

The Role of Indian Diaspora in India- Myanmar Relations

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28. 2. 2015

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “**The Role of Indian Diaspora in India-Myanmar Relations**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** to **Sikkim University** is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**The Role of Indian Diaspora in India-Myanmar Relations**” submitted to **SIKKIM UNIVERSITY** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Philosophy** in International Relations embodies the results of bona fide research work carried out by **Miss Sarita Rai** under my guidance and supervision. No part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree, diploma, associate-ship, fellowship.

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Sarita Rai

Abbreviations

ABFSU	All Burma Federation of Students' Unions
ABSDF	All Burma Students' Democratic Front
ADB	The Asian Development Bank
ADMM	ASEAN Defense Minister Meeting Plus
AHN	ASEAN Highway Network
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BIMSTEC	Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation
BSPP	Burma Socialist Program Party
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CPB	Communist Party of Burma
CRPP	Committee Representing the People's Parliament
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
HLCD	High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora
IBRF	Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front
ICFTU	the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICRIER	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations
IDEA	The Institutional Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies & Analysis
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INC	The Indian National Congress
MGC	Mekong Ganga Co-operation
MICELT	Myanmar-India Centre for English Language Training
MMCWA	Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association

MOIA	Ministry of the Overseas Indian Affairs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCGUB	National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma
NCUB	National Council of the Union of Burma
NEFIT	North East Federation on International Trade
NGO	non-governmental organization
NLD	National League for Democracy
NLM	New Light of Myanmar
PBD	Pravasi Bharatiya Divas
PRC	People's Republic of China
SAIN	Southeast Asia Information Network
SLORC/SPDC	State Law and Order Restoration Council/ State Peace and Development Council
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNLD	United National's League for Democracy
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Commission
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USDA	Union Solidarity and Development Association

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Geographically and historically India and Myanmar are closely related to each other much before the advent of British colonial power in the nineteenth century. Myanmar is closely related to India through cultural affinity that flows from India to Myanmar in the form of Hinduism, Buddhism and other religious practices, but of all these, Buddhism stood as the most important cultural influence in these relations. Together with cultural affinity is the economic and political relation that India and Myanmar shared till the early 1960s. Both India and Myanmar belonged to the Afro-Asian group of nations. During the early years of their independence, they share the same ideals and cherish the same hopes and this shaped their bilateral relations as well their behavior in Asian and world politics.

Diaspora has become an integral part in the discourse of foreign policy of national states and also emerged as a powerful factor in developing relations between nation-states. Diasporas have emerged as powerful entities, since they are recognized as ‘soft power’ in the realm of foreign policy strategy and also as an agent or catalyst of economic development of countries of origin beside their active role in the host countries. For instance, in the economic sphere, the Chinese Diaspora has been seen as a propelling force for its emergence as an economic super power (Mahalingam 2013:2). Indians have been migrating to various parts of the world as early as before Christ or 1st century BCE. From the early migration and during the colonial period to the recent migration to the industrialized West, they went through trials and tribulations to settle down in a new world. Likewise, the origin of Indian in Myanmar is not a recent phenomenon. Historically, India’s contact with Myanmar goes back to the Pre-Christian era. In this context, this dissertation will examine whether Indian diaspora play a role or not for transforming India-Myanmar bilateral relations.

In the political sphere, the Jewish Diaspora has a strong grip over the US and European Union in terms of shaping their strategic relationship with Israel. Lately, diaspora have emerged as a powerful factor in developing relations between India-US, India-Britain, India-Canada etc. Diaspora also plays an important role in foreign policy making in both host land as well as origin country. Since the days of Indian independent movement diaspora has been a major influence to India's foreign policy, and since then there have been major shifts in Indian foreign policy towards its diaspora. Hence, Diasporas being transnational communities have become important non-state actors as well as deciding factors in international political and economic relations (Mahalingam 2013:3).

While discussing India's Diaspora policy, one observes that though after independence, India followed the policy of disassociation with regard to its Diaspora. The basic principles of India's foreign policy were laid during the independence under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. In 1957, Nehru stated: Indians abroad should always give primary consideration to the interest of the people of those countries; they should never allow themselves to be placed in a position of exploiting the people of those countries; in fact, we have gone thus far and said, if you cannot be, and if you are not, friendly to the people of that country, come back to India and do not spoil the fair name of India (Nehru 1972:98).

The Indian Diaspora is estimated to be the second largest in the world with and global presence. The Diaspora, estimated at over 25 million, and spread across more than 200 countries with a diversified global presence with high concentration in developed and developing regions such as the European countries, America, Australia, Africa, Asia, Southeast Asia Middle East, Malaysia, South Africa etc. (Singh 2013:1-2). Over the years, the Indian Diaspora has not only increased in numbers but has also been gaining universal recognition for their unique contributions to its host countries, be it skilled and semi-skilled work force in the Gulf region or technocrats and educated professionals of Indian origin. Members of the Indian Diaspora do play a significant role in mobilizing political support for in their country of residence on issues of vital concerns to India.

The 2001 report of the High Level Committee of the Indian Diaspora (HLCID) has provided a brief overview of the mapping of regional and country profiles of Indian diaspora. The Report indicated that the Indian diaspora has transformed the economies and has come to occupy a pride of place in the life of these countries. Its members are found as entrepreneur, workers, traders, teachers, researchers, inventors, doctors, lawyers, engineers, managers and administrators (Chaturvedi 2005:154). The success of the Indian diaspora can be attributed to its traditional ethos, its cultural values and heritage, its educational aptitude and qualifications, and its capacity to harmonize and adapt.

Table 1: Estimated Size of Overseas Indian Community in Country Wise

Country	PIOs	Indian Citizens	Stateless	Total
Afghanistan	500	-	-	500
Algeria	5	40	-	45
Andorra	45	-	200	245
Angola	45	250	-	295
Argentina	1,200	400	-	1,600
Armenia	-	200	-	200
Australia	160,000	30,000	-	190,000
Austria	3,005	8,950	-	11,955
Azerbaijan	-	250	-	250
Bahrain	-	130,000	-	130,000
Barbados	2,100	100	-	2,200
Belarus	-	70	-	70
Belgium	-	7,000	-	7,000
Belize	500	-	-	500
Benin	450	-	-	450
Bhutan	-	1,500	-	1,500
Botswana	3,500	6,000	-	9,500
Brazil	1,500	400	-	1900
Brunei	500	7,000	100	7,600
Bulgaria	-	20	-	20
Burundi	300	-	-	-
Cambodia	150	150	-	300
Cameroon	250	-	-	250
Canada	700,000	150	1,000	701,150
Cape Verde	4	-	-	4
Chad	125	-	-	125
Chile	39	611	-	640

China	5	300	-	305
Colombia	1	19	-	20
Comoros	50	-	-	50
Costa Rica	1	15	-	16
Cote d's Ivoire	30	270	-	300
Croatia	10	-	-	10
Cyprus	-	300	-	300
Czech Republic	20	400	-	420
Denmark	900	1,252	-	2,152
Djibouti	280	-	-	280
Dominica	-	20	-	20
Ecuador	-	5	-	5
Egypt	40	1,350	-	1,390
Eritrea	30	1,723	-	1,753
Ethiopia	34	700	-	734
Fiji	336,579	250	-	336,829
Finland	410	750	10	1170
France	55,000	10,000	-	65,000
G. Bissau	25	-	-	25
Gambia	135	-	-	135
Germany	10,000	25,000	-	35,000
Ghana	2,000	1,800	-	3,800
Greece	-	7,000	-	7,000
Guadeloupe	40,000	-	-	40,000
Guatemala	22	-	-	22
Guyana	395,250	100	-	395,350
Hong Kong	28,500	22,000	-	50,500
Indonesia	50,000	5,000	-	55,000
Iran	-	800	-	800
Iraq	50	60	-	110
Ireland	600	1,000	-	1,600
Israel	45,000	300	-	45,300
Italy	36,000	35,500	-	71,500
Jamaica	60,000	1,500	-	61,500
Japan	1,000	9,000	-	10,000
Jordan	30	900	-	930
Kazakhstan	-	1,127	-	1,127
Kenya	85,000	15,000	2,500	102,500
Korea (DPRK)	-	5	-	5
Korea (ROK)	200	2,500	-	2,700
Kuwait	1,000	294,000	-	295,000
Kyrgyzstan	100	-	-	100
Laos	18	107	-	125
Lebanon	25	11,000	-	11,025
Libya	400	12,000	-	12,400

Lithuania	-	5	-	5
Madagascar	25,000	300	1,000	29,000
Malaysia	1,600,000	15,000	50,000	1,665,000
Maldives	1	9000	-	9001
Mali	20	-	-	20
Mauritius	704,640	11,116	-	715,756
Mexico	400	-	-	400
Mongolia	-	35	-	35
Morocco	25	350	-	375
Mozambique	20,000	870	-	20,870
Myanmar	2,500,000	2,000	400,000	2,902,000
Namibia	32	78	-	110
Netherlands	200,000	15,000	2,000	217,000
New Zealand	50,000	5,000	-	55,000
Nigeria	8,000	17,000	-	25,000
Norway	-	5,630	-	5,630
Oman	1,000	311,000	-	312,000
Papua New Guinea	-	1,000	-	1,000
Panama	211	1,953	-	2,164
Peru	10	135	-	145
Philippines	24,000	2,000	12,000	38,000
Poland	75	750	-	825
Portugal	65,000	5,000	-	70,000
Qatar	1,000	130,000	-	131,000
Reunion Islands	220,000	55	-	220,055
Romania	2	489	-	491
Russia	44	16,000	-	16,044
Saudi Arabia	-	1,500,000	-	1,500,000
Senegal	13	8	-	21
Seychelles	2,000	3,000	-	5,000
Singapore	217,000	9,000	-	307,000
Slovakia	-	100	-	1000
Solomon Islands	-	20	-	20
South Africa	-	-	-	1,000,0000
Spain	16,000	13,000	-	29,000
St. Lucia	-	200	-	200
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	-	160	-	160
Sudan	300	1,200	-	1,500
Surinam	150,306	150	-	150,456
Sweden	9,000	2,000	-	11,000
Switzerland	8,400	4,800	300	13,500
Syria	1,800	-	-	1,800
Taiwan	1,800	-	-	1,800
Tajikistan	-	400	-	400

Tanzania	85,000	5,000	-	90,000
Thailand	70,000	15,000	-	85,000
Trinidad and Tobago	500,000	600	-	500,600
Tunisia	-	70	-	70
Turkey	-	300	-	300
United Arab Emirates	50,000	900,000	-	950,000
Uganda	7,000	5,000	-	12,000
United kingdom	-	-	-	1,200,000
Ukraine	-	3,400	-	3,400
United States	-	-	-	1,678,765
Uzbekistan	40	650	-	690
Vanuatu	-	50	-	50
Venezuela	400	280	10	690
Vietnam	-	320	-	320
Yemen	100,000	900	-	100,900
Zambia	10,000	3,000	-	13,000
Zimbabwe	15,500	1,200	-	16,700

Source: The Report of High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001.

INDIAN DIASPORA: DURING COLONIAL AND PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

By the end of the 15th century, the Indian Ocean maritime route to India was open to European countries such as Portuguese, Dutch, English, French and Danish maritime traders established settlements in India from which they could trade (Lal 2006:22). The European colonisation marked by the penetration of mercantile capitalism in Asia was the most crucial phase in Indian diaspora. The rivalries of these European powers led to involvement and conflict in local politics. It was from such struggles that the English eventually emerged as the imperial rulers of India. Large-scale emigration of Indian into far-off lands was facilitated by the integration of peripheral economies into the emerging world capitalist system, the onset of a revolution in transportation and communication and the opening of the Suez Canal (Jayaram2004:20).

The phenomenal trade surpluses earned by the European mercantile class in the wake of geographical discoveries were invested in mines and plantations in Asia, Africa and elsewhere. This created an enormous demand for a cheap labour force. During the 17th and 18th centuries Indians migrated to Central Asia and Russia established their

settlements and observed socio religious customs (Gautam 2013:14). By the first quarter of the 19th century, the demand for labour was accentuated by the ever expanding colonial economy, the growing oppositions to slavery and its eventual abolition by England in 1833, by France in 1848 and by Holland in 1863, and the inability of the European countries to meet the shortfall in labour by deploying their own labour force (Jayaram 2004:20). They were referred as "Indian Merchant Diaspora". In Astrakhan (in Russia on the north east of Caspian Sea) there was a big Indian community which lived in an enclave. Most of them were bankers and traders and India always remained their home and forefather's home. During the period of 1602 and 1794 about 573 million guilders were remitted to India (Gautam 2013:14).

The immigration of Indian labour overseas during the colonial era broadly three distinct patterns of Indian emigration are identifiable in this period: (a) indentured labour emigration, (b) kangani, and (c) passage or free emigration. The kangani derived from Tamil kankani, meaning foreman or overseer system prevailed in the recruitment of labour for emigration to Ceylon and Malaya. Maistry labour derived from Tamil maistry, meaning supervisor system was practiced in the recruitment of labour for immigration to Burma. These systems which began in the first and third quarter of the 19th century were abolished in 1938 (Jayaram2004:21). Emigration from India did not cease with the abolition of indenture and other systems of organized export of labour. There was a steady trickle of emigration of members of trading communities from Gujarat and Punjab to South Africa and East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda), and those from South India to Southeast Asia. Most labourers immigrated to East Africa to work on the construction of railroads (Jayaram 2004:22). These types of migration called a passage or free emigration. The indentured labour emigration, after the contract signed by the individual labourer to work on plantations was officially sponsored by the colonial government. It began in 1834 and ended in 1920. The overwhelming majority of the labour emigrants were taken to the British colonies of British, Guiana, Fiji, Trinidad and Jamaica, the French colonies of Guadelupe and Martinique, and the Dutch colony of Surinam (Jayaram 2004:21). In the second half of the nineteenth century, as a result of the communication revolution and the opening of the Suez Canal the Asian peripheral economies were fully integrated into the world capitalist system with the result that

Britain earned a considerable surplus on her trade with Asia in general, and India in particular (Jain2013:3). This section has been deeply elaborated in second chapter.

A new and significant phase of emigration began after Indian became independent in 1947. Broadly, the patterns can be identified in the post- independence emigration: (a) the emigration of Anglo-Indians to Australia and England, (b) the emigration of professionals and semi-professionals to the industrially advanced countries like the United States of America, England and Canada, and (c) the emigration of skilled and unskilled labourers to West Asia (Jayaram2004:22).

The large- scale and steady emigration of doctors, engineers, scientists, teachers and other semi- professionals to the industrially advanced countries of the West is essentially a post-independence phenomenon, and particularly so of the late 1960s and the 1970s. The second and subsequent generations having emerged, and the emigrant population enjoying economic prosperity and socio cultural rights, this stream of emigration has resulted in vibrant Indian communities abroad.

The size and variety of Indian Diaspora in Europe is increasing fast. Today, there are more than 2 million of them, spread over 18 countries (Moharir 2009:12). On the one hand there is the old Diaspora group of 1.6 million in the UK where the Diaspora members have achieved great success in all sectors of the of the country; on the other hand there are also small groups of few thousands in countries like Finland, Italy, Spain and Poland, where due to recent arrivals and language difficulties, achievements have been relatively limited (Moharir 2009:12). Among them are senior politicians, leading entrepreneurs, scientists, doctors, academics, attorneys and lawyers, skilled workers, religious and spiritual leaders, community leaders, media specialists, etc.

The fastest growth of Indian Diaspora has been in the US for the last four decades numbering few thousand in the 1960s to reach over 2.5 million 2005 (Abraham 2006:3). In the late 1960's and 70's, there was a shortage of doctors and engineers in America and thus enabled and encouraged a large number of Indians to migrate to America. American universities started attracting the best students from India's prestigious institutions such as Indian Institute of Technologies (IITs), National Institute of Technologies (NITs),

Indian Institute of Science and others. Once graduated, American Corporations, universities, research and other organization absorbed them as engineers, scientists and business executives and they have been competing very well with their American counterparts. Currently numbering over 50,000, the Indians physicians and surgeons constitute the largest ethnic group among medical professionals (Abraham 2006:3).

According to Stephen Cohen state that the glowing tribute to Indian Diaspora in USA, in effective lobbying for India and in improving considerably the dialogue and discussion on India in US political institutions. Of course Indian Diaspora in US is not only 2 million strong but also consisting of highly educated and experienced professionals (Cohen 2001:10). Thus diaspora contribute to an increase in the flow of trade, investment, finance, technologies, and ideas to their country of origin.

The origins and evolution of Indian diaspora in different parts of developing countries such as South Africa, Fiji, Maldives, Sri-Lanka, Mauritius, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Singapore etc. some of the major Indian diaporic activities in the region are briefly discussed under the economic, political and socio-cultural contributions. The most of the Indian population migrated in developing countries are indentured and voluntary labourers who worked in production field of rubber, rice, sugar, tea, coffee, and oil-plantations (Jain 2013:1).

After the World War II, Indian emigrated mainly as indentured labourers to British Guiana, Trinidad, Surinam, South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius and Reunion Islands and as kangani/ministry labourers to Burma, Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka. Indian also emigrated as traders and government employees to the East to South African countries besides Fiji and South Africa (Jain2013:4). There is still a substantial number of Indians going to the Middle East as contract laborers and professional workers including physicians, doctors, accountant, managers, engineers and information technology (IT) professionals and also some businessmen have settled in countries such as U.A.E. and Kuwait (Abraham 2006:6).

The primary motive for migration was economic. This is more so when the initial immigrant where mineral wealth of Southeast Asia appears to have been a major attraction for Indian. Further the period of time their deep imprint of these ethnic migrants can be seen intense interaction that is still visible even today in the language and literature, religion and philosophy, art and architecture, customs and manners of the whole of Indo-China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, and the Malaysia.

The Indian government has shown significant interest in the diaspora and established a number of diaspora policies. Today, the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) is one ministry that directly engages with the Indian diaspora such as bringing together members of world-wide community of NRIs/PIOs once a year in India at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (Mohadrir 2009:7).

The diaspora contribute to an increase in the flow of trade, investment, finance, technologies, and ideas to their country of origin. Indian Diaspora in USA, in effective lobbying for India and in improving considerably the dialogue and discussion on India in US political institutions. This is also applicable to Indian Diaspora in England, Australia, Canada (and all other countries with English language at the local levels) (Moharir 2009:8). In other countries, diaspora has been active in improving image of India at popular level, making relations between the host country and India more diverse and fruitful, and contributing to India's development through different sector.

INDIAN IN MYANMAR: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Indians have been migrating to various parts of the world as early as before Christ or 1st century before Common Era (BCE) (Pradhan 2000:171). From early migration and Indian colonization to the recent migration to the Industrialized West, they went through trials and tribulations to settle down in a new world. So the origin of Indian in Myanmar is not a recent phenomenon. Historically, India's contact with Myanmar goes back to the Pre-Christian era (Pradhan 2000:171). They have centuries old geographical, cultural and strategic links with each other. At that period, the Indian priests, princes, poets and artists helped to spread the Indian culture into Myanmar.

India and Myanmar links are deeply rooted in history and belief. The legend of Shwedagon Pagoda, the story of two Burmese merchants meeting and obtaining a few strands of the hair of Lord Buddha, may just be a legend, but it has had a powerful hold on the ordinary person's perception in Myanmar that Buddhism originated in India. Historians point out that a royal monk of Asoka the Great visited Myanmar in 228 BCE, bearing the Buddha's message and Buddhist sacred texts (Bhatia 2011:316). Later, Theravada Buddhism reached Myanmar from India via Sri Lanka. An intense desire on the part of ordinary people as well as high dignitaries to visit Bodh Gaya and other famous Buddhist pilgrimage sites in India continues to be a strong bond between Myanmar and India.

Beyond religion and philosophy, ethnic links between the people of four Indian states bordering on Myanmar, namely Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram, and the people of western Myanmar, including Chins, Kukis and Kachins, have continued through the millennia (Bhutia 2011:317).. For many centuries, Indian communities lived in harmony with the natives in Lower Burma and in the royal capitals of Shwebo, Inwa (Ava), Amarapura and Mandalay in Central Burma (Lal 2006:168). These links, cemented by linguistic commonality or affinity, family and tribal ties, traditional trade exchanges, shared lifestyles and conflict and cooperation among rulers, began well before India and Myanmar emerged as nation-states (Lal 2006:168). When Indian troops under British command defeated the royal army in the First Anglo-Burmese War of 1824, they probably sowed the seeds of Burma's prejudice and grievances against Indian and India.

Indian immigration under British Rule: 1853-1942

After the British annexed Lower Burma during the Second Anglo-Burmese War in early 1853, Indian immigration was set in as a result of concentered British policy aimed at promoting transportation of skilled and unskilled Indian workers and professionals in general to various part of Burma. Unskilled Indian emigration involved indentured and voluntary labourers who worked in rubber, rice, sugar, tea, coffee, and oil-plantations and skilled labourers who worked in college and school teachers, doctors, lawyers, engineers,

constitutional experts, etc. (Bhattacharya 2007:51). Indian soldiers were readily available to fight the wars for their British masters.

Indians from the East Coast of India and some from the West Coast had established their trading – posts on the coastal areas of Burma (Pradhan 2000:150). In the beginning, Indian influence in general was limited to the sea-bound areas. A land route in the north was difficult to penetrate; it was from the sea route that most of the Indian came to Myanmar. In the middle of the eleventh century, the influence of the Hinduism had spread from Lower Burma to the centre of the country (Pradhan 2011:150).

After 1852, Indians migrated to Lower Myanmar in increasing numbers to fill a wide range of positions created by the expanding economy and greatly enlarged bureaucracy of the new province of the Indian empire (Pradhan 2000:151). The Irrawaddy Delta suitable for rice cultivation on commercial scale, the British encouraged the flow of cheap Indian labour into this area that was sparsely populated although being the most fertile part of Myanmar. Moreover, the opportunities for employment and trade in Burma were promoted in the post-1852 period (Pradhan 2000:151). During the entire period of the British administration, immigration of Indians into Myanmar remained free and unregulated. Therefore, it has been difficult to make any precise and exact calculations about the growth of Indians in Myanmar. The two censuses conducted in 1872 and 1881 covered only parts of Lower Myanmar. Upper Myanmar was added in the 1891 census, and most of the Shan States and Karenni were covered by the census of 1901 (Pradhan 2000:152).

The educational institutions in Rangoon were affiliated to Calcutta University at the British time. The British brought Indians to help them govern Myanmar. It is estimated that 60 per cent of the population in central Rangoon at the time was Indian (Bhutia 2011:317). The substantive presence at the time of Indians in administration, police, education, trade and agriculture, two important facets are still widely remembered at the popular level. These are: the exile until death in Rangoon of India's last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and the exile until death in Ratnagiri of Thibaw, Myanmar's last King; and visits, stay imprisonment, and work of prominent leaders of India's freedom struggle such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal

Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose (Bhattacharya 2007:55). Bose raised money and men in Myanmar for the Indian National Army (INA), which fought valiantly though unsuccessfully, for India's freedom. Both before and after its Independence, India extended full support to Myanmar's freedom struggle, and finally Myanmar got independence on 4 January 1948.

Post-colonial period: 1947-1962

It was explained that, post-independence, the Burmese government passed a series of legislations that created an exodus of the immigrants who had settled in Myanmar during the time of the British. Their businesses had been nationalized and laws passed curtailing their rights to own lands etc.

After getting independence, both the countries were jointly committed to maintain good-neighbourly relations between themselves. Indian business interest became a matter of debate and concern for the politicians of the stature of Jawaharlal Nehru and U Nu. Yet, no one could blame these two great leaders, for both Myanmar and India had opted to avoid Communism (Bhattacharya 2007:104). Census taking was severely constrained by the civil war that broke out soon after independence and threatened the very existence of the central government during the first half of the 1950s (Lal 2006:171). Estimates put the Indian populations at around 600,000 in the early 1950s, of which some 132,000 were labourers comprising 14 per cent of the urban labour population (Lal 2006:170). In Rangoon, Indians numbering some 126,000 still comprised 20.5 per cent of the city's population (Lal 2006:170). Indian also constituted around 22.6 per cent of the total labour force in the city in 1953 (Lal 2006:171).

At that time, Myanmar policies of nationalist socio-economic language, education and indigenization measures in the administrative and business fields led to the further marginalization and displacement of the majority of Indian who were non-citizens, causing the departure of tens of thousands in the few years independence movement some 50,000, including 12,000 who were destitute, returned to India by December 1949 and a similar number followed over the next two years (Lal 2006:171). Strict controls imposed by the government on foreign exchange transactions curtailed the long standing practice

of remittances by Indian migrants (Lal 2006:171). The majority of Indian became 'aliens' under the purview of the Foreigners Registration Act, with its restrictive rules and regulations governing the behavior of aliens of Burma (Lal 2006:172).

