered words nor do anything which might displease China. The Indian attitude to the Sino-Myanmar frontiers problem was a rather silent one. With its own effort Myanmar solved the problem without receiving any advice or assistance from India and in turn without excessively bordering about the Indian sensibility. The border was demarcated and in 1960 a border agreement was signed and it was regarded as a model of how Asian countries could settle their problem and disputes to maintain peace themselves.²⁶⁶ Though the border between India and Myanmar did not raise any serious difficulties, yet the border remained unmarked except for demarcation accomplished by the British during the colonial rule. The decision to formally demarcate the border was attempted in 1967

²⁶³ Ibid, p. 226.

²⁶⁴ See at Uma Shankar Singh (1979). Op.cit. p. 77 on the Sino-Burmese Border Treaty of 1961.

²⁶⁵ Richar J. Kosikki (1957, March). The Sino-Burmese Frontier Problem. *Far Eastern Survey*, p. 35.

²⁶⁶ Renaud Egreteau (2003). *Wooing the Generals: India's New Burma Policy*. Delhi: Authorspress, p. 29.

with an aimed strengthen the friendship between the two countries but it was failed to carry forward successfully.

b. KMT Crisis and the Reaction of India

During the first few years after the independence, KMT (Kuomintang) crisis emerged as a significant event in Myanmar which drew the attention of the Indian government. The Kuomintang crisis was a consequence of the defeat of these nationalist troops in the hands of the communist forces resulting finally in the communist victory in China in the year 1949.²⁶⁷ Like the Myanmarese government, the new communist government of China did not effectively control the area along the Sino-Myanmar border which was largely mountainous, sparsely populated and un-demarcated. This provided the defeated KMT armies in Yunnan province an excellent place to retrench, which subsequently posed security threat to Myanmar.²⁶⁸ In the beginning Myanmar did not give due consideration to this situation because of the preoccupation in internal crisis to prevalence of civil war. In 1950, the issue of large scale intrusion of KMT troops became an added problem for Myanmarese government and status quo. The intrusion created a potentially dangerous security threat in the north and by 1952 the crisis aggravated as the strength of KMT had increased to about 12,000 troops and subsequently, it was reported to have increased at an alarming numbers of 30,000 by 1953 under the command of General Li Mi.²⁶⁹ Thus the Myanmarese government feared that the Chinese government might take advantage of KMT troops and invade in their country. So the Government of Myanmar started condemning the presence of these troops and made an attempt to thwart the KMT but the attempt through diplomatic channel proved unsuccessful due to KMTs' refusal to submit on principle of disarmament and investment.²⁷⁰

On other hand, India showed its concern at the presence of KMT troops on the Myanmar soil from the very beginning and India could not afford to remain indifferent to the growing threat to Myanmar security. Thus the New Delhi on 28 February 1952 hold

²⁶⁷ Dorothy woodman (1962). Op.cit. p. 520.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 539. Also see at Taylor, Robert H. (1973). Foreign and Domestic Consequences of the KMT Intervention in Burma. New York, p. 10.

²⁶⁹ John F. Cady (1953). The situation in Burma. *Far Eastern Survey*, 22 (5), p. 49.

²⁷⁰ Ton That Thein (1963). Op. Cit. p. 178.

press conference in which Pandit Nehru said the presence of these troops is a matter of grave concern for the Government of Myanmar more especially the presence of Kuomintang troops because of conflicts on the border, and so long as these troops are there no country can be tolerated and they should be pushed out into the sea or mountains or anywhere else.²⁷¹ India's vital interest in anything pertaining to the security and stability of Myanmar was aptly described by 'The Hindu' in its editorial on March 18, 1953 'to the extent that the regime in Burma is strong, our northeastern frontier is secure'.²⁷²

Consequently, when Myanmar raised the issue at the United Nations in 1953, the Indian government strongly supported the Myanmar case. During the course of a joint tour of the Indo-Myanmar border with U Nu, Pandit Nehru stated that India's attitude regarding Myanmar's complaint in the United Nations would be to support that complaint.²⁷³ In the debate of the Political Committee of General Assembly on the issue, Krishna Menon, the Representative of India, highly deplored the situation growing out of the presence of the KMT troops in Myanmar and their hostile activities. On 17 April, 1953, he said, 'any violation of the honour of Burma or any wrong done to that country was a significant to it as a wrong done to India'.²⁷⁴ Likewise India's concern was always reiterated and said that the aggression was quite obvious and that the occupation of 50,000 square miles of Myanmar territory was an absolutely illegal and a flagrant act of aggression, which must be brought to an end with all urgency.²⁷⁵ However, unfortunately the presence of KMT until 1953 has no sign of retreatment. As a result, India equally becomes apprehensive of the intrusion of Chinese in the India's northeast frontier. Many policy makers describe that what hurts the Myanmar people equally hurts the sentiment of Indian and both India and Myanmar need to stand firm to counter the visible threat with the support of the United Nations. In the year 1953, India also became a party to nine-power resolution which stressed upon disarmament and interment of the KMT force in

²⁷¹ Jawaharlal Nehru (1952). Press conference 1952. New Delhi: Information Service of India, pp. 4-5.

²⁷² The Hindu (1953, March 18). Editorial. *The Hindu, New Delhi*.

²⁷³ Dorothy Woodman (1962). Op.cit. p. 527. Also see at Burma Weekly Bulletin (1953, April 8).

²⁷⁴ United Nations (1953). General Assembly Official Records (GAOR). 7th Session, First Committee, 605th Meeting 17 April 1952-53, Vol. 1, p. 659.

²⁷⁵ *ibid*, 611th meeting, April 22, 1953, p. 685. Also see at Uma Shankar Singh (1979). Op.cit. p. 65.

