

# The Spirit of Panchsheel

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Panshcheel or the Five Principles of Peaceful co-existence were first formally enunciated in the Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India signed on April 29, 1954. The Joint statements issued after the visit of Premier Zhou En Lai to India on 28 June 1954 and to Myanmar on 29 June 1954 affirmed these Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence as the guiding principles for China- India and China-Myanmar relations and also for their relations with all other countries and also for the projected boundary demarcation of China-India and China-Myanmar all three countries.

The noble principle Panshcheel had emerged during the period of post-war era and the early inception of the Cold War. It became known due to the joint efforts of Premier Zhou En Lai, Prime Minister Nehru and Prime Minister U Nu in their search for a rightful place in the international political arena. It is found to be on the similar line and intention of Asian Relations Conference which took place in New Delhi, India during March 1947 where by new vitality was given for the simultaneous development and rise of all Asian Countries.

These Principles began also with a hopeful Note that it would redefine the relations amongst Asian Nations in general as attempted by Asian Relations Conference in 1947 and relations between India and China in particular.

In pursuance of the Agreement between the two countries Myanmar embarked upon demarcation of 1300 miles Myanmar-China boundary in the year 1960. It was made on the basis of the Spirit of Panshcheela or the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence resulting in highly acclaimed Pauk Phaw Relationship in the following days. As for India, the intent to demarcate the boundary with China basing on the spirit of Panshcheels got aborted due to the unfortunate incidents that occurred at some points of the North East Boundary. However, these Principles have witnessed and endured and are later taken as the norms of conduct of foreign relations between countries contributing to World Peace and Stability.

However things are moving fast and present day world, while seeking Peace and Stability, is confronting (widespread) terrorism, suffering from intensifying effects of global warming, climatic changes, natural and man-made disasters.

During 1950, both China and India have the principle that is the vision of bringing close relations and oneness amongst Asian Countries but have no power to implement it within International Politics.

In the present day Asia Scenario two strong leaders emerged.

- President Xi Jing Ping of China, who propounded a great Chinese Dream named “One Belt One Road”;
- And Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, who initiated another great Indian Dream named “Act India”.

These two dreams appeared at a time when both China and India are rapidly rising in respect of economic development as well as with international power and politics.

It is to be noted that BRIC and BCIM are part of the dreams of China and India in their own way. But the two countries should began building trust to each other before trying to make their dreams as centre to bilateral, regional and politics. And this could be done by revisiting the relevance of “Panshcheela” the Five Principles.

The good relationship that existed between Myanmar and China for many years turned a new leaf as President U Thein Sein took over power in 2011 and abruptly suspended the US\$ 3.6 million Chinese Myitson Dam Project stalling China’s plan to make Myanmar a key piece of the energy policy. The suspension became a source of friction between the two countries and worsened when two armed groups led by Wa group equipped with Chinese arms supported by the Chinese side, refused to sign Government sponsored Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and when clashes took place between these armed groups and government security forces from time to time. These events are compounded by other border problems including illegal teak smuggling, jade mining and smuggling, opium growing, human trafficking in persons, large scale production and spread of narcotic drugs (methamphetamine) known as YABA resulting out of non restriction of chemical and raw materials into Wa area from China. It is needless to explain that these could not be possible without the connivence and support of the border authorities of both sides.

The problem in the Northeast is in fact Myanmar’s own issue but partly or importantly connected with China and if succeeded in solving, it would be of great benefit to Myanmar as well as to China, in particular, Yunnan, OBOR and BCIM. Both Myanmar and China are mindful that no western country should step in to solve the problem.

Meanwhile, many in Myanmar perceived China as the holder of all keys of different issues of Myanmar’s northeast problems.

Both sides have been trying different ways and means to rectify the position but without any success. By any possible means, should China push deeper, stronger and firmer, as done by China’s Great Leader Deng Xiaoping in respect of China based anti- Myanmar Regime Exiles during the year 1977 there is no way that we could not achieve our goal. If there is a will there is a way. It is expected that in the near future Daw Aung San Suu Kyi would possibly show herself that she is a sincere friend of China in as much as China would reaffirmed to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Myanmar people that China could still be counted as “a time-tested friend”.

Myanmar President U Htin Kyaw have recently paid a State Visit to China where by many Agreements including an Agreement on 770 km crude oil pipeline project. Exchange of Letter on Implementation of Deep Sea Port Project and Industry Park Project were signed. The Pipeline could carry up to 22 million tons of oil each year, or nearly 6% of China’s total imports in 2016. These projects happened to be taken as controversial Chinese Projects by the regime of President U Thein Sein.

The State Visit to China by President U Htin Kyaw followed by signing of many bilateral agreements including important agreements for Three Projects set aside by former President have proven that Myanmar have always adhered to and fleshing out the Pansheel Principle in the bilateral relations showing to the world that it is still relevant and valid.