However, Indian including non-citizens managed to find their economic niche in formal and informal private sectors as the economy recovered in the mid-1950s (Lal 2006:172). This included working as general labour, domestic helpers, petty traders, retailers, shopkeepers, service providers, food sellers and brokers in the small business sector (Lal 2006:172). Many Indian industrialists and trader managed to gain control of certain lines of business, such as foreign trade in rice, foodstuff, construction material and hardware, photographic equipment and supplies, books and stationary supplies, watches and textiles, as well as in real estate, cinemas, bazaars, brokerage, transport and construction (Lal 2006:172).

Ne Win's period: 1962-1988

This is the period of military coup who ruled the country under the authority of the Revolutionary Council (RC), chaired by armed forces chief, General Ne Win. Revolutionary Council is the unique ideology, that Burmese Way to Socialism; which has launched a relentless programme of nationalization and indigenisation that dispossessed capitalists, bourgeoisie and foreigners of their livelihood (Lal 2006:173). General Ne Win's period saw the ups and downs relations between them. It was reported that over 12,000 Indian businesses mainly small retail shops were nationalized in 1964 and over 100,000 Indian were disenfranchised by the nationalization drive (Lal 2006:173). Reeling from the situation and the abrupt termination of jobs, Indians were repatriated in such large numbers that a special arrangement had to be made to transport them by air and sea. Over 117,000 left by sea between 1964 and 1966; and estimated 300,000 left the country during the 1960s (Lal 2006:173).

According to Myanmar's post-independence census, the number of Indians in Myanmar declined to just over 547,000 (1.9 per cent) per of the total population in 1973. The average annual population growth rate for Indian between 1973 and 1883 was an incredible 6.6 per cent (Lal 2006:174). In the economic sphere, the Indian community

managed to find a niche in the formal and the informal sector as small business operators, mainly in the service industry, and as interlocutors in the interface between the emasculated official economy and the black market economy that grew out of the huge demand for scarce commodities.

The SLORC/SPDC period

This is the period of direct military rule under the Junta, known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the emphasis was on securing law and order after the mass uprising that led to the military coup of 18 September 1988 (La 2006:174). In the economic sphere, the SLORC abandoned the socialist command economic reforms in the line with a new market-oriented approach. Following increased efforts to attract foreign direct investment and encourage the expansion of private sector enterprises in trade, industry and services, the bias against non-citizens and foreigners has become less pronounced. This has benefited Indian commercial interests and entrepreneurs have been able to find new opportunities in the nascent private sector (Lal 2006:174).

The opening up of the economy since the early 1990s has resulted in the emergence of a new generation of Indian entrepreneurs of all faiths who have been able to exploit the opportunities offered by the government's support of the private sector (Lal 2006:174). These groups have been found to be quite successful in trade, industry and services, and travel abroad holding business passports (Lal 2006:175). This has benefited Indian commercial interests and entrepreneurs have been able to find new opportunities in the nascent private sector.

The allegations of religious persecution by expatriate dissidents and Muslim activists and the occasional outbreak of isolated violence against them, Indian Muslims appear to be in a better position to carry out their religious and socio-cultural activities than during the socialist era. The practices of performing the Haj and Hindu pilgrimages have continued with fewer impediments than before. Over 40 mosques in Yangon and several hundred all over the country appear to have been refurbished and rehabilitated. Similarly, some 30 or so prominent Hindu temples in Yangon and a few hundred around the country have been properly maintained. A few Hindu religious schools and over a

dozen Muslim schools continue to operate in Yangon (Lal 2006:175.). This section has been continuing influence in fourth chapter.

According to the 2001 report of the High Level Committee on the Indian diaspora (HLCID), the total numbers of Indians in Myanmar is estimated to be around 2.9 million (Singh 2013:1). Thus Diaspora plays a vital role in various fields and also emerged as a powerful factor in developing relations between countries. In this context, this dissertation will examine whether Indian diaspora play a role for transforming India-Myanmar bilateral relations or not.

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

Literatures on Indian diaspora in general and their influences in decision making of the host country in particular have been on the rise. This is because, diaspora have emerged as powerful entities since they are recognized as ‘soft power’ in the realm of foreign policy strategy and also as an agent or catalyst of economic development of countries of origin beside their active role in the host countries. For instance, in the economic sphere, the Chinese diaspora has been seen as a propelling force for its emergence as an economic super power (Mahalingam 2013:2). In the political sphere, the Jewish diapora has a strong grip over the US and European Union in terms of shaping their strategic relationship with Israel (Mahalingam 2013:3). In this context, diaspora plays a role in different sectors in different part of countries; the diasporic community plays a critical role to build the nation as well as foreign relations. The Indian diaspora is a powerful factor in developing foreign relations between Indo-US, India-Britain and India- Canada etc.

On exploring literatures on Indian diaspora in India-Myanmar relation has been limited. Nevertheless, a number of books and articles on the historical and contemporary India-Myanmar relations do exist. The literature under surveying will be useful tools to develop a clear understanding of the concepts of diaspora and foreign policy in the contemporary debates and thus provide a framework for this study.

The book, *India-Myanmar Relations 1886-1948* written by Swapna Bhattacharya (Chakraborti) 2007, highlights not only the official events of the colonial struggle, but also hitherto neglected stories of unofficial and partly clandestine relations between the nationalists in India and Myanmar. The universities, Rangoon and Calcutta, the Buddhist institutions of Eastern India, and various small associations contributed to a continuous strengthening of India-Myanmar relations. The first category of Indian immigrants comprised of the simple Indian labourers from the remote districts of India. The business of supplying laborers i.e., skilled and unskilled Indian labourers were the rice industry, oil industry, wood industry, metal working, ceramics, chemical industry construction industry and transport (overland as well as waterways) industry. Second, category of Indian immigrants comprised of services holders in various public sectors such as banking, insurance companies, postal services, police force, prison management and the railways. The third category of Indian immigrants in Burma comprised relatively rich classes. The Marwaries, the most vibrant business class of India, were engaged in the wholesale trade of Burma. The number of Indians and the indigenous people engaged in the various sectors of employment in Burma. Chettiars came to Burma and cheated all the Burmese.

In 1931, there was the time when Myanmar became popular destination for Indians from various social sectors. From the 1930s onwards, political developments in Burma became as uncertain and complicated as in India. In 1931, among the Indians born in Burma, there were 893 women per 1000 males. On the contrary, among the Indians born outside Burma, there were only 191 women per 1000 men, that is less than 1 female for every 5 men. This book focuses on the extent and limit of the serious involvement of Germany and Japan in the nationalist movement of India and Myanmar. This book stresses that the world view about India-Myanmar relations in general, and especially in the colonial period, should be more optimistic and critical.

The book, *New dimensions in Indo-Burmese Relations* written by Swatanter K. Pradhan 2000, attempt to evaluate major aspects of India-Myanmar relations after the two countries gained independence. How did the pre-independence historical association between the India and Myanmar influence their relations during the post-independence

period? What were the determining factors in India-Burmese relations? How far the bilateral relations between India and Burma were based on friendship and mutual cooperations? To what extent they cooperated on economic matters? Did the issue of Indian immigrants in Myanmar affect their relations? This book is attempted to find answers to these questions. This book weaves an authoritative politico-economic history of two great nations of South Asia.

This book highlights the historical relations between India and Burma, which had a common past. Both tasted the bitter fruits of British imperial authority; India during 1857-1947 and Burma during 1886-1948. The large scale economic exploitation by the British of their colonies generated strong anti-British feeling in India and Burma leading ultimately to the years of struggle for freedom. Similar sentiments Burmese succeeded in achieving independence from the British colonial rule. India and Burma had many other common factors which played a vital role in determining their relations. These factors, besides colonial legacies, identical value systems and personality of post-independence leadership, were geographical situation, cultural links, economic activities and foreign policy matters.

The article, *Non-state actors in international relations: A case of Indian Diaspora in Africa* written by Rajneesh Kumar Gupta 2013, emphasizes the non-state actors are non-sovereign entities that exercise significant economic, political, or social power and influence at a national and international level. Migrant communities are essentially non-state actors playing an important role in bilateral relations between their motherland and host-land. This article aims to assess the role of Indian Diaspora as a non-state actor in promotion of India-Africa partnership. Discussion of the paper is broadly focused on five themes- Theorizing Diaspora, India's Diaspora Policy, and Indian Diaspora in Africa and Role of Indian Diaspora in Enhancing India-Africa Partnership.

This article explores the major shifts in Indian foreign policy towards Indian Diaspora. During the independence movement of India, Indian leaders wanted to protect interest of Indian communities abroad. Several movements were launched by Indians abroad for the independence of India. As early as in 1906, India house was established in London to support Indian independence movement. However, after achieving

independence Indian foreign policy towards Indian diaspora undergone through a major change. Now, Indian policy makers wanted to see diasporic community as a citizen of their respective country. Later, in 1970s, Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi described Indian communities abroad as Indian Ambassador. Close association of India with Indian Diaspora begun with the establishment of Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) in 1989. But major change in Indian Foreign Policy towards Indian Diaspora occurred in 1990s. Since early 90s there has been a proactive interest of the Indian government in Indian Overseas. This started with appreciation of foreign remittance from NRIs in the Gulf region and from North America. This provided meaningful addition to India's foreign reserve requirements. Further, when liberalization started in early 1990s, the Government of India tried to rope in first NRI's and then Indian settlers abroad to attract foreign direct investment.

The article, *rethinking the concept of diaspora* written by Roza Tsagarousianou 2004, Communication and Media Research Institute University of Westminster explore the concept of diaspora: mobility, connectivity and communication in a globalised world. This article attempts a brief overview of the recent debate on diaspora. The argument of this article taken suggests that diaspora should better be seen as depending not so much on displacement but on connectivity, or on the complex nexus of linkages that contemporary transnational dynamics make possible and sustain.

The book, *Indian Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities* written by Atish Sinha & Madhup Mohta 2007, (Academic Foundation, New Delhi) highlights the burgeoning size and growth of the Indian economy and its attention in the world's psyche and in the international arena. The sub continental geography and years of history witness to invasions and incursions through the thousands of miles of land and sea frontiers, a suitable perspective might view India isolated amongst the large economies of the world, faced with an unfavorable environment outside its boundaries, and not possessing the aggressive politico-military power projection to protect and sustain peaceful national development.

In this books also highlights the recent years, India has attracted worldwide attention for its economic growth, inclusive and beneficial to all sections of society. However, future economic growth will depend on a secure and stable environment and India's own ability to integrate with the global economy. Since the 17th century, India's relations with the outside world underwent a fundamental reorientation. European maritime domination of the Indian Ocean changed the very nature of political, trade and cultural ties between India and its regional maritime partners to the east and the west. Several developments in the 20th century affected India's traditional relationships with its neighbourhood. The first half 20th century was certainly an aberration in the evolution of India's historical and traditional relationship with the outside world.

In order to meet the challenges that India faces, this book has been focusing on inclusive economic development, strengthening of its defence to deter aggression, ensuring stability and peace in its neighbourhood, developing friendly and mutually beneficial ties in its extended neighbourhood like West, Central and South-East Asia and establishing strategic partnerships with all the major actors in the world, particularly the United States, European Union, Russia, China and Japan. In order to deepen its engagement with Asia-Pacific and ASIAN, it is also pursuing its "Look East Policy".

The book, *India's Foreign Policy: Coping with the Changing World* written by Muchkund Dubey 2013, reflected on the transformations and includes prescriptions for strategies and policy measures. It deals with India's evolving relations with important world powers, like the United States, Russia and China. It also casts a glance on India's diaspora, spread out across the world, and the role it has come to play in influencing the country's development and foreign policy.

The book, *India's Foreign Policy and its Neighbours* written by J.N Dixit 2001. The vision and policies of the Indian National Congress towards South Asia can be traced to the pre-independence era, particularly from the 2nd to the 4th decade of the last century. This vision and policies have undergone transformation over the last 56 years in response to political, economic and technological developments in the South Asian region. The changing nature of inter-state equations in South Asia and the patterns of great power influence on the countries of this region also impacted on the policies and

vision of the Congress Party. It is obvious that these undercurrents and influences are not a static phenomenon.

It is to be remembered that in the initial period after India and Myanmar became independent, Indo-Myanmar relations were very close. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had visited Rangoon during 1945-46 and was a strong advocate of Burma's independence. His relations with Col. Aung San Founding President of Burma, the father of Aung San Suu Kyi and with the 2nd Prime Minister U Nu were based on their historical experience against colonial rule and a conviction about convergence of mutual interests. India-Myanmar relations were negatively affected for long years when General Ne Win held power in Rangoon. There was no break in relations but they were maintained at only the formal level and there was not too much economic, political or technological cooperation in bilateral relations during this period. The only exception is the strong and vibrant linkage of Buddhism remaining unaffected after the disappearance of democracy from Myanmar. Another factor which created distances between the two countries was an amount of discriminatory treatment which persons of Indian origin in Myanmar were subjected to. Myanmar's refusing to become a member of the British Commonwealth and of the non-aligned movement in its initial stages also contributed to a lack of depth in Indo-Myanmar relations. This situation characterized a profound contradiction in India's relations with one of its most important neighbours, because in terms of geo-strategic location, security considerations, the availability of markets and complementarily of mutual economic needs, India's relations with Myanmar, should have been multi-faceted and substantial.

The article, *India's Diaspora Policy and Foreign Policy: An Overview* written by M Mahalingam 2013, explores the diaspora policy and Indian foreign policy is two sides of the same coin. India is yet to utilize the potential of Indian Diaspora in its domain of foreign affairs. Indian Diaspora can be utilized for achieving the long due aspirations of India. In the recent decades, the international migration of semi-skilled and high skilled Indians has seen an upsurge due to demand of software Industry. A tangible and scrupulous diaspora policy is imperative to leverage upon the growing Indian diaspora population.

The article, *Diasporas and International Relations Theory* written by Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth 2003, focus on one aspect of diaspora which influence the independent actors that actively role of homeland ancestral or kin-state and foreign policies. Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth argues that Diaspora given their importance, and their status as a permanent feature in the imperfect nation-state system, now receive growing attention from decision makers around the world. So, the study of diaspora constitutes a growing intellectual industry, with numerous academic conferences and writings devoted to the subject. The subject evokes enthusiasm from across borders and was tasking to the intellectuals and policy makers. In the same vein, a resurgence of scholarship in the field of Diaspora studies from the perspectives of anthropology, sociology, economics and international relations has emerged.

This article argues how can international relations theories help to better understand diasporic activities, and how can the study of diasporic international activities enrich existing international relations approaches? In this context, Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth argue that diasporic activities can be better understood by setting their study in the theoretical space shared by constructivism and liberalism.

The article, *Role of Indian diaspora in increasing strategic influence in a globalised world* written by Parama Sinha Palit & Amentendu Palit 2009, explore the role of Indian diaspora in a globalised world. The Indian diaspora has transformed the economies and has come to occupy a pride of place of these countries. Its members are found as entrepreneurs, workers, traders, teachers, researchers, inventors, doctors, lawyers, engineers, managers and administrators. By playing a leading role in the global technological revolution, it has transformed India's image abroad. It clearly reflects the desire to actively engage an already proactive diaspora for not only influencing domestic politics in host countries in a manner beneficial for India, but also for obtaining long-term economic gains and enhancing India's image abroad. The economic and political significance of the diaspora and the need for engaging it is a natural corollary of India's rising strategic significance.

The article, *India Rising: The role of Indian diaspora in accelerating India's transition as a global power* written by Vasant Moharir 2009, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-Europe drawing the characteristics of India as an emerging global power, spell out more specifically the role which the community of NIRs/PIOs in Europe can play in realizing some of the objectives of India in this area. This paper concentrates more on the contribution of Indian diaspora. The starting points of this Indian diaspora have contributed considerably to India's economic and social development. The Indian diaspora are very appreciative of a number of diverse activities which the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) has undertaken since its creation, such as bringing together members of world-wide community of NRIs/PIOs once a year in India at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and also now in countries abroad.

The article, *Issues of identity in the Indian Diaspora: A transnational perspective* written by Ajaya Kumar Sahoo 2006, explores in terms of languages and regions, religions and sects, castes and subcastes, rural and urban, food and style of dress, which are also reflected by her diasporic communities. There are diasporic communities formed on the basis of linguistic or regional identities such as Punjabis, Gujaratis, Sindhis, Tamils, Malayalees and Telugus. In this article shows Gujarati diaspora and the internal dynamics of transnational networks as well as the underlying linkages with the homeland. Similarly, other regional diasporic communities also have transnational relations in a global scale and simultaneously maintain their identity in the host society through their participation in religious, cultural, political associations, and organizations.

The article, *Commentary on Indian's soft power and diaspora* written by Amit Kumar Gupta 2008, explores on the concept of "soft power" and how it can relate to India's foreign policy. He studied the constitutions, legal provisions, the ideological basis, the institutional arrangements, and the social and economic background that has fueled the political systems prevalent in the world today. India has a tradition of ancient wisdom and spirituality and now is surging in the field of economics and military capability, but it has failed to win back its lost glory, and is often thought to be backward. India has not adequately utilized its soft power resources at home and through the Indian Diaspora.

The article *India-Myanmar Relations 1998-2008: A decade of redefining bilateral ties* written by K. Yhome 2009, emphasis the period between 1998-2008 that the bilateral relationship with stood the test of critical events. Furthermore, expansion and diversification of these bilateral ties took place during the very same period. This article identifies some issues that could emerge the potential fissures to upset the relationship.

The article *India and Burma: Exploring new Vista of relationship* written by Keshab Ratha and Suhanta Kumar Mahapatra 2012, explains the mutual contact in the field of trade, commerce, religion, law, political philosophy and culture. Nehru and U Nu developed a friendship that created the foundation of good Indo- Burmese relation. When India supported pro-democracy movement and criticized the ruling military Junta in Burma, the relation between two nations come down. In 1990s, the relation between two countries restored again. They are co-operating in all fields including countering insurgency on the border, checking narcotics smuggling across the border, sharing intelligence on a real-time basis, promoting trade and investment. There are four important factors such as cultural, political, economic and security that involves relations with Burma has been analyzed.

The article, *India - Myanmar relations: Triumph of pragmatism* written by Bibhu Prasad Routray 2011, (Jindal Journal of International Affairs) Vol.1, and No.1, pp.299-321, an analysis of India-Myanmar foreign relations which are marked by both paranoia and bonhomie. Myanmar is strategically important for India, especially in achieving its objective of a Look-East Policy. India has to maintain a cordial relationship with Myanmar's non-democratic military junta to extend its influence in Southeast Asia and due to internal security concerns of its north-eastern states which are under continuous threat from various insurgent groups.

RATIONALE AND SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The focus of this study is to explore the Indian Diaspora in India-Myanmar relations. India's pro-active policy towards its diaspora community also coincided with India's "Look East" policy led to renewed effort on the part of New Delhi to engage Southeast and East Asia. In the context of Myanmar, the "Look East Policy" can be seen from the signing of the border trade agreement between the two countries in 1994.

Myanmar is an important neighbour of India, both countries share not only extensive land border and a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal but also historical ties. Historically, India's contact with Burma goes back to the pre-Christian era. Myanmar also came under the spell of Indian cultural influence, as Buddhism spread directly from India and indirectly through Ceylon, profoundly influencing all spheres of Burmese life. Most of the ethnic Indians migrated to Burma under the British colonial rule, numbering 300,000 – 400,000 and engaged themselves in the bureaucracy, police and military (Singh 2013:86).

When the military staged a coup in March 1962 and ruled the country by decree for 12 years under the authority of the Revolutionary Council (RC), chaired by the armed forces chief, General Ne Win. A present Indian community in Myanmar is largely composed of these people. According to the 2001 report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora (HLCID), the total numbers of ethnic Indians in Myanmar is estimated to be around 2.9 million (Singh 2013:83).

The recent political transition and democratization process in Myanmar, India once again is preparing the ground for engagement with Myanmar. Myanmar is the largest neighbour touching India's east and acts as a buffer zone between its North-Eastern region and the Chinese provinces. India has also recognized Myanmar as a crucial link between India and China. For maintaining peace in the North-East, it is in India's security interests to keep the momentum going in the right direction with Myanmar. India looks at the connectivity through Myanmar as being crucial for its Look East Policy and for the development of stronger ties with the ASEAN countries as an extended neighbourhood. In this context it is important to examine the role of the Indian diaspora in achieving India's internal and external objectives; one that stabilizes its northeastern border; and two a stabilized north east region will provide a much needed bridge for India's policy towards South East Asia.

The frequency of bilateral interactions between New Delhi and Nay Pyi Taw is noteworthy and has the potential of further elevating the India–Myanmar relationship to a new level. At present, both New Delhi and Nay Pyi Taw are engaged at regional and sub-regional contexts on Mekong–Ganga Co-operation (MGC), Association of Southeast

Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). This types of cooperation helps to enhance people-to-people contacts between India and Myanmar. In this context, the diaspora can play an important role in strengthening India–Myanmar relations.

The scope of the study is to analyses the Indian diaspora in India-Myanmar relations. There have been major shifts in Indian foreign policy towards Indian diaspora. The major change in Indian foreign policy towards with ASEAN region occurred in 1990s. Since 1990s there has been a proactive interest of the Indian government in South East region. The Indian government has been showing significant interest in the diasporic relations to the neighbouring countries and also established a number of diasporic policies. The role of Indian Diaspora in the USA has successfully lobbied for clinching of the Indo-US civil nuclear deal, now Singapore is using the Indian Diaspora as an asset by wooing the cash-rich Indian Diaspora in the USA for investments, technology and other expertise. This could be an eye-opener for other countries having a sizable Indian Diaspora. Thus this research will contribute the details information of Indians Diaspora and India’s Look East Policy in India-Myanmar relations and enquires whether the Indian Diaspora plays a strengthening role in India-Myanmar relations?

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

- To study the role of the Indian Diaspora in bridging the gap between India and Myanmar and enhancing India-Myanmar bilateral relations.
- To look into the role of Indian Diaspora and to examine the socio-cultural, political and economic conditions of ethnic Indians in Myanmar.
- To look into the current drivers of political and strategic security of India’s Myanmar policy and Myanmar’s India Policy in Northeast region.
- To examine the future sustainability of India’s Look East Policy vis-a-vis India-Myanmar relations.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How diaspora has become an integral part in the discourse of foreign policy of Nation State?
- What is the role of Indian Diaspora in India-Myanmar relations?
- What are the major change and challenges faced by Indian Diaspora in Myanmar?
- Whether the Indian Diaspora in Myanmar can further play a role in Indian's Look East Policy?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is particularly based on descriptive method substantiated both qualitative method of enquiry. This research is based on the primary sources which include the official documents of demography, government documents and annual reports, parliamentary debates, census and report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora (HLCID).

This qualitative method is based on the secondary sources which include the available books, original articles, journals, research papers, academic papers; online sources newspapers will be incorporated to determine the exploring the role of Indian diaspora in India –Myanmar relations. The study is an attempt at describing the concept of diaspora, theorizing of diaspora. In theorizing diaspora, international relations theories help to better understand issues of diaspora. In this context, the study sought to address the question of how diasporic international activities can enrich existing international relations approaches. Accordingly, the adaption of meaningful social constructivist approach, which emphasizes understanding the multiple meanings of people is what this study attempt it.

CHAPTERIZATIONS

Chapter I-Introduction

Chapter II-Diaspora and foreign policy: A Conceptual Framework

Chapter III-India-Myanmar Bilateral Relations Post 1994

Chapter IV-Exploring Indian Diaspora in India-Myanmar Relations

Chapter V- Conclusion.

CHAPTER II

DIASPORA AND FOREIGN POLICY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

Diaspora has become an important subject in the discourse of foreign policy of national states and also plays a crucial role in strengthening bilateral relations between nation-states. The potential of the Diaspora has gained growing international recognition, both in political and academic circles as well as among Diaspora members themselves. Foreign policy is no longer the sole domain of the diplomatic corps; rather the diaspora community organizations and members play an important role in promoting stronger, deeper, more effective bilateral collaboration with their countries of origin. Partnerships that build on existing linkages to nations of origin and draw on the talents, creativity, resources, and networks of diaspora communities are a vital part of the foreign policy process.

