



## India-Myanmar Relationship

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### Why in News

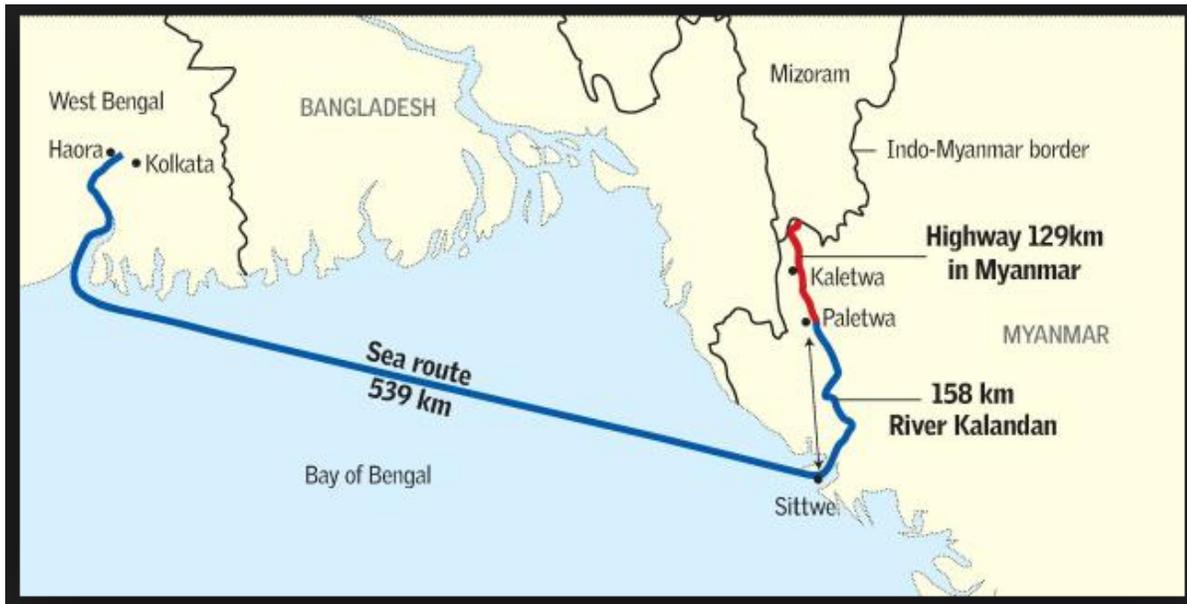
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A two-day visit by the Foreign Secretary of India and the Army Chief to Myanmar completed with greater engagement between **India and Myanmar**.

### Key Points

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- **Health and Pandemic:** As a part of India's **Medical or Drug Diplomacy** a package of **3,000 vials** of the **antiviral Remdesivir** given to assist Myanmar in its fight against the pandemic.  
India has shown willingness to prioritise Myanmar in sharing Covid -19 vaccines, when available.
- **Infrastructure and Connectivity:** Operationalisation of the crucial **Sittwe port** in Myanmar's Rakhine state **by March 2021** is committed.  
The two sides also discussed progress in the ongoing Indian-assisted infrastructure projects such as the **India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway** and the **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project**. The project will link **Kolkata to Sittwe in Myanmar** and then from **Myanmar's Kaladan river to India's north-east**.



- **Security:** India has been concerned over some militant groups like the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) from the North-East region taking shelter in Myanmar.
  - Myanmar handed over 22 cadres of Indian insurgent groups in May 2020.
  - The maintenance of security and stability in their border areas and mutual commitment not to allow their respective territories to be used for activities inimical to each other were re-stressed.
- **Transition to Democracy:** Myanmar successfully conducted the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **21<sup>st</sup> Century Panglong Peace Conference in Nay Pyi Taw.**
  - **The Union Peace Conference: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Panglong** is a continuing peace conference started in **2016**.
  - **Aim:** To have a stable political environment in Myanmar with peaceful transition into democracy.
  - **Outcome of 4<sup>th</sup> meeting:** The government of Myanmar and ten armed ethnic groups signed a framework agreement for the **National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)**.
  - **Indian Support:** India assured continued support in sharing experiences in constitutionalism and federalism to assist Myanmar in its democratic **transition**.
- **Rohingya Issues:** India came forward for support for ensuring safe, sustainable and speedy return of **Rohingya refugees** from refugees camps of Bangladesh. Building on the progress made under the **Rakhine State Development Programme (RSDP)**, India proposed to finalise projects under phase-III of the programme, including setting up of a **skills training centre** and **upgrading of agricultural mechanisation**.

- **Liaison Office:** With the formal inauguration of liaison office in Nay Pyi Taw, India has taken one more **significant step** towards establishing its **embassy** in Nay Pyi Taw.  
India has its embassy in **Yangon**, the former capital.
- **Other Highlights:**
  - A **bust of Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Mandalay Jail** is a symbolic gesture for a closer relationship and understanding mutual existence.
    - **Mandalay Jail Connection:** Between **1908 and 1914**, he spent 6 years in Mandalay Prison for defending the actions of revolutionaries Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki.
    - **Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki** had tried to assassinate the District Judge, Mr. Kingsford by throwing bombs at the carriage in which he was supposed to travel.
  - **Investment:** With investments of over USD 1.2 billion, Myanmar has the highest Indian investment in any country in South Asia.  
India's development cooperation in Myanmar is estimated at USD 1.4 billion.
- **Energy:** The two countries are also expanding partnership in the area of **energy cooperation**.  
Recently, India approved an investment of over USD 120 million in the Shwe Oil and Gas project.

## India-Myanmar

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- **India and Myanmar** have shared cultural roots and historical relations, apart from the strategic, economic, social and political ties.
- Myanmar is a **member of both Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, which is an organization of East Asian nations as well as **the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)** which bridges South and South-East Asia.
- Connectivity projects through Myanmar help India overcome its **Chicken-neck dilemma (Siliguri Corridor)**. Myanmar is also necessary for the **development of North-Eastern India**.
- Myanmar stands at the confluence of India's **Neighbourhood First** and **Act East Policy** and **India-Myanmar partnership** is at the heart of India's vision to create a connected and cooperative neighbourhood.
- Recently, **India and Myanmar** had signed **10 agreements with a focus on socio-economic development of Myanmar**, during Myanmar President U Win Myint's visit to India.
- Myanmar's growing closeness with China and the recent proposal of **China Myanmar Economic Corridor** is a cause of concern for India amidst growing **India-China tension**.

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