SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
INDO-SOVIE T RELATIONS, 1965-82

ABSTRACT

THESIS
SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
Doctor of Philosophy
IN
POLITICAL SCIENCE

BY
RESHMA

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
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ABSTRACT

The Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Soviet Policy in South Asia With Special Reference to Indo-Soviet Relations, 1965-82" is an attempt to study the pattern of Soviet policy in South Asia and to analyse the various factors and trends of Indo-Soviet relations which have grown very cordial and strong in the post-war era. Relations between these two countries have now come to occupy an important place not only in the Subcontinent but also in world politics.

Both geographically and in terms of socio-cultural continuities and economic infrastructure, India occupies a central place among all South Asian countries. The other countries of the region like Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka have individually and separately more in common with India than with each other.

The Soviet presence in this Asian region has proved to be more effective and durable than those of its two rivals, the United States and China. The search for peace, stability, and security in South Asia is a subject of global importance in our independent world. The US arms connection with Pakistan is said to be the prime cause of many of the problems of the subcontinent, reflecting the thesis that the security threats to the subcontinent come from outside powers and from the military build up of local
states. The intrusion by outside powers (and specially the US) constituted an interference in the natural order of things.

Soviet Union was directly involved in intra-regional affairs in South Asia in the mid 1950s and this reached its high water-mark in the Tashkent Declaration of 1966. India's military reverses in its border clashes with China brought into sharp focus the limitation of the South Asia policy that the Soviet Union had followed till then which was almost exclusively India-centred.

China's growing role in Pakistan compelled Soviet Union to establish its presence in Pakistan and counter China's growing influence there. There was a reshaping of Soviet policy towards the South Asian region in general and towards Pakistan in particular President Ayub Khan's visit to Moscow in 1967 resulted not only in trade agreement, economic cooperation, cultural exchange but also Soviet supply of arms to Pakistan. India protested against Soviet decision. The Soviet Union had assured India that Pakistan would not use Soviet arms against India. Since 1970s the Soviet Union started getting more involved in the affairs of South Asia. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was signed on 9 August 1971. The real purpose of the treaty was to safeguard India's security and strengthen its defence capability.

One of the main objectives of the Soviet foreign policy is the development of relations of friendship and comprehensive
cooperation with India. Despite the differences in their socio-economic systems, the two countries are united by a common loyalty to the cause of peace and detente and the ideals developing relations between the two states on a just and democratic basis. India and the Soviet Union have no conflict of national interests because of geographical proximity. It is in their common interest to develop and strengthen peaceful cooperation and friendly relations.

Indo-Soviet relations started to be built up in the early 50s and have developed steadily after Nehru's visit to the Soviet Union in 1955, followed by the visit of Soviet leaders Khrushchev and Bulganin to India in the following year. The Soviet Union has stood by India in times of need and supported India's policy of nonalignment, peace and national independence, India has also supported the Soviet Union's policy of peace and cooperation. The open support to India by the Soviet Union on Kashmir issue was a landmark in Indo-Soviet relations. In 1957 and 1962 the Soviet Union exercised its veto in the Security Council against the Western resolutions on Kashmir which supported Pakistan.

Since the Indo-Pak war of 1965, the Soviet Union has been enjoying a special position in the Indian subcontinent among the superpowers. The Bangladesh crisis and the Indo-Pak war 1971 had further strengthened the position.
The Soviet Union and India cooperate effectively on the international scene, including in the UN and other international organisations. Both the countries consistently support the strengthening of detente in international relations and its extension to all regions of the world, universal and complete disarmament under effective international control, the elimination of war from human existence and the affirmation in international relations of such principles as the right of each people to choose its own political system, the refusal to use force or the threat of force, respect for sovereignty and the inviolability of frontiers, noninterference in each other's internal affairs and cooperation in economic and other spheres on the basis of equality and mutual advantage.

On the economic front, the high momentum of Soviet aid to India, witnessed in the fifties and in the first half of the sixties, could not be maintained in the changed economic environment of the second half of the sixties, and particularly in the seventies. Since the second half of the sixties, utilization of Soviet aid declined sharply. At the same time, with the devaluation of the rupee in 1966, the debt repayments mounted up. In recent years, India also began to make repayments in advance. The combined effect of all these was that Soviet aid turned negative in most of the years except when the Soviet Union gave a wheat loan in 1974-75. However, even the wheat loan was repaid
in 1977 and 1978. With this India has repaid more than what it received from the Soviet Union. Thus, in the 1970s there was not only 'zero aid', but there was also a reverse flow of resources from India to the Soviet Union.

Similarly, the trade between India and the Soviet Union increased at a phenomenal rate in the fifties and sixties. Within a short period, the Soviet Union acquired a significant position in India's exports and imports. However, the rate of growth of Indo-Soviet trade during the seventies slowed down considerably as compared to the growth in the first phase as well as in relation to the growth of India's trade with some other regions, such as ECN, ESCAP, Latin America and OPEC counties. And also there was no dramatic change in the composition of India's exports to the Soviet Union during the seventies.

In many ways, despite criticisms within the apparatus of government and outside, the connection has grown and become a major dimension of the Indian reality. The relationship can be interpreted in many ways, although it will be generally agreed that it has been mutually beneficial for both countries particularly in times of crisis.

The study has been divided into seven chapters. The first chapter deals with the importance of South Asia in international
politics. The geographical location of South Asia, its strategic importance and its significance in world politics have been discussed in this chapter.

Soviet policy in south Asia is the subject matter of discussion in chapters II & III. The Soviet approach to various developments in the subcontinent and its role performance in South Asia has been thoroughly examined. An attempt has been made to study the Soviet foreign policy in this area in all its aspects.

Since the main thrust of this study is on Indo-Soviet Relations, more space has been devoted to this subject. The whole gamut of Indo-Soviet relations has been taken up for a close study of actions and inter-actions of the two very important powers in world politics. Though the subject is too wide and broad, an attempt has been made to cover almost all crucial areas of a most friendly and cordial relationship. Areas, both of cooperation and misapprehensions, have been covered.

Chapter VI of this thesis focuses on economic and cultural ties between India and the Soviet Union without which the study would remain incomplete. Economic and cultural aspects of relations between the two countries can be termed as catalysts for bringing the nations together.
The study ends with some concluding remarks. The conclusions drawn in this chapter are based on the totality of the pattern of Soviet approach in South Asia and the relations between India and the Soviet Union.
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1989
Dedicated
to
My Parents
whose love has always been inspiring me.
CERTIFICATE

Certified that the work entitled "Soviet Policy Towards South Asia With Special Reference to Indo-Soviet Relations, 1965-82" has been completed under my supervision by Ms. Reshma. The work is original and has been independently pursued by the candidate. It reports some interesting observations and contributes to the existing knowledge in the field of International Relations.

I permit the candidate to submit the work for the award of degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science of the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

[Signature]
(Mohammad Ali Kishore)
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South Asia's seven states can be divided into four categories. India stands by itself as the largest and most populous nation, aspiring to be a major power and in a category by itself. India is followed by the region's two middle powers — Pakistan and Bangladesh, having approximately the same population, although differing in economic and military strength. Sri Lanka and Nepal qualify as the small powers of the region while Bhutan and Maldives may be described as the micro-states. Although each of these states play an important role in determining the prospects for peace and security in South Asia, the position of middle powers has been more important and that of India, clearly decisive.

The Soviet Union is generally perceived as the dominant external power in South Asia since the mid-50s. It was directly involved in the intraregional affairs in South Asia and this reached its high watermark in the Tashkent Declaration of 1966. In the post-war period the Soviet Union, jointly with young newly free states, stepped up its efforts to consolidate peace in Asia. The world knows the constructive role of the U.S.S.R. as the initiator and active participant in a number of major international conferences and agreements aimed at ensuring peace in various parts of the Asian continent. Among them are Geneva Conference of 1954 (on a settlement in Korea and Indo-China) and of 1962 (on Laos), the Tashkent Meeting of 1966 on Vietnam, the Geneva Peace Conference of 1973 on the Middle East etc. Both geographically and in terms of socio-cultural continuities and economic infrastructure, India
occupies a central place among all South Asian countries. The other countries of the region like Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka have individually and separately more in common with India than with each other.

The Soviet presence in this Asian region has proved to be more effective and durable than those of its two rivals, the United States and China. The search for peace, stability, and security in South Asia is a subject of global importance in our independent world. The U.S. arms connection with Pakistan is said to be the prime cause of many of the problems of the subcontinent, reflecting the thesis that the security threats to the subcontinent come from outside powers and from the military build up of local states. Intrusion by outside powers (specially the U.S.) constitutes an interference in the natural order of things.

India's military reverses in its border clashes with China brought into sharp focus the limitation of the South Asia policy that the Soviet Union had followed till then and which was almost exclusively India-centred. China's growing role in Pakistan compelled Soviet Union to establish its presence in Pakistan and counter China's growing influence there.

There was a reshaping of Soviet policy towards the South Asia region in general and towards Pakistan in particular. President Ayub Khan's visit to Moscow in 1967 resulted not only in trade agreement, economic cooperation and cultural exchange, but also Soviet Union supplied arms to Pakistan. India protested against the Soviet decision. The Soviet Union had assured India that Pakistan would not use Soviet arms against India. Since 1970s the Soviet Union started getting more involved in the affairs of South Asia. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was
signed in August 1971. The real purpose of the Treaty was to safeguard India's security and strengthen its defence capability.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the Soviet Union advanced the idea of safeguarding security in Asia by its countries and peoples having relations based on the principles of peaceful coexistence. Important initiatives directly affecting various parts of Asia were set forth in the peace programmes for the 1980s approved by the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Peace and stability in India and Pakistan were essential for the success of Soviet policy of establishing its influence in South Asia. Therefore, the Soviet Union tried to bring the two nations closer to each other and for that it adopted policies that would maintain its relations with both the countries. Obviously the Soviet policy was to wean Pakistan away from U.S.A. and China so that it could build up both Pakistan and India as a stable peace area as a counterpoise to China. But Pakistan insisted that to improve its relations with Pakistan the Soviet Government is to stop military assistance to India. Thus, this period coincided with some alterations in the Soviet policy towards Pakistan. The Soviet Government concluded an agreement for Soviet military aid to Pakistan in July 1968. But the Soviet Union did not take any action to improve its relations with Pakistan at the cost of its relations with India. These gestures indicated that the Soviets were reappraising the power-position in the South Asian region in the light of their external requirements and their assessment of the domestic developments in India and Pakistan.

The Soviet Union's principled, internationalist approach to the national liberation struggles was demonstrated
convincingly during the events linked to the proclamation of the independence of the Republic of Bangladesh in 1971. Soviet Union was the only permanent member of the Security Council to support the liberation struggle of the people of Bangladesh. It was the first major power to recognize Bangladesh on 24 January 1972.

South Asia assumes a great significance for the superpowers because of the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean. There are inter-related connotations for the superpowers, in conventional and nuclear terms, in this region. The Soviet landmass is within easy range of the U.S. nuclear submarines operating in the Indian Ocean region. The reverse is not true, as the American landmass is far away from the Indian Ocean. But there has to be a defensive role for the Soviet forces in the Indian Ocean, and South Asian region, against the U.S. power. Since this region is well suited for the offensive deployment of U.S. strategic forces, the U.S.S.R. can play only a defensive role, a counter role in this region. An increased U.S. presence in this region will naturally attract increased Soviet presence heightening the tension in the region.

Such an increased Soviet presence in this region is not a potentiality that the Chinese would relish. They treat this phenomenon as a "hostile social imperialist encirclement" and want to curtail it.

Maldives, located in the centre of Indian Ocean, has also become a focal point of superpower rivalry during recent years. Soon after the British withdrawal in 1976 several countries showed interest in obtaining Gan, one of the islands of Maldives which is important strategically and militarily. The last such bid came from the Soviet Union in 1978 which offered $1 million for the ostensible purpose of using the base for maintenance of its fishing vessels. The Soviet Union is obviously
looking for a base in the Indian Ocean area to provide a strong counterbalance to the American base at Diego Garcia which is just 640 km South of Gan. President Gayoom has categorically stated that his country would pursue a policy of nonalignment and would not provide any base for the competing superpowers.

The Maldives has hardly the means to defend its maritime territory or even to keep out the fishing vessels that poach in its territorial waters. Maldivians are fully aware of this fact that the country is pursuing an astute diplomacy of maintaining cordial relationship with as many countries as possible from rival blocs. But how long the Maldives could continue this delicate balancing exercise in a conflict prone area is very difficult to perceive.

Nestled at the foot of the Himalaya Mountains, the tiny Kingdom of Bhutan occupies a strategic position in South Asia. The source of threat to Bhutan's territorial integrity in the present context is considered to be China. In no other country of the South Asian region Sino-Soviet rivalry is as apparent as in Nepal. In fact, China's share of economic aid to Nepal is massive in comparison to that of the Soviet Union. However, the Soviet Union supported Nepal's policy of positive nonalignment and of the King's desire not to allow Nepal to be an area of tension and a centre for hostilities against other countries.

Geopolitical factors have also played an important part in the definition of Soviet policy in South Asia over the past two decades. That the U.S.S.R. is separated from South Asia by only seventeen miles of Afghan territory is enough to ensure concern in Moscow over developments in the subcontinent. Probably, since the early 1960s, more important for Soviet Union is the long border South Asia shares with China.
and occasionally violent competition between Peking and New Delhi for a hegemonic position in this difficult frontier area.

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan proved that the Soviet Union not only has the capability to intervene in conflicts outside its frontiers, but also has the political will to use that capability as an active instrument of foreign policy. Though the Soviet Union never touched the international boundary, but at a time, in 1980, the Soviet troops almost knocked at the Pakistan frontiers. For India, the threat came from America's arms supply to Pakistan. Thus in order to arrest the threat, it became essential for India to localise the Soviet intervention and to see it as a defensive action of limited geopolitical import.

II

One of the main objectives of the Soviet foreign policy is the development of relations of friendship and comprehensive cooperation with India. Despite the differences in their socio-economic systems, the two countries are united by a common loyalty to the cause of peace and detente and the ideals of developing relations between the two States on a just and democratic basis. India and the Soviet Union have no conflict of national interests because of geographical proximity. It is in their common interest to develop and strengthen peaceful cooperation and friendly relations.

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Chapter VI of this dissertation focusses on economic and cultural ties between India and Soviet Union without which the study would remain incomplete. Economic and cultural aspects of relations between two countries can be termed as catalyst for bringing the nations together.

The study ends with some concluding remarks. The conclusions drawn in this chapter are based on the totality of the pattern of Soviet policy in South Asia and the relations between India and the Soviet Union.

Source material, both primary and secondary, has been used for this study. Books, journals and newspapers have been of much help. A large number of authors have been quoted to make the study more meaningful and objective. If I have not been able to consult certain material, I accept the responsibility for such and other lapses on my part.

I have received help from many quarters and individuals for the completion of this study. I would be failing in my duty if I do not greatfully acknowledge the help and encouragement received from my research guide Dr. M.A.Kishore, Reader in the Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. He has been most cooperative and generously gave his time and attention. I sincerely thank Prof. A.F.Usmani,
Chairman, Department of Political Science, for his kindness and help. I must record my sincere appreciation of the constant supportive interest taken by Mr. Zain in my work.

From time to time the Faculty of Social Sciences, A.M.U., Aligarh, has been generous in awarding me small amounts of money which has been a great help to me since I did not receive any regular financial support for this study. I would also like to thank the ICSSR for awarding me the study grant for six weeks. I would like to make a special mention of the help that I had received from the Librarians of Sapru House, JNU Library, ICSSR Library and the House of Soviet Science, Culture and Art, New Delhi. I would also like to thank the Information Department of the Embassy of the USSR in India, for sending me necessary material. I received full cooperation from the staff of Maulana Azad Library, A.M.U., Aligarh and from Mr. Qasim of the Seminar Library, Department of Political Science, A.M.U., Aligarh.

Mr. Mashhood Alam Raz did the typing and I am thankful to him for his friendly attitude.

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April, 1989
Chapter I

IMPORTANCE OF SOUTH ASIA IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

(A) South Asia as a strategic region

Asia occupies more than one-third of the entire land surface of the earth. It is inhabited by more than half of the world's population. The South East part of the Asian continent is washed by two oceans, namely, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. This vast landmass of Asia has within it two of the most ancient and yet living civilizations. Asia also is the source of all the religions which history of human-kind has created. Apart from this, the entire region today has within it the largest variety of political and economic structures. A very large part of the territory of the Soviet Union lies within Asia. Then there is China. There are the three countries of Indo-China, namely, Kampuchea, Loas and Vietnam. There is of course the socialist state of North Korea. Apart from these states, there is India. There are other states some of which are monarchical and some of them are even reminiscent of medieval times.

South Asia is a sub-system of the globular international system. Among the various sub-systems, South Asia is particularly well-endowed with the qualities that protect autonomy from the intrusions of global system, at least in political and strategic terms. The region contains vast human and material resources. Several regional countries possess

impressive political skills and military establishments to back them up.\(^2\)

The location of South Asia is favourable — it is well defined, defensible, and somewhat out of the line of fire of East-West hostilities. It also has, potentially at least, two of the most important structural elements stimulating autonomy — a significant but manageable external threat and a set of regional power dynamics that has been effectively clarified by the 1971 Indo-Pak War, most important, perhaps, both India and Pakistan have developed considerable skill in dealing with the super-powers, and each has developed a healthy degree of skepticism about close relationships with a super-power patron.\(^3\)

When the British withdrew from South Asia in 1947, they had established their strategic frontiers which included Tibet, Western Sinkiang, Pamirs, Afghanistan and Iran. Pakistan inherited the geopolitical and geostrategic frontiers of the British-Indian government, in Iran, Afghanistan and Western Sinkiang. India inherited the North-Eastern frontiers entirely contiguous with China. Jammu and Kashmir became a conflict zone between the feudal prince who ruled Kashmir and 80 per cent of his Muslim subjects. The Raja's army was unable to deal with the fight for political and social justice of his people. This army was defeated by the freedom fighters of Gilgit and it has to withdraw from large chunks of the state in Poonch, Mirpur and Muzaffarabad. When the Raja saw his tiny force dispersed over vast distances and increasingly ineffective, he decided to ask for Indian assistance while fleeing from Srinagar, although according to the principles on which India was partitioned, viz., geographical

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3 Ibid.
contiguity and the population composition of the local population was to decide if a state could accede to India or Pakistan.\textsuperscript{4}

All these conditions had kept India and Pakistan in a state of undeclared war and also disabled them to play an affective part in international affairs. Ever since the liquidation of British colonialism in the subcontinent, the Soviet Union has treated South Asian region as strategically and politically quite important. Therefore, it took no time for the leaders of Moscow to reverse their Stalinist policy of isolation. Soviet Union was directly involved in the intraregional affairs in South Asia in the mid-fifties and this reached its high water mark in the Tashkent Declaration of 1966. The Soviet Union is generally perceived as the dominant external power in South Asia. The Soviet intervention and presence building in this Asian Region has proved to be more effective and durable than those of its two rivals, the United States and China.\textsuperscript{5}

In the mid-1950s, the United States and the Soviet Union became involved in South Asia with different objectives but similar motivations. Perhaps the most important distinction between Soviet and U.S. involvement in South Asia since the mid-fifties concerns the intensity with which the two superpowers pursued their interests in the region.\textsuperscript{6}

South Asia, specially India, has occupied an important place in Soviet strategy. The interests of the U.S.S.R. are


\textsuperscript{6} Ibid.
perceived by Moscow to be strongly affected by developments in South Asia. However, this has not been the case for Washington, except for relatively brief period of time and under special circumstances.

For the most part, the American leadership has viewed South Asia with a sense of equanimity, even when developments there conflicted with the U.S. objectives in surrounding areas. The assumption has been nothing is likely to happen in South Asia that will seriously affect vital U.S. interest elsewhere in Asia.\(^7\)

At the end of World War II there was only one super-power, the U.S.A., possessing both nuclear weapons and strategic mobility. Although the Soviet Union had massively powerful land and air forces, it still remained essentially a mighty continental power. By acquiring nuclear weapons and ICBMs Soviet military power achieved global dimensions. The 1950s and 1960s witnessed a rapid build up of the Soviet Union's naval and maritime fleets. Although the U.S.A. today can probably deploy more powerful military forces practically anywhere on the high seas, the Soviet Union has acquired a worldwide interposing capability enabling it to deploy one or more of its seaborne units in the path of any U.S. fleet seeking to intimidate or attack a littoral country. The danger of unacceptable escalation, resulting from an open clash with the Soviet Units, has in effect severely curtailed the initiative and advantage that its strategic mobility had previously conferred on the U.S.A. A side effect has been that gunboat diplomacy has now become much less effective than in the past. China, despite its nuclear weaponry, still remains a continental power and presently lacks the capability to undertake large scale military operations much beyond its borders.\(^8\)

\(^7\) Ibid.

There are three great powers, Soviet Union, U.S.A. and China whose relevance for the security of South Asia is unquestioned. All the states of South Asia suffer from a measure of domestic instability. All the South Asian peripheral states tend to fear the core nation — India. The complimentary economics inherited as a legacy of a colonial past rapidly assumed a competitive character. Political friction and regional disputes accentuated this trend.

The super-power interests in South Asia are basically converging. Occasionally they become competitive for tactical considerations and motivational military aid fans considerable political controversy. Indian diversification of her military shopping to U.K., France, U.S.A., after the F-16 announcement is significant. Indian government became much more dependent upon the goodwill of the Soviets after defence purchases. The strings are implied and long term nonalignment being an elastic principle.

According to Prof. S.D. Muni, South Asia as a region has two characteristics. The first is that South Asia is an Indo-Centric region. This means that India is central to it geographically and in terms of the socio-cultural and economic infrastructure of the region, India occupies a central place. Countries of the region like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Nepal and Pakistan have a common border with India. They are also related to India separately and individually in terms of their cultural identities, economic patterns, philosophical trends, and historical experience. Conversely, there is a bit of India in every other country of South Asia. 9

As against this, there is hardly anything of significance

which is common between one of India's neighbours and another. If anything, it is India that is common between them. The emergence of Bangladesh in 1971 altered this situation a little, but the identities between Pakistan and Bangladesh fall within the overall Indo-Centric nature of the region. Particularly notable in this respect is the fact that Islam, as professed and practised in Bangladesh and Pakistan, is of Indo-Islamic cultural stock. Further there was something unnatural about the economic links between the eastern and western wings of Pakistan in the year prior to 1971. This is now evident from the fact that they can never be reforged into their original form. The result of this Indo-Centric nature of South Asia is that no step towards cooperation and collaboration can be taken in the region without India acquiring the central place in the scheme of things.10

The second characteristic of the South Asian region is that it has an unbalanced and asymmetric power structure. The nature of this imbalance and asymmetry is such that India stands as a dominant power in the region. In terms of size, population, resources, base, potential for economic growth, military strength and viability of the constitutional and political system, India is far too superior to any of its neighbours.11

Pakistan brought the super-power influence for the first time into the subcontinent, when they entered into military pacts which they now make no secret of, was done to get free arms against India. The Pakistani leadership wanted to play the role assigned to them by the external powers in the subcontinent. Given the history of the last

11 S.D. Muni, 'South Asia', in Mohammad Ayoob, ed., op.cit.
many centuries when the local rulers had invoked the inter-
vention of external powers for their own parochial interests
and thereby contributed to the subjugation of the subcontinent
to foreign rule, it is totally unrealistic to expect the
people of the subcontinent to take a charitable view of the
role of the Pakistani leadership to serve the interests
of neocolonialism. The Indian attempt to observe restraint
evoked no response. Between 1947 and 1962, India expanded
its forces vis-a-vis Pakistan only marginally. On the other
hand, the Pakistan expanded its forces almost to reach parity
with India. Neither in 1965 nor in 1971 India fielded dis-
proportionately large forces against Pakistan on the Western
front. 12

But when India was in great difficulties and faced the
Chinese in 1962 and the U.S. President wrote to Field Marshal
Ayub Khan asking for an assurance that Pakistan would not
move against India, the American President got a rebuff from
the Pakistani President. 13

Relations between India and Soviet Union also improved
after 1954. The United States felt that if India could not
join the western camp, it must not join the communist block
either. Thus India's policy of nonalignment became acceptable
to Washington, Moscow and Peking, while Pakistan's policy of
alignment antagonized the communist countries, especially the
Soviet Union. 14

During the Indo-China war, 1962, the United States and

12 Lt.Gen. P.S.Bhagat, 'The Shield and the Sword', The
13 Muhammad Ayub Khan, Friends not Masters, Oxford, London,
1967, in J.D.Sethi, Military Aid and Foreign Intervention
in the Indian Subcontinent, The Institute for Defence
14 Mohammad Ahsen Chaudhri, "Pakistan and the Changing Pattern
of Power Relations in South Asia", Pakistan Horizon,
XXXI(1), 1978, p.72.
Britain prevented Pakistan from doing anything that might hurt India in its moment of despair. The British Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, Mr. Duncan Sandys, and the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Averell Harriman visited the subcontinent. They urged Pakistan to stay scrupulously neutral in the India-China conflict and in return, they made India agree to start negotiations with Pakistan on Kashmir. But the matter did not end there. While the India-Pakistan talks on Kashmir were going on, the U.K. and the U.S.A. started sending consignments of military equipment to India. Pakistan protested but in vain. In December 1962, the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and President Kennedy of the United States met in Nassau and decided to give $120 million worth of military assistance to India on an emergency basis. It was followed, a year later, by a further chunk of aid to the tune of $60 million. Another sixty million dollars worth of aid was committed in 1964, and at the same time, it was announced that India would receive long term military assistance from the United States of the value of $100 million a year. The Soviet Union also supplied $131 million worth of military aid.

This massive military aid to India tilted the balance of power in South Asia to India's advantage. In fact, the United States aid to India, was a part of the former's strategy to contain China and to win India on to its side in the power game. Selig Harrison in his article pointed out that the U.S. was thinking more in terms of helping East and South East Asia and was losing interest in this region. He seemed to suggest that this was a kind of punishment which the U.S.A.

15 Z.A. Bhutto, Foreign Policy of Pakistan, A collection of speeches made in the National Assembly of Pakistan, 1962-64, Karachi, Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, 1964, p. 105.
wanted to met out to India and Pakistan for their quarrelsome
nature. The fact, however, is that the U.S. while taking a
direct interest in the defence and economic development of
East and South East Asia, has never taken more than a marginal
interest in South Asia. The same might be true of the Soviet
Union. She first came to India's aid largely for coldwar
reasons. As Pakistan had moved under the U.S. influence, the
Soviet Union decided to support India. Another reason
perhaps was that the Soviet Union was not happy with India and
China moving closer and wanted to compete with China, in
winning over India's good will. 17

In China's security calculations, Pakistan still holds
a key position, and India has already entered into an agree-
ment of peace and friendship with the Soviet Union — in
other words, has entered the Soviet version of the Asian
collective security system. 18

Like the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union, China's role in
South Asia is also of a limited character. It has a more direct
role in South East Asia from Burma to the Phillipines and
playing a vital role in the trade as well as politics of these
countries; each one of these countries is bound to take
note of China's presence in some way or the other, though
one might doubt how far China can be regarded as a dominant
power in the sense in which the U.S.A. or the Soviet Union
are treated as dominant powers. As long as China is interested
in maintaining disequilibrium and disharmony in the South
Asian region, she has a great deal of nuisance value, but
hardly anything more. 19

17 S.P. Verma and K.P. Misra, ed., Foreign Policies in South
18 Agha Shaukat Ali, op. cit.
According to Geoffrey Wheeler, the Soviet Union has diplomatic relations with all countries in the region, considerable military and economic aid projects operating in most of them, a naval presence in the Indian Ocean with shore facilities in India, South Yemen and East Africa, overt or clandestine communist activities, and the economic, social and cultural development of Soviet Central Asia on a scale so far unequalled in the countries to which it lies adjacent and most recently the invasion of Afghanistan.  

The Soviet government may now have reached the conclusion that Soviet communism cannot now be effectively established in Asian countries unless supported by a visible military presence in Afghanistan, only to find that the coup itself carried no weight in the country as a whole. Once this is certain, the consequences of this new venture will be far reaching and will profoundly affect Russian future political status in South and West Asia, concludes Wheeler.

From Pakistani's view on South Asian Security all the complicating problems surrounding South Asia, a comprehensive Indo-Pak concord is a strategic necessity for the peace and security of South Asia. The need for greater opportunities for travel, trade, scientific, cultural and technical cooperation has often been stressed. The one sector that would give content and meaning to this process would be pooling of all scientific and technical resources and crash programme of total collaboration between India and Pakistan in the field of nuclear development.

"(B) South Asian Security"

In South Asia, the emergence of India as a leading power has not been quite to the liking of some of the

20 Quoted by Agha Shaukat Ali, *op.cit.*
21 Ibid.
countries, specially the U.S.A. in view of its nexus with Pakistan and newly formed alliance with China and some of India's smaller neighbours. The vast disparity with India's geographical size, strength, population and resources is conveniently forgotten when the security environment of the region is discussed. How else could Pakistan even think of proposing mutual reduction of armed forces as one of the solutions for bringing about peace in the subcontinent. Pakistan leaders tend to forget that India — a much larger country — has common borders not only with Pakistan but also with a number of other countries. In the present context the situation along any one of them can hardly be termed as peaceful. It is imperative that India realises her position of importance, and her leaders and planners start thinking in terms of global security environment rather than China and Pakistan only.

According to K. Subrahmanyam, within the subcontinent there is considerable dissonance between India and her neighbours, and the seven South Asian nations do not form a community with shared values and political systems. India, a democracy, is surrounded by two monarchies, three military dictatorships and one democracy under a state of emergency whose future appears uncertain. One of the major complications is divided ethnicity across the borders like the Mohajirs in Pakistan, people of Bangladesh origin in Assam and West Bengal and the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

In South Asia the main security problems are between India and Pakistan. Pakistan consisted of two parts separated by foreign land — India. Thus, genuinely it had to be afraid

of India. Besides, India had never accepted the religious basis of partition, which the Pakistani leaders sought to justify. So since its inception Pakistan was in search of its separate identity and wanted to establish its distinct individual personality. It is because of this that Pakistan has been shuttling between South and West Asia, identifying itself with either according to its convenience. The lack of democracy and passing of powers directly into hands of military bureaucratic elite further complicated problems for Pakistan. Since dictatorship is inherent in every military rule, the military rulers in order to gain popular support and to keep themselves in power took foreign help, mainly from the U.S. by painting India as the villain of the piece. It is to be noted that security interests have taken precedence over Islamic fundamentalism and Pakistan, in order to assert its parity with India, attacked it three times starting as early as 1947 and ending up in 1971 with the creation of Bangladesh. In all these wars it was Pakistan which attacked India first and started the war.

It is generally acknowledged that it was the initial relationship of the United States with Pakistan that soured any prospects of improving relations with India. It is generally recognised in the U.S. that this did not imply antagonism towards India so much as a strategic need to support those states willing to ally themselves with the U.S. In India the choice is not always seen as reluctant; at times it has been suggested that the U.S.-Pakistan relationship was aimed specifically at India (implying that the Soviet Union was a lesser consideration). U.S. arms sales to Pakistan were, according to this view, designed to cut India down to size as an independent centre of power and to contain her influence by a built-up of her chief antagonist.  

The U.S. arms connection with Pakistan is said to be the prime cause of many of the problems of the subcontinent, reflecting the thesis that the security threats to the subcontinent come from outside powers and from the military build up of local states. The former leads to an incessant search for bases to gain a presence.\textsuperscript{25} This intrusion by outside powers (and especially the U.S.) constituted an interference in the natural order of things, a tempering with the balance of power. As the relationship between the United States and Pakistan grew, India became concerned that the U.S. would seek to make the smaller power a real threat to India, and that by providing Pakistan with technically superior equipment, it might make Pakistan into an Israel.\textsuperscript{26}

Since 1979-80, outside power interests in South Asian security have undergone a dramatic reappraisal in reaction to the Soviet expansion into Afghanistan and the fragmentation of the Northern Tier. In terms of Indian perceptions and reaction concern has been expressed less with respect to the direct consequence of the Afghan crisis — the projection of Soviet power into an area directly adjacent to the subcontinent — than to the adverse chain of events involving a broader set of factors which stem from it. The heightened strategic importance according to South Asia by the great powers in the wake of Afghanistan has stimulated renewed fears in India that the region may be transformed into an area of super-power competition.\textsuperscript{27}

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan caused serious threat to South Asia particularly Pakistan. The Rand Corporation study on the "Security of Pakistan" mentions the following security

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ibid.}, p.32.  \\
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Ibid.}, p.33.  \\
\end{flushleft}
(1) Afghanistan Soviet support for separatist movements along the Baluch and Pathan populations of Pakistan.

(2) Soviet air and artillery strikes at refugee camps across the border.

(3) An attempt by Soviet or Afghan forces to seize a salient portion of Pakistani territory in the frontier.

(4) A Soviet sponsored attack by India against Pakistan.

(5) A coordinated Indian-Soviet-Afghan attack designed to fragment Pakistan along ethnic lines.

Despite Soviet presence in Afghanistan, Pakistan's main preoccupation is still with India. Dangers from India continue to be the main pretext for Pak-US military relationship and import of huge military equipments from U.S. Though United States has given $ 3.2 billion worth of aid to meet Soviet threat, yet the stationing of Pakistani troops clearly indicates its preoccupation with India. The Rand report says thus: "of the Pakistani Army's Six Corps headquarters, only one (with two infantry divisions) is located along the Afghan border. The remaining five, which control all of the country's armor, face India". The Pakistani government even refused United States National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinshi's plea to change the deployment from east to west to meet the Soviet threat.

The main threat to India's security comes from not only the overwhelming military machines and dynamic social concepts but also by the "lengthening shadows of the Russian bear and


29 Ibid., p.8.
the Chinese dragon looming large on the country's horizon." India's security is not threatened by Pakistan. India is worried about the U.S. supplying arms to Pakistan and by other powers. Experience shows that whenever Pakistan acquired arms from outside, it has used them against India.

As far as China is concerned, it is to be noted that Chinese leadership right from 1949 has been interested in making China at least an Asian great power if not a superpower. Accordingly it has been their ambition to curb India's growing influence and power in the region by either supporting Pakistan or by aiding and helping the insurgents in the Indian frontier states along Indo-Burmese border. It can be suggested, for example, that the Mizo insurgency could not be checked by India because of Chinese help to them.

The Soviet Union has become a permanent factor in India's strategic thinking and has much the same position which the U.S. occupies in Pakistan's thinking. According to Rajan Menon, "In terms of India's security concerns the Soviet Union plays a dual role as a direct supplier of arms and a licensor of certain classes of military hardware produced in India." Again the Soviet Union stood by India when this country was under heavy pressure from the West — on the Kashmir issue and decolonisation of Goa. When the West failed to assist meaningfully in the defence preparedness of India following the Chinese aggression it was the Soviet Union which helped India both by arms transfer on terms which would not impose any significant burden on the Indian economy and technology transfer in certain sophisticated areas. Again, according to Subrahmanyam, when India faced the Washington-Peking-Rawalpindi axis during the Bangladesh

crisis, the Soviet Union provided the counter-vailing power which enabled India to liberate Bangladesh. The mutuality of strategic interests in South and South East Asia between India and the Soviet Union continues to be a basic plank of the foreign and security policies of both nations in spite of differences over issues like Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{31}

The presence of Soviet forces in Afghanistan had an adverse impact on the security of the sub-continent, just as the moving of Chinese forces into Tibet and those of the United States based at Diego Garcia have. But Pakistan has little credibility in talking about external threat to the subcontinent when it had been seeking Chinese help, and constructed the Karakoram highway.\textsuperscript{32} Further there was news of signing of a protocol between China and Pakistan for the opening of the Khungerah pass in Karakoram highway in Pakistan occupied Kashmir. India lodged protest against this. India is wary of Chinese designs in the region which consist of "an attempt to weaken the central government to encourage centrifugal forces, and to look for eventual creation of a number of separate states on the Indian subcontinent at least some of which would move into close alliance with Peking."\textsuperscript{33}

There is one and only one way, feels K. Subrahmanyam, of ensuring the security of the subcontinent — that is to keep the influence of all three powers — the United States, China and the Soviet Union — out of the subcontinent. It is necessary for all the South Asian countries to maintain their non-aligned status and independence of foreign policy.


\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibid.}, p.166.

India's objection to the U.S. proposal for the supply of $400 million worth of arms to Pakistan was not because it constituted a large induction of arms, but it would mean active U.S. involvement in the subcontinent. In the past, Pakistan had been led into disastrous misadventures because of its over confidence that the U.S. and China would haul it out of dangerous situations in which it landed itself. The Pakistani leadership, says K. Subrahmanyam, should not repeat that kind of mistake again: "If the influence of distant United States is brought into the subcontinent, the neighbouring Soviet Union will have every justification to seek to intervene in the affairs of the subcontinent which abuts on its southern borders, and therefore, has greater relevance to its security." Observers of India fail to understand why the Pakistani leadership should persist on such a perilous course.  

Speculation about the future of South Asian security, says Thomas P. Thornton, can be discouraging because the range of this future seems to be between the undesirable and the unacceptable. Despite its lack of formal institutions or even shared objectives, South Asia definitely constitutes a system.

Nations are drawn into mutual relationships by geographic proximity, shared problems, and even mutual hostility, and South Asia has all of these in abundance. The South Asian subsystem, according to Thomas Thornton, is highly vulnerable to outside intrusion or intervention because of the splits within it, indeed, in some regards its internal situation is about as bad as it can be since the two major members are in

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especially dangerous imbalance. Pakistan is neither strong enough to assert itself effectively against India nor it is so weak that it can readily acquiesce in a subordinate position.\textsuperscript{36}

The result of this combination of regional tensions has been a remarkable demonstration of how the global (East-West) polarization can impose itself onto a regional polarization. The outcome, says Thornton, has been the classic interaction between the two systems and has presented opportunities to the super-powers to intervene in their own interests. There have been ups and downs in this relationship that are familiar, but it is necessary to focus on the fact that (i) these vulnerabilities have led to very high levels of outside intervention in the past, and (ii) the potential for renewed high levels of intervention persists.

It is also necessary to bear in mind, adds Thornton, that the intrusion of global issues upon the South Asian system and its individual members is not limited to the traditional problems of security and political tensions associated with the U.S.-Soviet rivalry, but also includes many of the new global issues such as non-proliferation, human rights and ecology.

(C) \textit{Superpower Involvement in South Asia}

China, India, Pakistan and the Soviet Union constitute most of the sprawling Asian landmass and embrace more than a third of the earth's total area and some 40 per cent of its population. Geographically, the real Asian triangle is formed by China, the subcontinent and the U.S.S.R., though politically, it is a quadrangle, the subcontinent being shared by two unfriendly sovereign states. The U.S.S.R. as well as China tend to treat the subcontinent as one geographical

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
entity, which enables them to exploit the contradictions between Pakistan and India. Pakistan's obsession is India, and India's obsession is India, which in an esoteric way, means Pakistan too. Pakistan casts its shadow on India's relationship with the U.S.S.R. and China, India dominantes Pakistan's relations with either communist giant.  

The U.S.S.R. has always ranked the Indian subcontinent below Europe and East Asia in terms of its interests and concerns. The West has been the principal source of modern Russian culture under the Czars as well as their communist successors. At least since the time of Napoleon the principal threats to the security of Russian State especially its European heartland have originated in the West, although the rise of first Japan and then China in the twentieth century have increased Soviet apprehensions about the security of their position is Siberia.  

The search for peace, stability, and security in South Asia is a subject of global importance in our independent world. The Asian continent has several reasons to address itself to the problem of security and to the problem of bringing peace and tranquility in Asia. In this view of the matter, says P.N.Haksar, we should not develop Pavlovian reflexes on the question of Asian security just because of the Soviet Union's interest in the matter.  

During the last four decades, peace and security have been primary goals in South Asia. War and insecurity have resulted in frequent outbreaks of armed conflict, lingering territorial disagreement and deepseated enmities.

Armaments have increased in the quest for security; the result has been higher political stakes and increased feelings of insecurity due to greater threats from adversaries. The presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, the danger of big-power confrontations, and the potential for nuclearization of conflict further underline the need to search for effective strategies for resolving the major conflicts of the region.

Superpower involvement in South Asia has been, and continues to be a matter of some concern and controversy, specially since the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. There is a great amount of disagreement over the perceptions and intentions of both the Soviet Union and the United States. While Soviet actions and perceptions are obviously more crucial to the outcome of the war in Afghanistan, it is nonetheless important to attempt to delineate American views on that conflict and on other potential threats to peace and security in the region.40

American South Asian policy is shaped by the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Pakistan has been threatened by the Afghan conflict in at least three ways. First, care of nearly three million Afthan refugees in camps in N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan has created a heavy economic burden. There is also the potential social or demographic task of assimilating the refugees if the conditions for their return to Afghanistan cannot be created within a reasonable period of time. Secondly the presence of refugee camps in Pakistan has prompted some Soviet intrusions and remains a potential stimulus to more extensive military confrontation. Thirdly, continued Soviet military presence in Afghanistan implies the threat of Soviet

diplomatic pressure upon Pakistan and involvement in Pakistan's international affairs. 41

Six years of sustained attention to Pakistan and its neighbours, says Selig S. Harrison, have brought about a degree of maturity in America's understanding of South Asia. 42 Yet the dilemmas, says Stephen P. Cohen, that faced the U.S. in its initial response to the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan in late 1979 remain.

The happenings in Afghanistan and the developments in the United States-Pakistan relationship necessarily affected the trilateral relationship Indo-U.S. relations entered a difficult phase. Americans were disappointed that New Delhi had not taken a harder and harsher stand on the question of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, and India protested vocally and vigorously against U.S. supply of the most advanced and lethal armaments to Pakistan.

The immediate American reaction viewed the occupation of Afghanistan as part of wider pattern of Soviet assertion in Africa and Asia. The Afghan move was viewed as an extension of earlier Central Asian conquests which would probably not have taken place if the American strategic position in Iran and elsewhere had not fallen so low. The American response was an immediate cooling of relations with the Soviet Union, including the Olympic boycott, the shelving of the SALT II treaty, and the embargo of grain shipments and technology to the U.S.S.R. A programme of low level arms support to the Mujahideen groups operating in Afghanistan was also apparently initiated. 43


Washington being blamed for introducing relatively more sophisticated military hardware into the region is understandable. But, ironically, it is also credited with both intentions and capacity to bring about an India-Pakistan accord against the best interests of either country. Undoubtedly in this perception is the equally erroneous assumption that the Soviet Union has a stake in regional discord and an arms race between India and Pakistan.

On the contrary, there is a growing body of enlightened opinion in Pakistan that the U.S. wants to foist Indian leadership on that country. According to Dr. Rais A. Khan, the purpose of American leverage is to persuade Pakistan to share American perceptions of regional cooperation and India's leadership in South Asia. 44

There is a tendency in India to look upon our national security only in immediate terms. Hence the supply of a particular weapon to Pakistan or China is exaggerated in no uncertain terms but the question of the Super Powers intentions, the continued cold war vis-a-vis Indian Security are played down as questions of secondary importance. F-16s or Harpoon are criticised, protests are made in the Parliament but the factors behind the questions of these weapons by the neighbouring state, and its Super Power connection is easily forgotten. 45

Efforts to bring India and Pakistan closer were a feature of U.S. involvement in the region. But the question arises: will the United States allow Pakistan to befriend India and to lose its most important ally in this region? Will

the Soviet Union allow India to befriend Pakistan which is constantly encouraging Afghan Mujahideen? The basic question, says Abhay, is: shall relations between India and Pakistan become friendly if Ziaul-Haq's proposals are accepted? Generalists may have a positive answer but Pakistani analysts deny this by saying that the proposal can create one more bone of contention like the 1972 Simla Agreement. According to Abhay, if no treaties are to be signed, Super Powers would not allow us to be friends, are we then to sit idle and see the Super Powers play their game. 46

United States is very often prompted by a desire to see India reassured that military supplies to Pakistan are not meant to injure India's interests. But more than such diplomatic gestures which failed in every case, India was reassured by the United States' ability to use its influence in Pakistan towards restraint and avoidance of a military solution to Kashmir and the U.S. willingness to lend money for India's economic development. 47

The India-China Border Conflict 1962: brought new U.S. pressure on India to make concessions to Pakistan and led to a widespread view in U.S.A., sedulously fostered by Pakistan also that in order to effectively meet the Chinese challenge India should make up with Islamabad. While fighting with China, India was being asked to give away the strategic and populated area of Kashmir. The United States strategic interests at that time demanded that the Sino-Indian conflict should not be enlarged and made more complicated.

It is interesting to note in this context, that the two constants of the India-Pakistan-U.S. relationship have been:

46 Ibid.
Pakistan's preoccupation with the perceived threat from India and U.S. security concern about the Soviet Union. The mutual incompatibility between these two interests has not affected the relationship between the United States and Pakistan. On the other hand, the Soviet Union, since the moment, China rebelled, gave all possible assistance to India to counter the Chinese hegemonism. As a result India became more and more close to the Soviet Union. The presence of pro-Soviet communists and other parties in India encouraged the ruling party to join hands with the Soviets.

After the fall of Shah's regime in Iran and Soviet invasion in Afghanistan Pakistan has become an important country for the United States. It has been able to get among other things $3.2 billion military and economic aid. Further news of joint intelligence sharing between United States and Pakistan cannot but force India to join further hands with the Soviets to ensure Indian security, even if it suits the Soviet strategy interests.

Some Indians have argued that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, coupled with the restiveness of Pakistan's ethnic minorities, primarily the Baluchis, poses a threat to the integrity of that country that augurs ill for India as well. They have suggested that India take the initiative to create a regional centre of power by reaching an understanding with China and Pakistan. If this plan has not been pursued with any great vigour, there are two explanations. The first is that the complex disagreements that India has with China and Pakistan cannot be quickly settled. The suspicions, entrenched perceptions and domestic complications in all three countries pose formidable obstacles to speedy diplomacy.

48 Ibid.
In addition, India's primary concern is that the Soviet move into Afghanistan will lead the U.S. to arm China and Pakistan. To cope with this eventuality, India will not impair let alone jettison, what it regards as a tried and trusted friendship with the Soviets, who have provided arms and political support on the Kashmir issue and during the Bangladesh crisis, at crucial junctures.

These considerations explain India's gingerly response to the Afghan crisis. This has ranged from Indira Gandhi's initial suggestion that 'other's interventions' in Afghanistan explained the Soviet action and Indian abstentions from the two condematory General Assembly Resolutions, to "innocuously worded" calls for the withdrawal of 'foreign troops' from Afghanistan. Nevertheless, India has not, unlike Cuba, Vietnam, and Ethiopia, supported the Soviet invasion and, during the many recent visits exchanged by Indian and Soviet officials, has privately but persistently expressed its unhappiness with the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. During the visit to New Delhi of Gromyko and Brezhnev (February and December 1980) the two sides simply agreed to disagree and the communiques omitted any direct reference to the matter.

The Civil War in East Pakistan which began in March 1971, had by that summer settled into a war of attrition. Immediately, United States moved to supply Pakistan 100 M-47 tanks through Turkey. The reported move was bound to create concern in India. An authoritative source in New Delhi pointed out that Pakistan's armed forces were nearly half the size of India's forces. Pakistan's armour was already comparable to that of India and the addition of M-47 tanks would confer superiority on it.


51 *Asian Recorder*, 8–14 Jan., 1969, p.8707
Defence Minister Swaran Singh told the Rajya Sabha on 2 November 1968, that an agreement had already been reached in principle that Turkey would supply 100 Patton tanks to Pakistan in exchange for more modern tanks for Turkey from the United States. India had pointed out, he said, to the countries concerned that such a deal had grave implications both in regard to India's own defence responsibilities and to the objective of maintenance of peace in this subcontinent. India had also pointed out to them that these military supplies would make Pakistan more intransigent in its attitude towards normalization of relations with India.  

On 7 October, 1970, the U.S. Government officially announced its decision to resume the supply of lethal weapons which induced B-58 bombers and interceptors. The U.S. Ambassador in India Keating called a press conference to explain that the objective behind the "limited" arms supply was to reduce Pakistan's dependence on China and Russia.

A new situation was emerging in South Asia. A U.S.-China-Pakistan relationship was beginning to emerge, while in East Bengal an elemental resistance to West Punjab dominance was brewing which was to draw the Soviet Union and India much closer, establishing a new relationship of trust and confidence and awareness of the identity of interests of the two.

The U.S. and China were equally interested in protecting

52 V.P. Dutt, *India's Foreign Policy*, Vikas, Delhi, 1984, p. 99.

the territorial integrity of the Pakistani State. Neither country could ignore the Bengali demand for self-determination, but for their own reasons, they found it impossible to support the separatists. Moreover, after the Indo-Soviet treaty of August 1971, both the U.S. and China were convinced that the conflict in East Pakistan was being perpetuated by outside forces. The civil war in Bangladesh therefore had ramifications far beyond the frontier of the Pakistani State. Indian authorities perceived collusion between Pakistan, the U.S. and China. China and the U.S. were no less certain that India and the Soviet Union were determined to dismember Pakistan. 54

The U.S. administration took the ostensible position that the East Bengal revolt was a secessionist movement and, therefore, justified Yahya Khan's attempt to suppress it. The U.S. was willing to extend sympathy and material support for the relief of the refugees and to bring about a dialogue between India and Pakistan to defuse the tension and strive for a settlement. India's plea was that it was not an Indo-Pak issue. The military regime in West Pakistan had defied the will of the people expressed in the elections held under the auspices of the military regime itself, denied the majority party in the National Assembly, the right to form a government and clamped behind the prison its leaders, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman and many of his colleagues. The military regime had thus forfeited legitimacy and had no mandate to violently suppress the majority of the country, which resided in East Bengal. 55

When the Indian army crossed into East Pakistan in December 1971, all these perceptions were confirmed. The

54 Lawrence, Ziring, The Subcontinent in World Politics - India, Its Neighbours and the Great Powers.
55 V.P.Dutt, India's Foreign Policy, op.cit., p.101.
U.S. felt the Indians would not have violated Pakistan's sovereignty had it not been for the support guaranteed it by the Soviet Union. In the U.N. India was pressured to desist and withdraw its forces behind its own frontier, but the Soviet Union sided with India and blocked any action in the Security Council. While Pakistan waited in vain for the Chinese to open a front along the Himalayan chain China, the U.S. government decided to show its flag in the Bay of Bengal, and a small naval task force led by the nuclear carrier 'Enterprise' steamed into Indian waters. Undeterred by the American manoeuvre the Indian armed forces made short work of the isolated Pakistan garrison in East Pakistan, and, with no real sign of tangible external support, Bangladesh was recognised as an independent sovereign state both by India and the Soviet Union, and in the days that followed much more attention was given to the fact that Bangladesh was the first country to achieve its independence since World War II through the instrument of civil war. Even those countries that usually displayed sympathy for Pakistan held the view that the Pakistani government got what it deserved and that justice had finally been done to the Bengalis, though international law had been mangled in the process.  

More interesting, during the 1971 Bangladesh crisis when the notorious Nixon-Kissinger 'tilt' occurred, Pakistan invoked the 1959 Agreement of Cooperation but the U.S. would not go beyond despatching the Seventh Fleet Task Force into the Bay of Bengal. Although it was perceived by India as a U.S. threat to intervene in the Bangladesh war, in Pakistan it was dismissed as symbolic. Henry Kissinger himself admitted that "over the decades of our relationship with Pakistan there had grown a complex body of

56 Lawrence Ziring, op. cit.
communications by the Kennedy and Johnson administration going beyond 1959 pact, some verbal, some in writing, whose import was that the U.S. would come to Pakistan's assistance if she was attacked by India."

It was Soviet prodding rather than American threat which made India declare a unilateral ceasefire. Thus the stated U.S. reservations towards Pakistan's efforts to include India in the orbit of its security agreements with the U.S. and its role in the 1971 crisis underline the fact that the Pakistan-U.S. relationship has been both partial and asymmetrical from the beginning. For the U.S., countering the Soviet Union was more important than siding with Pakistan against India. In case of Pakistan, participation in the anti-communist alliances was only a means to fortify itself against the perceived threat from India. Pakistan is dispensable for the U.S. especially in the larger global context but successive Pakistani regimes have depended heavily on the U.S., especially for military hardware.

