

The Resurgent India

A Monthly National Review

March 2019



“Let us all work for the Greatness of India.”
- *The Mother*

Year 9

Issue 12

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SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

(Full of Promise and Joyful Surprises)

Botanical name: Gaillardia Pulchella

Common name: Indian blanket, Blanket flower, Fire-wheels

Year 9

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CONTENTS

Post-Pulwama Developments in Kashmir.....	7
India-Myanmar Relations and the Third Surgical Strike	13
The Third Surgical Strike: Active Terror Groups and Stakes Involved.....	13
A Fraught History	20
Post-2015: How India and Myanmar Divided and Weakened the NSCN-K	27

A Declaration

We do not fight against any creed, any religion.

We do not fight against any form of government.

We do not fight against any social class.

We do not fight against any nation or civilisation.

We are fighting division, unconsciousness, ignorance, inertia and falsehood.

We are endeavouring to establish upon earth union, knowledge, consciousness, Truth, and we fight whatever opposes the advent of this new creation of Light, Peace, Truth and Love.

— The Mother

(Collected works of the Mother, Vol. 13, pp. 124-25)

POST-PULWAMA DEVELOPMENTS IN KASHMIR

Since the end of February, the aftermath of the Pulwama attack and the Balakot strikes by India in Pakistan has seen yet another phase of major changes in Kashmir. The government has banned the Jama'at-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir (JIJK) and the separatist militant group, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), arresting its chief and the leader of original insurgency in Kashmir, Yasin Malik, while the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has re-started a major crackdown on money trails of separatists and their links to cases of terror funding, including complicity with Pakistan's ISI.

The actions against JIJK and JKLF open a Pandora's box on why Yasin Malik – one of the founders of JKLF in India – has been allowed to deceive the successive Indian governments for the past 30 years. The JKLF was founded by Pakistani-national Amanullah Khan and Kashmir-based Maqbool Butt in 1977 and operated through its branches in various regions, such as UK, Middle East and Europe. Its branch was opened in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) in 1982 and in Kashmir in 1987. While Butt – executed by India in 1984 – was the original motivator of insurgency in Kashmir, it was truly in 1987 that an unprecedented rise in terrorism and infiltration from Pakistan saw Kashmir become a severe problem for India.

The period from 1987 to 1994 was when Kashmir terrorism was at its peak – the worst phase in Kashmir's recent history – and when Pakistan was implementing its policy to 'bleed India by a thousand cuts' with full impunity. Kashmiri youth would cross over to PoK to receive arms and terror training from Pakistan's ISI, even as Pakistan's own terrorist organizations became active in the region, colluding with local Kashmiri

terrorists. It was during this period that the infamous massacre, mass exodus and genocide of Kashmiri Pandits was carried out by the terrorists and the community was almost entirely wiped out. This was also the phase when the JKLF was founded in Kashmir – under Yasin Malik – and was at its zenith.

Moderate intellectual hawks of India – as they fumble to explain the 1987-1994 phase – unequivocally state that the ‘militancy’ started in 1987 because of the rigging of the 1987 elections by the Congress-National Conference (NC) combine. In 1987 elections, when it became apparent that the three-time MLA, Mohammad Yusuf Shah, was on the way to a landslide victory, the Congress-NC rigged the elections, declared their coalition as the winner, and, imprisoned Yusuf Shah and his then election assistant, Yasin Malik. When they came out of the jail, Mohammad Yusuf Shah crossed over to Pakistan and became Syed Salahuddin, who the world today knows as the chief of the United Jihad Council (UJC) and the chief of Hizbul Mujahideen, while Yasin Malik founded the Kashmir chapter of JKLF. Malik and JKLF shot to fame in 1987 itself when they abducted the then Indian minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed’s daughter – and Mehbooba Mufti’s sister – Rubbaiya Sayeed and secured the release of five dreaded Pakistani terrorists in exchange for her. The terrorists were released despite NC’s Farooq Abdullah’s vehement opposition.