Myanmar and assured the Government of the Union of Burma of its continuing sympathy and support on efforts to bring about a complete solution of this serious problems.²⁷⁶

c. Pacific Settlement of Disputes

In aftermath of the partition by an Act of Government, 1935 and formal independence as distinct political identity, there were voluminous unresolved social, economic, political and diplomatic issues between the two countries. These issues have potential to diplomatic clash if the leader of both sides does not apply their best intellectual input to resolve the issue. Thus the Pandit Nehru made his effort along with U Nu to pacify all the disputes without use of force and somehow with good sense prevailed that it comes to understanding. It convinced the leader of either side and slowly brought all the daunted issues under control or pacifies the settlement. Prior to that there was onslaught of suspicion and conflict with each other. The situation looks quite grim as much to the seriousness of the problems. For instance, Myanmar government under U Nu passed an Act of Land Nationalization in 1951.²⁷⁷ Under this Act, the Indian diaspora has faced the direct and indirect effect because the government ceased their wealth, company's rights, and license of working permission.²⁷⁸ It largely affects the big moneylenders, businessmen and agriculturists.

In the meantime, another tricky problem was the boundary demarcation that is acceptable to both sides. During the colonial rule there was no demarcation of boundary made on the interest of indigenous ethnic populations in the fault line, whatever boundary laid down was just based on their administrative convenience, and this jurisdiction is not acceptable by either sides as international boundary. This spurious situation has uproar into a big issue between the governments and the indigenous ethnic groups of the trans-border. The ethnic group such as Nagas and Chins of this fault line does not accept the suzerainty of either country and thus take up arms to fight against the political arrangement by the Indian and Myanmarese governments. This repulsion led to a chaotic

²⁷⁶ Robert H. Taylor (1973). *Foreign and Domestic Consequences of the KMT Intervention in Burma*. New York, p. 58.

²⁷⁷ Uma Shankar Singh (1979). *Op.cit.* p. 66.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 67.

movement and there was relentless protest over the deal of border issue.²⁷⁹ Many soldiers sacrifices in course for the sake of promoting peace vis-à-vis safeguarding the future boundary of their country. In short, it was of three pronged conflict in which Myanmar, India and ethnic groups were fighting a tugged-of-war for their legitimacy over it. The Indian Prime Minister Nehru viewing the depleting condition called upon his counterpart U Nu to bring certain peaceful measure on the issue. In hearty response, U Nu also share his intention to solve the most tentacle issue base on the principle of the treaty of friendship that was signed in 1951.²⁸⁰ Unexpectedly the misunderstanding at the level of governments was resolved through negotiation and has opened a wider scope of relations but the fight of ethnic groups continued its discontentment and adamant to the decision brought forth by India and Myanmar. In 1967 another attempt was made to finally sign off the border agreement but unfortunately it fails to come out common grounds unlike the Sino-Myanmar border disputes resolution.

Since then, the matter was kept in abeyance from sparking an issue. Besides, India and Myanmar also peacefully resolves the issues such as debt settlement, trade and maritime boundary issues etc. In general, the leaders of both countries have wisely handled and endure all the disputes through cordial relations and negotiations.

d. Debt Settlement

Debt settlement was another important issue in the post independent time. Under the separation agreement of 1937, Myanmar was to pay India a fixed amount of Rupees 50,79,81,000 as an outstanding debt on the date of the separation. The debt was repayable in forty five years with three and half percent interest per year commencing from 1937-38.²⁸¹ The repayment of this debt and to payment of Myanmar share of pensions were, however, suspended in 1942 when Myanmar was overrun by the Japanese and had not been resumed thereafter. As a result, on 31 March 1946 Myanmar still owed India a sum of Rupees 48,14,55,147 out of the original debt and Rs 2,99,35,151 on account of

²⁷⁹ There was severe internal pressure from interested groups in India, yet Pandit Nehru dealt the matter courteously and politely to bring mutual understanding with the Myanmarese government. See at Parliament Debate (1954, November 26). Lok Sabha, Government of India, Vol. 61 (1), Col. 556-57.

²⁸⁰ Appendix II. See also at Uma Shankar Singh (1979). Op.cit. p. 69.

²⁸¹ Constituent Assembly Debate (1947, November 19). Government of India, Vol. 1 (3), p. 165.

pensions and the total amount was Rupees 511,390,298.²⁸² The issue of repayment of debt to India remained unresolved during the period from Myanmar's independence to April 1954. The Government of Myanmar underwent great economic hardship during this period and hence unable to repay it. Nevertheless, the repayment of debt issue was raised in India during the debates of the Constituent Assembly and the Parliament. The response to a question, John Matthai, the then Finance Minister of India stated that India was still exploring the possibilities, and further reiterates that 'we have not so far reached any definite conclusion'²⁸³ but it should be appreciated that in the present financial position of Burma the question of payment present certain difficulties.

Ultimately, in April 1954 C.D. Deshmukh, the new Finance Minister of India, announced the final settlement of the outstanding liabilities of the Government of Myanmar to India. Keeping in view the principal objective of maintaining friendly relations with Myanmar, India under this agreement made a generous gesture of writing off fifty percent of the capital besides the entire interest charge.²⁸⁴ From the total debt amounted of 72 crore, 48 crore was capital and the balance are interest and under the Indo-Pak partition arrangement, Pakistan was entitled to 17½ percent of Myanmar debt. Therefore, India's share of the capital came to 40 crores which India now agreed to reduce to 20 crores only.²⁸⁵ Further the repayment of this amount was linked with India's purchase of 9 lakhs tons of Myanmar rice at 48 pound per ton during the year 1954. As a result, Myanmar was to pay only 13 Sterling for every ton purchase by India to be adjusted towards her debt. Under this agreement it came to 15.6 crores and the balance was to be treated as financial aid to Myanmar under the Colombo Plan.

