



OLD ROUTES ANEW

**LOOKING EAST
FROM THE
NORTH EAST**

By

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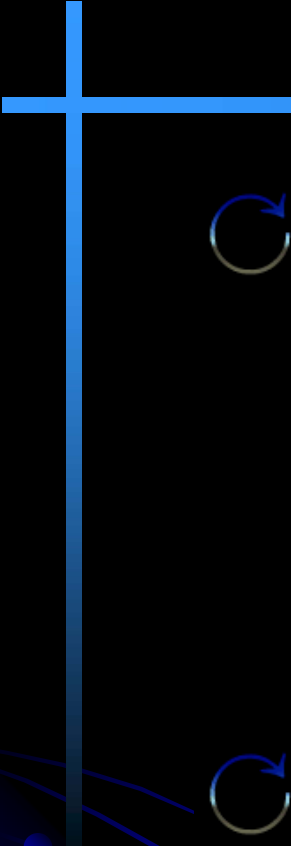
Minister, Assam



**60 years ago the
transport networks of
South & South East
Asia were one of the
most integrated in the
developing world.**



The disruption of these age-old links resulted by the partition of Indian Sub-continent in 1947 reduced the NE Region geographically in a most disadvantaged position.



Highways, Waterways and Rail links which traverse each country but stop at national boundaries – thus cannot service the region as a whole generate sub-optimal returns.

Absence of an integrated communication system in the region is inconvenient for passengers, harmful to the economy and inimical to regional economic integration.

BANGKOK DECLARATION

31 July 2004

➔ Prime Ministers of the Seven Member Nations collectively signed :

“Convinced that the geographical location of our countries and our rich natural and human resources provide a sound basis for mutually beneficial cooperation... Recognizing the pluralistic nature of our societies... Convinced that regional and sub-regional economic cooperation such as ours contribute to efforts towards global free and fair trade...”

IN THE WAKE OF CHANGING DYNAMICS



The challenge really is to create a model that will support economic integration of the North East with India and neighbouring countries around the region

NEED OF THE HOUR

- Decision based not on emotion but imperatives of prudence
- Locational disadvantages into advantage
- Anvil NE as a model for regional economic cooperation
- In consonance with diplomatic & economic policy options

DYNAMICS OF REGIONAL COOPERATION



Recent efforts to link the region to dynamic economies of Asia are moves that we welcome



Growth triangles and quadrangles such as



Mekong Ganga Cooperation Project



BIMSTEC (Bangladesh-India, Myanmar-SriLanka-Thailand, Bhutan & Nepal Economic Cooperation)



Kunming Initiative



BCIM countries under Track II Rounds

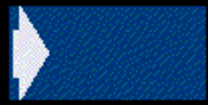
THE NORTH EAST

➔ Natural candidate for establishment of a staging ground for trade & cooperation

- ◆ Closest and contiguous landmass connecting SE Asia
- ◆ Traditional routes & river links
- ◆ Cultural affinity
- ◆ 4500 km long international borders all around

➔ Making it a “*natural capital*” for the able creation of “*economic clusters*”

DYNAMICS OF REGIONAL COOPERATION



**Project N.E. Region as an able partner
in a Growth quadrant comprising of**



Brahmaputra



Yangtze



Mekong

THE RATIONALE BEHIND SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION



The sub-region comprising Eastern India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and South-West China is a geographically contiguous area, where member countries who have interacted with each other through the 'Southern Silk Road' since the time immemorial.

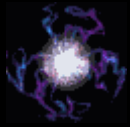


The border areas of the four countries are mostly developing regions with rich natural resources.



The intermediate country of transit will not be a loser in any event as such trade will generate income from services and will promote local investment and enterprise as well. There are well established international protocols for regulating such movements.