These developments triggered the worst phase of insurgency in Kashmir. However, it is a mistake to suggest that the rigging of elections had anything to do with insurgency. Malik himself, in a later interview, said that radicalization was occurring much before 1987. The real reason for insurgency was the rich flow of arms and money from Pakistan and a complete, fanatical takeover by the jihadi cause of Islam. So when a rigged election

is blamed for something as serious as a peak phase of terrorism, the Indians themselves end up whitewashing Pakistan and Islamic fanaticism. During this phase, Yasin Malik himself – as confessed, laughingly and remorselessly, in a later BBC interview – presided over the rape and brutal murder of a Kashmiri Pandit nurse, the murders of IAF officers and massacre and exodus of Pandits in general. In other words, the man – as the face of JKLF – was the heart and face of the worst phase of terrorism in Kashmir. He was subsequently jailed and was given bail in 1994. In 1994, he and JKLF's Kashmir unit declared an 'indefinite ceasefire'.

It has been 25 years since he was granted bail and nearly 30 years since he presided over the worst phase of terrorism in Kashmir and engineered the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits. Yet, it is only now, after the Pulwama attack of 2019 that the case against him is moving in the Indian judiciary and he has been re-arrested and sent to a Jammu jail. At the very least and to put it very mildly, Malik's case, deeply interlinked with the Kashmir problem itself, shows how the Indian political and judicial system is completely rigged and what a farce it has played out for the nation.

It is worth questioning how a first class terrorist accused of rape and genocide of Kashmiri Pandits and murders of Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel during the 1990s has been allowed to roam freely and acquire such a high level political influence and how he has been meeting politicians and prime ministers around the world, including Manmohan Singh and Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India.

The fact that during the last several years, he shared a stage with 26/11 mastermind, Hafiz Saeed, in Pakistan, to condole the death of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru, thanked Pakistan's

information minister openly in 2005 for running a jihadi camp training 3500 militants for Kashmir, has held multiple rallies in Pakistan and has refused to accept Kashmiris as Indians even as he accepts money from Pakistan, has been one of the most glaring blunders of Indian policy in Kashmir. Yet, not only have Malik and JKLF not been brought to task, but have been openly eulogized by the Indian establishment.

After his release from arrest in 1994 and his pledge to disband the militant activities of JKLF, the Indian establishment took at face value his proclamations of being a ‘Gandhian’ peace activist. Not only this, but he was openly lionized among India’s so-called ‘intellectual’ communities, visiting New Delhi like a VIP, shaking hands with former PM Manmohan Singh and giving keynote addresses and speeches at India International Centre (IIC). During his “keynote” address at IIC in 2010 among a gathering of ‘intellectuals’ on the issue of Kashmir, it happened that a group of agitated Indian youth disrupted his speech and called him out for being a terrorist, a rapist and a murderer, reminding him of his crimes, for which he has been out on bail since 1994. In line with political thinking in India during that time, the youth were arrested and grilled by Delhi Police for disrupting Malik’s address, while terrorism was openly intellectualized.

Malik, Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq – the three old terrorists who have formed the Joint Resistance League (JRL) – were, till now, given police protection and security and wielded unprecedented political influence in Srinagar circles. When Mirwaiz Farooq was recently summoned for questioning by the NIA to New Delhi, the whole of Kashmir erupted in protests, while Geelani has been openly and closely associated with Jama’at-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir (JIJK). The Hizbul

Mujahideen proclaimed itself as a military arm of JJK, while the JJK has been banned thrice by the Indian government since 1970s – by Indira Gandhi, V.P Singh and now Modi – for engaging in secessionist activity.