The trouble which the Super Powers are confronted with in South Asia is that in this region there are nations which themselves would like to emerge as power centres. Super Powers, therefore, do not know as to what role they assign to these aspirants in South Asia. The underdeveloped medium powers like India which may eventually aspire to be major powers, are to be afraid of rather than to be welcomed. And therefore, the Super Powers have been pursuing the policy of balancing the various aspirations in South Asia. Arms parity between India and Pakistan which some people advocate, emanates from this feeling. Arms parity may be an understandable

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58 G.S.Bhargava, *op.cit.*, p.43
concept; it ensures Indo-Pakistan peace. But the trouble is that the concept of arms parity between India and Pakistan really does not ensure peace.

Such a policy, according to Sisir Gupta, seems to imply that India and Pakistan must coexist but not cooperate, India and Pakistan must live together and yet must not come together, and that they must live on the basis of arms parity, of institutional distrust. This means that they must neutralise each other, and then leave the task of stabilizing this region to others. As a scheme, of course, it is plausible, except for two things: one, that these aspiring nations of South Asia would not be able to play any worthwhile role in the wider world, and, two, that the ultimate responsibility for the stabilization of this region would always rest with the Super Powers. 59

For the Soviet Union and China, Pakistan's international role did not matter. For the United States it was a convenient cover for obtaining and using influence in Pakistan. It worked as long as the U.S. was able to restrain Pakistan vis-a-vis India but the Chinese entry into the picture in the early 1960s wrecked the arrangement. It was now the turn of the Soviet Union to play the role of a mediator in South Asia with the U.S. going quietly along with the effort. The Tashkent initiative was followed by Soviet supply of some military hardware, including tanks to Pakistan.

The Soviet Union seems to be more concerned than the U.S.A. with South Asian affairs, particularly the Indo-Pakistani relations. Moscow's emergence considered as the

59 Sisir Gupta, Role of Major Powers in South Asia; based on the Report of a symposium held on the occasion of the All India Seminar on Foreign Policies of South Asian States held under the auspices of the South Asia Studies Centre, Univ. of Rajasthan, Jaipur, 1 to 6 Feb., 1968, p.335.
most influential outside power in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. With the intensification of the conflict with China and the realization that China was more a rival than an ally, Moscow was confronted with the problem of seeking fresh options and new friends. Moscow's turning towards India was an early move in response to this problem. India was the second largest country in Asia and an absence of national irritants, the border problems or open support to countries with whom India was in conflict as well as a steady convergence of the national interests of the two countries facilitated the fast development of friendship and cooperative relations. Now the Soviet efforts in Pakistan may be linked with the same search for option and friends.\(^{60}\)

Moscow's ultimate hope and greater expectation is that the trangular alliance between Moscow, Islamabad and New Delhi would provide a more powerful counterbalance to the ambitions of China and the lures of Washington, Moscow has stepped up in economic assistance to both India and Pakistan. It had adopted a posture of studied but benevolent neutrality and all its efforts are aimed at preventing the eruption of the hot flames of war once again.\(^{61}\)

The emergence of Sovereign independent Bangladesh in South Asia has radically altered the physical structure of the subcontinent; India emerged out of the conflict as the prominent power on the subcontinent. It definitely made India's position stronger in the context of its rivalry with China more specially when the U.S. accepted India as a major country and recognised its special role of leadership in South Asia and promised not to join any grouping directed

\(^{60}\) V.P. Dutt, 'Role of Major Powers in South Asia', Based on the Report of a symposium held on the occasion of All India Seminar, \textit{op.cit.}

\(^{61}\) \textit{Ibid.}
against India. But in actual practise there was very little substance behind these U.S. friendly gestures to India. The United States as a matter of fact regarded the events on the subcontinent tragic and one of the major disappointments for U.S. foreign policy in 1971. It virtually considered the subcontinent an area of Soviet sphere of influence. As an existing balance of power was not favourable to the U.S., it was not happy with existing balance in South Asia, that is why within a short span of time following India's nuclear explosion in February 1975 the United States lifted its 10 year old embargo on the supply of weapons to Pakistan and began to emphasise concern about security of its old ally Pakistan.

The Bangladesh experience has been even more painful, if less expensive for the Soviet. Once it became obvious in mid-1971 that another Indo-Pakistani war was inevitable, Moscow openly threw its support behind India and the Bangladesh freedom movement. This, according to Leo, E.Rose, was done at some sacrifice to the Soviet reputation in West Asia, as the Bangladesh war was widely perceived as pitting Islamic Pakistan, (supported by China and the U.S.) against Hindu India (supported by the Russians). This contributed, if only marginally, to the problems the U.S.S.R. has faced in maintaining credibility in West Asia.

Moscow thus had good reason to expect Bangladesh to demonstrate its appreciation in tangible ways. Yet once again they were disappointed. Soviet efforts to obtain access right to a Bangladesh port, for instance, were eventually rejected by Dacca reportedly on the advice of the Indians. The assassination of President Mujibur Rehman of

63 Indian Express, 11 February, 1971.
Bangladesh in 1975 and the installation of a government that displayed rather strong anti-Indian and anti-Soviet proclivities was another setback. While the new government in Dacca had to exercise caution when dealing with India, its vastly powerful neighbour, it could safely move to limit the presence of the Soviets. The 1977 elections in Sri Lanka, unseating a government in which the pro-Soviet communist party was a partner, has produced similar consequences in that country.65

Finally, the Soviet relationship with Pakistan that started to blossom briefly in the late 1960, barely survived the 1971 war. Moscow has indicated on several occasions its interests in reviving relations with Pakistan, and the Pakistani authorities have generally responded in kind. But there are some serious obstacles to any significant movement in this direction. Given the importance of the Chinese and Americans both to its domestic and its foreign policy, Islamabad must be primarily concerned with possible reactions in Peking and Washington to any substantial improvement in Soviet-Pakistani relations. For its part, Moscow continues to tilt towards India in its South Asian policy and thus, in the words of Leo, E. Rose, cannot safely ignore the still evident tendency in New Delhi to view the expansion of relations with Pakistan as potentially detrimental to Indian interests.66

The joint Indo-Soviet declaration signed on 26 October 1977, indicated the various important issues on which India had received, and would continue to receive, Soviet support. It also revealed that the two countries still had many "common purposes", one such purpose and an important one at that is to prevent the spread of Chinese influence in South Asia. If the Soviet need Indian in their plan to

65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
encircle China, India too cannot afford to give up its "special" relations with the Soviet Union as long as China is a threat to its security. True, on 15 April 1976 when China and India announced that they were restoring full diplomatic relations after more than thirteen years, it appeared as though a thaw had occurred in their mutual relations, but the improvement in Sino-Indian relations, since then has been painfully slow. The Prime Minister of India had said in 1977 that China had been in occupation of over 14,000 square miles of Indian territory since the 1962 "border operations" and that unless this question was settled, there cannot be complete understanding between our two countries.67

Two things more need to be said here. First, although, during the visit of Z.A.Bhutto to China in May 1976, Peking stated that it desired "peace" rather than "confrontation" in South Asia, continued Chinese political and military support for Pakistan and Bangladesh suggests that Peking is keeping its option open. It should not escape our attention, writes Golam W.Choudhry, that Peking played host to the two Zias of this subcontinent in 1977. General Zia-ur-Rehman, then the Chief Martial Law Administrator received an extremely warm and grand reception during his state visit to China between 2 and 6 January 1977. Subsequently there were reports that China offered as many as 12 sqardrons of MIG-21 jet fighter planes, but that Dacca was unable to accept so many because of "the lack of storage and maintenance facilities". China also agreed to train pilots from Bangladesh.68

67 The Times of India, New Delhi, 1 December, 1977.
The Chinese welcomed the Chief Marshal Law Administrator of Pakistan, General Zia-ul-Haq, later that year, from 14 to 19 December 1977. During this visit Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-Ping extended the customary "unswerving" support to Islamabad's efforts to safeguard its "national independence, State sovereignty and interference from outside". He also reiterated his country's support for Pakistan's effort to secure the right of self determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Besides Chinese military aid to Pakistan continues. Evidently, China has no desire to stop fishing in the troubled waters of the subcontinent in order to improve its relations with India.

Second, when a 5 member delegation of U.S. senators met the Prime Minister of India on 5 January, 1978, Morarji Desai told them that "no matter what any other nations did, India would never have atomic weapons". Earlier he had announced that India would not undertake even peaceful explosions. Whereas the Desai government has thus allowed its hands to be tied on the issue of nuclear weapons, the Chinese army has developed an intercontinental ballistic missile with a range of 12,800 kilometers. According to a U.S. military expert, China now has a stockpile of nuclear weapons amounting to several hundred, that its military planning is shifting from Mao's concept of people's war towards modern establishment, including nuclear capability by land, sea and air, and that its goal is parity with the Soviet Union and the United States by the end of this century. In all probability the Chinese will not accept their existing frontiers with the Soviet Union. Nor are they likely to vacate the Indian territories, occupied by them in the late fifties. India and the Soviet Union need each other's support on these issues.

69 M.V. Kamath, "China Developing ICBM with 12,800 Km Range", The Times of India, New Delhi, 29 November, 1977.
The Soviet Union continued to supply military equipment to India which created an arms imbalance in the subcontinent. The United States did not object to this because it was not averse to the Indian ambition to take over some part of Britain's role in the Indian Ocean and to counter the influence of China in Asia.  

During the Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin's visit to Islamabad in April 1968, Pakistan expressed grave concern about the supply of Russian Arms to India. The Russian leader, it was reported, paid no heed to this matter. It led Pakistan to think that it was a mistake to sign the Tashkent Declaration. Some of the leaders exploited the people's anguish to built up a political movement against the regime of President Ayub Khan. The political agitation eventually led to Ayub's downfall. The chaos and instability that followed in Pakistan created turmoil in the South Asian region, and led, eventually, to the involvement of a number of outside powers in the politics of the subcontinent. In other words, domestic issues became the most difficult, indeed tragic aspect of Pakistan's foreign policy. Hence it is imperative to have some knowledge of Pakistan's domestic problems in order to understand the conditions that affected the relations of the super-powers with the South Asian States.

United States interest in South Asia had subsided, partly as a result of entanglement in Vietnam and partly on account of a new vision of the world formulated by the U.S. President, Richard Nixon and his principal adviser, Henry Kissinger. In July 1971, Mr. Kissinger made a secret trip to Peking which

71 Ibid., p. 69.
72 Mohammad Ahsan Chaudhri, 'Pakistan and the Changing Pattern of Power Relations in South Asia', op.cit., pp. 78-79.
resulted in bringing about a rapprochement between China and the United States. This development alarmed both India and the Soviet Union. Foreign Minister of India, Sawarn Singh, told the Indian Parliament "while we welcome the rapprochement, we cannot look upon it with equanimity if it means the domination of the two countries over this region".

The Soviet Union was also annoyed at Pakistan's role in facilitating Kissinger's trip to Peking and regarded the Sino-American rapprochement as a move to counter Soviet influence in South Asia to cope with this development in world affairs, India and the Soviet Union hastily entered into a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation which had been under consideration ever since 1969 when the Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev, had come out with an Asian Collective Security Plan.

It was clear that India could not carry on the conflict with Pakistan in isolation from the great power content. India had rightly calculated that the U.S. after having burnt its fingers in Vietnam, was not likely to commit troops in any other war in Asia, not in the near future at any rate. The U.S. influence in Asia was on the decline, though it was not quite clear whether the U.S. would reconcile to Soviet influence in this area.

However, neither Pakistan nor Bangladesh accept India's domination in the region. And the U.S's determination to keep its own activities in balance with those of other powers has prevented the balance of power in South Asia from tilting solely on the side of India and the Soviet Union.

Chapter II

SOVIET POLICY IN SOUTH ASIA - I

The post-war Soviet policy in Asia is to underline the qualitative changes that have come about in international politics since the end of the World War II. The beginning of the process of the liquidation of the colonial system, the assertion of political independence by former colonial and semi-colonial countries and later their struggle to achieve economic independence, all these factors combined together with other new world developments, have led to the transformation of international politics of our times. Likewise, they have also hastened the process of imparting an Asian content in the external norm and conduct of Soviet Society. ¹

Upon capturing power in November 1917, the Bolsheviks for some time were concerned with putting their house in order and were obsessed with ideology. They believed that when the time came they had only to give a little push and the capitalist world would come down crashing and that "the colonial slaves of Asia and Africa" would have to wait for their liberation until the victory of "proletarian dictatorship in Europe". When the desired 'inevitable' did not take place, the theory was modified to forge an alliance of 'the three basic revolutionary forces, namely, Soviet Russia, the working class of the developed capitalist countries and the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples.'²

Asia saw great political and social ferment during this period. For example, in Afghanistan, Emir Amanullah raised the banner of revolt against British imperialism. J.V. Stalin considered the Afghan struggle for independence "objectively revolutionary" in spite of the monarchical outlook of the Emir and his followers, for it weakens, disorganises, and undermines imperialism. In India, the Soviet declaration on the right of nations to self-determination created considerable interest. An Indian delegation, led by Mohammad Hadi, met Lenin on November 23, 1918, appraised him of the impact of this declaration on India and expressed the hope that "our brothers in great free Russia will extend their hand in the cause of liberation of Indian and all peoples of the world."

The fundamentals of the political course the Soviet Union is following in the international arena, were set forth immediately after the October Revolution in Russia. The Soviet government declared its breaking with the foreign policy of tsarism. The Soviet government recognised the independence of Finland, and declared unequal treaties, which the Czar concluded with the countries of the East, null and void. Having denounced these, the Soviet government also published all the secret treaties, among which there was the 1916 agreement between Russia, Great Britain and France on the division of Turkey and Iran and others.

In the conduct of Soviet foreign policy, a distinctly western orientation became more and more marked although the liquidation of the colonial system in all its forms remained

4 The Hindustan Times, Delhi, 20 November, 1968
5 Yuri V.Gankovsky, "International Relations, Peace and Security: Problems of South Asia in the works of Soviet Orientalist", Strategic Studies, Quarterly Journal of the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad, VI(2 & %).
one of the primary objectives of Soviet Society and the international communist movement. It can be legitimately argued that such an orientation was called for in view of the predominant character of international politics of the interwar years, and also because of the weak position of socialist Russia in the community of Nations. 6

Lenin strived to restructure the system of international relations on the principles of equality of all nations and peoples, so as to open possibilities for the removal of mistrust and conflicts, the establishment of a spirit of mutual understanding and the successful development of everything valuable that the contemporary civilization has obtained through joint efforts. These principles of foreign policy of the Soviet Socialist state found their reflection, in particular, in the treaties signed by Soviet Russia with Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan in 1921, which were based on equality and respect of the sovereignty of the parties involved. The 1921 treaties were, as is known, the first equal treaties these three countries of Asia signed with a great power in modern and contemporary history. 7

Lenin put down the achievement of a democratic universal peace as the priority task of the Soviet government. War was condemned as the greatest strife against humanity in the very first legal act of the Soviet State, "The Decree on Peace." Lenin put forward the principle of peaceful coexistence of states with different social structures as a fundamental principle of the Soviet state's foreign policy, allowing the attainment of lasting peace between peoples and rejecting war as a means of solving conflicts in the international arena.

6 Zafar Imam, op.cit.
7 Yuri V.Gankovsky, op.cit.
(A) Soviet Involvement: The Background

Roosevelt and Stalin had several discussions on the future of the colonies of Japan as well as of Britain, France and the Netherlands. At Teheran they pondered over the future of Indo-China and India, and both seemed to agree that India presented a complicated problem. Roosevelt expressed himself in favour of political reform in India "from the bottom, somewhat on the Soviet line". Stalin stressed the complexity and ambiguity of Indian class relationships and warned that reforms from the bottom might mean revolution.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union appeared to be in broad agreement on how to tackle the post-war colonial problems, until differences began to emerge at the San Francisco Conference of the UN. The differences, however, were not serious. The Soviets appeared to understand that the American retreat from "independence" to "self government" as the explicit goal of UN trusteeship was an unavoidable concession to the British. The Soviet Union accepted permanent membership of the Trusteeship Council, a reversal of their decision not to have anything to do with the League of Nations mandate system in the thirties.

At San Francisco the Soviet delegation fought for a more radical trusteeship charter. Soviet publicists did not fail to point out the contrast between Moscow's progressive colonial perspective and the American retreat to "self government" but they were not overly critical of the U.S. position.

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9 Pravada, 8 and 9 June, 1945. Also see New Times, 15 Dec., 1945, pp. 3-6
The Soviet Union got the reward it was aiming at. Their labours impressed the colonial countries of Asia and Africa. The Asian sentiment was voiced by Jawaharlal Nehru: "There is no doubt that during the last few years there has been some disillusionment in India with regard to American championship of freedom", he said, "At San Francisco, the Soviet Union took the lead in championing independence for subject peoples but other powers fought shy of this and tried their utmost to choke it down".  

The Soviet Union came in contact with India in 1946 at the Paris Peace Conference and at the UN Conference at San Francisco. The Indian delegation to the Paris Conference consisted of officials who hardly represented the political changes that were imminent and the Soviets were highly critical of its performance. In a report Pravada described all members of the Indian interim government of which Nehru was the defacto head, as "representatives of the right wing, with the sole exception of Nehru himself"; the Indian delegation at Paris was just the "loyal vassal of British imperialism". It was even doubtful that the Indian government would be able to translate into reality Nehru's aspiration for an independent foreign policy. At the Paris Conference the Soviet Union expected more objective voting on the part of the Indian delegation, but,"we have been confronted once again with the impossible situation wherein the Indian delegation simply fulfilled its colonial obligation to vote in accordance with the will of another country — according to the will of Great Britain."  

Molotov had obtained in Paris some idea of Nehru's foreign

10 Jawahar Lal Nehru, Before and After Independence, A Collection of Speeches, 1922-1954, New Delhi, p.376
11 Pravada, 21 October, 1946
policy aspirations from his personal representative V.K. Krishna Menon. At the San Francisco Conference, India was able to play an independent role especially on the colonial question and the Soviet delegation often found the Indian delegation voting with it and against the western powers. Issues on which the Soviets and India voted together included trusteeship, military bases in trust areas, and racial discrimination. At a luncheon for the Indian delegation at San Francisco, Molotov now said that this expectation that the "authentic voice of India" would be raised on behalf of "progressive causes" had been "so completely fulfilled."\(^\text{12}\)

The visits which Khruschev and Bulganian made in 1955 to India, Burma and Afghanistan marked the beginning both of the Soviet foreign aid programme and of the Soviet Union's special relationship with India, while the arms deal with Egypt in the same year was the first to be concluded as part of a new policy of military aid to non-communist countries. It has been estimated that by the time of Khruschev's fall about 3 billion dollars worth of arms had been supplied to thirteen such countries in the preceding decade amounting to nearly half the total of all Soviet economic aid to underdeveloped countries in the same period.\(^\text{13}\)

The Soviet stance on India and Pakistan began to harden in early 1947. A strong Soviet delegation attended the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in February. One of its members was E. Zhukov, who also travelled extensively in India after the Conference. The Soviet delegation looked at the conference with suspicion, many of the delegates were surprised when it rose to oppose a resolution to create an

\(^{12}\) The Hindu, Madras, 8 December, 1946.

Asian block. The report on conference that Zhukov made to a Moscow meeting of Soviet experts on the colonial question revealed an astonishing hostility towards India. The New Delhi Conference as a whole did play a useful role, said Zhukov, who had words of praise for Egypt, Indonesia, Indo-China and Burma. But he attacked Nehru for his "pro-British sentiments, his pan-Asianism, his failure to organize Asia in opposition to western imperialism".

Zhukov found the Indian Nationalist leaders eager to conciliate the West. Nehru had failed to give a class interpretation to Indian independence. Zhukov suspected India of harbouring expansionist ambitions in Asia and was quite alarmed by the prospect of India and China, either separately or in collaboration, filling up the power vacuum in Asia created by the defeat of Japan.

Zhukov found the leadership of the Indian National Congress as "big capitalist". The British had neither departed from India in reality nor did they intend to do so. "Asia is heavily burdened with feudal remnants, and a purifying thunderstorm for her, undoubtedly was not only useful, but necessary". In his travel accounts Zhukov painted the picture of an India that was "weighed down by centuries of backwardness", where the proletariat was becoming a "more and more important factor in the political life", and a "considerable element" in the youth had an admirable "fighting spirit".

As the Soviets did not believe that India was independent, it was impossible that they should make an objective assessment of India's non-aligned status or its position in the

14 "The Asian Conference", International Affairs, Moscow, July, 1947, p.303
15 Pravada, 12 May and 16 May, 1947
newly emerging Asian-African world. Zhukov came down heavily on the policy of non-alignment, which he chose to describe as the so-called "theory of third force". He denounced it as "an imperialist device for slandering the Soviet Union by placing it on the same level with American imperialism."16

In the Soviet scheme of things, there were only two paths — the path of "Socialism and progress" followed by the Soviet block and the path of "imperialism and decay" adopted by the West. The Soviets could not conceive of a third course. They dubbed Nehru reformist when he talked of a middle course for India's economic and industrial development and its foreign policy. To them Nehru's line of argument meant compromising with the "enemy", instead of destroying him altogether. Indeed, in all Soviet writings during the Stalin period India was never presented to the Soviet readers as a non-aligned country.17

A few months later, on June 2, 1950, Pravada reported that the United States insisted on "forming an aggressive block", that a conference of the representatives of a number of Asian countries, including Pakistan, India and Ceylon, was convened in the Phillipines in May 1950 for this purpose at the "initiative" of the United States and that the participating governments had long been "collaborating with Anglo-American Imperialism". However, it was observed that India, Pakistan and Ceylon had refused "open declaration of allegiance to the aggressive American plan", since they feared "opposition of their peoples to such a plan."18

18 Pravda, 2 June 1950
India's decision to remain in the Commonwealth of Nations, even after the coming into force of the new constitution which declared India a republic, was criticized. It was argued that the membership of the Commonwealth made it obligatory for the Indian government constantly to "consult" with London on questions of foreign policy.\(^{19}\)

As India's first ambassador to the Soviet Union, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit experienced Soviet suspicion and hostility during her stay in Moscow. The Kremlin cold-shouldered her, believing that Nehru "being too pro-Mountbatten", could not be very different from "the ordinary run of imperialist lackeys."\(^{20}\) There was little response from Moscow to Nehru's articulated desire for close, friendly relations. Pakistan presented the Soviets with an additional problem — the Marxist aversion for religion and Moscow's failure to understand until very recently, what an American scholar has termed as Islam's "instrumentality in politics."\(^{21}\)

However, India's position on Korea highlighted the authenticity of India's policy of non-alignment and led to a little warmth in the relations between India and the Soviet Union. In his efforts to stop the Korean war, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote personal letters to J.V. Stalin in July 1950. Stalin replied immediately and his reply was considered to be "favourable" and conciliatory in the West.\(^{22}\) Yet, on the whole, India's mediatory efforts during the Korean War were suspected in both Peking and Moscow. Chou En-lai called Nehru "The running dog of British imperialism". Vyshinsky, though less abusive, was more sarcastic, when he observed: "At best you

19 New Times, 15 March, 1950, No.11, p.3
20 The Hindustan Times, New Delhi 22 Nov 1955
are dreamers and idealists. At worst you do not understand your own position and camouflage horrible American policy" - Broadcasts from both countries contained this theme, and the Chinese particular indulged in such personal vilification of Nehru.23

In the mid-fifties, the Kremlin had neither the wish nor the opportunity to begin its new South Asia policy with Pakistan, the latter was already a military ally of the U.S. Khrushchev and Bulganin undertook their Asian journey in late 1955 and determined to offer economic and political support to India, which no Indian government, in identical external and internal environment, could possibly decline. In contrast with this India based South Asia policy of the Soviet Union in the mid-fifties, was the tentative gesture of friendship Moscow had extended to Pakistan in the late forties. Soviet neutrality on the Kashmir issue as it came to the Security Council in 1948 was, in itself, an ambiguous move; it pleased the Indians, particularly because it was couched in language strongly condemning imperialist manoeuvres to "turn Kashmir into an American base".24

India's refusal to sign a Japanese Peace Treaty in San Francisco in 1951 evoked an even more positive, though indirect, response from the Soviet Union. During the summer of 1951 there began a limited cultural exchange programme. More significantly, the Soviets started shipping wheat and other food-stuffs to India with much fanfare to help it tide over food crisis in 1951.25 They also called upon the CPI to work within the parliamentary framework of the Indian system. This was undoubtedly to the Congress government's advantage.

23 "India", Round Table, March, 1953, XLIII(170), p.170
25 Pravada, 10 June 1951
Also, on the diplomatic front, the Soviet delegate to the United Nations, Jacob Malik, rejected the idea of a UN plebiscite during a debate on Kashmir in the Security Council in 1952, thereby perceptibly moving closer to the Indian position. At the session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) held in Singapore in 1951 the Soviet delegate indicated the willingness of the Soviet Union to assist in the industrial development of the newly independent states. Other perceptible signs of change in the Soviet attitude towards India in 1952 included Soviet participation in the International Film Festival and the International Industrial Exhibition held in Bombay in that year. In April 1952 India participated in the International Economic Conference in Moscow, where the Soviet Union made an offer to increase Indo-Soviet trade. However, negotiations were not consummated in the form of a trade agreement until after Stalin's death.

The Soviet Union as a global power is primarily interested in holding its allies in Eastern Europe, undermining NATO and extending its influence in the Third World. As compared to Europe, Asia is clearly of secondary interest to the Soviet Union. The evolution of Soviet South Asian policy has been of decent origin, a few decades old. The Soviet Union started taking interest in South Asia only after the emergence of People's Republic of China, creation of SEATO and the establishment of American bases in South Vietnam, Thailand, Phillipines and Pakistan. It was Khrushchev who came to recognise the pressing need for securing a firm foothold in South Asia for neutralising the power thrust of U.S.A. and China.

Khrushchev's changes in the doctrine of Soviet foreign

27 Pravada, 7 Jan, 1952
policy, coupled with his claim for Soviet ballistic missile technology, contributed to the great schism in the communist world, which became public the year before his fall. Although both sides trace the origin of the Sino-Soviet dispute to 1957, the Chinese leaders seem unlikely ever to have forgiven the Russians for their ambivalent attitude to their cause from 1920 onwards. Nevertheless, according to Khrushchev's impetuous nature, his conduct of the dispute by public abuse, and his attempt to have Chinese doctrines condemned by the majority of the international communist movement may well have loomed large in the minds of his colleagues when they finally decided to remove him from power.28

The world situation took some amusing turn in the early 1960s with the thawing of East-West relations. Within the world communist movement, the first break between the Soviet Union and China took place in June 1960 at the Romanian Communist Party Congress. The watershed was reached at the meeting of eighty-one communist parties held in Moscow in December 1960, when in another confrontation Albania supported China, while the Indonesian, North Korean, and North Vietnamese delegates remained neutral, although inclined towards Chinese.

In October 1961, at the XXII Congress of the CPSU, to which Albania had not been invited, Khrushchev attacked Albania — implicitly China — for opposing the line agreed at the XX Congress. Only two-thirds of the parties represented at the Congress endorsed the attack on Albania; all the Asians remained silent. In the following year, when by a remarkable (but genuine) coincidence the Sino-Indian border war broke out two days before the Cuban missile crisis began, the two communist governments for a few days lent each other moral support. But by the 5 November 1962 the Chinese had

28 Robin Edmonds, op.cit., pp. 13-14
begun to criticize the Soviet withdrawal of missiles from Cuba, and the Russians had reverted to their earlier attitude of neutrality towards the Sino-Indian dispute, urging the need for a negotiated settlement and continuing to provide military aid to India.\(^{29}\)

War between India, the befriending of which had enabled the U.S.S.R. to gain much influence in the third world, and China, fraternal member of the communist block, initially strained the Indo-Soviet relations that had developed so well during the preceding eight years. Khrushchev described the border fighting as "an outright godsend for the imperialists", \(^{30}\) and he had good reason to despair about a conflict in which he did not have to favour one side over the other.

Prior to the War, India had hoped that the U.S.S.R. would restrain China and in the event of a major armed conflict, remain neutral. This hope was not entirely without foundation: The Soviet Union did not want to lose friendship of India and made it look to the West for help. The U.S.S.R. made its position clear in September 1959, three years before the outbreak of war, declaring for the first time that it took a neutral position in conflict between a communist and a non-communist country. But when the War erupted in the midst of the Cuban crisis, unity within the communist block against the western countries was vital, and the Soviet Union felt compelled to show some fraternal feeling towards Peking.

On October 25, 1962, Pravada and Izvestia praised as "constructive" China's three point peace proposal of October 1-24, a proposal already rejected by India, and

\(^{29}\) Ibid., pp. 17-18
\(^{30}\) Pravda, 13 and 25 December, 1963
implicitly blamed India. The Soviet press did not condemn what India regarded as Chinese aggression, and it endorsed the Chinese views on the McMahon line, India's eastern boundary with China.

During the period that followed not only Sino-Indian relations deteriorated, but the relations between India and Soviet Union were strengthened considerably. From now onwards more Soviet leaders began to visit India and among those were Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Kosygin, Suslov, Kozhlov, and Nikoyan. Indeed, Khrushchev preferred to be in India on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Sino-Soviet Agreement of Friendship and alliance of 1950, which incident according to a leading expert of Chinese affairs, tended to add to Mao's irritation against Khrushchev and India.31

When the Sino-Indian dispute could not be resolved peacefully, Mao, for his own reasons, launched a large scale aggression on India in October 1962. There was nothing to show that Russia exhibited either pro-India or pro-China behaviour instantly. No Soviet paper carried any news of the Sino-Indian war in the following two days. When the Chinese forces were on the Indian soil, the American President declared the Cuban blockade from 24 October 1962 to the ships carrying war material to Cuba. The Cuban blockade, more than the Sino-Indian war, was a big embarrassment to the Russians. Unlike clashes on the Indian frontier, it came up suddenly and unexpectedly, and it placed the Soviet leaders in an unenviable predicament. Under the compulsion of developments on the Cuban front, Russia made quick moves in the Sino-Indian War too.32

31 Sisir Gupta, "India and the Soviet Union", Current History, March 1963, p.146; Also see J.A.Naik, Soviet Policy towards India;From Stalin to Brezhnev, Vikas, Delhi, 1970, p.152
32 J.A. Naik, op.cit., p.159
This turn in the Soviet policy towards India, however, came to an early end when the cause which brought it into existence had subsided. Pressed with the American confrontation on Cuba, the Russian policy to rally her allies round her continued so long as it had a mind to meet the U.S. challenges. When, however, its Cuban policy changed and Russia decided to withdraw the missiles from Cuba, its policy in the Sino-Indian war once again underwent a change. When thus the Soviet authorities decided the Cuban policy once for all they made up their mind to restore the earlier Soviet policy of neutrality in the Sino-Indian conflict. 33

**Russian Offer of Friendship to Pakistan**

While supporting India on the Kashmir issue, Khrushchev also said in Srinagar that the Soviet Union would like to have friendly relations with Pakistan and "it is no fault of ours if such relations have not so far developed. In the interest of peace, however, we shall steadily strive for an improvement of these relations." 34 In the Supreme Soviet, Khrushchev observed that Moscow was willing to meet Pakistan half way in establishing friendly relations. 35 This did not mean that Moscow wanted Pakistan to travel halfway by extricating itself from SEATO and the Baghdad Pact.

Pakistan's participation in the western sponsored military alliances and the open Soviet support for India and Afghanistan on the Kashmir and Pakhtoonistan issues respectively generated bitterness and hostility between Pakistan and the Soviet Union. Yet even at this stage, the Soviet Union did not

34 Bulganin and Khrushchev, *Speeches During Sojourn in India, Burma and Afghanistan*, Tass, New Delhi, 1956
35 *New Times*, 5 Jan 1956, No.2, Documents, p.23
appear to wish to write off Pakistan altogether. In an article published in August 1956, Izvestia observed that Pakistan was not altogether lost to the West in spite of its membership of the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO).36

The Soviet Union wanted Pakistan to accept as few commitments as possible under the western-sponsored alliance system and thereby prevent itself from becoming a source of serious tension in the region. Pakistan, it held, "need not go the whole hog with the Western countries in its anti-communism, or, at any rate, anti-Sovietism in view of the willingness of the Soviet Union to develop mutual trade and cultural relations." The motivation behind the endeavour of the Soviet Union to develop friendly relations with Pakistan in spite of the latter's openly pro-Western orientation appeared to be its concern for its own security. Pakistan's strategic location in the subcontinent and the Indian Ocean region and its proximity to Soviet Central Asia were facts that the Soviet Union could not ignore. In Soviet strategic thinking both India and Pakistan were equally important, and that is why, in the speech made at a public reception at Srinagar on 10 December 1955, Nikita S. Khrushchev, while announcing Soviet support for India's stand on the Kashmir question, was nevertheless careful to keep the door open for normalizing relations with Pakistan. He said that the Soviet Union would like to have "friendly relations with Pakistan (and) we shall persistently strive to improve these relations."37

36 Izvestia, 14 August 1955; also see "Political Changes in Pakistan", International Affairs (Moscow), September 1955

37 N.A. Bulganin and N.S. Khrushchev, Visit of Friendship to India, Burma, Afghanistan, Moscow, 1956, p.114; also see Pravda, 11 Dec 1955
Later, in the Supreme Soviet, he again declared: "We on our side are ready to meet attempts to establish friendly relations with Pakistan." 38

The Soviet offer to Pakistan in February 1956 to share technical knowledge on the peaceful uses of atomic energy was an indication that Pakistan lay well within the scope of the Soviet aid programme. Premier Bulganin clearly told Pakistan that "there are adequate opportunities for mutually beneficial economic cooperation between the Soviet Union and Pakistan if only there was willingness on both sides." On trade, he said, "there exists a practical possibility for promotion of trade relations between the two countries". He even suggested that it might be desirable to have a trade agreement between Pakistan and the Soviet Union. 39

In Moscow, the Republic Day celebrations in the Pakistani embassy were attended by the Soviet Foreign Minister, V.M. Molotov, who, in a toast to the new Republic, said: "For our part we drink to the establishment of good neighbourly relations between Pakistan and the Soviet Union." 40 In Karachi, the Soviet Union was represented by A.L. Mikoyan, First Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R., at the Republic Day festivities. During his stay in Karachi, he, among other things, delivered an invitation to the Speaker of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly for a Parliamentary delegation to visit the U.S.S.R. The invitation was gladly accepted. 41

38 Ibid., p.291
39 Izvestia, 7 February 1956
40 Pakistan Times, 25 March 1956
41 "World Events", New Times, 29 March 1956 (No.14), p.31; Also see Dawn, 30 March 1956
After the coming into power of General Ayub Khan, Pakistan started negotiating with the United States for a new military agreement. The Soviet government held that the conclusion of a new agreement would complicate the situation in South East Asia and the Middle East and warned Pakistan that this could involve her in the military ventures of the Western powers. Though Pakistan assured that foreign military bases on its territory could not be used by the foreign military powers against the Soviet Union and the peace loving neighbour of Pakistan without the wishes of the Pakistani government, the Soviet government again warned that the government of Pakistan bore full responsibility for the consequences of any steps Pakistan undertook "to transform her territory into a foreign military base."

It shows that the Soviets might have known that the United States was sending spy planes into Soviet Russia from its military bases in West Pakistan. A few months later, on May 2, 1960, when the Soviet Union shot down one such plane, the Kremlin sent a strong protest to Karachi, and Khrushchev threatened to destroy the Peshawar military base from which the U-2 plane (spy plane) was said to have flown.

Change in Soviet Policy Towards South Asia

India's military reverses in its border clashes with China brought into sharp focus the limitation of the South Asia policy that the Soviet Union had followed till then and which was almost exclusively India-centered. The Soviet Union seemed to have believed till then that India was in a position to defend its borders with China. The humiliating defeat


43 Ibid.
that India suffered caused great anxiety in Moscow. Indeed there was much greater anxiety in Moscow than in Washington, because India appeared to be drifting towards the Western camp. India's debacle and its drift towards the Western camp signified for the Soviet Union a qualitative change in the international situation, particularly in Asia. The Soviet Union made an attempt, though half-hearted, to build-up India as a counter weight to China.44

By striking a severe blow at India, China upset the balance of power in Asia and raised its own prestige at a time when there were no signs of improvement in Sino-Soviet relations. The Chinese action, therefore, threatened to checkmate Soviet policy in the region. And it looked as though Soviet interests were now going to be undermined by China rather than by the United States. The widening Sino-Soviet rift, which coincided with the final breach between China and India, was an important development which made a great impact on the Soviet thinking on the South Asian region.

China's growing close relations with Pakistan caused concern in Moscow. The Soviet Union did not want a hostile Pakistan backed by China. Thus it became essential for the Soviet Union to establish its presence in Pakistan and counter China's growing influence there, especially when India had shown how weak it was vis-a-vis China.

The growing detente between the super powers, especially after the Cuban missiles crisis of October 1962, also contributed to some extent to a re-orientation of Soviet policy.

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Moscow stepped up its efforts to improve its relations with Pakistan. The agreement on the exploration of oil was concluded in the summer of 1961. It provided for, among other things, a Soviet loan of Rs. 150 million to be used for the purpose of exploring the sources of oil in Pakistan. Moreover, just as on the eve of improvements in relations with India and Prime Minister Nehru's visit to the U.S.S.R., Moscow started translating important Indian books in 1961, Soviet Russia began to translate into the Russian language works of all major Pakistani writers. Perhaps Moscow was preparing the way for playing host to the President of Pakistan.45

For Pakistan, Kashmir was the touchstone to test the friendship of the Soviet Union. The 1962 Security Council debate on Kashmir provided this opportunity to Pakistan. Moscow did not give any assurance to Pakistan. In fact, Pakistan invoked the Security Council for the solution of the Kashmir dispute with a belief that it would get strong support from the West. But the Soviet Union's stand in the Security Council did not give any comfort to Pakistan.

However, the Soviet Union continued to strive resolutely to realize its set objective. On 7 October 1963 it concluded with Pakistan an air agreement providing for the operation of Aeroflot and Pakistan International Airways in each other's territories. The two countries also agreed to provide the necessary traffic facilities at specified points located in their respective territories.46 Pakistan and the Soviet Union signed a credit agreement on 17 June 1964.47 This agreement provided for a credit of $ 11 million to Pakistan. Though the amount involved was small, the credit agreement was

45 Vijay Sen Budhraj, op.cit., p.135
46 Izvestia, 8 October 1963
47 Dawn, 18 June 1964
significant in the sense that it indicated the willingness of the Soviet Union to participate in Pakistan's efforts to accelerate its economic recovery and development. A few days earlier, on 11 June 1964, Pakistan and the Soviet Union had signed an agreement on a cultural and scientific exchange programme for 1964.48

In spite of all these events, Pakistan was not too happy with the terms of trade offered by the Soviet Union. Pakistani leaders expressed unhappiness about the Soviet arms aid to India. Commenting on Soviet announcement of large-scale arms to India, President Ayub Khan observed that Pakistan was seeking to normalize its relations with the Soviet Union, but it depended on whether or not the Soviet Union continued to arm India against Pakistan.49

There was thus a reshaping of Soviet policy towards the South Asian region in general and towards Pakistan in particular. In May 1964, when the Kashmir issue was again debated in the Security Council, the Soviet representative while reaffirming his government's stand that Kashmir was a part of India refrained from condemning Pakistan. This was in marked contrast with previous Soviet practice. In fact, for the first time in many years, the Soviet Union recognized the existence of a dispute over Kashmir and called upon India and Pakistan to settle it peacefully. The Soviet leaders also started discreetly avoiding public pronouncement on the issue. In September 1964, when the Indian President S. Radhakrishnan visited Moscow, the Soviet Union failed to endorse in the joint communique India's position on the Kashmir issue.50

After the fall of Khrushchev in October 1964, the new

48 Ibid., 12 June 1964
49 Ibid., 2 October 1964
50 Indian Express, Delhi, 26 September 1964
leadership made significant modifications in the Soviet policy towards the Third World in general and towards South Asia in particular. The Soviet Union wanted to wean Pakistan away from China and United States. For this purpose, the Soviet Union adopted a flexible attitude towards Pakistan. The Soviet Union welcomed the formation of the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) organisation which came into existence in July 1964 with Iran, Pakistan and Turkey as members. Pravda stated: "Turkey, Iran and Pakistan have started to emerge from the isolation imposed on them by the U.S.A. and Britain and have developed their dependence and (have) simultaneously (manifested) their desire to solve problems on their own."

Pakistan's External Affairs Minister Z.A. Bhutto visited Moscow in January 1965. He held high level talks with the Soviet leaders on international relations in general and on Soviet-Pakistan relations in particular. In 1965, President Ayub Khan visited the Soviet Union. This was the first ever visit of a Pakistani head of government to Moscow. Premier Kosygin described Ayub Khan's visit as "a momentous event in the history of Soviet-Pakistan relations", and expressed the hope that the visit "will contribute to the further strengthening of mutual understanding and good neighbourliness between our two countries." Paying warm tributes to the visiting dignitary, he noted that President Ayub Khan's policies had greatly contributed to an improvement of his country's relations with the Soviet Union.

The Soviet leaders described the joint communique issued

51 Pravda, 15 November 1964
52 Ibid., 13 and 14 January 1965
53 Ibid., 4 April 1965
54 Ibid., 6 April 1965
towards the close of the Pakistani President's visit (11 April 1965) as "A milestone in the Pakistan-Soviet relations". The Soviet press hailed the communique as indicative of the "dawn of a new era in Pakistan-Soviet relations." To quote Dawn: "The first important outcome of President Ayub Khan's state visit to the Soviet Union was the signing of an agreement on Pakistan-Soviet trade, economic cooperation, and cultural exchange."  

Thus President Ayub Khan's visit to the Soviet Union was a milestone in Soviet-Pakistani relations. The talks between the Soviet leaders and the Pakistani President scattered the clouds of misunderstanding that had rendered the relations between the two countries gloomy for a long time and set them on the path of normal relations. Dawn noted that "they broke the barriers which Indian diplomacy had succeeded in erecting between Pakistan and the Soviet Union over the past decade".

During Lal Bahadur Shastri's visit to the Soviet Union more evidence became available on the shift in the Soviet attitude. The Soviet Prime Minister, Alexei Kosygin appeared as though he did not wish to be drawn into any discussion of his country's relations with Pakistan. It is said that whenever a controversial issue in Indo-Pakistani relations came up in the talks, he would only suggest to the Indian Prime Minister that "ways must be found leading to a political settlement" of the issue.

(B) Soviet Approach to the Indo-Pak Conflict, 1965

During the Indo-Pak War 1965, the Soviet Union got the opportunity to expand its influence in South Asia. It regarded

55 Pravda, 11 April 1965
56 Dawn, 8 April 1965
57 Ibid.,
58 Ibid., 15 May 1965
Pakistan's growing friendship with China almost as a betrayal of the U.S.-Pakistan alliance. China's emergence on the South Asia scene ostensibly as a friend of Pakistan but with the ulterior motive of understanding Soviet interests in the area gave an impetus to Soviet diplomacy. The Soviet Union played its cards with admirable skill. The Soviet Union and United States made significant changes in their South Asian policies. Both the super powers had come to recognise that stability in South Asia and the arresting of Pakistan's drift towards Peking were more important than either the strengthening of US-Pakistani ties or Indo-Soviet bonds. United States suspended its arms supply to India and Pakistan in September 1965, and made it clear that Washington would not give military assistance to Pakistan which could lead to Chinese intervention. The Soviet Union adopted a neutral stand and gave clear evidence of its decision to keep itself out of any Indo-Pakistani armed conflict and to treat India and Pakistan equally.

The Soviet attitude towards the grave situation in the Indian subcontinent, which ensued in the spring and autumn of 1965 could be first seen in a Tass statement on the deteriorating situation on the Indo-Pakistan border in the Kutch area. This statement underscored that solution of problems between India and Pakistan by means of war would not help the imperialists in developing the already existing tension in other parts of Asia. While citing Shastri Ayub's statements on 9 May 1965 regarding peaceful solution of the existing issues, it laid emphasis on the importance of direct and peaceful negotiations for India and Pakistan.

59 Pravda, 12 August 1965
60 Ibid., 9 May 1965, Translation from materials available in Russian language by Dr. S.P. Singh, The Quarterly Review of Historical Studies, Calcutta, Apr-June 1983, p. 54
Throughout the period of War, Soviet news and publicity media used the utmost caution in reporting or commenting on the developments on the subcontinent. There was no mention of Pakistani infiltration into Kashmir till 6 September 1965. Thereafter, too, the event was reported only in the form of Soviet media quoting Indian sources, and quotations from Indian sources were carefully balanced off with quotations from Pakistani sources. 61

The Soviet concern for peace in South Asia was fully contrasted by an incendiary statement of the Chinese government on 4 May 1965 which expressed its full sympathy with and support to, Pakistan in her fight against "Indian expansionism". 62 Similar was the substance of Sino-Pak joint communique, issued earlier at the end of President Ayub's visit to Peking on 7 March 1965. It is needless to observe that Peking's open encouragement to Pakistan certainly shaped, to a larger extent, the latter's policy towards the occupation of Kashmir by means of war in the following months. 63

To prevent an escalation of the conflict, the Soviet government initiated intense diplomatic activity to that end. On 4 September, 1965, in bold and unprecedented diplomatic initiative, Kosygin urged India and Pakistan to cease military operations immediately by withdrawing their armies behind the ceasefire line of 1949. 64

Towards the end of August 1965, the border situation in Kashmir became extremely tense after into this state of India and the latter's action against them. The Soviet

61 Dawn, 29 August 1965
62 People's Daily, 5 May 1965
63 See Daily Telegraph, 27 April 1965
64 Pravda, 12 September, 1965
Union called upon both the countries to find out ways to liquidate the conflict which would only further aggravate their economic problems. In a leading article in the Pravda on 24 August, 1965, an observer rightly elaborated the Soviet stand on the Indo-Pak War. While referring to Soviet respect for India's policy of peaceful coexistence and non-alignment, her fight against colonialism and respectable place in the world, the observer underlined that Soviet aspiration for developing its relations with Pakistan proceeded from the assumption that her good neighbourly relations with Pakistan would not weaken her friendship with any third country. Maintenance of relations between the Soviet Union and Pakistan, the observer added, was the part of the Soviet general policy directed towards ensuring peace in Asia and the world. Soviet relation with Pakistan, like her traditional friendship with India, would be a stabilizing factor for normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan as well as for situation in Asia.

On 7 September 1965, through an officially authorized Tass statement, the Soviet Union once again displayed its deep concern about the conflict, which was taking place "in an area in close proximity to the frontiers of the Soviet Union", and reiterated its appeal for an immediate ceasefire. While Soviet delegates were discussing adoption of immediate measures for restoring peace in Kashmir, Chinese foreign Minister Chen Yi paid a surprise visit to Karachi on 4 September for pledging China's moral and material support to Pakistan. The Soviet leadership directed all its energy to maintaining Peace in South Asia and thereby preventing any escalation of the conflict. The Tass statement warned against exploitation of the conflict by certain forces which intensified the conflict.

65 Pravda, 24 August 1965
66 Ibid., 1 September 1965
by issuing instigating statements and maintained that, if the conflict deepend many governments would be involved, the conflict would spread over distant regions and such forces would have to bear full responsibility for their policies and actions.  

On 19 September 1965 Tass released an identical message sent by Premier Kosygin to both President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, specifically proposing a meeting of the two leaders in a conference to be held on "Soviet soil" to resolve peacefully the issues dividing their two countries. Kosygin said that he would be willing to participate in such a conference if the two sides wanted him to do so.

In the hope of direct Chinese intervention against India, Pakistan did not pay any heed to two unanimous Security Council resolutions (4 September, 6 September) asking for ceasefire and withdrawal. This was what China had desired. To embolden Pakistan to keep on fighting, China condemned India's "naked aggression" and warned her that "she must bear the responsibility for all consequences." China denounced the UNO, Soviet Union and U.S. which it contended, were "helping" India.

This was the background of the Tashkent Conference, which opened on 4 January 1966. The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan held bilateral talks for nearly a week to thrash out the differences between their countries. In his inaugural speech Kosygin said that he was aware of the difficulties entailed in normalizing Indo-Pakistani relations.

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68 Pravda, 18 September 1965
69 Ibid., 20 September 1965
70 Cited in Peking Review, 1965, 8(37), p.6
He, however, still hoped that the meeting would prove to be a turning point in the relations between India and Pakistan and create a climate of trust and mutual understanding facilitating an eventual achievement of normalization. During the conference Lal Bahadur Shastri stressed the importance of signing a "no war pact" and following it up with a gradual elimination of differences and disputes. Ayub Khan pointed out that a 'no war' pact between nations would work only if it was adopted after taking concrete steps for settling the disputes that divided them.

However, on 10 January 1966 the historic Tashkent Declaration was signed.

Soviet Disappointment - The Soviets were soon to suffer several disappointments. The President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India did not meet again. The ministerial level meetings held on March 1 and 2, 1966 in Rawalpindi, too proved to be failure. Both sides reiterated their respective points of view and found themselves as part as ever. The joint communique that followed the meeting described the talks as exploratory leading to a useful exchange of views. Moreover, the two countries blamed each other for their strained relations and complained to Moscow of one another's alleged breaches of the Tashkent Declaration. Secondly, the Tashkent Declaration was not well received in Pakistan. Z.A. Bhutto described it as a betrayal and it began to be argued that it was merely a "no force" declaration which did not prevent Pakistan to resort to war over the Kashmir dispute if it was not settled peacefully. The hate India campaign received official blessing when the government of Pakistan decided to observe 6 September, the

71 Pravda, 5 January 1966
72 Ibid.
day India attacked the Lahore and Sialkot sectors in 1965, as the Defence of Pakistan Day.\textsuperscript{73}

Secondly, Prime Minister A.N. Kosygin in his opening speech, and the Soviet press subsequently, reminded both India and Pakistan that they achieved victory over colonialism through "their common efforts", that jointly they could keep their enemies away from the subcontinent, that the normalization of Indo-Pakistani relations would strengthen peace in South East Asia, and that "an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding", and economic cooperation between them could benefit the two countries. It was argued that the economies of India and Pakistan constituted "a single whole and that intercourse between them and expansion of trade would benefit both."\textsuperscript{74} But the atmosphere of hostility and mistrust continued; all attempts to establish good neighbourly relations remained unsuccessful.

