

1. India and Myanmar: Understanding the Partnership – Sampa Kundu, Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi, India; PhD Candidate, School of International Studies, Jawarhalal Nehru University, New Delhi, India

**Abstract:** India's bilateral relations with Myanmar has raised both optimism and doubts because of a number of ups and downs which portray India's vague willingness to remain favoured by the Myanmar government and Myanmar's calculated desire to get advantages from its giant neighbours including India. Scholars and practitioners have explained many times why both India and Myanmar need each other. Some may call it a realist politics and some may call it a fire-brigade alarm politics which implies that both of them act according to the need of the time. The objective of this paper is to explain the necessities of India and Myanmar to each other and how they respond to each other in different times. Connectivity, security, energy and economy are four major pillars of Indo-Myanmar bilateral relationship. Hence, each of these four sectors would have their due share in the proposed paper to illustrate the present dynamics of Indo-Myanmar partnerships. Factors like US, China and the regional cooperation initiatives including ASEAN and BIMSTEC are the external factors that are most likely to shape the future of the Indo-Myanmar relationships. Hence, a simultaneous effort would also be taken to explain the extent of their influence on the same. Based on available primary and secondary literature and field trips, this account will help the readers to contextualise Indo-Myanmar relationship in the light of international relations.

2. India's Policy of Engaging Myanmar – Md. Abdul Gaffer, School of International Studies, Jawarhalal Nehru University, New Delhi, India

**Abstract:** India-Myanmar relations are rooted in shared historical, ethnic, cultural and religious ties. Since the 1990s, India-Myanmar relations have entered into a period of mutual cooperation. Myanmar became included in India's new regional geopolitical vision that was redefined in the Look-East policy. This policy of befriending Myanmar was important for North-East India since it is an uninterrupted adjoining space to the ASEAN countries with which India has established engagement models. It is within this realist framework the paper will seek to examine the policy of engaging Myanmar in a constructive relation. A vibrant India-Myanmar relation is not only important for both the countries but also for India-Southeast Asia relations. The paper seeks to understand the potential of India-Myanmar cooperation as Myanmar experiences reforms and the consequences of such an engagement. It argues that Myanmar's nascent democracy is fluid and even unstable. And India's policy will need recalibration depending on whether Myanmar's current transformation is irreversible.

3. India-Myanmar Maritime Re-connectivity in the Emerging Relations – V. Srilatha, Centre for Indian Ocean Studies, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India

**Abstract:** India and Myanmar share historic and cultural ties. After a long hiatus, both the countries are now on the path to reconnect and reactivate their relations. With the

emerging importance of sea lanes and sea connectivity, Myanmar is an important neighbor in India's Look East Policy. Myanmar shares extensive land and maritime borders with India's North-eastern states and in the Bay of Bengal respectively. India which followed a policy of non-engagement with the Burmese authorities, as a part of its "Look-east" policy initiated in 1990s, re-started the engagement with the Military Junta. With the recent democratization process set into motion in Myanmar, India must acknowledge the culture and ethics of the region itself and present itself with informed and cautious diplomacy at all times. The past years have presented rising India, with challenges to come to terms with its position in the world. As part of its "look east" policy and 'China factor', India has been strengthening cooperation with Myanmar even militarily. Enhanced exchange of visits by military delegations has been a vital component of this important initiative. Myanmar Navy took part in "MILAN 2006", after a four decades hiatus. While India is seeking Myanmar's inclusion in SAARC, Pakistan has been insisting China's inclusion has a counter act. Thus the paper tries to analyse the role of ASEAN in India-Myanmar relations, Chinese perspective towards Myanmar and the possible role Myanmar could play the role of an economic bridge between India and Southeast Asia through BIMSTEC, MGC etc. from the maritime dimension through maritime cooperation and the possible role to be played by the navies of both the countries.

4. Making Sense of India-Myanmar Border Relations – Rahul Mishra, Research Fellow, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi

**Abstract:** On February 28, 1961, in response to a question asked in the Lower House of Indian Parliament, whether any boundary dispute was referred to at the Indo-Burma border conference held at Moreh, the Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, said: "there is no boundary dispute as such...from time to time, officers on India and Burma sides of the border meet for discussions." 53 years later, in response to an un-starred parliamentary question (No. 2165) it was replied: "There is no boundary dispute between India and Myanmar. There are, however, 9 unresolved Boundary Pillars along the India-Myanmar Border. The two sides hold regular dialogue on issues related with boundary demarcation and border management." What is striking is: similar response from the government to a similar question, giving a feeling of *déjà vu*. Apparently, India and Myanmar have been downplaying protracted border issue, which might pose a challenge to their relationship. Myanmar and India signed a boundary agreement in 1967, and situation has remained in control since then. However, apart from uncertainties posed by ongoing transition in Myanmar, numerous events, happened lately, are linked to the border issue including insurgency and ethnic separatism in Northeast India. India's decision to permit BSF to replace the Assam Rifles to guard the borders demonstrates its concerns; *inter alia*, illegal drug trafficking and immigration. Recent events signify creeping complexities in border issue. For instance, in September 2013, Myanmar army set up a temporary base in Hollenphai village in Southern Manipur. It claimed that some of the houses constructed fall in Myanmar territory, and also asked the authorities to halt the construction of ICP in Moreh. When a 13-party Manipur delegation met Indian Prime

Minister on December 3, 2013, claiming that vast tracks of Manipur's land had been left beyond the border, he assured that not a single inch of India's territory would be compromised. Next day, the Myanmar side rallied from Namphalong to Tamu protesting against India. Construction of fence was postponed until an amicable solution is reached. Such claims and counter-claims complicate the situation despite willingness of two countries to resolve the issue. It is often said that *good fences make good neighbours*. Overlooking 'the crisis that might erupt anytime' will leave both the countries in awkward position. This paper attempts to analyse India-Myanmar boundary issue, possible scenarios and how that might change India's envisioning of Myanmar.

5. Myanmar's Engagement with India's Northeast: The Inevitable Factor – Shristi Pukhrem, Research Scholar, Centre For South Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India

**Abstract:** The Indo-Myanmar relation through the Northeast India has traditionally been a factor of political, historical, economic and ethical issues complicated by security related to militancy. India has always had a unique relationship with Burma (now Myanmar). During its colonial era (1826-1998) the British brought in Indians to run Burmese administrations and economy. The Indians dominated trade, finance, civil administration, education and police and military affairs until Burma's separation from India in 1937. The predominance of Indians in Burma's colonial socio-economic affairs created resentment among the indigenous majority 'Burmese' population. This resentment sparked anti-Indian riots during the 1920s and 1930s. However, most of the Indians, as they were positive about the mutual friendship between Indians and Burmese, ignored the anti-Indian feelings prevalent in Burmese society and contributed to the economic development of the country. Besides, in the current context considering the changing nature of the transitional political government in Myanmar in compliance with the proximity it has with the Northeast region of India, the future course of India's much perceived Look-East Policy though the North-East region is assumed to be both resourceful as well as detrimental. Further, with North-East India sharing immediate borders with Myanmar remains a determinant influential factor in resolving insurgency; exploring the economic resources by availing transport network; accessibility to the international market and further enhancement of the regional-national political and economic efforts in reaching out to South East Asia.