Myanmar had, however, agreed to pay the share of the Central Pensionery Charge which was seven and half per cent of the liabilities of undivided India. Subsequently, Myanmar had undertaken to commence payment of current dues in respect of this amount from 1st April 1954, while the arrears of six crore was decided to be paid in 20 equal

²⁸² Ibid, p. 166.

²⁸³ Pradhan, Swatanter Kumar (1981). *Indo-Burmese Relations 1948-1962*. (Ph.D. Thesis, SIS/JNU), New Delhi, p. 113. Also see at Assembly Debate (1947, November 23). Government of India, Vol. 4 (20), p. 670.

²⁸⁴ Parliamentary Debates (1954, April 8). Lok Sabha, pt. 2. Vol. 3 (41), p. 458.

²⁸⁵ Parliamentary Debates (1954). Sixth Session of the Lok Sabha, Appendix VIII, Annexure 44, p. 699.

annual installments without any interest. The settlement of the debt problem expounds the act of generosity India and it had been commensurately appreciated by the Myanmarese government. In its editorial 'The Hindu' on 11 April 1954 appreciated India's gesture of goodwill in the settlement of the debt problem and the excerpt:

'this country has behaved towards Burma not only as a good neighbor but also as a good Samaritan....the generous sacrifice she had made under the debt agreement and the admittedly liberal price offered for Burma's rice are an earnest of India's desire to place Burma financially on her feet and strengthen the economic and political ties between the two countries. It is heartening to know that this is fully appreciated in Burma'.²⁸⁶

2.6. Indo-Myanmar Relations: Undivided Interest in Global Forums

After the independence, the leadership of both the countries has recommitted to work upon the promotion of world peace and security under the guiding principle of non-violence. From the very beginning the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Myanmar Counterpart U Nu dwells upon to work on the same streamline that would promote and protect the values of lives and condemned the segregation and separation of humanity base on colour, creed, sex and religion. This commitment is clearly seen in their participation at different global forums such as the United Nations, Non-Alignment Movement and Afro-Asian Association.²⁸⁷ During this phase both the countries has followed a democratic principle and have a very strong repose of trust on each other. As being fighting together in the self-determination movement against the colonial hegemony, they feel closeness to each other would embark more strength on their struggle against colonialism. India cannot neglect Myanmar and so much so for Myanmar without India due to many reasons. Hence it is seen that the leaders of both the countries shared common problems and interest to not only uplifting the two country's backwardness but also to strengthened their assertion against the discrepancies of world. Frank N. Trager (1966) also echoed that ever since Myanmar participated in the Asian

²⁸⁶ Burma Weekly Bulletin (1954, April 11). Burma's agreed payment of central pensionery charge. 3 (2-3), p. 14.

²⁸⁷ William C. Johnstone (1963). *Burma's Foreign Policy: A Study in Neutralism*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

relations conference at New Delhi in 1947, it sent many official and private missions to a wide variety of meetings and conference held in southern Asia.²⁸⁸

In the middle of twentieth century, the ravage of World War II has come to an end after killing scourge of innocent lives and damage properties that cost billions of dollars. This catastrophe led the community of states to come together and jointly exert a common platform where all states can resort for world peace and security. At this juxtapose the community of states, including vanquish and victim of the war, retorted for maintaining and promoting collective security. This initiative led to the formation of United Nations as an apex international organization on 24th October, 1945 bases on international law and treaties and along the line many newly independent countries across the world came to birth.²⁸⁹ Not forgetting they are the product of this new scheme thus like other third world countries, India and Myanmar actively involved towards promotion of peace and security and non-interference against the internal affairs of other nation but give equal respect to all the sovereign states.²⁹⁰ Some of the international platforms in which India and Myanmar collectively involved in advocating their proposal of the principles of non-violence, non-interference and to yield security are the United Nations, Non-Alignment Movement and Afro-Asian Association among others. In the meantime, the collective participations of India and Myanmar in the United Nations and the Afro-Asian Forum are briefly illustrated below:

a. United Nations

India and Myanmar immediately became member states in the United Nations soon the two were formally recognized a sovereign states in 1947 and 1948 respectively. India was, since the inception of United Nations, actively involves in the process of its formation, and Myanmar joined it less than four months after winning its independence in

²⁸⁸ Frank N. Trager (1966). Op.cit. p. 267.

²⁸⁹ Under Nehru and U Nu, India and Myanmar also refused to take sides in the cold war between the western bloc and communist bloc. Hence the United Nations gives the best platform to speak their new ideology of peace. See at K. P. Karunakaran (1958). *India in world affairs*. Calcutta: Oxford Univeersity Press, p. 47.

²⁹⁰ Uma Shankar Singh (1979). Op.cit. p. 65.

1948 primarily to protect self against future possible aggression by a stronger power.²⁹¹ Both the countries are committed to the principles of the United Nations and strive to promote it to the fullest. They find interest in it because it was on the streamline of their core values i.e., the approach of non-violence. India and Myanmar showcase their patience and perseverance through the hard time of freedom movement thus endured toward the promotion of peace and security was their first gospel to the international community and are keen to strengthen collective security so that regardless of size and power every nation can have similar dignity before each other.²⁹² As it says action is louder than words, the participation of India and Myanmar in the United Nations eulogizes the real meaning of its development when the pragmatism of their brain child Non-Alignment is reflected in the United Nations. Pandit Nehru was speaking of peace, harmony and prosperity as the ideal goal to achieve under the aegis of the United Nations.