The Soviet Union went ahead with demonstrating to Pakistan that it had adopted the policy of treating India and Pakistan equally and that it sincerely wished to improve the relations with Rawalpindi. Following the Tashkent meeting, Soviet Union and Pakistan signed, in January 1966, a barter agreement, providing for the exchange of Pakistani rice for Soviet vehicles and road-building and engineering machinery. In the same year the two countries signed an agreement on economic cooperation, which was a positive indication of the fact that Moscow had decided to treat India and Pakistan alike in the matter of economic aid. Under this agreement, the U.S.S.R. undertook to render technical and financial assistance in the construction of twenty-one projects, including two plants for the production of

\textsuperscript{73} Vijaysen Budhraj, \textit{op.cit.}, p.171
\textsuperscript{74} Kessings Contemporary Archives, Jan 22-29, 1966, p.21187 A.
electrical machinery, the Guddu Thermal power station, fifteen broadcasting houses, a high voltage transmission line, and a railway-cum-highway bridge across the river Rupsa. It was indeed a major economic assistance agreement. Moreover, a number of Soviet delegations and officials ranging from a Soviet tennis star to the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, visited Pakistan in 1966, indicating thereby the importance Moscow attached to its friendship with Pakistan. 75

But all this did not effect Sino-Pakistani ties in any way. If the Soviets considered India a counterweight against China, the Chinese believed that Pakistan was a counterweight against India. The Chinese Head of State, Liu Shao-Chi visited Pakistan in March and again in April 1966. During his first visit, he stated that "when Pakistan resolutely fights against foreign aggression in defence of its national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity the 650 million Chinese people will stand unswervingly "on its side and give it resolute support and assistance." 76

The growing China-Pakistan relations caused much uneasiness in Moscow. Rawalpindi was not satisfied with the new Soviet policy because India was still getting Soviet arms and sophisticated weapons. When Britain and the United States placed an embargo on the shipment of arms to India and Pakistan in September 1965, the Soviet Union became India's primary supplier of aircraft. It is said that while the fighting was on, the Soviets agreed to supply India with four submarines, destroyer escorts, and naval patrol craft. 77

75 Sangat Singh, Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Appraisal, Asia, Bombay, 1970 p.151
76 The Times, London, 28 March 1966
77 Indian Express, 7 September 1965
At the invitation of Soviet government, President Ayub Khan visited the U.S.S.R. from September 25 to October 4, 1967. Pakistan, at one time considered to be a "bastion of the free world", announced in Moscow that there was "need for the immediate ending of the War in Vietnam, in acknowledgement of the right of the Vietnamese people to settle their own destiny without foreign interference as envisaged by the 1954 Geneva Agreement". 78

It was clear that to please Moscow, Pakistan had moved closer to the Russian view than to that of American on the Vietnam issue. President Ayub Khan assured the Soviet Prime Minister that his country remained ready and willing to negotiate with India on all issues in the spirit of the Tashkent Declaration. 79

For India, the crucial problem was the arms supplies to Pakistan and its implications for Soviet policy towards the subcontinent. In an editorial in The Times of India, Nanporia commented that there persists a tendency in New Delhi, to act with alarm and bewilderment to any suggestion of a Soviet deviation from its earliest posture and more particularly in relation to Pakistan. This can be explained only in terms of a failure to grasp the essentials of Soviet policy in Asia and to realise that Soviet friendship is not an absolute created for the country's convenience ... the entire basis of Soviety policy seems to be to encourage the 'containment' not only of Chinese Communist influence but also that of the United States. It does not hope to achieve this by establishing any kind of a 'Soviet

79 "Pakistan President Ayub Khan's to visit to the Soviet Union and France", Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Nov. 4-11, 1967, p. 22345B.
presence' but by creating conditions in which it is hoped nonalignment will acquire an Asian presence, Moscow's openly expressed desire for friendlier relations with Pakistan, adds Nanpordia, should be no cause for hysteria in New Delhi. Similarly the possibilities of a minor Soviet arms deal with Rawalpindi must be seen in this context before surrendering to the infantile conclusion that this would be a Soviet 'betrayal'. What could be described as Soviet 'tactical neutrality' was implicit in its role in Tashkent. Moscow's patient cultivation of Rawalpindi is an extension of Mr. Kosygin's well calculated political initiative in this part of the world. 80

Notwithstanding such a great contribution to the political stability in South Asia at such a critical juncture, both in India and abroad, various sorts of misapprehensions regarding changes in Soviet policy towards India were inspired in some circles. 81 British journals took the lead in providing food to India's rightist parties by undernoting the lack of Soviet support to India, 82 the Jana Sangh seized the wind out of the British sail. 83 While advocating the need for reassessment of India's foreign policy, the Swatantra Party mouthpiece Swarajya blamed the Soviet Union for equating India with Pakistan.

General Yahya Khan, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Pakistan visited Moscow from June 27 to July 8, 1968. Prime Minister Kosygin informed Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on July 7, 1968 that the Soviet Union intended to supply arms

80 N.J.Nanpordia, The Times of India, Delhi, 14 July 1966
81 Times, 14 Aug 1965; also see Pakistan Horizon, XVIII(4), p. 326
82 New Statesman, London, 3 Sept 1965, p.307
83 Organizer, New Delhi, 19 Oct 1965
The news about the Soviet decision created an uproar in India. When informed of the decision, Mrs. Gandhi wrote to Premier Kosygin on 10 July 1968 protesting against the Soviet decision and pointing out that a Soviet supply of arms to Pakistan would bring the close, friendly Indo-Soviet relationship under tension and strain. The Indian government continued to mount diplomatic pressure on Moscow and in August 1968 the Indian President Dr. Zakir Husain went on a visit to the U.S.S.R. Apparently a goodwill visit, the circumstances of the timing could not be discounted and the use of the opportunity to forcefully put forward India's apprehensions could not have been passed up.

When the Indian Parliament met in July 1968, the Jan Sangh organized a protest demonstration in front of the Soviet Embassy's information centre in New Delhi, the first of its kind against the Soviets. The following day the Lok Sabha rejected Piloo Mody's (Swatantra) adjournment motion which sought to ensure the government for failing to safeguard India's interests "as signified by the Soviet decision to sell arms to Pakistan" by 200 votes to 61. The Prime Minister observed that she was not surprised by the Soviet decision, that the supply was not big enough to strengthen Pakistan to the extent of injuring India's interests, that the Soviets had assured her that Pakistan would not use Soviet arms against India and that she had no reason to believe that the Soviets "would want to injure us in any way," she philosophically rationalized; "friendship is not exclusive. If you are friends with one you cannot prevent that person from having other friends."  

85 Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 2-9 Nov 1968, p.23001A
Subsequently she told a group of Congress members of Parliament that the world was no more rigidly divided into blocs as had previously been and that the Soviet Union was also trying to improve its relations with Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. No one could object to it.86

If Soviet diplomacy ran into heavy weather in Pakistan, certain events in India in the second half of 1969 rehabilitated New Delhi's image in Moscow, assured the Soviets that their massive investments in Indian economy and defence had not gone to waste and created the hope in Moscow that political polarisation, then going on in India, would ultimately strengthen the hands of the progressive forces. The resignation of Morarji Desai, considered to be the most outspoken representative of the big monopoly houses in the Indian cabinet, nationalization of fourteen Indian banks with deposits exceeding Rs. 50 crores; the defeat of Sanjeeva Reddy, put up by the rightwing Congress leadership and supported by the Swatantra, etc., in the presidential election, and the Congress split — all created good impression and retrieved New Delhi's stock in the Kremlin.

(C) Diversified Role in South Asia in the 1970s

Since the 1970s the Soviet Union started getting more involved in the affairs of South Asia than the United States or China. One result of this deepening involvement is that the Soviet role in the region has become diversified. The Soviet Union is now as much involved in the security of South Asia as it is in its economic and political development. This diversified role has been acquired, according to Bhabani Sen Gupta, by successful and inexpensive intervention in

86 The Tribune, 20 July 1968
three wars in South Asia — the Sino-Indian border war of 1962 and the India-Pakistan wars of 1965 and 1971.\textsuperscript{87}

Vast and significant changes occurred on the Indian subcontinent in 1969, necessitating a reappraisal on the part of the Soviet Union of its policy towards this area. From the Soviet perspective the situation in Pakistan was somewhat gloomy: anti-Ayub riots and demonstrations had, in both East and West Pakistan, become the order of the day since the last quarter of 1968. These demonstrations disapproved the thesis of the Soviet experts that President Ayub Khan's firm leadership had created something akin to political stability in Pakistan.\textsuperscript{88}

Something had to be done to restore normalcy in East Pakistan and to prevent deterioration in Indo-Pakistan relations. The Soviet President, therefore, appealed to President Yahya Khan to "stop the bloodshed and repression" and "to turn to methods of peaceful settlement." In his message he spoke out against the army's action, advised that complicated problems in Pakistan "must be solved by political means, without the use of force" and warned that the "continuation of repressive measures" would make the solution of Pakistan's problems more difficult and might prove to be "highly detrimental to the vital interests of all the Pakistani people". He showed his sympathies for the Awami League leaders when he spoke of them as having "received such convincing support from the overwhelming majority."\textsuperscript{89} The

\textsuperscript{88} New York Times, 19 Feb 1969
\textsuperscript{89} "Message from N.V.Podgorny to the President of Pakistan", CDSP, May 4, 1971, Vol. XXIII, No.14, p.36 (from Pravda, 14 April, 1971).
reasons were clear enough: the Awami League's economic programme was progressive; its leaders were against Pakistan's membership of SEATO and CENTO and desired closer links, economic and cultural, with India. Broadly speaking, the government of the U.S.S.R. understood the danger posed by military action, sympathized with the Awami League leaders, and felt that the refugees would return home only if and when the military regime in East Pakistan transferred power to the representatives of the people. Later, the Indian Foreign Minister expressed his sincere gratitude to the Soviet government on this occasion during his visit to Moscow in June, 1971. 90

SOVIET PLAN FOR ASIAN SECURITY

The Indo-Soviet Treaty for 20 years was concluded in a sensational situation faced by India. The war between the two wings of Pakistan over the Bangladesh issue had forced more than 10 million refugees from East Bengal to seek shelter in India. India tried in vain to persuade the international agencies and the U.S. to prevail on Pakistan to facilitate the return of the refugees. Pakistan was encouraged by the U.S. and China in its attempt to crush the revolt in East Pakistan. In 1970 the U.S. supplied arms to Pakistan in violation of embargo. Henry Kissinger went to Peking and Nixon's visit to China was announced in July 1971. All these events made India panicky and it began to search for security. Thus the price of better relations between Washington and Peking was an improvement in relations between Moscow and New Delhi. 91

Prime Minister Chou En-Lai's promise of support to Islamabad in case "Indian expansionists dare to launch aggression against Pakistan", continuation of U.S. military supplies to Islamabad and the warning of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs to President Nixon, Henry A. Kissinger, to the Indian Ambassador to the United States, L.K. Jha, that in case China helped Pakistan in a war with India, New Delhi, should not count on U.S. support, emboldened Pakistan to threaten India with war. In an interview with the correspondent of the Financial Times (London), the Pakistan President talked of declaring "general war" on India. Later, on July 30, when the President repeated this threat, the Soviet press gave it wide publicity. On August 1, Tass quoted President Yahya Khan as saying in an interview to foreign television companies that Pakistan was very close to war against India. It also quoted the Indian press and a French news agency to give details of war preparations on the Pakistani side of the eastern borders.

Suspecting Washington-Peking-Rawalpindi collusion over the Bangladesh issue, India was forced to enter into a treaty agreement with the Soviet Union. This treaty marked a new phase in Indo-Soviet cooperation. As the title suggests, it does not merely involve a commitment to peace, friendship and cooperation, but to some extent it is a treaty of military cooperation. This treaty marked a turning point in India's foreign policy. It formalised the Indo-Soviet friendship and according to Gromyko it gave a durable international legal basis.

This treaty made India more dependant on Soviet Russia. The Statesman described the treaty as "virtually a military

92 The Times of India, July 20, 1971
93 Ibid., 2 Aug 1971
arrangement."\textsuperscript{94} Though Article 4 of the treaty stated that Moscow respected New Delhi's policy of non-alignment, "there is every evidence of alignment in the treaty almost indistinguishable from a defence pact."\textsuperscript{95}

Besides, it could be argued that this was the first step towards the realization of the Soviet plan for Asian security. It may be recalled that following the March 1969 armed conflict between Soviet and Chinese border troops on a small disputed Island on the Ussuri River boundary between the two major communist powers, Moscow renewed its efforts to convince the states on the southern periphery of China that Peking was a threat to their security. It also tried to bind them together in regional economic cooperation, and in June 1969, it publicly stated that the time was ripe for building a collective security system in Asia. Though India, at that time made it clear that it was not interested in anything more than regional economic cooperation, the Soviets did not abandon all hopes. Negotiations about the terms of a security pact between the countries continued through diplomatic channels. Ultimately in August 1971, finding itself isolated and threatened, India accepted the Soviet offer. The Soviets perhaps hoped that other countries in the region would, in course of time, fall in line, for it should not go unnoticed that the day India signed the treaty, Foreign Minister Sawaran Singh stated in the Indian Parliament that it "will provide a pattern for similar treaties between India and other countries in the region."\textsuperscript{96}

The Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin visited India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan in May 1969. During his visit he not only

\textsuperscript{94} Editorial, \textit{The Statesman}, Delhi, 10 Aug 1971
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{96} \textit{The Times of India}, N. Delhi, 10 Aug 1971
assured India of his country's support in its conflict with China but stated that India should become strong economically, politically and militarily. He seemed to have reverted to Khrushchev's policy of building up India so that it could shoulder the responsibility of defending the subcontinent from "adventurist encroachments on the part of outside forces which are out for a hegemony in Asia." 97

During his visit to Afghanistan and Pakistan later in the same month, he urged a speedy settlement of differences between Afghanistan and Pakistan and between Pakistan and India. He also urged increased regional economic cooperation among the three countries on a tripartite basis and promised that the Soviet Union "would do all it can on its part to promote this." 98 It is said that General Yahya Khan gave the visiting Prime Minister to understand that he was enthusiastic about the idea of a regional conference on economic cooperation involving Iran, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Soviet Union. 99

The clear possibility of China expanding in the direction of the Indian ocean made the Soviet Union propose a system of collective security in Asia. The first exposition of this system came from Leonid Brezhnev himself at the international conference of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in June 1969. 100 Thus by mid-1969 the Soviet Union had evolved two plans to ensure peace and stability in this region; regional economic cooperation and a collective security arrangement. Brezhnev did not spell out clearly what kind of security arrangement the Soviet Union had in mind. He, however, underplayed the military aspect of it by repeating that the

97 The Indian Express, New Delhi, 8 May 1969; also see Patriot, New Delhi, 17 May 1969
98 The Times of India, New Delhi, 1 June 1969
99 Ibid., 7 April 1971
100 Text of Speech, Soviet News, New Delhi, No.5498, 10 June 1969, p.132.
arrangement was not directed against any one nation and stressed the economic and political aspects.

At the same time the Soviet Union has claimed the subcontinent, because of its geographical closeness to the U.S.S.R., virtually as its sphere of influence — a claim that is contested by China, although China is not in a position to hurt Soviet interests too much. In the 1970s, says Sen Gupta, the Soviets had a spatial large strategic design for the interlinking regions of South Asia and the Persian Gulf, which none of the regional actors had so far accepted. The design is for the security of the two regions, to be brought about by multilateral economic cooperation; by bilateral settlement of inter-state differences and disputes; and, over time, by political and strategic collaboration, all of these with Soviet participation and involvement, though not formally under Soviet leadership. The Soviet policy makers, then, have given themselves the long-term task of establishing a broad strategic symmetry in the two inter-meshing regions.  

Soviet analysts believe that only by the establishment of multifaceted regional and interregional cooperation under the benign protection of the socialist system, can the two regions insulated from imperialist and Chinese intervention. This strategic design has introduced a new dynamism into Soviet relations with the two major regional powers, India and Iran, neither of which is willing to subscribe to the Soviet strategic design nor ready to reject it altogether; each has its own power interests and ambitions in South Asia. The Soviet strategic design for the region has also begun to be reflected in its conflict with China and its competitive coexistence with the United States in the Third World.  

101 Bhabani Sen Gupta, Soviet-Asian Relations in the 1970s and Beyond, op. cit.  
102 Ibid., pp. 137-38
The border crisis with China spiralled the defense expenditure of India upwards and after the border war of 1962 defence became its first priority. The need for U.S. military aid to the anti-China defence efforts of India betrayed, in Pakistani eyes, the tenuousness of Washington's military commitment to Pakistan. In Pakistan perceptions, the two super powers were now working together to strengthen India, "the mortal enemy of Pakistan". In 1963 Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, asserted that "the largest power in Asia", would come to his country's rescue if it were attacked by India".\textsuperscript{103} In the early 1960s, however, a promise of strategic symmetry in the subcontinent came from parallel Soviet and American aid to build up India as a countervailing power in Asia in relation to the People's Republic of China and from a U.S.initiative, in conjunction with Britain, to resolve the deadlock on Kashmir. According to Chester Bowles, then U.S. Ambassador in New Delhi, Nehru agreed to "support a genuine effort by the U.S. government to negotiate a political settlement that could end the fighting in South East Asia" that is in Vietnam, as well as to "negotiate a ceiling of military expenditure with Pakistan."\textsuperscript{104}

The promise proved to be fleeting. The Indian government resented the arm-twisting by the United States and Britain to force it to make concessions to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, and India abandoned its halfhearted conciliatory moves when China, in a tour de force, concluded a border agreement with Pakistan, conferring tentative sanction on Pakistan control of two thirds of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{103} New York Times, 18 July 1963

\textsuperscript{104} Chester Bowles, "America and Russia in India, Foreign Affairs", quoted in Bhabani Sen Gupta, Soviet South Asian Relations, \textit{op.cit.}

\textsuperscript{105} For details, see Bhabani Sen Gupta, \textit{The Fulcrum of Asia: Relations among China, India, Pakistan and the USSR}, New York, 1970, pp. 131-33
The main reason for the withering of the promise probably lay in a shift in U.S. priorities after the death of John F. Kennedy. This expectation was confirmed in the war between India and Pakistan in September 1965. For the first time United States remained officially neutral in a war involving one of its allies. The U.S.S.R. and China faced each other as direct contenders in the subcontinent. In a major strategic initiative, Moscow intervened in the India-Pakistan war, armed with the theory of geographical propinquity. The conflict, as Kosygin told the Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan, was taking place in an area close to the borders of Soviet State, compelling Moscow to offer its diplomatic services to bring the two warring parties together. At the same time, the Soviet government warned other countries to keep out of the conflict. Inherent in the Soviet diplomatic initiative was the claim that South Asia, being geographically close to the U.S.S.R., was a natural sphere of Russian interest. 106

The United States lost interest in India on the political and developmental planes. Increasing involvement in the Vietnam war led to a general U.S. disengagement from the uncommitted nations of the Third World in terms of economic aid. By the mid-1960s, anxiety to avoid direct military conflict with Chinese evidently persuaded Lydon Johnson to lower the U.S. anti-China profile in South Asia also. According to Sen Gupta, Washington found it wiser to conceded to Moscow the primary diplomatic and strategic role in South Asia because of the greater Soviet stake in containing China and because of the relative political unimportance of India to the United States. India turned to the Soviet Union and got every thing it had asked from the United States, having conceded to the Soviet Union the major role in controlling

106 Bhabani Sen Gupta, Soviet South Asian Relations, op. cit., pp. 139-140.
conflict in the subcontinent, could not possibly come to the help of Pakistan in an Indo-Pakistan military conflict. After the Tashkent Agreement, Moscow gradually unfolded its own strategic design for South Asia. The visit by the Shah of Iran to the Soviet capital in 1965 had led to an improvement in Soviet-Iranian relations, and in 1966 a programme of Soviet economic and military assistance to Iran was initiated. 107

After the Tashkent accord the Soviets ceased to support the Indian position on Kashmir and adopted a posture of "Neutrality", which paved the way for a diplomatic initiative to improve relations with Pakistan. The transfer of Soviet military aid to Pakistan, however, small in quantity, involved the risk of alienating India. The Soviets, however, took that risk. The 1964-67 period was also one of increasing Indian dependence on the United States. The military reverses against China followed by the economic crisis had sent India scurrying to Washington for military and economic aid. Although both Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi, showed keenness to maintain the Soviet option, the rightwing swing in the policy during this period was patently obvious and was generally regarded as the inevitable consequences of the turn towards the United States. Possibly, the Soviet interest in Pakistan was a reminder and a response: a reminder to India of Soviet options in case the Indian tilt towards Washington went too far, and a response to Indian domestic and foreign policy developments. 108

The problem was very much with India and only acquired more serious dimensions in these two years. The Soviet strategy clearly was to gradually raise the level of relationship with Pakistan while simultaneously expanding assistance.

107 Ibid.
108 Dev Murarka's despatch from Moscow, Indian Express, 17 Dec 1966
to India in order to quieten Indian misgivings and soften her opposition to a limited amount of arms supply to Pakistan. The Soviet media and public pronouncements also underlined the desirability of an Indo-Pak rapprochement. As for instance, as early as December 1965, a Pravda article had claimed that a settlement of the conflict with Pakistan was vital to India's economic advance and success in mastering her present problems and difficulties.\(^{109}\)

These themes were repeated in the next two years but the issue became more serious for India. The Minister for External Affairs, M.C. Chagla told the Rajya Sabha on 8 August 1967 that the Soviet Union had repeatedly assured India that it would not sell lethal weapons to Pakistan and that the helicopters reportedly sold to Pakistan could be purchased by any country on a commercial basis. He said helicopters did not fall within the category of lethal weapons. He held out the assurance that "there is absolutely no change in the U.S.S.R's attitude towards U.S. Our friendship continues without being lessened or being surrounded by doubts of suspicious the U.S.S.R. is most anxious that tension in this area should be reduced."\(^{110}\)

There was resentment and anger in India, but the times had changed, and it did not cost Moscow too much. Kosygin personally assured the Indian leaders that the Soviet Union continued to regard India as the kingpin of its South Asian policy and explained that a Soviet presence in Pakistan was the only way to diminish Chinese influence and block "Imperialist intervention" against Indian interests.\(^{111}\)

\(^{109}\) Asian Recorder, 8-14 Jan 1966, p.6863  
\(^{110}\) The Times of India, New Delhi 9 Aug 1967  
\(^{111}\) Dawn, July 12 1968
The Indians were reassured in 1968 when Kosygin proposed, almost immediately after the first transfer of military equipment to Pakistan, an economic cooperation conference of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India, with Soviet participation. It was suggested in the Soviet press that the four countries could have profitable trade with the U.S.S.R. through the roadways and rail links already existing and likely to be constructed between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan on the one hand and the Soviet Union and Iran on the other. The Afghan government, prompted by the Soviet Union, offered to host the proposed conference which never took place because of the Pakistani refusal to attend. Thus the first attempt to unfold the Soviet strategic design came to nothing, although as a price for economic and military aid, Pakistan agreed to close down the extensive U.S. intelligence facilities in Peshawar. 112

During the latter half of the 1960s there was considerable anxiety in the Soviet Union about the drift of internal politics in India and about a possible pro-American shift in Indian foreign policy. During the brief Prime Ministership of Lal Bahadur Shastri, the primary Soviet concern as judged from writings on India in the Soviet press, was to prevent the right wing from dominating the Congress party and the Indian government. The Soviet media welcomed the election of Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister after Shastri's sudden death in Tashkent. Within a short time, however, Soviet analysts began to note "the growing strength of the (Indian) capitalist monopolies with their close foreign ties." 113

After the 1967 general elections, in which the Congress party lost power in as many as nine states, a Soviet analyst

112 Bhabani Sen Gupta, Soviet South Asian Relations, op.cit.,p.140
113 New Times, Jan 19, 1965
identified the cabinet of Indira Gandhi as "a coalition of the ruling party's centrist and rightist elements". 114

The Soviet concern stemmed not only from the analysis perception of the rightward drift in the Congress party leadership but more particularly from the confrontation between the central government in New Delhi and the leftist-democratic coalitions that ruled West Bengal and Kerala. Both coalitions were dominated by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M), the parallel communist party which had been formed in 1964 after a split in the CPI. The Marxists were independent of Moscow and Peking but were nevertheless generally seen to be pro-Chinese. What placed the CPSU in an embarrassing situation was that the pro-Soviet CPI was also a partner of the two coalitions, and the confrontation between these two state governments and the centre was creating a polarization between the Congress Party and the CPI and undermining the CPSU line of a broad united front of "democratic and left forces", meaning the "progressives" in the Congress Party and the CPI. 115

When Kosygin made a suddenly announced visit to New Delhi in February 1968, one leading Indian commentator linked its significance to that of the Khirushchev-Bulganin tour of India in 1955. 116 His talks with Indira Gandhi covered the whole gamut of subjects from economic affairs to political developments in India to foreign policy. The communique issued at the end of the talks indicated that the Soviet government remained fully committed to help India restore its economic health and remain steadfast to its foreign policy. Much of the conversation centered on China, which had built a sizeable presence in

114  New Times, March 29 1967
Pakistan since Tashkent and was supporting several "revolutionary communist" groups in India in 1968 and projecting to these groups a Maoist line of protracted armed struggle from rural bases.\textsuperscript{117} Kosygin reportedly pointed out to Indira Gandhi that Pakistan was almost the only country with which Chinese relations had not been affected by the Cultural Revolution, and he impressed upon her the urgency of a parallel Indian and Soviet effort to loosen the Chinese hold on Pakistan. The Soviet Premier also told her that Moscow would like India to fill the vacuum to be created in the Indian Ocean region by the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf by 1971. India could not do this without internal stability and without some force of coexistence with Pakistan.\textsuperscript{118}

The Soviet attitude towards Pakistan has never been hostile, writes Kalim Bahadur. And this was in spite of the fact that the Soviet leaders could not understand and accept that religion could be the basis of a state in the modern world. They also overlooked the paranoidal anti-communist and anti-soviet policies of Pakistan's successive rulers. In the years after independence, Pakistan's policy makers and leaders were more anti-communist than even the Americans.\textsuperscript{119}

Until 1962, ideology was an important element in Pakistan foreign policy, and translated into practice it meant preference for the western countries and dislike of communism.

The new policy won India's friendship readily because it professed to be neutral in the East-West cold war and had worked for good relations with the communist countries from

\textsuperscript{117} Bhabani Sen Gupta, "A Maoist Line for India", China Quarterly, No.33 1968
\textsuperscript{118} Dilip Mukherji, \textit{op.cit.}
the outset of independence. With Pakistan it was not so easy to effect a change. Added to the ideological barrier was the difficulty that it had been palpable pro-west in her foreign policy, and in 1954 had openly subscribed to the western system of defence alliances. It was not till Pakistan's alliance with the west had cooled off in the wake of the latter's arms aid to India in 1962, that the requisite climate for a real improvement in Pakistan's relations with the communist world was created. ¹²⁰

A survey of Pakistani opinion after independence will vividly illustrate how seriously Pakistanis viewed the threat from communism to their spiritual and physical existence and will refute the notion that Pakistan tricked a gullible America but in reality for use solely against India. On 12 April 1950 Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan proposed that the United States should encourage the idea of territorial guarantees to India and Pakistan to allow them to spend more on economic improvement, "which would keep out the potential menace of communism." ¹²¹

Moscow's image of Pakistan was more unfavourable in comparison to India, Pakistan's bid to assume leadership of Pan-Islamic forces proved a stumbling bloc for the improvement of relations with the Soviet Union. Moscow condemned the convening of the first Islamic Conference in Karachi. The growing pro-west orientation of Pakistan also made the Russians suspicious, and there were adverse comments in the Soviet press: "Pakistan was being converted into a British bridgehead in the East", into a "Second Trans-Jordan of enormous dimensions", by allowing the continuation of British military bases in its territory under the reactionary ruling

¹²⁰ S.M. Burke, Pakistan's Foreign Policy, Oxford Univ. Press, London, 1973, p.91
¹²¹ The New York Times, 13 Apr 1950
circles". The Soviet press suspected a "secret agreement of Pakistan with the British for military bases and speculated about the United States negotiating for similar facilities in the NWFP and elsewhere." Visits by the Americans to Pakistan, particularly to the northern areas close to the frontier of the Soviet Union and Pakistan's attitude towards Korean War also came in for severe criticism in the Soviet press. Its support for the US-sponsored resolution on Korea in the U.N. General Assembly and the supplies and equipment rushed by it to the assistance of the U.N. press in Korea were described as the "Service Zeal" of Liaquat Ali Khan.

In 1953 and 1954, Pakistan was drawn into the U.S.-sponsored military alliances, CENTO and SEATO. The anti-Soviet objectives of these military pacts was not obscure. Not only that, Pakistan opened its territory for use by U.S. forces for actions against the Soviet Union. One example of this was the use of Peshawar base by U.S. spy planes on their way over the Soviet territory, which culminated in the famous U-2 incident in 1961. Not only this, the Pakistani leaders went on making anti-Soviet statements particularly after the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case in 1951 and after banning the Pakistani Communist Party in 1954. Actually, these two actions had been to legitimise growing Pakistan collaboration in the military field. Pakistan's successive rulers during this period failed to reciprocate all Soviet gestures and initiatives to improve Pak-Soviet relations.

It was only after the military coup by General Ayub Khan and when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto joined the government that some

123 Ibid., 21 Nov 1948
124 Ibid., No.28, 12 July 1950, pp. 19-20
125 Kalim Bahadur, op.cit., p. 69.
breakthrough was achieved in Pak-Soviet relations as indicated by the agreement signed in 1960. Under this agreement, Moscow agreed to help Pakistan in exploring oil and other natural resources. This was followed by grant of loans by the Soviet Union to Pakistan. Cultural and trade ties were further expanded in 1962-65. In 1965, President Ayub Khan visited the Soviet Union. This was the first ever visit of a Pakistani head of government to Moscow. During the visit comprehensive agreements on the expansion of cultural exchange, economic cooperation and trade were signed. A Pakistani military mission led by the then Commander-in-Chief of the army, Gen. Yahya Khan, paid a ten day visit to the Soviet Union during 28 June-July 1968 and it was indicated on 8 July that before the delegation left, it had secured Moscow's promise for military assistance.

The Soviet Union was the first country outside the subcontinent Sheikh Mujibur Rahman visited after being installed as the executive head of Bangladesh. Moscow agreed to give Bangladesh fifty railway locomotives and offered to clear Dhaka and Chittagong ports of mines, the latter move had obvious strategic implications. But the Soviets kept their aid commitments to a minimal and prudent level. The Simla Agreement of 3 July 1972 between the Prime Minister of India and the Pakistan President was welcomed by the Soviet Union. Pravda, in an article on the situation in Pakistan, called the Simla Agreement "an important step along the road of normalisation of Pakistani-Indian relations and the whole situation in South Asia."

Soviet Union might have assumed a bigger role in the

126 Ibid.
128 Pravda, 15 Aug 1972
development of Bangladesh if the new nation had adopted the Soviet model of "noncapitalist development" under a mobilization system of government. Soviet analysts came to the conclusion in 1972-73 that Bangladesh with its extremely small and highly fragmented bourgeoisie, its lack of an entrepreneurial and managerial elite and its preponderance of peasants with small holdings, was unsuitable for capitalist development and parliamentary democracy.129

129 For a detailed study of Soviet analysis of the social and economic structure of Bangladesh, see Yun V. Gankovsky, "The Social Structure of Society in the People's Republic of Bangladesh," Asian Survey, 14, No. 3, Mar 1974
Chapter III

SOVIET POLICY IN SOUTH ASIA - II

(A) Soviet Stand on Bangladesh

Soviet Union's attitude to the events in East Pakistan in 1970 was cautious and restrained. The Soviet Union wanted the settlement of the problem in Eastern wing of Pakistan without outside interference. However, with the aggravation of the crisis and the inability of military regime of Gen. Yahya Khan to find an amicable solution, Soviet Union became alarmed at the possibility of western powers fishing in troubled waters. Soviet Union wanted a political solution to the problem in Bangladesh which meant the transfer of power to the elected representatives of the Bengali people without which there could be no hope of peace in the region. The Soviet attitude should be seen in the context of the appearance of the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Bay of Bengal in December 1971 and also the aggressive postures of the Maoist-China.¹

The supply of arms by the Soviet Union to Pakistan which began in 1968 at the expense of considerable heart burning and pique in New Delhi, was stopped in April 1970. And when the Bangladesh crisis erupted in March 1971, even the sale of spares and other components to Pakistan was stopped.² By coincidence or by design, Indian and Soviet policy concerning the grave

² The Times of India, Delhi, 8 July 1971; also see The Hindustan Times of the same date.
crisis in Pakistan ran parallel through the summer of 1971 until they converged in the autumn. Indira Gandhi was under heavy public opinion pressure to intervene in the Bangladesh struggle, to recognize the government-in-exile, and to help it raise a "liberation army".

The Soviet Union was the first major power to intervene openly in the Pakistan crisis. Since 1968 Soviet relations with Pakistan had produced more frustration than friendship. The Soviet leaders had risked Indian displeasure by transferring military aid to Pakistan, but they had not been able to loosen the ties of Pakistan with China nor win the support of Pakistan for the regional economic grouping that Moscow had been wanting to create.

The Soviet Union was the first big power to realise the gravity of the situation and to see in it a major threat to peace and security in South Asia. At a time when both Peking and Washington were trying to condone the blood bath in East Bengal as an internal affair of Pakistan, the Soviet President Nikolos Podgorny in his letter of 2 April 1971 to the Pakistan President Yahya Khan, appealed to "stop the bloodshed and repressions against the population in East Pakistan", and restore methods of peaceful political development. ³

The joint Indo-Soviet statement on Gromyko's visit to New Delhi to sign the Indo-Soviet Treaty also called for urgent steps to be taken in East Pakistan for the achievement of a political solution and for the creation of conditions for the safe return of the refugees to their houses. ⁴

On 7 October 1971, the spokesman of the Pakistani Foreign Office objected to Kosygin's criticism of the Yahya regime's

³ Pravda, 4 April 1971
⁴ The Times of India, New Delhi, 13 Aug 1971
action. He also alleged that the recent Indo-Soviet Treaty had "encouraged India to step up provocative activities against Pakistan". He asked Moscow to take notice of the aggressive disposition of the Indian armed forces against the Pakistan borders in both the wings." On October 8, 1971, a joint statement of the U.S.S.R. and Algeria declared their "respect for the national unity and territorial integrity of Pakistan and India". The two states appealed to both New Delhi and Islamabad to find a peaceful solution to the problem confronting them "according with the principles of non-interference, mutual respect, good neighbour relations and the spirit of the Tashkent meeting." When a full scale war broke out between India and Pakistan as a result of surprise Pakistani air attacks on Indian air fields on the evening of 3 December 1971, the Soviet Premier A.N.Kosygin declared in his press conference in Denmark that the Soviet Union was "quite resolutely" in favour of ending the war and bringing about a peaceful settlement between the forces of Bangladesh and Pakistan. President Yahya Khan visited the Soviet Union in June 1970. Speaking at the state banquet given by him in honour of Yahya Khan, President Podgorny of Soviet Union said that the two countries had no dispute between them and that they valued each other's friendship. According to him, therefore, there was every reason for the two countries to strength and cement their friendship further. In the joint communique issued at the end of the visit, the two countries expressed identity of views on such international issues as the situation in the Middle East, the Vietnam War, and disarmament. It reaffirmed their common desire "to strengthen further the existing contacts". It also recorded the usefulness of periodical consultations.

5 New Times, No.42, Oct 1971
6 The Hindustan Times, Delhi, 6 Dec 1971
7 Dawn, 23 June 1970
between them "along with lines of Foreign Ministers". As regards Indo-Pakistani relations, the communique expressed the firm belief of the Soviet Union that a settlement of disputable question, by means of bilateral negotiations in the spirit of the Tashkent Declaration would accord with the vital interest of both India and Pakistan as well as the interests of the peoples of the region as a whole.

However, Soviet displeasure over the policy of military terror in East Bengal was duly conveyed to the rulers of Pakistan through Podgorny's note sent to Yahna Khan on the April 1971.

Having once conveyed to the Pakistani rulers its disapproval of military methods, Moscow refrained from criticising them further throughout the month of April. The Soviet press published brief reports but without any comments, regarding the events in East Pakistan, in which it quoted mainly western and Pakistani sources. Indian sources reporting and commenting on the situation, in sharp contrast, were referred to only four times in the same month, April 1971 by Pravda. The official organ of the communist party of the Soviet Union and just twice by Izvestia the mouth piece of the Soviet Government.

In the weeks immediately following the 25 March 1971 military crackdown Pakistan army appeared to be succeeding in crushing the spontaneous, sporadic, and almost entirely unorganised resistance offered largely by the Bengali personnel of the East Bengal Rifles, and East Bengal Regiment. The

8 Ibid., 27 June 1970
9 Ibid.
11 Pravda, 1,5,29 and 30 April 1971; also see Izvestia 7 and 19 April 1971
author of an article in the 14 April 1971, issue of the New Times seemed to have clearly been influenced by such an assessment of the situation.¹²

For nearly three months the Soviet press followed a policy of strict neutrality between India and Pakistan in that it published parallel reports from India and Pakistani sources without comments. Thus both India and Pakistan versions of violation of borders by the other side were carried side by side in the columns of Pravda. The paper, while reproducing Pakistani claims of growing normalisation of the situation in East Bengal, quoted at the same time the Indian reports of mounting figures of refugees fleeing into India from East Bengal.

The Indian Foreign Minister, Swaran Singh paid an unofficial visit to Moscow in June 1971. During his stay, he had high level talks. In the joint communique issued Foreign Ministers of both the countries significantly stated the decision of the two sides to remain in touch with each other in view of "the seriousness of the situation". It also called for immediate measures in East Bengal to ensure the cessation of refugee outflow to India and steps for the creation of conditions of security for the return of the refugees to their homes. It reiterated Soviet President Podgorny's appeal of April last to Yahya Khan for a political settlement in East Bengal.¹³

Premier Kosygin was quite sympathetic for the prevailing conditions in East Bengal. He took an unequivocal stand on the question of refugees and said in an election speech to his voters:

"All who value the principles of humanism must demand the

¹² New Times, 14 April 1971, No.15, p.9
¹³ National Herald, Delhi, 10 June 1971
creation of necessary condition for the return of refugees to their homes, giving to them guarantee of personal security and possibility of peacefully living and working in East Pakistan. According to our opinion he further said, such measures should be taken by the Pakistani authorities without delay.\(^{14}\)

It must be appreciated that in the problem of refugees the Soviet Union saw not only a humanitarian but also a political problem. The Soviet Union was keen that a precedent that refugees be allowed to return to their homes is firmly established, since Soviet Union itself faced a similar problem. The fairly substantial influx of refugees from China, especially the Chinese Sinkiang though admittedly modest in comparison with that in India for the time being could well assume the territorial proportions it had in India.

In August 1971, the Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko came to New Delhi, India, and the U.S.S.R. signed a 20-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, designed both to stay China's hand and to deter Pakistan from unleashing a war on India. This treaty had marked an extension and formalisation of the Soviet Union's role in South Asia.\(^{15}\)

Signing the Treaty should not be taken to mean, of course, that with its signing Soviet Union came all out in support of the struggle for Bangladesh, though there was, indeed, a noticeable tilt in the Soviet policy in favour of the struggle. For instance, Soviet Union backed India in the latter's opposition to the posting of U.N. observers on the Indian side of the border with East Bengal.\(^{16}\)

\(^{14}\) *Pravda*, 10 June 1971


\(^{16}\) *The Times of India*, Delhi, 1 Aug 1971
The Indo-Soviet statement of 11 August 1971, which reflected perhaps the Soviet line more than the Indian position, categorically declared that "there can be no military solution of the (Bangladesh nationalism) problem". The Soviet press, while criticising reactionary and chauvinistic elements in India and Pakistan for advocating war as a means of solving disputes stressed the need of maintaining peace in the sub-continent.  

India, however, wanted the Soviet Union to demonstrate its friendship with it by taking certain positive steps to solve the refugee problem and to use its influence with Pakistan to secure a political settlement. This was highlighted by Indira Gandhi when she conferred with the Soviet leaders on the Bangladesh crisis during her first visit to Moscow on 27-29 September, 1971. A joint statement issued at the end of her visit: "The Soviet side", read the statement, "took into account the statement by the Prime Minister that the government of India is fully determined to take all necessary measures to stop the inflow of refugees from East Bengal to India and to ensure that those refugees who are already in India return to their homeland without delay... Both sides consider that the interests of the presentation of peace demand that urgent measures should be taken to reach a political solution of the problems which have arisen there paying due regards to the wishes, the inalienable rights and lawful interests of the people of East Bengal..."

It was perhaps this welcome turn in the Soviet opinion which made India's Foreign Minister, S. Swaran Singh, bold to declare that India could count upon the U.S.S.R. for full

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18 Soviet Review, New Delhi, 12 Oct 1971, p.36
19 Full text of the Statement in Pran Chopra, Before and After In Soviet Treaty, New Delhi, S. Chand & Co., 1971, Appendix III
support in the event of a conflict with Pakistan, and that then all the relevant provisions of the Indo-Soviet Treaty shall be duly invoked to deal with the aggression.  

Thus, from October onwards, the Soviet Union seemed to be following a cautious policy towards the Bangladesh issue. It hesitated to identify itself with any particular type of political solution; clearly it was not willing to give up all its options vis-a-vis Pakistan. It had often stated that its friendship with either India or Pakistan was not to be at the expense of the other. But a certain shift in the Soviet stand was nevertheless evident following Indira Gandhi's visit to the Soviet Union. There was a marked upswing in the criticism of Pakistan in the Soviet press. The Soviet media started playing up the anti-Pakistani resolutions that were being passed by various bodies in the Soviet Union. Deputy Foreign Minister Nikolai Firyubin, who came to India in the fall of October 1971, expressed his full agreement with India's assessment of the tense situation in India, which as he put it, "endangers the course of peace in the area."  

When on 3 December 1971 Pakistan launched a massive attack on several Indian cities, the Soviet Union stood firmly behind India. Apart from extending its military support the Soviet Union used its diplomacy to help the conflict localized. It sensed the danger that might flow from a possible Chinese involvement in the conflict. Hence as early as 5 December, it came out strongly in support of India and issued a warning to all powers to keep out of the conflict.  

At the U.N. also the Soviet support of India's position

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20 The Statesman, Delhi, 29 Oct 1971
21 The Times of India, New Delhi, 27 Oct 1971
22 The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 6 Dec 1971
and of the Bangladesh aspirations came loud and clear. The U.S. sponsored proposal calling simply for a ceasefire and unconditional withdrawal of Indian troops from East Bengal was vetoed and resolutely countered by the Soviet Union with the insistence that without a political settlement in East Bengal which is based on the "lawful rights and interests of its people" no permanent peace in the area could be achieved. It became clear thus that the Soviet Union was determined to prevent interference by outside powers in the affairs of the subcontinent which would inevitably materialise, had the tensions of the type seen in 1971 continued to prevail there.  

The emergence of Bangladesh was an event of major importance in the subcontinent. For India it was a major victory of democratic socialism. The importance of Bangladesh to the U.S.S.R. lies mainly in its impact on the balance of political and military power in the subcontinent. Since the 1971 war, the objective of Soviet diplomacy in the subcontinent, according to Bhabani Sen Gupta, have been (1) to restore stability in the context of a balance of power based on Indian primacy; (2) to promote normalization of relations towards this end, with India and Bangladesh coordinating their negotiating positions with regard to Pakistan; and (3) to deny China and the United States any role, negative or positive, in the process of normalization. These objectives imposed on Moscow the quite formidable task of helping the new Republic of Bangladesh to its feet, while simultaneously promoting the primacy of India and endeavoring to mend fences with Pakistan. 

Moscow recognized Bangladesh on January 24, 1972, the first

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23 Izvestia, 11 Dec 1971
24 V.P. Dutt, India's Foreign Policy, Vikas, New Delhi.
major power, and one of the first nations to do so. Within two weeks Pravda announced that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had been invited to pay an official visit to the Soviet Union.  

A trade deal was concluded with Bangladesh in March 1972 involving the exchange of Soviet equipment and material for the traditional exports of the area. Subsequent trade-and-aid negotiations resulted in a three year pact for a yearly trade worth $435 million and a modest Soviet commitment to provide the equivalent of $3 million to finance projects in the public sector. Almost overnight some 400 industrial units were created by nationalisation, including jute and textile owned by Pakistani capitalists.

The most expensive and important service the Soviet Union gave Bangladesh was the clearing of the heavily mined shipping channels of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, free of cost. Operating with a 2 unit Soviet fleet, the Russians completed the operation in two years, salvaging 17 ships ranging from a 15,000 ton freighter to small coastal ships and barges.

The Soviet Union also welcomed Mujibur Rahman's initiative to conclude a 15 year treaty with India, signed on 19 March 1972 during the Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Bangladesh. The treaty was claimed to be inspired by common ideals of peace, secularism, democracy, socialism and nationalism.

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26 Pravda, 6 Feb 1972
27 Bhabani Sen Gupta, Soviet South Asian Relations in 1970 and Beyond, op.cit.
28 Ibid., p.158
(B) Indian Ocean

(i) The Soviet Strategy: Until the advent of the 1970s the overriding external force in the Indian Ocean had been British, and to a considerably lesser extent Portugese, Dutch and French. In 1968 the British Government announced the phased withdrawal of its military presence east of Suez. The British decision to withdraw and the concomitant appearance of a few Soviet naval vessels in the area shot the once neglected Indian Ocean into prominence. It has focused much more on the political, economic and military competition between the great powers rather than on the aspirations of the littoral states, particularly their cooperative endeavours. The vacuum created by the British withdrawal was regarded by the superpowers as to significant and too dangerous to be left to the littorals, since the naval powers of the nations bordering the Indian Ocean were regarded as too weak to dominate the Ocean.  

Justifying their naval presence as the continuation of traditional policies of securing their vital interests, both the United States and the Soviet Union began to increase and continued to increase their naval strength in the Indian Ocean. Thus the decade of the 1970s witnessed the emergence of the Indian Ocean as another theatre of big power rivalry.

The British decision to withdraw from the area alarmed the American and Chinese alike, both believing that the resulting power vacuum would be exploited by the Soviet Union. The appearance of a few Soviet vessels in the Ocean was immediately interpreted as Soviet efforts to step up its naval activities in order to fill the vacuum. Not much

29 Alvin J. Cottrell, and R.M. Burrell, "No Power can Hope to Dominate the Indian Ocean", New Middle East, No.36, September 1971, p.35
30 New York Times, 12 Jan 1968
weight was accorded at the time to the argument that the Soviet naval entry into the Indian Ocean could have been a reaction to America's introduction into the region of the Polaris-Poseidon nuclear submarine fleet. Neither was it considered that the appearance of the Soviet vessels merely coincided with Britain's decision to withdraw. Available evidence makes it quite clear that the Soviet entry was strongly influenced by its determination to achieve seaborne nuclear parity with the United States on the one hand, and the ongoing competition between the superpowers for political influence and economic gains on the other.  

Although the General Assembly passed various resolutions regarding the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace in 1974 and in 1975 progress towards the establishment of peace zone was not impressive mainly because of the lack of interest shown by the superpowers.

In the past, superpower capabilities to respond militarily to crisis situations in a swift and decisive manner were rather limited. Building such a capability was considered in the mid-sixties and the proposal was vetoed by a U.S. Congress suspicious of wars of intervention in the wake of the Vietnam experience. But now both the superpowers have demonstrated their capabilities to intervene effectively in the Indian Ocean area and also sustain interventionary operations for long periods. The Taboz incident in which U.S. ships and aircraft operating from Diego Gracia and Egypt in a combined operation tried to rescue the American hostages in Iran in the summer of 1980, is a case in point. Though the mission


failed, it did expose the vulnerabilities of littoral states to a combined assault by the U.S. forces. 7

U.S. interest in the Indian Ocean is part of its overall stake in the Asia-Pacific region. U.S. trade with this region has overtaken its economic interactions with the EEC and accounts for more than one-fourth of all U.S. foreign commerce. In 1977 this amounted to $ 62 billion. U.S. exports in the same year to ASEAN nations amounted to $ 24 billion. Arguing the case for an increase role for the U.S. navy in the region, Admiral Maurice F. Weisner of the U.S. navy had pointed out that the "Asia-Pacific region is a major reservoir of strategic raw materials, the significance of which has sharpened substantially in an era of heightened global competition for increasingly scarce resources."33

In a Rand Corporation Study 1977, Prof Guy J. Pauker argued forcefully for additional U.S. military capability to deal with what he considered the rising third world trade unionism. His thesis that the U.S. should be ready to respond militarily to instabilities in the third world before the establishment of a new international economic order, which he interpreted as a demand for redistribution of power at the international level, was widely discussed in the western strategic circles. Significantly, the Guy Pauker thesis appeared at a time when the Carter administration was having under consideration the proposal to set up the RDF. The RDF was advertised as a deterrent force against Soviet incursions into the Gulf region.34

The global strategy of the Western Alliance, spearheaded


34 Ibid., p. 62.
by the United States is undergoing very significant changes. These changes are structured on three fundamental factors where the U.S. enjoys a lead and superiority over the Soviet Union: technology, strategic mobility especially of the naval air military forces, and control of natural resources. Soviet global strategy exhibits a degree of parallelism though inhibited in a large measure by the limitations of its capabilities, and thus appears to be more reactive rather than initiative. Western global strategy, according to Jasjit Singh, manifests itself in three inter-related main areas: (1) Maintaining a favourable strategic balance vis-a-vis the Soviet Union; (ii) Extending control and influence over the world's resources which mostly lie in the "third world" under-developed/developing countries; and (iii) Harnessing advanced and emerging technologies to exploit resource base and upgrade capabilities for power projection ranging from the deep oceans, through triple-canopy tropical jungles to outer space.35

From the global perspective, the entry of the Soviet Navy in the Indian Ocean is part of the determined efforts of the Soviet Union during the past decade to emerge as the dominant naval power of the world. The Soviet Navy has entered the Indian Ocean after making its presence felt at important check points of sea communication like the Dardanelles, the Skagerrah Strait, and the Tushima Strait. To make its activities more effective the Soviets want to set up full-fledged naval bases in the region. Although they have not succeeded in setting up such bases so far, the treaties they have concluded in recent years with a number of countries in the region and the fleet port facilities they

have acquired in places like Aden, Iraq, Mauritius, the Seychelles Islands, Somalia, the Socotra Island, Sri Lanka, etc.  

Though India and the Soviet Union have often voiced their opposition to the U.S. naval base in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean Soviets too have expanded their naval presence in the Indian Ocean since 1968. This explains why, during Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to Moscow in September 1971, the Soviets merely agreed "to study" the question of making the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace and "to solve it together with other powers on an equal basis".  

The Soviet strategy in the Indian Ocean region is guided, in a large measure, by parameters and objectives similar to that of the United States; and may also be seen to operate in bi-planar dimensions. Perhaps the strongest incentive flows from the function of securing a role for the Soviet Navy to support the status of the Soviet Union as a global 'super' power. However, since the Soviet Union is lagging behind the U.S. in many spheres, especially strategic mobility, technology and naval-air capability, its strategy is a reactive one, and its policy options based more on responses to U.S. initiatives.

The Indian Ocean and its littoral is of special interest to the Soviet Union because of their geographic proximity with each other, and in more ways than one, the Indian Ocean and its littoral constitutes the soft, vulnerable underbelly of the Soviet Union in strategic terms. Any U.S. move in this

36 See B. Vivekananda, 'India and Britain' in Bimal Prasad, ed., India's Foreign Policy: Studies in Continuity and Change, Vikas, New Delhi, 1979, p.38
38 Jasjit Singh, op.cit., p.152
region, feels Jasjit Singh, must be seen by the Soviets as hostile and threatening to Soviet security, a subject on which the Soviets harbour sensitivities bordering on paranoia. The "Choke points" of Suez Canal, Horn of Africa and the Malacca Straits region, and the larger "getways" to the Indian Ocean dominated by pro-U.S. Australia and South Africa not only place server limitations on Soviet ability to project power and influence in the Indian Ocean but impose an even greater strategic limitation on its ability to redeploy and reinforce its naval capabilities in the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean. 39

It is pertinent to mention that the Soviet Union has supplied economic and military hardware including missiles, naval ships and aircraft to a number of Indian Ocean nations including Egypt, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mozambique, South Yemen, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, Vietnam and Indonesia. 40

In 1976, during Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Moscow there appeared to be some change in the Indian Ocean policy of the Soviet Union, for the Soviets stated that they were ready "to participate" with the other countries concerned in any move to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. They also supported the desire of the peoples of the Indian Ocean region to prevent this Ocean "from becoming an arena for (the) setting up of foreign military bases." 41

Presumably they calculated that the increase in their naval activity between 1971 and 1976 and their acquisition of military bases in Somaliland (which they were forced to

39 Jasjit Singh, op.cit.
41 "Joint Declaration...", Soviet Review, 21 June, 1975 p.37
to abandon subsequently) had made it possible for them to negotiate with the United States, on this issue as equals. However, during Prime Minister Morarji Desai's visit, the Soviets expressed their support "for the striving of the peoples of the area to make the Ocean a zone of peace". And in the joint Indo-Soviet declaration, the two countries urged the removal of all the foreign military bases existing in the Indian Ocean and prevention of establishment of the new ones.  

