CHAPTER IV

THE MALAYSIA DISPUTE AND INDIA - INDONESIA RELATIONS
Malaya, and later Malaysia, which was a staunch anti-communist country did not join S.E.A.T.O., partly due to its friendship with India and Indonesia. In contrast to India's criticism of S.E.A.T.O. members who had come together to contain international communism, India supported Malay's anti-communist stand in domestic politics. Internal communist threat faced by Malaya/Malaysia between 1948-1960, was severely condemned by Nehru, whereas fear of external communist aggression, such as expressed by members of S.E.A.T.O. found little Indian sympathy.\(^1\) India, which criticised Thailand and the Philippines for their pro-western policy, did not condemn Malaya's defence alliance with Britain. India not only approved Malaya's association with the Commonwealth but also justified its stand. With regard to Anglo-Malayan Mutual Defence Treaty and British responsibility for the external defences and the bases of Singapore, Nehru said that "there was a clear distinction between a purely defensive arrangement of this kind, and the regional pact which India disliked because it had the appearance of being directed at others".\(^2\)

It was in 1961 that Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Malayan Premier, came out with the plan of a merger of Malaya, Singapore,

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Brunei, Sarawak and North Borneo into a new Federation of Malaysia. India's support for the formation of Malaysia and Indonesia's policy of confrontation with Malaysia created a rift in the already strained India-Indonesia relations. The former part of this chapter deals with India-Malaya/Malaysia relations and the latter part with the gradually deteriorating India-Indonesia relations during the period under review, the emphasis being on India's support of the Malaysia scheme and opposition to Indonesia's confrontation policy and how far these factors affected India-Indonesia relations.

INDIA'S RELATION WITH THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA:

India's relations with the Malay world is one of the most ancient and fruitful inter-cultural and inter-regional relationships. The fruitful links between India and the Malay world were not only terminated but also assumed a new dimension during the era of colonial domination. Since the indigenous people of Malaya did not provide cheap labour for the development of rubber plantations, the British turned to India for required labour. In Malaya's transformation from a subsistence economy to a highly developed commercial economy the Indians undoubtedly played a significant role. Political developments in Malaya were relatively peaceful. The existence of a plural society prevented the growth of nationalism in Malaya before the second
world war. The Malays still owed their loyalties to the Sultans and looked on the British as their protectors and saviours. The most important political development in Malaya after the second world war was the armed struggle for power embarked upon by the predominantly Chinese Malayan Communist Party (M.C.P.). New Delhi’s policy towards Malaya, therefore, was not characterised by strident anti-colonial slogans, but was aimed at restoring security and stability which would pave the way for progressive introduction of self-government. Explaining the peculiar situation in Malaya, Nehru said in the Parliament:

The problem in Malaya is not an easy one. It is difficult because, oddly enough, in Malaya the people of Malaya are in a minority....The indigenous people of Malaya are not at all keen on something happening which might give power to non-Malays there. 3

Krishna Menon expressed the same view when he said that the "British government had a very difficult position whereby one talks of Malayan independence where the Malays themselves were in a minority". 4 According to New Delhi, progressive introduction of self-government in Malaya was the most desirable

3. Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches (Delhi, 1967), vol. 2, p. 92
4. G.A.O.R., session 9, plen. mtg. 492, 6 October 1954, p. 222
way of diffusing the situation and the British should transfer power as soon as a viable nationalist alternative emerged.

It must be emphasised that Nehru did not appreciate the manner in which the M.C.P. carried on the struggle against the British. Faced with a similar communist struggle in India and conscious of the dangers that communist parties posed to the newly independent Southeast Asian Countries, Nehru understood the true nature of communist threat to Malaya. Addressing a public meeting in Singapore, during the course of a tour of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore, Nehru declared that terrorism in Malaya was excessively harmful and it could not be tolerated. He further said that it passed his comprehension as to how a campaign of violence could lead to any good whatsoever. Nehru added that it only degraded humanity. 5

The Malayan nationalist leaders, on their part, looked to India for political inspiration. The relations were strengthened by frequent visits of leaders to both countries. Nehru visited Malaya in June 1950 and in April 1952, Dato Onn bin Ja'afar, Member of Home Affairs in the Malayan Government, visited India.

5. The Hindu, 20 June 1950
THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA ATTAINS INDEPENDENCE:

The Government and the people of India were naturally happy when the British transferred power to the Malayan hands and the Federation of Malaya attained independence on 31 August 1957. Following India's lead, the Federation of Malaya also became a member of the Commonwealth. The government of India was represented in the independence day celebrations in Kuala Lumpur by S.K. Patil, the Minister for Irrigation and Power. Patil said:

"We welcome the people and Government of Malaya for the statesmanlike way in which they have settled their problems. I am sure this new addition to the comity of free nations will strengthen the foundations of peace and international goodwill, for which India has stood all along."

Welcoming the independence of the new state, Nehru said in the Parliament:

"We welcome it for a variety of reasons. We welcome it because this is one more step, slowly and labouriously taken, in freeing Asia from foreign control. We welcome it because Malaya is a country which has thousands of years of association with India. Even now, in Malaya, as in other places in Southeast Asia, you will find evidence of India or Indian culture all over. And in the past few years our friendship and cooperation in some matters have grown."