THE RATIONALE BEHIND SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION



The promotion of sub-regional economic cooperation will greatly enhance



1 Border trade



2 The exploration of natural resources



3 Water resources

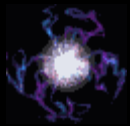


**4 Agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry
& fishery**



**5 Provide opportunities for establishing joint
ventures, scientific & technological
cooperation**

THE RATIONALE BEHIND SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION



The promotion of sub-regional economic cooperation will greatly enhance



Development of international tourism



Partnerships in power generation, hydro carbons & infrastructure build ups

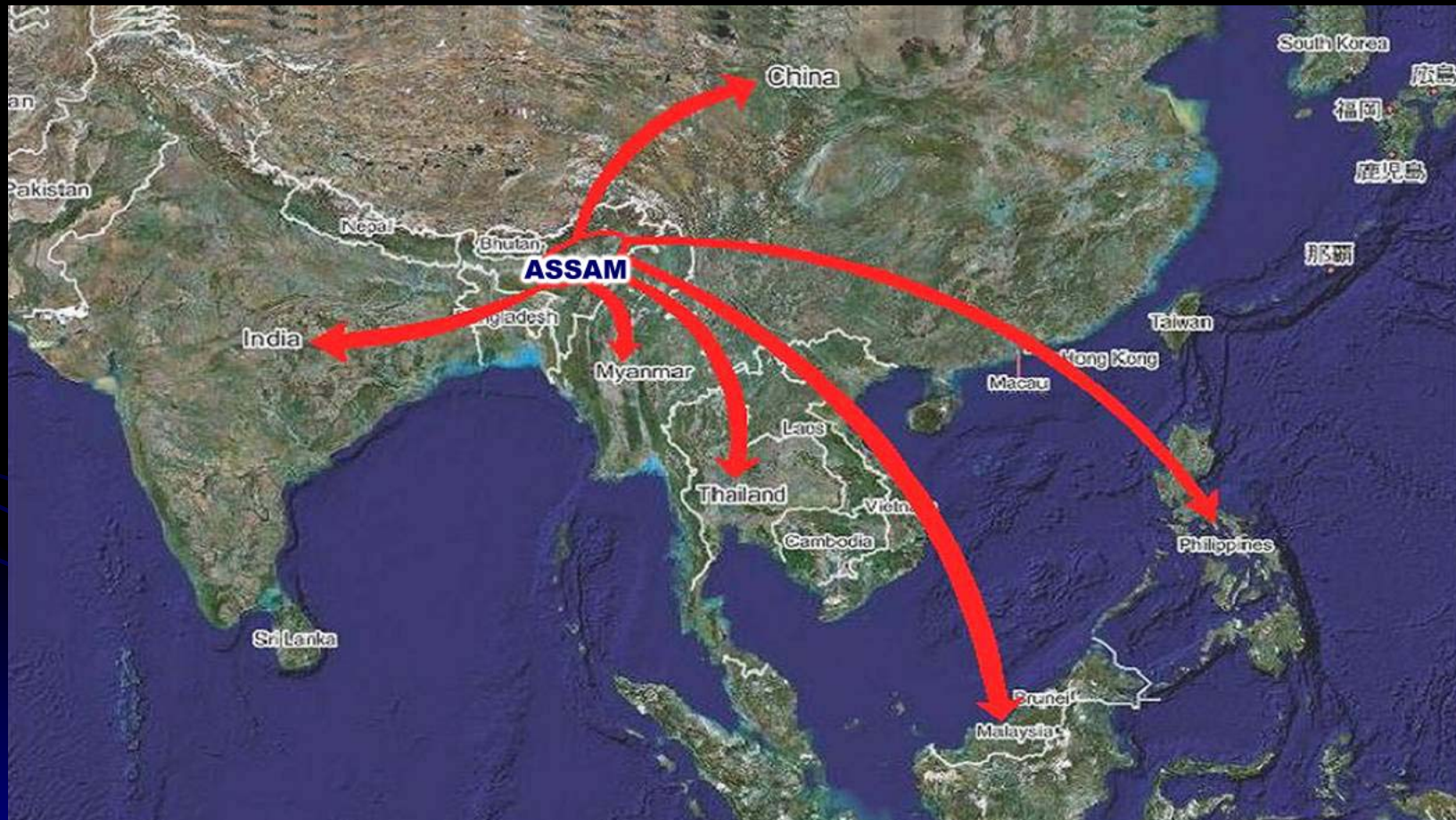


Speed up completion of transport links by land, water & air

Such a process of mutual interaction could have far reaching economic significance for all countries of the sub-region.

ASSAM - THE GATEWAY

TO NORTH EAST INDIA & TO SOUTH EAST ASIA



STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



Difficult terrain and unsettled conditions aggravated the problem.



Border trade can be the first step towards larger cross-border and coastal inter-country trade. It can help stimulate the development and sustenance of the required infrastructure.

STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY IN MYANMAR - CHINA



A southern route from Yunnan passed thro' Ruili in China across the Irrawady to Bhamo (Myanmar). The same route is extended across the Chindwin river upto Manipur (India)



China has already re-constructed Yunnan to Bhamo road under the GMS agenda to link up China thro' Myanmar to the Bay of Bengal.

STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY IN TRIPURA - BANGLADESH



Agartala is only 4 km away from the rail head across the border in Bangladesh – which is linked to both Dhaka and Chittagong by road and rail.



Through Bangladesh the link between Guwahati and Kolkata is 587 km (against 1300 km now)



Agartala to Kolkata thro' Bangladesh is 350 km (against 2000 km via surface road now)



STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY IN TRIPURA - BANGLADESH



**Agartala - Dhaka bus
service is a very
welcome development**



STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY IN MIZORAM – MYANMAR SECTOR



River Route – Kaladan river flows thro' Mizoram to Bay of Bengal in Myanmar.



Build Road from Aizawl to Kaletwa (Kaladin river) for to and fro shipment of Cargo to Sittwe Port in the Bay of Bengal.



Aizawl – Champhai – Tahan (Myanmar Airport) to Kalembo for hooking on to the Moreh (Manipur) – Tamu – Mandalay road.

STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



The active re-opening of the Tibet-India road via Nathu- La in Sikkim would enable Calcutta and Chittagong to serve Lhasa apart from opening up trade with Eastern India and Bangladesh.



The Irrawaddy and Brahmaputra, Ganga waterways need to be developed and linked by road or rail to permit long distance haulage of freight, some of it inter-modal.



STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



**The concept of Jiribam (Assam)
to Hanoi (Vietnam) rail link thro'
Myanmar needs to be
developed**

STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



The Beijing – Delhi direct flight being operated by China Airlines could stop over in Calcutta/ Guwahati and Kunming for purpose of trade, tourism and wider transit.



Guwahati now being an international airport, the Air India flight from Guwahati- Bangkok should be extended up to Kunming.



Bangladesh can conveniently provide maritime access to cargo traffic from the North-East, Nepal and Bhutan whereas Myanmar can extend such facility for South-West China to North East and Bangladesh.

STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



Bankok Airlines have formally communicated to Assam Govt. in Oct. 2005 expressing intent to start direct flight in Bankok – Guwahati & onward sectors.



They have proposed to connect Bangkok- Kaziranga – Gaya circuit for Thai tourists.



STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

**Build and upgrade to 4 lane
Express Highways from Siliguri to
Nathula pass (Sikkim)**

&

Guwahati to



Champhai (Mizoram)



Moreh (Manipur)



Nampong (Arunachal Pradesh)

STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



Similarly re-opening of the Stilwell Road from Nampong to Kunming can expedite development in the northern Myanmar and NE Region. This route via Tengchong-Baoshan is the shortest connecting China with India. The south to north road trunk extends into heartland of Myanmar



This road can also be hooked on to the trans Asian Highways at Mea Sot in Thailand border