Evidently, the Soviet position on the issue of foreign military bases in the Indian Ocean, is definitely quite close to that of India. It can be argued that in the age of the international ballistic missile, the Soviets do not need military bases in the Indian Ocean. By the same logic the United States and its allies too do not need such bases in the Indian Ocean, especially when it is claimed that "the Soviet Union is perfectly well targeted by second strike U.S. missiles and submarines stationed in the Pacific and the North Atlantic."  

The western powers also hold that the expansion of the Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean 'endangers the security of the United States, Britain, Australia and of the West as a whole.' This explains why the oil fields around the shores of the Persian Gulf are among the few pieces of real estates the West might use nuclear weapons to defend. From this it

42 Ibid., 3 Nov 1977, pp. 21-22
43 Russell Spurr, "World War in the Indian Ocean: Prospect of Super Power Deal", The Times of India, New Delhi, 9 Dec 1977
follows that for the security of their tanker routes through the Persian Gulf and across the Western Indian Ocean to Europe, Australia and Japan, the Western Powers must maintain and strengthen their military presence in the Indian Ocean. It also follows that since in this region Saudi Arabia and Iran together control 48 per cent of OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) output, the security of these countries and the continuance of the existing pro-western governments in them should be "the prime objective of U.S. foreign policy." 46

This was why, in the wake of the break-up of Pakistan (i.e., much before the oil crisis of 1973), when India appeared to have become the preeminent power in South Asia, Iran started getting from the United States virtually any weapons system it wanted. Whereas from 1950 to 1971 Iran was allowed to purchase from the United States weapons worth $1.2 billion, it spent between 1971 and 1976 as much as $11.8 billion in the United States on military equipment, with smaller purchases elsewhere. And U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia totalled $5.8 billion during the period 1974-76. 47

It is not without significance that these massive arms transfers took place after the liberation of Bangladesh. The United States realized that Pakistan could no longer serve as a counterweight to India. It, therefore, presumably decided to build up Iran's military capability and make it as strong as India. Obviously, it wanted Iran to play the role it had believed Pakistan capable of playing in this region.

46 Ibid.
107

till 1971. It also wanted Iran to protect its interests (i.e., U.S. interests) in the Persian Gulf and in the Arab lands south of it. Besides, the huge purchases of modern arms by Iran and Saudi Arabia in the United States was a profitable business for the U.S. war industry and arms dealers. 48

Though India has friendly relations with most Gulf States, Iran and Saudi Arabia are likely to endanger India's security at least indirectly in view of the fact that in most Indo-Pakistani conflicts in the past Pakistan had received support from both Iran and Saudi Arabia. It may be recalled that during the last armed conflict between India and Pakistan (Dec. 1971), Pakistani aircraft not only sought shelter in Iran but also used Iran as a base to fly essential supplies to Pakistan. Iranian experts using Iranian materials controlled the fire when oil and gas tanks were hit in Karachi. Medical facilities and supplies, especially oil, ammunition and spare parts, were provided to Pakistan, and Iran shared maritime air reconnaissance with Pakistan after the Indian Navy had blocked the Pakistan coast. 49

India has, of course, desisted from criticising U.S. arms sales to Iran and Saudi Arabia openly and strongly. Its dependence on West Asian oil — the Gulf States supply almost two thirds of its oil requirements — and some other considerations prevent it from doing so. Yet is is evident that China, Iran, Pakistan and the United States are engaged in an effort to contain India.

The geopolitical imperatives affecting the Pacific-Indian Ocean may also be affected by another dimension — the naval power of the People's Republic of China (PRC). It is believed

48 K.R.Singh, op.cit., p.236
49 Ibid.
that PRC plans to create a force of at least 12 nuclear-missile armed submarines to provide it a nuclear second-strike capability. The limited range of its SLMBs may dictate a deployment in the north-west Arabian Sea region to provide a serious and credible threat against important and critical targets in the Soviet Union. This in turn would generate the need for home-port facilities in the Indian Ocean. Thus, it may be reasonable to expect a revival of Chinese interests and activities in the Indian Ocean region in the years ahead. PRC's quest for attaining a major world power status would also point towards an expansion of its sea power, qualitatively, quantitatively, and geographically. Chinese relationships and sale of naval ships, submarines and equipment to countries of the Indian Ocean littoral may be seen as the early (and necessary) foundations on which to build the thrust of this expansion of its sea power, both in its search for greater role and status in this part of the world as well as a specific requirement of nuclear and military strategy against the Soviet Union, a country perceived as its major adversary.50

(ii) **India's Importance in The Region:** The importance of India in the Indian Ocean is enhanced by its north western coast which is very close to the Persian Gulf area. Further south, a future Indian navy might gain control over sea lanes leading in and out of the Gulf in the direction of the Pacific if the Maldives is also included in India's security perimeter. Towards South-East Asia, India possesses the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, close to Burma, Malaysia, and Indonesia, India's North-Eastern coast forms part of the Gulf of Bengal. Thus, India has enormous significance for the world power blocks on the one hand, and the two rival communist systems on the

50 Jasjit Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 152-53
other. In the power triangle — the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., and China — India's geopolitical position, and resources could be a balancing factor. Thus, geographically, India, as the map would show, is of greater significance to the U.S.S.R. than to U.S.A. or to Europe.

Moreover, Indian Ocean is assuming greater importance for the Soviet Union from economic, political and strategic point of view. Through the Ocean flows a considerable part of Soviet East-West internal trade, and its importance for Soviet domestic trade will increase in the 1980s when larger quantities of Siberian oil will have to be transported across the seas to European Russia. This trade route for Soviet Union is the only round the year open marine communication link between western Soviet Union, which is the centre of political activity, greater population density as compared to the eastern part and industry, with its Far-Eastern ports. The Trans-Siberian Railways is the only link between the two parts, which may not be able to carry all the increased load of traffic. Besides, the eastern part of this railway and especially the Soviet Pacific Fleet base at Vladivostok is insecure in the face of the Chinese threat.


52 Ibid.


54 A Lodozhsky, "The USSR's Efforts To Turn The Indian Ocean Into A Zone Of Peace", International Affairs, Moscow, No.8, August 1981, p.44.

So safeguarding these vital shipping routes across the Indian Ocean appears to be a strategic requirement for the Soviets. Apart from the need to safeguard these sea routes, security of Soviet Central Asia is also affected by it as it is common knowledge that the Pentagon reinforced the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea with the latest nuclear submarines carrying Trident Strategic missiles with targets in the Soviet Union.56

Soviet anxiety over the U.S. arms build up is related to the compulsions of its geography. The length of the Soviet frontiers is more than 60,000 kilometers of which not less than two third accounts for the sea frontiers. All the vitally important routes linking the European with the Asiatic and Far Eastern parts of the U.S.S.R. pass through the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean and this ice-free southern route is the only link between the Soviet ports in the Far East and the Black Sea.57

The existing internal land routes cannot be a substitute for these more economical and convenient sea routes and thus Soviet Union wants to keep the Indian Ocean clear of the American and Chinese domination. Soviet Union worries particularly, is the arrival of U.S. nuclear submarines in the Ocean, which can endure longer and operate at greater depths. The motives of American deployment in the area is also clear from a comment made by an American military correspondent, that "in the age of missiles and nuclear war-heads, the Indian Ocean... serves as a huge launch pad for missile carrying submarines. It is as near to many Russian military and industrial centres... Moreover within the rach of naval missiles there are vast territories of Soviet Siberia."58

56 M.Kosova, "Pentagon Shadow Over the Indian Ocean", International Affairs, Moscow, No.1, January 1980, p.142
57 V.K.Bhasin, Super Power Rivalry In the Indian Ocean, New Delhi, 1981, p.53
58 Quoted by Collin Cross, The Fall of British Empire, London Holder Sloughton, 1968, p.133
Furthermore, the Sino-American thaw developed after a sharp deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations especially after the clash along Ussuri river. Thus international power again got transformed from a two power adverse partnership game into a more complex one which was more unfavourable to the U.S.S.R. Indian Ocean has also become a centre of power rivalry among the superpowers, and the U.S. had deployed Polaris submarines with Posidom missiles barrel pointed towards the Soviet Union.

The significance and strategic location of Indian subcontinent, and particularly the land mass of India itself is crucial for the Soviet Union. India's strategic location in the Indian Ocean gives her a central position in the Asian politics. Moreover, India is adjacent to the tier that borders on the southern flank of the Soviet Union and has enormous significance for the world power blocks on the one hand and the two rival communist systems on the other. Furthermore, the Soviet dispute with China has at least two crucial factors for similarity with the Indian disagreement with China. On the one hand, the U.S.S.R. and India both have frontier wars over disputed territory with China, and on the other, both states share borders with China, Russia in the north and India in the south. Thus, the overall geopolitical consideration on the whole advised Soviet Union to be close to India. Thus, the Soviet policy towards India, according to J. Bandopadhyaya, "is based on mutuality of national interests and convergence of political understanding of world politics and international relations. Thus, India's strategic location in the Indian Ocean gives her a central position in Asian politics and adds to her geopolitical importance in the world. All major sea and air routes of the world pass through India and Indian Ocean are an
indispensable link in world trade and commercial intercourse."

From the geographical point of view as Nehru often used to say, India is a kind of bridge between the East and the West and becomes inevitably involved in major global issues.

It must be noted that all the Indian Ocean countries do not by any means support the Zone of Peace concept wholeheartedly though a majority of them, being non-aligned, certainly do.

The big powers are so overwhelmingly superior in military strength that there is nothing the Indian Ocean states can do but build up relentlessly world opinion against the obduracy of big powers. The struggle for dismantling all foreign bases and evacuation of all foreign forces from the Indian Ocean and its maritime states must continue. This might eventually affect public opinion in the United States which may force the administration to take action in the desired direction.

The littoral states also need to promote economic interdependence among themselves. For policy of resources is an important as removal of mutual suspicions. In this way the development of the region as a whole may be greater than the sum total of the development of individual countries.

India being the largest country in the region with long standing democratic traditions could well take the initiative in developing a benevolent, benign and tolerant leadership to instil confidence in the smaller nations of the region. A regional and consultative approach on all problems may gradually convince the nations that India is desirous of helping

60 Ibid.
and becoming an equal partner and does not wish to dominate or exert a dominating influence in the Ocean.

In dealing with advanced countries of the world, the littoral states should take a practical view of the world affairs. They must build up adequate defences against the threats they face. In this respect India will have to shoulder the biggest burden in strengthening and expanding its naval and maritime forces and superstructure and thus, in close cooperation with the maritime forces of the neighbouring countries, in a regional approach, present a credible threshold of deterrence to any potential aggressor.

Security and self-reliance for littoral states can only come about by internal strength and stability, economic development and self-reliance, and a naval strategy to provide effective and credible sea power to defend and safeguard national interests. Unitedly they can, in the coming years, develop into a reckonable forum-for-peace whose attainment by persuasion and negotiation appears despairingly elusive.

(C) Soviet Union and the Afghan Imbroglio

The world was taken by surprise by the events of 27-28 December 1979 when sizeable number of Soviet troops equipped with sophisticated weapons invaded Afghanistan in which Hafizullah Amin was killed and Babrak Karmal was installed as the new ruler of Afghanistan. The foundations of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had been laid much earlier and the December 1979 episode was the final act.

The overthrow of the Daud regime in Afghanistan on April 27, 1978, was no ordinary event. Afghanistan through the ages had seen so many upheavals when kings and conquerors had bitten the dust in orgies of massacres and mayhem. But what had
happened on that day in April 1978 was the end of a long era of succession of autocrats and tyrants. Afghanistan, once the backwaters of Asia had now joined the mainstream of the progressive comity of nations. Those who had now assumed power did not belong to ruling dynasties or powerful tribal hierarchies. Unlike past political upheavals it was not a mere replacement of one ruling clique by another. It was a revolution since the power had passed from the representatives of a set of exploiting classes to the representatives of the exploited and the oppressed classes. This was reflected in the 30-point programme which the first President of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan Nur Mohammad Taraki, announced on May 9, 1978.61

According to Thomas T. Hammond, the information for preliminary planning by Moscow would have been collected when General A. Epishev, the head of the Main Political Administration of the Soviet armed forces, made an inspection tour of Afghanistan in April 1979.62 This was followed by the visit to Afghanistan by General Ivan G. Pavloksi, Deputy Minister of Defence from August 1979 to October, 1979.63

In late November 1979, Moscow put its troops in a state of alert and reservists were called up to fill up understrength combat divisions in the central Asian military district. Bridging equipment was moved to the Afghan border.64


The Warsaw Pact countries had also placed their troops on an advanced stage of readiness. By mid-December Moscow had airlifted about two battalions of troops with heavy weapons into Bagram Air Base, whose management had already fallen into the Russian hands.  

A statement published in Pravda on 13 December 1979 stated that the Soviet Union had decided to grant Afghanistan's request... (for) immediate aid and support to send to Afghanistan a limited Soviet military contingent that will be used exclusively for assistance in preventing the armed interference from the outside. The Soviet contingent will be completely pulled out of Afghanistan when the reason that necessitated such an action exists no longer.

By 1 January 1980, fifty thousand Soviet troops were in Afghanistan and more were on the way. Thus by January end 1980 the number of Soviet armed forces in Afghanistan was estimated between 80,000 to 100,000.

The Soviet troops entered Afghanistan during the last week of December 1979 in defence of the PDPA regime and its security interest in the region. L.I. Brezhnev considered the activities of outside powers as posing "a serious threat to Afghan revolution and also to our southern borders."

Regarding the entry of Soviet troops in Afghanistan Babrak Karmal had stated: "Today I declare once more to all the people of the world that the entry of the United Soviet contingents

65 Ibid.
66 Pravda, 31 Dec 1979
into Afghanistan was in accordance with the request of the late Noor Mohammad Taraki and later, of Amin's government, and was begun much earlier than the election of Babrak Karmal to the responsible position of leadership of the Party and the state.\textsuperscript{69} Shah Mohammad Dost, the DRA Minister of External Affairs has confirmed this. He has also claimed that it was Nur Mohammad Taraki who had requested the Soviet Union for military assistance under the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Cooperation which Afghanistan had signed with the Soviet Union on December 5, 1978.\textsuperscript{70}

The emergence of Babrak Karmal regime backed by Soviet troops pushed Afghanistan into Soviet orbit and its non-aligned status was completely undermined. Engineering of the April 1978 coup and signing of the Afghan Soviet friendship treaty in December 1978 were steps towards the final takeover of Afghanistan by Moscow in December 1979.

\textbf{International Response:} It is one of Newton's Laws that every action evokes reaction. Similar analogy is applicable in international relations. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan took the world by surprise and was severely condemned and criticised. The United Nations General Assembly and Security Council have passed resolutions condemning the aggression in Afghanistan and called for the withdraw of all foreign troops from Afghanistan. Besides, the European Economic Community (EEC), Organisation of Islamic Countries, Seventh and Eighth Nonaligned summits, and other countries have

\textsuperscript{69} Excerpts of Interviews and Speeches delivered by Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of PDPA, CC and President of the ORA, Kabul, 1981, p. 130, quoted in Kalim Bahadur, 'The Politics of the Sour Revolution', \textit{op.cit.}, p.31

\textsuperscript{70} Kalim Bahadur, 'The Politics of the Sour Revolution, p.31
severely criticized the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan while calling for the unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. However, the United States has played a leading role in this regard by not only condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan but has taken certain steps since 1980 to help resolve the tangle.

The U.S. Response: The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan proved instrumental in changing U.S. perceptions about Moscow. As President Carter said that "the Soviets have seriously misjudged our own nation's strength and resolve and our unity and determination and the condemnation that has accrued to them by the "World community". They underestimated the courage and the tenacity of freedom in that country (Afghanistan) and they did not anticipate the world's quick and forceful response to their aggression. The U.S. reaction to those developments irked Moscow and the Soviet media especially Pravda accused the United States of "anti-Soviet hysteria reminiscent of the lamentable cold war times. To this President Carter reacted: "We do not want to return to the cold war, we do not want to have a confrontation with the Soviet Union. The Soviets have tried to mislead the world, they have failed". However, the Soviet media continued its criticism of Washington while concealing the real facts.

By January 1980, the Carter administration had realized that the Soviet invasion and subsequent occupation of Afghanistan posed a challenge to U.S. strategic interests in

71 Presidential Documents, No. 16, 28 Jan 1980, p. 111
72 Ibid., No. 16, 25 Feb 1980, pp. 386-87
73 Pravda, 8 Jan 1980
74 Presidential Documents, No. 16, 3 March 1980, p. 387
the Gulf region and South West Asia and a direct threat to its security. As President Carter said on 14 January 1980: "Our own nation's security was directly threatened. There is no doubt that the Soviet move into Afghanistan, if done without adverse consequences, would have resulted in the temptation to move again until they reached warm water port or until they acquired control over a major portion of the world's oil supplies." The Soviet Union has altered the strategic situation in that part of the world in a very ominous fashion. It places the Soviets within aircraft striking range of the vital oil resources of the Persian Gulf; it threatens a strategically located country Pakistan, (and) it poses the prospect of increased Soviet pressure on Iran and on other nations of the Middle East." The increasing Soviet influence after the April 1978 in Kabul was detrimental to the United States strategic interests in the region. Such an indication was given by Harold H. Saunders, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs in a statement before the sub-committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House of Representatives on 26 September 1979 when he said: "our effort to encourage peace and stability in that troubled region is clearly made more difficult by Afghanistan's internal unrest and exodus of refugees from Afghanistan." The United States regretted the "reorientation in Afghan foreign policy ... away from its traditional genuine non-alignment..." Washington also realized that direct interference in Afghanistan by any country including the Soviet Union would threaten the integrity of that country as well as the peace in the region.

75 Ibid., No.16, 14 Jan 1980, p.41
76 Ibid., 28 Jan 1980, p.165
77 Ibid., p. 185
78 Department of State Bulletin, Washington, D.C., Oct 1979
79 Ibid., Dec 1979
and it was a matter of concern to the United States. American scholars were also taking pains to show that the Afghan revolution and the friendly help the Soviet Union gave to defend Afghanistan's independence and sovereignty is in reality a smoke-screen to "cover the Soviet desire to fulfil Russia's age-old imperial dream of establishing a warm-water port on the Indian Ocean from which it could interdict western oil supplies... The Kremlin seeks to close the remaining gaps in an arch of influence stretching from the Horn of Africa to Central Asia." Some American scholars are more forthright on this crucial issue. According to them "the combined effect of the revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in U.S. perception was that a significant and quite abrupt deterioration in the local geopolitical balance had occurred, to compensate for which a military response was not only in order but imperative. The United States not only condemned the Soviet aggression but also took some measures to persuade Moscow to vacate the aggression in Afghanistan.

The specific U.S. measures against the Soviet action in Afghanistan were envisaged in his message to the nation on 4 January 1980 suggesting U.S. measures in this regard:

1) Blocking grain sales to the Soviet Union beyond the 8 million metric tons already contracted; this means withholding an additional 17 million metric tons which the Soviets have already ordered;

2) Stopping the sale of high technology and strategic items to the Soviet Union including computers and oil drilling equipment;

80 Ibid.
iii) Curbing Soviet fishing privileges in U.S. waters. The catch allowed to Soviet fishing fleets in 1980 would be reduced from 350,000 tons to 75,000 tons, resulting in an estimated Soviet economic loss of 35 million to 60 million;

iv) Delaying the opening of a new Soviet Consulate in New York and an American Consulate in Kiev;

v) Postponing new cultural and economic exchanges between the two countries, now under consideration;

vi) Boycotting the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. 83

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had accelerated the process of reinforcements of some form of qualified globalism for the U.S. policy. "The invasion appeared to challenge the United States to create a policy based on a new national consensus, one that required the necessary military power to support whatever role it determined to play." 84

Reaction in South Asia: India's Perception: The Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan shook all the national capitals in the South Asian neighbourhood. This, according to Bhabani Sen Gupta, changed the entire course of Afghan history and an independent and non-aligned country became a "satellite of Soviet Empire". The background of Soviet invasion was laid down during the last week of April 1978 when the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power with Soviet help, by overthrowing and simultaneously killing Sardar Mohammad Daoud. Between April 1978 and December 1979, the Soviet military advisers and troops had started reaching Afghanistan for a virtual takeover. The PDPA regime had

83 Department of State Bulletin, Washington D.C., Jan 1980
84 United States International Communication Agency (USICA), Chronology of Afghanistan Events: A Retrospective, New Delhi, 1980, p.2
departed from the traditional path of genuine nonalignment and Afghanistan was gradually pushed into the Soviet orbit. The Soviet invasion, says Bhabani Das Gupta, finally sealed the fate of Afghanistan as an independent and sovereign country. Today's Afghanistan is a client and satellite state of Soviet Union. 85

Major Indian newspapers had given different view of the Soviet action. The Hindu called the intervention "clear military aggression on the part of the Soviet Union against the small nation of Afghanistan and found it reprehensible on two counts: first, for its blatant violation of national sovereignty supposed to be guaranteed in international law and by U.N. Charter; secondly, as a manifestation of superpower bullying that threatens peace as well as regional security." 86

The Indian Express took a mellower view of the Soviet action: "There is no need to credit Moscow with all kinds of malevolent intentions. It is enough that they have placed themselves in a better position to intervene in a region where disaffected minorities like the Baluchis and the Kurds could yield rich opportunities. These are possibilities which must cause at least as much concern in India as the possible threat from Pakistan's newly acquired weaponry." 87

The Hindustan Times saw the two superpowers equally responsible for the Afghan crisis. "If Soviet intervention is to be condemned, so must also be the American. What is more, any strengthening of the Pakistan army as a part of the power

86 The Hindu, 1 Jan 1980
87 Indian Express, Delhi, 1 Jan 1980
game will only revive the tensions on this sub-continent. Of course, the danger to Pakistan from the west is now real. This danger is not so much of invasion as of sap and mine, the erosion of the authority in the Pathan and Baluchi area. So there is every reason to feel nervous. But perhaps all such consequences can be limited and the tension on the sub-continent avoided."

U.S. supply of arms to Pakistan caused much concern in India that it could increase tension in South Asia. Mrs. Gandhi attempted to bring back some semblance of balance to the Indian position. At a press conference on January 16, 1980, she disapproved interference by any foreign power in the affairs of another country and said that the Soviet presence in Afghanistan had increased tension and moved dangerously closer to the Indian border. Her Foreign Minister told the Lok Sabha: "India has close and friendly relations with the government and people of Afghanistan and we are deeply concerned and vitally interested in the security, independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of this traditionally friendly neighbour of ours and we believe that they have every right to safeguard them."

Mrs. Gandhi took a regional view of the Afghan crisis rather than a spatial global view which prevailed in the United States, China and Pakistan. Seen from the pure regional angle, the strategic divide in South Asia is between Pakistan and India. Pakistan's traditional allies are the United States and China, India's the U.S.S.R. In Indira Gandhi's view what was needed in the interest of regional stability and

88 The Hindustan Times, Delhi, 1 Jan 1980
89 The Indian Express, Delhi, 17 Jan 1980
balance of power, according to Sen Gupta, was to contain the Afghan crisis, not to aggravate it and enlarge its context and scope. It would be necessary to obtain the withdrawal of the bulk of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan within a specific time-frame. But this would not be possible if the insurgency was internationalised and if Pakistan were converted into a base for Sino-US military operations against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Mrs. Gandhi's policy also implied that while India could line with a Marxist Afghanistan passing into the orbit of the Soviet block, it could hardly line with a Pakistan rearmed by the U.S. and China, everless with a Pakistan destabilised and perhaps dismembered by the intermeshing impact of great power confrontation and internal conflict. Mrs. Gandhi's way to stabilise the situation and enforce a certain element of caution in the actions of Pakistan, the U.S. and China was to unequivocally reaffirm the strategic linkage between India and the Soviet Union in the event of a major conflict building up in South Asia. 91

**Pakistani Perception:** The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan has brought the largest trauma in Pakistan. Since the revolution of April 1978, half a million Afghans had taken refuge in Pakistan, thousands of them were actively engaged in an armed insurgency against the pro-Soviet regime. That Pakistan was training and arming a large number of insurgents and permitted other powers, notably the United States, China and Egypt, to feed the rebels with arms and ammunitions had been common knowledge. 92 Faced with the twin problems of legitimacy and tackling the problem of Baluch and Pakhtoon

92 For a comprehensive report see *The Indian Express*, Delhi, 10 Oct 1979
rationalism, the Pak military regime began look to the Afghan rebels for solutions. It started training Afghan refugees for insurgency activities with the objective to bring down the revolutionary regime and replace it by a friendly fundamentalist regime to offset the problems in the provinces. 93

If the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan poses an unprecedented threat to Pakistan, Carter's reflexive offer of military and economic aid immediately cast Gen. Zia in an important international role and ended his isolation from the community of polite and civilised governments. Gen. Zia clutched at his unexpected luck, but was far from anxious to provide the Soviet Union too much. His government's first official reaction to the Soviet action was somewhat cautious. On a statement issued on Dec. 29, it expressed "gravest concern at the Soviet intervention, all the more because the victim was an Islamic nation. It called for the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops." Unofficially, however, Pakistan saw the action as part of a grand Soviet design to establish hegemony in South Asia, and regarded it as a direct threat to the security of Pakistan, Iran and other neighbouring countries. 94

The Statesman wrote: "Gen. Zia painted a scenario of the Gulf region which mirrored American visions. After Soviet intervention he said, Afghanistan had become a "big red wedge". The question was whether the wedge moved west to Iran or east to Pakistan. If it moved west, the entire Gulf would be overrun. Either way the prospects were grim. He was certain that the Soviets had larger geopolitical designs. Otherwise, the presence of 80,000 Russian troops in a rugged

94 The Times of India, Delhi, 3 Jan 1980
barren country devoid of any mineral or natural resources did not make sense. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan was as much a threat to Pakistan as it was to India. More in pain than in anger Zia agreed with a reporter that Pakistan perceived Indira Gandhi to be "pro-Soviet."  

More than four years after the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, the Afghan problem was no nearer solution, nor did the Soviets seem any closer to establishing stability in the country. There was little doubt that Moscow's initial expectations that it could draw on the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) and on the public hatred of Hafizullah Amin to win popular legitimacy for the Karmal government and its own military presence have proved illusory. However, despite international censure and the Karmal government's inability to consolidate itself fully, there were no signs of flagging determination in Moscow. The Soviets appeared to be settling down for a longer stay till the task of consolidation is completed.

Within weeks of the Soviet action, President Carter came out with a plan of increasing the U.S. military aid to Pakistan, reverting the April 1979 decision, which cancelled all aid programmes following confirmed reports that Pak was building a nuclear plant capable of producing materials suitable for nuclear weapons. Further, Carter's Assistant for National Security Affairs, Zbigniew Brzezinski stressed the U.S.commitment to use armed forces if necessary to help Pakistan preserve its territorial integrity. For Zia-ul-Haq the changed situation

95 The Statesman, 7 Feb 1980; Indian Express, 7 Feb 1980
offered the best opportunity to seek legitimacy at home under the pretext of a new "threat". The same threat was also used to seek enormous military aid from the U.S. Zia passed the message to the U.S. in this way... if you visualise the map of the region... then Pakistan deserves attention." 98

Reactions of Other South Asian Countries: Bhutan strongly objected to the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. 99 Nepal's first reaction to the developments in Afghanistan was available on 1 January 1980 when a spokesman of the foreign ministry issued a statement in Kathmandu saying: "His Majesty's Government has been watching events in Afghanistan with increasing concern; Recent developments, including the large foreign military presence, in that non-aligned sovereign country have deeply aggravated our concern, since they pose a danger to peace and stability. His Majesty's government believes in the inviolability of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states and their right to determine and chart their own destiny themselves without foreign interference. Nepal opposes foreign intervention wherever it may occur. Nepal believes as a matter of faith and principle that foreign troops be withdrawn forthwith within National boundaries." 100

At a meeting with foreign press correspondent in Kathmandu on 4 January 1980, the Nepal Foreign Minister, K.B. Shahi deplored the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan and called for their early withdrawal. 101

99 S.D. Muni, "Bhutan: South Asian Initiatives", Strategic Analysis, 7(12), March 1984, p.1011
100 Rising Nepal, Kathmandu, English Daily, 2 Jan 1980
101 Ibid., 5 Jan 1980
When the issue of Afghanistan was brought before the General Assembly on 14 January 1980, Nepal's permanent representative to the U.N., Uddhave Dev Bhatta, made his country's position clear by asserting that the Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan contributed a threat to international peace and security and unless eliminated immediately, it would have a far-reaching and negative impact on peace, stability and the atmosphere of cooperation and understanding of the region and beyond. He further added: "The presence of Soviet troops has put at stake not only the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Afghanistan but also the fabric of civilised relationships between states." On 15 January 1980, Nepal voted in favour of a resolution at the emergency session of the General Assembly which called for the immediate unconditional and total withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan.

The Nepalese stand on Afghanistan issue was quite different from that of India which had abstained from voting in the General Assembly on that issue. Nor did Nepal try to link Soviet intervention with the Sino-American and Pakistani designs and activities in Afghanistan which India had been emphasizing right from the beginning of the Soviet action. In fact, the Nepalese Foreign Minister K.B. Shahi at a meeting with foreign press correspondents in Kathmandu on 4 January 1980, had described the U.S. decision to rearm Pakistan as a "bilateral affair" but soon corrected himself by adding that "rearming of any country in any part of the world will only create tension."
Nepal also took initiatives to make other small powers of the region to realize the gravity of the situation and forge unity among them in opposing the Soviet action and remaining vigilant against the big powers interference in the internal affairs of a small power. The King of Nepal along with the Nepalese foreign Minister visited Sri Lanka, Singapore, Burma, Bangladesh and India. The contents of his talks were quite relevant in this connection. In a joint communiqué issued at the conclusion of his visit to Sri Lanka on 27 February 1980, it was mentioned that His Majesty and President J.R. Jayawardene "reviewed the situation in South East Asia and South Asia and noted with serious concern that developments that had been taking place there". They "reaffirmed their support for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Kampuchea and Afghanistan, and the right of those nations to decide their destiny themselves without external interference." The two Heads of the States also called for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchea and Afghanistan. In addition, they reiterated their "faith in the principles and purposes of the U.N. charter and in the policies and principles of non-alignment" and expressed their determination to continue to work to strengthen those principles. They also expressed the hope that "South Asia will be an area of peace, stability and cooperation, and called upon all to scrupulously respect the non-aligned status of the countries of this region."  

The All Nepal National Students' Union, the student wing of the Communist Party of Nepal, handed over a memorandum to the Soviet Embassy in Kathmandu strongly condemning the Soviet


106 Ibid.
military intervention in Afghanistan and "the manner in which the Soviet Union in collusion with Indian expansionism have undertaken military intervention in Bangladesh, destroyed the identity of Sikkim and sought to exert political and economic pressure on small countries such as Nepal and Bhutan thereby creating danger for peace and stability in the entire subcontinent". The memorandum demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet and Vietnamese forces from Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Laos and an end to military intervention and expansionism. It also called for the abrogation of the Indo-Soviet military pact."107

Under these circumstances the Soviet leadership appears to have reassessed its options in Afghanistan. The essence of the revised policy clearly underscored by Gorbachev in his political report to the 27th Party Congress. In regard to Afghanistan he stated: "it is our vital interest that the U.S.S.R. should always have good and peaceful relations with all its neighbours. This is vitally important objective of our foreign policy."108

Gorbachev's support to Najibullah's national reconciliation moves was a step to facilitate the Geneva talks. Under this conciliatory move the Soviet Union intended to establish a broad coalition government in Kabul with the participation of various insurgent groups based in Pakistan, in which the PDPA would retain a dominant role.109

Geneva Talks: The Geneva talks to find a political solution

107 Nepal Post, Kathmandu, 16 Jan 1980
108 "Soviet View of Contemporary World", Excerpts from the Political Speech of CPSU General Secretary to the 27th Congress.
to the Afghan question started in June 1982 in pursuance of the resolution passed by the General Assembly. In the wake of Pakistan's refusal to recognize the Karmal government in Kabul, the U.N. Secretary General and his personal representative, Diego Cordovez, made hectic efforts during 1981-82 to help hold "proximity talks" between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. Diego Cordovez held indirect talks with the representatives of Pakistan and Iran which led to the first round of talks in Geneva in June 1982. Iran refused to take part in the negotiations. There was no outcome of the talks which led to its postponement. However, it was agreed that the "proximity talks" veered round four main points:

1) Withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan;
2) Non-interference in the internal affairs of states;
3) International guarantees of non interference; and
4) Voluntary return of the refugees to their homes.¹¹⁰

The Soviet Union was a silent observer while Iran preferred to be simply "kept informed". Until the middle of 1983, resulted in the preparation of 23-page draft agreement for the consideration of "concerned parties."¹¹¹ The U.N. special representative Diego Cordovez claimed that 95 per cent of the agreement was in hand.¹¹²

But there was no satisfactory outcome because of the differing opinions among the concerned parties. The fourth round of Geneva Talks held in June 1985 also proved a failure.¹¹³ However, the eighth round of talks held in Geneva

¹¹³ New York Times, 28 June 1985
in the beginning of August 1986 was adjourned on 8 August 1986,\textsuperscript{114} in view of the reported Soviet proposal to "withdraw some troops." The diplomatic process initiated by the Secretary General of the U.N. with the support of all governments concerned and aimed at achieving through negotiations, a political settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan, has been successfully brought to an end.

The personal representative paid an additional visit to the area from 8 to 18 March 1986 for consultations. The final round of negotiations began as proximity talks at Geneva on May 5, 1986, was suspended on 23 May 1986 for consultations and was resumed from 31 July to 8 August 1986. The personal representative visited the area from 20 November to 3 December 1986 for further consultations and 25 February to 9 March 1987, and from 7 to 11 September 1987. The personal representative again visited the area from 18 January to 9 February 1988 and the talks resumed at Geneva from 2 March to 8 April 1988.

After more than eight years of bloody strife, the Geneva Accord signed on 15th April 1988 between the Pakistan and Afghan Foreign Ministers, with the Soviet Union and the United States standing guarantee, marked a historic moment in the history of this Asian region. The accord only guarantees that Pakistan and Afghanistan will not interfere in each other's affairs, that they will not encourage or support rebellions or secessionist activities under any pretext. What the accord does not do is provide a framework for ending the civil strife in Afghanistan. Nor is there any agreement between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. on ending military support to their allies in Afghanistan so that the conflict will, in a sense now, be a

\textsuperscript{114} Larry Jagan, "Summit Surprise?" Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay, 21(4), 23 Aug 1986, p.1473
fight to the finish for control of Kabul without Najibullah having the support of 100,000 Soviet troops, tanks and attack helicopters.

Since May 15, Soviet troops began to leave Afghanistan. Before the accord, the Soviets had indicated that they were not opposed to a substantially broad based coalition as an intrim arrangement, an attitude that had worried the Najibullah Government. Shevardnadze, the Foreign Minister, told the Soviet news agency Tass that he was not particularly worried about the political fortunes of people in Kabul. No one, he said, could claim a monopoly of power or "put his personal considerations and aspirations above the interests of the nation." This is however, as far as the Soviets are ready to go. They will accept a new coalition in Kabul, but only if it is not balantly anti-Soviet (as one led by the Peshawar based seven party alliance — the Islamic Unity of Afghan Mujahidin — might be). It is because of this that the Soviets have refused to promise that they will not give military aid to any government in Kabul. Their position is that Afghan-Soviet relations go back at least a decade before the happenings of 1979, and all that is not going to be given up for the sake of an expeditious withdrawal.

(D) **South Asian Regional Cooperation**

South Asia has become a major arena of international rivalry between major world powers. The consequence is that a complex web of strategic, military and ideological interests are so juxtaposed as to result in divisions within the region which throws up obstacles to cooperation.

Vast changes have occurred in South Asia's geopolitical situation during the last decade. Momentous developments in
1971 — the dismemberment of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country — created a new South Asian environment much more conducive to cooperation than conflicts. Since 1947 the South Asian scene had been bedevilled by the ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan, which reached its climax in the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war. Although the war truncated Pakistan, the residual state of Pakistan emerged as more viable and geographically compact. Since the Simla Agreement of 1972, Pakistan's attitude also underwent a radical change.

A direct result of the Simla Agreement is that the new state system in the region is more compact and stable, with lesser problems of national identity and integration. Further, this resulted in dissolving the artificial balance of power, created by external powers, between India and Pakistan. This was, earlier, one of the major distortions in the regional power structures, a major source of conflict and an impediment to regional cooperation. Since then, the power gap between India and her neighbours is so great that any intra-regional conflict, over regional issues and with regional initiative, becomes redundant. This, particularly, made it possible for the idea of regional cooperation to take shape. As one scholar concludes: "for 1970s, unless there are very much great changes indeed, South Asia can be considered to be a zone of peace" and when peace prevails cooperation is more feasible.

The idea of South Asian Regional Cooperation took shape through a proposal made by President Ziaur Rahman of Bangladesh in May 1980, in which he called for a summit meeting of the leaders of the seven South Asian countries, to explore the possibilities of establishing a framework for regional cooperation.

cooperation. President Ziaur Rehman argued: "The countries of South Asia share many common values that are rooted in their social, ethnic, cultural and historical tradition. Perceptions about certain specific events or political situation of the world may differ but such difference do not seem to create a gulf between them that cannot be bridged." 116

This Bangladesh proposal was endorsed by Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan, but both India and Pakistan were reticent. It was a time that Mrs. Indira Gandhi had recently returned to power (in January 1980) and her government wanted a closer scrutiny of the proposal which had been discussed by the government of Bangladesh with the Indian government led by the Janta Party. At this time India's relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh were not very close. Mrs. Gandhi's government was apprehensive that the neighbours may collectively try to isolate India on global issues and may put pressure on it in order to improve their bargaining position vis-a-vis India. India also considered unrealistically ambitious the proposal of a summit level meeting as a first step for initiating regional cooperation without any groundwork. 117

The initial reservations of India towards the Bangladesh proposal were also because of the Western support behind the move. President Carter of the U.S. in his State of Union Address on 23 January 1980, proposed a "cooperative regional security framework." 118 Zbigniew Brezenski, National Security Adviser to the U.S. President and Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary of State, visited Pakistan at this time and made an offer of U.S. arms and other assistance to help Pakistan meet

116 S.D. Muni, Regional Cooperation in South Asia, National, 1984, p.10
the situation arising out of Soviet action in Afghanistan. Simultaneously, Clark Clifford, emissary of the U.S. President, visited India and advised India to "evolve a regional approach with Pakistan to the fundamentally changed situation which the whole region now faced."

It was in the context of these developments that India's Foreign Minister, Narasimha Rao, asked the U.S. to keep off the strategic and security aspects from the regional cooperation move.

SAARC : From Establishment to the Present : The launching of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, or to use its popular acronym SAARC, following the Dhaka Summit in early December 1985 was the slow, steady and welcome culmination of the steps initiated by President Ziaur Rehman of Bangladesh as early as 1977. The formal process began with the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries of the seven countries in Colombo in April 1981 and continued with three similar meetings in Kathmandu, Islamabad and Dhaka.

The idea got a push forward in the meeting of the Foreign Ministers in New Delhi in August 1983, which accepted the concept of regional cooperation for collective self reliance through economic growth, social progress and cultural development. Nine areas were identified for regional cooperation, namely, agriculture, rural development, tele-communications, meteorology, health and population, postal service, transport service, science and technology and sports, arts and culture. Following the meeting of the Foreign Ministers in Thimpu in May 1985, the summit meeting of the Heads of States was held

119 Ibid., p.65
120 Ibid., April 1980, p.62
121 The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 30 April 1981
in Dhaka in December 1985 and the SAARC was launched amidst much euphoria and fanfare.

The Declaration of its establishment gives the following objectives of the SAARC:

(a) to promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life;

(b) to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals the opportunity to live in dignity and to realise their full potential;

(c) to promote and strengthen collective self reliance among the countries of South Asia;

(d) to contribute, to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems;

(e) to promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields;

(f) to strengthen cooperation with other developing countries;

(g) to strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums on matters of common interest; and

(h) to cooperate with international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes.

Though, the SAARC move was made in early 1980, there were, however, vague indications in this direction since 1977. In 1978, when President Carter of the United States and the British Prime Minister Callaghan paid visits to South Asia, they underlined the need for the South Asian countries to forge cooperative linkages amongst themselves. Both these Western leaders made it known that if there were definite proposals for regional economic cooperation like the harassing

122 Text of the Declaration of the SAARC
of water resources, their countries were willing to come forward to provide economic assistance and support.

They also indicated the desirability of even China being involved in such cooperation exercises. This was in line with the growing rapport between the U.S. and China on regional South Asian Affairs. 123

The idea of regionalism in South Asia found prompt support in the West, particularly as it had been voiced by the leaders and the regimes sympathetically disposed towards the U.S. There were clearly two aspects of this Western support to South Asian regionalism. One was the Western offer of economic help if South Asian countries could work out multilateral regional cooperation projects in areas like.

The second aspect of Western support was related to the security dimension of the region in respect of the U.S. and the U.K. had encouraged the move of the whole of South Asia being declared a zone of peace. They also wanted the region to become a nuclear weapon free zone, in view of India's known and Pakistan's aspired nuclear capabilities. The Western support for Pakistani proposals in the U.N. on South Asia as a zone of peace and as nuclear-weapon free zone during this period was a clear indication in this respect. The American and the British leaders during the visit to the subcontinent in January 1978 had also tried to secure firm commitments from India and Pakistan regarding nuclear non-proliferation. 124 It is difficult to say as to what precisely prompted the West in their support for regional harmony and peace in South Asia

123 S.D. Muni, "Strategic Aspects of SAARC", Strategic Analysis, VIII(1), April 1984, p.23

at that time. But possibly the Carter administration priority coupled with the revival of super power tensions in the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{125}

The nature of South Asian events and diplomatic activities during the first few months of 1980 were such that President Rehman's proposal which underlined his concern for "peace, stability and security" in the region, was perceived even in Dhaka as a reflection of the Carter doctrine in South Asia.\textsuperscript{126}

South Asian Governments have found it advantageous to project assertive and divergent postures towards India in their strategies for domestic political sustenance and support mobilization.\textsuperscript{127} Such intra-regional disharmony has tended the South Asian countries to look towards outside powers for support to ensure a favourable regional balance. The external powers have naturally exploited regional disharmonies to serve their own strategic interests.\textsuperscript{128}

The United States and China favour this security biased approach to SAARC. This aspect of U.S. support to regionalism in South Asia has been evident since 1977, particularly since 1980. The Dhaka summit which endeavoured to give a political and strategic profile to SAARC was promptly welcomed by the U.S. and China. This is understandable in view of strategic interests of these extra-regional powers in the South Asian countries. China looks upon SAARC as a conducive factor to help it consolidate its growing political and strategic influence in India's neighbourhood.\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{125} Dieter Braun, \textit{The Indian Ocean: Region of Conflict or Zone of Peace}, London, 1983, p.27
\textsuperscript{126} Holiday Weekly, Dhaka, 27 Jan 1980, quoted in S.D.Muni and Jasjit Singh, ed., \textit{op.cit.}, p.13
\textsuperscript{127} U.S.Bajpai, \textit{India's Security}, New Delhi, 1983, Chapter 7
\textsuperscript{128} Stanley Wolpert, \textit{Roots of Confrontation in South Asia}, Oxford University Press, New York, 1982
\textsuperscript{129} S.D. Muni, "South Asian Regional Cooperation: Evolution and Prospects", in Jasjit Singh and K.Subrahmanyam, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 123
The U.S. and Western interests may also not favour SAARC to bring about collective self reliance in the region. South Asia has the potential to become a major market for Western goods, investments and technologies as a dependent rather than a self-reliant region. The Western efforts are therefore geared to adjusting South Asia in their desired patterns of East-West and North-South relations. If these efforts succeed, will a SAARC, incapable of meeting the rising developmental aspirations of the millions of South Asian people become a viable entity? At the same time, it would also be a miracle if SAARC can develop as an autonomous regional factor for peace through development in the face of adverse regional and extra regional pressures. 130

Thus the outside powers have exploited regional disharmonies to serve their own strategic interests. Such disharmonies and mutual apprehensions are deliberately played up by outside powers. These apprehensions thrive on the domestic need of some countries to project an assertive and anti-Indian policy for their domestic political sustenance and support mobilization.

SAARC and the Soviet Union: The development of regional economic cooperation in South Asia serves as a major factor of peace and stability in the region and on the whole Asian continent. The Soviet Union supports the efforts of South Asian States in this direction as well as of all other peace-loving states in the Asia Pacific region.

The Soviet Union and other socialist states are strongly in favour of Asia becoming a continent of peace, stability, good neighbourliness and cooperation. The U.S.S.R. has taken a

series of new initiatives in this field, aimed at pooling the
efforts of all Asian States regardless of their social systems
which might even include a pan-Asian forum on the whole range
of questions involving the assurance of durable peace and
equitable economic and political cooperation among Asian
states. The interests of each state in the region necessitate
the elaboration of a broad concept of security which could be
based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence developed
by Asian countries, on the ten Bandung principles on the
initiatives put forward by the Soviet Union, the Asian socialist
states, India and other countries, for promoting security in
Asia and for making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. Security
and stability in the region could be made stronger if all
nuclear powers agreed to stop all nuclear weapon tests notably
in Asia and in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and if the
states of the region refused to participate in the U.S. and
N.A.T.O. plans to militarise space.\textsuperscript{131}

Yuri Kuritsyn, APN political analyst, writes that "the
results of the summit meeting of seven South Asian countries
which was in the capital of Bangladesh on December 7 and 8,
1985, have evoked interest in the Soviet Union. The South
Asian region adjoins Soviet territory. It holds a strategic
position in the north of the Indian Ocean, where the busiest
international sea routes, important for the U.S.S.R. as well,
are passing. A total of 1,000 million people, i.e., nearly
25 per cent of the world's population, live there. Therefore,
it is natural that the Soviet Union wants to have stable
relations of friendship and cooperation with the people of
South Asia."\textsuperscript{132}

\textsuperscript{131} A. Granovski, "Regional Cooperation in South Asia: A Way
Stronger Peace, Stability and Economic Independence", issued by the Information Department of USSR Embassy in
India, New Delhi, 16 Sept 1985

\textsuperscript{132} Yuri Kuritsyn, "Promoting Good Neighbourliness, Trust and
Cooperation in South Asia", issued by the Information
Department of the USSR Embassy in India, New Delhi, 9 Dec
1985
The New Edition of the CPSU Programme whose draft was under discussion in the U.S.S.R. at the time of SARC meeting in Dhaka on December 7-8, 1985, pointed out: However, different newly-free countries may be and whatever road they follow, their people are united by a desire to develop independently, and to decide their affairs without foreign interference. The Soviet Union is fully in solidarity with them. These words fully apply to the South Asian countries.133

The Soviet Union does not want South Asia as a seat of global conflict. It stands for replacing tension in South Asia by relations of good neighbourliness and mutual assistance in national development. Observers believe that these problems were in the fore of issues discussed by the Dhaka meeting. Thus, the success of the summit fully met with the national interests to the U.S.S.R. and its Asian policy in general.134

Disarmament is a must for development. Regrettably, writes Kuritsyn, the South Asian region is being stuffed at rapid rates with ever more sophisticated and expensive weapons, including those that can carry nuclear warheads. South Asia accounts for 50 per cent of all people who live, according to the U.N. data, in "abject poverty", i.e., people whose annual income is less than 75 dollars.135

The arms build-up and other military preparations in South Asia did not make the situation safer there. If one of the neighbouring countries, clashing with one another, buys a new consignment of tanks, heavy guns or bombers, the other too considers it necessary to replenish its stocks. Such a race inevitably results in increasing mutual suspicion and distrust.

133 V. Florin, "Who Opposes Regional Cooperation in South Asia", Issued by Information Department of the USSR Embassy in India, New Delhi, 20 Nov 1985
134 Ibid.
135 Yuri Kuritsyn, op.cit.
This is to the benefit of only those whose policy is to draw dividends from seats of tension and conflicting situations. In case of South Asia these are the owners of foreign military bases and installations in the Indian Ocean and on its shores, who are thousands of kilometres away from this region, the owners of submarines with nuclear weapons on board, cruising not far from the coastal countries. There are those who intentionally whip up the arms race in the region, make a fortune on it and try to use it for strengthening their positions.

The Soviet Union opposes such a development of events in South Asia. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbochev pointed out at the session of U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet held in late 1985: "to ensure that the Asian region is not a source of tension and an area of armed confrontation, the Soviet Union stands for broader political dialogue between all the states in the region in the interests of peace, good neighbourliness, mutual trust and cooperation."\textsuperscript{136}

These words reflect in the best possible way the U.S.S.R's attitude towards the summit meeting of seven Asian states. The leaders of these South Asian States have repeatedly declared against the arms race. The joint efforts of South Asian countries in their striving to curb the arms race are also well known. Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, together with a group of other countries, submitted to the U.N. a draft resolution on "the Prevention of the Arms Race in Outer Space". It coincides with the concrete programme of wide-scale international cooperation in peaceful exploration of outer space in conditions of its non-militarisation, submitted by the Soviet Union for the consideration of the world community.\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid.
After the SAARC meeting held in Dhaka TASS submitted a report that it was the first summit of those countries, which in itself is a politically significant event. A new page in the history of the region was written by the desire, stated by the participants in the forum, to pool their efforts and to seek the replacement of mistrust and conflicts, that grim legacy of the colonial past, with mutual understanding and cooperation.138

The positive results of the Dhaka meeting are reflected in full in the documents approved by it, the Declaration and Charter of the Association. The South Asian countries, which have an aggregate population of about one billion, or one-fifth of the world's have quite a few problems in common, which can be effectively resolved only by common efforts by the erstwhile difficulties, rooted in the colonial past, have lately been compounded by new ones, born of the predatory practices of international monopolies. These include growing foreign indebtedness and also trade protectionism, practices more and more often by the U.S.A.and its allies.

The specific economic position of the Asian countries calls for a very careful approach to the choice of the mechanism of regional economic cooperation which would ensure equal and mutually beneficial participation for each member-country irrespective of its size and development standard. The Western attempts of economic integration based on the ungovernable market regulation, on the establishment of all sorts of common markets and so on are patently unacceptable for South Asian countries.139

Of special interest to the countries of South Asia in

138 Vasily Kharkov, "Important Step in Regional Cooperation," TASS News Analyst, 10 Dec 1985
139 A. Granovski, op.cit.
this connection, according to Granovski, is the experience of planned regional economic cooperation within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which is based on the interests of the member-countries which differ both in size and in the level of their development. The nucleus of this cooperation is production specialisation and cooperation of partners on the basis of inter-governmental agreements in manufacturing modern industrial products which serve as a material foundation for technical progress. Opportunities for specialisation in the new high-technology industries which the South Asian countries have just started are extensive.\textsuperscript{140}

The South Asian countries have adopted different strategies of economic development. Being comparatively well placed, the Indian economy has grown faster, so has the Indian state structure and the bourgeoisie as compared with their counterparts in South Asia. The neighbouring state structures and the dominant classes do not seem to relish this development.\textsuperscript{141}

The advance along the road to overcoming the obstacles to cooperation calls for persistence and patience from the partners as well as willingness to understand one another. Obstacles to regional cooperation stem not only from objective economic issues involving different standards of economic development but also from outside factors.\textsuperscript{142} One of the major obstacles, from the Soviet point of view, is the policy of American imperialism in the region. In its attempts to attain global supremacy the Reagan administration is stepping up its military presence in South Asia region and adjacent Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{143}

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{142} A. Granovski, \textit{op.cit.}
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
The U.S.A., says Granovski, is openly setting individual countries of the region against one another, trying to pose as a "disinterested defender" of small countries of the region from the alleged "Soviet threat". It is supporting and encouraging the destructive forces in certain countries of the region. The shipments of the American weaponry, including F-16 warplanes to Pakistan, the conversion of the island of Diego Garcia into a major naval base posing a direct threat to the countries of the Indian Ocean, the attempts to gain control over the instabilisation of the political situation in the region. They retard the efforts of the countries of South Asia to establish a climate of mutual trust and to promote constructive economic cooperation. Nor are the goals of regional cooperation promoted by the attempts of individual states to make the settlement of regional problems conditional on the prior settlement of bilateral differences on specific issues.  

