

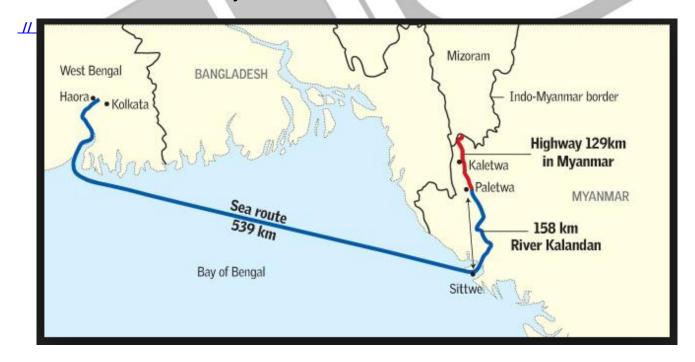
India-Myanmar Relationship

Why in News

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

- Health and Pandemic: As a part of India's <u>Medical or Drug Diplomacy</u> a package of 3,000 vials of the antiviral <u>Remdesivir</u> 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 restressed.
- Transition to Democracy: Myanmar successfully conducted the 4th meeting of the 21st Century Panglong Peace Conference in Nay Pyi Taw.
 - The Union Peace Conference: 21st 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 4th 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 <u>Rakhine State Development Programme</u>
 (<u>RSDP</u>), 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

- 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 <u>Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)</u>, which is an organization of East Asian nations as well as <u>the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)</u> 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 <u>Neighbourhood First</u> and <u>Act East Policy</u> and <u>India-Myanmar partnership</u> is at the heart of India's vision to create a connected and cooperative neighbourhood.
- Recently, India and Myanmar had signed <u>10 agreements with a focus on socio-economic development of Myanmar</u>, during Myanmar President U Win Myint's visit to India.

Myanmar's growing closeness with China and the recent proposal of <u>China Myanmar Economic</u>
 <u>Corridor</u> is a cause of concern for India amidst growing <u>India-China tension</u>.

Source IE

PDF Refernece URL: https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/india-myanmar-relationship

