



India-Myanmar Bilateral Relations: A Brief History of the Past and Present

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Abstract: India's bilateral relations with Myanmar, a neighboring country on India's eastern border, are very important. The former name of Myanmar was 'Burma' or 'Brahmadesh'; in ancient times the name of this region was 'Swarnabhumi' or 'Subarnabhumi,' which means 'Golden Land.' Every state gives priority to national interests in determining its foreign policy, and the relationship between India and Myanmar is no exception. Although the diplomatic and political relations of the two countries have been mentioned in official documents since 1948, in the real sense, social exchanges and cultural contacts between the two countries are ages old. For thousands of years, this relationship has been strengthened. Buddhist philosophy has deepened the relationship between the two countries. Both countries fell victim to British imperialism and were long exploited, oppressed, and made miserable by the colonial powers. Both countries gained independence after a long struggle. The two newly independent countries cooperated with each other in the interests of rapid poverty alleviation, nation building, infrastructure development, and internal development. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, and U Nu, the first Prime Minister of Myanmar, had a special contribution in establishing relations between the two countries. After independence, diplomatic, political, commercial, military, and strategic relations were officially established between the two countries. But over time, the relationship between the two countries has changed. The main reason for this is the political instability in Myanmar. So sometimes there was the rule of a democratic government in this country, and sometimes military rule prevailed for a long time. In such a situation, the relationship between a democratic government like India and the military-ruled government of Myanmar has been strained. Apart from this, the smuggling of drugs in the areas adjacent to the border between the

two countries, the scourge of separatist groups, the influence of one of the biggest powers, China, India's policy towards Southeast Asia, etc., have made the relationship between the two countries a complex equation.

Keywords: India-Myanmar bilateral relations, cooperation, politics, diplomacy, cultural ties, military rule, influence of China,



Introduction: In the modern state system, today no state can exist in isolation or alone. We know that no state is self-sufficient, so which state establishes relations with many states and institutions to meet the needs of the people and achieve national goals? Also, the relationship between two countries affects each other. In the context of such complex international politics, the state units, guided by their respective interests, are bound to each other by bilateral or multilateral relations. Simply put, the policy by which a state establishes relations with many other states is called foreign policy. Therefore, all small, medium, and large power states carefully implement their foreign policy. 'National interest' is the main priority of any state in adopting its foreign policy. National interests vary from state to state, such as internal development of the state, development of human resources, protection of state sovereignty, progress of the economy and trade, raising the status of the state on the international stage, etc. A country's foreign policy is influenced by many factors, such as its geographical location, historical heritage, political culture and ideology, economic power, military power, etc. Every country has its own foreign policy. For example, the main principles of India's foreign policy are non-alignment, opposition to colonialism, opposition to all forms of aggression and terrorism, disarmament, respect for international law, and peaceful coexistence with all countries.

Historical context: Before discussing the bilateral relations between India and Myanmar, it is necessary to mention some points about these two countries. Both countries are geographically contiguous to each other. Myanmar is a country on the eastern border of India. India shares borders with Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Manipur. India and Myanmar share a nearly 1,600 km long land border and a vast maritime boundary stretching from the Bay of Bengal to the Andaman Sea. The two countries are bound together by religious, cultural, social, and economic ties. According to Hindu mythology, this place is the abode of Lord Brahma. In Indian Vedic literature, this region is referred to as 'Suvarnabhumi' or 'Swarnabhumi. Buddhism and philosophy have been the mainstay of the relationship between India and Myanmar. According to historical evidence, Buddhism spread from India to Myanmar. The majority of the people in Myanmar are Buddhists. For the Buddhists, the Bodhgaya of Bihar is a holy place; at this place, Lord Gautama Buddha had attained Nirvana. India has a close relationship with the people of Myanmar. In ancient times, India had good relations with the Maurya Empire, the Gupta Empire, the Chola Empire, the Pyu Dynasty of Myanmar, and the Mon Dynasty. After all, Indian culture has had a special influence on the language, culture, and customs of Myanmar since ancient times. Later, during the British rule, the British incorporated Myanmar into British India in 1885. The British called it Burma. In 1937, to counter the anti-imperialist movement, the British divided Myanmar from British India. Both the countries got freedom from the British colonial rule after a long struggle. Official relations between the two countries began at the moment of independence. But the relationship between the two countries has gone through several ups and downs due to political instability and military coups in Myanmar. At the same time, the military government has made various administrative changes in this country, changed the constitution, changed the name of the country, and moved the capital. Until 1988, the country was known as Burma, but on June 18, 1989, the military government renamed it the Union of Myanmar. The capital was moved from Yangon to Nay Pyi Taw in 2005. Myanmar currently has a parliament called Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, a bicameral legislature consisting of a 224-seat upper house called Amyothu Hluttaw and a 440-seat lower house called Pyithu Hluttaw.