6. Ibid., 28 August 1957
7. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches, September 1956-April 1961 (New Delhi, 1983), Reprint, p. 433
India's relations with the Federation of Malaya were uniformly good. Though the independent Federation decided to enter into a Defence and Security Arrangement with the United Kingdom, there was general appreciation in Indian Foreign Office as to the compulsive factors, both domestic and foreign, which made Malaya enter into such an arrangement.\(^8\) Explaining the attitude of Malaya to the Bandung principles and alignment with Britain the Tunku said that:

> every sensible country which wanted to live in peace and grow would accept the principles. Malaya did not want to align with any bloc or group. Her pact with Britain was solely for internal security and defence purposes as Malaya had not yet developed her national army and was not in a position to incur the expenditure....We are a free nation and abrogate the pact when and if we want.\(^9\)

Malaya did not pursue a dynamic foreign policy but adopted a low profile\(^10\) in its external relations. On major Cold War issues like the admission of China in the United Nations, the Chinese military action in Tibet and the Soviet intervention in Hungary, the Federation of Malaya aligned itself with the "free world", whereas on issues of colonialism and national

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9. The Hindu, 9 December 1958

self-determination it sided with the Afro-Asian countries. 11

The friendly relations between India and the Federation of Malaya led to frequent exchange of visits of important leaders. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the Vice President of India, visited the Federation in September 1957 and Rajendra Prasad, the President, visited Malaya in December 1958. In fact, Rajendra Prasad was the first Head of State to visit Malaya after independence. Welcoming Rajendra Prasad, Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Malayan Prime Minister, acknowledged "the debt which we and all other freedom loving people of Asia owe to your great leadership of India". 12 The Tunku also pointed out that the Malayan Indians were playing an active role in the political and economic life of the country. 13

Rajendra Prasad, who spoke at the state banquet in Kuala Lumpur, expressed great pleasure and satisfaction that Malaya achieved its independence. He asked the Indian community to be loyal citizens of the country in which they were living. He further stated:

11. V. Suryanarayanan, Malaysia’s China Policy, 1957-1974, Monograph 4, Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Madras (Madras, 1980), p. 2

12. The Hindu, 9 December 1958

13. Ibid.
I and my people value the friendship of your country and we look forward to ever increasing cooperation with your country and your people in the pursuit of our common ideals of peace and economic and social development for the welfare and happiness of our people.  

Another area of cooperation between India and the Federation of Malaya was in the military sphere. Number of Malayan cadets came to Indian defence establishments for training. The appointment of General Habibullah, Commandant of the Indian National Defence Academy, as the Deputy General Officer Commanding of the Malayan Army in 1959 was an expression of growing friendship between the two countries.

Yang-di-Pertuan Agong, the Paramount Ruler of Malaya, paid a return visit to India in December 1961. He told the Indian people, "we in Malaya as the newest free nation of Asia owe an undying debt to the example and inspiration of India in the struggle for independence". The proposal for Malaysia was made by Tunku Abdul Rahman, Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya, at the end of May 1961.

16. Ibid., pp. 157-8
INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA:

India and Indonesia have interacted with each other for centuries. Their contacts date back to the first millennium of the Christian era. Tagore referred to these contacts in his own inimitable way,

In a dim distant unrecorded age we had met, thou and I (Java and India)...when my speech became tangled in thine and my life in thy life.17

It was the intervention of foreign rule that prevented contact between India and the countries of Southeast Asia. In the present century the leaders of India and Indonesia met in 1927 in the Brussels Congress against Imperialism. The contacts established in the Brussels Congress were of great importance in developing India-Indonesia relations and also in taking interest in each others' freedom struggle. The Indian National Congress expressed its support for anti-imperialist struggles in other Asian countries especially Indonesia. Indonesia declared independence on 17 August 1945. India which could not help Indonesia as long as it remained a British possession was able to assist Indonesia to some extent with the assumption of power of the Interim Government in September 1946. In his first broadcast as the Vice President of the Interim Government, Nehru said,

We are of Asia and the people of Asia are nearer and closer to us than others. India is so situated that she is the pivot of Western, Southern and Southeast Asia. In the past her culture flowed to all these countries and they came to her in many ways. These contacts are being renewed and the future is bound to see a closer union between India and Southeast Asia....India has followed with anxious interest the struggle of the Indonesians for freedom and to them we send our good wishes.\(^{18}\)

INDIA'S SUPPORT FOR INDONESIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE:

India during this period was involved in Indonesia's freedom struggle. The Legislative Assembly protested against the Indian troops being used in "a most unholy manner in the most disgraceful and disgusting war that was going on in Indonesia".\(^{19}\) As soon as the Interim Government was formed it was decided to call back the Indian troops. The essence of India's foreign policy was ending of colonialism all over Asia. In keeping with this objective, even while under foreign domination, India convened the Asian Relations Conference in March-April 1947. The Conference was an epoch-making event in Asian history because it was the first time that nationalists of Asian countries came together. Speaking on the occasion, stressing on Asia's role, Nehru said,

18. Nehru, n. 7, p. 3

Asia will have to function effectively in the maintenance of peace. Indeed, there can be no peace unless Asia plays her part. There is today conflict in many countries, and all of us in Asia are full of our own troubles. Nevertheless, the whole spirit and outlook of Asia are peaceful, and the emergence of Asia in world affairs will be a powerful influence for world peace.  

The Indonesian delegates thanking the conference for the sympathy expressed for their freedom struggle hoped that they would extend more "concrete assistance" to them. Addressing the conference, Dr. Sjahrir said,

Our being here in such great numbers is in fact due not only to our immense interest in what is happening here, but also to the fact that we have been isolated for many years. We thought it would be a great thing if as many of our people as could be spared from our country could take advantage of such splendid opportunity to meet so many representatives of nearly all Asia. That is why Indonesia is so greatly represented in this conference.  

India along with Australia brought the Indonesian dispute to the attention of the United Nations. The Indian delegates considered the Netherlands guilty of numerous and
flagrant violations of the agreements reached with Indonesia and also of bypassing the United Nations. Throughout the discussions, India was critical of the attitude of the Western powers and appealed to the United Nations to take stronger measures.