In similar tone, the Premier of Myanmar U Nu describes the dangers of forming an alliance of warfare that it would over-cross the guiding principles of the organization.²⁹³ Myanmar being suffered badly from the Second World War is much to have denounced the military alliance as it did not want to be repeated. The two countries were collectively evangelizing the values of humanity as to be the strength of the United Nations because unless it is respected the meaning of such forum is mere replica of a rubber stamp. India especially has endorsed Myanmar representative for the Secretary-General position thus U Thant became a symbolic gesture of the world leader.²⁹⁴ Besides that when Myanmar was reeling of the secessionist movement and economic breakdown India stood by it and seeks the world leaders to extend cooperation toward resolving the Myanmar problems.²⁹⁵ To the same breadth, Myanmar also supported India's position on issues such as disarmament, non-interference and peacekeeping etc. in the United Nations

²⁹¹ Jurgen Haacke (2006). *Myanmar's Foreign Policy: Domestic Influences and International Implications*. London: Routledge.

²⁹² William C. Johnstone (1963). Op. Cit. p. 110.

²⁹³ British Broadcasting Corporation (1956, July 5). London Calling: Postscript to the Burma elections. Digitized by the University of Michigan on 18 Apr 2011, Issues No. 870-895, p. 6.

²⁹⁴ Pranay Gupte (2009). *Mother India: A political biography of Indira Gandhi*. New Delhi: Penguin, p. 289.

²⁹⁵ Joseph Russell Rudolph (2003). *Encyclopedia of Modern Ethnic Conflicts*. Singapore: Greenwood Press, p. 18.

on many occasions. As a neighbour bound by same values, India and Myanmar had joint the same path in the early phase of their independence.

b. Afro-Asian Nations Forum

India is one of the biggest countries among the third world countries. Ever since the independence, India strives to form a new association of all third world countries. In the process India convince her nearest eastern neighbour Myanmar to adopt the policy of neutralization as both countries does suffered badly from the hands of the colonial master and does not want the repetition for second time.²⁹⁶ Soon Myanmar responded positively and works together with India toward achieving the goal of sovereignty as well as maintain free from suppression. In this alternative policy both India and Myanmar became a pioneer in spreading the gospel of freedom from colonialism and any other forms of subjugation among the newly independence countries. Lacking not both India and Myanmar joined hands with all the Asian and African countries in fulfilling their aspiration. In this way, it yields to grow a relation under Pandit Nehru and U Nu. The advantage to this was the geographical linkage – the two countries share not only bilateral relations but also become close partner even in multilateral relationship.²⁹⁷ Notable example of the Indo-Myanmar cooperative engagement under this auspicious was the fighting of apartheid movement in South Africa along with other Afro-Asian countries.²⁹⁸ Seeing this relationship at international podium led an apprehension to some of the neighbours presuming that tightening relationship between India and Myanmar would become another threatening situation for the rest.

At any circumstance India and Myanmar continued working together unceasingly to uplift the spirit of progressive development, unity, peace and harmony in the region. Therefore like China suspicion grew and starts supported the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) in Myanmar with an intention to break the cooperative relationship.²⁹⁹ The exploitation approach within the Myanmar internal policy has expanded like a wildfire in

²⁹⁶ G.H. Jansen (1966). *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment*. London: OUP, p. 14.

²⁹⁷ Ton That Thein (1963). *Op.cit.* p. 115.

²⁹⁸ G.H. Jansen (1966). *Op. cit.* p. 63.

²⁹⁹ Sisir Gupta (1964). *India and Regional integration in Asia*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, p. 49.

Myanmar and somehow sows a seed of dividedness feeling among the Myanmarese, particularly to the military branch. This ping-pong diplomacy overwhelmingly captured the Myanmarese communist and led to the downfall of liberal democratic structure in Myanmar which immediately overthrew the U Nu government and Military junta follows the policy of isolationism in 1962.³⁰⁰ Thence Myanmar discontinued all the cooperation with India as well as withdrew the membership from the Afro-Asian Forum and confined herself on domestic sustainability.

c. Non-Alignment Movement

Non alignment has often been characterized as ‘neutral policy’ although it had very few features in common with the policy of neutrality followed by a country like Switzerland. The traditional policy is not to get involved in the developments of neighbouring countries. The non-alignment countries, on the other hand, take a keen interest in the developments taking place in the different regions of the globe.³⁰¹ Non-alignment is one of the most notable side effects of the intervention crisis spark between the western and eastern powers and the arrangement was to throw a sold relief into each other’s company than to attach themselves to either sides and embroiled in an unpredictable ends.³⁰² Pandit Nehru describes that ‘it was a policy, which followed from outpost history from our movement and from the various ideals that we have proclaimed from any point of view’.³⁰³ In the words, for Nehru, the non-alignment was not a negative or neutral policy but a positive policy which helps those forces that is considered right other than alignments of power which normally lead to major conflicts.

During the time, being experiencing both internal and external exigencies, Myanmar was keen to pursue neutralist foreign policy in order to avoid antagonizing either from the pro-minorities or pro-Chinese group. Thus U Nu stated to pave way for friendly foreign policy with prime objective to achieve economic development in the

³⁰⁰ G.H. Jansen (1966). Op. cit. p. 154.

³⁰¹ K.P. Karumakaran ed. (1963). *Outside the Contest*. New Delhi, Orient Longman, p. 5.

³⁰² Coral Bell (1957). *Survey of International Affairs 1954*. London, p-283.