A Brief Look at India and Myanmar's Foreign Policy Stances: India has some ambitious goals in establishing relations with Myanmar. Firstly, from time immemorial, co-location has resulted in a kind of interaction through religious, cultural, spiritual, and ethnic exchanges. Despite the demarcation of the border between the two countries, a large number of Indians live in Myanmar. But in a multi-ethnic country like Myanmar, the number of Indians is less than the population of other nations. It is the moral duty of the government to protect the interests of NRIs in such a country. Secondly, for the economic development, livelihood security, creation of new jobs, and overall development of the tribal-dominated states of India's Northeast, it is important to develop good relations with Myanmar. Thirdly, drugs are smuggled into India from Myanmar through this region. Separatist groups that perpetrate terrorism in the northeast have bases in Myanmar, and Myanmar's assistance is needed to stop these illegal activities and suppress extremist groups. Fourth, India will benefit from economic and trade relations with a country like Myanmar, which is a populous country rich in natural resources. Myanmar's mineral resources, including natural gas, will be able to meet India's energy needs to a great extent. Fifth, Myanmar is not only India's eastern neighbor but also the gateway to Southeast Asia for India. There is a need to develop a better understanding



with Myanmar in terms of increasing contacts with the countries of Southeast Asia or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Similarly, India's friendship with Myanmar is also very important. Myanmar desires friendly relations with its two large neighbors, India and China, while safeguarding its sovereignty. Secondly, India is the world's largest democracy as well as an emerging economy. India is not only a military power but also a global power. It is good for Myanmar to have good relations with such an important country. Thirdly, Myanmar is a developing country and needs foreign assistance for its overall development. Fourth, Myanmar's economic development will be possible if it is able to develop agricultural products, forest resources, mineral resources, exports, and tourism in a large market like India. The bilateral relations between the two countries need to be discussed periodically, keeping in mind their national interests and common interests.

Political background and dynamics of political-diplomatic relations: The two countries that attained independence around the same time (India on 15 August 1947 and Myanmar on 4 January 1948) faced similar problems. They expressed interest in developing cooperative relations with each other to get rid of problems like poor economy, poverty, and illiteracy created by long colonial rule. India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of India's foreign policy, believed in the principle of peace and cooperative coexistence with neighboring countries. He wrote India's foreign policy on the basis of independent, non-aligned ideology, keeping India away from the polarizing politics of the world at that time. During the tenure of U Nu, the first Prime Minister of Myanmar, many similarities have been observed between the foreign policy of Myanmar and the foreign policy of India. Both countries supported the non-aligned movement, opposed imperialism, supported the national liberation movements of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and took various steps to build full cooperation between themselves to maintain peace in the regional field. In 1950, India provided financial assistance to Myanmar for its internal development. 'The Treaty of Peace and Friendship' was signed on July 7, 1951. According to the agreement, the two countries will respect each other's sovereignty, pay special attention to political-diplomatic relations, and build good relations between the peoples of the two countries. Any problem between the two countries should be resolved through dialogue. Undoubtedly, this agreement is a milestone in the relations between India and Myanmar. The personal friendship of the heads of state of the two countries kept the relations of the two countries flowing. In 1954, Pandit Nehru visited Myanmar during the Colombo Conference. U Nu visited India many times during his tenure as Nehru's guest. Meanwhile, in 1953, when China deployed its army^[4] on the land of Myanmar, India strongly criticized China's aggressive policy in the United Nations. After all, during this period, the leadership of the two countries believed in democratic ideology, which led to closer relations between the two countries. However, this relationship did not last long; in the course of time, when the army chief Ne Win seized power, India-Myanmar relations fluctuated.