Diasporas have emerged as powerful entities since they are recognized as ‘soft power’ in the realm of foreign policy strategy and also as an agent or catalyst of economic development of countries of origin beside their active role in the host countries (Mahalingam 2013:1). For instance, in the economic sphere, the Chinese diaspora has been seen as a propelling force for its emergence as an economic super power (Mahalingam 2013:1). The Chinese diaspora is one of the largest diaspora in the world. The US, Canada and Australia now receives more migrants of Chinese origin than from anywhere else in the world. The diaspora are increasingly exerting political influence on their host countries and their countries of origin. In the political sphere, the Jewish Diaspora has a strong grip over the US and European Union in terms of shaping their strategic relationship with Israel (Mahalingam 2013:1). The role of diaspora in terms of influencing the host land foreign policy was remarkably manifested perhaps during 1967 and especially after 1973 in Israel’s foreign policy where the exceptionally well-organized pro- Israel lobby influenced US foreign policy towards Middle East. Hence, Diasporas being transnational communities have become important non-state actors as well as deciding factors in international political and economic relations.

In 2003, Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth in “Diasporas and International Relations Theory” argues that given the importance of the diaspora community, and their status as a permanent feature in the imperfect nation-state system, now receive growing attention from decision makers around the world (Shain & Barth 2013:457). Therefore, the study of diaspora nowadays constitutes a growing intellectual industry, with numerous academic conferences and writings devoted to the subject. The subject evokes enthusiasm from across borders and was tasking to the intellectuals and policy makers. In the same vein, a resurgence of scholarship in the field of Diaspora studies from the perspectives of anthropology, sociology, economics and international relations has emerged. The virtue of their connection with both the host country and country of origin enable the diaspora communities play pivotal role in the relation of these two countries.

DIASPORA AND FOREIGN POLICY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The term Diaspora literally means “scattering” or “dispersion.” Derived from Greek word *dia* (over, through) and *speiro* (to sow, to scatter), the word “Diaspora” was originally used to refer to the dispersion of the Jews to the lands outside Palestine after the Babylonian captivity (Gupta 1969:1). Since the late twentieth century, the notion of diaspora has been used to describe any ethnic population who resides in the countries other than their own historical homelands. In its references to the diasporic experiences of Jews, Armenians or Africans, diaspora conveys a negative connotation due to its association with “forced displacement, victimisation, alienation, loss” (Salehi 2007:4). In this sense, it is accompanied with a “dream of return”. In broader usage, it describes displaced people who maintain or revive their connection with their country of origin and includes a range of groups such as political refugees, alien residents, guest workers, immigrants, expellees, ethnic and racial minorities, and overseas communication (Salehi 2007:4).

The last decade witness the emergence of various definition and commonalities, propounded by various social scientist, Walker Connor (1986) defines diaspora as "that segment of a people living outside the homeland" (Connor 1986:16). Similarly, scholars like Safran (1991) tried to build a definition based on the idea of trauma, exile and nostalgia. To Safran a definition based on the memories of one diasporic community (the

Jewish experience) and thus, turning it into a paradigm, could be less fruitful than one could imagine (Safran 1991:85). Based on the study of the Jewish historical experience, Safran tried to set the criteria in order to build a typology, according to which a community could be, or not, categorized as such (Safran 1991:85). It is here that new approaches that explore through a more ethnographic approach that point to different routes of not only to the variety of the histories, but also to the wider politico-economic conditions that instigate transnational movements and also, the epistemological framework that tries to comprehend the latter with the re-launching of the term diasporas (Clifford 1994:303). Diasporas also often relate to ethnic commonalities and kinship solidarity as common identity that is essential to distinguish diasporic communities from mere “transnational” or international groupings (Anthias 1998:561).

According to Khachig Tololian (1991) the term ‘diaspora that once described Jewish, Greek, and Armenian dispersion now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community’(Tololian 1991:2). In recent years, the notion of diaspora has developed into a central theme of academic and policy discussion. Encyclopedia of Diasporas gives a very broad and liberal definition of diaspora as “a people dispersed by whatever cause to more than one location. Thus people dispersed to different lands may harbor thoughts of return, may not fully assimilate to their host countries, and may maintain relationship with other countries in the diaspora (Ember & Ian 2005:429).

William Safran, a political scientist who defines diaspora as an expatriate community with a history of dispersal usually forced that maintains a memory and various myths about a specific “homeland” and constructs a collective identity related to this homeland (Safran 1991:85). It remains committed to the welfare of this homeland, to which it may return one day. It also tends to resist assimilation to the host country to which it has migrated. Through transnational solidarity networks, it supports its kin members’ emigration from, or repatriation to, the homeland, while attempting to influence developments there. Anthropologist James Clifford (1994) further underscored the emotional connection to the “homeland” that a diaspora cultivates (Clifford

1994:336). Similarly, Gilroy argued that displaced diasporic groups often define themselves by passion “against” a phenomenon disaster, conflict or an entity nation-state, which has driven them out of their homes. Essential to the construction of a diaspora is this “diasporic consciousness”, structured around the idea of a cherished faraway homeland and created by a powerful external force (Gilroy 1997:325).

Furthermore, Sociologist like Rogers Brubaker (2005) synthesized diasporas around three core element: *dispersion* (in space and time), *homeland orientation* (through the construction of a collective memory, the wish to return and influence the homeland), and *boundary maintenance* (preservation of ethnic ties and identity linked to the homeland, a reluctant assimilation to the host country) (Brubaker 2005:5-6).

Similarly Robin Cohen emphasized the necessity to consider both forced dispersal and voluntary migrations in the study of diaspora (Cohen 1997:20). Cohen proposes a typology in which he classifies diaspora as: victim diaspora, labor and imperial diaspora, trade diaspora, cultural diaspora, and global-deterritorialized diaspora (Cohen 1997:20). Not suggesting a perfect match between a particular ethnic group and a specific type of diaspora, Cohen identifies the Jewish, Palestinian, Irish, African and Armenian diaspora as victim diaspora. He represents the British as an imperial diaspora and the Indian as a labor diaspora. Chinese and Lebanese are classified as trade diaspora. Caribbeans in his typology are characterized as a cultural diaspora (Cohen 1997:20). Cohen describes today’s global migrants as considered to be a part of a diaspora. In our globalized and interconnected world, trade, labour and economic needs are powerful driving forces behind transnational migration and the formation of diasporic groups. Lately, the growing importance of diasporic groups in international politics has re-examined the patterns of influence as well as the role of diaspora in policymaking, trade, and circulation of ideas.

DIASPORA STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The study of diaspora nowadays constitutes a growing intellectual industry, increasing recognition of the importance of diaspora in international affairs. The theorization of diaspora in international relation theories like realism, liberal

institutionalism, constructivism and post-colonialism pay attention to the potential of diaspora in its theoretical tenets.

International diaspora is studied broadly in various disciplines like anthropology, geography, and sociology and so on but in the domain of international relation it is an underestimated area. The first theory to be considered is realism. Of all the theories which have been considered that realism has no space for international diaspora. To talk about realism, there is no singular definition of the same. However there are common attributes in all definitions. Propounded by Hobbes, Morgenthau, Kenneth Waltz there are some core assumptions of realism, i.e., state is a unitary actor in an anarchical world. The obsession with state centricism and anarchy leaves no space for diasporic community as an actor. In fact as states subsume unitary identity, the domestic abroad gets neglected as a component of the state which can exert influence even after remaining outside the boundary of the state (Das, 2014:4).

In 2003, Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth's article "Diasporas and International Relations Theory" argue that diaspora given their importance, and their status as a permanent feature in the imperfect nation-state system; now receive growing attention from decision makers around the world. According to Shain & Barth diasporic activities can be understood by setting their study in the theoretical space shared by constructivism and liberalism. These two theories provide scope for theorization of international diaspora. Liberal institutionalism and realism share many of their assumptions. Both the theories believe in anarchical system where the state has to survive, but liberalism acknowledges domestic influencing the international. Thus international diaspora are such actors who can link both domestic and international politics. Through their activities they can influence the policies of their homeland in spite of their international location. This, therefore expands the meaning and scope of domestic politics where the Diasporic community is considered as the domestic interest group according to Shain and Barth (2003) argued in this context domestic does not mean 'non-international' but means that although the diasporic community is living outside they are 'inside the people' (Shain and Barth 2003: 451). Another fact of liberal institutionalism is complex interdependence which can also accommodate international

diaspora. A concept propagated by Keohane and Nye (1977) envisage another ideal type (as they have called realism an ideal type) where there are actors other than states that participate in the international politics. According to this theory the state is not coherent unit but there are interstate, transgovernmental and transnational component in the international politics (Keohane & Nye 1977:23-37). Under complex interdependence it is acknowledged that agenda formation would be affected by both domestic and international issues (Keohane & Nye 1977:23-37).

Diaspora have a unique status, they are geographically outside the state, but identity- wish perceived by them, the homeland, or others as inside the people attach great importance to kinship identity. Constructivism seeks to account for actors' identities, motives, and preferences, while liberalism deals with explaining their actions once the preferences are settled. Diaspora is among the most prominent actors that link international and domestic spheres of politics. Their identity based motivation should therefore be an integral part of constructivist effort to explain the construction of national identities. Furthermore, diasporic activities and influence in the homeland, despite their international location, expand the meaning of the term 'domestic politics to include not only politics inside the state but also inside the people. However there is no mention of international diaspora in complex interdependence (Shain & Barth 2003:451).

Constructivism is another theory which can be utilized to understand the activities of international diaspora. To familiarize with this theory, constructivism holds that if structures shape the behaviour of social and political actor, then normative and material structures are also as important as material structure. The understanding of non-material structure's influence on actors' identity is important as interests are related to identity. However, according to constructivism structure and agent are mutually constituted. Normative and ideational structures can influence identity and interest but they are also dependent on the knowledgeable practice of the actors (Shain and Barth 2003: 451).

Thus it appears that constructivism offer space to theoretical conceptualization of international diaspora as the same is concerned with identity and interest. Constructivism helps to understand the identity based activities of international diaspora (Shain and Barth 2003: 451). According to constructivism identity is variable, shaped by internal

and external forces (Shain and Barth 2003: 451). Diasporic communities attach lots of importance to their identity. So, national identity is both variable and resource as it enables to impact on policy. Therefore, national identity attracts varying importance from different groups. Interestingly a resource is more valued by those who rarely have it. It explains why 'diaspora outside state but inside the people attach more importance to national identity than those who live inside the state'. William Bloom identifies a process of 'national identity dynamics' according to which there is a propensity among individuals, who identify themselves with the nation, to preserve and enrich the 'shared national identity' (Shain and Barth 2003: 458-459).

DIASPORA AND FOREIGN POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Diaspora can play a strengthen role for making the foreign policy. During the independence struggle, the Indian independence movement was deeply influenced them and Indian leaders wanted to protect interest of Indian communities. The Indian expatriates like Adi Patel, Chhedi Jagan and Koya led the Indian freedom struggle and the political awakening in their respective settled countries. Mahatma Gandhi who had come from diaspora was become of light for achieving political freedom for India (Mahalingam 2013:4). After achieving independence Indian foreign policy towards Indian diaspora undergone through a major change. Indian policy makers wanted to see diasporic community as a citizen of their respective country. Under Nehru's policies respect for national sovereignties, amicable international relations and non- interference into the affairs of other nations as part of India's non- aligned policy.

Later, in the wake of globalization and radical structural changes in the Indian economy, Indian diaspora was considered a viable and potential source to bail out the threatening foreign currency crisis of 1990s. The resumption of engagement with Indian diaspora resulted in major implications on internal as well as external political and economic processes for India. The diaspora has gained growing international recognition, both in political and academic circles as well as among diaspora members themselves. Foreign policy is no longer the sole domain of the diplomatic corps; rather the diaspora community organizations and members play an important role in promoting stronger, deeper, more effective bilateral collaboration with their countries of origin. Partnerships

that build on existing linkages to nations of origin and draw on the talents, creativity, resources, and networks of diaspora communities are a vital part of the foreign policy process.

Diasporas have emerged as powerful entities since they are recognized as 'soft power' in the realm of foreign policy strategy and also as an agent or catalyst of economic development of countries of origin beside their active role in the host countries. For instance, in the economic sphere, the Chinese diaspora has been seen as a propelling force for its emergence as an economic super power (Mahalingam 2013:1). The Chinese diaspora is one of the largest diaspora in the world. The US, Canada and Australia now receives more migrants of Chinese origin than from anywhere else in the world. Diaspora increasingly exerts political influence on their host countries and their countries of origin. In the political sphere, the Jewish Diaspora has a strong grip over the US and European Union in terms of shaping their strategic relationship with Israel (Mahalingam 2013:1).

According to Shain and Barth (2003), the first category is passive diasporic community who gets entangled in international relation not because of their own action but because of certain circumstances. In the first case the community might be in need of foreign assistance vis-à-vis the host-land like in the case of Syrian Jews who got assistance to immigrate. Another situation is when the mother land tries to represent her people including those living outside. There are multiple reasons of this action. It may be authentic, an act to strengthen the ties between 'empowered kin' living in another country or to have an impact on weak neighbour's internal and external policies. Russian Federation exhibited this attitude towards their 'non-Russian successor' which are newly independent countries and where Russian diaspora live (Shain & Barth 2003:453).

The second category that they talk about is active diasporic community who take part in the process of foreign policy making in the host country. They organize as a group and lobby to preserve their interest in the foreign policy. However it is basically in the liberal democratic countries like the USA where they can play a role. In fact, Samuel Huntington (1966) and Tony Smith were skeptics about the role played by diasporic community in the foreign policy making. According to them the 'narrow

agenda' of these communities promote the interest of people who are not from the USA and thus affect the 'common good' (Shain & Barth 2003:453).

The third category by Shain and Barth (2003) is also active diasporic group who play crucial role in the foreign policy making process of the country of origin (Shain & Barth 2003:453). Economically and politically empowered diaspora can directly influence the policies of the homeland. Through funding and philanthropic acts they can exert huge impact. They can also invest in their home country. In fact, many countries appreciate the participation of their empowered kin in the policy making process (Shain & Barth 2003:453).

Diasporic community also influences the internal conflict of the homeland both in negative and positive ways. They may provide assistance and support to any faction to continue fighting. They can play the role of peacemakers as well. A RAND study conducted in the 2001 finds that after the end of Cold-war the support of foreign government to insurgent groups declined but it's the diasporic community who are providing assistance to the same (Shain and Barth 2003: 450). The role of diaspora has been criticized for supporting war efforts in homeland, financially or otherwise; "promoting extremism and holding uncompromising political views". Clashes in Middle East, the Caucasus and South Asia are some such examples.

However the role of diaspora is not only negative in the context of internal unrest in the homeland. They can also act as peacemakers in a conflicting situation. Diasporic community can create lobby to influence government to settle internal disputes. They can also approach international organization for that purpose. They may provide assistance in the post-conflict reconstruction process. The resolution of the clashes in Northern Ireland witnessed the fruitful role played by the Irish diaspora as mediator (Baser & Swain 2008:13). Similarly, diaspora of Somalian origin also played pivotal role in the peace talks that started in the 2002 in Nairobi (Baser & Swain 2008:14). The participation of Afghani diaspora in the Petersburg talk on pacific conversion of Afghanistan in the post war period is another case in consideration (Baser and Swain 2008: 19).

The discussion on the role played by international diaspora as an actor in international relation dynamics enables as to show that they can play dominant role in the policy making process of both the host and homeland. Globalization and liberalization of global economic system coupled with the rapid advancement of transport and communication technologies that have reduced time and space that have in turn intensified their socio-economic, political and cultural ties very stronger with their origin countries (Vertovec 1999:19). Globalisation is examined in its guise as the world-wide flow of cultural objects, images and meanings resulting in variegated process of realization, back-and-forth transferences, mutual influences, new contestations, negotiations and constant transformations (Vertovec 1999:19). Hence, not only have diasporas attained due importance at the international level, but also in the domestic political and economic affairs of home countries than ever before. Eventually, they have emerged as an 'inevitable link' between their home and host lands along with major political and economic implications for both sides.

Indian Diaspora as a major component of global diaspora, has increasingly become more influential over India's foreign policy and has evolved as a strategic asset for India in the recent decades. Realizing its due role at various levels, India has been taking concerted efforts to engage and leverage upon its diaspora, that has been roughly estimated about 25 million dispersed 200 countries with the high concentration in regions such as the Middle East, the United States of America, Malaysia, and South Africa (Singh 2013:1). Considering its size and expansion, it is aptly mentioned in the High Level Committee Report on Indian Diaspora by the Government of India. The Indian diaspora has not only increased in numbers but has been gaining universal recognition for the unique contributions to its host countries, be it skilled and semi-skilled work force in the Gulf region or technocrats and educated professionals of Indian origin. Members of the Indian diaspora do play a significant role in mobilizing political support for in their country of residence on issues of vital concerns to India. Thus it recognized that there is a convergence of diaspora policy and foreign policy of a country due to the embedded role of diaspora in the foreign affairs. However, the diaspora policy of India has been sporadic and patchy because of lackadaisical approach and compulsion of deep linkages between Indian diaspora policy and India's foreign policy.

INDIAN DIASPORA IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

During pre-independence period, though the focus of foreign policy lay with British interests, the then Indian government took earnest interest in terms of protecting the various concerns of the Indian expatriates as they were 'British subjects' only living elsewhere in the British Empire. The Indian political elites had shown solidarity and shared their concerns with the Indian expatriates through deputations by the Congress delegates. In fact, the plight of Indians abroad was a major issue for the independence movement led by Indian National Congress. There was a remittance from the Indian labour migrants to their families back home. It can be argued that a symbiotic relationship existed between home and diaspora which continued till 1947 (Mahalingam 2013:2).

After achieving independence in 1947, there was a paradigm shift in the position of diaspora policy as a result of India's foreign policy being guided by Nehruvian ideals of anti-imperialism and racial apartheid, respect for sovereignty and non-alignment. On the economic front, India chose to follow self-reliance as its goal for economic development. The Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru categorically announced that ethnic Indians who chose to remain abroad would consider themselves as citizens or nationals of their respective host lands (Singh 2013:84). In fact, they were encouraged to integrate with host culture and fight for the liberation of their adopted lands. After a Nehru's successor Lal Bahadur Shastri entered into an agreement with Srimavo Bandaranaike to resolve the question of Tamils in Sri Lanka. Otherwise, the Nehruvian trend was continued and extended to till 1980 by successive governments (Mahalingam 2013:2).

Later, in spite of a change of focus in the India's foreign policy from Nehruvian idealism to realism under the regime of Indira Gandhi, there was no change of position in the diaspora policy or the Indian economic foreign policy. In fact, she made herself particularly unpopular during the East African Indian crisis of 1968-1972. However, owing to oil shocks and Balance of Payment crisis, the government pushed for a remittance-centric approach especially for the Gulf Indians. Later, when there was a switch of foreign policy priorities from realism to inter- third world cooperation under the

regime of Rajiv Gandhi, there was a slight shift in diaspora policy as well. He offered his amicable support and tried to handle Fiji Indian crisis in 1986, which had strained our relationship with Fiji. Besides, having realized Indian diaspora as a strategic asset, he invited Indian diasporic talents like Sam Pitroda to realize his vision of 21st century India and took administrative measures like the establishment of Indian Overseas Affairs department in 1984. At the same time, there were no constructive steps or consistent and clear-cut policies to deal or tap the overseas Indians until the coming of National Democratic Alliance government led by BJP.

After the end of Cold War, the emergence of a multi-polar centric foreign policy, a structural shift in the global economy and the relentless foreign reserve crisis of Indian economy in the 1990s, facilitated the Indian government led by Narasimha Rao to announce drastic economic reforms such as Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization, which at the sometime enable the Indian diaspora to participate in the plethora of economic opportunities of the unregulated and open Indian economy, thus resolving the foreign currency crisis due to substantial investment and remittance from the Indian diaspora. Subsequently, the Indian government under the BJP and NDA regime changed its outlook towards diaspora and reviewed its diaspora policy by initiating major steps to leverage upon the Indian diaspora for economic growth and also as part of its larger vision of cultural nationalism.

In the light of this, long and short term comprehensive policy measures were unveiled to engage its diverse diaspora during India's regime such as the appointment of *High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora*, launching of PIO card scheme, organizing annual Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on 9th January, giving out Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards, offering Dual citizenship (OCI) and so on. The subsequent UPA government established a separate Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs which has taken several initiatives for engaging the diaspora.

The first waves of Indian emigration to developed countries were mostly labour flow from rural regions in India to these European countries. However, during the middle of the 20th century, Indian emigrants began residing in the UK, USA, Australia and Canada as these sites turned to immigration for supplies of well-educated and

professionally trained Indians from urban middle class families (Salehi 2007:3). In the developed countries, there are senior politicians, leading entrepreneurs, scientists, doctors, academics, attorneys, skilled workers, religious and spiritual leaders, community leaders, media specialists, etc.

Diaspora had made high contributions in politics, trade commerce professions culture and sports. The most prominent among the diaspora of the world, namely, Jewish, Greek, Indian and Polish have played an active and crucial role in supporting independence movements in their homelands and in relating deep attachment to the motherland. The Chinese diaspora has been a major force in economic modernization and growth in China.

United State of America

Indian Diaspora in USA, in effective lobbying for India and in improving considerably the dialogue and discussion on India in US political institutions. Indian diaspora in US is not only 2 million strong but also consisting of highly educated and experienced professionals (Moharir 2009:11). The United States is today home to one of the largest Indian populations in the world, as well as to substantial diasporic Indian communities from places such as Fiji, Trinidad and Guyana. Though the early history of Indian American can be traced as far back as to about 1900, the contemporary history of most Indian communities extends back to the passage of new legislation in 1965 that lifted restrictions on the entry of Indians into the US (Lal 2006:314).

Indian Diaspora in USA is a culmination of different phases of Indian migration to the States including the twice- migrants. The fastest growth of Indian diaspora has been in the US for the last four decades numbering few thousand in the 1960s to reach over 2.5 million in 2005 (Abraham 2006:3).The financially powerful and politically well-connected Indo-Americans have emerged during the last decade. In the late 1960's and 70's, there was a shortage of doctors and engineers in America and this had enabled and encouraged a large number of Indians to migrate to America. The American universities started attracting the best students from India's prestigious institutions such as Indian Institute of Technologies (IITs), National Institute of Technologies (NITs), Indian

Institute of Science and others. Once graduated, the American Corporations, universities, research and other organization absorbed them as engineers, scientists and business executives and they have been competing very well with their American counter parts. The fast growth and success of big companies such as the Microsoft, Intel and several Silicon Valley companies can be partly attributed to thousands of Indian engineers and scientists. The Indian doctors made a big dent in the health services. The numbering over 50,000, the Indians physicians and surgeons constitute the largest ethnic group among medical professionals (Abraham 2006:3).

The Indian community enjoys the distinction of being one of the highest earning, best educated and fastest growing ethnic groups, and that too in the most powerful country in the world. Their high levels of literacy, economic success, knowledge of English and experience with democracy in their home country has eased their transition in the land of their adoption. Indian Americans are found in the following high profile occupations and sectors such as medicine, engineering, law, information technology, international finance, management, higher education, mainstream and ethnic journalism, writing, films and music. They also work in real estate, retailing and agriculture and as taxi operators, factory workers and newsstand workers (*Report of High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora–2001*)<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf.part1-exe.pdf> .The Indo- Americans community in US reflects the diversity of India. Promoting India Studies at Universities are now close to about 12 universities involved in India related studies. This has been possible because of the community support and involvement (Abraham 2006:7).

Canada

Indo- Canadians are among the largest and most important diaspora in Canada. The majority of Indian immigrants in Canada are Sikhs. Although early Indian immigrants to North America were largely all Sikh peasants from Punjab, there is a distinct difference of position between Canada and the United States. The Sikh population profiles in the United States diverged rapidly because Sikhs in the United State frequently married local Mexican American women, unlike those in Canada who neither married women of European descent nor could bring wives with them from India.

Sikhs now constitute the majority of East India populations in Canada, while in the US; Hindus are now the most numerous (Salehi 2007:16).

The early Indo-Canadian community was mostly composed of young Sikh men from Punjab, who came to British Columbia with the hope of finding the better economic opportunities Canada became first known to East Indians in 1897. Stopping in Canada en route in their journey home from Britain to India, a Sikh regiment of the British Indian Army participated in a parade to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in London. This regiment visited British Columbia and subsequently recommended North America to the other Sikhs who were seeking employment opportunities abroad (Salehi 2007:10). Canada also saw similar growth in Indian population in the last two decades as students, professionals and refugees from Uganda, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Australia and few other industrialized countries saw smaller groups of Indian professionals settling down so also businessmen in several industrialized countries such as Spain, Portugal, Belgium, etc. Indian merchants have now taken over the control of diamond trade in Belgium from the Jewish community (Abraham2006:4).