Boris Chekhonin, TASS Political News Analyst, appreciated the steps taken by the leaders of the seven South Asian states. He says that "the decision on setting up a special group to study the problem of terrorism and its impact on security and political stability of the states in the region is highly urgent, the more so that terrorism has its concrete address in that region: acts of sabotage and politically motivated assassinations are plotted in Pakistan. It is exactly in the territory of that country that dozens of bases were set up to train terrorist bands and infiltrate them into India and Afghanistan. Who can guarantee that the geography of these incursions will not be extended, that Nepal, Bhutan and other member countries of the seven states whose governments pursue an independent and consequently, unsuitable to Washington

144 Ibid.
policy, will not become the targets for terrorist provocations on the part of Pakistan?". According to Boris Chekhonin, it is not fortuitous that the U.S. assigned to Pakistan the role of the policeman in that region, the role which is incompatible with the status of non-aligned country. 145

145 Boris Chekhonin, TASS Political News Analyst, "On the Results of SAARC Conference", Issued by the Information Department of the USSR Embassy in India, New Delhi, 10 Dec 1985
Chapter IV

INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS: 1965-77

An important element of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is its relations with India with her great influence and traditional wisdom with specific political experience and huge economic potential. Even before 1947 India and the Soviet Union had friendly contacts and maintained commercial, scientific and cultural relations. The best minds in Russia and India showed traditional deep interest in each other's history and political, ideological and philosophical outlooks.

People in Russia followed with great attention and sympathy and sided with the national liberation struggle of the Indian people against the British colonialists for freedom and independence. India received with great enthusiasm the views of the victorious Great October Socialist Revolution and followed compassionately the heroic struggle of the Soviet people against German fascism and firmly believed in Soviet victory.

In his radio message in Delhi on September 7, 1946, the first Prime Minister of independent India and outstanding Asian statesman Jawaharlal Nehru said welcoming the Soviet people: "They are our neighbours in Asia and inevitably we shall undertake many common tasks and have much to do with each other". The Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with India back in April 1947, i.e., before India officially became independent.

(A) The Early Phase

When the British Raj in India was dissolved in 1947, and the sovereign states of India and Pakistan emerged, the Kremlin leaders, unlike their Czarist predecessors, paid
little attention to the subcontinent. Stalin and his ruling elite were preoccupied with East European affairs. Moreover, they harboured prejudice and misunderstanding about the great events during the liquidation of the British Empire in India. They dismissed the whole process of the peaceful transfer of power as "a set of new imperialist devices to retain British political, economic and strategic influence in South Asia... their dogmatic interpretation of major political events in strict accord with Marxist-Leninst theory, blinded them to political realities and dynamics in Asia."¹

Stalin contended that the ratio for bourgeoisie in colonial countries would split into the revolutionary group and the compromising group. In a colonial country such as India where capitalism was already more or less developed, the compromising bourgeoisie, according to Stalin, had come to an agreement with imperialist powers.² The founding of the Indian National Congress was itself a manifestation of anti-imperialist feeling among the Indian intelligentsia, which gradually percolated down to the Indian masses in the course of the Indian freedom movement. Although at the initial stage this protest was primarily against British rule in India, but after First World War imperialism started being regarded as an evil everywhere in the world.³ One of the deep impressions on Nehru's mind during his visit to Moscow at the end of 1927 was what he considered to be the complete absence of the racial prejudice in Soviet society and when he became the Prime Minister of the Interim Government of India in 1946, he declared that anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism were the "kernal of our

¹ G.W. Choudhry, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Major Powers, Collier Macmillan Pub., New York, pp.7-8
² See Hugh Seton Watson, "Five Years of Cold War" in George W.Keeton and George Schwarzenberger, eds. The Year Book of World Affairs, as quoted in G.W.Chaudhury, op.cit., p.8
³ J. Bandopadhyaya, Making of India's Foreign Policy, Allied Pub., New Delhi, 1980, p.32
foreign policy, and this policy was occasionally followed by Nehru's successive governments. India is opposed to any form of colonialism or imperialism and is wedded to the policy of uprooting domination of one country by another.

Colonialism is economic exploitation of one people by another by political domination. The cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy was always to align herself with peoples fighting for the eradication of the consequences of colonialism. India's anti-imperialist and anti-racialist stand brings her slightly closer to the Soviet Union and a little far from western countries, as the Soviet Union also fights for the same principles and supports all those who have the same foreign policy orientations.

Thus, India's anti-imperialist postures in international affairs have also some bearings in shaping Soviet policy towards India. Though not deeply involved in South Asia at the time of Indian independence, the Soviet Union, alone among the great powers, had a comprehensive theory to back up its policy towards the new countries of Asia.

As Vice-President of the Interim Government of India, Nehru declared at his first press conference on 7 September 1946, that it would be the policy of his government to build up good relations with both the great powers — the Soviet Union and the United States. In his very first statement he outlined free India's non-aligned policy, maintaining that it

4 Ibid., p.75
6 S.R.Patel, Foreign Policy of India, Bombay, 1960, p.75, Also see S.K.Raman Pillai, Indian Foreign Policy, Meenakshi Prakashan, Meerut, 1969, pp. 172-191
7 D.Cherkov, "The USSR and Developing Countries: Economic Relations", International Affairs, Moscow, No.8, Aug 1972, p. 54
would try "to keep away from the power politics of groups aligned against one another which have led in the past to two world wars and which may again lead to disaster on an even vaster scale." 8

In December 1946 the Indian Science Congress, at the instance of Nehru, invited some Soviet scientists to visit India. The first Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union was appointed on 25 June 1947. On Nehru's instructions the first step of sounding the Soviet Union about the establishment of diplomatic relations had been taken much earlier. V.K. Krishna Menon and K.P.S. Menon met the Soviet Foreign Minister, M.Meltov, in Paris on 28 September 1946 for the purpose. Meltov welcomed the idea. 9

According to K.P.S. Menon, relations between India and the Soviet Union after independence may be divided into two phases — passive phase and active phase. The active phase, in his opinion, began in 1955. 10 A period of transition may be marked from 1953 to 1955. In fact, a slow change can be discerned towards the end of 1952 and early 1953 in the last days of Stalin. The establishment of diplomatic ties between India and the U.S.S.R. did not lead to an immediate development of close economic and cultural relations. There were many psychological barriers to be crossed. "Some Indians", wrote K.P.S. Menon, "still suffered from the fear of a relic of British days, that the U.S.S.R. was out to turn the world red by hook or crook, and many Russians thought that though India was nominally free, it was economically bound hand and foot to the chariot of western imperialism." 11

8 The Statesman, Delhi, 8 Sept 1946
9 Devendra Kaushik, Soviet Relations With India and Pakistan, Vikas, Delhi, 1971, p.27
10 News and Views from the Soviet Union, New Delhi, No.3, 1961
11 K.P.S. Menon, Lenin Through Indian Eyes, Delhi, 1970, pp.67-8; also see Devendra Kaushik, op.cit., p.28
The warming of Indo-Soviet relations initiated a new era of cultural, economic, military and diplomatic cooperation. The Soviet Union always emphasizes the importance of cultural understanding in achieving closer relations with other countries and India, in the mid-1950s was no exception. Since 1955 there has been a regular annual exchange of delegations of scientists, artists, writers and others between India and the Soviet Union. In 1954, the U.S.S.R. organised the first festival of Indian films in Moscow.

Until the mid-1950s India's economic relations with the Soviet Union were confined to trade, but this changed with the improvement of relations. Now much emphasis was laid on Soviet help in capital construction and development of heavy industry. In September 1954 the U.S.S.R. indicated its willingness to assist India in constructing a steel mill and in February 1955 an agreement was signed for the much publicized steel plant in Bhilai. The steel works in Bhilai was the first major industrial enterprise to have been built with the assistance rendered by the U.S.S.R. and other member countries of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance. India had received external help during its First Five Year Plan launched in 1951, from the west. During the Second Five Year Plan western aid continued to be much higher, but Soviet assistance was significant. Between November 1957 and February 1961 the U.S.S.R. extended credit to India totalling $670 million. Soviet aid in India's industrialization programme was even more extensive during the Third Five Year Plan. Most of the Soviet aid was utilised for industrial development.¹²

India obtained a large amount of economic assistance from

¹² G.W. Choudhury, op.cit., p.22
both the U.S.S.R. and the western countries during the height of the cold war in the 1950s because of its special role as the leader of the 'third block'. Through the 1960s India and Egypt received more Soviet arms and military equipment than any other non-communist country. In the mid-1950s, when Pakistan began to receive U.S. arms through various military pacts, a powerful section of the Indian public started to campaign in favour of soliciting Soviet military assistance. Since 1962 Moscow has become New Delhi's almost only source for the supply of sophisticated weapons. Peking took the view that Soviet military assistance to India was directed against it and alleged that the Russian 'revisionists' were colluding with Indian 'reactionaries', American 'imperialists' and Japanese 'militarists' to encircle their country.\(^{13}\) Nehru, however was cautious in relying solely upon one super power for military assistance and although Soviet arms assistance had increased enormously, his policy in this respect is still followed.

But the first break for Nehru's policy of befriending the communist neighbours was achieved in Beijing, rather than Moscow. The Korean War had broken out in 1950. Although Nehru initially supported the U.S. in condemning North Korea's aggression, an attitude which was widely criticized in India, he changed his stand. Nehru's objective became the evolving of a formula for peace, and he was soon to become a constant advocate of according China its rightful place in the United Nations and the world.

A significant change in the Soviet attitude took place in 1952. The Soviets had previously not participated in U.N. debates on Kashmir, but in the January debate (1952) they attacked the U.S. and Britain by charging them with seeking

\(^{13}\) Grilal Jain, 'India-Soviet Treaty', IDSAJ, The Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis Journal, 2(1), July 1969, p. 37
to convert Kashmir into their colony. Nehru's initial reaction was one of embarrassment because he did not want the question to be involved in the cold war. In fact, he informed Washington and London that India had not sought Soviet support on Kashmir.  

The real change in the Soviet attitude came only after the death of Stalin in 1953. Nehru's first visit to the U.S.S.R. in June 1955 improved friendly relations between the people of India and the Soviet Union. Nehru succeeded in allaying Soviet doubts about India's foreign policy. He impressed the Soviet leaders with the policy of Panchsheel which coincided with the Soviet policy of peaceful coexistence. On 18 November 1955, Marshall Bulganin and Khrushchev reciprocated the Indian Prime Minister's visit. In June 1956 Vice-President Dr. Radhakrishnan, paid a 9 day goodwill visit to the Soviet Union. In his speeches during his tour Dr. Radhakrishnan made a point to commend the Soviet Union for taking steps for easing world tension and also for dissolving the Cominform. He referred to the remarkable liberalization in the Soviet Union since the days when he was ambassador in Moscow, he expressed the hope that the Soviet people would march steadily towards welfare state.  

In 1956, Nehru and his government's attitude towards Soviet atrocities in Hungary was mild compared to their severe condemnation of Anglo-French-Israeli action in Egypt. "The Hungarian crisis", as one commentator put it, "produced a much discussed illustration of the Indian leader's kindly treatment of Soviet misdeeds." In the U.N. General Assembly

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15 The Hindu, Madras, 18 June 1956
India, alone among the non-communist countries, voted with the Soviet bloc against a resolution calling for free elections in Hungary. Nehru, whose foreign policy was for the first time criticized inside his country for its "apparent dual standard of morality", tried to justify the Indian vote at the U.N. on the grounds that a U.N. supervised election in Hungary might create a bad precedent elsewhere. Kashmir was obviously his concern. He eventually responded to the criticism at home and abroad by modifying his stand. Later he told the Indian Parliament that the great majority of the Hungarian people wanted a change of government and that the Soviet forces which had suppressed their revolt should be withdrawn. In response, the Soviet government, pointedly reminded Nehru of India's many pressing domestic problems, particularly the Kashmir problem for which Soviet help was desired. Similarly when Nehru expressed concern in May 1958 over the worsening Soviet-Yugoslav relations, Premier Khrushchev was reported to have told the Indian Ambassador that India should not interfere. The Soviet government also resented Nehru's late 1958 article "The Basic Approach", which criticized all dogmatic ideologies including communism.\(^\text{17}\)

Nehru reacted vigorously to the Anglo-French attack on Egypt condemning it in no uncertain terms, although he felt Nasser's original step was precipitate and had moved to try to resolve the dispute. After the ceasefire he took a hand in bringing about a speedy settlement and again activated his peripatetic foreign policy advisor, Krishna Menon.\(^\text{18}\) For Nehru the Anglo-French attack was a "flagrant violation of the U.N. charter" and a "clear and naked aggression".

Perhaps stung by the western criticism and the sharp protest of the respected Indian leader Jayaprakash Narayan,

\(^{17}\) G.W.Choudhury, \textit{op.cit.}, p.24
\(^{18}\) Sarvepalli Gopal, Vol.II, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 277
Nehru publicly expressed his sympathy for Hungarian national forces on November 5, 1956 and condemned the Soviet conduct. Hungary, however, took second place to Egypt in the Indian Foreign Office.19

Thus India's policies generally favoured Moscow during 1954-62 and the Soviet dropped their neutrality on the Kashmir dispute and openly and unequivocally supported India. War between India, the befriending of which had enabled the U.S.S.R. to gain much influence in the third world, and China, fraternal member of the communist bloc, initially strained the Indo-Soviet relations that had developed so well during the preceding eight years. Khruschev described the border fighting as "an outright godsend for the imperialists",20 and, according to Pravda, he had good reason to despair about a conflict in which he did not have to favour one side over the other.

Prior to the war, India had hoped that the U.S.S.R. would restrain China and in the event of a major armed conflict, remain neutral. This hope was not entirely without foundation: the Soviet Union did not want to lose the close friendship of India and make it look to the west for help. The U.S.S.R made its position clear in September 1959, three years before the outbreak of war, declaring for the first time that it took a neutral position in conflict between a communist and a non-communist country. But when the war erupted in the midst of the Cuban crisis, unity within the communist bloc against the western countries was vital and the Soviet Union felt compelled to show some fraternal leaning towards Peking.


20 Pravda, 13 Dec and 25, 1963
During the period that followed not only did Sino-Indian relations deteriorate, but the relations between India and Soviet Union were strengthened considerably — from now onwards more Soviet leaders began to visit India and among those were Khrushechev, Brezhnev, Kosygin, Suslov, Kozhlov and Mikoyon. Indeed, Khrushchev preferred to be in India on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Sino-Soviet Agreement of Friendship and Alliance of 1950, which incident, according to a leading expert of Chinese affairs, tended to add to Mao's irritation against Khrushchev and India.21

(B) Phase-I : 1965-71

The first test of the strength of Nehru's foreign policy came immediately after his death. There were fears expressed that India would have moved away from non-alignment and the Soviet Union. But this did not happen and when Mrs.Gandhi took over as Prime Minister, all such fears were set at rest. But in early 1964 Lal Bahadur Shastri was eminently placed to succeed Nehru. At the initiative of the Government of the U.S.S.R. Prime Minister Shastri paid an official visit to the Soviet Union from May 12 to 19, 1965. He had meetings and talks with Brezhnev, and other leading statesmen of the Soviet Union. During these talks held in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding, the two sides exchanged views on major international problems and discussed questions pertaining to the further development of Soviet-Indian relations and mutually profitable cooperation.

The most significant development was Pakistani President

21 Sisir Gupta, "India and the Soviet Union", Current History, March 1963, p.146; Also see J.A. Naik, Soviet Policy towards India : From Stalin to Brezhnev, Vikas Delhi, 1970, p.152
Ayub Khan's visit to Moscow in April 1965.

He made a considerable impression on the Soviet leadership. The Soviet leaders declared publicly that the Soviet-Pakistani detente did not involve any sacrifice of India's interests. Kosygin put it thus in his speech at the Kremlin reception for Shastri: "When the Soviet Union is striving to improve its relations with a third country this does not have to be at the cost of Soviet-Indian friendship."  

The Soviet policy of friendship to both India and Pakistan was put to severe tests during 1965, but it emerged successfully with added confidence and trust. When a crisis arose over the Rann of Kutch in April-May 1965 the Soviet Union appealed to India and Pakistan to resolve it through direct negotiations.

In order to resolve the problems between India and Pakistan and create conditions in which both would be joined to the Soviet Union in ties of friendship and in a benevolent relationship, Soviet Premier Alexie Kosygin took the initiative in arranging a high level conference between India and Pakistan (in January 1966 after the Indo-Pak War) in which he himself actively participated. The conference, meeting at Tashkent attended by the Indian Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistan President Ayub Khan with their senior aides grappled with the issues dividing the two countries and at crucial moments when deadlock threatened to stall further progress, Kosygin's deft intervention saved it from failure and finally resulted in an Indo-Pak declaration and various other allied agreements. Moscow, according to

22 T.N. Kaul, Diplomacy in Peace and War: Recollections and Reflections, Vikas, New Delhi, 1979, p.157
23 Pravda, 16 May 1965
24 Ibid., 9 May 1965
V.P. Dutt appeared to have scored an important diplomatic triumph and to have considerably advanced its objective of taking the entire subcontinent together with it into the international arena.  

All this, however, did not mean that the conference proceeded smoothly. On the contrary, it ran a very complicated course and its outcome was difficult to foresee right up to the closing day. If the conference succeeded, this was in a large measure due to the great pains taken by Premier Kosygin to bring the two sides closer. As M.S. Rajan wrote "... the Soviet Prime Minister firmly stuck to the letter and spirit of the offer of good offices. He did not make at any stage any proposals or pressurise either of the leaders to accept the proposals of the other. Contrary to inspired and malicious press reports, there was no Soviet arm-twisting of India or Pakistan. All that the Soviet Prime Minister tried to do was to bring to bear on the two leaders his tremendous powers of persuasion to make them see each other's point of view in the interest of peace in the Indian subcontinent."

Shastri felt that the declaration had achieved "very tangible results". Kosygin expressed the hope that the declaration might become "the symbol of eternal friendship between India and Pakistan" and would also "strengthen friendship between Pakistan and the Soviet Union". He also said the declaration "lays down the real foundations for the creation of conditions of peace in this most important area of Asia."
Even while striking up a more balanced posture towards the two major countries of the subcontinent, Moscow made a point of reiterating its continuing interest in India. In September 1964, the Soviet Union gave India military credit for fortyfour MIG-21s, twenty helicopters and seventy PT-76 tanks, among other items. More significantly, they made technical and financial arrangements for MIG production and agreed to improve MIG capabilities for Indian requirements. India's decision on the major arms deal with Moscow was made after repeated rebuffs from western sources.

The Post-Tashkent Period: After Shastri's death immediately following the Tashkent accord, Mrs. Indira Gandhi took over the reins of power in India becoming the third Prime Minister of the Republic. Her first official visit to Moscow in that capacity lasted four days — from 12 to 16 July, 1966. Her speeches in the Soviet capital reflected her devotion to safeguard peace, a legacy of her father — something that has found concrete manifestation in her deeds over the years. The joint communique at the end of her talks with the Soviet leaders reaffirmed their common goal of ensuring peace and highlighted the need to renounce the use of force in inter-state relations. It urged an immediate end of the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam and abolition of military alliances. It also emphasised the need for consolidation of peace in Europe, solution of the human problem, elimination of Portugese colonialism in Africa and apartheid in South Africa and Rhodesia and realisation of nuclear disarmament.

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By the mid-sixties, western donors became increasingly critical of India's development strategy and took measures to change it through the lever of economic assistance. President Johnson has recorded that both India and Pakistan had used U.S. weapons, leading to doubts the value of military and economic aid. Mrs. Gandhi undertook a visit to the U.S. towards the end of March 1966. President Johnson told senators that they must help "this little lady".

In January 1968, Kosygin had paid an important visit to New Delhi. His purpose was to give assurances of Soviet support to India against the background of the deepening political crisis in the country, the intensification of the Vietnam war and the intended British withdrawal from Asia by 1971.

Summit meetings between the Indian and Soviet leaders have become a regular feature, each time providing a fresh impetus to the further consolidation of friendship and to the development of all round cooperation between the Soviet Union and India. From 8 to 18 of June 1968, the President, Dr. Zakir Husain paid a friendly visit to the U.S.S.R. The communique said: "The U.S.S.R. and India are determined not only to maintain the relationship already established but also to develop these relationships in all spheres — political, economic, scientific, technical and cultural".

When Alexie Kosygin, the Prime Minister of U.S.S.R. visited India in May 1969 to attend Zakir Husain's funeral,

33 Bhabani Sen Gupta, "Moscow, Peking and the Indian Political Scene," *Orbis*, Summer 1968
he not only assured Moscow's support to India in her conflict with China but stated that India should become strong economically, politically and militarily. Moscow deemed to have reverted to Khrushchev's policy of building up India so that it could shoulder the responsibility of defending the subcontinent from what Prime Minister Kosygin described as "the adventurist encroachments on the part of outside forces which are out for a hegemony in Asia."34

Kosygin made a significant speech at the Red Fort in New Delhi on May 6, 1969. He said: "The Soviet Union has always had complete understanding for the Indian people's peace-loving aspirations and their desire to live in peace with their neighbours, since without this, it is impossible to resolve big and crucial tasks in the area of economic and social progress."35 In September 1969, the foreign minister of India, Dinesh Singh, paid an official visit to the U.S.S.R. He was received by the General Secretary of the CPSU, L.I. Brezhnev, Kosygin and he had talks with the Soviet foreign minister A.A. Gromyko. Indo-Soviet relations and other matters were discussed.

Cultural ties between India and the Soviet Union are putting on firm foundation. The holding of joint symposia on problems of culture and art, the sharing of experience in choreography, music and musicology and exchange of visits of painters became regular. An Intergovernmental agreement on cultural, scientific and technical cooperation was signed between the two countries on February 12, 1960. This laid the firm foundation for coordination at first in an annual and later from 1967, on a biennial basis, of the programmes

34 Indian Express, New Delhi, May 8, 1969. Also see The Patriot, May 17, 1969
35 Tass, Condensed text in the Current Digest of Soviet Press, 21(9), 21 May 1969
of cultural exchanges. This cooperation has since grown in scale, and now embraces various aspects of social life, like education, all forms of art, literature, radio, films, TV, sports, etc. 36

The study of the Russian language is becoming more and more popular in India. Today Russian language is being taught at many of the Indian universities. By 1970, the Soviet Union had emerged as the second largest buyer of Indian goods; it was the main source for heavy industry and main supplier of sophisticated military equipment. In view of the heavy payments involved for economic assistance and arms, there was a negative aid flow, estimated at 28 million for 1970-71. 37

Indo-Soviet relations improved further in 1970. The visit of President Giri to the U.S.S.R., in September 1970, took place in an atmosphere of sincerity, friendship and mutual understanding. In the communique it was noted that this visit and further strengthened relations between the U.S.S.R. and India for the good of both the countries. The Indian press gave a very glowing account of the meeting between Indira Gandhi and Kosygin in Moscow in October 1970. While discussing a host of important international problems, the identity of views of both the countries was noted. 38

(C) The Indo-Soviet Treaty

Mrs. Gandhi decided in December 1970 to seek early

36 The Times of India, Delhi, 24 Nov 1987
elections in the hope of changing the minority nature of her government. She probably figured that things would have been much worse a year later; prices of goods were sharply going up, unemployment was rising, there were demands for wage increases and the 1971 crop prospects did not seem too encouraging. She surprised her opponents and the world by winning a landslide victory, obtaining 359 seats in the Lower House of 521. A slogan she used to telling effect was garibi hatao (banish poverty). 39

Events in Pakistan, meanwhile, had been taking an ominous turn. In later years President Ayub Khan had given the army a back seat after appeasing it with pay increases and choice plots of land in the new capital of Islamabad. He ruled through civil servants and "basic democrats", who received money and privileges and provided the regime with support in the villages. 40

The December 1970 General Elections brought to surface serious and basic differences between the two wings of Pakistan. In the eastern wing the Awami League headed by Sheikh Mujibur Rehman achieved landslide victory. The Awami League, resplendent with victory, once again raised the issue of complete autonomy. Mujib stood for the implementation of the six point programme which called for full autonomy for the provinces with the federal government looking after defence, foreign affairs, and subject to certain conditions, currency. The programme envisaged complete control of economic affairs including foreign trade and aid by the provinces. 41

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40 Ibid., pp. 80-81
(1) The Bangla Desh Factor: All these demands aroused in West Pakistan a resentment against Mujib. The military rulers of Pakistan arrested the Awami Leaders including Shekih Mujib, let loose a reign of terror in March 1971 to suppress the popular movement in East Bengal. As a result about three million Bengalis were massacred and ten million people were forced to leave their homes for India as refugees. India tried in vain to persuade the international agencies and the U.S. to prevail on Pakistan to facilitate the return of the refugees. The situation created by the Bangladesh issue can be viewed as a major factor in the Indo-Soviet Treaty.

Pakistan was encouraged by the U.S. and China in its attempt to crush the revolt in East Pakistan. In 1970, the U.S. supplied arms to Pakistan in violation of embargo. Henry Kissinger went to Peking and Nixon's visit to China was announced in July 1971. All these events made India panicky and it began to search for security. Thus the price of better relations between Washington and Peking was an improvement in relations between Moscow and New Delhi.  

Suspecting Washington-Peking-Rawalpindi collusion over the Bangladesh issue, India was forced to enter into a treaty agreement with the Soviet Union. This treaty marked a new phase in Indo-Soviet cooperation. It does not merely involve a commitment to peace, friendship and cooperation as the title suggests but to a limited yet significant extent it is a treaty of military cooperation. Foreign Minister Swaran Singh told Parliament on August 10, 1971 that the negotiations on the treaty had been going on for the previous two years and secret talks had taken place at various levels. Swaran Singh was in Moscow in June 1971 for important high

42 Robert Jackson, South Asian Crisis, Vikas, New Delhi, 1978, p.157
43 The Statesman, Delhi, Aug 11, 1971
level talks. S.Nihal Singh says that discussions on the treaty were held in a desultory fashion from the second half of 1968. On the Indian side, the negotiations were largely conducted by foreign secretary T.N. Kaul and Ambassador D.P. Dhar, Indire Gandhi's trusted political aide. Indeed, it seems likely that Dhar's appointment to Moscow in the first place, in January 1969, was made by Mrs.Gandhi with an eye on the treaty.44

(ii) **The China Factor**: It would thus appear that the treaty was initially offered by the Soviet Union in the wake of China's Ninth Party Congress; the watershed marking the end of the Cultural Revolution and the country's self imposed international isolation and perhaps around the time of the World Communist Parties Conference in Moscow in March/April 1969. In the same year, the CPSU chief Leonid Brezhnev, for the first time had proposed Asian Collective Security which ever since has become an anathema for Peking. This was also the period of Sino-Soviet clash at Ussuri river and a series of armed clashes on the Sinkiang-Kazakhstan border. After these clashes, Soviet Premier Alxie Kosygin and Premier Chou-En-Lai had their dramatic meeting in August 1969 at the Peking airport and the Sino-Soviet border talks commenced in Peking. SALT discussions had begun in September 1969, between the two superpowers. Meanwhile China continued to make progress in the nuclear field. Its first hydrogen bomb was tested in June 1967, which was followed by two thermonuclear and one underground tests in 1969 and a series of test firing of MRBMs and a few IRBMs in 1968. Finally on 24 April 1970, it entered the space age by orbiting a 173 kg satellite, thus demonstrating its capability to develop powerful boosters

44 S. Nihal Singh, *op.cit.*, p.67
for IRBMs/ICBMs. Since late 60s, the Soviet Union had established a nominal presence in the Indian Ocean that became the target of repeated attacks by Peking which in early 1970 announced its intention to build a powerful modern navy to counter the Soviet "gunboat diplomacy". Simultaneously the Soviet Union and China were engaged in winning over as many third world countries as possible the tussle being keen in Africa and West Asia.

All these strategic developments are relevant to a correct appraisal of the Indo-Soviet Treaty and the motivations behind it, since they "served to emphasise that the international power game was being transformed from a two power adverse partnership... into a more complex (triangular) one", which according to K. Subrahmanyan, in view of standing Sino-Soviet conflict was likely to be more unfavourable to the Soviet Union.

Keeping in view its security, Moscow decided to initiate steps to counter this game and the offer of the treaty to India appears to be one of these measures. The Soviet Union had started looking for a "balancer" and India by virtue of its geopolitical importance locations, population, resources, armed potential, etc., and strained relations with China could serve the purpose. India, since early sixties, had been facing a possible combined threat from China and Pakistan and was greatly concerned with the U.S. sophisticated military supplies to Pakistan. India was in need of Moscow's firm support. Thus, India had accepted Moscow's offer to sign this treaty and came close to Moscow.

46 K. Subrahmanyan, "The Indo-Soviet Treaty", Talk delivered at the Indian Council of World Affairs on Sept 1971
Though the offer of the treaty had been made and the discussion regarding the treaty already had taken place between Moscow and New Delhi much before (in 1969) but it was officially signed when India's security was threatened by Pakistani military junta backed by China and the U.S.A. Thus, the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation formalised Soviet political, economic and military help, and served the cause of Indian security admirably.

The first Chinese comment on the treaty came on September 2, 1971 when a member of a visiting Chinese trade delegation, making a brief reference to the treaty, reportedly said in Georgetown (Guyana) that China "certainly does not regard the signing of the Indo-Soviet treaty as a friendly act so far as it is concerned". He also said that China was watching the "growing USSR-India collaboration against China." 47

In a statement in the U.N. General Assembly on 26 November, 1971, Vice Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua severely criticised the Soviet policy in the Indian subcontinent and said that the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty was, in fact "the basis of bare-faced armed aggression against Pakistan". This, he added, fully revealed the true features of the "foreign policy of peace" pursued by the Soviet leaders. 48

Speaking in the Security Council on 10 August 1972, the Chinese chief delegate Huang Hua, said that the Soviet social imperialism was continuing to play "a most insidious role in the development of the situation in the South Asian continent". The Indo-Soviet Treaty, he added, was "in essence, an aggressive pact of military alliance, whereby the Indian Government had "finally and openly dropped off its cloak of nonalignment". 49

47 The Hindu, 4 Sept 1971
48 The Statesman, Delhi, 28 Nov 1971
49 Ibid., 12 Aug 1972
Mrs. Gandhi's primary aim in taking up the Russians on their offer of a treaty was to break the new compact between Pakistan and the Soviet Union. Her domestic compulsions had not become as urgent as they did after President Zakir Husain's death in early May, 1969.  

Mrs. Gandhi had written to Kosygin on July 10, 1968 on the dangers of giving arms to Pakistan. In his prompt reply Kosygin referred to the close Indo-Soviet relations, suggesting that even if Pakistan received arms it was in the larger interests of the region. After Tashkent, Kosygin had emerged as the dominant voice in shaping Soviet foreign policy. Perhaps he also felt that he was responsible for forcing the Tashkent Declaration on Ayub, thus weakening his position domestically.

Thereafter, the re-establishment of amicable relations with India became the focal point of Soviet politics in the subcontinent. The Soviets thought that new gestures of friendliness towards New Delhi would remove all doubts created by Soviet arms supplies to Pakistan. In the pursuit of this policy the Soviets began to play up the danger of Pakistan's new aggression on Kashmir and assured New Delhi that Moscow regarded the state as an integral part of India. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union urged New Delhi to sign a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation in return for Soviet promises of help to defend India's security against foreign aggression and for more economic and military assistance. Proceeding with some caution, New Delhi finally welcomed the changed Soviet attitude.

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50 S. Nihal Singh, *op. cit.*
51 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
Thus on August 9, 1971 the Soviet Union and India signed a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation for a period of twenty years. The treaty bound both the Soviet Union and India to extend to each other full support in the event of an outside aggression. Swaran Singh stated in Indian Parliament that it "will provide a pattern for similar treaties between India and other countries in the region.\(^{54}\)

Article IX of the Treaty stipulated that in the event of either party being subjected to an attack or threat thereof, the signatories would immediately enter into mutual consultations to take "appropriate effective measures", to ensure peace and security of their countries. Under this article if Pakistan, supported by China, threatened India with military damage in Kashmir, the Soviet Union was obliged to consult India and provide her with appropriate assistance to resist the aggression and ensure peace and security of India. Though the treaty did not specify military assistance in the event of armed aggression, the term "appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and security" could be implied to mean military peace and security. The statement by Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko that "no one is any longer capable of basing the policy be it vis-a-vis the Soviet Union or vis-a-vis India without taking into account the treaty", seemed to provide Soviet military support to India in the event of an aggression.\(^{55}\) Boris Ponomarev indicated that the treaty had guaranteed Soviet military support to India in the event of an aggression by her hostile neighbour. "In the event of an attack on one of our countries or the threat of such an attack", he explained, "the treaty provides for

\(^{54}\) The Times of India, New Delhi, August 10, 1971

\(^{55}\) Pravda, 14 Aug 1971, Also see New Times, Aug 1971
effective measures to be urgently taken by both contracting parties to guarantee peace and security. This commitment is aimed at serving the cause of defending peace and prevent the unleashing of aggressive acts." Another Soviet spokesman emphasized that the treaty had guaranteed peace in South Asia against any potential aggressor. The treaty got adverse press criticism. Three leading newspapers of New Delhi pinpointed various aspects of the treaty in their lead editorials right after the event. The Times of India observed that the treaty represented "a departure from the policy of nonalignment as interpreted all these years." The Statesman held that the treaty gave "every sign of being hastily conceived." And The Hindustan Times argued that "in a situation of real crisis, Soviet support would have been forthcoming without a treaty."

The Soviets achieved yet another objective. The treaty strengthened Indo-Soviet ties, made India more dependent on Soviet Russia and above all, abandon the policy of nonalignment. The Statesman described the treaty as "virtually a military arrangement". Though Article IV of the treaty stated that Moscow respected New Delhi's policy of non-alignment, "there is every evidence of alignment in a treaty almost indistinguishable from a defence pact."

Thus it became a controversial issue whether the Treaty amounts to an abandonment of India's policy of nonalignment.

56 Ibid., 13 Aug 1971
57 Ibid., 12 Aug 1971
58 The Times of India, Editorial, New Delhi, 10 Aug 1971
59 The Statesman, Editorial, New Delhi, 10 Aug 1971
60 "Was this Necessary", Editorial, The Hindustan Times, 10 Aug 1971
61 The Statesman, 10 Aug 1971
62 Ibid.
It appears a valid point of view, says V.M. Tarkunde that the policy of non-alignment would be compromised by this treaty. Formerly, there were pacts like NATO and SEATO and they were defence pacts which provided that if any party was attacked, the other party would give military aid and support to that party. That is the slight difference between this treaty and those pacts because in this one it is said that if one party is attacked, the other party shall enter into "mutual consultations" to take "appropriate" effective measures to ensure peace and the security of that country.  

In Tarkunde's opinion, the difference is not very significant. He says, formerly the world was divided into two blocs—the Russian and the American. And if one signed a treaty of mutual defence with Russia, it implied an anti-American stance in foreign policy. The opposite would hold true about a treaty with America. That was the reason why even defence treaties were regarded as alignment because it implied alignment in a situation in which the world was bipolarised. Though the policy of non-alignment might not technically be continued by this treaty, whether the world is the same as it was about ten years ago. According to Tarkunde, the world is no longer bipolarised. There are at least three blocs and more are likely to emerge. Therefore, a defence treaty with one power does not necessarily imply enemity or some sort of non-alliance with another power. We are in a situation in which a treaty with Russia necessarily implies some sort of antagonism to America. But a treaty of common defence does not necessarily imply alignment when the world is not bipolarised and when there are several power blocs. This Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation

between India and Russia, concludes Tarkunde, does not necessarily imply antagonism or a stance against the U.S.A. 64

The treaty got wide support in India. During the debate on it in Parliament only three MPs voted against it. Only the rightist parties expressed doubts on the need for the treaty. Thus The Hindustan Times wrote that the treaty "in a way breaks with the traditional Indian policy of non-alignment." 65

Giving a rebuff to the rightists and defining the reality of Indian foreign policy, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi stated: "The cornerstone of our foreign policy continues to be nonalignment. This is a dynamic policy and means that the nation will not belong to any military pacts. India is prepared to support friendly relations with all countries and to respond to manifestations of friendship by any country. Precisely because of this the Indo-Soviet Treaty on Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was signed. This treaty in no way harms the policy of non-alignment and does in no way bar India from concluding similar treaties with any other nation." 66

This treaty marked a turning point in India's foreign policy. It formalised the Indo-Soviet friendship and according to Gromyko, gave it a durable international legal basis. It assured India solid and secure support of the Soviet Union in case of any aggression against her. The latter too got in India a friend to counterbalance the growing Peking-Washington axis. The treaty attested to the shared world view of India and the Soviet Union.

From 27 to 29 of September 1971 on the invitation of the

64 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
Soviet government Indira Gandhi paid a visit to the U.S.S.R. to develop further friendly Indo-Soviet relations. During the visit she had talks with the Soviet leaders over a large range of subjects of mutual interest. "In strengthening peace in Asia", said A.N. Kosygin, Prime Minister of the U.S.S.R., "the Soviet Union and India are strengthening peace all over the world." 67

As a matter of fact, the Indo-Soviet relationship is not based on personalities or ideologies but on equality, national interest and common purpose. As long as the interests of the two countries converge the Indo-Soviet ties are continuing to expand. In both countries Indo-Soviet friendship has become a deep rooted popular tradition.

(D) Phase-II : 1972-77

The friendly relations between India and the U.S.S.R. continued to grow in the spirit of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The domestic situation of India was deteriorating fast. In a brief stopover in New Delhi on 1 October 1971, Soviet President Podgorny said that Soviet people were closely watching the "difficult and dangerous situation in the Hindustan subcontinent." Intense Indo-Soviet consultations at various levels in conformity with the Treaty followed as the U.S. under Nixon took a tough stand trying to bend India in Pakistan's favour. 68

The Indo-Pak war broke out on 3 December 1971, and ended with India unilaterally declaring ceasefire after the complete liberation of Bangladesh on 16 December. In the meantime,

67 Ibid.
political and diplomatic moves by the U.S.S.R. in India's support at the U.N. thwarted all Sino-US attempts to block Bangladesh's independence. Again it was Indo-Soviet coordination in accordance with the Treaty which failed the designs of the U.S. government in its despatch of a Seventh Fleet task force to the Bay of Bengal just on the eve of Bangladesh's freedom from the oppressive Yoke.69

Talks to C.L. Sulzberger of the New York Times shortly after the war, Mrs. Gandhi said, "we are unable to display gratitude in any tangible sense for anything."70 As for the United States, she assumed that Washington policy towards India changed when U.S. policy towards China changed.71 Even earlier, on December 31, 1971, she emphasized the importance of friendly Indo-U.S. relations, taking into account the "new realities" on the subcontinent.72

The policy of the Indian government to ensure peaceful development of relations in the Asian subcontinent received the backing of the Soviet leaders. As stated by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, L.J. Brezhnev in March 1972, establishment of secure peace and good neighbourly relations between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh would be "a great contribution in improving the political atmosphere in Asia."73 In Brezhnev's report on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Soviet Union, it was stated: "Indo-Soviet friendship plays a very positive role in international life.

69 Ibid.
70 The New York Times, Feb 17, 1972
71 The Indian Express, Delhi, Feb 18, 1972
India is one of the largest nations on our planet. The Soviet Union and India have already acquired quite a lot of experience in fruitful cooperation. We believe that hence forward when these relations will grow in the spirit of friendship, peace and cooperation, our cooperation would deepen more. The strengthening of democratic, progressive and anti-imperialistic forces in India, as well as the policies of the Indian government led by Indira Gandhi, augur well for this objective.\textsuperscript{74}

On the 15th August 1972, India observed the 25th anniversary of its national independence. Marking as it did, the silver jubilee of India's independence and 50th anniversary of the formation of the U.S.S.R., 1972 was a momentous year for both the countries. The gigantic third Asian International Trade Fair — Asia 72 — which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 3 November provided an opportunity for the two states to present a panoramic view of their achievements. Trade deals at the U.S.S.R. Pavillon had been quick and sizeable. On the very first day of the fair, five contracts were signed between the Soviet Union and Indian trading firms. The Soviet organization "V/o Zapchasterport" undertook to import shirts manufactured by Indian firms like Wings, Liberty, Milton and excel. Contracts for imports from the Soviet Union of polygraphic machines, excavators and mining machinery had also been signed. Under a contract signed on 13 November 1972, the Soviet firm "V/o Techmastexport" undertook to supply the Indian Express a rotary printing machine of the volta type. According to the director of Soviet Pavillion, contracts worth Rs. 150 million had been concluded by 22 November 1972. "Indian industrialists", he said, "are interested in our machine tools, electronic equipment and agricultural machinery. I hope many more trade deals will be struck in the coming days."\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} Sovietland, Nos. 23-29, issued by the Soviet News Agency, Tass, at New Delhi, p.6
**Indo-Soviet Commission for Stronger Ties:**

The proposal to set-up an Indo-Soviet Joint Commission to strengthen the ties between the two countries in the economic, scientific and technical fields was cleared at the highest level on 17 August 1972. The Union Planning Minister, D.P. Dhar, represented India on the Commission. The decision to have a joint Commission was taken at the talks the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi had with the Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin in Moscow in September 1971. At that time the need to further strengthen the ties in various spheres was recognized during the talks. A formal agreement for this purpose was signed in Moscow on 19 September 1972.  

Mr. Y.T. Shah, Additional Secretary, Indian Ministry of Foreign Trade, after signing Indo-Soviet Trade Protocol on 25 November 1972 at New Delhi said that the volume of trade between the two countries was growing at such a rate as to be worth of the cooperation between the two countries. He added "we are happy that the Soviet Union and India have now become big partners in the economic and trade relations."  

The Soviets were now satisfied with India's attitude towards their country. They hoped to further strengthen the bonds of friendly cooperation to build a barrier against China. The Soviet commentators welcomed the Simla Agreement signed by India and Pakistan on 2 July, 1972, as "an important instrument for the relaxation of tension in Asia and for peaceful coexistence." The Agreement to resolve the Kashmir issue through bilateral discussions without outside interference manifested "their sincere striving for normalization of relations and reservation of peace in the sub-continent."  

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76 The Statesman, New Delhi, 20 Sept 1972  
77 The Times of India, 26 Nov 1972
The Simla Agreement had been "approved by all those, who have at heart peace and stability in the area. It should become the cornerstone of peace and cooperation between India and Pakistan." Izvestia said on 4 July 1972 that the summit meeting had shown that the path of peace and friendship was a realistic one for the countries of the subcontinent to follow.

The Indo-Soviet joint commission which was set up in August 1972, began its first meeting in New Delhi on 9 February 1973 with leaders of the teams from both the sides agreeing on the immense possibility of expanding economic cooperation and collaboration on a mutually beneficial basis. While India's emphasis was largely on trade expansion, the leader of the Soviet team, S.A. Skachkov, underlined Soviet capability to assist India in developing key industries.

The leader of the Indian team, Planning Minister D.P.Dhar, in his opening remarks spoke of the great scope for cooperation in the field of production which he described as "a new and exciting field". "We are prepared", Mr. Dhar said, "to enter into long-term understanding with the Soviet Union." He pointed out that the recent expert level discussions between the two sides had opened up new vistas of cooperation.

The leader of the Soviet team expressed satisfaction on the points that the trade between the two countries has risen nearly six times in the last twelve years. He was also proud of the fact that there were 90 Soviet aided projects of which 50 were in cooperation.

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78 Pravda, 6 July 1972
79 Izvestia, 5 July 1972
80 The Times of India, New Delhi, 27 Dec 1972
81 Ibid.
82 Ibid.
Brezhnev's Visit to India - Leonid Brezhnev visited New Delhi in November 1973. This visit was one of the most striking landmarks in Indo-Soviet relations next only to the historic visits to the U.S.S.R. by Nehru in June, 1955 and to India by Bulganin and Khrushchev in November-December of that very year. Brezhnev used the visit to convey the intense Soviet feeling towards India — a feeling shorn of any trace of artificiality. "Friendship and cooperation with India", he declared at the Red Fort grounds on 27 November 1973, "is part and parcel of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. We were with you in difficult and trying periods for India. We were with you when various external forces were trying to bring pressure on your country when it was upholding its vital interests. We shall be with you in the days of joy and in the days of trial."\(^{83}\)

The talks which were held in an atmosphere of trust, friendship and mutual understanding, covered a wide range of subjects concerning Indo-Soviet bilateral relations and perspectives of their future all-round development as well as topical international problems of common interest. Both sides noted with satisfaction the broad identity of views on the questions discussed and expressed their profound satisfaction at the successful development of relation of friendship and cooperation between India and the Soviet Union in all fields.\(^{84}\)

In course of an exchange of views on topical international problems the two sides expressed their satisfaction at the coincidence or proximity of the positions of India and the U.S.S.R. or major questions of the international situation.\(^{85}\)

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83 Sumit Chakravarti, op.cit., p.97
85 Ibid., p.401
Yet another issue of importance to India, which came up for discussion was the U.S. and Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean. India wanted the ocean to be declared a "zone of peace". The Soviet Union was in favour of reducing this naval presence on a reciprocal basis as a first step to declaring the Ocean a zone of peace. The joint statement nonetheless, was more positive than the earlier ones. It said: "the two sides reaffirm their readiness to take part together with all interested states on an equal basis, in the search for a favourable solution to the question of turning the Indian Ocean region into a zone of peace."  

The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU stressed that in the present world of today the growing desire of the majority of states for international detente and for the settlement of outstanding problems by negotiations is becoming ever more pronounced. Positively appraising the important contribution made to the improvement of the general international situation as a result of the Soviet-American summit talks, the Soviet Union considers that the agreements reached in the course of the talks will serve the cause of developing peaceful cooperation and improving the international climate. It attached great significance to the conclusion of the Soviet-American Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War which not only meets the interests of the people of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., but also serves the cause of strengthening universal peace. Indira Gandhi welcomed the detente between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. as a step towards relaxation of tensions in the world. On this connection, she highly appreciated the efforts of the general secretary of the central committee of the CPSU and expressed the hope that

this relaxation will also spread to other areas of the world and bring an end to the nuclear arms race which is a threat to mankind.87

The importance of Indo-Soviet relationship was emphasized by Brezhnev in his report to the 25th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. He said, "We attach special importance to friendship with that great country. In the past five years, Soviet-Indian relations have risen to a new level. Our countries have concluded a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. And even this short period has clearly shown the tremendous significance of our bilateral ties and its role as a stabilizing factor in South Asia and the continent as a whole." Close political and economic cooperation with the Republic of India, he said, was the constant policy of the Soviet Union. The Soviet people appreciate, and now, are in solidarity with India's peace loving foreign policy and the courageous efforts of her progressive forces to solve her difficult socio-economic problems. We wish the people and government of India complete success in these efforts, he added.88

The delineation of the Sino-Indian border in Soviet maps had been a contentious issue between New Delhi and Moscow for years. The Soviets had been either evasive or vaguely sympathetic, but had refrained from expressing full support. Russians' nervousness over Indian moves for a rapprochement with China in the late sixties was both explicit and implicit. They now perhaps wanted to make a thaw in Sino-Indian relations more difficult to achieve through their belated support.89

88 *Patriot*, New Delhi, 18 March 1973
India exploded its first nuclear device on May 18 1974. The Indian Atomic Energy Commission announced that the explosion had been carried out more than 100 meters underground. H.H. Sethna, the then Chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission, reported that the yield of the plutonium device exploded equals 10,000 to 15,000 tons of TNT. No radioactive fallout exceeding the safe limit has been registered. The aim of the experiment, he said was "to obtain information on the crater formation effect and on the possibility of blasting hard rock by means of the atom". The device has been designed exclusively by Indian scientists and built of Indian materials, Sethna said.  

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who also held the post of Minister of Atomic Energy and Electronics, told a Delhi press conference that the explosion was part of the nuclear research programme. "We firmly stand for the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes," she said.  

The explosion sent shock waves throughout the world and particularly in Pakistan. Pakistan believed itself to be threatened. It had all along been Pakistan's effort to convey to the world a justification for some kind of a parity between the two countries for the good of the world itself and to relate every Indian action to this yardstick. Reaction in Pakistan was predictably highly inflamed. The media carried alarming forebodings and sinister implications. Bhutto described the explosion in a statement on 19 May 1974 as a "fateful development", and said that Pakistan would never succumb to nuclear blackmail and would not accept Indian domination over the subcontinent. The explosion, he claimed, had put an end to the possibility of a no-war pact between India and Pakistan.  

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90 R.K. Jain, *op.cit.*, p.415
91 Ibid.
92 *Asian Recorder*, 4-10 June, 1974, p.12035
Buutoo disclosed that he was having the matter raised in the forthcoming meeting of CENTO, that he was sending emissaries to China, France, Britain and Canada and that he himself would take up the matter with the Soviet leaders during his coming visit to Moscow. The Indian explosion no doubt, raised alarm bells in Islamabad, but part of the exercise of vigorous denunciation and cancellation of talks with India on normalizing relations was to prod the Americans to tilt further towards Pakistan and to redress the balance. Part of it was also for home consumption to stiffen the morale.\(^{93}\)

India's Minister of External Affairs, Sardar Swaran Singh, paid an official visit to Moscow from September 8 to 10, 1974, at the invitation of the Soviet Government. Swaran Singh was received by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Leonid Brezhnev. Talks were held between the Members of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and the Foreign Minister of the U.S.S.R. Gromyko and India's Minister of External Affairs Swaran Singh.\(^{94}\)

The Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal A.A. Grechko, visited India on 27 February 1975. In his meeting with the Prime Minister of India, there was an exchange of views on some major international problems of interest to both the countries as well as on questions concerning further development of bilateral cooperation. He met the Minister of External Affairs, Y.B. Chavan and he also had several meetings and talks with Swaran Singh, Minister of Defence of India. The Soviet side positively assessed the progressive and anti-imperialistic direction of the non-aligned movement, of which India was one of the leaders, and expressed support for the aspirations

\(^{93}\) V.P. Dutt, \textit{India's Foreign Policy}, Vikas, New Delhi, 1987, p.212

\(^{94}\) R.K. Jain, \textit{op.cit.}, p.423
of the non-aligned countries to promote the consolidation of world peace, security and cooperation. Both sides noted with satisfaction that the visit of the Soviet Defence Minister has significantly contributed to further strengthen the friendship and understanding between the peoples of India and the Soviet Union.  

(ii) **Emergency in India and Soviet Support**

The political and economic situation in India had deteriorated rapidly during 1974 and early 1975 resulting finally in the proclamation of the emergency in June 1975. The left in India was split and while the CPM denounced, welcomed it in order to "stem the rightwing tide" unleashed by many opposition parties. Moscow, too accepted this rationale of the need for emergency. Tass carried a long interview with the Congress President P.K. Baroah explaining the background of rightwing offensive against which the Emergency was proclaimed and the need to boost the economy and improve the living conditions of different section of the people.

From the declaration of the State of Emergency in India on June 26, 1975, until the electoral defeat of the Congress Party in March 1977, the Soviet posture towards the measures adopted by Mrs. Gandhi was one of unequivocal support. Pravda, in an article entitled "India: On the Road to Peace and Progress" maintained that "the emergency had been necessitated by the attempts of internal reaction aided by external forces to capitalize on the difficulties posed by the 1975 economic crisis to create an atmosphere of pandemonium."

Western press reports on the curtailment of civil liberties in India were discounted since "there were few who questioned the timeliness and expediency of the measures undertaken by the government."

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95 Ibid., p. 428
96 Indian Express, 7 July 1975
97 Pravda, 25 Jan 1976
In the economic realm, there was enthusiastic coverage of Mrs. Gandhi's Twenty Points Programme, and the Soviet media were effusive in their praise for the beneficial impact that the emergency had on inflation, agricultural and industrial production, land reform and the extension of credit to the poor. In short the emergency was perceived as a means for attending to the "diverse and complex problems" encountered enroute to social and economic development. A Soviet political commentator concluded that it was for this reason that "the actions taken by the Indian government against internal and external reactionaries were responded to with full understanding in the Soviet Union."  