Military rule in Myanmar: In 1958, Prime Minister U Nu appointed Ne Win, a trusted military commander, as acting head of government for special reasons. He remained in this role until 1960. Prime Minister U Nu's decision was later regarded as a fatal mistake. General Ne Win established military rule in 1962, removing the democratically elected government from power. With this sudden change of regime in Myanmar, a new chapter began in the relations between the two countries. So far, the relationship between the two democratic countries has been transformed into a relationship between a democratic government and a military government. Bilateral relations between India and Myanmar have deteriorated since then. "Believing in nationalist and socialist ideology, Ne Win established a political party called the 'Burma Socialist Programme Party' to dominate the country's political arena in accordance with his own policy of 'The Burmese Way to Socialism' with the aim of establishing socialism in the country. They adopted the policy of nationalization in the economic and industrial sectors. A large number of Indian people and businesses suffered economically as a result of the military regime's policy of Ne Win. Indian companies investing in Myanmar were taken over by the Myanmar government without any compensation. A large number of Indians were forced to leave Myanmar after losing their livelihood and being subjected to discriminatory treatment by the military government. According to a report, about 2 lakh Indians came to India from Myanmar between 1962 and 1965. This behavior of the military government was criticized by Prime Minister Nehru, who could not accept the military government of Myanmar during his lifetime. When Nehru died in 1964 due to old age, Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Prime Minister of India. He tried to improve relations with Myanmar in the interest of India, but he could not do much in his short tenure.



Mrs. Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister of India in 1966. Mrs. Gandhi's period saw the resumption of stable relations between the two countries. Mrs. Gandhi built a pragmatic relationship with Myanmar, giving importance to India's interests. The Land Boundary De-limitation Treaty was signed in 1967 to resolve the boundary dispute between the two countries. In 1969, Mrs. Gandhi visited Myanmar to discuss various important issues. The India-Myanmar trade agreement was concluded in 1970 to enhance trade exchanges between the two countries. The head of state visited India more than 11 times during his reign. The maritime boundary between the two countries was demarcated in 1986 through the Delimitation of Maritime Boundary Agreement. At this time, the government faced public anger due to the long-standing misrule of the military in Myanmar. An increase in unemployment, a decrease in employment, inflation, etc. causes dissatisfaction among the people. On 8 August 1988, students and youth staged a massive protest against the government. This movement is known as the 8888 movement. Ne Win deployed the military to quell the unrest. The military forces clashed with the agitating people, a large number of people lost their lives, and a chaotic situation was created throughout the country. Eventually, unable to resist the movement, Ne Win was forced to step down from power.

Period of Political Instability: On September 18, 1988, the army chief Saw Maung seized power. This government formed a board called the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). The council governs Myanmar. It is also known by the junta government. It took more brutal measures to suppress the long-standing democratic movement. But instead of suppressing the Democrats, the movement became more widespread. Democracies, including India, supported this spontaneous movement of the people of Myanmar. The SLORC was finally forced to organize elections by the strong demand of democracy lovers. In 1990, multi-party general elections were held in a democratic way for the first time since 1960. The election resulted in a landslide victory for the National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Tin U and Aung San Suu Kyi. But the military regime refused to hand over power. NLD candidates were arrested and imprisoned. Party leader Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest, thus creating political unrest throughout the country. The international community condemned the incident. In 1991, Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, prompting calls for his release. In 1992, India's Foreign Minister Natwar Singh said that India would break off all diplomatic relations with Burma if the current government prevented the elected representatives of the people from functioning. After all, India-Myanmar relations went through a very bad phase during this period. Meanwhile, army chief Saw Maung lost the credibility of other army officers. Saw Maung was removed from power, replaced by the experienced military commander Than Shwe.^[7]