India showed great interest on the question of Indonesian independence. Perhaps no other question in the outside world interested India more than the freedom of Indonesia. To the people of India,

Indonesia was a symbol - a symbol of the aspirations of many millions of the people of Asia - for freedom and their determination to obtain recognition of the freedom already obtained.  

The intensity of India's interest in the Indonesian question was evident from the fact that India convened a Conference on Indonesia in New Delhi in January 1949. The Conference outlined the long story of broken pledges and continuous attempts to undermine and break the Republic of Indonesia. Nehru in his inaugural address said,

We meet today because the freedom of a sister country of ours has been imperilled and the dying colonialism of a past age has raised its head again. Any person who is acquainted with the spirit of the Indonesian people or of Asia today, knows that this attempt to suppress Indonesian nationalism and the deep urge for freedom of the Indonesian people must fail. But if open and unabashed aggression is not checked and is condemned by other Powers, then hope will vanish and people will resort to other ways and other means...one thing is certain; there can be, and will be, no surrender to aggression and no acceptance or reimposition of colonial control.25

The eventual transfer of power from Dutch to Indonesian hands in 1949 was based on the resolutions passed by the conference.

The friendly and cordial relations which existed between the two countries were further strengthened in the years after Indonesia's independence. Two factors contributed to this growing friendship. First was the personal friendship between the leaders of the two countries. Second was the identity of foreign policy perceptions on major cold war issues. Like India, the Indonesian leaders did not want to entangle their country in the cold war and decided to pursue a policy of

non-alignment. Like New Delhi again, Jakarta tried to exert its benign influence to eradicate the last vestiges of colonialism in Asia and Africa, opposed the inhuman policy of apartheid practised by South Africa, adopted a constructive approach to problems of peace and security within the United Nations and tried to ward off external influences from Southeast Asia and make it an area of peace. It was but natural, therefore, for Indonesia to raise its voice of protest when the United States formed the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (S.E.A.T.O) in 1954. The striking resemblance in the foreign policies of the two countries was highlighted by the Far Eastern Survey in February 1951:

The one country to which Indonesia seem to look for leadership in foreign affairs is India, which also has tried to steer a middle course between the conflicting policies of Russia and the United States.

Evidence of cordial relations between the two countries can be seen in the frequent visits of leaders to both countries.

26. For a lucid account of Indonesia's foreign policy see:

and exchange of high level delegations. The first official state visit of President Sukarno was to India in January 1950. President Sukarno was the chief guest in the Republic Day Celebrations in New Delhi on 26 January 1950. Explaining the significance of his visit to India, Sukarno said,

The whole world realises the deep significance of the independence of India, but I think that there is no country which realises its significance more than Indonesia does. The spiritual ties that bind Indonesia and India date back to hundreds, even thousands of years. I pray that free independent India will achieve peace and prosperity and become one of the greatest nations in the world and that India and Indonesia will march together in close cooperation.  

Six months later Nehru paid a return visit to Indonesia and he was received with great eclat and enthusiasm throughout the archipelago. Arnold Moenonutu, Indonesia's Information Minister, highlighted the significance of Nehru's visit to Indonesia when he said "it was not a routine visit by one Head of State to another but had more profound and abiding significance". Visits by other distinguished leaders followed in subsequent years.

28. The Hindu, 26 January 1950

29. Ibid., 8 June 1950
INDIA'S STAND ON THE QUESTION OF WEST IRI.

India also consistently supported the cause of Indonesia and tried to rally world opinion in Indonesia's favour on the question of West Irian. The issue of West Irian dominated Indonesian politics from 1949 to 1962 and President Sukarno made it a test case of the anti-colonial credentials of Indonesia's friends and foes alike. Unfortunately the question of West Irian, which was purely an issue of decolonisation, got enmeshed in cold war rivalry and became intractable during the 1950's. Due to the uncompromising and unfriendly approach adopted by the Western powers, the question of West Irian could never get the required two-thirds majority in the United Nations between 1954 and 1957. The mediatory efforts of neutral powers also did not get off the ground.

As mentioned earlier, India consistently championed the cause of Indonesia on the question of West Irian both within and outside the United Nations. In June 1950, in the course of his visit to Indonesia, Nehru unequivocally supported the Indonesian claim. 30 In the United Nations, India's representative V.K.Krishna Menon exploded the Dutch myth that West Irian was never a part of Indonesia and strongly urged the United Nations to take immediate steps to peacefully resolve the issue in Indonesia's favour. He added that,

30. Ibid., 22 June 1950
West Irian, so far as the Government of India is concerned, is an integral part of Indonesia. The position of the Government of India is that West Irian is a colonial territory, having been administered by the Netherlands, and whole sovereignty has been transferred under the terms of the Charter of Transfer of Sovereignty. 31

Nehru also frequently expressed his support to Indonesia. Nehru pointed out that it was most unfortunate that in spite of the conciliatory approach followed by the Afro-Asian countries, the resolutions pertaining to West Irian failed to get two-thirds majority. He emphasised that,

....regardless of the particular problems that exist in parts of Asia, that in the new Asia that has arisen, it is very difficult for that Asia to stomach or to digest any foreign occupation anywhere. That is regardless of the justification of any particular problem; it just goes against the spirit of the times, the spirit of Asia as it is. Such foreign occupation may continue for some time, a short time or along time, but it will always be resented; it will always create difficulties and will undoubtedly ultimately have to be given up. 32

The pressure exerted by the non-aligned countries, with the strong support of the Socialist bloc and combined with the mediatory policies adopted by the United States during the Kennedy era finally led to the resolution of the West Irian dispute to the satisfaction of both Jakarta and Hague. Nehru