Yet, all these terrorists and organizations operate like VIPs in Kashmir, with mainstream political parties like NC, PDP and Congress openly supporting them, while previous Indian governments at the centre enacted the sophisticated charade of having a ‘dialogue’ and ‘negotiations’ with them to bring ‘peace’ to Kashmir. In retrospect, the whole thing comes across as one of the biggest political scams that has duped the nation. Successive Indian governments are to be squarely blamed that today Kashmiri terrorists have been able to whitewash themselves as activists and are wielding political influence instead of serving time in jail for their seditious crimes.

Given this background, the recent arrest of Yasin Malik and the banning of JJK and JKLF seems to be a mild, incomplete and belated response. The fact that these steps are coming after five years – with the JKLF being banned after full 30 years, despite its and its founder’s, Yasin Malik’s clear complicity in terrorism – brings a keen sense of what could have been if the government had taken a consistently strong stand in Kashmir.

Even now, none of these measures would be fruitful unless the government goes beyond its constitutional moorings and brings in some big policy changes in Kashmir that could result in a permanent and unassailable assertion of India’s complete sovereignty in the region – that is, it must fulfill its promise of abrogating, if not Article 370, then at least the Presidential Order of 1954, which has restricted citizens from other Indian states from having equal rights in Kashmir.

While the government has, over the last five years, made substantial headway in stripping the veneer of false compromises and imagined reconciliation with terrorists and Pakistani proxies, the gaps are also becoming more visible and there is a clear sense that a lot more should have been done. The banning of JJK after the Pulwama attack was a belated action. And this is not even the first time that JJK is being banned. It was first banned by Sheikh Abdullah in 1975 and second time by Governor Jagmohan in 1993, both times for a limited number of years. This time the ban is for five years.

The recent government actions in Kashmir are piecemeal at best and nowhere near as strong as they should have been. They are also not new or extraordinary and, in fact, come nearly five years late, during which Malik and others have been roaming free. While the Modi government has had considerable military successes in Kashmir and has shown a firm hand, yet, the lack of sustained pressure and permanent changes, is being felt, since there was a lull during 2017-18, when the government decided to appoint an interlocuter. It is only now that the focus has been brought back to a clean resolution of terrorism in Kashmir. Though the Balakot strikes and India's response to Pakistan at both military and political levels have opened an entirely new chapter in Indo-Pak ties in which India is setting the terms, it needs to be accompanied by a radical and consistent and persistent overhaul in Kashmir.

INDIA-MYANMAR RELATIONS AND THE THIRD SURGICAL STRIKE

India's eastern border, which it shares with Myanmar, has recently witnessed a 'third surgical strike' conducted jointly by Indo-Myanmar armies across the eastern border, between February 17th and March 2nd. The strikes are unprecedented since they signify the mounting strength of Indo-Myanmar joint efforts to wipe out terrorism on the eastern border, and, are a culmination of the efforts undertaken by both sides, especially by India, since 2015, to improve the defence relationship between the two countries.

THE THIRD SURGICAL STRIKE: ACTIVE TERROR GROUPS AND STAKES INVOLVED

The third surgical strike was jointly conducted by the armies of India and Myanmar to attack the Arakan Army (AA), which is trained by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Myanmar. It is an anti-Myanmar terrorist organization and poses more of a threat to Myanmar than to India. However, during the same operations, anti-India outfit, National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K) was also targeted by both the armies. All the terror outfits on the Indo-Myanmar border and within the border areas of Myanmar – both anti-India and anti-Myanmar – operate mainly in the Taga region of Sagaing Autonomous Regional Council in Myanmar, bordering its Chin and Kachin states and along the same line as the country's restive Rohingya-conflicted Rakhine area.

Source: Joshua Project

Most of the military of Myanmar has been deployed to tackle the security challenges in the Rakhine state, arising out of the Rohingya Muslim terror activities of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), besides the Kachin state, whose KIA trains a separate Buddhist terror outfit Arakan Army (AA) to attack Myanmar's sovereignty and demand independence. The AA headquarters are located at Laiza, within the Kachin state, and close to sensitive India-Myanmar-China trijunction. However, the AA has formidable presence all along the Chin and Rakhine states as well and have been demanding independence from Myanmar.

