

October 26, 1954
**Minutes of Chairman Mao Zedong's Third Meeting
with Nehru**

Citation:

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Summary:

On the final day of Nehru's visit, he and Mao discuss Soviet technical assistance and relations with Burma.

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Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

ird Meeting with Nehru
(not yet reviewed)

Time: 26 October 1954, 4:35 pm-5:30 pm

Place: Zhongnanhai, Qinzhengdian

Attendants on the Chinese side: Vice Chairman Zhu [De], Vice Chairman Liu [Shaoqi], Premier Zhou [Enlai], Vice Chairwoman Song [Qingling], Vice Premier Chen [Yun], Ambassador Yuan Zhongxian, Pu Shouchang (interpreter and note taker)

Attendants on the Indian side: Madam Indira Gandhi, Pi-lai [sic], Ambassador Nedyam Raghavan

Nehru: I am about to leave. I feel sad. I know many friends here, and have made great friendships [here]. All of my experiences here have greatly moved me. I would like to express my gratitude to the Chairman and his colleagues. You have given me magnificent gifts, which have made me very grateful. I think I can say that we have left part of ourselves in China, and we will bring part of China back to India.

Mao: We are also very grateful for the gifts that Prime Minister Nehru has given us. The gifts are very precious, which are symbols of friendship.

Nehru: I believe that Premier Zhou must know a French saying, "Departure is similar to the death of part of a person."

Mao: About two thousand years ago, the Chinese poet Qu Yuan wrote these two verses:

"A great sorrow it is to bid adieu;
A great joy it is to make friends anew."

I remember telling Prime Minister Nehru at a dinner party about our feelings toward India, saying that China and India do not need to be on alert against each other. We have no apprehension that India will harm us.

I asked whether our countries' prime ministers and concurrent foreign ministers could correct themselves if they had a slip of the tongue. I think they can correct themselves, but this applies only to our two countries and not to some other countries, which perhaps would seize on our errors in speech as we would seize on theirs. There is a Chinese saying-"to seize somebody's pigtail." But China and India do not seize each other's pigtail-we are not on the alert against each other, and it does not matter if a slip of the tongue occurs.

Nehru: I was not trained as a diplomat, or at least I was not trained as an old-style diplomat. We are not going to "seize each other's pigtail[s]." Anyway, in my talks with Premier Zhou and his colleagues, such things will not happen."

The poem that the Chairman has cited does not only fit in the relationship between persons. It also suits the relationship between countries. After a very long period, our two countries met again. So the second sentence of the poem is particularly fitting.

Mao: Qu Yuan was a great poet of China. He wrote many patriotic poems 1,500 years ago. The government was not happy with him and put him into exile. Finally, Qu Yuan had no way out and drowned himself in a river. For over a thousand years, the Chinese people have made the date of his death a festival, and this is the Duanwu

Festival held every 5 May of the lunar year. On that day, the people eat zongzi, the leaf-wrapped rice dumplings. People put zongzi in the river to feed fish so that fish, by eating zongzi, will not harm Qu Yuan.

India is a promising nation, a great nation. I have heard from our Ambassador Yuan Zhongxian that the people in southern India practice intensive farming and utilize all the land that can be utilized-somewhat like the situation in the areas around Chengdu of our country.

Nehru: I received a telegram today, which mentions that the rice output of India is the highest in Indian history, an output that is 4.5 million tons more than in the past. Also, the increase of rice output is not because of expansion of acreage of cultivation, but because of deep tillage.

Mao: Every piece of good news from India makes us happy. When India gets better, the world benefits.

I have heard that the Soviet Union is to help India develop an industrial project.

Nehru: Yes. We have invited the Soviet experts to visit India in ten days to discuss helping us develop a steel plant. We hope that we will reach an agreement with them.

Mao: That is very good. We have had several years of experience of cooperation with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has helped us develop 141 projects in basic industry, and some countries are unwilling to see this happen. For so many years in the past, Britain did not want to share with us secrets in technology. They want to make China forever the market of consumer goods and the exporter of raw materials. The only thing they developed in China was transportation. The situation of India is also like this. Japan developed industry in the Northeast in the past; for example, they developed steel plants in Anshan. However, Japan did not train Chinese engineers and technicians, and they only used the Japanese. After these people had left, we no longer had technicians. After the past several decades, we have no more than 200 personnel in geological exploration. Without personnel in this respect, we cannot begin our industrial development. After the first Five-Year Plan, we will train about 10,000 personnel for geological exploration. The Soviet experts have helped us to raise and train technicians. After completing the training process, they will leave. You may sign an agreement with the Soviet Union in the same way. The Soviet experts will leave after helping you raise and train the technicians. This is only beneficial to us and not harmful at all. The Soviet Union does not attach any political conditions.

Nehru: We also face the problem of technicians. Although the number of technicians that we have is probably larger than that of China, for a big country as India, the number of our technicians is still too small. We also hope to raise and train more technicians in the shortest possible time.

Forty-five years ago, the United States established a steel plant for us, and it used American machines and hired American technicians. Until several years ago, all of the senior managers of the plant remained Americans. Not until recently did the management become taken over by Indians. Situations like this also exist in other industries. In addition to what I just mentioned, that the Soviet Union would be helping us develop a steel plant, there are Soviet experts serving as our advisers on other matters.

Mao: The Soviet experts have taught our people in a few short years. The way is like this. The development of a factory can be divided into five phases: exploration, design, construction, installation, and putting into operation. There is a special group of Soviet experts who help train our technicians during a special phase. The duration

of the Soviet experts' stay in China seldom surpasses three years.