During this period India's relations with the United States continued to be strained because of Washington's attitude on the Bangladesh issue and arms supply to Pakistan. However, the successful meeting of the Indo-US Joint Commission lifted to some extent the gloom cast by the second cancellation of President Ford's visit to India. It was in this context that India's Foreign Secretary Kewal Singh visited Moscow in November 1975 for the annual consultations between the two countries. He carried a personal letter to Kosygin from Indira Gandhi. He had talks with Kosygin and Gromyko as also with Brezhnev. The Soviet leaders reiterated their support to the emergency at a time of growing world-wide criticism against it. They also expressed their admiration for the courageous way in which Indira Gandhi had dealt with a difficult situation and welcomed the socio-economic reform she had introduced. They equally stood by Indira Gandhi on the Bangladesh issue, and shared India's concern over the negative trends in that country.  

98 Ibid., 10 Feb 1976  
99 Y.Tsaplin, "The Sound Foundation of Indo-Soviet Ties, International Affairs, No. 8, Aug 1976, p. 73  
100 The Statesman, 30 Nov 1976
Indira Gandhi indeed gone out of her way in early 1976 to make some friendly gestures towards China. These were reciprocated by Peking, though there was no warmth in all these. However, on April 15, 1976 Foreign Minister Chavan announced that India was sending back its ambassador to Peking after 14 years. In September, the same year, the Chinese envoy took up his charge in New Delhi.  

Apparently Moscow was not unduly perturbed over this process of normalization in Sino-Indian relations, for at the 25th Congress in February 1976, L.I.Brezhnev praised India and the leadership of Indira Gandhi in effusive language.

Brezhnev reiterated Soviet appreciation of India's continuing commitment to progressive transformations in the face of heavy pressure from reactionary circles both at home and abroad. And his statement, "We attach special importance to friendship with India", must have been very reassuring to Indira Gandhi.

Brezhnev concluded by saying with regard to the emergency imposed in India that "close political and economic cooperation with Republic of India is on steady course. Soviet people are sympathetic towards more than that, they feel solidarity with India's peace loving foreign policy and the courageous struggle of that country's progressive forces to solve the difficult social and economic problems confronting it. We wish the people and government of India, complete success in their struggle."

Mr. Firyubin, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister visited India in February 1976. Moscow's main concern at that time was that

101 Vinod Bhatia, Indira Gandhi and Indo-Soviet Relations, Panchsheel, New Delhi, 1987, p.77
102 Ibid.
103 Ibid.
104 Ibid.
India should not open up a chasm in Indo-Soviet relations while trying to bridge the one between itself and China. There was undoubtedly no prospect for such developments in view of the abiding friendship between India and the Soviet Union and also because India continued to depend on Soviet arms even though it had sought aircraft from both France and Britain. And Moscow was also emerging as the most important source of assistance and raw materials at a time when India was under heavy economic strain.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi had paid an official visit to the Soviet Union between 8 and 13 June 1976. Mr. Brezhnev, welcoming the Indian Prime Minister, said that experience had confirmed the foresight of the policy pursued by the Indian National Congress led by her — the policy aimed at industrialization, building of a self-sustained economy and the establishment of a strong public sector. This was the first time that the Soviet Party Chief had referred to the Congress Party in such laudatory terms. "Indeed it is due to this policy that India has become a powerful state which plays an important part in world politics", he maintained and added, "we highly value the constantly strengthening Soviet-Indian friendship and unity of the two great forces of today — the world of socialism and the countries that have liberated themselves from the colonial yoke and have embarked on the road of independent progressive development." The joint communique issued after the visit spoke of an atmosphere of "trust, friendship and mutual understanding."

The Soviet expressed their "full understanding of the efforts of the government and the people of India aimed at solving the complicated socio-economic tasks facing the country" and high appreciation of the "peace loving foreign policy of India, its important positive role in the non-aligned
movement and its great contribution to the struggle for peace and against colonialism and racialism", the policy which had "won for India a well deserved and high prestige in the international arena." Indira Gandhi visited Moscow with two main objectives. She wanted to assure her hosts that she would do nothing to damage Indo-Soviet ties while promoting normalisation of relations with China. And she wanted to raise the level of Indo-Soviet cooperation in view of the continuing oil crisis and adverse international economic development. 

The Soviet Union and India expressed their unanimous opinion on the usefulness of the many faceted ties existing between them in the field of scientific and technical cooperation including fundamental research, applied sciences and technology, medicine, agriculture and other fields. The two sides attach great importance to the practice of Soviet-Indian political consultations which has proven its value. They decided to develop this practice making these consultations systematic and substantive and paying special attention to using them in assisting the implementation of agreed measures to strengthen peace, international security and cooperation on the basis of equality between states. 

Following the split in the Indian National Congress in 1969, Indira Gandhi successfully projected a radical image of herself. The Soviet Press and leaders sincerely believed that she represented the progressive forces in India, that her commitment to socialism was deep and firm, and that her opponents, who established the Janata Party eventually in 1977, were all reactionaries representing pro-western. 

105 Asian Recorder, 1-7 July, pp. 13233-35
106 Vinod Bhatia, Indira Gandhi and Indo-Soviet Relations, op.cit.
pro-monopoly, anti-communist, Hindu chauvinist elements in Indian Politics. When Indira Gandhi clamped Emergency rule on the country in June 1975, and when the government arrested most of those who formed the new cabinet in March 1977, Moscow strongly and consistently backed her. The political commentator of Pravda argued on 13 July 1975, that the "Right wing opposition" had been trying for some time to create "an atmosphere of chaos, anarchy and lawlessness in the country" and that the steps taken by the Government were timely and necessary.108 Two other political commentators observed that "the intrigues" of the Indian "Right-wingers" had "forced Indira Gandhi's government to declare a state of emergency" on 25 June 1975.109

The Soviet press repeatedly supported the Indian Government's Emergency measures till the eve of the March 1977 elections. For example, New Times wrote in January 1977 that these measure were necessitated by the attempts of the "Rightist parties backed by the imperialists... to topple the Gandhi Government and seize power in the summer of 1975."110 Another Soviet correspondent wrote two weeks later that the Emergency was proclaimed in view of the "reactionaries acting in contravention of the constitution and democratic norms and laws."11

The Congress Party, however, paid a heavy price in electoral terms for the imposition of the Emergency and for the excesses committed during June 1975 and December 1976. For the strength of the Congress in the Lok Sabha was reduced from 352 in 1971 to 153 in 1977. Of the forty-nine Ministers of the Indira Gandhi Government who faced the electorate in March 1977, as many as thirty-four were defeated, including Indira Gandhi herself.

108 Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 6 Aug 1975, p.17
109 New Times, Moscow, No.27, July 1975, p.11
110 Ibid., No.6, 1977. p.21
111 Ibid.
The Soviets were not prepared for the defeat of the Congress Party although Mrs. Gandhi's own reading of the situation was considerably less sanguine. At any rate, Moscow did not like the look or the policies of the Janata leaders. In the election campaign in February 1977, Morarji Desai, who would soon become Prime Minister, charged Mrs. Gahdhi's government with doing "whatever the Soviet Union does" and declared that if Janata came to power, the Indo-Soviet treaty might "automatically go". 112

Moscow received the news of the Congress Party's rout at the polls with deep embarrassment and, possibly some alarm. It, however, hastened to overcome the embarrassment of dealing with those they had been running down until the eve of the March 1977 elections, for within five weeks of the election results, Foreign Minister A.A. Gromyko landed in New Delhi to mend Moscow's fences with the Janata Government. Pravda of 10 May 1977 described the Janata Government's decision to welcome the Soviet Foreign Minister "as a practical step affirming continuity of friendly policy of India towards the Soviet Union." 113

A new government has been formed in India following the elections to the Lok Sabha in March 1977. Analyzing the poll results, the CPI central executive committee arrived at the conclusion that they were not a "verdict against the nationally accepted progressive policies of economic self-reliance, strengthening of the public sector, radical socio-economic reforms, secularism, anti-imperialist non-alignment, and friendship and cooperation with socialist countries." On March 2, 1977 Morarji Desai, veteran Indian politician and Chairman of the Janata Party, was elected leader of its

112 The Indian Express, New Delhi, Feb 11, 1977
113 Times of India, New Delhi, 12 May 1977
parliamentary group. He was sworn in as Prime Minister on the same day and began forming a new government.\footnote{114}{A. Usvatov's Commentary on change of Government in India, April 1977 in R.K. Jain, \textit{op.cit.}, p.475}

At his first press conference Prime Minister Desai said his government's main task would be to eliminate poverty and unemployment. In foreign policy, he said India would follow a policy of genuine and complete nonalignment. India's relations with other countries would be good and cordial, provided they reciprocated, he said.\footnote{115}{Ibid., p.477}

Congratulating Mr. Desai on his appointment as Prime Minister, Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin expressed confidence that the traditional relations of friendship and all-round cooperation between the Soviet Union and India would continue to grow and develop in the interest of their peoples, peace and international security.\footnote{116}{Ibid.}
Chapter V

INDO-SOVET RELATIONS : 1977-82

(A) Phase-I, 1977-80 : Relations During the Janata Regime

After eleven turbulent and historic years in office, Indira Gandhi stepped down as the Prime Minister of India in March 1977 - not left the country in a shambles as the rout of the Congress in the election of the new Lok Sabha would suggest, but a country that had been cajoled, persuaded and whipped into shape on the way to achieving its full stature as an economically strong, socially forward looking and politically mature nation.

A new party, the Janata Party, led by Morarji Desai assumed power in New Delhi at the end of March 1977. Atal Behari Vajpayee, a former Janasangh leader, took over as the new Minister of External Affairs. Prime Minister Morarji Desai and the Minister for External Affairs, Vajpayee took the earliest opportunity to declare their commitment to India's traditional policy of nonalignment. We can say that several specific characteristics or directions of the Janata government's foreign policy manifested themselves between April and June 1977 namely "genuine" or "proper" nonalignment, first priority to better understanding and cooperation with immediate neighbours, pursuit of a policy of "beneficial bilateralism" in general, renewed interest in the Commonwealth as a multilateral association and its regional and bilateral benefits and opportunities, and a somewhat different articulation of India's nuclear policy.¹

¹ The Indian Express, New Delhi, 25 March 1977
Soon after assuming office as Prime Minister on 24 March 1977, Morarji Desai had told a press conference that his government would follow a policy of "proper nonalignment". He also said that his government would not wish to have any "special" relations with any country. Obviously he had the Soviet Union in mind when he made this observation; for it is often asserted that the 20 year Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation between India and the Soviet Union signed in August 1971 had established "special" relations between the two countries. Commenting on this Treaty, the new Prime Minister said that if it meant that India should not have friendship with other countries, then it would have to change. "At least we will not act upon it in that manner."2

Vajpayee, in a similar view, had declared on 7 April 1977, in his address at the meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned countries in New Delhi India's resolve to follow the path of "genuine" nonalignment. Further, he made a speech in the Lok Sabha on 29 June 1977, in which he presented a full exposition of the Janata Government's nonalignment policy and its view of "proper" or "genuine" nonalignment. He said: "Non-alignment is not the policy of an individual or a party. This is based on National Consensus... The policy of non-alignment is, in fact, a logical and essential extension of national dependence in the field of international affairs... We affirm this old tenet of policy because nonalignment recognizes that in today's nuclear world war or its inevitability must be ruled out. We cherish our national independence, but reject the need to consign national defence to a committed or dependent military or ideological arrangement. Nonalignment frees a nation from the pressures to borrow foreign models or adopt other ideologies which may be alien to a nation's

2 Asian Recorder, New Delhi, 23-29 April, 1977, p.13707
civilization or its ethos.³

These statements might have caused some alarm in Moscow but the Soviet Union needed India's friendship as much as India needed Soviet Union's.

Within five weeks of the election results, Foreign Minister A.A. Gromyko landed in New Delhi, on 25 April, 1977. Two weeks prior to his visit, a shift in the Soviet attitude toward the Emergency and the new Indian government was discernible. The fate of the Congress was now seen as a consequence of the "abuse of power", the "destruction of democratic norms", and the denial of the rights of the working class.⁴ Similarly, a statement on change in economic strategy by the new Minister for Industries, was reported without adverse comment.⁵

The contents of the Soviet press in the week prior to Gromyko's visit indicated that the Kremlin had discussed the possibilities of the new leadership altering India's policy towards the U.S.S.R. There was a highly defensive attempt to dwell on the past benefits of Soviet support for India. Prominent Indians and major newspapers were quoted stressing the importance of Soviet-Indian ties, the value of Soviet economic and technical assistance and the significance of the 1971 Treaty of Friendship existing between the two nations.⁶

During his stay in Delhi, Mr. A.A. Gromyko was received by the Acting President of India, Shri B.D. Jatti and hold

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³ Foreign Affairs Record, June 1977, p.90
⁴ Pravda, 10 April 1977
⁵ Ibid., 21 April 1977
⁶ Ibid., 17 April 1977. Also see The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 25 April 1977
talks with the Prime Minister Morarji Desai and the Minister of External Affairs Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This was the first high level exchange between the leaders of the new Government of India and the Soviet leadership. Pravda of 10 May, 1977 described the Janata Government's decision to welcome the Soviet Foreign Minister "as a practical step affirming continuity of friendly policy of India towards the Soviet Union."

From the Soviet point of view, it was a vital mission, and, after a long meeting with Desai, Gromyko felt sufficiently reassured to declare that it would be absolutely "unnatural" to allow "anygaps" to develop in Indo-Soviet relations. Vajpayee set the tone for Janata's policy towards the Soviet Union by telling the Soviet Foreign Minister: "We appreciate the help the Soviet Union has given us to industrialize our country and to make us self-reliant. We are also grateful for their consistent and principled support in our difficult times. We remember all this and we shall continue to value our friendship with you." In the joint Indo-Soviet communique signed before A.A. Gromyko left for Moscow on 27 April, 1977, the two countries reaffirmed their faith in the spirit of the 1971 Treaty and noted with "satisfaction" their "identical or close" position on many important world problems. At the luncheon held in honour of the visiting delegation, Atal Behari Vajpayee assured the Soviet Foreign Minister "that the bonds of friendship between our two countries are strong enough to survive the demands of divergent system, the fate of an individual or the fortunes of a political party".

7 Cited in The Times of India, New Delhi, 12 May 1977
8 The Hindustan Times, 27 April 1977
9 The Times of India, New Delhi, 28 April 1977
10 Soviet Review, 5 May 1977, p.14
At the close of Gromyko's trip, it was evident that the relationship had been reaffirmed. Three new agreements were signed involving a Soviet loan, a supplement to the bilateral trade plan for 1977, and Soviet technical assistance for the Srinagar-Tashkent Trans-Himalayan Tropo Scatter Telecommunications link. In addition a lengthy joint communique issued at the end of Gromyko's visit revealed several areas of agreement between the two sides. Desai and Vajpayee were officially invited to the U.S.S.R., the importance of recognizing the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace was mentioned, South Africa and Rhodesia were condemned; a settlement of the Middle East crisis was called for on the basis of a return by Israel of the Arab territories taken in 1967, and Vietnam's admission to the United Nations advocated.

On 3 April, the 39th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and India was extensively observed. On 8 April 1977, A.B. Vajpayee expressed the hope that traditional relations of friendship and all round cooperation between the Soviet Union and India would further develop.

Despite all the greetings and platitudes which were exchanged when the Janata Government came to power the Soviet attitude began to quickly harden in their important dealings with India. This is clearly illustrated by the Soviet intransigence on the important question of Rupee-Rouble parity. The Russians sought to significantly hike the exchange rate of the Rouble which would result in India having to pay back much more for the aid received from Soviet Union.

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11 The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 28 April 1977
12 Pravda, 28 April 1977
On June 30, 1977 Morarji Desai wrote to India's Ambassador in Moscow, I.K. Gujral, "... I appreciate the sentiments he (Brezhnev) expressed about me and the new Government of India. Nevertheless we have to remember that he and his colleagues were equally effusive about the past regime which, if I may say so, was probably more in line with the way of their thinking and ideology than with democratic tradition..." 14

In November, 1977, Gujral reported to Morarji Desai that the Communist Party of India was placed in a very high position in the 'communist fraternity'. Morarji replied to say that "he was not surprised at all because after all they were playing their game very faithfully and are receiving their reward." 15

On 14 July, 1977 Indo-Soviet relations figured in the Lok Sabha in the context of the Soviet plan for Asian security. Prime Minister Desai told the House, that so far as he was aware, the Soviet Union had not fully spelt out the contents and implications of the proposed security designed. He added that if the plan meant the formation of another bloc or alliance India would not be interested in it. He did not agree that there were no Soviet bases in the Indian Ocean. As he put it, the Soviet Union certainly had its "spheres of influence", there: "it is a race between the two powerful nations. It is from that we have to save Asia." 16

The Prime Minister's statement on 14 July were the first overt indications of a new turn or attitude towards relations with the superpowers. In the past, India's official spokesmen had always expressed their explicit ignorance about any Soviet bases or military expansion in the Indian Ocean.

14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Lok Sabha Debates, 4(29), 14 July 1977
Gromyko's visit to New Delhi was followed by the arrival of Desai and Vajpayee in Moscow on 21 October 1977. On the 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, in his speech on October 21, 1977 in Moscow, Mr. Desai called the October Revolution an epoch making event; in the history of the Soviet State and world history, that has inspired and continues to inspire millions of people. 17

In a speech made at the dinner given in his honour on the same day, the Indian Prime Minister indicated to his hosts that New Delhi was not considering any major change in its relationship with the Soviet Union. He noted that the differences in the political and economic systems of the two countries had not prevented close cooperation in a number of fields and pointedly referred to the Indo-Soviet Treaty as a high point in the relationship.

Though he spoke of the recent political change in India as a revolution directed against the infringement of democratic rights, he immediately sought to reassure his hosts that the governmental change in New Delhi did not threaten the future of Indo-Soviet ties. He pointed out that the two countries were bound not by transitory issues such as ideology and personality but by their "national interests and vital common goals." Similarly, while emphasizing that India's basic commitment to nonalignment provided a flexible base for working toward friendly ties with all states, he added that established friendship would not suffer in the process. 18 "From a visit to London for a conference fixed a long time ago and a stop in Paris on the way back, the Soviet Union is the first country I am visiting as Prime Minister of India," said Desai. 19

17 Y. Aleveyer, "A Major Factor of Peace and Stability", International Affairs, Jan 1978, Moscow, p.88
19 The Hindustan Times, 26 Oct 1978
Apart from the joint communique signed on October 26, 1977, and press reports on the talks, there is no detailed information available on the issues that were covered during the three rounds of negotiations that were held. Judging from the composition of the Desai's delegation, Indo-Soviet economic relations constituted a major area of discussion. A major dispute between India and the Soviet Union had erupted in the field of the Rupee-Rouble exchange rate. The Soviets argued that following price of the pound sterling to which the rupee was linked, justified a revision from 11.39 Roubles to 100 Rupees to 8.66 Roubles to 100 Rupees in 1975. The Indians countered with the argument that the Rouble was arbitrarily set in terms of gold and was not subject to market forces. The issue involved the payment of vast amounts by India in debt repayment and had led to prolonged haggling.

While developments such as the decision to use U.S. aid for the projected expansion of the Bokaro Steel Mill would suggest that New Delhi wished to avoid excessive dependence on the Soviet Union, the joint communique issued at the close of Desai's visit points to an expansion in the scope of Indo-Soviet economic ties. The two sides were ready to cooperate in the development of alumina, non-ferrous metal, irrigation and agriculture in India, while the possibility of setting up joint industrial projects in third countries was also discussed. In addition, it was decided to continue Soviet assistance in the expansion of steel and coal production.20

During Desai's visit, judging from the attention given to the Indo-Soviet Treaty in Soviet media, it was clear that Moscow was eager to have New Delhi clearly reaffirm its commitment to this aspect of the Soviet-Indian relationship. While the Treaty was mentioned twice in the communique, the two

20 The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 26 Oct 1978
sides resolved to strengthen their ties "in the spirit" of the document. This formulation was at variance with the Soviet tendency to refer to the Treaty as the "basis" of Indo-Soviet relations.21

The Indo-Soviet treaty emerged unscathed from the Desai visit, the Janata Prime Minister contenting himself with reiterating his view on his return to New Delhi that "there was no question of India having special relations with any country."22 The Soviets however, did seem to be changing their formulations, but not their policy, on the Indian Ocean. During Desai's visit they expressed support "for the striving of the peoples of the area to make the ocean a zone of peace". The joint declaration also "urged the removal of all foreign military bases existing in the Indian Ocean and prevention and establishment of new ones."23

Morarji Desai had told the Parliament on 14 November 1977 about his visit to the Soviet Union (October 21-26, 1977) that "when the Janata Government came to power, there were many who believed that Indo-Soviet relations would suffer as a consequence of change of Government in India. This was not our expectation; the visit had indicated our faith that notwithstanding differences in our social and political systems and approaches on some issues, our relationship has in no way suffered. On the contrary, on the principle of promoting beneficial bilateral relations, there are possibilities of healthy development in future." He further said that the Declaration signed by President Brezhnev and himself, Indo-Soviet relations have stood the test of time. It is a relationship which need in no way be feared by any nation as it is

21 The Hindu, Madras, 25 Oct 1978, Also see Pravda, 22 Oct 1977
22 The Statesman, New Delhi, 29 Oct 1977
anchored in the principles of peaceful coexistence which have universal applicability.  

Gromyko's talks in New Delhi had Desai's visit to the U.S.S.R. seem to indicate that neither side wanted to alter the existing structure of Soviet-Indian relations. Despite speculation to the contrary, there is evidence of disinclination on the part of Desai and Vajpayee to bring about a change in the prevailing relationship with the Soviet Union. The fact is that India has little to gain by taking steps in this direction. For example, while the annulment of the Soviet-Indian treaty might be of value as a symbolic gesture as an indication of an impending change in India's foreign policy — it would not be worth much more. The treaty is not without a tacit significance for India's security concerns regarding China, and the recent indications of an upturn in Sino-Indian relations has not been substantial enough to make this aspect of the treaty unattractive to New Delhi. It is to be noted here that after a fifteen year interval, ambassadorial links with China were reestablished in 1976. In addition, in 1977, China broke a similar fifteen year impasse in Sino-Indian trade by concluding an agreement with the Indian State Trading Corporation for the import of shellac and nonferrous metal. Indian trade agents also participated in the Canton Trade Fair in April 1977. 

The Janata Government hoped to insulate the Indo-Soviet relationship from its initiatives in other field in promoting better relations with the U.S., China and the neighbouring countries, the last being a matter of first priority. 

The Janata leadership continued to be aware of the security 

24 Foreign Affairs Record, Nov 1977, pp.243-4
25 The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 20 May 1977
26 Vajpayee's Statement in the Lok Sabha, 29 June 1977
problem along the Sino-Indian frontier. While India's military capability along the border had improved substantially since 1962, a reduced sense of sinophobia could well have the effect of making New Delhi feel less urgent about the need to enter into substantive negotiations with Peking. At any rate any radical improvement in Sino-Indian relations would have brought to the fore certain major issues on which there existed a wide divergence of views. While the Chinese were perhaps be willing to settle the border dispute on the basis of the status quo, any agreement along these lines by the Janata Government would have complicated its political position at home. In addition, recent developments indicated that both countries viewed themselves as rivals for political influence in the smaller nation of South Asia.

The Janata government's approach to neighbours was considerable to scale down the country's power projection and meet them more than half way to resolve contentious issues — the "logic of good neighbourliness", as Vajpayee described the policy.

Political observers point out that the Janata government would have liked India to play a bigger role in South Asia and in international politics. Again,"there was already talk in Janata Party circles about India staking its claim to permanent membership of the Security Council". If the Indo-Soviet ties remained intact and if Sino-Soviet antagonism continued, the Kremlin would not have been averse to supporting India's reasonable, legitimate aspirations.

28 Kedar Man Singh, Far Eastern Economic Review, 6 Jan 1978
30 "Indo-US Relations: Structural Constraints", Economic and Political Weekly, 13(1), 7 Jan 1978, p.4
By early 1978, the Soviet leadership was disturbed by the discussions that the Indian Government was having with Western countries. President Carter, it seemed, wished to deal with India as the dominant regional power and would be mindful of its vital interests. Carter turned down the sale of A-7 aircraft to Pakistan, which pleased India, and corresponded copiously with Desai. Carter had paid a visit to New Delhi in January 1978.

Desai made other gestures to Pakistan. He adopted a line of diplomatic neutrality on Pakistan-Afghanistan differences and supported Islamabad for membership of the non-aligned movement after it left CENTO in the wake of the Iranian Revolution. An agreement on Salal dam, initiated by Mrs. Gandhi's government, was signed in 1978. Vajpayee, during a visit to Kabul in September 1978, urged Afghanistan to remain non-aligned and promote trust in the region.  

Indian trade agents participated in the Guangzhau (Canton) trade fair in April 1977 and Chinese interest in promoting better relations with India was heightened by the change of government in New Delhi although Desai's meeting with the Dalai Lama in April 1977 provoked an official protest from Beijing for the record. China made friendly noises and signals came thick and fast from Beijing indicating a desire to improve relations.  

All through the years of the Janata regime, and even when Kosygin visited India in March 1979, the Russians seemed obsessed with China and the fear that they were attempting to get nearer to them.
A balanced relationship was sought to be maintained with the superpowers on the basis of "genuine" nonalignment, beneficial bilateralism and international cooperation during Janata government. A new chapter in India-US friendship was opened with President Carter's visit to India; although serious differences over the nuclear issue remained, relations between the two countries were restored to a new level of mutual confidence. Friendly ties with the Soviet Union were sought to be strengthened further by working for greater cooperation in the economic, scientific and technological sphere. In February 1978, the 4th session of the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission met in New Delhi, when a protocol was signed on long-term cooperation between the two countries. Arkhipov, who visited India for the meeting emphasised that Indo-Soviet cooperation between the two countries entered a new phase with prospects for wider and new areas of cooperation.

The Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Ivan Arkhipov arrived in India as the head of the Soviet delegation to attend the fourth session of the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission in February 1978. Arkhipov described Indo-Soviet relations as very "close", and said that there were yet "greater prospects for further deepening of our friendship and in particular our cooperation in the field of economic activity." At the conclusion of the session, a long-term protocol was signed between the two countries for the expansion of economic trade, technical and scientific collaboration, an expansion which according to Vajpayee, reflected a new pattern of cooperation in industry. The major areas of cooperation envisaged for the next fifteen years were steel, non-ferrous metallurgy, heavy machine building, coal and petroleum, communication and transport.

34 Vinod Bhatia, _Indira Gandhi and Indo-Soviet Relations_, op.cit., p 90
35 _National Herald_, New Delhi, 26 Feb 1978
Seven sub-committees were set up to work out the details of cooperation the most important of these being the one charged with the task of preparing a long-term economic programme, including a trade plan. 36

Besides agreeing to keep up its assistance for the ongoing projects, the Soviet Union offered to help in the setting up of a blast furnace at Visakhapatnam. It also undertook to set up an alumina plant with a capacity of 6,000,000 tonnes to exploit the bauxite deposits in Andhra Pradesh. Both projects were to be financed in accordance with the "compensation" principle which meant in the present case that the Soviet Union would be paid back in kind for the technology and expertise that it supplied. At the end of his visit, Arkhipov observed that his country's economic relations with India were passing on to a "qualitative new phase" a phase marked by a search for new areas of cooperation, wider development of industrial collaboration, exchange of technologies and experience on a broader basis, and collaboration in third countries. 37

In May 1978 India's Minister for Defence, Jagjivan Ram, visited the Soviet Union for a review of Indo-Soviet cooperation in the field of defence. In the course of his visit he expressed the hope that India would receive Soviet support for the furtherance of its objective of speedy national self-reliance. Marshal Ustinov, his Soviet counterpart, stated that the central objective of Indo-Soviet friendship, which he held up as an example of peaceful coexistence, was not confined to the two Governments but derived its strength from the people. 38 Replying, India's Defence Minister specially mentioned the Indo-Soviet Treaty, and said that it

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36 The Statesman, New Delhi, 10 Mar 1978
37 Indian Express, New Delhi 3 Mar 1978
38 Hindustan Times, 24 May 1978
was not just a document between the two governments but a symbol of the sentiment of the two peoples for each other. The Treaty, he added, aimed at peace and friendship, non-interference, respect for sovereignty and mutual aid in times of necessity.  

In 1978, the Janata had to make decisions on arms purchases. Intense lobbying was on by France and Britain to sell the Mirage and the Jaguar. It was in this context that Soviet Air Force Chief Kutakhov visited India in March 1978 and offered an improved version of MIG-23 at concessional price and on better terms along with the promise to transfer its technology to India. In May, Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram visited Moscow for a review of Indo-Soviet cooperation in defence production. His main objective was to secure rapid transfer of Soviet weapon technology to India.  

when the Nani Palkiwala, India's Ambassador in U.S.A., wrote a letter to Morarji Desai on January 22, 1979, which showed that Soviet Union didn't want Morarji Desai to be Prime Minister of India. He wrote that the government of the Soviet Union had decided that they should work, as far as it lay in their power, to see that you (Morarji) cease to be the Prime Minister, and he added that some chosen persons in the Communist Party of India, who are pro-Soviet, had already received the message. The letter made public last week only confirm a conspiracy whose general contours have been known all along.  

Now it can be told that, from the very first month of the Janata Government a mystery meeting used to be held periodically, in the Guest House of a business house, in Faridabad. It was regularly attended by H.N. Bahuguna, Madhu Limaya, Nikhil

39 Ibid., 27 May 1978  
40 Vinod Bhatia, Indira Gandhi and Indo-Soviet Relations, op.cit., pp. 90-91  
41 Dirty Russian Hand in Indian Politics, Organiser, 25 Sep 1983
Chakravarti and the Russian Ambassador Vorosilov. A regular participant was Chandrasekhar.

Russia got its biggest break in India in 1969, when Mrs Gandhi continued in office after the Congress split, with CPI support. A top Russian Politbureau member flew into Delhi at the time and persuaded CPI and CPI(M) to support Giri for Presidentship to save Mrs. Gandhi's office and protect Russian interests in Asia. It is significant that Limaye and his friends also backed Giri's candidature. According to Giri's friends, Russia made Rs. 7 crores available to buy the so-called "Conscience" vote. It was during this period that the Treaty of friendship was signed, giving the world the impression that India was now part of the Russian camp. During the same period RAW entered into an arrangement with KGB transferring the services of some of its agents in the CPI(M) Politbureau to the Russian outfit. It was two of these gentlemen who played a crucial role in switching the CPI(M) support from Morarji to Charan Singh.42

Although Limaye's link with Moscow became clear after Janata came to power, Bahuguna's links were clear from the start. When he was Chief Minister of U.P. Russia presented him an Ilyushin plane. The Soviet Ambassador lauded him as an up and coming "National leader" at a function in Lucknow early in 1975. Russia continued its support to Bahuguna even in the 1977 elections as per Litto Gohosh's letter to Dr. Uletsiferov in Moscow.43

Vajpayee had paid a visit to Moscow in September 1978. His main purpose was to appraise the Soviet leadership of the state of Sino-Indian relations and of India's new

42 For details see Madhu Limaye, Problems of India's Foreign Policy, Delhi, 1984, Chapter 7
43 Organiser, 12 July 1979
initiatives to normalise relations with Peking. Vajpayee spoke of the high degree of trust and confidence between India and the U.S.S.R. and of the Janata government's efforts to improve relations with India's neighbours, including China. He assured the Soviet leadership that improvement of Sino-Indian relations would not be at the expense of Indo-Soviet relations. However, divergence in perceptions had widened. Moscow had pointed out that the Karakoram Highway, built by China was a strategic one, which threatened China's neighbours, particularly India. Moscow wanted a reassurance from Vajpayee that the Janata government would do nothing at the expense of Indo-Soviet relations and friendship. At his luncheon in honour of Vajpayee, Gromyko did not mince words. He said: "The schemes of the forces that are hostile to world peace and international security in Asia should be rebuffed, and rebuffed decisively. It is necessary to unmask and frustrate their aggressive designs and expansionist proclivities in time." However, Vajpayee did not respond to these strong sentiments though he praised the principled policies of the Soviet Union in contrast to China's wayward actions. Thus, Moscow failed to dissuade Vajpayee from his proposed visit to Peking, if that was Moscow's intention. In the end even Vajpayee had to postpone his visit to Peking since he fell ill.

Kosygin came to India in March 1979. He had spent six days in India and had a series of talks with Desai and Vajpayee. He was relentless in his attack on China, and called China's aggression on Vietnam criminal. He addressed the Indian Parliament and said that no peaceloving country could remain indifferent to such blatant actions. He warned

44 Pravda, 13 Sep 1978
45 Vinod Bhatia, op.cit., p.92; also see Shashi Tharoor Reasons of State: Political Development and India's Foreign Policy Under Indira Gandhi, 1966-1977, New Delhi, 1982, p.372
that China might choose to 'teach India a lesson' at some point in future. However, even though India was outraged by the Chinese action, the Janata government did not want to fully identify itself with the Soviet reaction. Desai merely said: "We have agreed even where we differ." It was clear that New Delhi was not ready to team up with Moscow against China. So in the final communique India would only go to the extent of characterising the Chinese aggression as massive and armed attack, and to demand an immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of Chinese troops from the territory of Vietnam. However, on the economic front, the Kosygin visit was memorable and an agreement was concluded on the controversial Rupee-Rouble exchange ratio. Kosygin offered 600,000 tonnes of additional crude for 1979. And although the Janata was more favourably disposed towards the West and to India's private sector, the visit of Kosygin led to the signing of a long-term agreement on trade, scientific and technical cooperation for a period of 15 years. It was the first long-term and comprehensive agreement between which led to an unprecedented expansion of cooperation between the two countries. The Soviet assistance already accounted for 30 per cent of steel capacity, 70 per cent of oil extraction, 30 per cent of oil refining capacity, 20 per cent of power generation and 80 per cent of metallurgical equipment. About 76 major projects had been built in India or were being constructed with Soviet cooperation.

The Soviet Premier had separate meetings with the President Sathya Reddy, the Deputy Prime Minister (Finance), Charan Singh and the Deputy Prime Minister (Defence) Jagjivan Ram, and the Minister of External Affairs, Atal Behari

46 Overseas Hindustan Times, March 25 1979; and The New Times, No.13, 1979

47 Pravda, 10 March 1979, The New Times, No.12, 1979, Text of the agreement in Foreign Affairs Record, April 1977
Vajpayee. Among other subjects, Vajpayee talked of his visit to China. He informed Kosygin that he had told the Chinese leaders that if China normalised her relations with Moscow peaceably through bilateral negotiations, the forces of peace and stability would be strengthened and the whole world would stand to gain.

India and the Soviet Union considered it necessary to exert further efforts in the interest of strengthening peace in the Asian continent, of developing cooperation among all Asian countries on the principles of sovereign equality and independence: non-use of force, inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity of states, non-interference in the internal affairs and other generally recognised principles of interstate relations. Acceptance of these principles in interstate relations, the communique said, would contribute to the transformation of Asia into a continent of durable peace and to strengthening of world peace.

Besides the situation in South-East Asia, the two sides reviewed various other international issues, including the situation in West Asia, the freedom struggles in Southern Africa, disarmament, the need to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations to ensure lasting peace and restructuring international economic relations on a democratic basis. The two sides noted that non-alignment is a positive factor in maintaining world peace, eliminating colonialism and racialism and ensuring equitable economic relations. They reiterated firm support to the conversion of the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace and regretted that Soviet-American talks on the subject had been suspended. India appreciated Soviet readiness to resume these talks.

Expressing deep concern over the continuing serious threat to peace in West Asia, they pronounced themselves
in favour of a comprehensive and just settlement of the problem on the basis of the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, the recurring of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to establish their own state as well as the ensuring for all states in the area the right to independent existence and development.

On yet another international issue, there were differences between India and the Soviet Union. This was on the Heng Samrin regime which had been installed in Kampuchea with the Soviet support. Despite repeated requests from Kosygin, Vajpayee was reported to have told him that India would extend recognition to Kampuchea only when it was sure that the new regime was in full control of the situation in that country. Yet as it turned out, the Janata government did "go a long way towards the Soviet position, refusing to link Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea with China's assault on Vietnam. In drawing the line between friendship and the Soviet policies, the Janata was careful not to antagonise Moscow while preserving its own independence. However, the difference between the two countries were very much evident. Vajpayee, as has been pointed out by an astute observer, was privately reported to have expressed his " unhappiness over Kosygin's use of Indian podiums to denounce China and after the Russian Primier's departure, declared on television that what had been said in the joint communique was not as significant as what had been left out of it. Desai put it a little more succinctly.

48 Pushpesh Pant, "Major Developments in India's Foreign Policy and Relations, Jan-June 1979, "International Studies, Vol.19, 1980, p.508
49 Shashi Tharoor, Reasons of State: Political Development and India's Foreign Policy Under Indira Gandhi 1966-1977, New Delhi, 1978, p.371
50 Ibid., p.374
While Kosygin, before his departure, told reporters that both countries agreed on all subjects, Desai quipped that they had agreed even where they differed.\textsuperscript{51}

During Kosygin's visit in 1979, several protocols were signed between India and the Soviet Union. These included protocols for supply of 600,000 tonnes of Soviet crude in exchange for Indian rice, supply of agricultural machines and motor vehicles as gift to Suratgarh State Farm, agreement on cooperation in medical science and public health and a protocol on cultural exchanges.\textsuperscript{52} Another long term agreement was signed on cooperation in economic, trade, technological and scientific fields which would run for ten to fifteen years covering major proposals like Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, East Coast aluminium project, Mathura Refinery, Singrauli and Raniganj coalfields, Ramgarh washery and Malanjkhan copper project and also providing for Indian experts to visit Soviet Union to familiarise themselves with the Soviet development in inland fisheries, pulp and paper, and food industry.\textsuperscript{53}

Political dialogue between India and the Soviet Union continued uninterrupted in the next years. The Indian Prime Minister visited the Soviet Union on 11 June 1979 and received a flattering welcome. Cooperation between the Soviet Union and India, linked by traditional friendship, was strengthening with every passing year and this served the vital interests of the peoples of the two countries, said Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and the President of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet in his dinner speech in the Kremlin in honour of the visiting Prime Minister of India.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{51} Pushpesh Pant, \textit{op.cit.}, p.508
\textsuperscript{52} Asian Recorder, \textit{25(15)}, 1979, p.14832
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{54} Pravda, and \textit{The Times of India}, New Delhi, 12 June 1979; Also see \textit{New Times}, No.25, 1979
It has been considered necessary to draw extensively on this communique as it amply illustrates the close correspondence of views on a wide range of issues and brings out the community identity of strategic contexts between the two countries. It shows that in this case the cordiality in bilateral relations is more a function of coinciding national interests rather than a rapport between individual personalities or any ideological affinity.

Touching upon the situation in Asia, Leonid Brezhnev said that "China's recent aggression against Vietnam, the repeated threats of taking up arms again to teach somebody a lesson, all this extremely complicates the situation, and creates considerable dangers for Asian countries."

Morarji Desai was received on his arrival in Moscow by President Brezhnev, Primer Kosygin and other Soviet leaders. Speaking at a banquet held in his honour in Moscow, Desai said: "In India the Soviet Union has a steadfast friend whose policies are not guided by or founded upon the shifting sands of transient considerations and temporary advantages, but are based upon the bedrock of warmth, goodwill and recognition of mutual interests." The Minister of External Affairs, Atal Behari Vajpayee who accompanied the Prime Minister on the tour, described as a "Landmark" the agreements reached during Desai's visit to the Soviet Union.

In the Soviet Union, Morarji Desai visited Tashkent, Moscow and Leningrad. At Moscow, Desai had talks with Brezhnev and Premier Kosygin. The joint communique issued at the end of the visit stated that the Indo-Soviet talks showed the "coincidence or similarity of views of India and the Soviet Union on key international problems". This would serve the

55 Ibid.
cause of "further widening the many sided cooperation between India and the Soviet Union."

The communique cited the Indo-Soviet long-term programme of economic, trade, scientific and technological cooperation, the agreement on cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the joint commission meetings, the launching of the Bhaskara Satellite\textsuperscript{56} and the agreement on the Visakhapatnam steel plant on "new manifestation of the determination of the two sides to expand their economic and other cooperation."\textsuperscript{57}

During his wide ranging talks with the Soviet leaders, Desai explained India's position regarding various issues, especially those on which India and the Soviet Union had differences. On Kampuchea, the differences persisted and both countries reiterated their positions. Again, while India and the Soviet Union agreed that the Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel signed through the mediation of the U.S. could not lead to a comprehensive settlement of the Palestine problem, India did not express itself in favour of the move to expel Egypt from the non-aligned movement for being a party to the agreement.\textsuperscript{58}

However, the subject on which intense debates took place between the two leaders was on the development in Afghanistan, India's next door neighbour, where the Soviet Union had installed a pro-Moscow regime. The changed environment at India's doorstep was causing considerable concern to India not only because of the Soviet role there but also because of Pakistan using this as a proxy to get sophisticated military hardware from the U.S. Desai was forthright in his criticism of the developments in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Indian Express}, New Delhi, 8 June 1979
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{The Hindu}, Madras, 12 June 1979
\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Indian Express}, New Delhi, 13 June 1979
\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid}.
while referring to Afghanistan, both countries expressed themselves "firmly in favour of the aspirations" of the Afghan people for the preservation of their national independence and declared their opposition to "any interference by outside forces" in the internal affairs of that country. 60 Desai, however, reportedly advised Brezhnev that the government in Kabul should try to acquire credibility among the Afghan people rather than blame Pakistan's interference for its troubles. 61 On his return to New Delhi, Desai even went to the extent of offering his good offices to mediate between Afghanistan and Pakistan to solve the situation there. 62

A host of agreements were signed between India and the Soviet Union. Protocols on long-term programmes of cooperation were signed in October and December. On 1st December 1978, India and the Soviet Union signed in New Delhi a protocol envisaging cooperation in several new fields including agriculture, animal husbandry, light engineering and new areas of science and technology for the next ten to fifteen years. 63 While extending Soviet cooperation in the development of small sector in India and also in the methodology of planning, it also facilitated joint research projects and joint industrial ventures in third countries. 64 Yet another protocol signed in New Delhi on 23 December 1978 envisaged a total turnover of Rs. 1,200 crores, an increase of twenty per cent in Indian Soviet trade during 1979. 65 It provided the Soviet Union an opportunity for the first time for the export of 300,000

60 Foreign Affairs Record, 25(6), June 1979, p.123
62 Ibid.
63 Asian Recorder, 25(2), 1979, p.14686
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid., 25(4), 1979, p. 14709
tonnes of cement, 57,000 tonnes of wood pulp as also fertilizers supply which was 40,000 tonnes more than the previous year; it also provided for the Soviet Union buying new items like petrol dispensing equipment, pneumatic tools and tool kits, steam boilers, heating equipment, printing machinery, incinerators and shoe uppers. It was clear that there were practically very few fields to which Indo-Soviet cooperation did not extend.

However, the most significant development during this period was the signing of a protocol on 25 November 1978 which fixed an exchange rate of Rs.10 to one Rouble for the settlement of all existing and future credit agreements and commercial transactions designated in Roubles between India and the Soviet Union. India, which had been trying for a reasonable Rupee-Rouble exchange rate for quite some time had reasons to feel happy about the new agreement. This was very much evident in the Annual Report of the Ministry of External Affairs for 1978-79 which commented on the agreement thus: "India regards the new exchange rate as a reasonable readjustment between the two countries taking into account the adjustment between the rupee and other currencies. The protocol also contains an agreed built in mechanism for future adjustments in the exchange rate. The Soviet Union has provided an interest free 45 years deferred payment facility to meet additional liabilities arising from the application of the new rate of exchange in respect of supplies made and services rendered upto the date of protocol under the existing credits. The protocol is expected to smoothen the flow of trade and further strengthen the economic cooperation between the two countries."

66 Ibid.
67 The Hindu, Madras, 26 Nov 1978
68 Government of India, Reports, Ministry of External Affairs, 1978-79
It was pointed out that the agreement was, in the long term, self-balancing with imports and exports equalling each other, thus needing no external resources to balance it. Also it was emphasised that the trade between the two countries being planned, the nature and substance of it was reviewed regularly and adjusted to the changing needs of the economies of the trading partners. However, critics of the agreement maintained that the compulsions in rupee trade on the partners to balance their two-way transactions could naturally lead the stronger partner like the Soviet Union to charge higher prices for its exports and lower prices for imports.

(B) Phase-II, 1980-82: Relations During Indira Gandhi's Second Term

After being in the political wilderness for nearly three years, Indira Gandhi returned to power following the mid-term poll to the Lok Sabha, the Lower House of India's Parliament, in January 1980. She took over as Prime Minister on 14 January 1980 and appointed P.V. Narasimha Rao as her Minister of External Affairs.

Indira Gandhi was no stranger to the domain of government and foreign policy. She had been Prime Minister earlier for eleven years (1966-67) and had been associated with the formulation and implementation of foreign policy at the highest level, both in times of peace and war; and her approach to the various issues and aspects of foreign policy and relations was widely known.

Indo-Soviet relations survived a change of government in

70 Ibid., p.146
India and four leadership fatalities, those of Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko and Indira Gandhi. The durability of Indo-Soviet ties was manifest when the Janata Government came into power in 1977. The Janata leaders had talked about "genuine non-alignment", given the impression that they intended to distance India from the Soviet Union, but in effect Morarji Desai signed significant economic agreements with Moscow which were not exactly an indication of moving away.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the onset of the 1980s is the first time the Soviet had conducted a full-scale invasion of a country outside Eastern Europe. Although Afghanistan borders the U.S.S.R. it is a third world Muslim country. It also has considerable geostrategic importance.

The Afghanistan issue created some differences of opinion. India was not in favour of the presence of foreign troops and stood for an overall political settlement that would ensure withdrawal of Soviet troops as well as cessation of interference from across Pakistan's frontiers in the shape of material assistance to rebel elements. The Soviets sought to justify their massive military incursion into Afghanistan in December 1979 on the round that they had been "invited" by the then Afghan President, Hafizullah Amin. However, it is well known that Amin was far from being a friend of the Soviet Union. Indeed he was a foe or, at any rate, whom the Soviet Union regarded as a thorn, as it were, in its side. An unmistakable proof of this fact is provided by Amin's physical elimination, soon after the Soviet military take-over of Kabul, and the establishment of a pro-Soviet regime headed by Babrak Karmal.

Naturally the then Government of India headed by Charan Singh did not accept the manifestly untenable Soviet version.
The Indian press had also rejected the "Invitation" story. The veteran journalist, Girilal Jain wrote in a signed article: "It was sheer chicanery on the part of the Kremlin that it had arrived at the request of Kabul."71 The first official intimation India had of the Soviet invasion was from the Soviet Ambassador Yuri Varontsov knocking on foreign secretary R.D. Sathe's door around midnight on December 28.72

By contrast, Indira Gandhi, who was then on the threshold of a new term of office, tended to indulge in a balancing exercise by blaming the Afghan developments equally, as it were, between the United States and the Soviet Union. In an interview to a French correspondent, she did say that she saw the developments in Afghanistan as a danger to India, but she has hastened to accuse the U.S.A. of being "responsible for destabilization of the region..., the past should not be forgotten."73 Moreover, even before she took over as Prime Minister which was on 14 January 1980, the Minister of External Affairs in New Delhi had reportedly got in touch with her, and on 11 January 1980 — in tune with her equivocal line — a spokesman of the Ministry said in New Delhi that the situation in Afghanistan "cannot be looked upon in isolation from bases and military linkages in Asia" and added that "a discussion [at the UN] at this stage will really highten cold war tension."74 In the same view India's Permanent Representative at the UN Brajesh Mishra, intervening in the General Assembly debate on the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan expressed the view that "a discussion in the General Assembly of the question... did not help in restoring peace in the

71 The Times of India, New Delhi, 1 Jan 1980
73 The Times of India, New Delhi, 1 Jan 1980
74 Ibid., 12 Jan 1980
region." At a time when the Soviet troops, as *The Times of India* editorially put it, had already forced their will on Afghanistan in utter contempt of international law.76

When a resolution sponsored by twentytwo nonaligned countries demanding the "immediate, unconditional, and total withdrawal" of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan was put to vote on 15 January 1980, India chose to abstain, while an overwhelming majority of the nonaligned states lined up behind the 104-strong affirmative vote.

The speech of Indian delegate, Brajesh Mishra, as it was delivered, stunned the world. While opposing the presence of foreign troops and bases in any country, he said that the Soviet Union had assured India that it would withdraw its troops from Afghanistan when Kabul asked it to do so. "We have no reason to doubt the assurances, particularly from a friendly country like the Soviet Union with whom we have close ties."77

Mrs. Gandhi attempted to bring back some semblance of balance to the Indian position. At a press conference on January 16, 1980 she disapproved interference by any foreign power in the affairs of another country and said that the Soviet presence in Afghanistan had increased tension and moved danger closer to the Indian border. 78 Mrs. Gandhi went a step further by assuring Parliament on January 30 that India would made "every effort to ensure speedy withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan."79

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75 *Indian and Foreign Review*, New Delhi, 15 Jan 1980
76 *The Times of India*, New Delhi, 1 Jan 1980
78 *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, 17 Jan 1980
Despite these differences, Indo-Soviet relations continued to have all-round development. On 27 May, 1980 UNI reported that the Soviet Union would supply India military hardware worth Rs. 1,300 crores under an agreement which was considered to be the biggest so far between the two countries. The Soviet Union undertook to advance long-term credit for these purchases under the most favourable terms, repayable over a period of 17 years and carrying an interest rate of 2.5 per cent per annum. The items covered were petga class missile-equipped patrol boats, air-to-air and surface-to-surface missile rockets and anti-tank weapons and defence equipment. This was part of the defence agreements worth Rs. 2,500 crores concluded with various countries. Subsequently an official spokesman clarified that western reports about a 1.5 billion was a "wrong projection". He denied that the arms deal was an indirect way of carrying favour with the Soviet Union. He added: "there was no uproar in the western media over the Jaguar deal with Britain last year which is double in value." 

Another major step in the further expansion and consolidation of friendly Soviet Indian-relations was the meeting between Leonid Brezhnev and Indira Gandhi in Belgrade on May 8, 1980, which took place in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. In the course of the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on a number of questions pertaining to Soviet-Indian cooperation in various spheres, and agreed that expanding the sphere of mutually advantageous cooperation met the interests of the peoples of the Soviet Union and India. During discussions on major international problems the two sides noted that the positions adopted by

80 The Statesman, New Delhi, 28 May 1980
81 Eric Gonsalves, then Secretary in the Indian External Affairs Ministry at a press Conference at Kuwait, The Times of India, New Delhi, 21 June 1980
the Soviet Union and India on the main questions concerning the strengthening of detente and peace were identical, and that cooperation between them helped to promote stability and good neighbourliness in Asia and throughout the world.82

On the invitation of the government of the U.S.S.R., the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Narasimha Rao, paid an official visit to the Soviet Union on June 3-7, 1980. During his visit, Narasimha Rao had talks with Anderi Gromyko. The two sides discussed the development of bilateral relations and also a wide range of international issues of common interest. They were pleased to note that relations between the U.S.S.R. and India serve the interests of peace and stability in Asia and throughout the world. They also examined questions related to fulfilment of long term agreements in the main sphere of Soviet-Indian cooperation. Having exchanged views on the major international issues, the two sides remarked on the closeness of the positions of the U.S.S.R. and India regarding the issues under discussion. The Soviet Union and India expressed their conviction that the process of detente should be extended to all regions of the world and also their firm intent to continue their support for an end to the arms race and for the struggle against imperialism, racism and all forms of domination. The results of the visit by Narasimha Rao to the Soviet Union constituted a new and positive contribution to the development of mutual understanding and friendship between the U.S.S.R. and India.83

The President of India, Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, visited the U.S.S.R. between September 29 and October 7, 1980. During

83 Pravda, June 8,1980 quoted in Gromyko and Ponamarev, ed., op.cit.
his talks with Leonid Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders, there was an exchange of views on the main question concerning Soviet-Indian relations, based on the firm foundation of the 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. In their discussions on urgent international problems, the two sides paid particular attention to the strengthening of peace and international security, to the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racism. The Soviet Union, declared Leonid Brezhnev, was making consistent and resolute efforts to preserve and stimulate detente, to secure a concrete shift from armament to disarmament; and to achieve a just political settlement of conflict situations, including those in such a "sensitive" region as the Near and Middle East. The two sides made a detailed analysis of the situation in Asia, where the intensification of activity by aggressive forces has escalated tension. The President of India described the traditional friendship between India and the U.S.S.R. as an example of fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation answering the fundamental interest of both the Indian and Soviet peoples and also the interests of universal peace.84

An important landmark in the field of India's relations with the Soviet Union during this period was the 3-day state visit by L.I.Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of U.S.S.R. The brief visit, which began on 8 December 1980 was considered to be more than a routine diplomatic exercise. It was indeed a crucial one because of the prevailing situation in the region. India viewed with apprehension the tension and conflicts growing in the region, the increase in the presence of the great powers, and the changing security environment caused by the rapid militarization of the Indian Ocean.