At the beginning of British Colonial time, Indian did not need visa to travel to Canada. In this way large numbers of Indian migrated in Canada. The growing numbers of Indian would take over their jobs in factories, in lumber camps, in lumberyards, in saw mills, on cattle farms and in fruit orchards (Salehi 2007:10-11). In 1902, these Hong Kong regiments travelled through Vancouver and across Canada to the coronation celebrations of Edward VII. They brought back stories of the rich soil and favorable climate of British Columbia, similar to Punjab, and high earnings for work in lumber yards (Lal 2006:328). Between 1903 and 1908, about 5000 East Indians, almost all male Sikhs from Punjab, came to British Columbia to work on the railroad, in lumber mills or in forestry (Lal 2006:328).

The average annual income of immigrants from India is nearly 20% higher than the national average, and they are also in general better educated. Indo-Canadians are organized on the basis of linguistic, regional, religious, and other characteristics. The growing political prominence of Indo-Canadians reflected in the increasing attention devoted to their concerns by Canadian politicians. The community wants that India to

be strong and play a role in the world commensurate with its importance. Its leaders keep abreast of Indian developments and maintain close personal ties with politicians in India (*Report of High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora–2001*, Executive Summary), <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf.part1-exe.pdf> .

In 1967, with the replacement of a point system for immigration quotas based on ethnicity, Indian immigrant population began to increase. According to statistics Canada, since the late 1990s, approximately 25,000- 30,000 Indians arrive each year, making east-Indians the second highest group immigrating to Canada after Chinese immigrants (Salehi 2007:14). The 2001 census of statistics Canada estimate the number of people who identified themselves as being of East-Indian at 713,330. The majority of the Indo-Canadian population is comprised of new immigrants from India, or second and third generation East Indian Canadian. Half of the East Indian population in Canada is Punjabi. The other Indian ethnic communities are Gujaratis, Tamils, Keralities, Bengalis, Sindhis and others. East Indo- Canadians speak various languages. The most widely spoken language is Punjabi. The second broadly spoken language is Tamil. Urdu is mostly the language of Muslims who come from North India. Hindi is mainly spoken by Indo-Canadians from North India. Gujarati is also spoken by people from Gujarat. Bengali is the language of people from the state of West Bengal (Salehi 2007:14).

East Indo-Canadians are very diverse in terms of religious backgrounds. Sikhs, at 33.5 per cent are the largest group among Indo- Canadians, while the group comprises only 2 per cent of the population in India (Salehi 2007:14). In India, Hindus, at 80 per cent, are the greater population. However, they comprise only 27 per cent of the Indo-Canadian population. Muslims and Christians respectively are 17.5 per cent and 16.5 per cent of East- Indian population in Canada. Indo-Canadians represent diversity in culture, as well as diversity in religion and language (Salehi 2007:14).

According to Leonard argues that the East-Indian Muslim communities in both Canada and the US are becoming increasingly important. Unlike Indo-Canadians, Indians in the US are dominantly Hindus and have a highly variant relationship with India. One link is the remittances that they sometimes send home. According to the US 1990 census, Indians had the highest median household income, family income, and per

capita income of any immigrant community. The major populations of Indian in the US are professionals. According to Nair argues that United State with the lowest population of Indian diaspora in its total population in 2001 i.e., 0.59 per cent, has the highest share of India's total trade in 2000-2001, i.e., 12.96 per cent. Canada, with a share of 2.74 per cent of the Indian diaspora population has only 1.11 per cent shares of India's total trade (Salehi 2007:16).

Europe

The size and variety of Indian Diaspora in Europe is increasing fast. Today, there are more than 2 million of them, spread over 18 countries (Moharir 2009:12). On the one hand there is the old Diaspora group of 1.6 million in the UK where the Diaspora members have achieved great success in all sectors of the of the country; on the other hand there are also small groups of few thousands in countries like Finland, Italy, Spain and Poland, where due to recent arrivals and language difficulties, achievements have been relatively limited (Moharir 2009:12). However, amongst them are senior politicians, leading entrepreneurs, scientists, doctors, academics, attorneys and lawyers, skilled workers, religious and spiritual leaders, community leaders, media specialists, etc. Their past performance through remittances, transfer of resources, technology, promotion of Indian exports, contributions to charitable establishments, support to small projects through NGOs, etc., is no less than that of Diaspora from other regions. Also, the future scope for their contribution is tremendous, provided some institutional measures are undertaken to bring them together and pool their sources.

Remittances are not the only instrument of Diaspora contribution. They can be a major source of Direct Foreign Investment (FDI), market development (outsourcing), technology transfer, philanthropy, tourism, political contributions and more tangible flows of knowledge, new attitudes and cultural influence. There is no up-to-date estimate of Indian Diaspora resources but an estimate in 2000 stated that "The economic output of NRIs/PIOs was estimated US \$400 billion, almost the same as total GDP of India (Moharir 2009:L14). The estimate may be US \$600 billion. As Pavan Verma observes, "Indian Diaspora in USA has merged as that country's richest immigrant community, with nearly 200,000 millionaires" (Moharir 2009:14).

The very fact of an economically successful overseas Indian community and the rising numbers in the diaspora, are indicative of the ‘pull’ of the European economies that have provided opportunities for diaspora success. The Indo-EU diaspora addressed this issue of the Overseas Indian contribution to the host country and it received overwhelming positive response (though few hard details on actual contribution or investment). Other than the Diamond trade ‘Antwerp - Surat Diaspora Corridor’, and corporate IT business, no other dynamic business linkages involving large Indian diaspora communities was found in any of the 5 focus countries of Europe (Singh 2012:40). This is the growing interest and much potential on both sides yet the fact is that the relationship is nowhere near its potential. Both host and home countries need to push the already available framework. This framework of Indian Diaspora policy meets several criteria of global best practice and needs to be further strengthened. Host governments too would stand to benefit in promoting the Indo-EU Diaspora as a bridge for economic collaboration and investment.

United Kingdom

The Indian diaspora has a global migration history. Since 1834, Indians have migrated to widespread places in the world (Hussain 2005:189). The colonization of India opened the doors for few migration opportunities and Indians availed themselves. It was during the British colonial era in India that the first Indians found their way to the imperial motherland, and it is this connection that accounts for the intimate ties that continue to exist between the two countries.

Mainstream economic migration of Indians to the United Kingdom started taking place during the 1950s. The new states of India and Pakistan were then suffering from fragile economics and manpower exports were beneficial to them. The Indian population in Britain, according to the statistics of 1999-2000, is more than 942,000. Approximately 40 percent of the population lives around London. The predominated group of the second migration was mainly Hindu Gujaratis who settled in the urban areas of Britain particularly in Leicerter and North London. They came as whole family units, often sending a single member first to establish a base and make links with extended family

members already in residence. Once settled they began to reproduce organizations and practices familiar to them from their time in Africa (Hussain 2005:190-191).

One million people of Indian origin were living in the United Kingdom in 2001(Hussain 2005:189)..Thus represents just fewer than 2 per cent of the total population of the British Isles (Lal 2006:338). First, they were highly developed culturally and satisfied the needs of their community. Secondly, they made important contributions to Britain economically. Thirdly, the Indian migrants have also made significant monetary contributions to the economy of India. Although mainly economic reasons, they were instrumental in embedding Indian migrants within British society (Hussain 2005:189).

The manual to highly qualified professionals, Indians have played a role in Britain's economic life, spanning the class divide but remaining marginal. Within east strata of the workforce, they have almost always fulfilled roles that have been spurned by the local population. Indian economic success has become part of the public discourse about Indians in recent year. The relationship of Indians in Britain to Indian politics was shaped by the success of most Indian political parties (Lal 2006:342).

INDIAN DIASPORA IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

To discuss about the origins and evolution of Indian diaspora in a different parts of developing countries such as South Africa, East Africa, Fiji, Maldives, Sri-Lanka, Mauritius, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Iran etc. The modern Indian diaspora was caused by the British colonialism in India. Two-thirds of the total Indian emigration involved indentured and voluntary labourers who worked in rubber, rice, sugar, tea, coffee, and oil-plantations (Jain2013:1). The Indian emigration to Malaysia, Ceylon, Mauritius and the West Indies and petty bourgeoisie emigration to East Africa had to wait for British colonial settlement in this place. Thus Indian overseas emigration is obviously the result of the workings of British Colonialism.

Africa

India has more than three thousand years' history of cultural and commercial relations with Africa. Commercial relations have a longer history than cultural contacts. Indian sources indicate that there were contacts and trade relations between Dravidians and Babylonians as early as the seventh century B.C. (Gupta 1969:3). On their way to Mesopotamia the Indian merchants and sailors would have certainly visited Southern Arabia, which lies on the maritime route and most probably the Eastern part of Horn of Africa, the Somalian peninsula (Gupta 1969:3). It has been argued that a flourishing maritime trade existed between India and Southern Arabia long before the time of Minaean inscriptions, i.e. before the fourteenth century B.C. (Gupta 1969:4). Indian contacts in ancient period were more visible in Eastern and Southern coast of Africa and ancient Indian epics like 'Vedas' and 'Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta', provide valuable information regarding contacts between the two regions. During 1829-1924 about 769,437 Indians migrated to Mauritius, South Africa, Reunion, Seychelles and East African region; mostly as indenture workers (Gupta 1969:4). Later period of colonial era also witnessed increased frequencies of free emigration as traders, skilled artisans, bankers, petty contractors, clerks, professionals and entrepreneurs.

The central idea here is that the age of globalization is producing a new breed of diaspora. The era of liberalization, privatization and globalization, United State of America, Canada and West European countries have become favorite destination for highly skilled Indian immigrants, prevailing opportunities in Africa still attracts significant number of Indian migrants. Official records of the Government of India also note increasing presence of Indian communities in the African continent. Report of the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora (2001) estimated total number of Indian Diaspora in Africa 20,63,178 which includes 19,69,708 PIO's, 89,405 NRI's and 3,500 stateless people. They were spread in 34 countries located in various regions of the continent. Latest available estimates on overseas Indians indicate that current Diasporic strength of India in Africa is 26, 96,956 out of those 25, 08,503 are PIOs and rest 1,55,897 are NRIs. Indian Diaspora resides in 46 countries of Africa covering all linguistic, cultural or geographical regions of Africa (Gupta 1969:5). Indian Diaspora in Africa constitutes 12.48 per cent of the total Diasporic strength of India.

South Africa

India severs trade relations with the South African apartheid government and imposed a complete diplomatic, commercial, cultural and sports- embargo on South Africa and those ended only after the end of apartheid regime in 1990s. India established its diplomatic relations with South Africa in 1993. Since then both countries have developed close partnership in diverse areas ranging from defence, culture, trade, science and technology and economic cooperation. Bilateral trade between India and South Africa in 2010-11 has been recorded to 11,125.56 million US Dollar, more than eleven times from the level of 952 million Dollars in 1999. They have remained instrumental in increasing export from India (Gupta 1969:9). This is evident from export basket of India which includes rice, spices, readymade garments of cotton, silk, other textiles, carpet, handicrafts etc. These 'Indian ethnic goods' are being imported from India mostly because of demand arises from Indian communities in South Africa.

Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Nigeria, Madagascar, Mozambique, Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe come under category. Kenya has largest population of Indian diaspora in East African region. The High Level Committee of Indian diaspora estimated that there were about 102500 Indian diaspora in the country. Tanzania is divided in to the two parts-mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar Island. Zanzibar Island and coastal region of the Tanzania was in touch of Indians since ages. A major junk of Indian diaspora in Tanzania is settled in Zanzibar Island. According to High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora, In Tanzania there is 85000 PIO's and 5000 NRI's. This consists around 0.28% of the total population of the country (Report of the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora, 2001). In these countries, strength of Indian Diaspora in terms of total population of host country is very small and in scattered in various regions. Except for where the Indian diaspora has been actively participated in the political process of the country, they don't make influential political constituency and there is very less chance of obtaining political offices on the basis of ethnic identity. But incidentally, Indian Diaspora in these countries are economically well off and culturally keen to retain identity. Some of leading journalist, prominent academician and lawyers, who shape public opinion in these countries, belong to Indian communities. Therefore, Indian

Diaspora could play marginal, if not substantial role in the promotion of promotion of bilateral partnership between motherland and host-land (Gupta 1969:11).

Uganda

Uganda is a country where Indian Diaspora has seen major ups and downs. Uganda was a favourite destination for Indians immigrants in Africa but consequences of 1970s affected Indian Diaspora badly and most of them further migrated to the other countries; in 2001 the total strength of Indian Diaspora recorded merely 12000 (*Report of the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora, 2001*), but, due to friendly policies of current government of Uganda, this picture is changing very fast with the increasing number of fresh immigrants from India (Gupta 1969:13). As per revised estimates of Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, as of now there are roughly 20000 Indian Diaspora in Uganda (MOIA, 2010).

Uganda has also availed of the services of ITEC experts. 24 scholarships are offered to Uganda by ICCR, for courses of study in Indian universities. Ugandan defence personnel have been attending various training courses in Indian defence institutes under ITEC-II. PIOs and NRIs are estimated to have invested over US\$ 500 million in Uganda in the last two decades. The volume of bilateral trade has increased from US\$ 5.6 million in 1984 to US\$ 727.9 million in 2010-11 and India has emerged as second largest FDI investor in Uganda (MEA, 2012).

INDIAN DIASPORA IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Historically, India's cultural relations with Southeast Asia are one of the most fascinating fields. This interaction, which precedes the beginning of the Christian era, has left an indelible impression on almost every aspect of life in a number of countries of the region (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora – 2001, South-East Asia- Chapter 20, pp.243-271*), <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>. The deep imprint of intense interaction is visible even today in the language and literature, religion and philosophy, art and architecture, customs and manners of the whole of Indo-China, Indonesia, Myanmar and Southeast Asia. Large scale of Indian emigration

however took place only in the 19th and 20th centuries as a result of colonialism through the indenture or Kangani system, and also by free emigration of traders, clerks, bureaucrats and professionals (*Report of High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora–2001*)<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf.part1-exe.pdf>.

After independence Indians continued to migrate to Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and Indonesia in search of employment, with the pace picking up from the 1970s onwards. India also benefited considerably from its interactions with Southeast Asia. The trade with Southeast Asia played an important role in India’s prosperity. While the opportunities in these booming economies were diverse and ranged from blue collar jobs in the construction and hospitality industries to employment with Indian companies, international mainly UN organisations, multinationals, banks, consultancy and financial institutions and recently the information technology sector, these in the countries of Indo-China and Myanmar declined because of the strife in the region, while the economic instability has impact on their presence in Indonesia (*Report of High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora–2001*) <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf.part1-exe.pdf>.

Table 2: the Indian Diaspora in the South East Asian Countries

Country	Population	NRIs	PIOS	Stateless	% of the Population
Brunei	331,000	7,000	500	100	2.3%
Cambodia	11,340,000	150	150	Nil	Negligible
Indonesia	200,000,000	5,00	50,000	Nil	Negligible
Laos	5,100,000	107	18	Na	Negligible
Malaysia	22,890,000	15,000	1,600,000	50,000	7.3%
Myanmar	46,500,000	2,000	2,500,000	400,000	5%
Philippines	76,000,000	2,000	24,000	12,000	Negligible
Singapore	3,160,000	90,000	2,17,000	Negligible	9.71%
Thailand	62,000,000	15,000	70,000	Nil	.07%
Vietnam	78.,000,000	320	Nil	10	Negligible

Source: *Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*, South East Asia-Chapter 20: <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>

Malaysia

India’s contact with Malaysia goes back the pre- Christian era. However, despite the great antiquity of the Indian overseas migration to Malaysia and the debt of Malaysia culture to ancient India, there were seldom large numbers of Indians in Malaysia in the

pre- British period. The bulk of Indians came during British time as plantation workers. Nearly all the 1.6 million Indians at present in Malaysia are either themselves immigrants or decedents of recent immigrants (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*)<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

Indians who came to the Malay Peninsula up to the late 18th century and those who came in far larger numbers in the subsequent 130 years. The early arrivals were mainly Muslims merchants and traders. In the early 19th century, a different class of Indians began to arrive. As British and European capitals became more and more involved in plantation agriculture, coffee first and rubber later, Indian labourers were brought into the peninsula with increasing rapidity and in greater numbers. The largest average annual flow of Indians into Malay occurred during the period 1911-30, when more than 90,000 persons arrived in the country every year (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001,*)<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

Indian ethnic community consists of mostly Tamils 80 per cent, followed by Keralites, Andhrites, Bengalis, Punjabis, Sindhis and Gujaratis. Most Indians are settled in Penang states in North Malaysia, Perak in Central Malaysia and the rest in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor state. Indian community's contribution to Malaysia's GDP is about 2 per cent and its share in Malaysia's international trade is about 3 per cent (*Report of the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora South East Asia-Chapter 20*), <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>. The Indian community is engaged in rubber and palm plantations, a small section is involved in services like police, railways and food business as well as in the legal and medical professions. Being engaged in plantation labour, the major chunk of Indian community belonging to the older generation was either illiterate or educated up to the primary school level.

Indonesia

Indian involvement in Indonesia long preceded the arrival of the Dutch. However, the Indians presently in the country are descendants of those who arrived largely in response to Western mercantilism from the end of the 19th century through the late 1930s

(Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001, South East Asia- Chapter20)<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>. At the end of 19th century, many unskilled or semi-skilled labourers of Tamil origin went to work on the Dutch and English plantations in East Sumatra. According to 1930 census, 67 per cent of the Indian population was domiciled in Sumatra, while Java and Madura had about 18 per cent of the population (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001, South East Asia- Chapter20* <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>).

The member of the Indian community, who came in the 1960s and 1970s invested mainly in textile industries. They played a prominent role in the export of Indonesian textile products. They expanded their activities during the economic boom seen by Indonesia. The economic recession, which took place, affected them slightly. However, the recovery has started which has opened up other avenues for Indian investment in textile, IT and other industries. The early identification of Sindhis with the textile business and Sikhs with the exports goods business continues to provide the overall framework of the economic position of Indians in Jakarta (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001, South East Asia- Chapter20*), <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

Indian cultural centre at Jakarta organizes various cultural programmes in Indonesia apart from imparting yoga, dance and table training. The Indian community is treated well and has integrated itself with the local population due to many centuries of cultural and historical relations. The Indian diaspora play a strengthening role between India and Indonesia relations.

Singapore

The origin of Indian community in Singapore was formed by Sir Stamford Raffles, who was the East India Company Officer, arrived in 1819 to establish a base there to arrange protection and provision for East India Company ships carrying cargo between India and the region especially China. From 1830 onwards, large immigrant groups mainly Tamilians were brought by the British as indentured labourers to work on the plantations, civic, projects, government facilities such as harbor, transportation

system, naval military bases, etc. at that time the immigration of Indian traders from Sindh to South Indian Muslims to the Chettians attracted by the Singapore's rapidly increasing status as a trading centre. In the middle of the 19th century, Indians had become Singapore's second largest community about 13,000 (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*, South East Asia- Chapter2), <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

In the cultural terms, the Indian community is the most diverse of Singapore's ethnic communities. There is 64 per cent of Tamil origin and Tamil is one of the four official languages together with Chinese, Malay and English, 7 per cent of Punjabi mainly Sikh community. The other distinct Indian communities are the Malayalis is 8 per cent, Sidhis 6 per cent and the Gujaratis 2 per cent. Indians are also the most religiously diverse of Singapore's ethnic categories an estimated 50-60 per cent are Hindu, 20- 30 per cent Muslims, 12 per cent Christians, 7 per cent Sikhs and 1 per cent Buddhists (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*, South East Asia- Chapter20), <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the top posts in the government, among civil service, judiciary, armed forces and educational institutions were largely held by Indians. Some people of Indian origin involved in Singaporean politics and government. For example, the president, Mr. S.R Nathan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Law, Prof. S. Jajkumar and opposition leader Mr. J.B Jeyaretnam Buddhists (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*, South East Asia- Chapter2), <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

Myanmar

The Indian immigrants in Burma were a crucial factor in Indo-Myanmar relations. The origin of Indian immigration to Myanmar is not a recent phenomenon. The Indian plays a important role throw the light on their origin and growth and their subsequent political and economic role (Pradhan 2000:149). The origins of the present day Indian community in Myanmar can be traced back to the second half of the nineteenth century with the establishment of British rule. Indian labour was extensively used for developing

the infrastructure and for construction work. Indian farmers were taken there to cultivate virgin lands. There are important spheres that included the civil services, education, professional services, trade and commerce, were largely in the hands of the Indian community.

According to the 2001 report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora (HLCID), the total numbers of ethnic Indians in Myanmar is estimated to be around 2.9 million, which is roughly 5 per cent of the total population of Myanmar (Lal 2006:175). This accounts for around 2,500,000 people of Indian origin (PIO), 2000 non-resident Indians (NRIs) and 400,000 stateless (Singh 2013:83). Though the report of HLCID mentioned that the size of Indian Diaspora is 2,902,000, some studies indicate that the Indian Diaspora is no larger than 1,000,000 (Singh 2013:83).

CONCLUSION

Indians as a distinctive community has been a part of human history. Indians have been migrating to various parts of the world as early as before Christ. From early migration and Indian colonization to the recent migration to the Industrialized West, they went through trials and tribulations to settle down in a new world. The Indian population has a global migration history. Since 1834, Indians have migrated to widespread places in the world. Today' Indian diaspora is one of that extends to the four corners of the world. Now, in this era of globalization where distance is diminishing, contacts are ever increasing the role international diaspora increased many folds in international system. International migration has shown tremendous increase in last few decades and therefore, their role in political, economic, cultural and other aspects of international relations is growing. The Indian Foreign Policy is to engaged Indian Diaspora and promote them to play more meaningful role in the enhancement of India relations with other nation state.

According to Mahalingam (2013) argues that diaspora policy and Indian foreign policy are two sides of the same coin. Diaspora is a productive as well as counter - productive. India is yet to utilize the potential of Indian Diaspora in its domain of foreign affairs. In the recent decades, the international migration of semi-skilled and high skilled Indians has seen an upsurge due to demand of software Industry and other different

sectors. A tangible and scrupulous Diaspora policy is imperative to leverage upon the growing Indian Diaspora population. With the versatile role of Diaspora, India try to fulfill its cherished dream of being a super power and it make much head way in its international and foreign affairs.

CHAPTER III

INDIA-MYANMAR BILATERAL RELATIONS POST 1994

INTRODUCTION

India and Myanmar are close neighbours with and extensive commonalty of interests between them. India and Myanmar represent two important areas of the world in South and South-East Asia respectively, as well as the non-aligned nations of these regions (Pakem1992:1). These two countries are neighbours to each other because of the facts of geography. The geographical proximity of the two countries has helped and sustains cordial relations and facilitated people to people contact. Historically these two countries had a very long period of mutual contact with each other in the realm of trade, commerce, religion, law and culture. In the early centuries Myanmar was not a unity country but consists of many petty kingdoms of the Shans, the Mons, and the Arakanese (Pakem 1991:1).

Even before British conquest and annexation to India in the nineteenth century, Burma was related to India through cultural affinity which involved her acceptance of many concepts of Hindu civilization and adoption of Buddhism (Singh 1979:1). Burma was interested in forgoing close political, economic and diplomatic relations with her powerful Asian neighbour in the West and closely linked from 1886 to 1937 as an integral part, and later shared the common fate under a common British colonial rule. The British ruled over Burma for a long time by attaching it as a province of the British Indian Empire (Singh 1979:42). The experience of a common colonial past and desire to get rid of the common enemy, i.e. British rule brought them closer in their attitude towards world politics after their independence.

Burma's experience during the British administration as a part of India and later during Japanese occupation, and British re-occupation, taught her to shape her economic and foreign policies as best suited to her needs and national interests. Burma's struggle for independence, which come on 4th January 1948 although different in nature, closely

paralleled India's struggle for freedom, especially since the middle of 1945 to the attainment of independence by India on 15th August 1947 (Singh1979:1).