Even though AA is an anti-Myanmar outfit, the intensification of AA insurgency AA's movement from Kachin to Rakhine threatens India's infrastructural projects in the Rakhine region, besides posing a problem of influx of refugees into India in the event of conflict between AA and Myanmar army. In 2018, a large group of 1,484 people from Myanmar landed in Mizoram. While most of them have returned to their homes, around 500 Myanmar citizens can still be found in the Mizoram border villages, where AA has managed to garner local sympathy for its cause (Bhattacharya 2019).

Besides these developments in anti-Myanmar terrorism that India has to, increasingly, contend with, India's main concern remains the anti-India Naga terror groups operating from Myanmar. Anti-India terror groups – such as NSCN-K, United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and their associates – are mainly concentrated in the Taga division of the Sagaing autonomous region. The region is characterized by poor, rocky terrain and lack of roads or transport connectivity as well as minimal

presence of Myanmar army.

There have been times in the last few years when Myanmar army would – at India’s behest – occupy the terror outposts in the Taga division, resulting in a dispersion of terrorists, but because of the need to tackle its own anti-Myanmar insurgents in other areas, it has never been able to deploy permanent military resources in the Sagaing region, thus allowing anti-India outfits to operate freely. Thus, once the Myanmar army would withdraw after temporary occupation of Sagaing bases, these terror outfits would return and continue their activities along the nearly 1680 km border that India shares with Myanmar. Sagaing has, thus, become a fertile ground for terrorists to launch attacks on Indian armed forces along the Indo-Myanmar borders and quickly return to Sagaing.

The anti-India and anti-Myanmar terrorists in the restive Chin, Kachin, Sagaing and Rakhine regions of Myanmar operate freely and in close coordination with each other. In Sagaing, in particular, all terror groups have formed a coordination committee and their own institutions, running their own schools and facilities. Even the anti-Myanmar Buddhist-led Arakan Army (AA) and the Rohingya Muslim-led Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) have, in recent times, reached a compromise in order to jointly weaken the Myanmar armed forces.

The joint operations that India and Myanmar carried out between February 17 and March 2 have been targeted at the anti-Myanmar Arakan Army (AA), in which India helped out Myanmar, in accordance with the understanding strengthened between the two countries that they will jointly tackle terror and not allow each other’s territories to be used for operations

against each other. While such an understanding has been on paper since 2012, it was only after the major 2015 attack by NSCN-K on Indian armed forces and the resultant 'hot pursuit' by the Indian armed forces crossing over into Myanmar territory to attack the terrorists, that the two countries could re-start dynamic talks.

The most recent surgical strikes occurred in two parts. The first phase targeted the AA camps bordering Mizoram, while the second phase saw joint attacks on NSCN-K by the two armies. The operations were first of their kind since they covered all areas along the long Indo-Myanmar border. It was during the last two years that the AA cadres had moved from the Kachin state further towards India's Mizoram to carry out their anti-Myanmar activities, often taking shelter in Mizoram districts such as Lawngtlai and Saiha. The AA insurgents have been frequenting these villages every time the Myanmar army intensifies its operations against them. Not only has this movement posed a problem for Myanmar, but has also further threatened India's major infrastructural projects in Myanmar, since it means the anti-Myanmar AA is moving from Kachin state near China towards India's Mizoram and is also attempting to gain local sympathy in these Mizoram villages.

India is heavily invested, along with China, in building infrastructure in Myanmar's restive regions, such as the Rakhine state, which the terror groups have been targeting. One of India's major projects in Myanmar is the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP), which will connect India's Kolkata with Myanmar's Sittwe through a sea route and will connect India's north-east with Myanmar through waterways and roads.



It is envisaged as India’s gateway to South-east Asia through Myanmar, since Myanmar is a crucial starting point for connecting India to south-east Asia and is also one of ASEAN’s (Association of South East Asian Nations) biggest and least developed member countries.