31. G.A.O.R., Session 17, plen. mtg. 1127, 21 September 1962, pp. 57-8
32. India, Lok Sabha Debates, series 2, vol. 10, no. 10, 17 December 1957, cols. 5880-5881
congratulated both the countries and said,

I should like to congratulate both those Governments on the peaceful settlement of a very difficult and delicate problem.... This removes one source of conflict in Southeast Asia. There are still other conflicts going on in Southeast Asia, but the settlement of these two is a matter of good augury for the peace of Southeast Asia, and we are particularly happy not only because of our intimate contacts with the countries concerned but also because, in a sense, we are part of Southeast and we earnestly hope that there will be peace there.33

INDIA AND INDONESIA AT BANDUNG AND BELGRADE:

India supported the Indonesian interest in convening an Afro-Asian Conference. The Conference which was held in Bandung in April 1955 brought for the first time in the same platform, the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. The conference was held immediately after the signing of the Panchsheel agreement between India and China which incorporated the five principles of 'peaceful co-existence'. One of the first non-aligned countries to subscribe to these principles of peaceful co-existence was Indonesia. The two countries also, as mentioned earlier, vigorously opposed the U.S. attempts to form the S.E.A.T.O. which represented a danger to the independence of Southeast Asian countries.

The Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung represented in many ways a high water mark in Indonesia's foreign policy. It was in Bandung that Chou En-lai made his diplomatic debut and made a tremendous impression on non-aligned leaders, especially President Sukarno of Indonesia. It was also the beginning of Sino-Indonesian friendship which continued for a period of ten years. Chou En-lai repeatedly affirmed People's Republic of China's (P.R.C.) commitment to the principles of peaceful co-existence; he whole-heartedly supported and pledged aid to anti-colonial struggles in Asia and Africa and also tried to allay the fears of many Southeast Asian countries that P.R.C. would use the Overseas Chinese as a fifth column.

A diligent student can see a difference in the style and emphasis between Sukarno and Nehru on the crucial question of colonialism in Bandung Conference itself. In Bandung, Nehru declared that classical colonialism was "dead and gone" and old imperialism was "fading away". With the unresolved problem of West Irian still at hand President Sukarno took a diametrically opposite stand. Sukarno asserted that colonialism was the greatest danger to the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa and declared.  


We are often told 'colonialism is dead'. Let us not be deceived or even soothed by that. I say to you, colonialism is not dead. How can we say it is dead, so long as vast areas of Asia and Africa are unfree. And I beg you, do not think of colonialism only in the classic form which we of Indonesia and our brothers in different parts of Asia and Africa know. Colonialism has also its modern dress, in the form of economic control, intellectual control, actual, physical control by a small alien community within a nation. 36

Sukarno's proposition was widely acclaimed by the Chinese and their convergence of interests increased in subsequent years. The growing friendship between Indonesia and China was paralleled by deterioration in Sino-Indian relations. The Chinese repression in Tibet, the flight of Dalai Lama to India and the growing differences about the undemarcated Sino-Indian border culminating in armed clashes between the two countries - all were symptoms of a growing rift between the two largest and most populous countries of Asia. The late 1950's also saw the emergence of Sukarno as the undisputed leader of Indonesia. The abandonment of parliamentary democracy and the emergence of Guided Democracy catapulted Sukarno to a domineering position in Indonesian political system. 37 He became the chief spokesman of the foreign policy of the country and was ardently supported by the Partai Kommunis Indonesia (P.K.I.) in his anti-imperialist

36. Agung, n. 26, pp. 511-12

stance. The involvement of Western powers in support of the Outer Islands in the civil war of 1958 and the continued intransigence of the Dutch on the West Irian issue made him not only an anti-imperialist, but also anti-West.

At the end of 1960 President Sukarno made a major announcement on his country's foreign policy in the United Nations which can be considered as the ideological basis of Indonesia's foreign policy during the early 1960's. According to President Sukarno the cold war conflict was the consequence of "inequalities" both within a nation and between nations. These inequalities, Sukarno maintained, were the results of "imperialism and colonialism" which should be eliminated in order to remove the exploitation of man by man and nation by nation. Imperialism and colonialism, therefore, according to Sukarno, was the root cause of all conflicts. The present era Sukarno pointed out, was characterised by breakup of empires and emergence of new nations. The great powers who dominated the United Nations as it was constituted, could not decide on vital questions of war and peace and had "no right, singly or together to settle the future of the world". He strongly advocated the reorganisation of the United Nations which alone could truly reflect the new configuration of forces that had come into existence as a result of the consolidation of the
socialist world and independence of many Asian and African countries. Sukarno divided the world into two categories -
the "new emerging forces" demanding freedom, equality and justice
and the "old established forces" who were keen to maintain the
status quo. The "new emerging forces", as Sukarno saw it,
consisted of the socialist countries and the newly independent
countries of Asia and Africa and "old established forces"
comprised of countries of Western Europe and the United States.
Sukarno asserted that a conflict between the "new emerging forces"
and the "old established forces" was inevitable because colonialism
and imperialism would not yield ground easily and the "new
emerging forces" would have to wage a concerted struggle so
that they could occupy their rightful place in the international
system. 38

Such an ideological formulation and approach to
international politics was diametrically opposed to Nehru's view
of international affairs. These two perceptions had to clash
and they clashed in the first meeting of the non-aligned countries
in Belgrade in September 1961. In India's view the greatest
threat to world peace came from the difference between the two

super powers and the possibility of a conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States. Nehru, therefore, exhorted that non-aligned countries must exert their maximum to bring about a detente between the two. To quote Nehru's words:

What we have contended against and what we are continuing to struggle against - imperialism, colonialism, racialism and the rest - things which are very important and to which reference has been made repeatedly here, all these things are somewhat over-shadowed by this crisis. For if war comes all else for the moment goes. Therefore it becomes inevitable for us to pay attention to and .... to make sure that the dominant note of our thinking and action, and what we say and put down, is this crisis that confronts humanity.39

Nehru wanted the non-aligned countries to view the problem in the proper perspective. He stated: "First things must come first and nothing is more important or has priority than this world situation of war and peace. Everything else, however, vital to us - and other things are vital to us - has a secondary place".40

Sukarno took a diametrically opposite stand and clashed with Nehru in Belgrade. Sukarno asserted that the root cause of international tension was imperialism and colonialism and called


40. Ibid.
on the non-aligned countries to be prepared for a continuous struggle against imperialist forces. To quote Sukarno's words, "In every single case, the cause, the root of international tension, is imperialism and colonialism and the forcible division of nations". The tension grew, he believed, from the conflict between the new emergent forces for freedom and justice and the old forces of domination. According to Sukarno different social systems can co-exist, but there can be no co-existence between independence and justice on one side and imperialism-colonialism on the other. This was the essence of his doctrine of inevitable conflict between the "new emerging forces" and the "old established forces". Sukarno also pleaded for overhauling of the structure of the United Nations in order to suit the present day realities. To ensure that the world body did not "become the instrument of any power bloc", he urged that the new, emerging forces should find adequate recognition so that they could "exert a rightful influence in the world councils where major world problems are considered". 41

Roeslan Abdulgani, a leading member of the Indonesian delegation, to the conference at Belgrade, highlighted the difference between the two countries as follows:

41. Arora, n. 38, p. 21
We (Indonesia) .... believe that actually at this very moment there is no nuclear war as yet. However, in a colonial war, like Angola, Algeria, Tunisia, etc., ordinary bombs alone can kill numerous Asians and Africans .... Of course, we do not close our eyes to the danger of a nuclear war, but neither could it be accepted that colonialism is not a major issue. I can understand the Indian frame of mind. India has developed within her relations with Britain and the Commonwealth, in a different way from the experiences Indonesia, Indo-China, Tunisia, Algeria, Angola, etc., have experienced or are experiencing in a struggle against Dutch, French and Portuguese colonialism. 42

The differences between the two countries, though in the beginning was muted, gradually widened. Added to this was the loss of personal rapport between the leaders of the two countries.

It was in such an atmosphere of growing friendship between India and the Federation of Malaya and emerging estrangement between India and the Republic of Indonesia that the proposal for the formation of Malaysia was made in May 1961.

42. Ibid., pp. 23-4
INDIA'S ATTITUDE TO THE FORMATION OF MALAYSIA:

India's favourable attitude towards the proposed Federation of Malaysia became evident as early as December 1961. During the visit of Yang di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia to India, Vice President Radhakrishnan expressed India's sympathies for the Malayan proposal to bring together Federation of Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo and Sarawak into a larger Malaysian Federation. He welcomed it as a factor contributing to decolonisation and peace and security of the region. During Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's visit to India in April 1962 he emphasised on the anti-Communist character of the Malaysia plan. Various aspects of the scheme and its regional implications also figured in the talks between Nehru and Lee Kuan Yew. At a Press Conference in New Delhi, Lee Kuan Yew observed that Nehru was "remarkably well-informed on all matters connected with Southeast Asia" and that Nehru "understood his point of view very well and expressed sympathy with his view that this (Malaysia) was a logical way of liquidating the British Empire in Southeast Asia".

43. The Hindu, 9 December 1961
45. The Statesman, 20 September 1962
ESTRANGEMENT IN INDIA-INDONESIA RELATIONS:

India at this particular juncture was confronted with two crises. Anti-Indian feelings were whipped up in Indonesia and it culminated in largescale demonstrations and looting of Indian shops in September 1962 during the Asian Games. The crisis was the consequence of Indonesian refusal to grant visas to the teams from Formosa and Israel to participate in the Asian Games. This was resented by the Asian Games Federation and International Olympic Committee. In pursuance of the decision taken by the Committee, C.D. Sondhi, the Federation's Vice President, called for the use of another name for the Games. The Indonesian leaders took it as an insult to Indonesia and an affront to President Sukarno. Sondhi incidentally happened to be an Indian national. Unfortunately his statement was construed as representing the view of the Indian Government. The incident came handy to Indonesian politicians and anti-Indian feelings reached an all time high.

Several thousand Indonesians stormed the Indian Embassy. They smashed the furniture and broke window panes, while another group threw stones on the Embassy in protest against Sondhi's statements. Indonesia's Minister of Trade, Dr. Suharto, declared that Sondhi's behaviour would adversely affect Indonesia's relations with India. He said that while hoping for improvement of relations, Jakarta would refrain from
entering into new trade relations since it would come under criticism by the people. 46

Indian Ambassador in Indonesia, Apa B. Pant, was shocked by the turn of events in Jakarta and the precipitate action contemplated by the Indonesian Government. In his autobiography, *A Moment in Time*, Apa B. Pant recalls the difficult days that he spent in Jakarta: "...a serious polarisation ensued, and a violent anti-Indian demonstration and an attack on the Indian Embassy in Djakarta. This was under the Presidency of Sukarno. My attempts to cool the cinders of anger led only to more misunderstanding". 47 The statement issued by the Ambassador stated, "the statement (of Dr. Suharto) was really surprising and shocking. The Government of India had nothing to do with the Asian Games Federation or with the representative Sondhi, Vice President of the Asian Games Federation*. The statement further said that Sondhi was not in Indonesia as an Indian representative. The Government of India and the people of India had the highest regard and affection for President Sukarno. "That such a doubt should creep into the mind of our Indonesian brothers is a tragedy", the statement added. 48