STILWELL ROAD

REJUVENATE OUR LIFE LINE
REVITALIZE OUR RELATIONSHIP
REACH OUT BEYOND THE BORDERS

From here we start in Assam

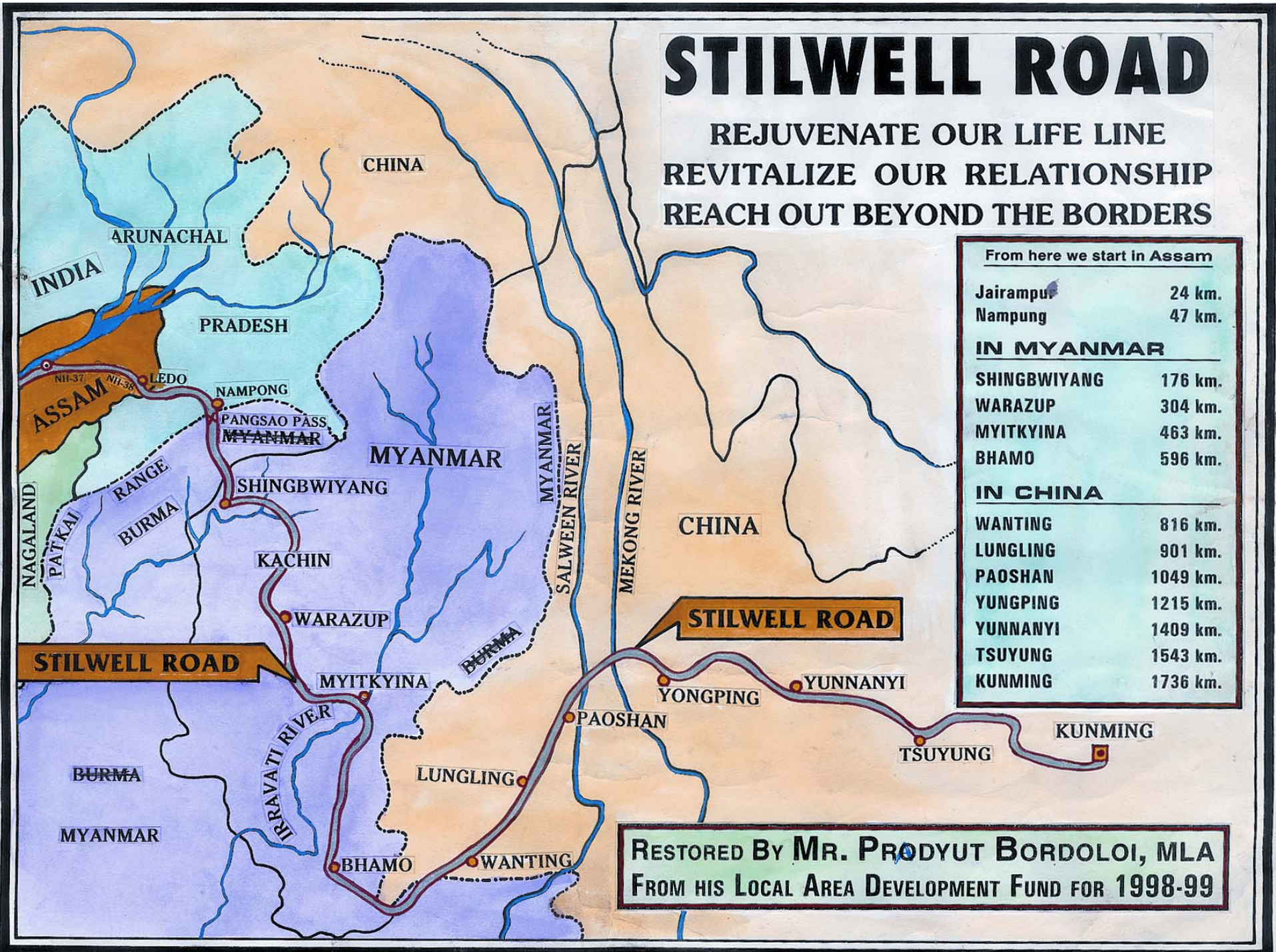
Jairampur	24 km.
Nampung	47 km.

IN MYANMAR

SHINGBWIYANG	176 km.
WARAZUP	304 km.
MYITKYINA	463 km.
BHAMO	596 km.

IN CHINA

WANTING	816 km.
LUNGLING	901 km.
PAOSHAN	1049 km.
YONGPING	1215 km.
YUNNANYI	1409 km.
TSUYUNG	1543 km.
KUNMING	1736 km.



RESTORED BY MR. PRODYUT BORDOLOI, MLA
FROM HIS LOCAL AREA DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR 1998-99