The newly independent countries of Asia including Burma and India have to tackle various problems in domestic and international fields provide a unique opportunity to assess their achievements as independent nations. Burma after independence had to shape and her policy towards India keeping her national interests. Thus, during the colonial period both countries were under British India, after their independence, the two countries cultivated a close relationship that culminated in the signing of the 1951 Treaty of Friendship in New Delhi (Yhome 2009:1). This treaty was for five years and was to remain in force "forever thereafter" if neither side gave notice of its desire to terminate it six months before its expiry (Yhome 2009:2). The Treaty of Friendship came into force on 31 January 1952 with the exchange of instruments of ratification in Rangoon in accordance with Article VII of the treaty. Article II of the treaty stipulated that "there shall be everlasting peace and unalterable friendship between the two States who shall ever strive to strengthen and develop further the cordial relations existing between the peoples of the two countries". Article IV of the treaty said, "the two States agree that their representatives shall meet from time to time and so often as occasion requires to exchange views on matters of common interest and to consider ways and means for mutual cooperation in such matters" (Yhome 2009:2). The treaty culminated in India's first Prime-Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and Myanmar's Premier U Nu sharing a common views on many issues regarding the nature of international politics that pioneered the Non- Aligned Movement (Yhome 2009:1).

The most important objective of India's policy on non-alignment was to preserve peace and avoid war. A subsidiary purpose of this policy was to maintain friendly relations with all countries and to secure help without any strings attached from all quarters. But the main purpose of the Indian non-alignment as Mr. Nehru viewed was to create an area of peace, which Myanmar called the third force (Yhome 2009:2).

The relationship between the two countries was strengthened by the personal friendship that existed between the two Prime Minister Nehru and U Nu. Whenever a troublesome issue occurred, the two Prime Minister worked closely with mutual trust and friendship (www.idea.int/asia_pacific/burma/upload/chap4.pdf). The changing situation came after General Ne Win Period. General Ne Win's period 1962-1988 saw ups and downs in the bilateral relations. Ne Win's rationalization programme of the 1960s resulted in the eviction of thousands of people of Indian origin from Myanmar, causing frictions in the relationship. Nevertheless, during the same period, the two countries signed the Land Boundary Agreement in 1967 and the Maritime Boundary Agreement 1986 as India and Myanmar share a long land border of over 1600km maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal (Yhome 2009:1). During the same period, a number of agreements enhancing bilateral cooperation have been signed between the two countries. Similarly, institutional mechanisms for facilitating regular dialogue on a range of issues of bilateral interest have also been established. Between 1988 and 1990, the relationship reached its lowest point as a result of India's strong position against the Myanmar military's brutal suppression of the pro-democracy uprising and the subsequent takeover of power by the general. After a new military came into power in September 1988, the Indian government signaled its commitment to democratic rule by severing contact with Myanmar (Chenyang 2010:115). It is during this time that China began gaining a foothold in Myanmar, benefiting from the vacuum left by the international community. However, such policy by India and the increasing influence of China make India to react that since Myanmar was a potential continental gateway to mainland Southeast Asia for both India and China, it was best to ignore or not oppose Myanmar's new military junta, especially considering that China was swiftly increasing its presence in the region (Egreteau 2008:940).

Both China and Pakistan were fast expanding their presence and influence with the post-General Ne Win military leadership that assumed power in 1988. On its part, India was isolated from the Myanmarese military regime due to its traditional support for the democratic forces that continued until Rajiv Gandhi's period. While the popular forces in Myanmar looked towards India for inspiration and encouragement in their struggle against the military order, China and Pakistan were supportive of Myanmar's

new military leadership, which refused to transfer power to the Aung San Suu Kyi-led democratic forces, even after their massive electoral victory in 1989 (Muni 2011:10). On China's part, its support for the new junta in Yangon was also a reciprocal gesture for the Myanmar military leadership's endorsement of the Chinese government's position on the Tiananmen Square revolt of 1989.

Thus, New Delhi had to reassess and redefine its Myanmar policy in order to protect and enhance its emerging geopolitical interests on its eastern flank (Egreteau 2008:942). The frozen ties began to melt after India adopted its Look East Policy in 1991.

INDIA'S LOOK EAST POLICY

In the pre-colonial period, there is evidence of India's dynamic and extensive relations with its eastern neighbours. This phase lasted until the 12th century and can be described as the first wave of Look East in cultural and commercial engagement (Muni 2011:2). During this period, the first Hindu empire and later became Indo-China region flourished based entirely on cultural and philosophical contacts with India. The expansion of Hinduism was followed by the spread of Buddhism to the east. The religious and cultural messages travelled directly from India as well as through China. The images of Ganesha, Garuda, Shiva, Parvati, Rama and Sita are adored and worshiped in many parts of Southeast Asia, along with those of Buddha (Muni 2011:3). This imprint is also visible in languages, where Pali and Sanskrit provide the texture and base of many Southeast Asian languages. The cultural synthesis is also reflected in the names of the people and places, lifestyles and festivities, patterns of old architecture and temples like Borobudur in Indonesia, Angkor Wat in Cambodia and Wat Phu in Laos. The Angkor Wat in Cambodia and the Luang Prabang temples in Laos have episodes of the Hindu epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, engraved on their wall.

It is during this period that Nalanda University in Bihar emerged as the principal centre of learning based on philosophical and Buddhist religious discourses for the whole Southeast and East Asian region. The very significant of cultured flow from India to Southeast Asia during this period was also reflected in trade and commerce. The spice

trade route from West Asia and the Persian Gulf stretched over to Indonesia and even beyond bringing in traders and travelers from one part of Asia to the other. This commercial link also facilitated the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia. The adventures of innumerable traders who braved rough seas across the Bay of Bengal, straits of Malacca and South China Sea to commerce and culture to the eastern shores of the Indian Ocean (Muni 2011:4).

During the colonial period, the Second World War engulfed East Asia and the war added a strategic dimension to British India's links with Southeast Asia. The British grasped centrality of India and as the bastion of their power and influence in Asia that protected their colonial holdings as far in the east as possible up to Hong Kong (Muni 2011:4). This period may be considered as the second wave of India's Look East policy when strategic interests were brought upfront along with the commercial interests at the loss of cultural and civilization links.

The third wave of India's Look East policy was set in motion of with the advent of independence. The eastern neighbours constituted one of the priority areas in India's commitment to work for Asian resurgence. After the independence of India, Nehru's vision of a 'closer union' with the east was shaped by the strength of India's geographical proximity, similarity of historical experiences, cultural identity, economic interests and common strategic concerns in relation to the countries of the east (Muni 2011:5). The feature of the third wave of India's Look East policy was decolonization and Asian resurgence. The Nehruvian vision had a strong political content to back them but was bereft of much tangible substance of commerce, culture and economic (Muni 2011:5).

India worked intensely for evolving a broad based regional organisation of cooperation which did not identify itself with any of the superpowers strategic and cold war oriented interests. This however, was not acceptable to the powers involved in establishing ASEAN against a strategic backdrop of the messy Vietnam War. The result was an ASEAN representing and ideologically and strategically divided Southeast Asia (Kripa 1996:7).

The fourth wave of India's Look East Policy is credited to Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and is said to have been driven by economic and post-cold war imperatives of India's foreign policy. Look East means looking eastward for fostering newer ties with the immediate neighbour of South East Asia. This policy adopted by India after the end of cold war period. As the regional strategic order began to change in Asia in the early 1990s, India launched a new Look East Policy aimed at creation closer ties to the booming Asian economics to its East. In 1991 India adopted a Look East policy, which aimed at expanding India's influence in the Asia-Pacific region. The policy focuses on ASEAN member countries and shows India's eagerness to strengthen its relation with the Southeast Asian countries. Myanmar is India's land bridge to the ASEAN community as well as an important barrier protecting India's eastern shores and plays a crucial role in strengthening India's geopolitical position in Southeast Asia. Thus Myanmar is a key stepping stone in India's new Look East policy, which seeks to develop and expand political, economic, and security ties with ASEAN. Within this policy, India's new foreign policy strategy and its geopolitical relations with Myanmar do not allow India to be hostile toward Myanmar over the long term (Muni 2011:7).

Demonstrating new interests in a country that has long lived in isolation, New Delhi's policymakers have many reasons to focus on the strategic and economic benefits that Myanmar can offer India. As a part of New Delhi's extended neighborhood, Myanmar has been included in India's new regional geopolitical vision that was redefined in the 1990s (Egretau 2008:933). This new policy was a paradigm shift from an idealist approach suited Indian policymakers perfectly well when Myanmar was formed by the 1988 pro-democracy uprising. New Delhi took an opening sympathetic stance toward Myanmar students and activists led by the charismatic Aung San Suu Kyi, whose close links with the Nehru-Gandhi family were well known in India since the 1960s (Egretau 2008:934).

Since 1993, however, the Indian government has gradually adjusted its policies towards Myanmar shifting from idealism to realism to achieve its strategic objectives. India's policy objectives in relation to Myanmar are to strengthen relations with its Southeast Asian neighbours, to moderate China's influence in Myanmar to contain unrest

in its own Northeastern states, and obtain access to needed natural energy resource (Chenyang 2010:115-116).

India's Look East policy was targeted at opening markets in Southeast Asia, and cooperation with Myanmar was important for its implementation. Without this shift in policy, the growth of several of India's northeastern states would have been hindered by the attendant risk of fueling ongoing insurgencies (Kanwal 2010:135). India's interest in Myanmar and the Look East policy also reflect growing international interest in Asia as an engine of economic growth in the twenty-first century. Myanmar supports India's quest for a place in the sun and is comfortable with India's increasing engagement with its immediate and extended neighborhood (Kanwal 2010:135). For the Myanmar government, the additional purpose of addressing problems in the northeastern states comes as a welcome part of the deal (Kanwal 2010:135). Moreover, India's move to engage Myanmar closely reflects its growing concern over Myanmar's jettisoning its policy of neutrality toward India and China and gradually tilting toward China.

A number of external and internal factors point to Myanmar's strategic importance for India. Myanmar is located at the junction of East, South, and Southeast Asia and functions as a land bridge to Southeast and East Asia. For the government of Myanmar, a policy of engagement with India not only helps balance its excessive dependence on China but also helps to boost its 'international image and legitimacy' (Kanwal 2010:134). Myanmar is the second-largest of India's neighbors and the largest on its eastern flank. The two countries share a land border of 1,640 kilometers, almost all of it unfenced, along which India's Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram states border Myanmar's Kachin, Sagain, and Chin states (Kanwal 2010:135). Multiple insurgent groups operate in the northeastern states of India, and they are known to operate from bases in Myanmar. Such groups can be successfully tackled only on a bilateral basis. Myanmar is also a key player in the Bay of Bengal littoral region and shares a maritime boundary with India. Given the increasing significance that India now ascribes to its own centrality in the northern Indian Ocean region, Myanmar now shares in that importance. The importance of Myanmar lies in its 2,185-kilometer border with China, which is located next to the disputed section of the India-China border. Similarly,

Myanmar is said to have the tenth-largest gas reserves in the world, estimated at 90 trillion cubic feet (Kanwal 2010:135-136). Therefore, it is in India's interest to gain from its proximity in the use of these resources. India can provide help by way of investment and technology for exploration as well as production.

THE POLICIES OF CHINA AND INDIA TOWARD MYANMAR

China and India stances on the Myanmar issue are based on their pragmatic strategic objective for the region. After all, Myanmar is the second largest country after Indonesia among the ten states of ASEAN admitted in July 1997 (Zhao 2008:176). For both China and India, Myanmar's geostrategic location at the tri-junction of East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia is of critical significance. The two countries China and Myanmar share the 2200 km border with easy access to each other's territory (Zhao 2008:176). Myanmar is not only a potential supply route bypassing the Malacca Strait, but also a strategic staging point of for controlling access to Malacca Strait's of western approach. While "controlling Malacca Strait is a key strategic objective of China to the point of risking armed conflict with the regional states and the U.S.", access to Myanmar's ports and overland transportation routes through Myanmar is seen as a vital and strategic security asset for China (Zhao 2008:176).

In the case of India and Myanmar, these two countries share an unfenced 1,640km border. Myanmar has a long coastline of 2,276km that shares parts of the Bay of Bengal, in particular, the surrounding areas of the Coco Islands and the Andaman Sea which is very important to India's strategic policy (Zhao 2008:177-178). Thus the both countries are competing to each other in Asian region. India provides political and economic support to Myanmar to deter China's commercial and military influence. According to Andrew Selth, India's Myanmar policy objective is to test the strategic relation between China and Myanmar (Selth 2010:116).

Foreign scholars are led to such views, in part because of the differing social systems and ideologies in China and India. Moreover, India has been worried about China's gradual emergence as a competitor and one of the main threats to India's national security (Selth 2010:116). Therefore, China is an inevitable factor in India's Look East

policy. As a major coastal state on the Bay of Bengal, Myanmar is western and northern borders connect Bangladesh, China, and the sensitive northeastern states of India, and its southeast coast is close to India's Nicobar archipelago in the Andaman Sea. India thus regards Myanmar as crucial to its national interests and does not favour it to become a haven for foreign naval intervention. Indian foreign minister Jaswant Singh declared publicly at the opening ceremony of the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo highway in February 2001 that "the development of the relations between India and Myanmar relates to India's national interest (Selth 2010:116).

INDIA-MYANMAR BILATERAL RELATIONS POST 1994

The period of transition 1988-1990, witnessed change of governments in both countries. India extended strong support to the pro-democracy movement driven by its principles and values and probably expecting that the 1990 elections would usher in democracy, thereby opening a new chapter in the history of Myanmar (Bhatia 2011:318). In the years of 1991-2010, there witnessed tremendous improvement, expansion and diversification of bilateral relations. The period has two fairly distinct phases with the first phase running from 1991 to 1999, and the second phase starting with Vice Chairman SPDC General Maung-Aye's visit to India in 2000 and culminating in the second visit by Chairman SPDC senior General Than Shwn to India in July 2010 (Bhatia 2011:118).

The first phase saw the Indian government adopting, after a careful review, the two-track policy of engaging the government of Myanmar, while continuing its support for the cause of democracy. By the time of second phase concluded, the bilateral relationship had reached a high level of maturity, momentum and substance, even as New Delhi continued to urge national reconciliation and inclusive governance

The four principle pillars of bilateral relations namely political, security and defence, economic and socio cultural cooperation, the highest importance perhaps be accorded to political cooperation which is the key driver. The tender ships in the two countries have been committed to broadening and enhancing the multi-dimensional relationship. The relations reflect the multifarious and traditional linkages that bind the two countries as close neighbours inspired by the five principles of peaceful co-existence.

Political Aspects

The political situation of both India and Myanmar had many things in common. In the past history of these countries, various dynasties had ruled over the destinies of their people. In India, the Mughal dynasty was ruled before the British came, and in Myanmar, it was the Toungoo and Konebaung dynasties that shaped the future developments in Myanmar (Pradhan 2000:54). In the recent history, both the countries came under one colonial rule that is British rule. During the period of British colonial rule, both India and Myanmar faced the similar kind of political experiences.

Till the year 1937, Myanmar was ruled as a province of India. It was under one political framework that governed both India and Myanmar. The constitutional development in Myanmar proceeded more or less on the same line as India. Even after separation, the constitutional development, nature of leadership and formation of political parties in Myanmar had been influenced to a great extent by the political developments in India (Gledhill 1953:214). In 1937 when Myanmar was separated from India, the Government of Myanmar Act of 1935 set up a constitution combining the functions of the Government of India under the Government of India Act of 1935 with those of a provincial executive. After that India achieved independence on 15 August 1947 and Myanmar achieved their independence on 4 June 1948.

After getting independence of India, India chose the parliamentary democracy as the form of government. Similarly the Myanmar Draft Constitution of September 1947, based on the Constitution of 1935 as a model provided for a democratic form of parliamentary system of government at the national level (Kahin 1964:115). The basic principles of parliamentary system as provided in the Myanmar constitution and based on the principle of justice, liberty and equality, were quite sound. In India, the parliamentary form of democratic system has been stable since the day of independence but it has been a failure in Myanmar. Many incidents threatened to reduce democracy in Myanmar, and finally in 1962, Myanmar's democracy was overthrown by General Ne Win in a bloodless military coup (Trager 1966:166).

Post 1994, an examination of India's political policy towards Southeast Asian countries shows that Myanmar figures prominently from all perspectives political, security, socio-cultural, economic and strategic. India engagement to the eastern Asian regions, or more particularly, strengthening relations with the CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam), coincided with the strengthening of its bilateral ties with Myanmar (Yhome 2009:2). New Delhi sees Myanmar as an important land bridge on its path to the consolidation of ties with Southeast and East Asia. Myanmar thus fits in very well into India's regional plans. On the other hand, Myanmar's India policy has been largely based on its desire to diversify its external engagement. The need for diversification was felt in the face of increasing dependence on China in the late 1990s, which prompted its leadership to reach out to other countries and India was seen as potential counter-weight to China (Yhome 2009:1).

India's Look East policy pulled the two neighbour nation ties out of the doldrums it had been languishing in for long years. According to the border agreement signed on 10 March 1967, India shares a 1643 km long border with Myanmar and a long maritime boundary successfully settled in March 1984. India's Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram too share border with Myanmar. Similarly the three states of Myanmar Kachin, Sagaing and Chin border with India (Ghosh 2011:102). The first factor that influences India to renew interest in her neighbourhood is the changed international situation that has shifted the focus of international attention from Europe and the United State to Asia (Ghosh 2011:102). India certainly, wants to play a role in the emerging international system particularly in Asia. This calls for greater engagement with the Asian countries though this is not an easy task given the political condition in most of India's neighbourhoods.

In these circumstance that led to a renewed effort on the part of New Delhi to engage Southeast and East Asia especially Myanmar. In March 1993 India sent her foreign secretary, J.N. Dixit, to hold talks with Myanmar's initial result seen in the border trade agreements in 1994. (Yhome 2009:2). Similarly a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between the border authorities of both countries for maintaining border tranquility was signed in 1994 (Ghosh 2011:104). The bilateral relations deteriorated

when the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for promoting international understanding was given to Suu Kyi. Despite this, India has kept political and diplomatic channels open with Myanmar and the relationship is fast evolving towards irreversible engagements (Ghosh 2011:104).

With the visit of General Maung Aye, Myanmar's Vice- Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council in 2000, Myanmar strategic importance was future recognised. During this visit both countries discussed issues of common security concerns and identified a deep common interest in undertaking counter - insurgency operations in India's northeast and decided to accelerate cooperation (Ghosh 2011:104). India's Northeast is arguably the most troublesome region of the Indian Union. The seven sister and one brother, as the Sikkimese call themselves, is the zone of operation for 36 major and minor insurgent groups actively involved in articulating demands of various natures (Ghosh 2011:103). Myanmar remains an area of security interest for India not only on account of the activities of north-eastern insurgent groups that have set up camps across the Indian border, but also because of the activities of countries working against India's legitimate security concerns and the repercussions of the tussle between the forces of democracy and military government on these interests (Ghosh 2011:103).

The special importance in strengthening political ties was the visit of Than Shwe in 2004, during which Myanmar expressed its support to India's bid for permanent seat in the UN Security Council (Yhome 2009:3). Again during the visit of General Maung Aye to India in early 2008, significant agreements were signed, especially the Kaladan Multi Model Transit Transport Project. During his visit to Myanmar in September 2007, Minister of Petroleum Murli Deora signed an agreement on energy exploration (Yhome 2009:4).

In recent past, the several high level bilateral exchanges had taken place between India and Myanmar. In October 2011, the president of Myanmar visited New Delhi and was followed by a return visit in May 2012 by the Indian Prime Minister. The pro-democracy activist and the leader of the opposition Ms Aung San Suu Kyi visited India in 2012, thus furthering official engagement (Singh 2013:91). The Lok Sabha Speaker Smt. Meira Kumar led the first-ever visit of an Indian parliamentary delegation to Myanmar on

12–15 February 2013. While interacting with the Indian parliamentary delegation, the President of Myanmar Thien Sein hoped that present visit of the Indian parliamentary delegation will not only contribute to strengthen relations between the two parliaments but also between the two countries. Smt. Kumar also alluded the training availed of by the 30 MPs of Myanmar and 30 Myanmar parliamentary staff in India (Singh 2013:93). The present pace and growing momentum in India–Myanmar relations indicates that the bilateral ties between them.

Economic Aspects

In the backdrop of improving political relations between the two countries, economic cooperation has also made significant progress. Economic interest plays a crucial role to develop India – Myanmar relationship. Myanmar is a bridge between India and South East Asian markets (Ratha & Mapapatra 2012:10). Since 2000, Indian products particularly medicines have made their presence felt in the markets of Myanmar, bilateral trade has been raised from US\$ 273.23 million in 1997-1998 to US\$ 995.37 million in 2007-2008 and investments have increased (Ratha & Mapapatra 2012:10)

Bilateral Trade

Trade relations between India and Myanmar developed from ancient times. Myanmar has a claim to be identified as Suvarnabhumi (Sanskrit) or Sonapranta (Pali) the golden century. A trade route from India to China crossed North Central Myanmar down the Chindwin Valley then up the Irrawaddy to Bhamo and the border of China started from the 1st century AD (Singh 1979:12). From the 17th century onwards, the British had commercial contacts with Myanmar. Thus the trade and commerce between India and Myanmar have been rapidly growing in the Southeast Asian region. India is 4th largest trading partner with Myanmar after Thailand, China and Singapore (Yhome 2009:5).

Since early 1990s, with the adoption of Look East Policy (LEP), India-Myanmar engagement has been growing on substantive ground and increasing being structured. Myanmar is the land-bridge that connects world's two largest markets – South and

Southeast Asia. It is therefore an important country for both India and ASEAN that helps integrate economies across the border. India's change in policy towards Myanmar has paid a rich dividend. For example, the bilateral trade between India and Myanmar has grown from US\$ 12 million in 1980 to about US\$ 1.5 billion in 2009, increased by an extraordinary 46 per cent per annum in the last two decades (Yhome 2009:4). The bilateral trade between the two countries increased exponentially over time. In particular, the fastest growth in bilateral trade helped the bilateral trade to reach US\$ 2.18 billion in 2013-2014 (Ramaswany & Maini 2014:2). India has also promoted some trade events such as the India product show 2012, which represented 19 Indian companies and the NEFIT car rally from Guwahati to Yangon and back, which had 60 participants and was also part of the trade promotion (Ramaswany & Maini 2014:2). This phenomenal rise in bilateral trade has been driven by Myanmar's increasing exports to India. Myanmar exports goods worth about US\$ 1.09 billion goods to India, which contributes to 85 per cent of total bilateral trade and one-fifth of Myanmar's exports to the world.

Bilateral trade has expanded significantly over the last few decades. With the opening up of Myanmar economy, India's exports to Myanmar have growth significantly. The growth in exports from India to Myanmar (70 percent) is more than the growth in exports from India to the world (21.83 percent) from 2010-11 to 2011-12. In a similar manner the growth rate in imports from Myanmar to India was also more than that from the world during the period. The major items that India imports from Myanmar are wood, pulses, charcoal, ginger, turmeric roots and nuts, etc. while Myanmar imports iron, steel, pharmaceutical products, machinery and mechanical appliances and their parts (Yhome 2009:5).

The following table shows the India – Myanmar bilateral trade relations. The following tables give us a clear indication about the bilateral trade scenario between India and Myanmar.

Table 3: India-Myanmar Bilateral Trade Relation (Us\$ In Millions)

YEAR	EXPORT	IMPORT	TOTAL TRADE	BOT
1980	4.770	7.620	12.390	-2.850
1990	1.435	90.144	91.579	-88.709
2000	48.050	179.175	227.225	-131.125

2001	53.047	197.809	250.856	-144.762
2002	71.528	345.639	417.167	-274.111
2003	86.001	390.768	476.769	-304.767
2004	104.705	400.052	504.757	-295.347
2005	111.322	495.952	607.274	-384.630
2006	132.717	718.395	851.112	-585.678
2007	174.020	802.793	976.813	628.773
2008	212.230	893.916	1106.146	-681.686
2009	209.778	1195.260	1405.038	-985.482
2010	207.972	1289.801	1497.773	-1081.829
2011	320.621	1017.678	1338.299	-697.057
2012	545.382	1381.151	1926.533	-835.769
2013	544.665	1412.690	1957.355	-868.025

Source: Computed from IMF Direction of Trade Statistics. Export Import Data Bank, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and industry, Government of India, Official website <http://commerce.nic.in/eidb/default.asp>.