³⁰³ India Parliament Debate, 17 March 1950.

country.³⁰⁴ At the same time, Myanmar was impressed by the avowed position of India in world affairs – subsequently Myanmar adopted Non-alignment as India to serve the national interest. The Indian and Myanmar professions of non-alignment fitted in with the pressing internal problems confronting both the countries.³⁰⁵ Though the understanding of NAM is different to either country, the objective remains the same and both continue to endeavor simply not to secure their individual interest but bring solidarity of third world countries, in fact, under one banner for securing the rights and equality. For India, it's a movement to neither participating in the ideological warfare nor to construct a leadership position through the collaboration with newly independence nations, but it was purely a movement that raises voice against the violent nature of the world. Likewise Myanmar also regarded the NAM as a positive neutrality³⁰⁶ and conclusively entered the same understanding as to India and has strives for safe haven from the tussle of world great powers. In this forum, India and Myanmar, being a pioneer, has mostly shared their opinion as to create a safe haven.

2.7. Chinese influence in Myanmar: *Security Dilemma in India's Northeast*

In the beginning, China does not possess any potential threats to the community of states, particularly to the neighbouring countries, because of her poorness and agrarian economy. At the same time, for long period Chinese follow communism and strictly adopted a close door policy but in aftermath of Cultural Revolution, 1911 the Chinese has started making her foreign policy more assertive under the communist party. In short span of time, there economy and other sphere have improved at great speed which in fact awoke the international community to seriously ponder on this emergence as alternative center of power.³⁰⁷ The southern neighbour, India, is more surprised to this rise, and so looking ahead to make cordial relations was made the very foundation of India's foreign policy. No matter the effort of friendly relationship was succeeded for brief period through the signing of Panchel Agreement or Agreement of Peaceful Co-existence in

³⁰⁴ Richard Butwell (1961). *South East Asia today – and tomorrow*. New York: Preager, 171.

³⁰⁵ Uma Shankar Singh (1979). *Op.cit.* p. 158.

³⁰⁶ Thakin Nu (1975). *U Nu: Saturday's Son*. Translated by U Law Yone and edited by U Kyaw Win. New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 183.

³⁰⁷ Hungda Chiu (1984). *China: Seventy Years after the 1911 Hsin-Hai Revolution*. Virginia: University Press of Virginia, p. 514.

1952.³⁰⁸ This agreement gave impetus to the Chinese government an opportunity to rebuild and expand their power without potential threats from neighbouring countries. Looking upon the agreement, India was continued follows moral foreign policy and does not have intensive effort to generate her military power. This ignorance reaped the fruit of historic wound when the Chinese military carried out aggression against India in the border regions. India tried to defence the strong offensive mission but could no longer stand before the aggressor and loss the war of 1962.

On the other hand, Myanmar has long and more porous international border with China by 2,171 km than that of India which is 1,643 km. The relation of Myanmar with China is rather more plagued than that of relations with India in the early years of Independence. The ultimate reason was due to the lacked proper demarcation of boundary between the two countries; illegal Chinese migrations and large existence of Chinese Kuomintang soldiers in upper Myanmar.³⁰⁹ Besides, there was more aggressive claimed of China over large parts of Myanmar as part of their territory, which create irritant to Myanmar and put struggle against any aggressions. However, the relations of Sino-Myanmar improved when a border trade agreement was signed between U Nu and Zhou Enlai in 1954³¹⁰ and after that the two countries respect each other sovereignty and promise not to interfered internal affairs but strive forward to live with peaceful co-existence. Thus the boundary issue is resolved with the agreement signed on 28 August, 1960, during the Ne Win's first instinct in power.³¹¹ Along with it was also signed several agreements but the most notable was a treaty of friendship and mutual non-aggression.³¹² If one looks through the prism of realism, the border agreement of Myanmar with China was a real relieved as Chinese stop exaggerated claims over the Myanmar territory.

³⁰⁸ N. Jayapalan (2000). India and her neighbours. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, p. 10.

³⁰⁹ Dipankar Banerjee (1996). Myanmar and Indian Security Concerns. *Strategic Analysis*, XIX (5), p. 698.

³¹⁰ Marc Lanteigne (2015). Chinese foreign policy: An introduction, (third edition). New York: Routledge, p. 203.

³¹¹ B. Pakem (1992). India Burma Relations. New Delhi: Omsons Publications, p. 91. Also see at Trager, Frank N. (1966). *Burma: From Kingdom to Republic – A Historical and Political Analysis*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, p. 413.

³¹² Sean Turnell (2008). Burma's Insatiable State. *Asian Survey*, XLVIII (6), p. 962.

In the early years of mutual relationship, the two countries joined hand in uprooting the Kuomintang soldiers who were scattered in the border of South China and Upper Myanmar. As like the affect over India through Chinese's Cultural Revolution, Myanmar also directly or indirectly affecting the integrity because the revolution has spread over outside the border. Thereafter the Beijing began to postured as the leader of "World Proletarian Revolution" and assumed responsibility of supporting revolutionary movements around the world and particularly in its southern borders.³¹³ In response to that call, the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) came into existence as a symbol to bring change in Myanmar and this was supported by China.³¹⁴ Therefore the Sino-relation reached its nadir in 1967 as the CPB, which got voluminous support of China both in financial and military ammunition, create internal disturbance in Myanmar. However, the relations of Myanmar with China recovered after Deng Xiaoping's state visit to Rangoon and thereafter the Chinese no longer supported the CPB and other ethnic rebels who virtually ruled as a parallel government in Upper Myanmar but signed fresh trade agreement with Myanmar and it widely presumed as the beginning of new era in Sino-Myanmar relations.³¹⁵ This relationship, in fact, posed problems of security for the other neighbouring countries, particularly to India and Southeast Asian countries. In context of India, the Northeast lies at a critical location and geographically interlink with Myanmar and China with porous border.