Thus, in accordance with India’s ‘Act East’ policy – which had often gone into cold storage in the past – works of KMTTP, India-Myanmar Friendship Highway and on a trilateral project to link India-Myanmar-Thailand, have been quickened, although the pace of implementation still falls short. There are now plans to link the trilateral highway further to Vietnam, thereby, deepening India’s connectivity with south-east Asia.



All these projects may become a target of anti-Myanmar and anti-India terror groups in future. In this context, the strikes could be considered preemptive, since the movement of AA terror groups from the India-China-Myanmar trijunction in the Kachin state down south towards the Myanmar-Mizoram border had to be checked to protect the Kaladan project. This is besides the fact that the strikes also represented the two countries doing each other a favour by attacking each other's terror groups.

Between January 29th and February 1st, at India's behest, the Myanmar army had gone into the Sagaing division had started taking over the terror camps out of which the NSCN-K was operating. In continuation of this and as part of the deepening military cooperation, the two countries together carried out strikes on AA and NSCN-K between February 17 and March 2. Both the operations – Myanmar's occupation of the camps during late January and early February and the joint Indo-Myanmar anti-terror operations between mid-February and early March – need to be, thus, seen as a continuation of a sustained period of military action between late January and early March by the two countries. The sustained operations represent an unprecedented level of cooperation and deepening of ties and have weakened the terror groups more than at any other point in the recent past.

A FRAUGHT HISTORY

That India and Myanmar have come a long way in jointly dealing with terror on India's eastern border becomes clear when the present levels of cooperation are contrasted with the fraught and often hostile relations between the two neighbours and the slow progress and several lapses that have occurred over the last two decades in making relations progress, reflected by the apathetic attitude of the Indian establishment.

The problem of the Naga community had, like most other issues of separatism in the north-east, its genesis in the self-serving and destructive policies of the British rule. The introduction of the 'inner line' permit – which bans outsiders or people from mainland India from coming into indigenous territories, and, continues to be contentious till date – by the British in 1873 sowed the seeds of north-east, particularly, Naga separatism. In 1918, with the support of Britishers, a 'Naga club' was formed, becoming a regular forum, and further cementing the Naga exclusivity. Finally, the inclusion of the Naga hills under 'excluded areas' and the training of the Naga groups for the Second World War by the British presented them with opportunities to learn guerilla warfare, seize the leftover Japanese arms after the war, and use them against India after 1947.

The Naga Hills Tribal Council was formed in 1945 and was renamed the Naga National Council (NNC) in 1946 (Chowdhury 2018). The armed insurgency against India formally began in 1950 with the NNC declaring independence after Nehru refused to accept the Nagas' demand to not accede to India. Matters reached a head when the NNC formed its own institutions, such as a separate flag for the 'Federal Government of Nagaland', the Naga Home Guard and a parliament, Tatar Hoho. India formally granted statehood and created Nagaland in 1963. This, however, did little to stop Naga terrorism against India.

Early Naga terrorists of NNC frequented China and Pakistan to receive material support in the form of weapons and training, in particular Pakistan, with Naga leaders, in 1962, even declaring, in London, that in the event of a plebiscite, they would join Pakistan. This was before the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, when East Pakistan had been made a haven for training terrorists

in India's north-east by the ISI. Subsequently, whenever Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has ruled over Bangladesh, ISI has had a free hand in training these terrorists till date. It was only after Sheikh Hasina took over in 2009 that this stopped.

Anti-India Naga terror groups have also had association with Myanmar since the 1960s. The rebels from Naga National Council (NNC) would cross over into Myanmar and pass over to Yunnan in China for arms training during that period. While the Indian government was able to temporarily crush or accommodate the NNC from time-to-time, the policy was never successful, since India historically stuck to its skeptical attitude towards China and Myanmar instead of actively seeking cooperation with the two countries.