According to the India-Myanmar Chamber of Commerce, the volume of trade could increase further if Indian businessmen were to invest more in Myanmar. The Myanmar President, Mr. Thein Sein, who visited to India from 12-15 October, 2011 was accompanied by the Chief of General Staff and the Ministers for Border Affairs and Myanmar Industrial Development, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Irrigation, Religious Affairs, Industry, Electric Power, National Planning and Economic Development, and Livestock and Fisheries, Transport, Energy, Science and Technology, Commerce and the Deputy Minister for Health. Commercial relations between the two countries have strengthened and bilateral trade for the year of 2010-2011 stood at US\$ 1.07 billion. The 4th India-Myanmar joint Trade Committee meeting was held on 27 September, 2011, in New Delhi. During the meeting, the bilateral trade and investment figures were reviewed and a decision was taken to more increase of bilateral trade in near future. They included a bilateral investment promotions agreement to facilitate greater Indian investment in Myanmar and vice versa.

The Foreign Minister of Myanmar, U Wunna Maung Lwin, paid an official visit to India from 22-26 January, 2012. Both sides positively assessed the development in bilateral relations after the landmark state visit of the President of Myanmar and discussed measures to exchange cooperation in the areas of trade and commerce, security,

agriculture, health, culture, science and technology, human resource development and capacity building.

Border Trade

Border trade is the most important when it comes to India's trade with Myanmar. India shares about 1643 km border with her north-eastern neighbour Myanmar. This border touches four out of seven north-eastern states of India, viz., Arunchal Pardesh 520 km, Manipur 398 km, Mizoram 510 km and Nagaland 215 km (Thomas 2005:1). Manipur and Mizoram is one of the states in the region that has on exclusive international boundaries with Myanmar. Since the signing of the border trade agreement in 1994, to such border points Moreh-Tamu in April 1995 and Zowkhathar-Rhi on 30 January, 2004, has been operationalized (Yhome 2009:7). The signing of border trade agreement between India and Myanmar has opened up new vistas of development for our North – Eastern States. Connectivity between the region and Myanmar is growing very fast following the improvement in trading relation between India and Myanmar.

The North – Eastern region enjoys very special advantages over other parts of India in trade in view of India's Look East Policy in general and India's economic should be another important priority for the government. India's Northeastern states have been urging the Central Government to expand border trade with the neighbouring countries including Myanmar (Yhome 2009:7). The official trade, mostly under barter arrangements, is modest and dwindling. By far the largest volume of trade is taking place through illegal channels. So, still, trade traffic across the border remains thin and India's share among Myanmar's trade partners is the lowest at US\$ 17 million. China has the largest share with Myanmar, followed by Thailand and Bangladesh (Yhome 2009:7).

There are other border trade issues between two countries. To address some of the these issues, an agreement for banking agreement was signed between United Bank of India and Myanmar Economic Bank on 24th June, 2008 (Yhome 2009:8). To boost the border trade, the two countries during 3rd India-Myanmar joint trade committee meeting held in Oct, 2008, agreed to convert the existing points i.e., Moreh in Manipur and Zow

Khathar in Mizoram into normal trade center and to develop Avangkhu in Nagaland into a third point. The meeting also agreed to expand the list of commodities from the 22 to 40 items and to operationalise the banking arrangement (Yhome 2009:8). The total border trade stood at around \$ 13.73 billion in 2009-10. While Myanmar recorded a 58 percent hike in its border trade in 2011-12, amounting to \$ 3.367 billion, India-Myanmar trade amounted to about \$15.049 million only in the same period, reflecting the scope for more engagement in the area (Bhonsale 2013:2).

Oil and Gas

Myanmar's oil and gas sector has attracted the largest foreign investment with over 21 companies from 13 countries involved in the sector (Yhome 2009:8). In the fiscal year 2005-2006, Myanmar's oil and gas sector alone absorbed 34 per cent of the total foreign investment of US\$ 141.4 billion (Yhome 2009:8). Myanmar has an abundance of natural gas resources with three main large offshore oil and gas fields and 19 onshore one. Myanmar has proven recoverable reserves of 18.012 trillion cubic feet (TCF) or 510 billion cubic meters (BCM) out of 89.722 TFC or 2.54 trillion cubic meters (TCM) reserves of offshore and onshore gas (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:11).

The oil and Natural Gas Corp and Gas Authority of India, Ltd have been involved in the gas field with 20 per cent and 10 per cent stakes, respectively, in A-1 and A-3 offshore blocks, which have combined reserves of 4.53 TCF, Essar oil Ltd(Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:11). The first Indian Private Sector Company to have signed two productions sharing contracts (PSCs) with Myanmar for oil exploration in two blocks - one offshore (Block Az) and the other onshore (Block L) in May 2005 (Ratha & Mahapatra2012:11). On 24th Sept, 2007 the ONGC's (Oil and Natural Gas Corporation) subsidiary ONGC Videsh, signed a deal with Myanmar Oil and gas enterprise (MOGE) to explore for gas in three more offshore blocks. Under the deal, ONGC pledged to invest US\$ 150 million (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:11). Adani Energy, a private Indian company has been negotiating with Myanmar government to undertake gas distributions in Yangan and Naypyidaw (Ratha & mahapatra 2012:11).

Table 4: Indian Companies Investing in the Oil and Gas Sector of Myanmar

Company	Blocks (Offshore)
ONGC Videsh Ltd	AD-2, AD-3, AD-9 (100% stake) A-1& A-3 (20%)
GAIL	A-1 & A-3 (10% stake)
Essar Oil Ltd	A-2 & Block L

Source: Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India Official website: <http://commerce.nic.in/eidb/default.asp>.

After the prospect of bringing a pipeline from Myanmar to India via Bangladesh did not materialize due to Bangladesh's intransigence, India plans to build a pipeline from Myanmar through its north eastern region. The proposed pipeline is expected to run along the Kaladan River from Sittwe in Myanmar to India's state of Mizoram, Assam, West Bengal and join the Haldia-Jagdishpur pipeline in Gaya, Bihar. The construction of the pipelines will cost estimated US\$ 3 billion (Yhome 2009:9).

Cultural Aspects

Historically speaking, the important determinant in India – Myanmar relations has been the cultural factor. Throughout the recorded history there have been two main foci of cultural development in Eastern Asia; one in India, the other in China (Pradhan 2000:44). Deep sentiments based on long established historical and cultural links have been played a large part in shaping India's policy towards Asian countries, particularly those of South – East Asian. India's indigenous traditional culture, much of religion, literature, dance, language, folk lore, script, architecture, sculpture, family relations, personal and place names and law have gone out to these countries (Pradhan 2000:45).

Myanmar is one of the first countries to have come in contact with India and Indian civilization. The process of cultural assimilation between India and Myanmar started in 241 BC. during the pre – Christian era. The most important part of Indian culture that had its imprint on Myanmar was Buddhism. It was the amazing zeal of the early Buddhists of India that laid a foundation for cultural association between India and Myanmar (Pradhan 2000:46). The cultural contact with India and the functions of the

Brahmans of Indian origin were maintained down to the very end of the last Myanmar dynasty. From this mutual association, Burmese civilization developed a Hindu – Buddhist culture, freely adopted and enriched by Myanmar (Sing 1979:11). Buddhism liberal and revolutionary in outlook took firm roots in Myanmar while it was ousted by the reactionary revival of Brahmanism in India (Sing 1979:11).

In 1991, India officially launched its look East Policy (LEP) in response to increased globalization and regionalization as well. In Myanmar, performances by India cultural troupes have been organized in a regular basis since 1997. A bilateral cultural co-operation agreement was signed in 2001 and followed up with cultural exchange programme between 2004 – 2006 (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:5). Between November 28 to December 07 of the year 2009, a 15 member of cultural troupe from Myanmar visited India's north eastern region, particularly Nagaland, Manipur and Assam. This was organized by Union Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region in coordination with India Embassy at Yangon, the Myanmar Embassy in New Delhi, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR), North Eastern Council (NEC) and the north eastern state governments. The objective of this event was to advocate closer cultural and trade links between North East Indian states and South East Asian countries as part of LEP (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6).

Various cultural troupes have exchanged visits and performed in both countries. In November 2009, a 13 member student group from Myanmar attended SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) cultural festival in India. In December 2009, a popular Myanmar music band 'Emperor' went to India to participate in South Asian Bands festival, organized by ICCR (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6). In Jan 2010, the Embassy organized the annual "Indian Film Festival" at Yangon. This event has become a highlight of Yangon cultural calendar. In March 2010, a famous landscape artist from Myanmar went to Puduchery India to participate in South Asian Artists Camp organized by ICCR and SEHER (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6). The paintings emerging from that camp were exhibited in the Embassy auditorium in November 2010 and received an outstanding response from the local community. A 15 member theatre group from Myanmar went to participate in South Asian Theatre Festival organized by ICCR and

NSD in March 2010. The Abiogenesis band performed Yangon and Mandalay in the last week of May 2010. There was a packed calendar of commemorative activities for R.N Tagore 150th birth anniversary celebrations. Classes in yoga and Bharatanatyam have been started in the Embassy with the support of ICCR since December 2010. MGC (Mekong Ganga cooperation) is an initiative by 6 countries since 2000. The objective of this is to extend co-operation among India, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand in the field of tourism, culture, transport and communication (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6).

CONCLUSION

India-Myanmar relations are rooted in shared historical, ethnic and religious ties. Century's old geographical, cultural and strategic links between these two Asian neighbours coupled with mutual economic interests and identical foreign policy made their relationship a notable example of friendship. Historically, both India and Myanmar had a common past. Both tasted the bitter fruits of British imperial authority, India during 1857-1947 and Myanmar during 1886-1948. Once under the grip of British colonialism both India and Myanmar underwent many social, economic and political changes. Till 1937, Myanmar was a part of British India and was ruled under the Western concept of government and politics imposed by Britishers. Thus it was under one political framework that the administration of both India and Myanmar had been carried on.

India and Burma had many other common factors which played a vital role in determining the relations. These factors besides colonial legacies, identical value systems and personality orientation of post – independence leadership, were geographical situation, cultural links, economic activities and foreign policy matters. Geographically, India and Myanmar share a mountainous common boundary of nearly one thousand four hundred and fifty kilometers from its southern extremity to its northern end which in fact is the tri – junction of the boundaries between India, Myanmar and China.

After their independence, the two countries cultivated a close relationship that culminated in the signing of the 1951 Treaty of Friendship. India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and Myanmar's Premier U Nu shared the common views on many

issues regarding the conduct of international politics and pioneered the Non – Aligned Movement. General Ne Win's period in 1962 – 1988 saw ups and downs in the bilateral relations. But the adoption of Look East policy in the early 1990s, economic engagement between India and Myanmar has been steadily growing. Among the factors shaping India's policy towards Myanmar is that challenge of counterbalancing China's growing influence, cooperating in the containment of insurgent groups in India's northeastern state seeking independence from India or greater autonomy, enhancing security in the Indian Ocean, adjoining access to Myanmar's natural gas and other resources.

Some problems are still going on that is security aspect of Indian North East insurgency. The major insurgent groups that are fighting against the India state have bases on the myanmarse side of 1600km long Indo-Myanmar border. Myanmar bilateral relations remain largely guided by geopolitical considerations less by ideological values. The relations have been strengthened over the past decade with a vast potential for expansion in political, economic, security and strategic areas.

CHAPTER IV

EXPLORING INDIAN DIASPORA IN INDIA MYANMAR RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

India and Myanmar represent two important areas of the world, South and South-East Asia respectively. These two countries consider being neighbours to each other of their geographical, historically and also had a very long period of mutual contact with each other in the realm of trade, commerce, religion, law, political philosophy and culture.

Indian influence was felt in Myanmar from very ancient time. Many Indian came to Myanmar by land through Assam and by sea from Madras (Pakem 1992:2). It is argued that ancient Indian settlers in Myanmar had probably established their presence by the second century AD. and by the third century A.D. Indian from the East Coast and some from the West Coast of India had established their trading posts on the coastal areas of Myanmar (Pradhan 2000:150). In this time Myanmar were also under the religious influence of India where both Hinduism as well as Buddhism spread over as a result of the Indian immigrants who despite being mainly Hindus, but their Hinduism also included the Buddhist elements since the time of King Ashoka (Pakem 1992:2). By the fifth century, Buddhism triumphed in Conjeevaram, from which Myanmar received its Buddhism. But when Buddhism in Conjeevaram was replaced by Brahmanism in the eleventh century, Myanmar retained its Buddhism, with Ceylon then as a centre (Pakem 1992:3).

Similarly, in architecture and sculpture too, Indian, were in great demand in the country. It was the Indian architects and craftsmen who created the great temples of Pagan during the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries (Pakem 1992:3). Closely connected with inscriptions, architecture, and sculpture were the other arts such as music, dance, drama and painting. The early legal system of Myanmar was also influenced by the legal system of India. The earliest law book in Myanmar was the Wagaru Dhammathat which is still in existence and dealt primarily with the customary laws brought by the Indian to

Myanmar. Linguistically, Myanmar had certain affinities with India. Pali, the sacred Language of Buddhism, was the source of so many Myanmar words.

However, the earliest historical records of Muslim settlements in Rakhine (Arakan) and Bago (Pegu) date back to the 15th century AD. For many centuries, Indian communities lived in harmony with the natives in lower Myanmar and in the royal capitals of Shwebo, Inwa (Ava), Amarapura and Mandalay in central Myanmar. When Indian troops under British command defeated the royal army in the First Anglo-Myanmar War of 1824, they probably sowed the seeds of Myanmar's prejudice and grievances against Indians and India, fuelling nationalist fervor in the 20th century (Lal 2006:168).

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW ABOUT INDIAN DIASPORA IN MYANMAR

Pre-Colonial Era

The origin of Indian diaspora in Myanmar is not a recent phenomenon. The first Indian settlers must have gone to Myanmar by the first century of the Christian era (Pakem 1992:136). Myanmar legend even dates Indian contacts with Myanmar from the Pre-historic days. Historically, like other parts of Southeast Asia, Myanmar came under the spell of Indian cultural influence. They have countries old geographical, cultural and strategic links with each other. At that time, the Indian priests, princes, poets and artists helped to spread the Indian culture into Myanmar (Suryanarayan 2009:2). The spread of Buddhism directly from India and indirectly through Ceylon profoundly influenced all aspects of Myanmar life (Suryanarayan 2009:2). Myanmar received Hinduism as well as Buddhism from India. The Indian immigrants were mainly Hindus, but their Hinduism also included the Buddhist elements since the time of King Ashoka. Since the beginning of Christian era, however, there has been evidence of Indian commercial activities in Myanmar. By the third century A.D. Indian from the East Coast of India and some from the West Coast had established their trading posts on the coastal areas of Myanmar. The middle of the eleventh century, the influence of the Hindus had spread from Lower Myanmar to the people of the centre of the country (Pradhan 2000:150).

The Indian architecture and sculpture were also great demand in the country. It was the Indian architects and craftsmen who created the great temples of Pagan during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Closely connected with inscriptions, architecture, and sculpture were the other arts such as music, dancing, drama and painting. In these other arts also there was an Indian influence in Myanmar (Pakem 1992:3). The early legal system of Myanmar was also influenced by the legal system of India. The earliest law book in Myanmar was the Wagaru Dhammathat which is still in existence. The book dealt primarily with the customary laws brought by the Indians to Myanmar. Even the first law book in the Myanmarese language was known as the Manusara Shwemin to indicate the Indian system of attributing the name of Manu to a law book to make it authoritative (Pakem 1992:3). Linguistically, Myanmar had certain affinities with India. Pali, the sacred Language of Buddhism, was the source of so many Myanmarese words. The Myanmarese language and the other languages of Myanmar belonged to the Tibeto – Myanmar group and could be found on the Indian side too (Pakem 1992:3). Similarly, the Myanmarese languages like Jinghpaw, Chin, and Naga were extensively spoken on the Indian side of the dividing hills (Pakem 1992:3). There were also marked similarities in the cultures and sub- cultures of the two countries. For instance, there were cultural similarities between the way of life of the paddy lands and the villages of Assam in India and Myanmar (Pakem 1992:3).

Beyond religion and philosophy, ethnic links between the people of four Indian states bordering on Myanmar, namely Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram, and the people of western Myanmar, including Chins, Kukis and Kachins, have continued through the millennia (Bhutia 2011:317). For many centuries, Indian communities lived in harmony with the natives in Lower Burma and in the royal capitals of Shwebo, Inwa (Ava), Amarapura and Mandalay in Central Burma (Lal 2006:168). These links, cemented by linguistic commonality or affinity, family and tribal ties, traditional trade exchanges, shared lifestyles and conflict and cooperation among rulers, began well before India and Myanmar emerged as nation-states. When Indian troops under British command defeated the royal army in the First Anglo-Burmese War of 1824, they probably sowed the seeds of Burma's prejudice and grievances against Indian and India.

Colonial Period

The real beginning of Indian immigration to Myanmar on appreciable scale traced in colonial period. During British's colonial rule over India, the British considered Myanmar as an important post for monitoring activities of hostile powers such as Japan, Russia, and China (Gaur 2011:102). Myanmar, like India, was under the British colonial rule from 1886 until its independence in 1948. Bound by strong historical and cultural ties, bilateral relation between the two newly independent countries were cordial and friendly. From this date, the date of the British annexation of Lower Myanmar to the British Indian Empire, Indian immigration began having economic and political consequences in the country. By 1852 the Indian Chettyars started their banking business. In the same year it was estimated that 25,000 Indian had poured into Moulmein in Lower Myanmar (Pakem 1992:136). At that time the Indian migrated to Lower Myanmar in increasing numbers to fill a wide range of positions created by the expanding economy and greatly enlarged bureaucracy of the new province of the Indian empire (Pradhan 2000:151). After on finding that Irrawaddy Delta was suitable for rice cultivation on a commercial scale; the British encouraged the flow of cheap labour into this area that was sparsely populated although being the most fertile part of Myanmar. Moreover, the opportunities for employment and trade in Myanmar were promoted in the post 1852 period (Pradhan 2000:151).

Indian immigrants to Myanmar almost trebled between 1861 and 1871. In 1871, there were 1, 13,000 Indian in Myanmar (Pakem 1992:136). These Indian were found mostly in urban areas. The Annual Report on the Administration of Myanmar of the year 1884-85 stated that:

“A large number of natives of India are permanently settled in the sea ports and large villages, and they have driven the more apathetic Myanmar out of the more profitable fields of employment. The money lending business of the country is in the hands of the Madrasi banking caste of Chetties; the retail price goods trade is chiefly in the hands of the Suratis; natives of India, and Chinamen. The natives of India have also driven the Myanmarese out of the field where hard manual labour is required; the coolies employed by the Public Work Department are almost

exclusively Indian, the gharry drivers (Cartmen, coachmen) everywhere are chiefly Madrasis, coolies on the wharves and at the railway stations are also natives of India and natives of India are here and there settling down to permanent rice cultivation” (Pakem 1992:137).

Indian was also employment in the rice mills of the country. Myanmar had its first rice mills in 1861. These rice mills almost entirely employed Indian labourers, as the Myanmarese did not like to work in rice mills (Pakem 1992:137). The province of the Indian Empire in 1886, the British began to promote the immigration of Indian into the empty lands of Myanmar with a view not only for extending Myanmar’s rice cultivation for export purposes but also to relieve congestion in the more thickly populated areas of India as well as to get rid of the problem of unemployment in the country.

During the entire period of the British administration, immigration of Indian into Myanmar remained free and unregulated, thus rendering it difficult to make any precise and exact calculations about the growth of Indian in Myanmar at that time (Pradhan 2000:152). Even the Decennial Census of India Reports of include that Myanmar proved quite inadequate, even the two censuses conducted in 1872 and 1881 covered only parts of Lower Myanmar (Pradhan 2000:152), while Upper Myanmar was added in the 1891 census, and most of the Shan States and Karenni were covered by the census of 1901 (Pradhan 2000:152). Thus all these censuses including the census reports of the latter period covering 1911-1931, did not help in giving any proper basis of comparison in population growth from one period to another. Moreover there is no special attempt during 1824-1937 to classify Indian in Myanmar as permanent residents, aliens, temporary residents or seasonal immigrants. It was only after the separation of Myanmar from India in 1937 that the census of 1941 was directed to give a reasonable estimate not only of the Indian Population in Myanmar, but also their political and economic interests in the country (Pradhan 2000:152).

The table below shows the overall estimated gradual growth of Indian population in Myanmar in the colonial period provided by James Baxter Report on Indian Immigration.

Table 5: Indian population in Myanmar

Census	Total population	Indian Population	Indian % of Population
1872	2,747,148	136,504	4.9
1881	3,736,771	243,123	6.5
1891	8,098,014	420,830	5.1
1901	10,490,624	568,263	5.4
1911	12,115,217	743,288	6.1
1921	13,212,192	887,077	6.7
1931	14,667,146	1,017,825	6.9
1941	16,823,798	918,000	5.4

Source: James Baxter, Report on Indian Immigration (Rangoon: Government Printer, 1941, p.5).

Based on this report, it is cause that of Indian immigration in Myanmar was largely concentrated in the number of Lower Myanmar was than Upper Myanmar and that the Indian populated in Lower Myanmar increased more rapidly than did the indigenous population (Pradhan 2000:153). Moreover the deep rooted poverty, unemployment, starvation, and over population in Indian villages were the other factors which motivated Indian to move for work and employment.

When considered on the profile of the Indian Migrants the occupational Indian can be divided into three classes. The first was the capitalist and the big businessmen class like Chettiars. The second class consisted of middle class intellectuals like the engineers, doctors, teachers and lawyers. The third category consisted of labourer class, both skilled and unskilled workers (Pradhan 2000:155). Most of the Indian farmers in Myanmar were low-caste. The high caste groups monopolize the bureaucracy, professional and commercial positions. As far as the labourer class migration, most of these would come Myanmar towards the end of the year for rice harvests.

Indian migrants played a significant part in transforming Myanmar's subsistence economy into a commercialised export economy (Lal 2006:168). Occupationally, the 1931 census enumerated that 51.5 per cent in raw materials production mainly agriculture 9.5 per cent in miscellaneous activities including domestic work, 6.5 per cent in public administration, arts and professional services. Ninety – six per cent of Indian employed in non-agricultural male occupations was sweepers and scavengers, 73 per cent were

insufficiently described manufactures, businessmen, contractors, 49 per cent were unskilled and semi-skilled labourers, 48 per cent were clerical workers, 44 per cent were police and military personnel, 36 per cent were traders and shop assistants, 28 per cent were officers in organized industrial undertakings, and 27 per cent were craftsmen (Lal 2006:169).

The corresponding occupational representation of Indian in Rangoon exhibited a more accentuated were eighty-nine per cent Indian people were worked skilled and semi-skilled laboureres, 72 per cent were traders and shop assistants, 70 per cent were police and military personnel, 61 per cent were clerical workers, 59 per cent were craftsmen, 55 per cent were rentiers, 50 per cent were in the medical professional personnel, 43 per cent were officers in organized industrial undertakings, and 40 per cent were general public service workers (Lal 2006:169).

INDIAN COMMUNITY IN MYANMAR POST-COLONIAL PERIOD: 1948-1962

The mutual understanding and close contacts between leaders of the independence struggle greatly contributed to the friendly relationship between India and Myanmar after the two countries independence from the British on 15 August 1947 and 4 January 1948, respectively the relationship between the two countries was further strengthened by the personal friendship that existed between the Prime Ministers Nehru and U Nu. After independence the government of Myanmar took a number of measures calculated to strengthen the economic interests of Myanmarese against the foreigners. These measures generally hit Indians, as Indians constituted the biggest section in the foreign population of independent Myanmar. Among the several acts passed by the Myanmarese Government in 1948, the Land Alienation Act forbade the sale of land to non-Myanmarese nationals. The Myanmar Land Nationalization Bill, which was passed on 11 October 1949, aroused deep resentment and strong protest among Indians in both Myanmar and India (Lal 2006:171). Census enumeration was severely constrained by the civil war that broke out soon after independence and threatened the very existence of the central government during the first half of the 1950s. Estimates put the Indian population at around 600,000 in the early 1950s, of which some 132,000 were labourers comprising 14 per cent of the urban labour population (Lal 2006:171). In Rangoon, Indian numbering

some 126,000 still comprised 20.5 per cent of the city's population in 1952. Indian also constituted around 22.6 per cent of the total labor force in the city in 1953 (Lal 2006:171).

When the new constitution was promulgated it was stipulated that those who had been in continuous residence in Myanmar for eight out of the past ten years immediately preceding war years were eligible for citizenship. Adding to the political uncertainty was the assassination of Aung San, who was generally considered to be a great friend of India and the Indian community. Only 400,000 applications were received for citizenship and out of these early 10,000 were granted Myanmarese citizenship (Suryanarayan 2009:8). However, Indian including non-citizens managed to find their economic niche in formal and informal private sectors as the economy recovered in the mid-1950s. the included working as general labour, domestic helpers, petty traders, retailers, shopkeepers, service providers, food sellers and brokers in the small business sector (Lal 2006:172).