On the other hand, the people of the Northeast are ethnically more closely link with the Myanmarese and Chinese and aftermath of India's independence this peoples are demanding separate more autonomy if not separate state from India.³¹⁶ Thus Indian policy makers foresee the critical situation to the region as at the time India's military strength was weak and no protecting mechanism was installed in this region. During the same time the Northeast insurgent groups are directly or indirectly get support of the

³¹³ David I. Steinberg (1993). Myanmar as Nexus: Sino-Indian Rivalries on the Frontier. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 16 (1), p. 3.

³¹⁴ Lowell Dittmir (2010). Burma or Myanmar: The struggle for national identity. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, p. 57.

³¹⁵ Verinder Grover (2000). Myanmar: Government and Politics. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publication, p. 508.

³¹⁶ Samir Kumar Das (2013). Governing of India's northeast: Essays on insurgency, development and the culture of peace. New Delhi: Springer, p. 57.

Chinese particularly on acquiring arms and ammunitions.³¹⁷ This has led India's concern on the security of the Northeast thus the Indian government plays a tactical game to embrace Myanmar.

2.8. Indo-Myanmar's Economic Relations: *Synergy of Progress*

Myanmar and India as part of the British Empire have a very long tradition of trade relationship and the economies of both countries were complementary in the sense that India needed Myanmarese rice, timbers and oil products whilst Myanmar also required India's coal, textiles, Iron and steel etc. Myanmar was the leader in the world rice trade with nearly 54 percent of the net rice export of Asia not counting the trade with Formosa and Korea.³¹⁸ For the period from 1948 to 1955 the flow of rice from Myanmar to India represented 90 percent of India's rice imports and 50 percent of Myanmar's export.³¹⁹ While rice remained the most prominent item, other major items of exports were mainly Petrol and Kerosene. In this way, India and Myanmar enhance its cooperation. India posed as a big brother of the other newly emerged nations of Asia and with no exception Myanmar was considered as younger brother who must be helped as part of the obligation of elder brother.³²⁰ Thus when Myanmar was plunged into civil war and plagued by insurgent movements, India gave a substantial amount of financial aid to Myanmar.

Similarly, when India required for food grain increased it has to reckon on Myanmar and the agreement that reached on August 18, 1950 was a symbol of Indo-Myanmar economic dependency.³²¹ Under this agreement India was to purchase of 170,000 tons of rice from Myanmar for the period ending 30th June, 1951 from date of agreement.³²² A further quantity of 120,000 tons of rice was also agreed to be made available to India during the same period. It is interesting that before the signing of agreement, India had officially announced to import 43,934,00 tons of food grain of

³¹⁷ Sumit Ganguly & David P. Fidler eds. (2009). *India and counterinsurgency: Lesson learned*. London: Routledge, p. 14.

³¹⁸ Hugh Tinker (1967). *The Union of Burma: A Study of the First Years of Independence*. London, Oxford, p. 252.

³¹⁹ J.S. Furnivall (1948). *Colonial Policy and Practice*. London: Cambridge University Press, p. 182.

³²⁰ Sanamani Yambem (1973). *Op.cit.* p. 87.

³²¹ *Ibid*, p. 90.

³²² Ministry of External Affairs (1951). Report for the year 1950-51. Government of India, p. 5.

which Myanmar share would be 3,432,00 tons of rice.³²³ India's dependence on Myanmar for the supply of food grain was quite high. There was a substantial increase in the volume of rice trade between India and Myanmar with the signing of another agreement on May 1, 1951 and later reconfirmed on 29th September, 1951. Under this agreement, India was to purchase from the State Agricultural Marketing Board for a period of four years.³²⁴ This agreement outlined the scope and nature of trade relations with a division into three phase – the first period was from May to December 1951 and under this period agreement, it was agreed Myanmar to supply 2,40,000 tons of rice while India agreed to supply 25,000 tons of gunny bags with items like groundnut oil, cotton yarn and galvanized iron sheets. The second period covered from January 1952 to December 1955 and in this period Myanmar was to export 3, 50,000 tons of rice annually and India was to export a minimum of 1,50,000 tons of gunny bags, 8000 tons of groundnut oil, 2000 bags of cotton yarn of 200 lbs each and 4000 tons of iron and steel products annually. The third portion of the agreement concerned the general conditions which were applicable to both the previous two parts of the agreement.³²⁵

In this way, Myanmar slowly recovered its booming of rice export trade to its pre-war production but unfortunately it did not last long as the price of rice in the world market suddenly declined and thus export of rice became the most pressing problem for Myanmar. In order to counter this drastic drop in prices a campaign for the sale of approximately two million tons of surplus rice started and under this campaign, Myanmar had to bargain quite hard with India for exporting rice.³²⁶ This bargaining though it resulted in an amicable bill of price proved to be quite an irritant in the Indo-Myanmarese relations. Myanmar accused that India was taking advantage of the large unsold stock to force down prices unfairly on Myanmar while India argued that Myanmar with a large overseas balance should be standing out for a figure which was about the prevailing world price. After a series of discussion, a final agreement was signed

³²³ Keessing Contemporary Archives (1951). Pp. 11536-38.

³²⁴ *Chronology of Burma's foreign relations, 1948-58.* (1959). Compiled by William C. Johnstone, Rangoon: Ministry of Information.

³²⁵ Sanamani Yambem (1973). Op.cit. p. 93.

³²⁶ Frank N. Trager (1956). Burma's Foreign Policy, 1948-1956: Neutralism, Third Force and Rice. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 16 (1), p. 89.

whereby India agrees to buy 9,00,000 tons of rice at 50 pound per ton for 1954, at 48 pound per ton for 1955, and 46 pound per ton for 1956.³²⁷ The delivery may be made over three years at the above rates or may be supplied entirely during 1954 at an average price of 48 pound per ton.