Thus, the consolidation of the Naga cause, instead of weakening over time, actually strengthened with the formation of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) during the 1980s. The NSCN has had mixed leadership of both Myanmarese Pangmi Nagas as well as Indian-origin Nagas, who have collectively been demanding a separate Naga homeland consisting of slices of territories from both bits and pieces of India's northeast and Myanmar's Taga division of Sagaing. The leadership of NSCN split into two – NSCN-K and NSCN (Isak-Muivah or I-M) in 1988, due to internal differences. In 1997, the NSCN (IM) accepted a ceasefire with the Indian forces, and it is currently, with the NSCN (IM) that the Modi government had, in 2015, concluded an unprecedented 'framework agreement' on Naga sovereignty under India, whose details were not made public, but which garnered immense goodwill in Nagaland, from people and civil society groups, towards the Indian interlocutor, despite some intermittent rough patches.

However, the NSCN-K never came on board, despite the efforts of the Modi government to stitch a broad Naga coalition to arrive at a consensus. And in 2015, the NSCN-K violated a 2012 understanding between the Myanmar government and the Sagaing Autonomous Regional Council that the Myanmar soil will not be used for attacks in India, when the NSCN-K terrorists launched a bloody attack on Indian army convoy in Mizoram, resulting in India's famous 'hot pursuit' with Indian army crossing over into Myanmar and attacking the NSCN-K terrorists.

Despite the 'hot pursuit' event, Myanmar and India relations remained strong due to proactive efforts by the Indian government – a scenario which would have been difficult to envisage many years back. Historically, India's reluctance to cultivate friendly relations with Myanmar and China has cost us precious time and progress towards regional unity. The high level of hostility between India and Myanmar was borne out during the negotiations between the Rajiv Gandhi government and military dictatorship in Myanmar during the late 1980s, when every Indian effort to bridge differences and every Indian suggestion was infamously shot down by Myanmar, leading nowhere.

India's support to the pro-democracy movement in Myanmar, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, had effectively, over the last few decades, alienated India from Myanmar. Further, even as tentative steps were taken to open up diplomatic relations since the 1990s, as part of India's 'Look East Policy', the steps were frustratingly slow and riddled with friction. Under the Narsimha Rao government, when the Act East policy was initiated, even as India and Myanmar covertly agreed to undertake joint anti-terror operations, the plans were foiled by India's political leadership and domestic compulsions.

The intense pressure of Pakistani ISI's mischiefs and terror funding in India's north-east through the then Khaleda Zia government in Bangladesh had persuaded Narsimha Rao to undertake security cooperation with Myanmar army during the late 1990s, besides offering an unconditional ceasefire, in 1996, to all eastern militant groups, which was accepted by NSCN-IM in 1997 but not by NSCN-K. During Khaleda Zia's regime in Bangladesh, the ISI actively used Bangladeshi soil to provide funds and training to terrorists of Assam, Manipur and Nagaland, infiltrating them from Bangladesh into the Indian states of Manipur and Mizoram.

According to a former Indian ambassador to Myanmar, "Despite domestic opposition, including from high levels of his Congress party, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao worked quietly to enhance diplomatic, economic and intelligence cooperation with Myanmar's military government." As a result, in 1995, the Indian army cooperated with Myanmar's army, killing 38 terrorists and capturing 100, seizing more than 100 weapons (Parathasarthy 2019). However, according to the former ambassador, "The operations sadly ended prematurely. Disregarding Rao's wishes, Vice President K R Narayanan announced that Aung San Suu Kyi, then under detention, was being given the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding. Infuriated by this, the Myanmar Army withdrew its support" (Parathasarthy 2019).

With this level of distrust between the two countries and with often anti-national machinations by the 'secular' Congress governments, India's Look East policy was bound to result in a failure. Further, during the 1990s, India, due to strained relations, did nothing or even encouraged anti-Myanmar terror groups to take safe refuge in Mizoram.