Many Indian industrialists and traders managed to gain control of certain lines of business such as foreign trade in rice, foodstuff, construction material and hardware, photographic equipment and supplies, books and stationery supplies, watches and textiles, as well as in real estate, cinemas, bazaars, brokerage, transport and construction. Indian, especially Muslim enterprises were prominent in industries such as brassware, Indian cheroots, matches, textiles and knitwear, furniture and wood products, rope and coin, flour soap, umbrellas and footwear (Lal 2006:172).

Indian industrialists and businessmen during the era were known to be quite influential, not only through their lobbying of the community's chambers of commerce, there were various merchant associations, but also by being close to top politicians from the ruling party. Some prominent Muslims were even known to have made donations to Buddhist causes and many prominent Hindus regularly participated in Buddhist celebration and ceremonies (Lal 2006:172). There were also several religious schools operated by Hindu and Muslim organizations.

INDIA DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD: 1962-1988

A major change in Myanmar's foreign policy towards China had repercussions on Indo-Myanmar relations. A Sino-Myanmarese border agreement and a treaty of friendship and mutual non-aggression were signed on 28 January 1960 when General Ne Win was leading a caretaker government in Myanmar. The changing attitude of China to Myanmar also figured prominently in the Indian Parliament. A Sino-Indian border conflict broke out in October 1962. At that movement, Myanmar showed a neutral stand on the issue, not wanting to incur the hostility of either of the two. The silence of Myanmar was interpreted as 'pro- Chinese' by India and naturally Indo-Myanmar relations were disturbed.

General Ne Win's period saw the ups and downs relations between them. It was reported that over 12,000 Indian businesses mainly small retail shops were nationalized in 1964 and over 100,000 Indian were disenfranchised by the nationalization drive (Lal 2006:173). Reeling from the situation and the abrupt termination of jobs, Indians were repatriated in such large numbers that a special arrangement had to be made to transport them by air and sea. Over 117,000 left by sea between 1964 and 1966; and estimated 300,000 left the country during the 1960s (Lal 2006:173). Consequently, the number of Indian in Myanmar declined to just over 547,000, 1.9 per cent of the total population in 1973. By 1983, the number had risen to over 1 million and the male to female ratio was far more balanced than ever before (Lal 2006:173). The average annual population growth rate for Indian between 1973 and 1983 was an incredible 6.6 per cent. Again, as shown, the number of Muslims in 1983 was 2.5 times average growth rate of 9.9 per cent that of a decade earlier, while the number of Hindus had increased by just 41 per cent (Lal 2006:173).

In 1982, the government led by the Myanmar Socialist programme party which formed by the Revolutionary Council instituted a new citizenship law which could settle the uncertain status of Indian and other foreigners in the country once and for all. The political influence of Indian ended with the advent of the Revolutionary Council, which subsequently banned all political parties and activities (Lal 2006:174). It also tightened the rules and regulations for all social, cultural and religious organizations, banned

foreign media, imposed strictly controlled public gathering and events. The nationalization drive and the autarkic economic policies depleted the financial resources of the Indian community affairs (Lal 2006:174). The Revolutionary Council's new educational policies that favoured citizens both of whose parents must also be citizens.

In the economic sphere, the Indian community managed to find a niche in the formal and the informal sector as small business operators, mainly in the service industry, and as traders and retailers as well as interlocutors in the interface between the emasculated official economies had black market economy. In Rangoon, the pattern of distribution among the major occupational groups within the Indian community had not changed very much between 1953 and 1973 (Lal 2006:174).

INDIAN COMMUNITY IN MYANMAR POST-1990s

In the period of 1988 was the direct military rule under the Junta, known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC (La 2006:174). The period of transition, 1988-90, witnessed change of governments in both countries. At this juncture, India extended strong support to the pro-democracy movement, driven by its principles and values and probably expecting that the 1990 elections would usher in democracy, thereby opening a new chapter in the history of Myanmar. But the failure restore democracy led the two governments to experience serious tensions in their relation (Bhatia 2011:318).

The State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) emphasis was on securing law and order after the tumultuous mass uprising that led to the military coup. Martial law was imposed and the Indian community, together with others in the newly christened Union of Myanmar. Later, the regime opened up the political arena before the multi-party elections in 1990 (Lal 2006:174). However, there was no evidence that the Indian community played an active political role in the heady atmosphere of the time leading to the election. When the junta refused to hand over power to the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Aung San's daughter, Aung San Sue Kyi, a political stalemate set in and the promised transfer of power to civilian rule was deferred indefinitely (Lal 2006:175).

While, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) were superseded by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in 1997, which reiterated the promise to return to civilian rule. However, at the end of 2004, the resolution to this political impasse, which had stalled the political reform process was nowhere in sight. Under these circumstances, the Indian community prudently stayed away from involvement in any political fields (Lal 2006:175). When the Myanmarese student activists fled to the India-Myanmar border, the Indian Embassy in Rangoon provided them financial assistance to go to India. The Government of India opened refugee camps for these students in Mizoram and Manipur States and then External Affairs Minister, Narasimha Rao informed a parliamentary panel in 1989 that “strict instructions” had been given not to turn back any genuine Myanmarese refugees seeking shelter in India (Lal 2006:175).

Perhaps the relevance of the Indian diaspora to approve the SLORC was mainly because of the economic benefits that the community experienced with the introduction of the SLORC. The State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) abandoned the socialist command economy soon after its inception and carried out some economic reforms in line with a new market-oriented approach. Following increased efforts to contract foreign direct investment and encourage the expansion of private sector enterprises in trade, industry and services, the bias against non-citizens and foreigners has become less pronounced. This policy benefited Indian commercial interests and entrepreneurs and they enable thus to find new opportunities in the nascent private sector (Lal 2006:175).

Likewise with the opening of the economy, the Indian diaspora seems to be adapting well to the new economic and political environment. Despite allegations of religious persecution by expatriate dissidents and Muslim activists and the occasional outbreak of isolated violence against them, Indian Muslims appear to be in a better position to carry out their religious and socio-cultural activities as compared to that of the socialist era. The practices of performing the Haj and Hindu pilgrimages continued with fewer impediments than before the result can also become when over 40 mosques in Yangon and several hundred all over the country appear to have been refurbished and

rehabilitated (Lal 2006:175). Similarly, some 30 per cent prominent Hindu temples in Yangon and a few hundred around the country been properly maintained and few Hindu religious school and over a dozen Muslim schools continue to operate in Yangon. Hindu institutions like the ABHCB, Sangh, Arya Samaj and all Myanmar Hindu Purohit Pujari Central Organisation are very much alive, albeit with a new generation of younger leaders (Lal 2006:175).

The opening up of the economy since the early 1990s has thus resulted in the emergence of a new generation of Indian entrepreneurs of all faiths who have been able to exploit the opportunities offered by the governments support of the private sector. Many of them appear to be well off, with mobile phones, SUVs and air-conditioned offices (Lal 2006:175). These groups have been found to be quite successful in trade, industry and services, and travel abroad holding business passports. This new generation of young and wealthy entrepreneurs, well connected to the authorities and with good organizational skills, has become quite influential in their respective communities (Lal 2006:175).

INDIA'S INVESTMEN IN MYANMAR

First, major initiatives taken in the late 1990s, resulted in the expansion of the ties in divers sectors, as indicated by the frequent exchange of high-level visits. According to Yhome, this relationship withstood the test of critical events during the period, suggesting that the relationship had reached degree of maturity and trust (Yhome 2009:1). Where these circumstance the trade and commerce between India and Myanmar have been rapidly growing in the recent years. Since the signing the border trade agreement in 1994, two such border points Moreh-Tamu in April 1995 and Zowkhathar-Rhi on January, 2004 has been operationalized (Yhome 2009:7). A Joint Trade Committee (JTC), chaired by the commerce ministers of India and Myanmar was set up in 2003 and has met four times to review trade and investment. In 2008 a Bilateral Investment Promotion Agreement (BIPA) and a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) were signed (Price 2013:3).

There has been steady expansion of bilateral trade from US\$12.4 million in 1980–81 to US\$1.92 billion in 2012–13. India's imports from Myanmar are dominated by agricultural items (beans, pulses and forest-based products form 90% of our imports) (Singh 2013:93). India's main exports to Myanmar are primary and semi-finished steel and pharmaceuticals (Singh 2013:93). India is today Myanmar's 4th largest trading partner after Thailand, China and Singapore. It is the second largest export market after Thailand, absorbing 25 per cent of Myanmar's total exports and is the seventh most important source of that country's imports (Yhome 2009:5). There is huge potential to increase border trade between North-East and Myanmar. A large number of items are currently banned from border trade including wood, plastic, milk and milk product, allopathic and alternative traditional medicine, and medical equipment (Price 2013:3). Indian has been taking measures to extend air, land and sea routes to strengthen trade links with Myanmar. It has also been observed that while government to government cooperation has increased in various fields, Indian private sector investment in Myanmar remain low. Myanmar has been trying to woo Indian entrepreneurs and investments in areas like pharmaceutical, cement, steel, fertilizer, IT and food processing in a major way (Yhome 2009:6).

INDIA'S DIASPORA POLICY IN MYANMAR POST 1990

There have been major shifts in Indian foreign policy towards Indian diaspora. During the independence movement of India, Indian leaders wanted to protect interest of Indian communities abroad. Several movements were launched by Indians abroad for the independence of India. As early as in 1906, India house was established in London to support Indian independence movement (Gupta 2013:2). However, after achieving independence Indian foreign policy towards Indian diaspora undergone through a major change. Indian policy makers wanted to see diasporic community as a citizen of their respective country.

Since the mid - 1980s, however, Indian diasporic communities and the Government of India have both altered their stance toward one another. Concurrently, the Indian government has initiated a multitude of new policies and institutions to help strengthen the linkages between the Indian diaspora and India. In the mid-1980s, the

Indian government created new bank accounts that allowed non-resident India (NRIs) to invest money in India under favorable conditions (Agarwala 2012:2). Close association of Indian diaspora begun with the establishment of Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) in 1989. But major change in Indian foreign policy towards Indian diaspora occurred in Since early 1990s there has been a proactive interest of the Indian government in Indian Oversea (Gupta 2013:3). This started with appreciation of foreign remittance from NRIs in the Gulf region and from North America. This provided meaningful addition to India's foreign reserve requirements. Further, when liberalization started in early 1990s, the Government of India tried to rope in first NRI's and then Indian settlers abroad to attract foreign direct investment (Gupta 2013:3).

The proactive diaspora policy, from “active-disassociation” to “active association” started especially after 1991, when the Indian economy faced severe crisis arising from the bankruptcy of its foreign exchange reserves. The crisis triggered a process of economic reforms as India prepared itself to exploit the opportunities to counter the threats arising from globalization and liberalization (Singh 2013:82). There was a realization that India needed to restructure itself economically and needed investment for infrastructure restructuring. Neither the Indian state nor the private sector had the capacity to counter the drastic situation (Singh 2013:82). If India intended to develop economically and remain competitive in a swiftly globalised world, it had aggressively to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and the infusion of new technologies (Singh 2013:184). In this context, the large policy shifts appeared in the re-engagement of India with its diaspora in the 1990s because only affluent section of the overseas Indian, i.e., non-residential Indians (NRIs) could be safe guards for the Indian economy in the 1990s (Singh 2013:89).

This was the same time when India also initiated its “Look East Policy” under P.V Narasimaha Rao's Congress government. When India's initiated its Look East Policy towards the Southeast Asian countries, the large presence of ethnic Indians in the region was unquestionably in the minds of the foreign policy makers, but unfortunately Indian could not leverage its diaspora in strengthening bilateral as well as multilateral relations with the ASEAN (Singh 2013:88). India also missed the opportunity to constructively

engage its diaspora and gratify aspiration and inspiration of the diasporic community often region nevertheless in contrast to Nehru's policy of active dissociation of PIO from Indian foreign policy objectives, the Bharatiya Janata Party's government in 1999, under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, stood for active and overt association of PIO for active and overt association of PIO for India's foreign policy objectives. They started celebrating the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas PBD and offering few benefits to the overseas Indian community (Singh 2013:90).

In Myanmar the small communities of persons of Indian origin can be seen all over the country, including in the remote areas, major concentrations are in and around Yangon, Mandalay, Zeyawaddy, Kyauktaga, Mawlamyine and Patheingyi. In the Yangon area, which has its largest concentration, most of the PIOs are engaged in jobs like domestic help, mechanics and construction workers, while others are engaged in petty trades. Only a handful of them are doing well in trade and business. In other cities, the PIOs are mainly engaged in petty trading. In the rural areas, the Indian communities are still engaged in farming. There is a large concentration of the Indian community, nearly one hundred thousand of them, in the Zeyawaddy and Kyautaga areas, who are engaged in farming. They are third or fourth generation descendent of Indians from Bihar who had been brought in by the British at the turn of the century. While few of these farmers are landowners, the rest of them are either sharecroppers or farm labourers. There are around 200 NRI families which came to Myanmar after economic liberalization began in 1990s. Most of them are located in Yangon and are engaged in business (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*)<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

Political Policy

India's policy towards Southeast Asian countries shows that Myanmar figures prominently from all perspectives such as political, security, economic and strategic. The desire to engage the eastern Asian regions or more particularly strengthening relations with CLMV countries i.e., Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, India's renewed focus on them coincide with the strengthening of its bilateral ties with Myanmar. New Delhi sees Myanmar as an important land bridge on its path to the consolidation of ties

with Southeast and East Asia. Myanmar thus fits in very well into India's regional plans (Yhome 2009:2).

India's Look East policy pulled the two neighbour nations ties out of the doldrums. The policy led to a renewed effort on the part of New Delhi to engage Southeast and East Asia (Yhome 2009:2). The initial result was seen in the signing of the border trade agreement in 1994. Since social status in any society is linked to economic well-being, the Indian community in Myanmar does not at present enjoy much social or political clout. The military junta does not permit any political activity. Hence, in the parliamentary election of 1990 and the recent general election of November 2010, the Indian community played a negligent role. As a result, the ethnic Indians in Burma have been suffering incessantly (Singh 2013:88).

Socio Cultural Policy

Culture is something which is not time bound which is especially beyond the border. The easiest way for both to have a closer relation is to cultivate cultural linkages including cultural exchanges and people to people contacts. The culture of Myanmar was enriched by India. The origin of cultural relation of both nations can be traced back to King Asoka. The two arahats; Sona and Uttara's mission to Subsarnabhumi in 241 B.C before Christ, sent by third Buddhist Council of Pataliputra, the similarity of Kadamba script and the Pyu script of 5th century A.D, Buddhist remains excavated round about old Prone and Pagan of the existence by Mahayanist, Theravadin and Braminical influence of Buddhist Tripitakas and of Vedic treaties on literature of Myanmar point out to the extent of cultural relations between India and Myanmar (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:5).

To emphasis the cultural policy of India towards Myanmar in term of religion, there were Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs and Christians. In term of language, there were Bengalis, Hindi speaking people from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam speaking people from the former Madras Presidency and Punjabi speaking people from Punjab. They belonged to various caste groups and were also economically stratified, the rich Chettiars, the poor Tamils and Hindi speaking people and the English educated middle classes from all parts of the country (Suryanarayan 2009:5).

The PIOs in Myanmar are near the bottom of the social pyramid, they have few or no prospects at present for any significant improvement. The various linguistic and religious groups among them still maintain their cultural identities. Most of the younger generations are more comfortable speaking Myanmarese. The Arya Samaj and the Sanatan Dharma Sabha are active in areas with large Hindu communities. However, there are no Indian political organizations because of the restrictions imposed by the military regime. There are a large number of Hindu temples, mosques and gurudwaras in Myanmar. Practically in every town, the Indian community has established places of worship. The Indian community celebrates religious and cultural festivals and events with great fervor and enthusiasm. The older generations, in particular, are making a special endeavour to keep Indian religious traditions and languages alive by holding religious and language classes in temples, mosques and gurudwaras. The special festivals celebrated by the Hindu community include Durga Puja and Navaratri, Holi, Janma Ashtami, ect, (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*)<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

In some areas like Zeyawaddy and Kyautage, there are villages inhabited entirely by PIOs from Bihar. In these places, the community is maintaining its distinctive linguistic and cultural identity. Their language and some of their customs date back to the beginning of the twentieth century. In other places, while the older generation is maintaining a separate identity, younger persons are more comfortable with the local language and customs. There are increasing instances of inter-marriages between Indians and Myanmarese persons (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*) <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

Culture and religious links could be strengthened by promoting tourism. At one time, the faculty and alumni of the University of Rangoon comprised mainly of Indians. There are hardly any Indian students of the Universities and results in a virtual extinction of a professional class. The main reason was that between 1964 and 1988, Indian was denied admission to the Universities and professional courses (Saryanarayan 2009:6). The social status in any society is linked to economic well-being; the Indian community

in Myanmar does not enjoy much social or political clout as the military junta does not permit any political activity.

The Indian Community's relations with the Myanmar Government and people are, by and large cordial. Occasionally, senior government functionaries attend functions organized by the Indian community. The Indian community also looks up to India for its educational and cultural needs. They would like to send their children to India for higher education but are unable to do so for economic reasons. The Myanmar Embassy has been helping in a limited way by providing text books and books in Hindi and other Indian Languages. It has also been supplying religious books, musical instruments etc. to different socio-religious bodies. Ministry of Human Resource Development also gives annual grants to some cultural organizations in Myanmar. On the cultural fronts also, the Indian community expects India to help them in maintaining their cultural identity by providing them necessary support. Cultural troupes from India are always a special attraction for the Indian community (*Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora 2001*) <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter20pdf>.

In 1991, India officially launched its Look East Policy in response to increased globalization and regionalization. In Myanmar, performances by India cultural troupes have been organized in a regular basis since 1997 (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:5). A bilateral Cultural Co-operation Agreement was signed in 2001 and followed up with cultural exchange programme between 2004-2006 (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6). At that time, a fifteen member of cultural troupe from Myanmar visited India's North Eastern Region, particularly Nagaland, Manipur and Assam (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6). This programme was organized by Union Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region in coordination with India Embassy at Yangon, the Myanmar Embassy in New Delhi, Indian Council of Cultural Relations, North Eastern Council and the North Eastern state governments.

Various cultural troupes exchanged visits and performed in both countries. In November 2009, a thirteen member student group from Myanmar attended South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) cultural festival in India. In December 2009, a popular Myanmar music band Emperor went to India to participate in South

Asian Bands festival, which is organized by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6). They also performed in Shillong and Meghalaya. In January 2010, the Embassy organized the annual “Indian Film Festival” at Yangon. This event has become a highlight of Yangon cultural calendar. In March 2010, a famous landscape artist from Myanmar went to Puducherry India to participate in South Asian Artists Camp organized by ICCR and SEHER (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6). A fifteen member theatre group from Myanmar went to participate in South Asian theatre festival organized by ICCR and NSD in March 2010 (Ratha & Mahapatra 2012:6).

EXPLORING INDIAN DIASPORA IN INDIA-MYANMAR RELATIONS

Exploring Indian diaspora in Myanmar, according to the report High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora, the total Indian population in Myanmar is estimated to be 2.9 Million of which 2,500,00 are People of Indian Origin (PIO), 2000 are Indian citizens, and 400,000 are stateless. Regarding the stateless category, it must be mentioned that all of them are born in Myanmar, they belong to the third or fourth generation. But since they do not have any documents to prove their citizenship under the Myanmarese citizenship law of 1982, they are deemed to be stateless. As T.P. Sreenivasan, former Indian Ambassador to Myanmar has pointed out they had no rights either in the land of their origin or in their origin or in their land of adoption, and neither the two governments seemed concerned (Suryanarayan 2009:2). In fact, of the Indian Diaspora in Myanmar has the largest number of stateless people.

To addressing various personalities of Indian origin in colonial Myanmar in particular. They were from areas of knowledge i.e., teachers, professors, medical practitioners to world of business and trade to legal professions for various public servants of high and middle rankings who served under colonial administration. Their valuable contributions remained eclipsed under the dark shadow of biased historical dominating tendency for a long time that highlight the immigration of unskilled or semi-skilled Indian workers in the industrial sectors or small enterprises or in service sectors of lower ranking.

According to Swapna Bhattacharya observed the role of Indian diaspora in Myanmar is that a large number of highly educated people mostly from the University circle. The people of Myanmar remember with the deep sense of indebtedness the contribution of Indian professors who taught them Philosophy, Law, Pali, Buddhism and among other subjects. This Indian has left a legacy of guru-sisya-parampara unique in nature. Those Indian were completely identified with Myanmar and her people (www.jair.net.in/files/documents/book-of-abstracts_2dox). Myanmar and her people thinking about Indian at the colonial time that Indian people has come out through their huge donation in education and training sectors.

The city of Kolkata and the city of Yangon shared a very rich heritage of knowledge and also sharing in the fields of Pali, Buddhist studies and Archaeology. At that time, the famous people like U Ottama, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, E. Forchhammer, Sir Asutosh Mukherjee, Ch. Duroisell, Taw Sein Ko, Gordon Luce, Suniti K Chatterjee, Professor B.M Barua, Stella Kramrisch, Niharranjan Ray played a key role in Myanmar(www.jair.net.in/files/documents/book-of-abstracts_2dox).

Myanmar is going through an unprecedented political and socio-cultural transformation. During the past five decades of military rule, the country witnessed suppression of democratic norms/institutions, human rights violations, armed insurgencies by the sidelined ethnic minorities, detention of the opposition activists and leaders, especially the Nobel Peace laureate Ms Aung San Sue Kyi and the economic policies enforced by the junta, and left most of the common people impoverished, including the Indian diaspora. While diaspora have emerged as a powerful factor in developing relations between nation-states, The Indian Diaspora can be a catalyst in strengthening bilateral relations between India and Myanmar as the two nations share a geographical contiguity (Singh 2013:82).

After two decades of closer Indo-Myanmar state interactions, the Myanmar authorities proved not only reluctant to intimately embrace India's rising ambitions eastward, but seemed also to be in position to impose conditions to the pace and path of the Indo-Myanmar relations (Egretau 2011:469). The recent democratization process in Myanmar has further prepared the ground for India to be more proactive with Myanmar

(Singh 2013:91). On 8 August 1998, at a joint meeting in New Delhi, six political parties of India re-committed their support to Myanmar struggle for democracy. More than 75 MPs in the same month signed a letter urging the Myanmar government restore democracy in Myanmar. On February 1999, Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh confirmed that India is committed to the security and freedom of the Myanmar people who are taking shelter in India (Aung & Myint 2003: 111).

The most active support has come from George Fernandes a trade unionist-turned member of Indian Parliament. George Fernandes allowed a Myanmar student organization to function from his official residence in New Delhi. In January 1996, George Fernandes organized an International Convention for the Restoration of Democracy in Myanmar in New Delhi to bring together those involved or supporting the struggle of the Myanmar people from all over the world (Aung & Myint 2003:111).

The two contrasting views about the prospects of the Indian Community in Myanmar, according to Singhvi Committee Report, Thet Lwin, who is a member of the Myanmar, Academy of Arts and Science, Ministry of Education, the Government of Myanmar on Indians in Myanmar presented an optimistic view (Suryanarayan 2009:12). According to Thet Lwin said that the presence status of Indian in Myanmar is a historical legacy, a section of Myanmar, the Indian community is engaged in business while a majority is in agriculture or in menial labour (Suryanarayan 2009:12). The younger generations through education are moving fast towards integration into the mainstream in Myanmar society and this complemented by the rise of India that has a profound impact on the image building attempts of overseas Indian (Suryanarayan 2009:12).

The long running welcoming of Myanmar monks in Indian monasteries or Buddhist studies University departments in India, notably the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara University, New Delhi has been trying since the late 1990s to foster academic exchanges between its faculty and its Myanmar counterparts. Despite the far humbler expertise or English language command of most of the Myanmar students each year the Indian Council for Cultural Relations sponsored a dozen Myanmar doctoral students to study in India (Egreteau 2011:477). In 2003, Educational Consultants India Ltd Negotiated with the Myanmar Ministry of Education an agreement proposing short-term

deputations of Indian teaching personnel to various Myanmar Universities (Yhome 2008:23).

Through India-ASEAN cooperation framework as well as BIMSTEC and MGC multilateral cooperation schemes, India has been offering several scholarships to Myanmar people that well established academics and mid rank civil servants to be trained in various Indian institutions (Egreteau). In the recent years of 2010-2011, 140 Myanmar trainees were supported by India under the Indian Technical and Economic Programme, 70 under the Technical Cooperation Scheme of Colombo Plan and 10 under the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations figures that has been doubled to compared with four years earlier (Egreteau 2011:477).