Strengthening bilateral ties: India faced some problems in the 1990s. India's relationship with Myanmar's military rulers deteriorated as the Indian government supported Myanmar's democratic movement for a long time. On the other hand, China's growing proximity to Myanmar's military rulers is a security concern for India. Separatist groups became active again in the northeastern states. At this time, P. V. Narasimha Rao's government adopted the Look East Policy to develop political, economic, and trade relations with Southeast Asian countries. Therefore, due to the special geographical location of Myanmar, it becomes very important to normalize relations with Myanmar. Than Shwe's junta also did not want to maintain hostile relations with India for a long time. Saying goodbye to the mutually disappointing past, the two governments emphasized the development of relations. The then Indian government adopted a special policy called 'a two-track policy,' considering domestic politics and national interests. "On the one hand, it supports Myanmar's democratic movement while upholding India's democratic values and ideals. On the other hand, the junta established good relations with the government, giving importance to national interests. Diplomatic talks between the two countries have been held regularly since 1992. In 1993, India's Foreign Secretary J. N. Dikshit went to Yangon and raised India's concerns in the diplomatic talks. In response, Myanmar's Assistant Foreign Minister U Nyunt came to India in 1994 and assured assistance on issues of concern to India. Myanmar's^[8] government has said it will not allow any foreign forces to establish military bases on its soil. Myanmar will provide all possible assistance to India in countering extremist groups in the border areas. The focus will be on increasing bilateral trade. In 1995, the military forces of India and Myanmar launched a joint operation to suppress the separatists in the northeastern states. This operation is known as Operation Golden Bird.

In 1997, the SLORC was removed by the Than Shwe Governing Council to facilitate military rule in the country. Instead, a new governing body, the State Peace and Development Council, was formed. He served as chairman of the board. Since the tenure of Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1998, a new dimension of India-Myanmar relations has emerged. Diplomatic talks between



the two countries are taking place on a regular basis. The visits of top leaders between the two countries have increased. In fact, the Look East Policy can be seen being implemented from the Vajpayee tenure. A number of agreements were signed between India and Myanmar in the areas of trade, industry, infrastructure and services, science and technology, and connectivity. In 2004, SPDC chairman Than Shwe came to India. This is the first visit by a Myanmar head of state to India since 1980. Than Shwe's visit was very important for both countries. The two governments signed several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) on innovation, energy, telecommunications, banking services, and security. In 2006, the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, visited Myanmar. By 2007, students and young people, monks, and men and women from all walks of life protested against the government in Myanmar, protesting against starvation, food shortages, poverty, and government corruption. "The media called the movement 'Saffron Uprising.' The military government violently tried to suppress the movement. The Security Council proposed economic sanctions against the Myanmar government for human rights violations and atrocities against its citizens, but China and Russia vetoed the proposal.

In 2008, Myanmar was affected by Cyclone Nargis and flooding of the Irrawaddy River. According to official data, about 84,500 people were killed and 53,800 people were injured. A lot of resources are lost; according to the UN report, about 2.4 million people are directly and indirectly affected. The Government of India is sending relief material on an emergency basis. This step of India was appreciated by many countries, including the United Nations. Myanmar held elections in 2011, which were won unilaterally by the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party, as the NLD did not participate in the elections. The newly elected Thein Sein's government made some administrative reforms. The military junta was banned. With regard to international politics, the previous government moved away from the policy of isolation and began to establish relations with different countries. He expressed special interest in maintaining good relations with India. Thein Sein came to India in October 2011. Narendra Modi was elected Prime Minister of India in 2014. The Narendra Modi government has adopted an 'Act East Policy.' Initiatives were taken to maintain good relations with Myanmar in terms of economic, commercial, cultural, and military security. Investment is being made in infrastructure to make communication with Myanmar easier and faster.

Aung San Suu Kyi and the restoration of democratic government in Myanmar: In 2015, the NLD, led by Suu Kyi, won the election with overwhelming popular support. Suu Kyi was elected as State Councilor (the path that leads to Prime Minister in India). The whole world, including India, congratulates Suu Kyi. She took steps to build good relations with India. However, it needs to be mentioned that Suu Kyi's personal relationship with India is a long-standing one. In 1960, Suu Kyi's mother was appointed as Myanmar's ambassador to India. She came to India at a very young age and was fascinated by the culture, customs, and traditions of India. Politically, she believed in the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. In 1993, she was awarded the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding by the Government of India in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the movement for the protection of human rights, which had resisted the military government's misrule in Myanmar for a long time. Speaking about her relationship with India, Suu Kyi said that she feels like a half citizen of India, a citizen of love and respect. These emotional feelings of Suu Kyi gave moral strength to the relations between the two countries during her rule. In her various speeches, she has appealed for India's cooperation in the democratization and development of Myanmar. The Indian government has responded positively to the request. Meanwhile, from 2020 to 2021, the whole world was hit by an unexpected epidemic. Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS-CoV-2), also known as COVID-19, is a respiratory disease caused by a virus. In such a difficult situation, the Modi government immediately provided masks, medicines, test kits, and other medical supplies to the people of Myanmar. Under the Vaccine Maitri policy, the Government of India provides 15 lakh vaccines to Myanmar free of cost and about 20 lakh vaccines at a minimum price. The Government of India is committed to providing all possible assistance in this hour of need.