46. *Indonesian Observer* (Jakarta), 1 September 1962
47. Apa B. Pant, *A Moment in Time* (New Delhi, 1974), p. 64
48. *Indonesian Observer*, 1 September 1962
Merdeka, a local newspaper, wrote that it was "really disappointed" with the statement of the Indian Embassy. Merdeka warned that the Indian Government would have to face "all the consequences if President Sukarno was humiliated" by an Indian like Sondhi.\(^49\) Subidjo, Secretary-General of the National Front, declared that the idea of changing the nomenclature of the Games was an insult to President Sukarno who had inaugurated the games.\(^50\) The Indonesian Herald, an English language newspaper, which was generally regarded as the mouth-piece of the Foreign Ministry "welcomed" the statement of the Indian Embassy that the Government of India had nothing to do with decisions made by Indian sports representative in governing bodies of the Asian Games Federation.\(^51\)

Dr. Subandrio, Indonesian Foreign Minister, expressed regret over what had occurred at the Embassy building of India. He said investigations would be conducted to find out the guilty. "Personally however", Dr. Subandrio added, "I am also offended by Sondhi's statement and I can understand that the reaction given by the people was to defend the honour of the President as the Great Leader of the Revolution whom we all love". In concluding his statement, the Foreign Minister said, "our friendship with India and other Asian and African countries is very important".\(^52\)

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49. Quoted in *The Sunday Standard*, 2 September 1962
50. *Indian Express*, 3 September 1962
51. Quoted in *The Sunday Standard*, 2 September 1962
52. *Indonesian Observer*, 4 September 1962
The Indian Government naturally was much distressed by the happenings in Indonesia. Prime Minister Nehru was of the opinion that since no meeting or procession could take place without permission from the Government, some official must have had prior knowledge of it. The Trade Minister's statement, Nehru added, indicated that the Indonesian authorities were actively involved in the whole affair. Nehru further said "It is highly deplorable that this kind of thing should happen". Nehru also suspected Chinese complicity in the storming of the Indian Embassy. The Chinese had, in any case, stepped up a vicious propaganda over the misunderstanding due to the views expressed by G.D. Sondhi. The Indian Government stopped short of sending a protest note to Indonesia. As Nehru said, the Jakarta riots convinced New Delhi that it could "no longer afford to take a sentimental view of the ties with Indonesia". So when the Sino-Indian border conflict broke out in October 1962 while Malaya came out in open support of India, Indonesia adopted a non-committal stand.

53. India, Lok Sabha Debates, series 3, session 2, 3-8, vol. 8, 4 September 1962, cols. 5908-11

54. Statesman, 5 October 1962
SINO-INDIAN CONFLICT: REACTION OF INDONESIA AND THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA:

Federation of Malaya was the first Asian country to immediately condemn Chinese aggression. The Malayan Premier, Tunku Abdul Rahman, was on a state visit to India and Pakistan at the time of border conflict. On 28 October 1962, the Tunku warned the countries of Asia that they would be making a mistake if they just sat back and did nothing in the face of China's armed and hostile aggression on India. The Tunku characterised the "open Chinese aggression in India" as a "glaring red signal of danger to non-communist Asia". The Tunku said "we in Malaya know very well what you are facing because we had to fight armed communist terrorism in twelve long years of emergency in our own country." The Tunku, therefore, viewed the dispute as essentially a struggle between democracy and communism and not between Indians and Chinese. The border incursions were essentially a show of strength to impress the small Asian nations. To quote Tunku:

55. The Hindu, 29 October 1962
56. The Malay Mail (Singapore), 31 October 1962
Being lovers of democracy, we must support democracy. In the event of war being declared, Malaya must give all-out support to India. There can be no half-way policy. Either we go all out and sink with democracy or with communism if we support Communism. For those who support Communism they will have a lingering death, of that I am very sure now.  

Nehru said that the Malayan Prime Minister had expressed his country's sympathy fully to India without any ambiguity. The government and people of India were very happy with the spontaneous Malayan support. As Nehru said:

We have liked this categorical stand and his statement that whatever happens he will be our friend and comrade. It is a great thing that a country like Malaya with which we have old bonds of friendship should strengthen this friendship when we face big dangers on our borders. I am thankful to the Prime Minister of Malaya for all this.  

National sentiment over the Tunku's remarks were reflected in Indian newspapers. In an editorial headlined "The Friend from Malaya" the Hindustan Times said:

57. Indian Express, 3 November 1962

58. The Hindu, 29 October 1962
No words of encouragement could be timelier. Tunku Abdul Rahman knows from first hand experiences the nature and methodology of Communism. The Tunku's performance is all the more deserving admiration as his country has a considerable population of Chinese descent. India owes him her lasting debt of gratitude for his forcefully expressed sympathy. 59

In order to channelise aid to India the Tunku started an "Aid India Fund" on 9 November 1962 to provide supplies like blankets and warm clothing, medicines and food-stuffs to the Indian troops. 60 On 11 November 1962 the Tunku renamed the "Aid India Fund" as "Save Democracy Fund".

The first official reaction from Indonesia was Foreign Minister Dr. Subandrio's statement on 5 November 1962. After detailed discussions with the Indian Ambassador, Subandrio told the Press that Indonesia "stands firm on the principle that the Sino-Indian border dispute should be settled peacefully". 61 He added, "I would like to emphasise that Indonesia has no desire to be mediator unless there is a point of meeting that both countries can accept." 62

59. Quoted in the Straits Times, (Singapore), 31 October 1962
60. The Hindu, 10 November 1962
61. Guardian (Rangoon), 7 November 1962
62. Ibid.
It was a clear indication that Indonesia wanted to avoid taking sides lest its growing relations with China would cool off. It also implied Indonesia's readiness to offer its services as a mediator provided there was "any concurrence of views" between the two countries.