Bilaterally, New Delhi also granted a US\$2 million loans to build in Rangoon the India-Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills. The agreement for this high-tech computer centre was finalized during the visit of India's Vice president Hamid Ansari in 2009 (Egreteau 2011:477). India promoted the establishment of a Myanmar-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre in Rangoon and an Industrial Training Centre in Pakokku to train electricians, welders and mechanists (Egreteau 2011:477).

Prior to Antony's visit, several high level bilateral exchanges had taken place. On October 2011, the president of Myanmar visited New Delhi and was followed by a return visit in May 2012, by the Indian Prime Minister. The pro-democracy activist and the leader of the opposition Ms Aung San Sue Kyi visited India in November 2012 and the External Affairs Minister of India, Salman Khurshid, visited Myanmar in 2012, thus furthering official engagement. The frequency of bilateral interactions between New Delhi and Nay Pyi Taw is noteworthy and has the potential of further elevating the India – Myanmar relationship to a new level (Singh 2013:92).

As the year of 2013, both India and Myanmar are jointly working on quite a few projects, namely the upgrade and resurfacing of the 160-km long Tamu- Kalewa-Kalemyo road, construction and upgrade of the Rhi-Tiddim Road in Myanmar, etc. India is also implementing the Kaladan multimodal transport project, which involves upgrading the Sittwe port in Myanmar and constructing a highway to connect the town of Paletwa in

Chin state to the border state in Mizoram (Singh 2013:93). The government of India has also announced the long-awaited luxury bus service between Imphal and Mandalay, the first link between India and Myanmar (Singh 2013:93). This connectivity holds the potential to integrate India's North-East with the broader ASEAN's inter-connectivity efforts with substantial benefits for both India and Myanmar.

The Lok Sabha Speaker Smt. Meira Kumar led the first-ever visit of an Indian parliamentary delegation to Myanmar on 12–15 February 2013. While interacting with the Indian parliamentary delegation, the President of Myanmar Thien Sein hoped that present visit of the Indian parliamentary delegation will not only contribute to strengthen relations between the two parliaments but also between the two countries. Smt. Kumar also alluded the training availed of by the 30 MPs of Myanmar and 30 Myanmar parliamentary staff in India (Singh 2013:93).

Conclusion

India and Myanmar are close neighbours with an extensive commonality of interests. They have centuries old geographical, cultural and strategic links with each other. In addition, both these countries had similar historical experiences. India and Myanmar cooperated in their struggle for independence. The biggest cause of contention between the two countries was the fate of the People of Indian Origin (PIOs) who were being treated as foreigners despite having lived in Myanmar for generations. Therefore, the presence of Indian population in Myanmar is a long historical legacy. The political unrest in Myanmar and present geopolitical equations saw ups and downs relations between India and Myanmar. Myanmar's uncertain political situation and instability in the border region and the Indian diaspora question are some issues that may create concerns for the two countries. From 1962 to 2011, the country was ruled by a military junta that suppressed almost all dissent and wielded absolute power in the face of international condemnation and sanctions. At that time the socio-economic conditions of the Indian in Myanmar are pathetic. They have no certificates or any other documents to prove that they are citizens of the country. They have been relegated to the poorest sections of the society with little presence in the higher education sections and the professional class of the society.

After 1990 when the Indian economy faced several crises to develop economically and remain competitive in swiftly globalised world, it had to aggressively attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and the infusion of new technologies. In this context, larger policy shifts appeared in the reengagement of Indian with its diaspora. When India initiated its Look East Policy towards the Southeast Asian countries, the large presences of ethnic Indian in the region are unquestionably in the minds of the foreign policy makers but unfortunately they missed the opportunity to constructively engage its diaspora and gratify its aspiration and inspiration of the diasporic community.

The Indian Diaspora in Myanmar should mobilise the Indian community to start lobbying for Myanmar's permanent seat in the SAARC, as this will improve their position in the host country. India should try to bring in an amicable solution of the citizenship dispute between the ethnic Indians and the Myanmar's authority. If Myanmar obtains permanent membership in SAARC with India's supports, India will gain a platform to engage and interact with Myanmar's "civilian" regime. Myanmar will also enjoy the benefits of SAFTA (South Asia Free Trade Area), in which trade within the member countries will be duty free. On August 2010, the SAARC University has been started in New Delhi, where students from all the member countries are eligible to enroll and there will be no discrimination in visas against any student from any member country. According to the report of HLCID, education is also a concern among the Indian community in Myanmar. If Myanmar receives the SAARC membership, the country will become the part of this university, which will also facilitate the interest of the PIO. The future of Myanmar and the future of Indians in Myanmar lie in democracy, and if all goes well then the future of the Indian Diaspora as well as Myanmar will be bright, including their bilateral relations with India.

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSION

The Indian Diaspora in Myanmar can play a crucial role in strengthening India–Myanmar ties. The centuries old geographical, cultural and strategic links between these two Asian neighbours coupled with mutual economic interests and identical foreign policy made their relationship as a notable example of friendship. Historically, both India and Myanmar had a common past. Both tasted the bitter fruits imperial authority during India in 1957-1947 and Myanmar during 1986-1948. Once under the grip of British Colonialism both India and Myanmar underwent many social, economic and political changes. Till 1937, Myanmar was a part of British India and was ruled under the Western concept of government and politics imposed by Britishers. India and Myanmar had many other common factors which played a vital role in determining their relations. These factors besides colonial legacies, identical value systems and personality orientation of post-independence leadership were geographical situation, cultural links, economic activities and foreign policy matters. Geographically, India and Myanmar share a mountainous common boundary of nearly one thousand four hundred and fifty kilometers from its southern extremity to its northern end which in fact is the tri-junction of the boundaries between India and China.

The present study has developed a thematic approach towards conceptualizing of Indian diaspora. There are some prominent aspects of India's diaspora policy in general and Myanmar in particular. For a viable understanding of the Indian diaspora policy, this study discussed the history of Indian diaspora, the theoretical aspects and debates and the impact of Indian diaspora on Indian foreign policy. The Indian Immigrants in Myanmar were the crucial factor in Indo Myanmar relations. The origin of Indian immigration to Myanmar is not a recent phenomenon. The most important determinant that for centuries had played a role in Indo- Myanmar relations was a cultural factor. Myanmar was one of the first few countries that came in contact with India and its civilization. Through years of contact, India's culture, religion, art, literature, language, dance forms etc. reached Myanmar and influenced the Myanmarese way of life. Buddhism by virtue of its liberal approach and national outlook that affected the Myanmar society. The Hindu influence

could be seen distinctly in the field of architecture, literature, paintings, dance and music. Thus Myanmar was the richest country of Southeast Asia with the active support of Indian Diaspora.

The Indian diaspora is estimated to be the second largest in the world with and global presence. The diaspora estimated at over 25 million and spread across more than 200 countries with a diversified global presence `with high concentration in developed and developing countries (Singh 2013:2). Thus, diaspora plays a crucial role in strengthening relations among the nation states. Foreign policy is no longer the sole domain of the diplomatic corps; rather the diaspora community organizations and members also play the important role in promoting stronger, deeper, more effective bilateral collaboration with their countries of origin. Diaspora build on existing linkages to nations of origin and draw on the talents, creativity, resources, and networks of diaspora communities are a vital part of the foreign policy process. Indian diaspora policy and Indian foreign policy are two sides of the same coin. Diaspora can be active actors to influencing the foreign policies of their hostlands as well as their homelands. Diaspora can directly achieve that economic and political power and also affect the foreign policies of their homeland.

The Indian population has a global migration history. Since 1834, Indians have migrated to widespread places in the world. Today' Indian diaspora is one of that extends to the four corners of the world. Now, in this era of globalization where distance is diminishing, contacts are ever increasing the role international diaspora increased many folds in international system. International migration has shown tremendous increase in last few decades and therefore, their role in political, economic, cultural and other aspects of international relations is growing. The Indian Foreign Policy is to engaged Indian Diaspora and promote them to play more meaningful role in the enhancement of India relations with other nation state. According to Mahalingam (2013) argues that diaspora policy and Indian foreign policy are two sides of the same coin. Diaspora is a productive as well as counter - productive. India is yet to utilize the potential of Indian Diaspora in its domain of foreign affairs.

In the case of Indi Myanmar, after their independence, the two countries cultivated a close relationship that culminated in the signing of the 1951 Treaty of Friendship. India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and Myanmar's Premier U Nu shared the common views on many issues regarding the conduct of international politics and pioneered the Non – Aligned Movement. General Ne Win's period in 1962-1988 saw ups and downs in the bilateral relations. The adoption of Look East policy in the early 1990s, economic engagement between India and Myanmar has been steadily growing. Among the factors shaping India's policy towards Myanmar is that challenge of counterbalancing China's growing influence, cooperating in the containment of insurgent groups in India's northeastern state seeking independence from India or greater autonomy, enhancing security in the Indian Ocean, adjoining access to Myanmar's natural gas and other resources.

Some problems are still going on that is security aspect of Indian North East insurgency. The major insurgent groups that are fighting against the India state have bases on the Myanmar side of 1600km long Indo-Myanmar border. Myanmar bilateral relations remain largely guided by geopolitical considerations less by ideological values. The relations have been strengthened over the past decade with a vast potential for expansion in political, economic, security and strategic areas. Though, diaspora have emerged as powerful factors in developing relations especially in the case of India-Myanmar relations. Indian society faces a constant threat of ethnic hostility due to the inherent divide along social lines that is reinforced by religion, culture, language and occupation.

It should be noted that there is no extensive study on Indian's policy towards its diaspora especially in the background of contemporary diaspora discusses with special reference to Indian in Myanmar. Due to lack of available of present data, the exact size of the Indian diaspora in Myanmar is largely a matter of conjecture. According to report High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora (2001) the total Indian population in Myanmar is estimated to be 2.9 million of this, 250000 is people of Indian origin, 2000 are Indian citizens and 400000 are stateless. All of them were born in Myanmar and belong to the third and fourth generation in the country. But since they do not have any

document to prove their citizenship under Myanmar citizenship law of 1982, they are deemed to be stateless. There are numerous Indian diaspora in Myanmar from Bihar, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab but it is noted that none of the author has been focuses in Northeast region. As Northeast region is the geographical continuity with the India sharing both land and maritime boundaries with Myanmar. The cross-border contact and movement facilitated large scale migration of Indian into Myanmar.

After 1990 when the Indian economy faced several crises to develop economically and remain competitive in swiftly globalised world, it had to aggressively attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and the infusion of new technologies. In this context, larger policy shifts appeared in the reengagement of Indian with its diaspora. When India initiated its Look East Policy towards the Southeast Asian countries, the large presences of ethnic Indian in the region are unquestionably in the minds of the foreign policy makers but unfortunately they missed the opportunity to constructively engage its diaspora and gratify its aspiration and inspiration of the diasporic community.

After the Indian Diaspora in the USA successfully lobbied for clinching of the Indo-US civil nuclear deal, now Singapore is using the Indian Diaspora as an asset by wooing the cash-rich Indian Diaspora in the USA for investments, technology and other expertise. This could be an eye-opener for other countries having a sizable Indian Diaspora. Myanmar may consider the Indian Diaspora as an asset and not a liability, and could also learn from Singapore. The motivating factor for India's policy towards Indian diaspora in Myanmar has been its growing economic integration with the ASEAN region. Both India and Myanmar are playing a major role in promoting bilateral trade as well as the bilateral relations. The Indian Diaspora in Myanmar should mobilise the Indian community to start lobbying for Myanmar's permanent seat in the SAARC, as this will improve their position in the host country. India should try to bring in an amicable solution of the citizenship dispute between the ethnic Indians and the Myanmar's authority. If Myanmar obtains permanent membership in SAARC with India's supports, India will gain a platform to engage and interact with Myanmar's "civilian" regime. Myanmar will also enjoy the benefits of SAFTA (South Asia Free Trade Area), in which trade within the member countries will be duty free. On August 2010, the SAARC

University has been started in New Delhi, where students from all the member countries are eligible to enroll and there will be no discrimination in visas against any student from any member country (Singh 2013:94). According to the report of HLCID, education is also a concern among the Indian community in Myanmar. If Myanmar receives the SAARC membership, the country will become the part of this university, which will also facilitate the interest of the PIO.

Thus, Indo-Myanmar relation post 1990 is a phase of unique importance. On bilateral level, they cooperated keeping in view each other's national interests. On the global level, they worked hard for the establishment of world peace. On economic matters, they worked jointly to provide a better living to their country's population. Increase in people to people contacts, youth exchange programme, cultural exchange programme and other institutional activities especially targeted towards PIOs. Establishment of local institutes or centers, financial and other support in the form of books, instruments etc. from the government of India for promoting India's culture. Various cultural troupes exchanged visits and performed in both countries. In November 2009, thirteen member student groups from Myanmar attended South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation cultural festival in India (Egreteau 2011:11). At the same time, a popular Myanmar music band emperor went to India to participate in South Asian Bands festival which is organized by Indian Council for Cultural Relation (Egreteau 2011:11). The future of Myanmar and the future of Indians in Myanmar lie in its democratic transition and if all goes well, the future of the Indian Diaspora as well as Myanmar will be bright, including their bilateral relations with India.

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NEWS PAPERS

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Times of India.

Appendix-I

A Political Timelines of Myanmar

1821-1886: The beginning of British rule.

1920s- 1930s: The rise of Myanmarese Nationalism.

1937: Britain separation Myanmar from India and makes it a crown colony.

1940-1945: World War II and the Japanese Invasion.

July 19, 1947: General Aung San, the architect of Burma's independence from Britain, is assassinated in Yangon along with six members of his pre-independence cabinet.

Jan 4, 1948: The Union of Burma declares independence. A new charter establishes a bicameral parliament.

March 1962: General Ne Win launches a military coup. He discards the constitution and establishes a Revolutionary Council of military leaders who rule by decree.

March 1974: A new constitution transfers power from the armed forces to a People's Assembly of former military leaders headed by Ne Win. It allows for a unicameral legislature and one legal political party. Ne Win is installed as President.

1988: Ne Win resigns as decades of economic strife and ethnic tensions boil over into anti-government riots in which more than 3,000 people are killed. The military takes direct power under the name the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), and annuls the constitution.

June 19, 1989: The military government changes the official name of the country from Burma to the Union of Myanmar.

July 20, 1989: Aung San's daughter, Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD) party, is placed under house arrest for "endangering the state".

May 27, 1990: The NLD wins 392 of 485 seats in the first multi-party general election since 1960.

June 19, 1990: SLORC chief Saw Maung rules out a quick transfer of power, saying a new constitution is needed first.

Oct 14, 1991: Suu Kyi is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, while under house arrest.

1992: Senior General Than Shwe becomes head of the junta and prime minister. Plans for a new constitution are announced.

Jan 9, 1993: A National Convention on a new constitution is abruptly adjourned after delegates oppose a clause stating the military must have the leading political role.

July 10, 1995: Suu Kyi is freed after four years and 355 days under house arrest.

Nov 28, 1995: Convention reconvenes. NLD pulls out, saying the process does not represent the will of the people.

July 29, 1997: Myanmar's foreign minister says a new constitution is being finalised, a week after the country joins the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Nov 15, 1997: SLORC changes its name to the State Peace and Development Council. The 19-member SPDC includes former SLORC chairman Than Shwe and intelligence chief Khin Nyunt.

Sept. 22, 2000: Suu Kyi is placed under house arrest.

May 6, 2002: Suu Kyi is released.

Aug 30, 2003: New Prime Minister Khin Nyunt announces a 7-step "roadmap to democracy", but gives no firm timetable.

May 30, 2003: Suu Kyi is placed under "protective custody" in her home after her motorcade was attacked by pro-junta thugs.

May 17, 2004: National Convention reconvenes without the NLD, which boycotts talks while Suu Kyi is under house arrest. The process stutters for three years and makes little progress.

Sept. 3, 2007: Convention completes work after 14 years working out the broad outline of a "disciplined" democracy.

Oct 18, 2007: Junta appoints 54-member commission, mostly military officers and civil servants, to draft a constitution.

Aug-Sept, 2007: A sharp rise in fuel prices sparks the biggest protests in 20 years. Monk-led demonstrations are crushed by soldiers, killing at least 31 people and sparking international outrage and more sanctions against the regime.

Feb 9, 2008: Junta announces referendum on new constitution in May, followed by multi-party elections in 2010. Critics call it a sham aimed at deflecting international pressure.

May 10/May 26, 2008: Referendum takes place on two dates, because of a hurricane that left 134,000 dead or missing in the Irrawaddy delta. The regime declares 92.48 percent of voters backed the constitution, with a turnout of 98.1 percent.

March 9, 2010: Government announces the first of five election laws, including one that bans serving prisoners, including Suu Kyi, from involvement. The Union Election Commission (UEC) is later appointed to oversee the polls.

March 11, 2010: Junta annuls the result of the 1990 polls it ignored, saying the vote breached election laws that were published 19 years later. No election date is announced.

March 29, 2010: NLD members voted unanimously to boycott the polls over "unfair and unjust" election laws.

April 26, 2010: At least 27 government ministers, including premier Thein Sein, resign from their military posts to run as civilian candidates in a new political party, the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP)

May 7, 2010: Deadline passes for existing parties to re-register. The NLD fails to sign up and is effectively disbanded. A new party of renegade NLD members, the National Democratic Force (NDF), is formed, a move that angers Suu Kyi.

Aug. 14, 2010: UEC announces the election will take place on Nov. 7, a week before the scheduled release of Suu Kyi. Parties complain they have insufficient time to prepare.

Aug 27, 2010: A military reshuffle list is leaked showing that dozens of generals have been retired to join pro-junta political parties. No announcement is made. Rumours swirl that Than Shwe had also resigned to become a presidential candidate.

Aug 31, 2010: Deadline passes for parties to submit candidates. Proxies of the junta say they will contest nearly all of the 1,158 constituencies. The biggest pro-democracy party, the NDF, says it has the means to run in only 166 constituencies.

Sept 14, 2010: UEC gives the green light to 37 parties to run in the polls, but only two - both of which are pro-military -- will contest more than 14 percent of the seats.

Sept 16, 2010: UEC announces voting has been scrapped in hundreds of villages in ethnic regions where the political climate "is not conducive to free and fair elections".

Sept 24, 2010: A local UEC source says Suu Kyi's name is on the list of eligible voters, even though the constitution bars prisoners from the ballot. Suu Kyi later says she will not vote.

Oct. 18, 2010: The UEC says all foreign journalists and observers will be banned from overseeing the polls. The UEC said observers were not needed because Myanmar had "abundant experience" in holding elections".

(Compiled by Bangkok Newsroom; Editing by Jason Szep)

Appendix-II

Important Bilateral Agreements and MoUs Post 1990

1990: Agreement on Border Trade signed.

1999: Agreement on Science and Technology signed.

2001: Agreement on Bilateral Cultural Co-operation signed.

2003: Protocol on Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar signed.

- Establishment of the Joint Trade Committee signed.
- MoU on Cooperation in Communication, Information Technology and Services between Indian Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and Myanmar's Ministry of Communication, Post and Telegraphs signed.
- MoU between Human Resource Development Ministry of India and Education Ministry of Myanmar.

2004: MoU for setting up Entrepreneurship Development Centre at Yangon.

2005: MoU on Cooperation in the field of Railways signed.

- MoU on Cooperation in the Hydrocarbon sector signed.

2006: The following agreements were signed during Indian President A,P.J. Abdu Kalam's visits to Myanmar in March:

- Framework Agreement for Mutual Cooperation in the field of Remote Sensing signed on 9 March.
- MoU for Cooperation in Buddhist Studies between Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Myanmar's Ministry of Religious Affairs signed on 9 March.

- MoU for Cooperation in Petroleum Sector between Indian Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Myanmar's Ministry of Energy signed on 9 March.

2007: MoU for Establishing India Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills at Yangon signed.

- MoU Establishing India-Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of Information Technology Skills

2008: The following agreements were signed during the visit of Myanmar's vice Senior General Maung Aye to India from 2-5 April:

- Agreement and two Protocols of the Kaladan Multi Model Transit Transport Project.
- A Double Taxation Avoidance.

Four economic cooperation agreements were signed during the visit of Indian minister for Commerce and Power, Jairam Ramesh to Myanmar on 24 June

- Bilateral Investment Promotion Agreement to facilitate greater Indian Investment in Myanmar and vice Versa.
- A credit line agreement between the Exim Bank of India and the Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank for US\$64 million for financing three 230 kv transmission lines in Myanmar to be executed by the Power Grid Cooperation of India.
- A credit line agreement between the Exim Bank of India and the Myanmar Trade Bank for US\$ 20 million for financing the establishment of an aluminum conductor steel reinforced (ACSR) wire manufacturing facility to be used for expansion of the power distribution network in Myanmar.
- Agreement between the Unites Bank of India the Myanmar Economic Bank for providing Banking arrangement for implementation of the Border Trade

Agreement between two Governments that takes place at Moreh (in Manipur) at present.

- MoU signed between Myanmar's Hydroelectric Power Department and India's National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Ltd to build the 1200-megawatt Thamanthi Hydroelectric Power project and the 600- megawatt Shwezaye project in northwest Chin State of Myanmar on 16 September.

During the 3rd India-Myanmar Joint Trade Committee from October 14-15, the two countries agreed to:

- Convert the existing border trade at Moreh in Manipur and Zowkhathar in Mizoram into normal trade;
- Develop Avankhu in Nagaland as a third border trade point with Myanmar;
- Expand the list of commodities under Indo-Myanmar Border Trade Agreement from the existing 22 items to 40 items ;and
- Operationalise the banking arrangements.

Appendix III

TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN INDIA AND THE UNION OF BURMA

Rangoon, 7 July 1951

The President of India and the President of the Union of Burma being desirous of strengthening and developing the many ties that have bound the two countries for centuries and being urged by mutual recognition of the need for maintaining the peace and friendship that have always existed between the two States, have resolved to conclude this Treaty for the common benefit of their peoples and in furtherance of the objectives of their respective countries, and have, to this end, appointed as their Plenipotentiaries the following persons, namely,

- The President of India:
- His Excellency Dr. M.A. RAUF Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.
- The President of the Union of Burma.
- The Hon'ble SAO HKUN HKIO, K.S.M., Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Who, having examined each other's credentials and found them good and in due form, have agreed to and signed the following Articles:

Article I

The two States recognize and respect the independence and rights of each other.

Article II

There shall be everlasting peace and unalterable friendship between the two States who shall ever strive to strengthen and develop further the cordial relations existing between the peoples of the two countries.

Article III

The two States agree to continue diplomatic and consular relations with each other by means of representatives of either party in the territory of the other and agree that such representatives and their agreed staff shall have, on a reciprocal basis, such privileges and immunities as are customarily granted by recognized international principles.

Article IV

The two States agree that their representatives shall meet from time to time and as often as occasion requires to exchange views on matters of common interest and to consider ways and means for mutual co-operation in such matters.

Article V

The two States agree to start negotiations for the conclusion of agreements, on a reciprocal basis, relating to trade, customs, cultural relations, communications, extradition of criminals, immigration or repatriation of nationals of each country resident in the other, or of dual nationals of the two countries, and all other matters of common interest to the two countries.

Article VI

Any difference or dispute arising out of the interpretation or application of this Treaty or one or more of its Articles shall be settled by negotiations through the ordinary diplomatic channels and if no settlement is reached by that method within a reasonable time, the matter shall be referred to arbitration in such manner as may be mutually determined by a general or special arrangement between the two parties.

Article VII

The treaty shall be subject to ratification and shall come into force from the date of exchange of the instruments of ratification, which shall take place as soon as possible at Rangoon.

Article VIII

This Treaty shall continue in force for five years from the date of its coming into force and shall thereafter remain in force: Provided that after the termination of the said period of five years either party may give to the other party a notice of not less than six months intimating its intention to terminate the Treaty and on the expiry of the period of such notice the Treaty shall cease to be in force.

IN FATTH WHEREOF, the said Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty in the Hindi, Burmese and English languages (the English text shall prevail in case of conflict between the three texts) and have affixed hereto their seals.

DONE in duplicate in Rangoon on the seventh day of July 1951.

For the President of the Union of Burma:

(Sd.) S.H. HKIO. In the presence of- (Sd.) TUM SHETN.

For the President of India:

(Sd.) M.A. RAUF. In the presence of- (Sd.) K.M. KANNAMPTLTY.