Subsequently, in 1955, Myanmar Economic Delegation led by U. Rashid visited India and concluded a loan agreement. Under this agreement India agreed to give Myanmar a loan of rupees 10 crore and in addition Myanmar was granted a credit of the same amount to enable her to finance her purchases in India.³²⁸ This agreement was signed in October 1955 and there was an increase in the loan with total amount now reached rupees 20 crore. But suddenly by the year 1956 India's share in Myanmar export fell from 35 per cent though imports remained unchanged. Without a doubt, India was insisted twice regarding the renewal of the previous agreements in 1955 for a loan of rupees 20 crore but unfortunately there was a starkly point in which India did not responded affirmatively.

In 1958 another Myanmar trade delegation came to New Delhi to improve trade on non-traditional items and proposal was signed which gave certain improvisation to the 1956 trade agreement and this proposal was to remain valid till September 1961.³²⁹ In the same year 1958, an agreement for further loan of rupees five crore was signed under the terms of agreement of March 1957. Suddenly, there was a political transition in Myanmar by 1958 and the caretaker government had taken over the administration. This change did not alter much the pattern of foreign trade with India. In 1958-59 the rice production stood at 6.49 million tons, a post-war record, and the export in 1959 was totaled 1.34 million tons of which India received 313,000 tons.³³⁰ India still figure as Myanmar main export market. At the same time, the main item of export from India to Myanmar was transport equipment. The pattern of trade showed a considerable continuation of earlier trends. However, the General Ne Win slowly placed an embargo on the importation of Japanese goods from December 1959 to February 1960 due to failure over the

³²⁷ Ibid, p. 89.

³²⁸ Keesings Contemporary Archives (1955), p. 14486.

³²⁹ MEA (1959). Report of the year 1958-59. New Delhi: Government of India, p. 16.

³³⁰ Far Eastern Economic Review (1961). Review of the year 1960, p. 43.

repatriation talks. India's position did not undergo any change, it was only because of nationalization of all types of import agencies in 1961 by Myanmar and thence percentage of India's purchased of Myanmar rice had declined.³³¹ Consequently, India which use to rank as the third main supplier to Myanmar came down to the fourth position, being over taken by China, which captured India's textiles and base metal manufacture market in Myanmar.

2.9. India-Myanmar Symmetric Approaches to Foreign Policy

The symmetric approach in foreign policy of India and Myanmar has been yet another significant factor to determine their relations. India and Myanmar followed parliamentary democracy with socialism as the guiding principle to do welfare activities in within and the principle of non-violence is being guided as cornerstone of their foreign policy. Consciously or otherwise, India and Myanmar happened to follow the same path in most of their policies, particularly foreign policies. This symmetric policy can be attributed to their calls for world peace and security, participation in the United Nations, pioneering of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) and initiatives of Afro-Asian Association among other calls to the international community.³³² Generally, it was an independent foreign policy based on non-alignment and peaceful co-existence. India and Myanmar strongly advocated of keeping a safe distance from the power bloc and preached the gospel of peaceful co-existence among nations. The NAM is sometimes referred to as the neutralist bloc. Here it should be noted that India called its foreign policy as 'non-alignment' whereas Myanmar preferred as 'positive neutrality'.³³³ Irrespective of the use of different terminology it can be said that both India and Myanmar followed in essence one line of foreign policy.

The evolution of foreign policy in India and Myanmar was normally based on similar lines of approach and practice and there are numerous reasons behind it. At the outset there are strong sentiment of nationalism among the Indian and Myanmar, and

³³¹ Sanamani Yambem (1973). Op.cit. p. 97.

³³² K.P. Karumakaran ed. (1963). Outside the context. New Delhi: Akansha publishers, p. 5. Also see at Coral Bell (1957). *Survey of International Affairs 1954*. London: McMillan, p. 283.

³³³ William C. Johnstone (1963). Op. Cit. p. 96.

felt that national pride and sense of independence would achieve only through the pursuance of independent foreign policy, and the non-aligning with either of the blocs – they perceived, not only helped them to safeguard and preserve their newly freedom but gave a sense of magnitude and recognition in world affairs.³³⁴ More so, the Indian and Myanmarese came from the regressive colonial background and as such had exploited economically by the colonial power thus their main concern immediately was to reconstruct the economic structure of their respective countries. For this they needed peace and stability at home and economic cooperation from both the blocs was possible only when they maintain neutral status.³³⁵ Nonetheless, there was also common character of leadership in India and Myanmar and that had certain relevance in influencing a policy of non-alignment. The neutralism in India and Myanmar had been basically ‘middle-class’ in character, particularly in respect of their leadership. After Independence it was in the hands of this class that power has been a reflection of the general thinking and characteristics of this class.³³⁶

The other reason was that India and Myanmar freedom movement was based on non-violence, and they realize that joining either power blocs would led them into violence warfare, and hence opted for neutralism. Similarly, both observe an international situation marked by the bi-polarity and conflict interest between the socialist and capitalist and affiliating to any blocs was to enter the area of power rivalry. In power rivalry they were hardly interested and therefore adopted policy of non-alignment. It is an independent foreign policy emerged in India with Pandit Nehru as its chief protagonist.³³⁷ In fact the basic rudiments of this policy had already been laid down by the Congress since inception. It was expunged by Pandit Nehru when he outlined the objectives of Indian foreign policy a year before India won independence. On 7 September, 1946, it was officially declared by Nehru and in his speech to the nation on September 7, 1946 said:

³³⁴ K.P. Karumakaran ed. (1963). Op. Cit. p. 29.

³³⁵ Peter Lyon (1963). *Neutralism*. Leichester: Leicester University Press, p. 113.

³³⁶ K.P. Karumakaran ed. (1963). Op. Cit. p. 31.

³³⁷ Uma Shankar Singh (). Op.cit. p. 157.