This was especially so in the case of Arakan Army (AA), whose genesis lies in the formation of the National United Party of Arakan (NUPA) in 1994 in the Rakhine region, at the India-Bangladesh-Myanmar trijunction. According to an observer, “Like the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), the NUPA was cultivated by Indian security agencies for espionage in Myanmar and was given access to Mizoram for setting up camps and access to essential commodities. The situation headed for a change after the Myanmar Army lodged complaints with New Delhi against the increasing assistance to NUPA functionaries” (Bhattacharya 2019).

India’s break with the AA came in 1998 when Indian intelligence agents killed 6 NUPA functionaries and jailed 36 others in Andaman Islands. This episode finished the Indian ties with NUPA, soon resulting in the end of NUPA itself. This was also a time when India-Myanmar relations were beginning to improve, despite India’s adverse domestic political conditions.

Thus, through all this, India-Myanmar relations improved, but very gradually, much like India-China relations. Eventually, though NUPA had died out, the Arakan Army (AA) was formed in a bigger form out of its remains in 2009. Till date, the AA has active sympathizers in Mizoram and its members are regularly apprehended by Indian forces in the border villages of Mizoram.

A positive break for India-Myanmar relations came in 2012, when the Myanmar government signed a ceasefire agreement with the NSCN-K rebels in its Sagaing region. This was a part of a famous nation-wide ceasefire agreement that Myanmar had undertaken with all terrorist groups in Myanmar during 2011 to 2016, to which all, except, AA were invited. The ceasefire process had nothing to do with India, but the 2012 understanding with NSCN-K had incidental benefits for India.

As a part of this benefit, the NSCN-K was not to launch attacks inside India. However, this was not such a significant concession for India, as it was for NSCN-K and Myanmar military. The 2012 agreement rapidly improved the relations between Myanmar and NSCN-K, since the agreement implied that Myanmar military would not attack NSCN-K, would maintain officially friendly relations with it and would allow it to openly operate its schools and civilian infrastructure in the Taga division of the Sagaing region. The bit about not attacking India was a by-product rather than a mainstay of the 2012 agreement.

In 2014, there was a visible change in India-Myanmar relations. The Modi government, discarding the Look East policy, formulated a new 'Act East' policy, and unlike the earlier mode of confused diplomacy with little results, the Modi government made good on its promises under the new Act East policy. Pending infrastructural projects with Myanmar were rapidly given new life and new projects were launched. Partnership with Japan, Thailand and Vietnam was actively initiated, as the Indian government proved that it meant to fulfill its commitment to make Myanmar a 'gateway' for linking India's north-east to the ASEAN.

Alongside this, active contact was maintained with Myanmar military and government through thick and thin. The 2015 debacle when NSCN-K attacked Indian forces and India retaliated by crossing into Myanmar did nothing to slow the momentum of bilateral relations.

If anything, the 2015 episode strengthened it further, and when Myanmar army had a massive confrontation with the Rohingya terrorists, India supported it.

POST-2015: HOW INDIA AND MYANMAR DIVIDED AND WEAKENED THE NSCN-K

After 2015 and building up on a series of bilateral visits and agreements between both the countries, at both high political levels and military levels, India and Myanmar evolved a novel strategy to engineer a break in terrorists' ranks – the result of which was the recent 'third surgical strike'. As we have seen, prior to the strike, both India and Myanmar had reached an understanding to not support each other's terrorist groups, such as AA and NSCN-K, and to jointly eliminate the space for them which enabled them to flee to each other's territory during military confrontations.

Therefore, when the Myanmar army occupied the NSCN-K outposts in late January, prior to the joint strikes, it was a first in the otherwise cordial relations between the Myanmar army and the NSCN-K, taking even the NSCN-K by surprise and signaling the strong alliance between Myanmar army and the Indian army. This January occupation forced NSCN-K members to flee away from the Indo-Myanmar border. During the surgical strike one month later, India returned the favour in helping Myanmar kill cadres of the Arakan Army.