After detailed discussions with the Chinese Charge d'Affairs, Li Chu-Sheng, Dr. Subandrio expressed confidence that a meeting between Indian and Chinese leaders should and could be arranged to settle the Sino-Indian frontier dispute peacefully. Speaking to reporters, the Foreign Minister added that "hope is mounting at present" that a meeting point would be found between India and the People's Republic of China.63

The Colombo Conference of six Afro-Asian non-aligned countries - Ceylon, Burma, Ghana, U.A.R., Indonesia and Cambodia - after considerable discussions made its proposals for a settlement. Speaking about this settlement, Dr. Subandrio said it was difficult for the Colombo Conference to reach an agreed formula for they were all friends of both India and China. The six countries wanted "to bring about negotiations between India and the People's Republic of China", to keep their endeavours and continue their efforts "until the final settlement.

63. *Indonesian Observer*, 17 November 1962
of this problem could be negotiated directly" between the two countries. There was a general sense of dismay and bewilderment in India of a friend not acting true in times of need with regard to the Indonesia's response to the Sino-Indian conflict.

INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES: POLICY OF Confrontation AGAINST THE FORMATION OF MALAYSIA:

By the end of 1962 and the beginning of 1963 the proposal for the formation of Malaysia came under attack by Indonesia and the Philippines. Sukarno did not oppose the proposed Federation in the beginning in view of his repeated pronouncements that Indonesia did not have any territorial ambitions once it got West New Guinea. He, however, began to adopt a publicly hostile posture toward Malaysia once the West New Guinea question was settled in its favour in mid-1962. The Brunei revolt (of December 1962) against the formation of Malaysia changed the stand taken by Indonesia. He denounced Malaysia as a "neo-colonialist" plot meant to deny the right of self-determination to the people of Sarawak, Brunei and Sabah. In January 1963 he announced the policy of Konfrontasi - a policy of diplomatic, economic and military pressure.  

64. Indian Express, 13 December 1962
65. Lalita Prasad Singh, Power Politics and Southeast Asia (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 65-66
The armed forces and the Partai Kommunis Indonesia (P.K.I.) also vehemently opposed the formation of Malaysia.

Indonesia found an ally in the Philippines who claimed North Borneo. An initial British refusal even to talk about the claim only intensified Manila's desire to prosecute it. The Brunei revolt also provided the Philippines with an opportunity to demonstrate their dislike of Malaysia by playing host to Azahari during the first week of the revolt.66

**INDIA WELCOMES THE FORMATION OF MALAYSIA:**

Among the first regional Governments to welcome the formation of Malaysia was India. Indian officials criticised Indonesian attacks on Malaysia and did not respond favourably to Philippine claims to Sabah.67 Nehru expressed the hope that the efforts of the United Nations Secretary General who was taking interest in the problem of orderly and peaceful transfer of power by the United Kingdom would be successful and the present tension there would be removed. The proposal for the formation of the Federation of Malaysia was welcomed by Nehru since British control over Singapore, North Borneo and Sarawak would be transferred and they would gain their

67. Heimsath and Mansingh, n. 1, p. 251
"independence and sovereignty". In reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, if Malaya had informed the Prime Minister about the developments and sought sympathy and support, Nehru said:

I cannot remember any special appeal....This matter has been pending for a long time and naturally both countries (Malaya and Indonesia) have from time to time expressed their opinion ....In fact, there is a third country coming into the picture, that is, the Philippines, who have their own claims and who object to the formation of this. So, it is a complicated matter...we welcomed this on the basis especially that British control was going to be transferred to these places, they cease to be colonies. That is the first thing. And the second thing is their being formed into a kind of federation of Malaysia. The major thing it seemed to us, was that the colonies should cease to be colonies, the rest it was for them to decide. 69

The formation of Malaysia had been welcomed by the Indian communities in all these territories because Malaysia would ensure them "political stability, racial balance and economic prosperity". 70 India gave her support as the new federation would be a great bulwark against communism in this region. 71 Dinesh Singh, the Indian Deputy Minister of External Affairs, who was in Singapore on a five-day fact-finding mission

68. India, Lok Sabha Debates, series 3, vol. 13, nos. 1-10, 22 February 1963, col. 736
69. Ibid., p. 737.
70. The Hindu, 17 October 1962
71. Ibid., 11 June 1963
in Singapore and Malaya, said that Indonesian opposition to
the Malaysia plan had not in any way changed India's staunch
support for the proposed Federation. "We will continue to
back it", he said. 72

India welcomed the inauguration of Malaysia on
16 September 1963. Prime Minister Nehru in his message said:

I have great pleasure to send to Your Excellency
our warm felicitations and greeting on the
happy occasion of the inauguration of the
Federation of Malaysia. 73

The President in his message said:

I have much pleasure in sending to Your Majesty
and through you to the Government and the
people of the Federation of Malaysia the most
cordial congratulations of the Government and
the people of India to which I add my own,
together with our sincere good wishes for the
prosperity and well-being of the new state
and for the welfare and advancement of the
Malaysian people. 74

Lakshmi Menon, Minister of State, represented the Government
of India in the Malaysia celebrations held in Kuala Lumpur. 75

72. The Times (London), 17 May 1963
73. The Statesman, 16 September 1963
74. The Hindu, 16 September 1963
75. India, Ministry of External Affairs, Report 1963-1964
(New Delhi, n.d.), p. 34
The Indian Press also hailed the inauguration of Malaysia. The Hindu welcomed the "birth of the multi-racial Federation of Malaysia" as "a landmark in the history of post-war Asia". In an article contributed to the Indian Express it was stated that "16 September was a red letter day in the history of Asia not only because it witnessed the birth of a new nation, Malaysia, but also saw the virtual end of colonialism on that continent."