“we propose as far as possible to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led to the disaster on an even vaster scale ... we are particularly interested in the emancipation of colonial and dependent countries and peoples, and in the recognition in theory and practice of equal opportunities for all races ... we seek no domination over them, and we claim no privileged position over other peoples. But we do claim equal and honorable treatment for our people wherever they may go and we cannot accept any discrimination against them”.³³⁸

This objective of India’s foreign policy was further consolidated after India’s independence. Aftermath of freedom, India’s approach has been not to interfere in other matters and not to get involve in conflict issues of other parts of the world. India as newly independent state roles was to guard its status quo, and voluminous duty to solve internal problems that have accumulated in the past. India also becomes an inevitable to try to the best of its ability to help in the maintenance of world peace but also not to get entangled in so far as it can in world conflicts.³³⁹ The character of the Indian foreign policy outlined by the Indian National Congress and latter developed by Prime Minister Nehru gain wide popularity. Therefore, it can be said without exaggeration that non-alignment has remained the main cornerstone of India’s foreign policy in early phase of freedom.

On other hand, Myanmar also followed the principle of non-alignment but with slight variation. In Myanmar it was popularly known as positive neutrality. In fact the groundwork for the policy of ‘positive neutrality’ had been prepared by Prime Minister of India.³⁴⁰ Myanmar seems to have fantasize and impressed by the featured of Indian foreign policy hence during the formulation of their country, the leaders of Myanmar took the support of Nehru who was pioneer of India’s foreign policies. Myanmar opted this foreign policy for yet another important reason which in fact, was missing in the Indian case. Unlike India, Myanmar had been directly affected by the Second World War. The Japanese occupation period had taught the Myanmar leaders the evil effects of a war.

³³⁸ Jawaharlal Nehru (1961). *India’s Foreign Policy*. Selected Speeches, (September 1946-April 1961). New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, p. 2.

³³⁹ Parliamentary Debates (1950, March 17). Parliament of India, pt. 2, Vol. 3, p. 1694.

³⁴⁰ John F. Cady (1953). The situation in Burma. *Far Eastern Survey*, 22 (5), p. 48.

Myanmar economic potential had been damaged by the war and what Myanmar needed after independence was the re-organization of its economy.³⁴¹ This in turn demanded a peaceful, stable atmosphere so that Myanmar can progress without unnecessary drawn in the conflict of any kind. In the formulation of the policy of positive neutrality, U Nu attempted to make it clear that it was dictated by Myanmar's strategic weakness, economic needs and the wish to avoid devastating consequences of a new war. The excerpt of U Nu is here:

“Our country” he said, “suffered the most by the war and seeks peace for the whole world. We do not wish to seek dissension between the big powers, and we shall support any measures for securing unity between Britain, United States, Russia and other powers”.³⁴²

Laying emphasis on the need of economic relations with different countries, U Nu describes that as an independent country, Myanmar need to sell our produce at the best price available in the markets of the world and to obtain imports at the most favorable world price. In the post-independence period some of the internal factors led the country to lean towards the policy of non-alignment. The outbreak of Karen insurrection in the early 1949 created an apprehension that they might get rid from the west and thus provides an excuse for Soviet intervention. Such an apprehension led to stress all the more upon the policy of non-alignment.³⁴³

In the turbulent years of 1948-50 there was firm pronouncement by the leaders that gave indication of Myanmar going to follow an independent foreign policy. The Prime Minister of Myanmar U Nu stated in 1948 that Myanmar wants peaceful relations with all the three great power i.e., the United Kingdom, the United States and Soviet Union.³⁴⁴ Two years later, it further stated that Myanmar did not desire alignment with a particular power bloc antagonistic to other opposing bloc.³⁴⁵ This emphasis to follow an

³⁴¹ J.S. Furnivall (1953). Op. Cit. p. 23.

³⁴² U Nu (1949). *Towards Peace and Democracy*. Rangoon: Ministry of Information, p. 130.

³⁴³ William C. Johnstone (1963). Op. Cit. p. 50.

³⁴⁴ Uma Shankar Singh (1979). Op.cit. p. 73.

³⁴⁵ Thakin Nu (1951). *From Peace to Stability*. Rangoon: Ministry of Information, p. 86.

independent course was not only found correct from the point of view of international relations, but also the safest to adopt in view of the conditions prevalent in Myanmar because any other course would expose to unwelcome political pressure from quarters nearest to her which might involve grave risk and danger.³⁴⁶ During his visit to the United States in 1955, U Nu more explicitly explained about his country's foreign policy that 'Nations that choose not to participate in military blocs usually are referred to in this country as neutrals. If my impression is to correct, this word 'neutral' has acquired a distinct and unfavorable semantic coloration.'³⁴⁷ Apparently the word suggests the image of the Ostrich with his head in his sand, a negative attitude towards world politics, a blind withdrawal from reality'.³⁴⁸ This analogy shows that it was their independence call to leads logically an independent to the foreign policy. U Nu further reiterates that this is not a negative policy towards world affairs but a positive concept. It is a positive policy of seeking peace and friendship with all countries. It is a policy of actively seeking to discover through negotiation and compromise and accommodation some acceptable basis on which the peace of the world can be secured. U Nu's quest for friendly relations with all nations like that of Nehru was related to his strong conviction in the principles of peaceful co-existence.³⁴⁹ These similarities in foreign policy approach led to active participation of both Nehru and U Nu in the podium of international community.

³⁴⁶ G.A. Goorma (1954, January 8/14). Whither Burma. *The Gurdian*, 1 (1), p. 14.

³⁴⁷ U. Nu (1955). *An Asian Speaks*. Washington D.C. Embassy of the Union of Burma, p. 13.

³⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 18.

³⁴⁹ Uma Shankar Singh (1979). Op.cit. p. 81.