Brezhnev was accompanied by a high power delegation, comprising some of his senior colleagues, including the foreign minister Andrei Gromyko. During his stay Brezhnev held wide-ranging discussions with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi both on bilateral matters and on the prevailing international situation. The President of India, N. Sanjiva Reddy, reiterated India's stance on development in the region. Speaking at a banquet given in honour of Brezhnev, he stated that "we in India remain opposed to any form of intervention, covert or overt, by outside forces in the internal affairs of the region". He reaffirmed India's firm conviction that durable peace can be restored through negotiated political solution having full respect to the independence, sovereignty, integrity and nonaligned status of the countries of the region."85

President Brezhnev's visit to Delhi in December 1980 promoted the relationship further in a variety of directions. Although the Indian side reiterated its position on the issue of Afghanistan, the joint declaration issued at the end of the visit made no reference to the presence of Soviet troops in Kabul. Apparently, the two leaders did not want their different perceptions to be reflected in the joint declaration which expressed serious concern over the hotbeds of tension in South-West Asia and reaffirmed their conviction in a comprehensive political settlement respecting the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and nonaligned status of the countries of the region. They asked for termination of the armed conflicts in the region and the exercise of restraint and promotion of cooperation.86

Prior to President Brezhnev's visit to New Delhi, President

85 Foreign Affairs Record, Dec 1980
86 The Times of India, New Delhi, 25 Sept 1981
Sanjeeva Reddy went to Moscow in October 1980. President Reddy's visit to Moscow was interesting in a number of ways. While the Reddy-Brezhnev talks covered a wide area and found considerable coincidence of views on lessening tensions in the troubled spots of the world, there was also the extraordinary incident of President Brezhnev keeping away from a dinner hosted by the Indian President in Moscow. speculation was rife at the time that the Soviet Union was expressing annoyance over India's stand over some of the issues like Afghanistan, but subsequently the official explanation given by Moscow was that President Brezhnev had to keep away because of the death of the wife of the senior-most member of the Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party, Mr. Nikolai Tikhonov on the same day and that it was because of mere protocol.

During his 1980 visit Brezhnev said: "Friendship and cooperation with India is part and parcel of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. We were with you when India was under the yoke of colonialism. We were with you when India's new statehood was emerging. We were with you in the difficult and trying periods for India. We were with you when various external forces were trying to bring pressure on your country when it was upholding its vital interests. We shall be with you in the days of joy and in the days of trial."88

During the visit it was rightly emphasised that the experience of Soviet-Indian relations over the quarter century of the existence of independent India was of fundamental importance. It convincingly demonstrated how close multi-faceted ties can unite states with different social

87 See Joint Communiqué, Ibid., 2 Oct 1980
88 Oleg Kitsenko, the Road of Friendship, Soviet Indian Cooperation Series, Soviet Land Booklets, 1980, pp.19-20
systems when their policies promote the fight for peace, security of nations, and are against aggression, all forms of colonialism, when relations among the states concerned are founded on respect for one another's sovereignty, non-interference in one another's internal affairs, and extensive development of economic and other cooperation based on equality and mutual benefit.

The Soviet Union continued to develop the relations with other countries in South and South-East Asia, with Nepal, Srilanka, Burma, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Phillipines. The peaceful initiatives of the Soviet Union met with understanding on the part of the governments and the public of these countries. The important and urgent proposal put before the Thirty-Fourth session of the UN General Assembly by the Soviet Union on the inadmissibility of a policy of hegemonism in international relations brought a favourable response from the countries of Asia. Representatives of the Asian countries stressed that the issue was raised at an appropriate moment, pointing out that a hegemonic policy was a direct threat to international peace and security, and that this question bore on the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and also the principles and aims of the non-aligned movement.

On 10 December 1980, the Soviet Union and India issued a joint declaration in which they called for the elimination of all foreign military and naval bases in the region of the Indian Ocean, and for the prohibition of the establishment of new bases. They also strongly condemned any attempts to increase the foreign military presence in the Indian Ocean for whatever reason, and expressed their support for the just demand of Mauritius that the Chagos Archipelago including the
island of Diego Garcia, be returned to it. "The Soviet Union is a staunch champion of the idea that the Indian Ocean be turned into a zone of peace", declared Leonid Brezhnev. "We believe that the Indian Ocean has been and remains the sphere of vital interests of the states located on its shores, but not of any other states."  

The expansion of economic relations kept pace with the development of other relationship. The Indo-USSR Joint Commission ending its 6th session in New Delhi on 23 January 1981, had agreed on specific areas of cooperation and a protocol was signed on the basis envisaged between Mrs. Indira Gandhi and President Brezhnev in September 1980. A Soviet aid of Rs. 527 crores during the Sixth Plan was agreed upon. The areas indentified for this aid included such major units as an Aluminium complex in Andhra Pradesh, a four-million tonne Coal complex, a 1,000 MW integrated thermal power plant at Singrauli, oil exploration and the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. The Protocol was signed by P.V. Narasimha Rao and Ivan Arkhipov, First Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers. The Commission indicated that substantial progress had been achieved in the implementation of working programmes of cooperation in important fields like ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, coal industry, oil, machine building, power and irrigation.  

Trade had also expanded very substantially between the two countries. There had been a threefold increase during 1976-81. According to the statistics released from Moscow, the turnover which was 647 million Roubles in 1976, had touched 2,398.9 million Roubles in 1981. (One rouble equalled rupees twelve at the time).  

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89 Pravda, 12 Dec. 1980, in Gromyko, op.cit., p.626  
90 Ibid.  
91 The Statesman and The Times of India, New Delhi, 24 Jan 1981  
91A India Today, 15 Oct 1982
The Soviet Union became the leading trade partner of the country, imported goods worth 1,333.8 million Roubles in 1981 as against the exports worth 1,084.1 million Roubles to India during the same period. Indeed of India's total exports of Rs. 6,709 crores in 1980-81 the Soviet Union accounted for goods worth Rs.1,167 crores that is, about 17 per cent. 92

Another example of such close cooperation as exists between India and the Soviet Union with their different social, economic, and political systems was Mrs. Gandhi's week-long goodwill visit to the Soviet Union beginning from September 20, 1982, comes in the spirit of the understanding. The Indian Ministers of Irrigation and External Affairs preceded her arrival in Moscow for consultations with their Soviet counterparts on various issues of mutual interest.

Reviewing the progress of cooperation after Brezhnev's visit to India in 1980, V.I. Litvinenko, Deputy Chairman of the Soviet State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, in an article mentioned the inauguration of the troposcatter link between the two countries in November 1981, the beginning of construction of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, the completion of the construction of the Mathura Oil Refinery, Korba aluminium plant and the preparation of the 1981-1990 techno-economic plan for oil development, the beginning of the work on the Singrauli coal and power complex construction, preparation of the technical documentation for the construction of a factory for production of prefabricated ferro-concrete structures for irrigation projects and the study for controlled explosion techniques in building of the 50 meter high Birarikhad dam in Himachal Pradesh. 93

92 The Hindustan Times, 31 Sept.1982
93 O.N. Mehrotra, "Mrs. Gandhi's Visit to the Soviet Union", Strategic Analysis, VI(7), Oct 1982
With such close and friendly relations between the two countries, India's efforts to diversify its sources of arms supply and to strengthen its economic relations with the West have been cited in sections of the Western press as irritants in Indo-Soviet relations. India's attempts to improve its relations with China and Pakistan during 1982 had also been treated in the Western media as issues causing dissatisfaction to the Soviet Union. None of these developments however has in fact retreated relations between the two countries. Mrs. Gandhi's visit to the Soviet Union was not meant to clear any misunderstanding or to resolve pending issues but to strengthen the existing close friendly relations and further expand the economic cooperation between the two countries.

This visit was in contrast to her well-published visit to the United States in July which first appeared as very successful but later raised certain doubts about the nature of the final outcome. Asked about the difference between her visit to the U.S. and the one to the Soviet Union, Mrs. Gandhi said the two were entirely different. One common thing was that they were goodwill visits. She said the Soviet Union stood by India in its moments of need: "Today, we seek friendship with all countries", she said. Her visit to the U.S. was intended to promote friendship with that country in the aftermath of the U.S. decision to transfer arms to Pakistan.

The Indo-Soviet joint declaration marking Mrs. Gandhi's visit affirmed the strong opposition of the two countries to outside interference in the internal affairs of the countries of South-West Asia. Without mentioning Afghanistan, the two countries expressed their conviction that the problems of the region demanded peaceful political solutions paying full
respect to the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and nonaligned status of the countries of the region. The declaration called upon the countries of South-West Asia to expeditiously terminate the armed conflict, to exercise restraint and cooperation constructively for reducing tensions and restoring peace. Both sides were confident that negotiated political solutions alone could guarantee a durable settlement of the existing problems of the region. Mrs. Gandhi said in a press conference in Moscow that the Afghanistan question should be viewed in its "totality" — the presence of Soviet troops as well as supply of weapons to insurgents from outside, which also was "interference".

The centrepiece of the joint declaration were the proposals on disarmament. India secured Soviet endorsement to its proposals for immediate suspension of nuclear weapons tested and convention on non-use of these weapons. For its part India welcomed the Soviet declaration not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and agreed with the Soviet Union that adoption of similar obligations by other nuclear weapons states would contribute to the achievement of complete ban on the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

Apart from issues related to South-West Asia and nuclear disarmament, the joint declaration also dealt with the need to restore détente between the two superpowers, find political solutions to conflicts in West Asia, South-East and elsewhere, convert the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, implementation of U.N. decisions on decolonisation and complete elimination of racism and apartheid in South Africa.

During the course of talks, both the leaders referred to certain specific issues and among them two merit attention. First, Pakistan's offer of a non-aggression treaty with India.
The Soviet Union has never looked at this offer as positive and Brezhnev was reported to have told Mrs. Gandhi that the Pakistan's proposal was a cover for induction of American weapons. Another was Mrs. Gandhi's reference to the role of the leftist parties in India. There had been much criticism in India that this was unjustified as it related to internal affairs of the country. Mrs. Gandhi had explained that the subject figured when she gave a bird's eye view of the political and economic situation in India. Similarly, Brezhnev surveyed the Soviet situation.

The highlight of Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Moscow however was the Soviet offer to set up a 1000 MW nuclear power station in India. Mrs. Gandhi had suggested on the first day of her visit further expansion of Soviet collaboration in nuclear energy among several major areas in which India needed help at this stage. But the Soviet offer, which was first made in 1979 by the then Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin, during his official visit to India, was considered by the Janata government which did not find it feasible. India had evolved a specific design of nuclear power plants suited to the local conditions and has achieved a great degree of self-reliance. Secondly, India has had frustrating experience of dependence on external nuclear fuel supply for the Tarapur Plant.

In sum, Mrs. Gandhi's visit to the Soviet Union was successful. Her visit had created an atmosphere conducive to further development of economic, diplomatic, defence and nuclear relations between the two countries.

Much of Indian attention was concentrated in the early months of 1983 on the Nonaligned Summit whose venue had been moved at the last minute from Baghdad at war with Iran, to New Delhi. Most members of the movement were pressing for an early summit, despite Baghdad's untenability, to praise Cuba
out of the Chairmanship, and India was happy to fill the breach. India had made a major contribution to the founding of the movement, but had not hosted a summit before.

The Soviets took keen interest in preparations for the summit, principally with a view to limiting the damage caused by their action in Afghanistan. Early in 1983, Leonid Zhegalov sounded the Soviet note in New Times. He said: "Indian politicians and diplomats are now taking an active part in drafting resolutions for the coming forum and consulting with representatives of other nonaligned countries on a wide range of questions. Some topics, like the so-called Afghan and Kampuchean questions, are tossed in from outside the movement to divert the conference from the discussion of truly burning issues, issues of paramount importance for the cause of peace and the developing countries. Delhi's stand on these questions is unambiguous." 94

The Soviets were banking on India to guide the summit through the shoals of Afghanistan and Kampuchea, a goal which coincided with New Delhi's objectives of bringing the summit to a successful conclusion. India's strategy was to emphasize issues of war and peace and economic development and give a global perspective to problems, instead of getting bogged down in regional issues. But there were no illusions about the contentious nature of the Afghan and Kampuchea problems. 95

G.L. Bondavesky, who arrived in Delhi at the end of a Soviet team to observe the summit declared: "The Seventh summit will be the most crucial in the history of the movement. You now have the right lady at the right place and the right time." 96

94 India Today, New Delhi, 31 Mar 1983
96 Quoted in India Today, New Delhi, 31 Mar 1983
In July 1983, the Soviets made a gesture to Mrs. Gandhi by inviting her son Rajiv Gandhi who had entered politics. Rajiv met almost everyone of note, including Ustinov, Gromyko, Arkhipov, Kuznetsov, Ponomora and Foreign Trade Minister Potolichev. Perhaps this was a Soviet way of pleasing Mrs. Gandhi. Immediately after Rajiv's return from Moscow, the pro-communist as distinguished from the CPI, press began lavishing praise on him.

There was no denying that despite multifarious development of the economic relationship, there were serious problems bedevilling trade between the two countries. The most serious problem was the huge balance in favour of India in its trade, particularly in the last three years. Indian exports to the Soviet Union far outstripped the Indian purchases from the Soviet Union. The turnover in Indo-Soviet trade increased eight and-one-half times between 1970-71 and 1981-82, showing sharp fluctuations and a dramatic increase from 1979 to 1982. Between 1980-83 India has been piling up a large surplus in its rupee holding as the trade with the Soviet Union is on the rupee trade pattern. According to the official figures, India's surplus had gone up from Rs. 212 crores in 1980-81 to Rs. 2,353 crores by the beginning of 1984.

This compelled the Soviet Union to reduce its purchases from India and led to the Soviet refusal to import Indian cashew in 1982-83 creating a serious problem for 200,000 workers in 120 cashew factories in Kerala.

The revised budget estimates for 1982-83 provided for Rs.12,800 million in "technical credits" to meet "temporary

97 Jayashankar, "India's Trade with the Soviet Block: Growing Dependency and Commodity Inconvertibility", Problem of Nonalignment, New Delhi, June-Aug 1983

98 The Times of India, Editorial, New Delhi, 9 May 1983
imbalance" in India's rupee payment trade, largely with the Soviet Union. In the Soviet view this imbalance in India's favour was far from temporary. According to one estimate, India's trade surplus in 1982 was Rs.6,680 million.  

The Soviet agreement to sell India more oil was, in effect, a reluctant and short term effort to maintain the level of trade. The Soviets were sufficiently alarmed over the long-term trend to fire a warning shot across the bow. In 1983, they suddenly withdrew from Indian markets and temporarily suspended shipment of goods. India's dependence on Soviet and East European markets in certain areas had been considerable. In percentage terms, the rupee trade area accounted for 96.8 of exports in knitwear, 83 in cosmetics, detergents and toiletries, 76 in mica, 69 in pepper, 65 in cashews, 45 in coffee, 42 in drugs and pharmaceuticals, 41.6 in tobacco and 23 in textiles.

Indian officials warned the Soviet Union that their abrupt withdrawal from the market would have political repercussions. Large parts of the country were dependent upon Soviet trade. Punjab in hosiery, Kerala in cashews, U.P. in shoe upper, Andhra in tobacco, apart from several enterprises set up specifically to cater to the Soviet demand. To Indian exporters, the government sent out a message that they should diversify their markets.

During Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Moscow in September 1982, the trade issue was discussed and the six-day visit to New Delhi of Arkhipov in May 1983 was a follow-up to the Moscow talks. Arkhipov signed a credit agreement of $140 million for the second stage of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. He also brought offers of two nuclear power plants of 440 megawatts each.

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99 Jayashankar, op.cit.
100 Ibid.
four more thermal power stations of 200 MW each and new oil refineries.\textsuperscript{101}

The trade quarrel was however patched up during 1983 by India promising to try harder to import Soviet machinery and the Soviets beginning a determined effort to interest the Indian private sector in Soviet industrial products.\textsuperscript{102}

On 15 November 1982 President Brezhnev died and Mrs. Gandhi flew to Moscow for the funeral. On 9 February 1984 Soviet President Andropov died. Mrs. Gandhi again went for the funeral and had a special session with his successor, Chernenko. Indira Gandhi's assassination on 31 October 1984 was deeply mourned in the Soviet Union. She was genuinely held in high regard by the Soviet people, and as a world leader who was friendly to the Soviet Union, her passing away caused concern and anxiety in Moscow.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's coming to power was welcomed. In its message of greetings to Rajiv Gandhi, the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers had said: "The people and the leadership of the Soviet Union attach great importance to strengthening and deepening traditional relations of friendship and cooperation with India. You may be rest assured of the Soviet Union's readiness to extend assistance to India in further consolidating its economy, and in enhancing its international prestige."\textsuperscript{103}

These assurances were reaffirmed during the meeting by Nikolai Tikhonov, Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers, had with Rajiv Gandhi on November 2, 1984. The

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{101} The Overseas Times, 20 May, 1983.
  \item \textsuperscript{102} For details see The Times of India, New Delhi, 11 Jan 1983
  \item \textsuperscript{103} The Times of India, New Delhi, 14 Nov 1984
\end{itemize}
Indian Prime Minister expressed profound gratitude for the kind wishes offered to him by the Soviet leadership and the deep sympathy expressed by the Soviet people. He had pointed out that India valued high its friendly relations with the Soviet Union and that these enjoyed the broad support of the political forces of the count and the Indian people in general. Proceeding from this fact, he had assured the Soviet delegation led by Nikolai Tikhenov, that much attention will be devoted to the further deepening of cooperation with the Soviet Union in keeping with the independent and peaceful foreign policy of the country, shaped under the guidance of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. 104

104 Ibid.
Chapter VI

ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

(A) Economic Relations

Indo-Soviet relations are characterised by mutual respect and trust between the leaders and people of the two countries and by diverse spheres and forms of bilateral cooperation. These words, taken from the joint Soviet-Indian Declaration signed in 1982, reflect in brief the essence of relations between the two countries.

Independent India's advance to economic progress is inseparably linked with Soviet-India cooperation. The relations between the two countries are a good example of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems. They are based on the principles of mutual benefit, complete equality, trust and non-interference in each other's affairs. These very principles underly the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation between the Soviet Union and India, signed in 1971.

Indo-Soviet relations currently embrace practically all major spheres of the two countries' economies: the heavy industry and geological prospecting, irrigation and the coal industry, machine building, space research and state planning. Tens of major enterprises of ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, machine building, oil, coal, medicine and other branches of industries as well as power and agriculture have been built in India with Soviet assistance during the short period. They first of all, are steel plants at Ranchi and Durgapur, aluminium plant at Korba, oil refineries at Barauni,
Koyali and Mathura, a number of coal enterprises, petroleum industry, power stations, instrumentation plant at Kota, pharmaceutical plants at Rishikesh, Hyderabad and Madras agricultural farms, higher middle education establishments and other important projects.¹

An important role in the development of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries belongs to trade. Statistics indicate that the provisions of the joint Soviet-Indian declaration signed in November 1973, dealing with the increase of mutual trade 1.5 to 2 times by 1980, was successfully brought into effect. Indeed, the volume of trade in 1980 exceeded 1.7 billion roubles, having increased 2.5 times since 1975.²

The Soviet Union has long ceased to be a buyer of traditional Indian export commodities. Along with stepping up the import of traditional items, the U.S.S.R. is increasingly importing Indian industrial or the so called engineering products.

Starting from the 70s, the Soviet Union, meeting the requests of the Indian side, appreciably increased the exports to India of many commodities and industrial articles: oil products, fertilisers, asbestos, metals, newsprint and so on. From 1977 the U.S.S.R. started exporting crude oil to India to meet the increased demand of the country's industry for this commodity. Machines and equipment hold important place in the structure of Soviet exports to India, too.

Trade is an important and most dynamically developing

¹ V.I. Litvinenko, Economic Counsellor of the U.S.S.R. Embassy in India, The Times of India, New Delhi, 13 April 1987

² Y. Pitovranov, President of the Presidium of the USSR Chamber of Commerce and Industry, The Times of India, New Delhi, 18 Nov 1984
sector of the bilateral Soviet-Indian trade relations. It has been developing on a long-term and balanced rupee payment basis. Such a system of trade has been in existence between the two countries for over 30 years. It has been tested by time and has proved its vitality and utility.

Before 1955, when the first economic agreement was signed, India imported little from the Soviet Union. The trade was almost stagnant. After the 1955 agreement, with growing Soviet exports to India of plants and machinery, Indian exports to the Soviet Union continued to rise till the early 70s. With the growing development of its economy, India's demand for plants and machines began to decline, and its need for raw materials began to rise.

After two decades India's exports to the U.S.S.R. increased to Rs.2,858 million and imports to Rs.2,547 million in 1973-74. In the next year there was a steep rise in both exports to and imports from the U.S.S.R. and it became India's most important trade partner.3

The overall Soviet foreign trade grew from 6.4 billion dollars in 1955 to about 20 billion dollars in 1958. In commodity composition of the foreign trade, consumption goods increased from 25 per cent of the total imports in 1955 to 34 per cent in 1968.4

During the 1960s agricultural products began to yield place to manufacture, especially to engineering industry in the composition of India's exports to the Soviet Union. The

3 R.H. Patel, "Emerging Possibilities in India's Bilateral Trade", Economic and Political Weekly, 5 March, 1977
4 M. Sebastian Stanislaus, Soviet Economic Aid to India, New Delhi, 1975, p.159
manufactured exports were made up to clothing, chemicals, footwear, dyeing and tanning materials, pharmaceutical products, iron and steel and engineering goods. In the second half of the sixties the exports of engineering goods to the Soviet Union showed an increasing trend. The value of the engineering exports stood at Rs.97 lakhs in 1968-69. However, these exports amounted to only one per cent of the total Indian engineering exports in 1968-69. Export of other commodities like clothing and iron and steel also showed an upward trend in the late sixties.

It is also necessary to mention here that by the end of 1960s the Soviet Union constituted a significant market for many Indian exports. For instance, the Soviet Union accounted for 64% of India's total export of fruit juices, 60% of batteries, 59% of woolen hosiery, 55% of men's shirts and 52% of leather footwear.

Therefore, from the early seventies, the U.S.S.R. stepped up the supply of raw materials to India which rose to about 85%. It was realised then that further growth of Indo-Soviet trade would depend on India buying more machines, equipment and technology from the Soviet Union.

Geared to India's planned development, Indo-Soviet trade has played a major role in the industrialisation of India. About 70 major projects in the core sector of the Indian economy — steel, heavy machines, oil, power, coal and others — have been built in India through Soviet assistance. This has not only placed India among the industrial countries of the world but also advanced its economic independence and self reliance today. India holds the leading place among the developing countries with whom the Soviet Union maintains trade relations.5

5 The Times of India, New Delhi, 18 Nov 1984
For more than 30 years now trade between the two countries has been built on the basis of long-term agreement signed for five year periods. Today, it is based on a trade agreement for 1986-1990. Every year the two countries sign protocols on trade turnover specifying the list and volume of mutual goods deliveries with due regard for each side's requirements and capabilities. The planned character of trade enables the U.S.S.R. and India to make appropriate provisions in their respective long term and current plans of economic development for the planned mutual goods deliveries under long-term agreements and yearly protocols. ⁶

In the subsequent period, having made substantial progress in the development of national machine building, India started gradually reducing the import of many types of machines and equipment. In the period between 1981 and 1985 the share of machines and equipment in the general volume of Soviet exports to India averaged 15 per cent. Today, the U.S.S.R. exports aircraft, trucks, mining, geological prospecting, oil drilling, metallurgical, power and other equipment to India.

India's exports to the U.S.S.R. include a wide range of goods which are not produced in U.S.S.R. for climatic reasons such as coffee, castor oil, black pepper, jute, etc., or whose home production does not meet the existing demand (hides and skins, tea, mica, cotton fabrics, shoe uppers, etc.).

The share of the U.S.S.R. in the general volume of Indian exports is growing all the time and stood at about 15 per cent in 1984, while in the export of individual commodities it is actually much higher, viz., coffee-37 %, tea-28 %, black pepper and other species-25 %, tobacco-40 % and jute articles-65 %.

⁶ A.P. Filatov, "Fruitful Soviet-Indian Trade Cooperation", The Times of India Supplement, New Delhi, 14 Nov 1986
⁷ Ibid.
The growth in the volume of import from India is accompanied by changes in its commodity structure. In particular, the share of agricultural products (tea, coffee, spices, groundnuts) is declining, although in absolute figures their imports to the U.S.S.R. continues to grow, while the share of finished articles (engineering products, clothes, cotton fabrics, shoes upper, etc.) is going up the shares of finished articles in the general Soviet import of Indian goods surpassed 60 per cent in 1985, with engineering products accounting for 12 per cent of that total. 8

A new trade agreement, an agreement on mutual supplies of goods during 1986-1990 as well as a protocol on the supplies of machinery and equipment in India during 1986-1990 (under a commercial credit for 10 years at four per cent interest) were signed in furtherance of the agreements and accords concluded between the two countries. These documents will serve as the basis for the broadening of Soviet-Indian trade during the entire current five-year plan period. They define the main principles and the consignment of goods of mutual deliveries. 9

The creation of an Indo-Soviet Joint Commission in 1972 was also a significant step in the promotion of trade and economic cooperation. An equally important step was the agreement between the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Soviet Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 1979. The contacts between the two chambers have grown from 1979 so that today not only regular exchanges of business delegations take place but also seminars and meetings are conducted in order to explore further possibilities for trade exchange. 10 The agreement notably provides for the exchange of

8 Ibid.
9 I. Semenov, Trade Representative of the USSR in India, The Times of India, New Delhi, 9 Aug 1986
10 The Times of India, New Delhi, 18 Nov 1984
information on issues of mutual interest, for the organisation
of various symposiums and seminars, for assistance in staging
exhibitions in both countries, for the exchange of delegations
of representatives of business circles and so on.

Under that agreement, the U.S.S.R. Chamber of Commerce
has worked out business programmes and organised visits to
Soviet foreign trade organisations, ministries and agencies
for more than 20 delegations from India. In April 1982, in
accordance with the agreement there was a seminar on "How to
Trade with the USSR" in India, which was attended by a delega-
tion of the Soviet Chamber of Commerce and Industry and by
about 250 representatives of Indian firms and organisations.

In the period between 1977 and 1982 over 70 Indian firms
have taken part in various international and specialised
exhibitions organised in the U.S.S.R. with the assistance of
the U.S.S.R. Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The 1978
National Exhibition of India in Moscow was a big success. About
400 Indian firms and organisations took part in the exhibition
which was attended by 1.5 million visitors. Even bigger
exhibition was staged in the Soviet Union in 1984.

The export of goods to the U.S.S.R. is of special impor-
tance for India since in conditions of perpetual instability
of the world capitalist economy and because of the various
restrictions and barriers raised by the Western nations in the
way of exports from developing countries, Indian goods are
running into mounting competition on the world market and
therefore their share in world trade is declining.

India's share has decreased in the global export of tea

11 Y.Pitovranov, President of the Presidium of the USSR Chamber
of Commerce and Industry, The Times of India, 18 Nov 1984
12 Ibid.
from 27 to 16 per cent, of cotton fabrics from 5 to 1.7 and of coffee from 2 to 0.9 per cent. In these conditions the Soviet Union remains a large and secure market for Indian goods. Moreover, stable purchases by the Soviet Union of certain Indian goods have led to the establishment and intensive development of corresponding industries in India such as the production of knit wear clothing and shoe uppers. 13

The results of Soviet-Indian trade cooperation and the permanent drive of these two countries for its further expansion and advancement show how much can be accomplished by states with different socio-economic systems if their relations are built on the principles of equality, mutual benefit and respect for each other's interest. Good prospects for the further consolidation of trade contract were opened after the signing of a trade agreement between the U.S.S.R. and India for 1981-85, providing for a further growth of mutual trade by about 100 per cent. In 1982, trade turnover between the two countries totalled as much as 2.5 billion Roubles. 14

At the end of sixth five-year trade agreement (1981-85), Soviet-Indian trade touched the 178 billion Rupee mark, which was 2.5 times more than the trade turnover during 1976-1980. In 1985 trade turnover between India and Soviet Union exceeded Rs.44 billion for the first time. 15

The most favourable possibilities for production cooperation between Soviet Foreign Trade organisations and Indian public organisations and private firms exist in such fields as power, electronics, computers, machine tools, transport,

13 A.P. Filatov, op.cit.
14 Y. Pitovranov, President of the Presidium of the USSR Chamber of Commerce and Industry, The Times of India, 14 Nov 1984
15 I. Semenov, op.cit.
production of transport means (trucks, cars, electric locomotives), power and mining equipment. The visit of a delegation of the Indian Association of Engineering Industry to the U.S.S.R. (in May 1985) and of a delegation of the U.S.S.R. State Planning Committee to India (in October 1985) laid the foundations for this work. These visits revealed to both sides a number of interesting fields of possible cooperation. The results of these visits were concretised later at the session of the working group of production cooperation and machine building, held in January 1986.

The Fourth Session of the working group on electronics, which concluded in Delhi, was a concrete and important step in this direction. A working programme of cooperation in the field of electronics for 1986-1990 elaborated a long-term programme of cooperation in computer technology and electronics till the year 2000. Such programmes are being worked out for other branches as well, as envisaged by the Agreement of Basic Directions of Economic, Trade and Scientific Technical Cooperation till 2000, signed on May 22, 1985.

Considerable work is being done in the field of Soviet-Indian trade. After registering constant growth in the commodity turnover during all these years, in 1986, following the steep decline in the prices of oil and petroleum products in the world market, the commodity turnover also declined. However, as a result of the efforts made by the two sides, in 1987, it became possible to stabilise lateral trade and ensure its growth. For this, new commodities such as plastics, ammonia, cellulose, raw materials, non-ferrous metals and methanol, etc., were added to the Soviet-Indian trade as new additional possibilities were explored for increasing the supplies to India of a number of important goods.16

16 Gennadi Scherbakov, Trade Representative of the USSR in India, The Times of India, New Delhi, 18 Nov 1988
The two countries are also considering possibilities of utilisation of such forms of cooperation with India's public sector and private firms as participation in the construction of joint projects in the U.S.S.R. by Indian firms, conclusion of long-term contracts between Soviet organisations and Indian private and public sector firms which export Soviet goods and import Indian goods, organisations of counter deliveries and barter deals, widening of the exchange of visits of delegations of industrial and trade circles of the two countries, development of cooperation between Soviet and Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, associations and amalgamations, organisation of exhibitions, seminars and symposiums, participation of Soviet organisations and Indian firms in fairs and exhibitions to be held in the U.S.S.R. and India.

Of late, substantial progress has been made in this direction as a result of the holding of a number of exhibitions and seminars and mutual visits of delegations. A major specialised exhibition of Soviet machinery, equipment and technology in Bombay and exhibition of fifteen Soviet foreign trade organisations held earlier in Calcutta, Bangalore and Pune, were a great success. The seminar on "Indo-Soviet Trade and Economic Relations" held in Delhi on January 2-3, 1986, at the India International Centre with the active participation of a number of Union Ministries of India, leading State Corporations, associations and federations of private sector firms was extremely interesting and useful. Undoubtedly, such seminars should be held more frequently.
## INDO-SOVIET TRADE

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**Source:** *India Today, Oct 15, 1982*
INDIA'S TRADE WITH U.S.S.R.

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Source: The Times of India, New Delhi, 25 Nov 1986

Major Projects

Indo-Soviet Cooperation in Steel Making - The signing of the historic agreement on 2 February 1955, on the construction of Bhilai Steel Plant, marked the beginning of this fruitful and highly beneficial cooperation.

The share of Soviet-assisted iron and steel plants is nearly one-third high in the aggregate national steel output. In Bhilai the steel plate rolling mill 3600 assembled of equipment manufactured by the Soviet Novakramatorsk and Indian Ranchi Heavy Machine-Building plants has been steadily advancing to its design capacity. The Bhilai plant started up three continuous steel casting machines which are to supply the rolling mill 3600 with slabs and a blooming installation. Equipment for these plants was manufactured by the Soviet South-Ural and Indian Ranchi Machine Building plants. 17

The Bhilai Steel Plant managed by the Steel Authority of

17 V. Kolpakov, Minister of Iron and Steel Industry, USSR, The Statesman, New Delhi, 10 Aug 1986
India Limited contributes more than 30 per cent of the total production of steel in the country. Since the beginning of operation in 1959 and by the end of 1975-76, the plant with the capacity utilisation of about 94 per cent has registered cumulative production of 25 million tonnes of ingot steel and that of 20 million tonnes in 1962-63 and was subsequently expanded to 2.5 million tonnes in 1967. The plant is under process of expansion. 18

In 1974-75 the profit-wise performance of Bhilai was extremely impressive. Out of the total profit of Rs.400 million made by the Hindustan Steel Limited, Bhilai contributed Rs.360 million. A substantial amount of Bhilai's production is exported to more than 40 countries thereby earning a considerable amount of foreign exchange. Till March 1976, it had exported 4.4 million tonnes of steel worth Rs.248 crores.19

India is in fact the largest recipient of Soviet aid among the developing countries. Starting with the construction of the Bhilai plant, the Soviet Union has assisted India setting up about 70 more enterprises. By 30 April 1977 the total Soviet credit facilities to India has reached Rs.1,920 crores. The Soviet Union has so far provided long-term credits of Rs.1,237 crores.20

These long-term credits have helped India to emerge as one of the industrial states on the world map. Today Soviet aided projects in India account for 85 % of heavy engineering goods, 60 % of turbo-generators and heavy electrical equipments, 31 % of steel, 20 % of electric power, 70 % of oil

19 The Patriot, New Delhi, 26 May 1975
products and 16% of iron ore. 21

At the moment, the work to expand the plant's capacity to 4 million tonnes of steel a year is nearing completion. Already built is a converter shop with a capacity of 1.5 million tonnes of steel a year with continuous pouring stabbing and blooming mills, and a high capacity thick steel rolling mill 3600; these production facilities were designed by the Indian company MECON with the participation of a number of Soviet agencies at the initial stage of designing. A seventh blast furnace with a volume of 2,000 cum. and a ninth cokeoven battery are under construction at Bhilai now under MECON's designs. 22

Another big step in Soviet-India metallurgical cooperation was the construction of the Steel Mill of Bokaro. The first stage of the plant with a capacity of 1.7 million tonnes of steel per annum was completed in early 1978. At the moment workers and engineers are completing the expansion of the plant to a capacity of 4 million tonnes a year. 23

Meanwhile, Bokaro has emerged as the biggest supplier of pig iron to the foundries of the country thereby meeting 45% of the demand. In June 1977, it completed despatch of one million tonnes of pig iron valued at over Rs.380 million of which 660,000 tonnes were sold at the home market and 334,000 tonnes were exported to the Soviet Union and Japan, earning Rs.110 million in foreign exchange. 24

In 1979 the U.S.S.R. and India signed an agreement on cooperation with the construction of a new Steel Mill at

21 Subrata Banerjee, "Indo-Soviet Economic Cooperation and Struggle Against Neo-Colonialism", Amity, 9(2-3).
22 I.Kazanets, Minister of Ferrous Metallurgy of the USSR, The Times of India, New Delhi 14 Nov 1984
23 Ibid.
24 R.K.Sharma, op.cit.
Visakhapatnam with a capacity of 3.2 million tonnes of steel a year with the first stage production facilities having a capacity of 1.1 million tonnes of steel per annum. The plant is designed with due regard for the latest advances in ferrous metallurgy. It will have blast furnaces with a unit volume of 3,200 cub.m and coke batteries with an oven volume of 41.6 cub.m, a converter shop where all steel will be cast by 6 steam continuous pouring machines and a rolling shop with advanced high productive rolling mills.25

These days Soviet design agencies are completing a cost and feasibility study for modernising and expanding India's oldest TISCO Steel Mill at Burnpur. The accomplishment of the measures provided for by the study will help raise the plant's output, upgrade its efficiency, introduce new technologies and equipment and thereby expand the range of finished products, upgrade their quality and improve working conditions at the plant.

To provide India with qualified national metallurgical design personnel, the U.S.S.R. renders it technical assistance in strengthening the country's research and design institutions.

Oil - Soviet and Indian oil producers have been cooperating for more than three decades now. The seismic sea survey undertaken with the aid of Soviet seismic ship lasted from 1964 to 1966. Nearly 124,000 square kms of shelf area is extremely promising according to the provisional estimates.26

The Soviet Union has made the most valuable contribution in the field of necessary skills for Indian oil industry. Nearly 1,500 oil experts have visited India to assist the ONGC and

25 I. Kazanets, op. cit.
26 See for details, V.B. Singh, Indo-Soviet Relations 1947-77, New Delhi, 1978, p.38
more than 400 oil engineers and workers have received training in the U.S.S.R. and 500 other Indian oil specialists have been trained directly at the work sites.27

The Soviet Union has not only helped in the field of prospecting, drilling and production of crude oil but also in the public sector at Barauni, Koyali and Mathura. The Barauni refinery started production in 1964 for which the agreement was signed in September 1959. The capacity of this refinery was expanded from two million tonnes to three million tonnes in November 1967. The two million tonnes annual capacity at Koyali was also built with Soviet assistance. It was commissioned in 1965 and its capacity was expanded to three million tonnes in September 1967.

Soviet oil producers are glad that India is an oil producing nation, with annual production estimated at 30 million tonnes. It has launched offshore production on the Bombay shelf, in addition to onshore facilities in the States of Gujarat and Assam where Indian specialists for the first time discovered oil deposits and began to develop oil fields with the help of their Soviet colleagues.28

Cooperation between Soviet and Indian producers has now entered a new stage. Earlier, seismological prospecting conducted with the help of Soviet specialists in some areas of different oil and gas bearing basins was not tied up in a single programme. In line with inter-governmental agreements of 22 May 1985 and 27 November 1986, Soviet organisations at the present time fulfil all geological and prospecting operations on a contract basis in a comprehensive programme within the boundaries of agreed-upon onshore


28 V. Dinkov, Minister for the Soviet Oil Industry, The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 23 Nov 1987
districts of India. These include geophysical research, data process and interpretation, the drilling of exploration wells, evaluation of recoverable oil reserves, project design and development of a feasibility report on a contract for geological prospecting in West Bengal, now under the consilopment of new fields. These works are to be carried out and paid for by Soviet organisations in Cauvery, North Cambay and West Bengal basins.\(^29\)

**Coal** - Soviet assistance in coal industry has been equally vital. There were four projects in 1974 (increased to 12 in 1987), in the coal industry built with Soviet assistance — the Banki project with an annual capacity of 0.6 million tonnes, Surakhachar project with 1.1 million tonnes, coal quarry in Manikpur with 1.0 million tonnes of coal and coal washery at Kathara with a capacity to process 3 million tonnes of raw coal per year.\(^30\) In 1975-76 these enterprises made a profit of about Rs.100 lakhs. Apart from so many other valuable technical assistance in the development of Indian coal industry, the Soviet Union has assisted India also in the Mining and Allied Machinery Plant at Durgapur with a capacity of over 45,000 tonnes of mining equipment annually.\(^31\) In 1975-76 it earned a net profit of Rs.70 lakhs.

Over the 30 years of Soviet-Indian cooperation in coal-mining, quite a number of coal mining and processing facilities have been started up in India, including the above mentioned Surakachar and Banki manies, and the Ramgarh, Manikpur and Jayant open cast mines and Kathara benefication plant. This led to a considerable increase in the national coal output in

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29 Ibid.
India, which has grown to something like 170 million tonnes of coal a year. Indian authorities are planning to raise coal production to 400 million tonnes by the year 2000. Soviet assisted projects will account for a quarter of the annual national output of coal.\footnote{M. Schadov, Minister of Coal Industry, \textit{The Hindustan Times}, New Delhi, 23 Nov 1987}\footnote{Ibid.}

In keeping with these accords, the Ministry of Coal Industry of the U.S.S.R. and the Ministry of Steel and Mines of the Government of India developed and signed a programme for cooperation in coal production for up to the year 2000.

Soviet design institution have already developed projects for the Mukunda open cast mine with a capacity of 12 million tonnes of coal a year, Nigahi open-cast mine with a capacity of 14 million tonnes of coal a year and the Jhanjra mine (2.8 million tonnes) among others. Three more designs are underway for the Moher, Kumari and Khaida open-cast mines with an aggregate capacity of 30 million tonnes of coal a year. Another five designs for the Sitanala, Kapuriya, Mahal, Karhauri and Parbatpur mines with an aggregate capacity of nine million tonnes of coal a year will be completed in the very near future.\footnote{Ibid.}

Soviet organisations elaborated a master plan for the development of the Godavari coal deposit in the southern part of India, which provides for the construction of 12 conventional and five open-cast pits with an aggregate capacity of 24 million tonnes of coal a year. A possibility is being considered for building fuel-energy complexes at the Mukunda open-cast mine in Bihar and the Neiveli-lll open cast mine in Tamil Nadu.\footnote{Ibid.}
The Soviet Union gives expert and technical assistance in driving three shafts at the Jhanjra mine and developing steep coal beds at the Tipong mine. The Soviet Union began shipping of equipment for the Khadiya, Mukunda and Jhanjra mines.  

Power Industry - Since 1957 the leading design and head building, assembly and adjustment organisations of the Ministry of Electric Power Development and Electrification of the U.S.S.R. have, together with Indian specialists, been actively involved in the designing and building of 16 power plants, including factory-attached, having a total capacity of 345 million kilowatts. It is to be said here that the initial period of cooperation laid a good and healthy foundation for mutual understanding and confidence between the two countries.

In 1968-69 the Harduaganj, Korba, Obra and other fuel-burning and hydraulic power plants were completed and put to use. One of India's largest electricity generating facilities at Neyveli stands apart among thermal power stations.  

The Heavy Electrical Equipment Plant at Hardwar, also set up with Soviet assistance, was an important landmark in the development of our power industry. Presently it is meeting more than 56% of the demand for large power generators and a substantial part of the demand for large size industrial motors. This is a technologically advanced plant which produced turbines with a capacity of 200,000 kilowatts. Not a single developing country except India is manufacturing such machines.  

Agreement on economic and technical cooperation between

35 Ibid.
36 Anatoli Mayorets, Minister of Power Industry and Electrification of USSR, The Statesman, New Delhi, 10 Aug 1986
37 Soviet Review, 13(39), 26 Aug 1976, p.36
the Soviet Union and India, signed on December 10, 1980, marked a new phase in the development of bilateral cooperation. Under it, the Soviet and Indian organisations signed in 1982 contracts on giving India assistance in building the first stage of the Vindhyachal Thermal Power Plant, consisting of six power units of 210 megawatts each. 38

Equipment and materials supplies for the Vindhyachal project began in late 1984. As of now 4 boiler units, 2 turbines, 2 generators and part of the generators and part of the general and auxiliary equipment have been shipped; most of the equipment has been supplied for the first power unit, due for commissioning in June 1987. Together with their Indian colleagues a group of Soviet specialists are conducting building inspecting and contract supervision of equipment. 39

Simultaneously the Soviet Union and India are building the 570 km Vindhyachal-Jabalpur-Itarsi power-transfer line of 400 kilowatts. The detail contractor design of the line has been handed over to the customer. Metalwork pylons, wires, insulators and equipment for the line are being supplied. At the Soviet-Indian summit in 1982 the agreement in principle was reached on giving India assistance in the building of industrial projects, including a thermal power plant of 1,000 megawatts. The Soviet organisations discussed India's feasibility study on Kahalgaon fuel burning plant (4 power units of 210 megawatts each) in Bihar and issued in October, 1983, the assistance proposals. 40

The bilateral scientific and technical cooperation in the use of low-calorie fuels and solar energy holds an important place. An impetus to it was given by the signing of the

38 Anatoli Mayorets, op.cit.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.

Space - Soviet-Indian cooperation in space studies dates back more than 20 years. Since late 1963, meteorological rockets with a ceiling of up to 100 kilometers have been blasting off an international launching pad in the vicinity of the fisherman's townlet of Thumba, a suburb of the city of Trivandrum.

The joint Soviet-Indian space flight marked the beginning of a new and important stage in the Indian national space programme. India was the fourteenth country of the 150 odd U.N. members to send a man into space. April 19, 1975, June 17, 1979 and November 20, 1981 were important milestones along the road of Soviet-Indian cooperation in space development. These were the days of launching the Indian satellites of Aryabhata, Bhaskara-1 and Bhaskara-2 from the Soviet Kapustin Yar Cosmodrome. Soviet specialists consulted their Indian counterparts at all stages of the development and manufacture of satellites and their preparation for launching. Soviet industry supplies a number of on board systems and units including the altitude control and stabilisation system, solar and chemical cells, computers and thermal insulation. The Soviet Medvezhile Ozera tracking station was actively involved in their flight programmes. These launchings confirmed what Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, first Chairman of the Indian National Committee for Space Research, once said that "if we need help in space technology we shall ask the Soviet Union. We need not only a satellite, but also the knowhow in building it, the knowhow in space technology, and only the Russians can give us such help."41

41 V.Kozynev, Vice Chairman of the Intercosmos Council under the USSR Academy of Sciences, The Times of India, New Delhi, 9 Aug 1986
In 1961, when Yuri Gagarin, the first space hero of the world came to India, he spoke of the time when Soviet and Indian cosmonauts would together explore the universe. India was grateful to him for his kind thought but attached no more importance to it because it did not have, then, even a space programme.  

India's space programme took shape when the U.S.S.R. launched the world's first Earth Satellite in 1957, India established an optical tracking station at the Nainital Observatory (U.P.) to watch it. In 1958 the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay, began launching constant altitude plastic balloons to collect data on high altitude conditions. In 1961 space research was brought under the Department of Atomic Energy. In 1962 the Indian Council for Space Research was formed. A decision was soon taken to open a sounding rocket launching site to carry out systematic launchings. In 1969 the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was formed.

In 1982 India and the U.S.S.R. concluded an agreement to launch the fourth Indian satellite by a Soviet carrier. The 'IRSIA' satellite meant for the earth's natural resources research was launched into space from the Bayconur spaceport on March 17, 1980.

On 3 April, 1984, the Soviet Union launched the Soyuz T-11 Spaceship with an international crew of two Soviets and one Indian Cosmonaut, Rakesh Sharma. The joint Soviet-Indian space flight marked the beginning of a new and important stage in the Indian national space programme.

Soviet and Indian scientists continued their research into gamma astronomy using balloon-carried telescopes. These

air balloons start from a special ground in the vicinity of the Indian city of Hyderabad which lies on the geomagnetic equator. Soviet scientists recommended to consider the possibility of installing jointly.  

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**Agriculture** - The industrial sector has claimed nearly 99% of total aid from the U.S.S.R. to India. This, because firstly, in the Soviet development strategy agriculture was given a minimal role. Between 1921 and 1950 agriculture received a share of only 8% of the total investment, while industry drew as much as 70% of the total. Secondly, the Soviet Union was convinced that a scientific development of agriculture in India was possible only through socialisation measures, because collectivisation of land would facilitate mechanisation of agriculture. In the view of Soviet Union therefore, agricultural growth would only be a function of land reforms.

It is not surprising in this context that the little Soviet aid that India got for agriculture has flowed largely to state farms.

The Soviet Union has offered a gift of machinery and equipment constituting a composite unit for a farm of about 30,000 acres at Suratgarh, Rajasthan. This led to the establishment of the centralised mechanised farm, and it is the first and the largest of its kind in the country and is noted for production of improved seeds. The farm stretches over an area of 30,331 acres of which 27,300 acres are devoted to agricultural operations which yield good crops despite water shortage. The Suratgarh farm constitutes the core of India's seed growing farms. The organisational principles for large state farms evolved at Suratgarh are now utilised to set up

\[43\] V.Kozyrev, *op.cit.*
state livestock breeding farms. Machine operators trained in the farm now work in the fields in nearly all the Indian states.

This followed by the setting up of yet another farm in 1964 at Jetsar, Rajasthan, with the help of machinery purchased from the Soviet Government. The completion of a number of irrigation projects in the Third Plan period opened up large areas of wasteland. Here was an opportunity to set up more large-sized mechanised farms, and the Soviet Government agreed to gift machinery for five state seed farms, of these four farms at Hirakud (Orissa), Hissar (Haryana), Jullunder (Punjab) and Raichur (Karnataka) have already been set up. The five year (1971-76) inter-governmental agreement on scientific and technical cooperation in agriculture had been extended for the next five years.

On 19 July 1973, the Union Minister of State for Agriculture, A.P. Shinde, inaugurated at New Delhi a photo exhibition "The Agriculture of the USSR", at the House of Soviet Culture. Speaking about the Indo-Soviet collaboration in agricultural research and development which has grown over the years, Mr. Shinde said: "We now have a number of state farms operated with Soviet machinery. We also have extensive programmes of sheep improvement based upon Russian marine". He added that he was grateful for the possibility that India might also be able to intensify its sheep improvement programme for the desert areas of Rajasthan and Gujarat by using the famous Karakul sheep. 44

The Soviet Union has offered to supply India, on a loan basis, two million tonnes of food grains including certain quantity of rice, giving one more magnificent proof of its

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44 News and Views from the Soviet Union, A press release issued by the Information Department of the USSR Embassy in New Delhi on 29 July, 1973, XXXII (168), pp.4-5
sincere friendship with this country. The offer was conveyed personally by Soviet Communist Party General Secretary, Leonid Brezhnev, in a special message to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 25 September 1973. In his letter to Mrs.Gandhi, Mr.Brezhnev said: "Taking into account Indi's food difficulties caused by unfavourable weather conditions and being guided by aspirations to develop friendly Soviet-Indian relations, the Soviet Government is willing to supply India two million tonnes of foodgrains including a certain amount of rice, on a loan basis." The despatch of the food grains can be started immediately Mr.Brezhnev informed Mrs.Gandhi.45

Food Secretary G.C.L.Juneja, who announced India's acceptance of the Soviet offer at a press conference on 28 September 1973 said: "The charming feature of the offer is that it was made by our friend, the Soviet Union entirely on their own initiatives.46

It is necessary to note that in 1971 and early 1972 the food situation deteriorated because India had to feed over 10 million refugees from East Pakistan. Again, floods in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar destroyed about 2 million tonnes of foodgrains. As India was unable to be independent of food imports, the supply from U.S.S.R. was welcomed.

In 1979 a protocol was signed by Dr.D.P.Gautam, Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), and A.A.Geltehov, Soviet Deputy Minister of Agriculture, which took into account the provisions of the long-term programmes of cooperation signed in March 1979 when the Soviet Premier had visited India.

45 Patriot, New Delhi, 29 Sept 1973
46 Ibid.
Science and Technology - The first agreement on cultural, scientific and technological cooperation was signed in 1960. It opened the way from contacts between individuals or groups of scientists, to relations between scientific organisations. It has also helped India to advance its scientific education. And the two countries have been cooperating in fundamental research in a number of fields — agriculture, power generation, solar energy, atomic power, space programme, and several others.

Bilateral technological cooperation has come a long way. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Soviet Academy of Sciences and its branches and the Indian organisations conducted joint research into geology, geophysics, cybernetics, crystallography, magnetohydrodynamics (MHD) generators, petrochemistry, engineering, ferrous metallurgy and other spheres. The results of much of this research were later introduced into metallurgy, oil and gas industry, power industry, engineering and other industries.