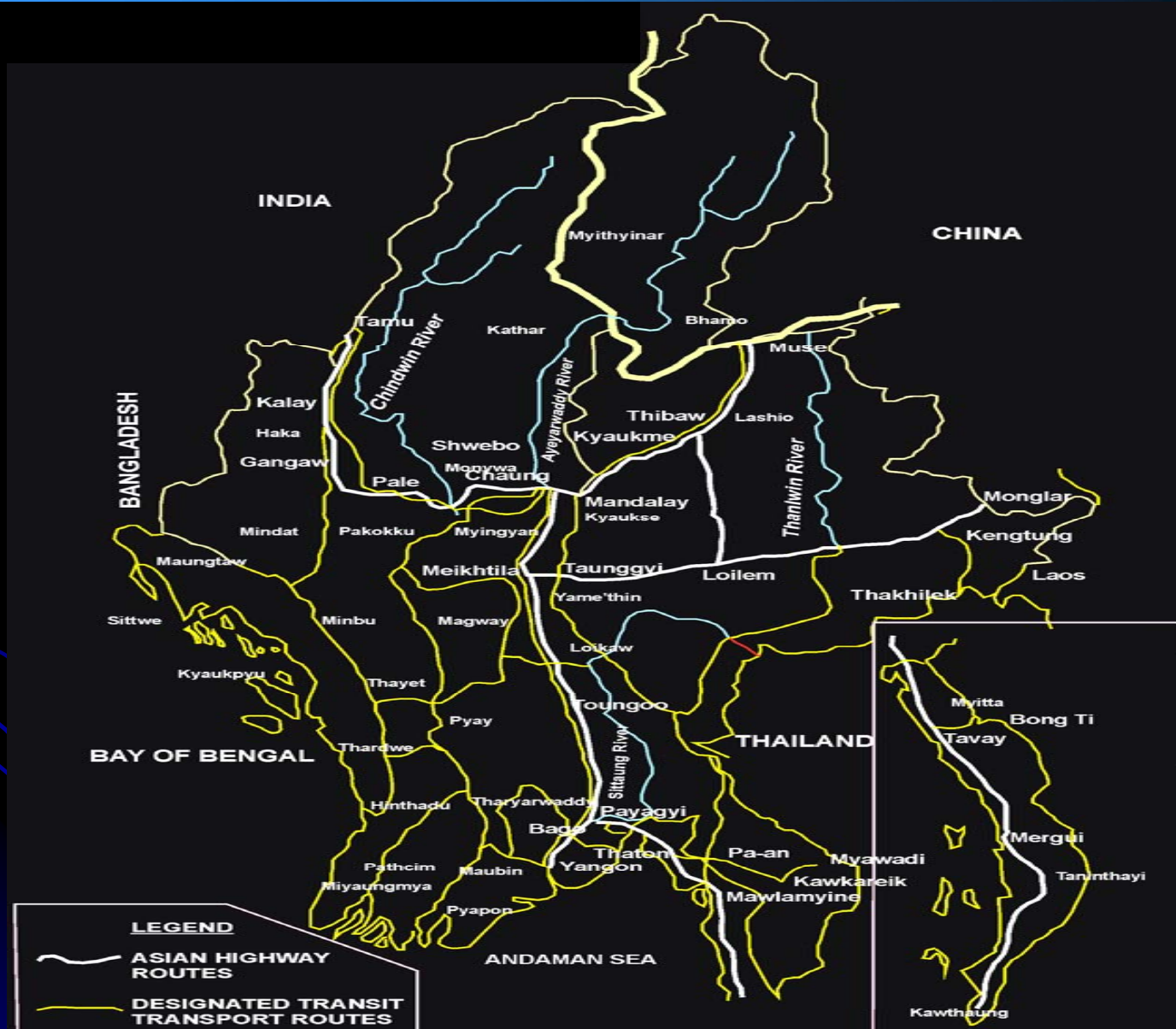
MAP

ASIAN HIGHWAY ROUTES AND DESIGNATED TRANSIT TRANSPORT ROUTES IN MYANMAR



MAP

ASIAN HIGHWAY ROUTES AND DESIGNATED TRANSIT TRANSPORT ROUTES IN MYANMAR



STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



The three railway networks are closest to each other at locations namely

- ❑ Ledo (Lekhapani), NEFR terminal of Assam**
- ❑ Myitkyina -- North railway terminal of Myanmar**
- ❑ Dali--West Railway terminal of Yunnan, China**

The three networks can be linked to each other by building Myanmar-India Railway and Yunnan-Myanmar Railway. The former one is from Myitkyina to Ledo, being about 480 km long and the latter one is from Dali of Yunnan to Myitkyina of Myanmar, being about 520 km long.

STRENGTHENING TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



The two railways go in the same direction with the Stilwell Road whose reconstruction can realize the road and railway coordinated transportation.



These road and railway projects can be financed by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

MEA – Your Reservations ?



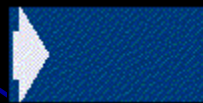
There's no denying that an active underworld of smugglers, drug peddlers, AIDS, money launderers, arms merchants, stalking insurgent groups and flesh traders and illicit immigrants operating in certain Indo - Myanmar - Bangladesh areas.



They are well organized and networked. So there is quite a lot of trade actually, but much of it of the wrong kind.

MEA – What role do you play ?

Without being formally connected, at present in many cases -- smuggling or so-called informal trade and trade via third countries is far larger than legitimate trade.



All these are possible because of porous border with no road to access the boundaries.

MEA – What role do you play ?



Remember, - a road will help you to dominate and take control of the situation because crime detection/prevention and joint border management can only be possible by re-opening old routes and giving legitimacy in bilateral relations.



In the new climate of political understanding and goodwill that prevails, we must explore beyond our boundaries. The economic future of the North-East has to be secured with the realization that today, boundaries are seen not as barriers but as gateways.

There has to be a new mindset.

V
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Thank you