On its part, the strikes were a highly secret operation, of which even the state government in Mizoram was not informed. Before the strikes, Assam Rifles and Indian army forces were mobilized at the Mizoram border, even as villagers were rounded up and asked to evacuate, initially under the pretext of a free medical camp, so that no information could be divulged. During the strikes, Indian forces prevented the AA cadres from fleeing into Indian territory when attacked by Myanmar, as they customarily do and also provided logistic information and support to Myanmar.

The current operations were made possible by the clever split engineered by India and Myanmar within the NSCN-K ranks. It came to light over the past one year, that India and Myanmar had jointly engineered a surgical split within the NSCN-K ranks in October 2018, thereby weakening it considerably. The NSCN-K leadership got divided into an Indian faction, led by Indian-origin Khango Konyak and the Myanmar faction led by Yung Aung. This was made possible after Khaplang's death in 2018 and the ensuing battle for succession.

The split was crucial to India's plans, since the framework agreement signed by the Modi government with NSCN-IM and other Naga groups in Nagaland would remain incomplete unless the NSCN-K also came around. After the split and the weakening of NSCN-K, the Myanmar faction has 'impeached' and sent the Indian-origin Nagas packing, while Konyak has reportedly been sending feelers to the Indian government about signing a possible ceasefire agreement. Meanwhile, the Myanmar faction of NSCN-K, led by Aung, has signaled to the Myanmar government that it is ready to accept the Myanmar's conditions under the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) viz. dropping the demand of a separate Naga homeland across Indian and Myanmar territories.

The level of tensions between the two factions of NSCN-K and the desperation within the Konyak-led Indian faction is borne out by its statement on social media declaring that, "There cannot exist two parallel NSCN/GPRN in Nagaland, the Myanmar NCA secessionist group led by a Hindu and a Meitei half-breed Yung Aung, an arch opponent of Naga integration must never be allowed to create any disturbances in Nagaland. Nagas from India must understand that NSCN led by Khango is the only legitimate organization. Few Nagas from India who are still

affiliated to the Yung Aung group must seriously contemplate their fate once the NCA is implemented – they would be compelled to become Myanmar citizen or finally surrender before India because even the GoI [Government of India] will not offer ceasefire to a handful of desperate people without base or refuge.”

The Indian faction of Konyak-led NSCN has accused the Myanmar faction of NSCN led by Aung of entering into a “treacherous deal with Myanmar Juntas at Nyapidaw” and “forfeiting almost a century-old Nagas’ struggle for sovereign independence” (Kalita 2018).

With this landmark split, giving a major setback to anti-India Naga movement, which originated in the colonial rule, and the subsequent recent joint strikes, India has achieved a major success in consolidating Indian nationalism and making a breakthrough in not only improving relations with Myanmar, but also coming close to solving the historical Naga terrorism issue. From Modi’s novel framework agreement with the Nagas to setting the Indo-Myanmar relations on a new trajectory and dealing a blow to the Naga movement, the entire episode reflects the permanent and profound nationalistic changes that have been occurring in the north-east since 2014, with a dynamic approach adopted.

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The Importance of the Development of the Emotions in a Sound Human Evolution

“The development of the emotions is therefore the first condition of a sound human evolution. Unless the feelings tend away from the body and the love of others takes increasingly the place of the brute love of self, there can be no progress upward. The organisation of human society tends to develop the altruistic element in man which makes for life and battles with and conquers aśanāyā mṛtyuḥ. It is therefore not the struggle for life, or at least not the struggle for our own life, but the struggle for the life of others which is the most important term in evolution, – for our children, for our family, for our class, for our community, for our race and nation, for humanity. An ever-enlarging self takes the place of the old narrow self which is confined to our individual mind and body, and it is this moral growth which society helps and organises.”

– Sri Aurobindo

(Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, Vol. 13: pp. 20-21)