Nehru: Although we lack technicians ourselves, Burma, Indonesia, Afghanistan, and countries in West Africa often ask for technicians from us. We always try our best to satisfy them. Although we also feel that we do not have enough technicians, we have also dispatched more than one hundred technicians to these countries.

Mao: That is very good.

Nehru: These countries are afraid of the experts from European countries and America. They are afraid of the political influence of these experts. But they are not afraid of India. Therefore, they ask for our help.

Mao: Yes.

Nehru: I am honored to have had several talks with the Chairman. I am very grateful. I have had longer talks with Premier Zhou. I told Premier Zhou that we could sit down and talk for several days because we have so much to discuss.

Mao: I am very glad to have had these several rounds of talks together, which have enabled us to exchange views. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Nehru has had talks with Premier Zhou Enlai. The diplomatic work between our two countries is easy to do; there is no need to quarrel.

Nehru: Sometimes we have differences, but we do not quarrel.

Mao: Between friends there are sometimes differences and sometimes quarrels-quarreling until faces turn red. This kind of quarrel, however, is different in nature from our quarrel with John Forster Dulles.

With this visit, Prime Minister Nehru must be aware that China is truly in need of friends. Ours is a new China, still weak, though called a big country. We are faced with a strong opponent, the United States, which is bent on fixing us whenever it has the opportunity. Therefore, we need friends, and Prime Minister Nehru must have felt this already. I think India is also in need of friends; this can be seen from the talks we have just had, from our cooperation over the last years, and from the welcome that Premier Zhou Enlai received during his visit to India and the sincere talks held during that visit.

Prime Minister Nehru advocates the establishment and expansion of zones of peace and hopes that countries that stand for peace will continually increase. To establish and expand zones of peace is a very good idea, with which we agree. To attain this goal, it is necessary to remove certain factors that are likely to cause suspicion or hamper cooperation. The Sino-Indian Agreement relating to Tibet is conducive to the removal of factors causing suspicion or hampering cooperation. It is very good, too, that we have jointly announced the Five Principles. The question of overseas Chinese should also be solved in an appropriate manner lest some countries assert that we wish to utilize overseas Chinese to make trouble. If overseas Chinese retain their status as foreign nationals, they should not take part in the political activities of the country in which they reside. If they have acquired the nationality of the residing country, they should abide by the laws of that country. Overseas Chinese should also observe the laws of the country in which they reside.

We should try to resolve all issues that can cause suspicion or hamper cooperation. By so doing, equality and mutual benefit, as contained in the Five Principles, can be realized. Cooperation should not harm any of the participating parties. If it does, it

cannot last long and is bound to break up. That is true of all cooperation, whether between friends, countries, or political parties. Cooperation has to be beneficial; otherwise, who will join in it?

Nehru: I agree. Chairman just mentioned the overseas Chinese question. For India this is not a strange question. As Ambassador Yuan knows, there are more than 40,000 overseas Chinese in India, and most of them are in Calcutta. What has surprised me is that some of them recently have registered as voters. Obviously they have obtained Indian citizenship. This is what I did not know in the past.

Mao: The Burmese government is the most suspicious of us, and that is because there is revolution in their country. They suspect that we will help the revolutionaries to overthrow the government and that we will deliver weapons to the revolutionaries. When Premier Zhou visited Burma, he discussed this matter with Prime Minister U Nu. Prime Minister U Nu will be visiting China in one-months' time. We will discuss [this] with him again. We will clarify this matter in accordance with the Five Principles.

Now there are also Guomindang troops in Burma, and we have never used this as an excuse. We know that Burma faces difficulty, and this needs to be resolved gradually. But the existence of the Guomindang troops in Burma is disadvantageous to both China and Burma. But we will only tighten the defense of our borders and will not cross the border. As for how Burma will deal with the Guomindang troops, it is Burma's own business. We understand the difficulty that Burma is facing.

There are two communist parties in Burma. One is the Red Flag, and the other one is the White Flag. This is also Burma's own business. We do not even know who they are. The two parties all developed after Japan's occupation of Burma, and they belonged to the same alliance of which Prime Minister U Nu's party was also a member.

Nehru: In the past five to six years, it was the Karen people who have been making trouble. They have received support from American officers (but not necessarily the American government) and have also received weapons from America. American churches have also made the Karens Christians. The Karens have made troubles more than anyone else.

As for the communist party, I also know that there is the difference of the Red Flag and the White Flag, but many of those who claim themselves to be communists actually know little about communism. They have no discipline and they are irresponsible.

But the main trouble has come from the Karens. In order to show their discontent with America's support to the Karens, Burma turned down America's technological support last year.

Mao: The Guomindang troops in Burma have also been supported by the United States. Aid has been delivered via Thailand. The Karens are not beneficial to Burma, and the Guomindang troops are not beneficial to Burma either, but they have received support from the United States. Probably, Britain also feels unhappy with these pro-American forces.

As to the Burmese Communist Party, we have never given them a single gun, and we do not plan to give them help now. In the past, we supported Ho Chi Minh.

Nehru: I know. But the support is far less than the support that the United States has given to the other side.

Mao: Ho Chi Minh only had five divisions, including four infantry divisions and one artillery division, and all the others are guerillas. However, Ho Chi Minh's forces have expanded after Dien Bien Phu.

Nehru: Is this because the soldiers of the other side have come over to join Ho Chi Minh's forces?

Mao: This is mainly because they have seized weapons, and thus their armed forces have expanded.