

## Prospects Brighten for Kunming Initiative (Cont.)

neighboring Southeast Asian countries and not Kolkata.

“The northeastern states have to have an access eastward,” he told newsmen accompanying him on his tour to Myanmar, the first by an Indian minister in 14 years. Subsequently, India has built the Moreh-Tamu-Kalewa road. Besides the Moreh-Tamu linkage, three new trade points are being opened at Champai-Rih, Pangsau Pass and Paletwa on the Kaladan River to enhance economic cooperation between the two countries. The two sides have also identified the Lungwa-Yangyong and Pangsha-Pongnyo crossings as potential trading points. Weekly haats (village markets) are held at these places on the Indo-Myanmar border in the Nagaland sector.

It seems that New Delhi has finally begun to recognize the importance of extending its trade by land to Southeast Asia. Myanmar’s readiness to cooperate with India in helping to develop a transport corridor has assumed great importance for New Delhi. The transport corridor through Myanmar can offer a cheaper and faster alternative to the narrow Siliguri corridor in the northern part of the state of West Bengal. This is currently utilized as the trade corridor within India for sending goods to the northeast India. India and Myanmar are presently working on a project along the Kaladan River that runs through the Indian state of Mizoram and Myanmar before joining the Bay of Bengal. This project envisages upgradation of port facilities at Sittwe, about 155 miles from the border between Mizoram and Myanmar, where Kaladan flows into the Bay of Bengal.

Once the right waterway and road links are established, commodities and goods will have economically viable passage from India’s east coast ports to Sittwe and thereafter through Mizoram and other states of India’s northeast. Last month, India started short-haul turbo-prop services to link all the capitals of the northeastern states and also some destinations in the eastern region of India. At the moment the air service will meet only passenger requirements, but New Delhi hopes that the connectivity itself will enhance trade and commerce with and among the northeastern states. If things begin to move, more commercial proposals will surface.

According to the Independence of Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources has accepted, in principle, a proposal for the construction of a Myanmar-Tripura-West Bengal gas pipeline through Bangladesh. It is also said in that the Myanmar, Tripura and West Bengal state governments of India have accepted the proposal in principle.

## A Little Humor

*Editor: We received the following report from Ruth Heckinger, concerning an amusing incident that occurred to her on the way home from the St. Louis Reunion. The following is an excerpt from a recent letter from Ruth.*

“... The affair was a great success and my friend, Gus, enjoyed it hugely... as well as the ballgame he attended Friday while we partied.

Speaking of partying, there was an encounter on the way home: I drove back to Florida with Druce Henn and Mike Feduniak, stopping at every casino along the way.

At one stop, we met a woman, southern belle (ala GWTW) type in a long, flowing white dress, shoulder-length wispy pale hair, who confided, with fluttering hands, that, although she had been “but a wee child in WWII” (haw!), her 3rd husband (or was she his 3rd wife?) had been a P-51 pilot with the Flying Tigers in the CBI!!

Of course, we were interested and she went on, again assuring us that she was but a “wee child at the time” but her husband told some fascnatin’ tales:

“You know,” she earnestly lectured us, “they had no instruments in those days,” and one time, her hero flew out of Karachi in his P-51, got lost, and ended up over Berlin!!!! That got our attention which have begun to waver and all three of us whipped our heads around...

“Got lost in a P-51 out of Karachi and ended up over Berlin??” “Oh yes,” said the ditsy one, nodding the pale head vigorously, “You know they didn’t have any instruments in those days...”

We laughed all the way home and if whoever happened to be driving made the least miscalculation, the other two would shout, “You’re going to end up over Berlin.”

What a hoot!”