Participation and cooperation in regional organizations: India-Myanmar relations have not been limited to the bilateral sphere. Both countries have joined various regional organizations for regional peacekeeping, cultural exchanges, security, and economic and trade development. Formed in 1967, ASEAN has played an important role in the overall development of Southeast Asian countries, with Myanmar joining the organization in 1997. Myanmar is the only country with which India shares a border. ASEAN is a key pillar of India's Act East Policy. In 1987, former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi proposed to the government of Myanmar to join the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Although



the military government at the time refused to join the organization, Myanmar joined as an observer in 2008 with the support of India. The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was established in 1997. India and Myanmar are members of this to promote free trade between the countries along the Bay of Bengal. In 2000, India, Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam launched the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation to promote cultural, educational, communication, and tourism exchanges among themselves. India and Myanmar are politically, diplomatically, and commercially engaged in multilateral relations through these institutions.

Infrastructure Development: India has invested in various infrastructure projects in Myanmar to enhance connectivity between the two countries. Some of the important projects include the 160 km Tamu-Kalewa-Kalay road. Later, the project was expanded to widen the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. 80 km long Rhi-Tiddim road. The Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project has been developed to boost economic activity in the Northeastern Region of India and provide seamless connectivity to the Northeastern Region, excluding the Siliguri Corridor, on an emergency basis. The Indian government has also provided financial assistance to Myanmar for railway connectivity, hydropower projects, and construction of children's hospitals and schools. Indian companies such as Tata Motors and Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GHIL) have invested in Myanmar. India undertakes various training initiatives for the development of technical education and technology in Myanmar.

Economic and trade relations: The volume of trade between the two countries has steadily increased, but it is not as expected. In 1994, two agreements were signed to promote trade between the two countries: i. Agreement on Border Trade and ii. Agreement on Cooperation between Civilian Border Authorities. According to an Indian government report, the trade between the two countries was worth US \$12.4 million in 1980-81. This increased to US \$1.49 billion in 2009-2010. It crossed US\$2 billion in 2014-15. According to the data of the financial year 2014-2015, Myanmar exports about 1.2 billion worth of goods to India and imports about 77 million worth of goods from India. Most of the products imported from Myanmar are agricultural products, cereals, pulses, forest products, etc. India's exports to Myanmar include industrial products, cement, steel, engineering products, pharmaceutical products, etc. Border market initiatives are taken for economic development in the border areas. The Moreh-Tamu border market and the Zokhawthar-Rhi border market have been built. The completion of the proposed tri-national gas pipeline project between India and Myanmar and Bangladesh in 1997 will further enhance trade relations between the two countries.

Cultural connection: India and Myanmar have been culturally closely linked for centuries. The two countries are determined to maintain cordial relations in the present as in the past. Cultural, spiritual, religious, educational, and sporting exchanges, as well as people-to-people exchanges, take place between the two neighbors. A special agreement was signed in 2012 to enhance cultural exchanges between the two countries. A large number of students from Myanmar come for higher education at various universities in India. Since 1997, various cultural troupes from India have been regularly participating in the events organized in Myanmar. Similarly, various cultural groups of Myanmar came to India. Both countries participated in the events organized by SAARC. In 2009, the Myanmar band Emperor performed at the South Asian Bands Festival in India. Special events were held in Yangon and Mandalay to mark the 150th birth anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore. The famous Ananda Temple was destroyed by an earthquake in 2010, damaging Buddhist monasteries in Yangon. The Government of India provides financial assistance for its reconstruction.