In 1980-87, Soviet-Indian scientific cooperation was governed by an agreement between the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Science and Technology and the Indian Department of Science and Research. The document highlighted the development of alternate energy sources and new power generating technologies.

Both countries are keen about computer development. Apart from setting up a Faculty for Computer Studies at the Institute of Science, Bangalore, the U.S.S.R. has been cooperating with India in the computer field for a number of years. The U.S.S.R. is already producing super computers of 100 million operations per second. 47

47 Shankar Narain, "New Horizons in Science and Technology", The Times of India, 13 April 1987
Science Academy will continue their cooperation in fundamental research, particularly in earth sciences, physics, mathematics, chemistry, biology, etc. Further development of the computer and electronic revolution depends on production of new materials. The two countries are doing joint research in a number of fields to achieve this target. The Soviet Union itself has set the target of eliminating man's presence in the technological processes and production of high purity substances.

Radiation technology and synchrotron radiation are new technologies with immense industrial application potential. The U.S.S.R. has supplied an accelerator to the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). Among its uses, are may be mentioned. It can disinfect food grains at 200 tonnes per hour and is much cheaper compared to chemical methods and improves storing.\(^48\)

India and the U.S.S.R. have been closely working on the problems of desertification and environmental problems. The two countries are particularly interested in three areas: fixing of moving sands, problem of desalination and fertility.

During the 10th session of the Inter-governmental Soviet-Indian Commission on Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation (Delhi 28-29 April 1986) an agreement was reached on widening production cooperation on long-term basis. A protocol on cooperation by the production of a wide range of products of machine-building was signed in January 1987 in Delhi. A programme in the field of production upto the year 2000 has been prepared.\(^49\)

\(^48\) Ibid.

\(^49\) V.I. Litvinenko, Economic Counsellor of the USSR Embassy in India, *The Times of India*, New Delhi, 13 April 1987
The Comprehensive Long-term Programme of Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and India, signed by Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi in Moscow on July 3, 1987, marked a major step along this road. The activities envisaged by the programme from three groups.

The first of them comprises joint works in the priority fields of science and technology with the aim of putting the results to use in the economics of the U.S.S.R. and India in the immediate future. They are research exercises in the sphere of biotechnology and immunology, including development of medicines, materials technology, laser and space technology, development and use (including industrial uses) of powerful electron accelerations, technology for surveying for underground water, computer technology and electronics, and development and use of catalysts. The prospects of dynamic economic and social development of the two countries are now determined by their scientific potential in the sphere of pure science. That is why the next group of the projects envisaged by the Comprehensive programme deals with the most important research work in fundamental sciences — mathematics, mechanics, physics, astronomy and sciences concerning the earth, biology, chemistry and ecology.

And, lastly, the third group of the areas for long-term development of cooperation, such as non-traditional (including renewable) energy sources, long distance transfer of power, machine-building and instrument making.

During the drafting of the Comprehensive Programme priority was given to the research projects in which the scientific and technical interests of the Societ and Indian scientists were manifested most graphically.

50 The Times of India, New Delhi, 4 July 1987
51 Ibid., 19 Nov 1988
The Soviet and Indian scientists pay particular attention to research and development in the field of electronic materials and hyperpure substances necessary for carrying out work relating to high temperature superconductivity. The first meeting of the Joint Council held in New Delhi on March 30-31, 1988 showed such a scheme for directing the programme and assuring its fulfilment is effective.

In the sphere of materials technology and development of new structural materials the scientists of the two countries have focused on the development and treatment of composite and superstrong materials, the application of diamond coatings, the development of articles by a super plastic moulding method, and on the treatment of materials in space. These works are being carried out successfully particularly in the field of production of friction materials and articles made of Indian iron ore — "blue dust". To conduct research in this area, the two sides have recognised it expedient to establish a joint Soviet-Indian centre for materials technology. The scientific-technical and organisational aspects of such a centre are now being considered. 52

Power metallurgy figures prominently among the fields of scientific-technical cooperation in which the results are not bad. The preparations for signing a general agreement on building a joint Soviet-Indian centre for dust metallurgy on Indian territory are nearing completion. Development of production processes and equipment for turning Indian iron ore ('blue dust') into iron powder and of titanium filters, and hydrodynamic compaction of powders by an explosion are to be the main directions in the work of this centre. All this means that the activity of the centre will be aimed at satisfying the needs of the two countries economies in the most up-to-date materials.

52 Ibid.
The project to set up an anti-poliomyelitis vaccine production unit in India, based on Soviet technology and with an annual capacity of 100 million doses is also at the organisational stage. An agreement on this was signed in Moscow on September 19, 1988.

The projects in the field of development and synthesis of new catalysts and creation of new production processes on their basis are much closer to technical reality. The Joint Soviet-Indian Council for implementing and coordinating the Comprehensive Long-term Programme of Scientific and Technical Cooperation instructed the respective organisations in both countries to prepare urgent proposals on establishing a joint Soviet-Indian enterprise for the industrial production of new catalysts and new catalytic technologies, developed within the framework of Soviet-Indian Cooperation and the national programme, and for the sale of them in India, the Soviet Union and third countries.

Soviet-Indian Cooperation in the priority fields of science and technology is carried out on a priority basis and is clearly aimed at accomplishing the most important economic tasks facing the two countries.

(B) Cultural Relations

Cultural ties between the two countries were put on a firm foundation after India became independent. Together with traditional exchanges such as of artists and exhibitions of pictorial and applied art, contacts were established between libraries and museums. The holding of joint symposia on problems of culture and art, the sharing of experience in choreography, music and musicology, and exchange of visits of painters became regular.
In the beginning of the 20th century the Russian people were already reading such classics as 'Panchatantra', 'Bhagavad Gita' and the 'Shakuntalam', translated into Russian. The Russian painter Vereshchagin, who visited India twice, left memorable paintings, particularly on the cruelty of the British rule in India.

An inter-governmental agreement on cultural, scientific and technical cooperation was signed between the two countries on February 12, 1960. This laid the firm foundation for coordination, at first in an annual, and later from 1967, on a biennial basis, of the programmes of cultural exchange. This cooperation has since grown in scale, and now embraces various aspects of social life like education, all forms of art, literature, radio, films, T.V., sports, etc. India and the Soviet Union signed the latest cultural agreement for the year 1985-1986 at New Delhi in February 1985.

Many Soviet theatres have productions based on Indian subjects and plays by Indian authors in their repertoires. The 'Ramayana', for instance, has been running at the Central Children's Theatre in Moscow for almost 24 years. Soviet spectators know and love 'The White Lotus' produced after a drama by Shudraka, 'Sohni Mahival' by Balwant Gargi, the musical 'The Big Wave of the Ganges', the ballets 'Chitra' and 'The Love Charm'. Not long ago the Moscow Stanislavsky and Nemorovich-Danchenko musical theatre had a premiere of the ballet 'Shakuntala', music for which was written by Soviet composer Sergei Balasanyan. Indian theatres stage plays by Russian authors: Gogol, Chekhov, Gorky, Simonov, and Sofronov.

Films – Cooperation in cinematography began actually in the forties. Soviet films by famous directors like Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Dovzhenko made a significant impact on Indian
viewers and film producers, particularly on directors like K.A. Abbas, Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen and others.

In 1954 the U.S.S.R. organised the first festival of Indian films in Moscow. As a result, names like Raj Kapoor and Nargis became highly popular in the Soviet Union.

This formed a new form of Soviet-Indian cinematographic cooperation. The first such film titled "A Journey Beyond the Three Seas" (or Pardesi) was produced on the visit of the Russian seafarer Afanasy Nikitin. Then followed a number of other co-productions — 'Rikki Tikki Tavi', 'The Black Mountain', 'Sunrise on the Ganges', and 'Ali Baba and Forty Thieves' of late, a documentary on Jawaharlal Nehru directed by A. Aldokhin and Shyam Benegal has been released, as also a feature film 'Sohni Mahival'.

As Indo-Soviet Cultural Agreement was signed in 1976, this was announced by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting Mr. L.K. Advani, who led an Indian delegation to the International Film Festival which began in Moscow on 7 July 1976. The Indian entry, 'Mrigaya' or the Royal Hunt, a film directed by Mrinal Sen was widely acclaimed at the festival.

A 20-day Festival of Indian Art and Culture was held in the Soviet Union in September 1977. A festival in which eminent musicians and dancers from India participated, was inaugurated at the Bolshoi Theatre by the Union Education Minister Dr. P.C. Chunder on 15 September 1977. A Film Festival and three exhibitions — miniatures, handicrafts and photographs — were also held. The U.S.S.R. held a Festival of Soviet Art and Culture in India in November-December 1977. These festivals were being held under the Indo-Soviet Cultural Exchange Programme.

53 Indian Foreign Review, 15 Sept 1977
The Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Vasant Sathe, said on 25 May 1980 that there were great possibilities of cooperation between India and the Soviet Union in the fields of cinematography and radio, television. On his return from Tashkent, where he represented India as leader of the Indian delegation to the Sixth Tashkent International Film Festival, he said that India could cooperate in the field of children's films with the Soviet Union which had made great advance in the field. He added that during his visit, he had very useful and fruitful discussions with the Soviet Minister for Cinematography, Ermash and the Chief of the Soviet Radio and Television. Sathe further said that the Indian films "sparsh" and "Ek bar phir" entered in the festival, had been very well received. The Joint Indo-Soviet production 'Alibaba Aud Chalis Chor' had already become very popular with the viewers. 54

Festivals - The festivals of the U.S.S.R. in India and the Festivals of India in the U.S.S.R. in 1987-88 played an important role in the cause of strengthening friendship and mutual understanding between the two countries and peoples. The festivals of the U.S.S.R. dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, opened on 21 November 1987. This was coincided with the time when the Festival of India in the U.S.S.R. was in full swing, which was dedicated to the 40th anniversary of India's independence. The festivals are an expression of deep respect of the peoples of both the countries for each other's history and culture, their adherence to the ideals of freedom and justice. Equally important is the fact that the holding of the festivals was possible only due to very good relations which shaped between

54 Ibid., 13 Sept 1977
the leadership of the two countries, whose bright manifestation was the exchange of official friendly visit of Mikhail Gorbachev to India and Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the U.S.S.R.

Suffice it to recall that nearly 3,500 Indian representatives, including performers, public figures, young leaders, scientists and sportsmen have visited the Soviet Union as part of the Festival programme. Nearly 150 Indian troupes performed in 140 Soviet cities. Some 2,000 artists participated.

Exhibitions held as part of the Festivals had become crucial to cultural exchanges between India and the Soviet Union. It was a serious scientific effort prepared jointly by Soviet and Indian organisations, including the Soviet Academy of Sciences, the Chief Administrator of Archives under the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Culture of the U.S.S.R., the Soviet Foreign Ministry and the National Archives of India.

Summing up the results of the Festivals, the Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Organising Committee of Soviet-Indian Festival, Zakharov, said in conclusion: "We can say that both have written down a vivid page in the history of Soviet-Indian cultural relations. Any such festival is an example showing the whole world the fruits of new thinking and new political approaches in international affairs." Zakharov described the festival as the diplomacy of the masses. He said that "everything thought by us was an endless field for the meeting of millions of citizens of the two countries in the name of peace, friendship and mutual prosperity."

55 A. Pozin, *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, 2 Nov 1988
56 Vasili Zakharov, USSR Minister of Culture and Chairman of the USSR Organising Committee of Soviet Indian Festival, *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, 21 Nov 1987
Education - Indo-Soviet cooperation in education began in 1956 with the signing of UNESCO protocol on the establishment of the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay with Soviet assistance. Starting with 100 students in 1958, the Bombay IIT was the first institute in the country to have introduced a five year academic course for students, as well as a two-year postgraduate course.

Indo-Soviet cooperation in the field of education covers the granting of scholarships to students, promotion of higher scientific education in India, production of Soviet textbooks in India, establishment of direct relations between Soviet and Indian educational establishments, promotion of the study of Russian language in India, and others. The U.S.S.R. has taken part in organizing four autonomous departments at large Indian universities devoted to aeronautics, metallurgy, geophysics and automatics and computers. Specialized technical training schools were set up with Soviet assistance in the cities of Baroda, Bhilai, Hyderabad, Ranchi and Bhopal to produce middle-level technicians.

An Indo-Soviet Joint Commission has been set up for cooperation in the field of social sciences. A centre for Russian studies was opened at Jawaharlal Nehru University in 1965.

The study of Russian language is becoming more and more popular in India. Today Russian language is being taught at most of the Indian universities.

Cooperation in Book Publishing - A major field of Soviet assistance at present in the field of education is in providing inexpensive and good textbooks to university students. Already over 450 Soviet textbooks have been adopted for Indian
languages. An Indo-Soviet Textbook Board has been set up for this purpose and it meets yearly in order to select books and arrange for their publication. The books are produced at low cost for students.

Publication of Soviet classics and modern work in Indian languages is another major activity in the educational field. Soviet publishing houses are bringing out translations in almost all the major Indian languages, thus helping students and readers to acquaint themselves with the rich literary traditions of the Soviet people. Russian and Soviet classics occupy a prominent place in the literature now made available in India.

At the same time, Indian classics and modern works are being translated into the Russian language. Tagore, Gandhi, Nehru, Prem Chand, Mulk Raj Anand, Sardar Jaffri and others are well known names today among the Soviet readers. Tagore's "The Gardener" and "Gitanjali" were published as early as the 1920s in the Soviet Union. The overall editions of Indian books published in the languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. has already topped the 30 million copies mark.

Societ copyright agency VAAP has been cooperating with several Indian publishers such as Federation of Indian Publishers, The National Book Trust, Oxford Press, Ajanta Books, Arnold Heinemann, Vikas, Sterling, etc. 57

Thus, academic exchange became a regular feature of Indo-Soviet cooperation. It takes place under the Cultural Agreement signed by the two countries. As a follow-up of the Cultural Agreement, Joint Committees of the representatives of the two governments have been regularly reviewing and

57 Nikolai Chetverikov, Chairman, VAAP Board, The Times of India, New Delhi, 24 Nov 1987
drawing up cultural exchange programmes as means of implementation of the Cultural Agreement. So far 10 annual and 7 biannual programmes have been successfully implemented.\textsuperscript{58}

A large number of students/trainees from India are visiting U.S.S.R. for studies. A survey has indicated that in 1985-86, about 329 persons from India were studying in the U.S.S.R. Out of it 326 were trainees. The number of U.S.S.R. students studying in the Indian universities is, however, very negligible. In 1985-86 one student from the U.S.S.R. was in undergraduate courses and one was in postgraduate course.\textsuperscript{59}

Cooperation in the field of sports is now gaining momentum. The Soviet Union provides sports coaches to India and teams have been exchanged in volleyball, football, and other sports fields. Since 1983 the sports exchange is being implemented under the Soviet-Indian Sports Protocol which provides good opportunities for expanding the scope of cooperation of great importance in promoting sports relations. A protocol was signed in December 1985 for the construction of a large sports complex in Bangalore with Soviet assistance.

\textsuperscript{58} Anil Bordia, Secretary, Department of Education, The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 18 Nov 1988

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
MAJOR SOVIET-INDIAN PROJECTS AND ASSISTANCE

(Industrial, Agricultural, Scientific, Educational)

FERROUS METALLURGY
- Bhilai Steel Plant (with raw material facilities)
- Bokaro Steel Plant
- Vizag Steel Plant
- Metallurgical & Engineering Consultants Ltd. (MECON).
- Ranchi R & D Centre for steel research, Ranchi.

NON-FERROUS METALLURGY
- Aluminium Plant, Korba
- Bauxite and Alumina Plant project.
- Andhra R & D Centre for nonferrous metallurgy, Korba.

HEAVY ENGINEERING
- Heavy Machine Building Plant, Ranchi.
- Heavy Electrical Equipment Plant, Haridwar.
- Mining and Allied Machinery Plant, Durgapur.
- Training Institute for Designing Metallurgical Equipment, Ranchi.

OIL INDUSTRY
- Drilling and Exploration (Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, etc. and offshore exploration along the costs of India).
- Barauni Refinery, Bihar.
- Koyali Refinery, Gujarat.
- Mathura Refinery, U.P.
Training: - Hind Oil Designing Institute, Baroda.
   - Research and Training Institute, Dehra Dun.
   - Drilling Technology Research Institute, Dehra Dun.
   - Institute for Reservoir Development, Ahmedabad.

COAL INDUSTRY
- Surkhachar Coal Mine
- Bank Coal Mine
- Manikpur Coal Mine
- Kathara Coal Washery
- Nigahi Opencast Mines
- Jayant Opencast Mine
- Mukunda Coal Mine
- Jhanjra Coal Mine
- Raniganj Coal Mine
- Tipong Coal Mine
- Kumari Coal Mine
- Sitanala Coal Mine
- Assistance to Singareni Colliery Co (Andhra).
- Development and Modernisation of Coal Washeries.
- Central Mechanical Workshop, Singrauli, for repair and production of mining equipment and materials.

Training - Coal Preparation and Engineering Institute, Ranchi.
   - Assistance for Coal gasification in Rajasthan.

POWER INDUSTRY
- Neyveli Thermal Plant, Tamil Nadu.
- Korba Thermal Plant, Madhya Pradesh.
- Obra Thermal Plant, Uttar Pradesh.
- Patratu Thermal Plant, Bihar.
- Harduaganj Thermal Plant, Uttar Pradesh.
- Bhakra Hydropower Station, Punjab.
- Mettur Hydropower Station, Tamil Nadu.
- Balimela Hydropower Station, Orissa.
- Lower Sileru Hydropower Station, Andhra.
- Hirakud Hydropower Station, Karnataka.
- Linganayaki Hydropower Station, Karnataka.
- Vindhyachal Thermal Power Station, Singrauli.
- Kahalgaon Thermal Power Station, Bihar.
- Bakreshwar Thermal Plant, West Bengal.
- Tehri Hydropower Plant, Uttar Pradesh.

**MEDICAL INDUSTRY**

- Anti-Biotic Plant, Rishikesh.
- Synthetic Drugs Plant, Hyderabad.
- Surgical Instruments Plant, Madras.

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Cooperation in combating mass infectious diseases like malaria, smallpox, cholera, etc.; in Ophthalmology; in preparation of vaccines and blood preparations and others.

**TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATION**

- Calcutta Metro system.
- Troposcatter telecommunication link between Moscow and Delhi.

**INSTRUMENTATION & AUTOMATION**

- Precision Instrument Plant, Kotah.
- Optical Glass Factory, Durgapur.
AGRICULTURE
- State seed farms (in all six).
- Plant Development: Sunflower, beetroot.
- Canning Factory.
- Assistance for production of specialised cans and packaging material.
- Tractor Plant, Loni, U.P.
- Training: Workshop for training middle level farm hands. Factory for production of lining materials for irrigational canals.
- Assistance for Dam building.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
- Scientific Corporation in the development.
- MHD power generation.
- Protection of metals from corrosion.
- Powdermetallurgy.
- Standardisation and metrology.
- Construction materials.
- meteorology.
- Lasers.
- Biotechnology.
- The physics of high temperatures and pressures.
- Catalysis.
- Electrical metallurgy.
- Oceanography.
- Science information (in all 112 subjects)
- Solar Energy Development.
- Space Research and Development.
- Nuclear energy.
EDUCATION

- The Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay.
- Autonomous faculties for:
  - Aircraft Designing (Bombay).
  - Metallurgy (West Bengal).
  - Geophysics (Hyderabad).
  - Automation and Computer (Bangalore)

and a number of technical schools for promoting scientific education.
CONCLUSION

The perspectives of South Asian States on the external environment since the withdrawal of the British from the subcontinent have varied widely over time, but there has been a considerable degree of consistency in their respective responses to the involvement of outside powers in the subcontinent. While this has been determined primarily by the specific circumstances surrounding both regional and extra-regional developments, there is also a wide variety of historical and cultural traditions that continue to influence policies and attitudes on foreign policy and security issues in the politics in South Asia.

To cultivate India as the major South Asian nation which steered clear of any alliance with the U.S. was the leitmotif of Soviet South Asian policy in the 1950s. Another important strand joined this one in the 1960s, viz., India as a counter-weight to Maoist China which increasingly challenged the ideological authority of post-Stalin Soviet leadership. In 1960 Moscow withdrew all aid from China. In October that year it concluded an agreement with India in the latter's purchase of various types of Soviet aircraft. This was followed by further orders in 1961 and 1962. In August 1962, or the eve of the Sino-Indian border clash, Moscow concluded an agreement to grant license to India to produce MIG-21 jet fighters. This may have been the first such licensing outside the U.S.S.R. including the Soviet bloc. The military dimension of Indo-Soviet relations developed significantly enough against the background of a major incident on the 2,500 mile Sino-Indian
border leading to loss of lives in October 1959 and mounting border tension between the two most populous nations of the world.

The post-Khrushchev Soviet leadership, consisting of the triumvirate of Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny was more restrained in its policy towards the South Asian subcontinent. The Indo-Pak war of 1965 led to Moscow's mediatory role early next year in Tashkent. The summit between president Ayub and Premier Shastri in that Soviet city revealed two interesting features. First, Moscow had become an important factor in South Asia. Second, Kremlin's new leaders were taking a more balanced stance on the Indo-Pak dispute, an important reason for which was the growing Sino-Pak link. Indeed Moscow even extended limited arms aid to Pakistan in the late 1960s, to neutralize Chinese influence there, thereby running into Indian indignation.

The 1962 debacle awakened India to the new realities. The America of Dulles was unwilling to accept the genuineness of non-alignment and described it as dishonest. In the context of South Asia, Pakistan was the focal point, being an ally. Inevitably, India did not get American sympathy or support, even though the U.S.A. and U.K. did not approve China and had kept it out of the U.N.

Moscow's growing role in South Asia was exemplified by its successful mediation in the 1965 war and its attempt to build up its influence with Pakistan by offering arms aid to it in 1968. The Soviet Union tried to mediate in the 1971 war between India and Pakistan, but its offer was turned down by India, which preferred to negotiate bilaterally. Moscow hoped that the Treaty of Friendship concluded with Mrs.Gandhi's government would be the precursor to India's acceptance of the
Brezhnev Doctrine. But the doctrine still remains a disembodied spirit. While Soviet interests have undoubtedly prospered in the area, they have not reached a point where the Soviets can hope to play a pre-eminent role in the policies of India or of the other countries of South Asia.

The Soviet Union chose its options with skill, taking full advantage of the opportunities which offered. When the U.S.A. began to arm Pakistan, Soviet military assistance to India became readily available. Soviet political support over Kashmir helped to neutralise American backing of Pakistan, while the United States looked askance at India's socialistic five year plans with their emphasis on industry, the Soviets welcomed the planning process and helped in the building up of heavy industry. The rupee trade agreement provided new export markets for India's developing skills and an outlet for its industrial products. In the war with China and the recurrent clashes with Pakistan, Soviet military and political support was invariably extended to India. The Soviet image in Indian eyes was therefore that of a loyal and steadfast friend, whose support can be counted upon in good times as in bad.

But while there was this spectacle of competition and sometimes of confrontation between the super powers in India and South Asia, their basic aims were not so divergent after all; they were common, complementary or compatible. But they were also competitive. American strategic interests were not directly involved in the Indian Ocean area except to the extent of safeguarding vital oil supplies from the Gulf and West Asian states. Soviet strategic interests were also largely limited to keeping the lines of communication open with its Eastern provinces and blocking their attempts to build up anti-Soviet groupings in the area. India's
insistence on keeping the Indian Ocean area a zone of peace, free from great power rivalries, affects both superpowers equally.

Superpower rivalry in the Indian Ocean is a threat not only to India but other countries of the region. It is of the utmost importance to them that superpower military presence should be gradually reduced and eliminated from there. For this purpose, India and other littoral countries are demanding that the Indian Ocean be declared a zone of peace.

The Soviet Union is in favour of turning the Indian Ocean into a peace zone, as was proposed by the nonaligned states. It is also for the withdrawal from this region of all the naval fleets not belonging to the coastal states. The Soviet Union considers it necessary to hold an international conference to discuss the question of turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace and expresses its readiness to resume the talks suspended by the United States on a limitation and then reduction of military activity in the Indian Ocean. The U.S.S.R. resolutely called for convening an international conference on the Indian Ocean in the first half of 1986, in accordance with the U.N. Special Committee's decision. Gorbachev had put new proposals for enhanced military and political stability in the Indian Ocean in his speech in the Indian Parliament during his visit to New Delhi in November 1986.

One of the most important Soviet foreign policy lines is the struggle for peace and security in the Asian continent—the Soviet Union builds its relations with the countries of Asia on the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has always considered the struggle to
reduce threat of war and curb the arms race a major foreign policy task of the Soviet Union. At the 26th Party Congress in February 1981, it put forward a series of new constructive proposals of a political and military character, some of which directly concerned various Asian regions from the Near to the Far East.

However, it is Soviet intervention in Afghanistan that has introduced a strong role of divergence in Indo-Soviet relations, and altered India's strategic perspectives of the region in a radical manner. The geographical distance between India and the Soviet Union was an essential element of friendly Indo-Soviet relations. Nonaligned Afghanistan was a buffer between the two countries. India was not exposed to pressures or interferences from this quarter except from Pakistan. Soviet troops could not pose an immediate threat to India, but it was decisively important for India to seek a solution to the Afghan problem so as to enable Soviet troops to withdraw and restore Afghanistan's nonaligned status.

The emerging Afghanistan-Pakistan scenario heralds dangerous portents for India. One such consequence is that Pakistan has been receiving massive quantities of arms from the U.S.A. on the pretext of the Soviet threat; whether or not Pakistan will be able to take on a superpower is a different question. But it has been the Indian experience that whenever Pakistan has received huge quantities of arms for other purpose, these have, in fact, been used against India.

Superpower confrontation on India's border would be extremely disastrous for India. On the other hand, the last decade witnessed an equally significant development in South Asia. India emerged as a regional power after the birth of Bangladesh. Consequently India's strategic perceptions underwent
a change. A truncated Pakistan was no longer a serious threat. India's military capability along with her rapid economic development could safeguard her western frontier. At the same time, the threat from China had lost its intensity. China was too preoccupied with the Soviet threat in the north. The defeat and withdrawal of American power from Vietnam and the Soviet Union exacerbated the situation from the Chinese point of view.

For Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Moscow visit of October 1982 had restored the balance of power in the South Asian region. Whatever clouds had fallen on the relationship as a result of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan had passed. Mrs. Gandhi did tell Brezhnev that India would like him to pull out his troops from Afghanistan.

If one analyses the developments in Afghanistan after the total withdrawal of Soviet troops (February 1989) an impression is created that the Kremlin does not have a long-term Afghan policy. Gorbachev's leadership seems to be on trial in Afghanistan, and if he fails to pass the test, the interests of both the Soviet Union and India will be compromised. The Soviet Union is seriously disturbed by the continuing U.S.-Pakistan support for the Mujahideen and their consequent refusal to accept anything less than Kabul government's surrender. But Soviet Union does not seem to be thinking in terms of replacing President Najibullah with someone who, in its view, may be more acceptable to Mujahideen as an interlocutor for a possible rapprochement.

It is of utmost importance for Soviet Union and India to realise that in the context of US-Pakistan-Iran designs for installing a fundamentalist regime in Afghanistan, new schemes dangerous for both the countries are in preparation.
which Moscow and New Delhi will be ill-advised to ignore. By any reckoning developments in Afghanistan would have a critical bearing on the security of both the Soviet Union and India.

The Soviet Union has developed its relations with the other South Asian countries. In April 1980 Moscow had signed a scientific and cultural agreement with Maldives, a nation of over 1,000 coral islands with a Muslim population. Nepal too has been successful in receiving Soviet aid. The Soviet Union helped in the construction of some projects in Nepal. However, the Soviet Union has not shown any involved interest in Nepalese affairs except its concern for the increasing influence of China in Nepal. It appears that the Soviets are inclined to view with favour any government in Nepal which could maintain internal stability and status quo in the country.

Soviet Union adopted a differing posture on the Bangladesh crisis than India. When the crisis erupted in March 1971, the Soviet approach to the problem was merely to counsel President Yahya Khan to end brutalities in East Pakistan and negotiate with its leaders. This approach persisted even after the Indo-Soviet treaty was signed, while the Indian stand was that conditions must be created in East Pakistan for the return of the refugees in honour and safety.

More importantly, the Soviet Union did not visualise the prospect of an independent Bangladesh till the very end. Given the emerging Sino-Pak-American axis, war in the western sector with the backing of China and the U.S.A. close to the Soviet border was viewed as a security hazard for the Soviet Union. That is why the Soviet Union was keen for a political settlement of the Bangladesh crisis within the framework of
Pakistan. However, when full scale war between India and Pakistan broke out in December 1971, the Soviet Union supported India. Its firm diplomatic support in the United Nations was valuable and enabled India to liberate Bangladesh.

II

The Soviet-Indian relations serve as an example of multifaceted cooperation between states with different social systems. This friendship dates many decades back but only after India won independence was the striving for friendship translated into reality.

Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, outstanding Indian leaders, spent much time and effort to consolidate Soviet Indian friendship and cooperation. Jawaharlal Nehru proposed establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union even before India won independence. Four months before the proclamation of independence he wrote that cooperation between the two countries would benefit both nations and contribute to peace and progress world over. His active work resulted in fundamental bilateral agreements opening the way to broad-based fruitful cooperation in economy, trade, science and culture. Nehru's historical perception was indeed prophetic. He clearly saw the advantage of sending his very first diplomatic mission to Moscow to symbolize a major turn in Indian history.

Nehru placed an even greater premium on more cooperative relations with the U.S.S.R. and the West. His diplomacy in this era proved successful, for both powers were interested albeit for different reasons in Indian political stability
and economic development. Each provided India with material assistance without pressing for a change in her basic international relations. In retrospect Nehru's policy has been vindicated with regard to Russia but it did not succeed in the case of China. As the years passed, Nehru learned sometimes in a painful way, of limitations on his power to influence international events.

Khruschev's visit to India in November 1955 was a turning point in Indo-Soviet relations which from that modest beginning had assumed a multi-dimensional character by the end of the sixties. A marked feature of these wide ranging relations was the cordiality and warmth. It is obvious that the development of close and friendly relations between the two countries belonging to opposite social systems must have been motivated by their vital interests.

The first major area where Indo-Soviet interests converged was Pakistan. On the Indian side Pakistan wholly dominated the Indian strategic perception since independence. The trauma of partition coupled with a territorial dispute over Kashmir soured Indo-Pakistani relations from the very beginning.

The Soviet Union also shared India's strategic perspective on China. Sino-Soviet relations worsened even further when China laid claims to Soviet territory. On this issue the two socialist countries fought a border war in the Far Eastern region in March 1969. Convergence of strategic interests on China provided an additional incentive to friendly Indo-Soviet relations. Two decades ago the security needs of India determined the level of Indo-Soviet relations. Today, the Indo-Soviet political relations determine the Indian security position.
All of this shows that if Indo-Soviet relations were close and friendly, it was largely because of the convergence of their national interests. Issues, which had a vital bearing on India's security considerations also impinged on Soviet strategic perceptions. In the process, India received valuable support on some of its major foreign policy issues and came to occupy a pivotal place in Soviet security considerations. The Dullesian strategy of containing communist and the rift with China aroused Soviet fears of encirclement which would have been complete but for India which had kept out of these alignments. Thus the Soviet Union developed a vital stake in India's nonalignment.

India's nonalignment was the minimum requirement of Soviet security interests. That is why the Soviet Union publicly castigated China for provoking a war with India which was bound to throw the latter into Western arms. Fortunately for the Soviet Union, western interest in India waned after the escalation of the American conflict in Vietnam. This also explains Soviet eagerness to cooperate with India on the economic level. Had Western aid started flowing into India, it is likely that India would have acquired a state of dependence at some point. However, from the late fifties onwards the Soviet Union was the sole supplier of Indian weaponry and military hardware. Military and economic dependence on the Soviet Union throughout the late fifties and sixties contributed in strengthening Indo-Soviet relations which by the late sixties, had acquired a wide ranging character, and were close.

The Soviet-Indian security link continued to develop. In February 1975 a top level Soviet military delegation consisting of Defence Minister Grechko and the Air and Naval Chiefs visited India. The visit came against the background
of Chinese arming of Pakistani forces (including two new Pak divisions) and the reported move by the U.S. to resume military supplies to Islamabad. The result of the high level Indo-Soviet military consultations was an agreement to expand defence production in India with Soviet aid. This would include production of an improved version of the MIG-21. The Indian Navy also stood to benefit. In April that year an agreement provided for delivery to India of 8 Nanuchka missile patrol ships. The Soviet team was reportedly impressed by India's defence industry and Marshal Grechko declared that a strong India was vital for peace in the subcontinent.

Developing with each passing year, these relations reached maturity and found expression in the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation signed on August 9, 1971, which proved its worth for bilateral relations and for peace in Asia. Summit contacts and meetings between Soviet and Indian leaders were particularly important for strengthening bilateral relations.

In November 1973 Brezhnev paid a visit to India, the first Asian State to be so honoured by the CPSU General Secretary. Besides signing a 15-year trade and economic agreement, he told India's Parliament that there was need for a "thorough and comprehensive" discussion of the concept of Asian collective security. The absence of any specific reference to that concept in the Joint Declaration, however, reflected New Delhi's steady reluctance to accept what had come to be widely suspected as Soviet strategy for isolating China.

Brezhnev and his colleagues apparently did not show any strong reservations about Delhi's efforts to normalize relations with Beijing. The Soviet stake in cultivating India
for strategic reasons was remarkably evident that year when Moscow granted a wheat loan to India despite its own shortages in food grains. The stake was again seen the following year. Barely a month after India's nuclear explosion at Pokharan, a Pravda article on India's foreign policy was all praise for New Delhi while being critical of Beijing. But there was no mention of the nuclear test despite the fact that Moscow happened to be a most conservative co-sponsor of nuclear nonproliferation. When External Affairs Minister Swaran Singh paid a visit to Moscow in September that year, Brezhnev reiterated firm and consistent Soviet support for Mrs. Gandhi's government. Moscow lived up to its words by supporting the emergency rule in India which was clamped down the following year.

Mrs. Gandhi visited Moscow in June 1976. The 25th CPSU Congress had concluded with Brezhnev making warm references to India in mid-April. The Sino-Indian decision to exchange Ambassadors had been made public. The rosy picture was tarnished somewhat by Bhutto's statement that the Chinese were helping Pakistan troops construct a road connecting Skardu (which had an air base) in the North-Western Frontier Province with the Karakoram highway, and by Premier Hua's reiteration to him of Chinese support for the Pakistan stand on Kashmir the same month. In Moscow, the Indian and the Soviet leaders reiterated familiar views like the Indian Ocean should be treated as a zone of peace, with the Soviet side deriving obvious satisfaction at the pin-pointing of U.S. presence in Diego Garcia by both sides. But China was not mentioned, reflecting India's strong desire to preserve and develop the recent movement in Sino-Indian relations.

1 N. Shurigin's article in Pravda on June 13, quoted in The Hindustan Times, 14 June 1974
Ruring 1970-80, India's relations with the Soviet Union has been fashioned on the anvil of choice. The inevitable necessity to choose imparted to Indo-Soviet relationship an in-depth strategic dimension in 1971. India had to choose to intervene in the Bangladesh liberation struggle with force; the choice was picked up from among several options. Once the decision was made, it was necessary to forge close cooperation with one great power to neutralise the resistance put up by Pakistan and its international allies to the implementation of the Indian decision. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace and Friendship was born out of the necessity of choice. The necessity was nationally shared; hence the support the treaty received in 1971 even from quarters that were cool towards the U.S.S.R.

Leonid Brezhnev had paid an official visit to New Delhi in December 1980. This visit had proved very significant. In September 1978, External Affairs Minister Vajpayee went to the U.S.S.R.

The long-standing personal friendship between Brezhnev and Mrs. Gandhi had steered the relationship through the 1960s and 1970s, in directions desired by both. Brezhnev's death (15 November 1982) could mean a vacuum. But Yuri Andropov, Brezhnev's successor took immediate care to fill the gap created by Brezhnev's death. A series of changes in international politics, resulting in a sharp aggravation in the US-Soviet confrontation, raised a number of issues which Andropov and Mrs. Gandhi had no occasion to sit down together to discuss to mutual satisfaction. Then early February 1984, Andropov died. His successor, Konstantin Chernenko, assured the Prime Minister at a brief cordial meeting in the Kremlin that there would be "no change" in the Soviet Union's policies.

towards India. The meeting was too short for a comprehensive exchange of views. The Soviet leadership therefore decided to send Politburo member Demitri Ustinov to India fully authorised to conduct summit level political talks covering the entire field of international and regional issues. 3

The Ustinov visit was one of the important landmarks in the 34 year old Indo-Soviet friendship. In political and strategic importance it is comparable to the India visits of Khurshchev and Brezhnev. The Ustinov visit had indeed two dimensions. First, Ustinov represented the collective CPSU Politburo leadership whose brief he was carrying. Secondly, as defence minister of the U.S.S.R., he was in a position to lend a strategic aspect to the political understanding distilled from his conversations with Mrs.Gandhi and her senior cabinet colleagues. To be sure, the Ustinov-Mrs.Gandhi talks were almost entirely political. However, at several points in the conversations, Ustinov assured the Prime Minister of "complete" and "unequivocal" Soviet support and backing if India were in trouble. A number of times, Ustinov mentioned the Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971 to reiterate Soviet support to India in any contingency that may arise. 4

Another augmenting factor of Indo-Soviet relations was the economic cooperation between the two countries. The Soviet Union supported the stress laid on heavy industry in the Indian economic strategy for development. India's first major project in the public sector was the Bhilai Steel Plant in 1954. It also assisted India's Second Five Year Plan and was willing to accept rupee payment. This helped

3  Bhabani Sen Gupta, India Today, 31 Aug 1984
4  Ibid.
India in conserving her limited foreign exchange and gave a big push to Indo-Soviet trade, providing the Soviet Union with a market for its industrial goods at a time when it was unable to compete in the world market due to poor quality. Over the years, economic cooperation between the two countries has grown vastly. Soviet aid and trade continue to play an important role in India's economic development.

In the fifties and sixties, economic links with the Soviet Union had acquired a prominent place in India's foreign economic relations. Both the depth and range of these links were quite remarkable. All significant sectors of the Indian economy such as steel, oil, machine building, power, pharmaceuticals, etc., received substantial and crucial assistance from the Soviet Union. The rate of growth of Indo-Soviet trade during the seventies slowed down considerably as compared to the growth in the first phase as well as in relation to the growth of India's trade with some other regions such as ECM, ESCAP, Latin America and OPEC countries and also there was no dramatic change in the composition of India's exports to the Soviet Union during the seventies.

Undoubtedly, Soviet Union has helped India to play a crucial role in attaining a large measure of self sufficiency. Indo-Soviet economic relations can be projected to the third world as a classic example of economic relations between an industrially advanced socialist country and a developing country.
Meetings between Soviet and Indian leaders are always marked by warmth and cordiality, and deep trust and mutual understanding. They have a beneficial effect on the development of relations between these two countries. Years and decades pass, but the relations of friendship and cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and India continue developing on the ascending line. This is happening because these relations are built on a basic of equality and mutual respect, on coincidence or similarity in the positions of the two countries on the cardinal problems of recent times.

The state of Indo-Soviet relations is symbolised by the fact that India is the first Asian country that Gorbachev has chosen for a stage visit after assuming the leadership of the Soviet Union even as the U.S.S.R. was the first foreign country that Rajiv Gandhi visited as India's Prime Minister. This "respectful closeness, a sort of kinship", is a new phenomenon reflecting the new heights of Indo-Soviet cooperation and friendship. Rajiv Gandhi and Mikhail Gorbachev are building a glorious edifice on the sure and firm foundations laid by Nehru, Khurshchev, Indira Gandhi and Brezhnev.

Rajiv's Moscow visit in May 1985 took place along somewhat predictable lines. Two agreements, negotiated earlier, were signed in Moscow. The more significant of the two was a 15-year economic and commercial agreement on the pattern of the one signed by Mrs. Gandhi setting out cooperation between the two countries till the year 2000. True to the long-range Soviet policy of sponsoring a Moscow supervised Asian Security System, Gorbachev pointedly referred to "constructive initiatives... to ensure certain aspects of the security of the Asian continent and some of its regions".
suggesting a comprehensive approach to these problems. 5. Rajiv Gandhi was noncommittal and told a press conference in Moscow that the issue was discussed but no specific proposals came up. India had signed with the Soviet Union a protocol on cooperation in the power sector on 27 December 1985. The working programme of cooperation between India and the Soviet Union for 1986-90 is directed towards increasing power generation and reliability. The programme is to be carried out by way of joint execution of power projects, both thermal and hydel and modernisation of existing ones.

The Soviet Union is assisting India in the construction of the first phase of Vindhyachal Super Thermal Power Station in Madhya Pradesh consisting of six units. Soviet assistance is also available in the construction of the Kahalgon Super Thermal Power Station in Bihar consisting of four units.

Mr. Gorbachev described the visit of Mr. Gandhi to the Soviet Union as "a big event in the life of our two states". He further said that the personal relationship he and the Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi have already established would strengthen the personal contacts and friendship between the two countries. 6

During the speech at the Kremlin dinner in honour of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on May 21, 1985, Mr. Gorbachev said that "a special place is held by the Soviet Union and India's concurrent efforts to remove the threat of war and end the arms race. No one can ignore the fact that friendship and cooperation between our two countries are playing a more and more important and beneficial role in the entire system of international relations. By force of example, these relations are helping assert the principles of peaceful

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5 The Statesman, New Delhi, 1 June 1985
6 The Times of India, New Delhi, 22 May 1985
coexistence and work for stronger peace and security of all the peoples. These aims are well served by our Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation.  

Several positive steps have been taken by the leaders of both the countries to improve relations. Gorbachev's visit of November 1986 is remarkable in this direction. He had paid an official friendly visit to India. In his welcome speech at the Delhi airport Mr. Rajiv Gandhi said that Mikhail Gorbachev relentlessly works for peace and disarmament. "His bold peace initiatives, particularly those which he put forward at Reykjavik, reflecting the sincere and consistent foreign policy course of the Soviet Union, have won universal approbation. Hence, it was with great warmth and pride that India welcomed this honoured guest". Rajiv Gandhi noted that Indo-Soviet relations had gained depth and maturity with the passage of time and that those relations had remained firm and steady through the twists and turns of international politics.

The visit of Mr. Gorbachev to India was a great and significant event not only from the point of view of this country but also for the cause of world peace. The high level of Soviet-Indian relations enabled the sides to produce a truly historic document. On 27 November 1986, Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi signed the historical Delhi Declaration on the principles for a nuclear weapons free and nonviolent world. This important document sets forth 10 principles to build a world free from nuclear weapons and violence. "Peaceful coexistence", says one of the ten points of the Declaration, "must become the universal norm of international relations.

7 Mikhail Gorbachev, Selected Speeches and Articles, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1987, p.77
so that in our nuclear age confrontation is replaced by cooperation, and conflict situations are resolved through political and not military means*.

On the same day, an agreement on economic and technical cooperation was signed by Vladimir Komentsev, Deputy Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers, and Mr. N.D. Tiwari, India's Minister of External Affairs. A protocol on the festivals of the U.S.S.R. in India and of India in the U.S.S.R. to be held in 1987-88 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of India's independence was signed by Eduard Shevardnadze, Foreign Minister of U.S.S.R. and P.V. Narasimha Rao, India's Minister for Human Resource Development.

It would be relevant, in fact necessary to make the point that the Delhi Declaration is the result essentially of India's initiative if only to dispel the impression that it is part of the Soviet "peace offensive". India has been wanting such a declaration to be endorsed by the U.N. General Assembly and must regard the Soviet acceptance as a significant gain. The Soviet side has, of course, made a vital contribution to the formulation of the declaration and the ten principles accompanying it. But again it is early to see that the principles embody the same spirit which has informed India's approach to human relations. Witness the references to non-violence as the desirable "basis of community life", recognition of human life as "supreme" and creation of conditions for "the individual's harmonious development". Mr. V.N. Rykov, Soviet Ambassador to India had said that Gorbachev's visit to India in November 1986 opened new vistas for broadening of bilateral cooperation and interaction on the key issues of the day averting nuclear threat and developing new equal international relations.8

8 The Times of India, New Delhi, April 13, 1987
The extensive exchange of views between Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi on issues of bilateral relations, international problems and the agreements, signed during the visit gave Soviet-Indian relations a new powerful thrust and filled them with more concrete contents.

One of the provisions of the Delhi Declaration is about outer space. Near earth space surrounds the whole of mankind, and so it cannot be immaterial to anyone how this environment is used. Both the Soviet Union and India favour keeping space peaceful. In advancing a programme for "star peace", the Soviet Union considers it necessary to enable every developed or developing country wishing to join in the exploration and utilisation of outer space to do so on the basis of broad international cooperation.

The Festival of India in the U.S.S.R. and the Soviet Festival in India have helped the peoples of both the countries to enrich their knowledge about each other's country. The level of interaction between the two peoples has been the highest form. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi went to Moscow in July 1987 to inaugurate the Festival of India in the Kremlin. The Soviet Prime Minister Mr. Nikolai Ryzhkov had come to Delhi to inaugurate the U.S.S.R. Festival in India on 24th November 1987. The holding of the Festival was possible only due to the high level of relations which shaped between the leadership of the two countries, whose bright manifestation was the exchange of official friendly visit of Gorbachev, to India and Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the U.S.S.R.

Mr. Gorbachev had paid another visit to India on 18 November 1988. This time he came to receive the Indira Gandhi International Peace Award and to attend the closing of Soviet

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Festival in India. He had received the Indira Gandhi Award for Outstanding Contribution to Peace, Disarmament and Development. On this occasion he said that "Soviet-Indian friendship rests on a firm foundation and has nothing to do with any transient consideration or schemes." This visit of Gorbachev is not only a step towards peace but also a step in further deepening a time tested friendship.

The Soviet Union and India hold similar views on the comprehensive system of international security. Proof of this is the coincidence of the Soviet initiatives advanced on the January 15, 1986, statement of Mikhail Gorbachev and documents of the 27th Party Congress, and of the proposals elaborated by Rajiv Gandhi in his action plan for ushering in a nuclear weapon free and nonviolent world order tabled at the Third General Assembly Session on Disarmament. In the coalition for peace Soviet Union and India are called upon to play a major part in this understanding. Indo-Soviet relations prove that cooperation between states with differing social orders can be fruitful if these countries pursue common goals of peace, security and justice for all.

The Chinese Factor: It is indisputable that Indo-Soviet friendship, as it has developed since Bulganin-Khruschev visit to India in 1955, has been deeply influenced, if not shaped, by two cold wars in which the Soviet Union had been caught, one with the West led by the U.S. and the other with Communist China. The point about the cold war with China needs to be underscored because it has not attracted the attention it deserves, especially in discussions of Indo-Soviet friendship.

It is to the credit of Nehru, writes Girilal Jain, analyzing Indo-Soviet relations, that he was among the first world
figures to recognise that Communist China was not and could not be a Soviet satellite in view of the strength of Chinese nationalism. Nehru was quick to realise that the Khruschev-Bulganin visit was intended to reassure him not only in respect of U.S.-armed Pakistan but also in respect of Communist China. It is ironical, though understandable, feels Girilal Jain, that while the fact of Soviet support to India in its conflict with Pakistan should have been over-emphasised, it has been greatly de-emphasised in relation to our difficulties with China. Ironical because the latter have been by far more important in cementing Indo-Soviet bonds than India's conflicts with Pakistan. India turned for military supplies to the Soviet Union in view of the conflict with China and not with Pakistan.  

In the context of the recent efforts for a Sino-Soviet rapprochement when Rajiv Gandhi said in the Rajya Sabha that China was unimportant in Indo-Soviet relations, The Times of India termed his statement as extraordinary. Justifying its stance, the paper commented editorially that "to begin with the possibility of reasonably cordial relations between India and China was one reason for the Soviet overtures to India even before Khurshchev emerged as the top leader. Subsequently when Sino-Indian relations began to sour in the latter half of the fifties, Indo-Soviet ties grew strong precisely on that count."  

By providing a squadron of MIG-21s to India in 1961, both India and Soviet Union wanted to give an indirect warning to Peking that it must not push New Delhi on the border issue. Soon after the 1962 war it became evident that Soviet sympathies were engaged on the side of India. In 1965 India sought and secured hardware from the Soviet Union. Since then

10 The Times of India, New Delhi, 22 Nov 1988
11 Editorial, The Times of India, New Delhi, 24 Nov 1988
U.S.S.R. has been India's principal arms supplier. There can be little doubt that China will continue to be a source of anxiety for India even if there is a visible improvement in their relations for the simple reason that the Chinese see themselves as being entitled to a pre-eminent role not only in South-East Asia but also in South Asia.

In an acerbic comment the editorial says: "Unless we are willing to fool ourselves into believing that we are about to move into an era of goodwill and harmony in our neighbourhood, we have to be vigilant in respect of China. It does not, of course, follow that we need Sino-Soviet hostility in order of look after our interests vis-a-vis China. But it does follow that China will remain a factor in Indo-Soviet relations". Geography has made the Soviet Union, China and India neighbours and ties between any two of them must have a bearing on the third country's relations with those two.12

Relations with India are a priority in Soviet foreign policy. The most important aspect of Indo-Soviet relations is tradition, friendship covering a period of many years and cooperation in bilateral and international affairs. There is a legal foundation for these relations, the 1971 Treaty. The tremendous importance of continuous, intensive and constructive political dialogue between the Indian and Soviet leaders as a factor cannot be ignored.

Indo-Soviet cooperation could serve the interests of both and continue to contribute to a better world. Ties between the two countries have indeed attained a new level of harmony and mutual understanding in the recent years.12

12 Ibid.
The relations are guided in the new objective by the Delhi Declaration of November 1986 which symbolises the common aspirations. Mr. Gorbachev asserted that the Soviet Union is not changing its priorities or becoming cool towards India. The relationship rests, he said, on a firm foundation.

For more than three decades, India and the Soviet Union have enjoyed a close relationship. Today it can be justly claimed that much of the new thinking about disarmament and the new world order drives from the relationship between India and the Soviet Union. Both the countries have been an example to all the world of peaceful coexistence at its best, of two different socio-economic systems working in close cooperation on the basis of equality, mutual understanding and mutual trust.

Indo-Soviet friendship, in the words of Rajiv Gandhi, has benefitted millions and harmed none. It is a relationship built by the peoples of the two countries over decades. It is a demonstration, said the Prime Minister, of what can be achieved through goodwill, mutual respect and trust. The Delhi Declaration has placed the bilateral relationship in a larger global context. It signals the joint endeavours of the two countries to work together, and with others towards world peace and world cooperation.

Indicating new directions of Indo-Soviet cooperation, Gorbachev said that it is significant that at a time when mankind stood at the crucial watershed in its development, the Soviet Union and India are among those who strive to put an end to confrontations and to achieve radical turn for the better in world affairs. Science and technology have emerged as an important area of Indo-Soviet collaboration with a
potential for onward thrust into highly sophisticated fields.

Major changes taking place in the Soviet Union and India present both a challenge and an opportunity. The policy of Glasnost and Perestroika (Openness and Restructuring) underway in the Soviet Union is revolutionary in content and has a global significance. The Indian people are following with deep interest the attempts of the Soviet people under Gorbachev's leadership to bring about a second revolution in the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union and India, as representatives of the world of socialism and the world of national liberation, the world of development, have been fruitfully cooperating for years and decades in the interest of their peoples and all the people. This cooperation serves as a fine example. Both the countries would like to see these relations develop further.

Indo-Soviet relations opened broad vistas for strengthening political and economic interaction of socialist and non-aligned states, the East and the South in general. This interaction is an example of restructuring international economic relations on the basis of equality and justice. Indo-Soviet relations help strengthen the potential of peace, reason and goodwill, the basis of a new democratic world order, the essence of which as Nehru said is "the free cooperation of free nations".
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