Speaking in the Lok Sabha on 16 September 1963, Nehru referred to the trouble which arose in Indonesia and the Philippines with regard to the formation of Malaysia. It appeared several times that there was a settlement. The matter was referred to the U.N. to find out the view of certain inhabitants in Southeast Asian territories and the U.N. reported in favour of this amalgamation and formation of Malaysia. Nehru stated:

We accept the report of the U.N....We hope that the slight friction that exists between Indonesia, Philippines and Malaya will be settled satisfactorily and Malaysia will have a good start.

76. The Hindu, 18 September 1963

77. Arora, n. 44, p. 131

78. India, Lok Sabha Debates, series 3, vol. 21, session 5, nos. 21-30, 16 September 1963, col. 6280
Nehru in a written answer to a member in the Rajya Sabha said that reactions to the formation of Malaysia in the Afro-Asian countries were generally favourable. As to how many non-aligned nations supported the formation of Malaysia, Nehru said, "with the exception of two countries all the other non-aligned countries which attended the 1961 Belgrade Conference including observers, have recognised Malaysia". 79

Indonesia did not recognise the new Federation. Anti-Malaysia and anti-British demonstrations were carried out in Jakarta. The Statesman criticized Indonesia for its refusal "to acknowledge Malaysia after having agreed to abide by the findings of the U.N. mission to Sarawak and North Borneo". 80 Rajagopalachari, founder leader of the Swatantra Party, called on India to give its "sympathy fully, warmly and without any hesitation to Malaysia in its present conflict with Indonesia". 81

The Malaysian Federation was welcomed by India because it would serve as a democratic bastion in an area which was becoming politically very unstable. 82 The government and the people of Malaysia were extremely happy with India's spontaneous support to the cause of Malaysia. The Tunku declared

79. The Hindu, 26 February 1964
80. Arora, n. 44, p. 132
81. The Straits Times, 9 July 1964
82. The National Herald (Delhi), 2 September 1964
that he was extremely happy with the support of India.\textsuperscript{83}

Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister, said his Government was apparently satisfied with the strong support New Delhi gave it since the "Malaysian Federation was formed eighteen months ago".\textsuperscript{84} He said his country would welcome the mediation of a country like India in the Malaysian-Indonesian dispute.\textsuperscript{85}

\textbf{INDIA-INDONESIA RELATIONS AT A LOW EBB:}

India's relations with Indonesia suffered a severe set-back. Local newspapers described India's foreign policy as 'pro-Western' and 'pro-imperialist'. Some of them published the report circulated by the national news agency Antara under the heading: 'Nehru defends Malaysia'. The report pinpointed the "claim" made by Nehru that "only two" Southeast Asian countries have so far expressed their opposition to Malaysia and thus underlined Indian Prime Minister's unfriendly tone towards Indonesia.\textsuperscript{86} In an interview the Indonesian Deputy Foreign Minister, Ganas Harson said: "We consider India's

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Indian Express}, 24 September 1964
\item \textit{Hindustan Times}, 20 March 1965
\item Ibid., 21 March 1965
\item \textit{Dawn} (Karachi), 3 March 1964
\end{itemize}
attitude towards Indonesia particularly in regard to Malaysia as unfriendly and unwise.\textsuperscript{87} India-Indonesia relations at this time were at the lowest ebb. Though India made it clear that India's recognition of Malaysia did not mean unfriendliness to Indonesia, there was no improvement in Jakarta-New Delhi relations.

Malaysia, which came into existence on 16 September 1963, was very keen to get international support in the face of mounting confrontation from Jakarta. The Malaysian Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, requested India's help in this direction and appealed to New Delhi to try to include his country among the invitees to the Non-Aligned Nations Conference scheduled to be held in Cairo in October 1964.\textsuperscript{88} He wrote to all the Governments participating in the Conference requesting them to give his country a "fair hearing" against possible Indonesian abuse. It was significant that the Indonesian attempt to malign Malaysia in the Conference was not successful. It was largely due to Indian initiative that the Malaysian dispute was not included in the final declaration.\textsuperscript{89} New Delhi eloquently championed the cause of Malaysia in the U.N. which culminated in Malaysia's

\textsuperscript{87} Indian Express, 23 April 1965
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., 26 September 1964
\textsuperscript{89} G.P. Bhattacharjee, Southeast Asian Politics: Malaysia and Indonesia (Calcutta, 1976), p. 191
election to the Security Council. New Delhi also canvassed membership for Malaysia in the second Afro-Asian Conference scheduled to be held in 1965, during the preparation meeting held in Jakarta in April 1964, and various other Afro-Asian organisations. The already strained relations between India and Indonesia further deteriorated during this period.

President Sukarno viewed India's support for Malaysia and efforts to mobilise world opinion in favour of Kuala Lumpur as unfriendly acts intended not only to prop up neo-colonialism in Southeast Asia but also to deny Indonesia its rightful place in the world.

At the end of Nehru era (May 1964) relations between India and Indonesia were more strained than ever and Indonesia alienated so completely that the traditional India-Indonesia friendship and close relationship were falling apart. 90 Swaran Singh's statement in the Rajya Sabha sums up India-Malaysia relations:

As for Malaysia we have always understood with a great deal of appreciation their peculiar difficulties. And we can add that Malaysia also has always understood our problems and there has been a special friendship between Malaysia and India. 91


91. *Foreign Affairs Record*, vol. 12, no. 8, August 1966, p. 200