Security issues: India has not had a good understanding with the military government of Myanmar for a long time. By 2000, there was a shift in India's Myanmar policy. Talks between the military officers of the two countries began, with Indian Army Chief V.P. Malik visiting Myanmar. In response, Myanmar's army chief Maung Aye visited India. Both countries are determined to crack down on extremist groups that are creating chaos in the border areas. India equips the Myanmar military with a range of military equipment. It has been training Myanmar military officers since 2007. Several agreements were signed between the two countries. For example, the issue of countering terrorist activities in 2011, for overall development of border areas in 2012, etc. On June 9, 2015, the Myanmar government helped India conduct Operation Sunrise to crack down on extremists in the border areas of Myanmar. The two countries held a joint military exercise, IMBAX-2017, in 2017. The two navies enjoyed good relations, with Admiral Arun Prakash, the Chief of the Indian Navy, visiting Myanmar in 2003 and



2006. In 2005, the navies of the two countries held a joint naval exercise followed by regular exercises in the Bay of Bengal. IMNEX-2019 was held in 2019. In order to strengthen the Navy, the Myanmar government purchased INS-Sindhu VIR submarines from India at a cost of US \$200 million.

China's role in India-Myanmar relations comes up effortlessly. Both countries are victims of China's aggressive and expansionist policies. India and China have a long-standing border dispute and have fought several wars in the past. At present, China has become a very challenging subject for India since 2016-17. On the other hand, China's closeness to the military government of Myanmar has been long-standing, with China supporting the military coup in Myanmar every time it took place. Myanmar buys a lot of military equipment from China, and trade between the two countries is also good. China is Myanmar's largest trading partner, with trade between the two countries totaling more than \$6 billion. China has invested in various development projects in Myanmar. The Chinese government has taken the initiative to create the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone for economic growth between the two countries. In fact, the main reason for China's initiative is to bypass the Malabar Strait and enter the Bay of Bengal or the Indian Ocean directly through Myanmar. The Chinese project is a major security concern for India.

Conclusion: India-Myanmar bilateral relations have never been on the same track. Relations between the two countries have changed. It can be noted that when there is a democratic government in Myanmar, relations between the two countries have improved. Relations between the two countries have deteriorated since the military takeover. India wants a democratic government in Myanmar. But the relationship between the two countries has not been strong due to the presence of the military in power for a long time. The new constitution of 2008 gave constitutional recognition to the presence of the military in governance. In Myanmar, 25 percent of seats are reserved for representatives of the military in the two houses of parliament. Therefore, it is not fair to assume that even if a democratic government is formed in Myanmar, that government will be free from the influence of the military. Although the policy adopted in the form of idealistic policy from independence to 1962 improved the relations between the two countries, later that policy did not bring benefits to India. Relations between the two countries have long been strained. In the 1990s, India changed its foreign policy and decided to have a pragmatic relationship with Myanmar. As a result, relations between the two countries deteriorated. For the development of relations between the two countries, it is necessary to give importance to trade, culture, tourism, etc.

In the end, Suu Kyi was re-elected in the November 2020 election with overwhelming popular support. But the military government dismissed the victory as undemocratic. On 1 February 2021, a military coup led by army chief Min Aung Hlaing took place, declaring a year-long state of emergency across the country. Suu Kyi was removed from power, and the State Councilor abolished the path and replaced it with a new governing body called the State Administration Council. The army chief himself took over as chairman of the council. Myanmar is once again in a state of chaos. The people of Myanmar took to the streets to defend their democratic rights, and the military government treated them with brutal leniency. India, the US, and other democracies have strongly condemned the incident. But other countries, including the United States and Britain, which call themselves defenders of democracy, have not done much beyond their national interests. The U.S. has proposed sanctions on the U.N. Security Council's military, but they have been blocked by Russia and China. The Indian government did not openly oppose the military government of Myanmar even though it could not wholeheartedly accept it, keeping its larger interests in mind. In this regard, the Government of India is following its earlier two-track policy. In August 2021, Myanmar's army chief extended the period of military rule until 2023 and subsequently continued to extend the period of military rule progressively. The future direction of relations between the two countries will be determined.

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