CHAPTER-5

CONCLUSION

The Indo-Soviet relations are very close though were many up and down came. From the phase of initial hesitation to develop close relations with India, Soviet Union realized the importance of India in the cold war context. Pakistan's decision to join US block was a major factor for the Soviet Union to search for new partners in the third world. In this context, what could have been the better alternative than joining hands with India? Geography of India, its leadership of NAM were some of the obvious distraction for the Soviet Union. The Khrushchev and Bulganin visit was a milestone in the relations during the cold war era. During this visit, Soviet leadership took a firm stand on Kashmir in India's favour. Inter alia India also wanted economic help from USSR for its economic development and industrialization. Soviet Union provided economic aid to India on turn key basis system and did not exploit India in a very critical situation when westerners wanted to exploit India. Brezhnev knew very well the importance of South Asia. Therefore, he used the Kashmir card for rapprochement between India and Pakistan because its ultimate aim was to reduce the US and Chinese influence in the region. The Tashkant effort was a step in this direction. During the Indo-Pak war in 1971, Soviet Union signed friendship treaty with India. It was a clear proof that the Soviet Union was interested in special relations with India. The same policy was followed until the collapse of the Soviet Union. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Indo-USSR relations also faded. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia became successor state of Soviet Union. President Yeltsin and its team specially Kozyrov were pro-western. Noted scholar Arun Mohanty takes the position that Yeltsin downgraded the Indo-Russian relations. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the initial two years (1991-93) were the most difficult years in bilateral relations. Russia as a successor state, faced several political, economic and domestic problems (Chechnya) etc. Its nascent institutions, to some extent following their own contradictory such as conflicts between executive and legislative wings of the Russian polity, had paralyzed its functions. Russia's economy was totally at nadir point and Russia wanted economic
help from IMF, WB via America. Security problems in Central Asia, increasing Chinese influence, and Western attitude towards Russia were also a matter of concern for Russia. After the demise of the USSR, Russia's foreign policy's major priorities were close relations with 'near abroad' members of the CIS and to establish and maintain relations with the third world. Centre priorities of Russia were arms control and international security, economic reforms, the United States, Europe, Asia Pacific regions, West and South Asia, Africa and Latin America. India was rather a low priority in overall Russian policy of that time. But Russian aspirations could not be fulfilled because USA followed unilateral activities which were totally against the Russian interests such as Yugoslavia bombardment, USA activities in Central Asia which Russia defined as "near abroad" during that period. India was also facing many problems such as lack of political stability and economic crisis. The grave economic crisis pushed Narasimha Rao government to liberalize economy and dismantle strict regulation, removing all barriers. Economic and military hard realities of economy and security forced India towards the west, the US, Germany, Italy, Japan, Israel and even Taiwan. Indian diplomats were talking more about the need to integrate Indian economy with the world economy. India has no option but to nurture close links with the west. Kozyrov, Boris Yeltsin's team mate and Foreign Minister adopted the "Foreign Policy Guidelines" towards the end of 1992. Kozyrov believed that there was no need to preserve the special relations with India as found in the Soviet era. There were many irritants during Yeltsin era which proved obstacles in the way of close cooperation between both the time-tested friends. These irritants included cryogenic engine issue, Kashmir issue and Rupee rouble issue etc. Irregular supply of spare parts for Soviet weapons was another irritant which further deteriorated Indo-Russian relations. Kashmir and NPT issues also worsened the bilateral relations during the initial years of 1991-92. On the nuclear non-proliferation issue, Moscow was now not showing a special relations from Indian point of view. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there were two stages in Indo-Russian relations (I) 1991-93, (II) 1993-2000. First phase of the Russian foreign policy toward India was not identical with that of the erstwhile Soviet Union.
The time from 1993 to 2000 can be called the second phase in Indo-Russian relations in the post-cold war scenario which was to revive the old friendship. During his visit Yeltsin he made it clear that Russia would deliver cryogenic engines and space technology for India's space programme under US $ 350 million deal between the ISRO and Glavkosmas inspite of the imposition of sanctions on both the organizations by the US. Big issue between two nations i.e. rupee-rouble disagreement had been settled by that time. After the pro-west Kozyrev, Yevgeny Primakov became the Minister of External Affairs on 9 January 1996. While Kozyrev was known for his pro-western orientation, Primakov was interested in maintaining good relations with the old allies. During his visit to New Delhi, he also floated the idea about strategic triangle including India, Russia and China for peace and stability in the world and also as a counter to unipolarism. At the Pokhran event of 11 May, 1998, Russia consistently refused to impose sanctions against India for her breach of nuclear ethics. The nuclear test by India did not put an end to close and warm relations between India and Russia. In the context of nuclear tests, the Russian diplomats made it clear that Russia's policy towards India would remain same as was before the tests. The overall Russian perception and attitude during Yeltsin period remained friendly, barring the initial two years 1991-92. During that period Russia distanced itself from its old stand regarding Kashmir issue. During Yeltsin visit, many agreements were concluded and Indo-Russian relations came on the old track. During the Primakov rule, Indo-Russian relations reached a new height. Russia supported the Indian stand on Kashmir and India supported the Russian stand on Chechanya. Other issues like multipolarism, economic reforms and democracy brought both the countries together.

Political and strategic relationships between both the countries are at high level since 2000. There were annual summits and visits at high level, taking place between the two countries. After the collapse of Soviet Union, world entered into a new phase. This phase was described as US hegemony all over the world. His unilateral pre-emptive action, regime change in democratic cloak, use of UN as a pawn, NATO expansion towards Eastern Europe are the main examples. There were many issues in Indo-Russian relations, which provided framework of convergence such as global
terrorism, reforms in UNSC, Afghanistan, multipolar world order, Central Asia, Chechnya and Kashmir issue.

Russia also got worried about increasing Indo-US relations. The Indo-US relations were influenced by the geopolitical shifts. They saw China as the most rapidly changing regional power as China, had violated U.N. Convention the Law of Sea. But there is also growing differences between both the nations which are not limited to one or two areas but include many areas like bilateral access issue, problems in the implementation the US-India civil nuclear deal US's immigration rule, WTO policies, departure of USA from Afghanistan, defence cooperation and trade. If the India has dexterity balanced relations with USA inter alia closer ties with Russia. Moscow is also maximizing its political options meticulously with China and Pakistan. Indo-US rapprochement such as Indo-Russian relationships not at earlier level, end of cold war, deteriorating India-Pakistan relations, emergence of cross-border terrorism and Islamic extremism, China is matter of concern from geopolitical and security point of view and finally India's structured adjustment programme post-1991. India's lucrative market is providing new opportunities to American economy. America's policy on issues such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, terrorism and Kashmir is not straight forward and consistent. As compared to USA, Russia's support on such issues is forthright and consistent. Russia's stand on Taliban is clear like India. It does not recognize good Taliban and bad Taliban theory.

Erstwhile Soviet Union was a source of 70 percent of India's defence needs. After its collapse, Indo-Russian defence relations reached at very low level, due to Moscow's pro-western tilt and the diversion of interests of both countries. More than half of the Indian defence equipments were fulfilled by the Soviet Union. The relations at political and military level between the two countries can be termed as best in the world. The Putin era will be noted as a transformational period for Russia as well as for the Indo-Russian strategic partnership. Paradigm changed in bilateral defence relationship. It moved from buyer-seller interaction to joint development of weapons system between the two countries. Their marketing over the world's major joint development and production projects such as Brahmos Missile, 5th Generation Fighter Aircraft, Medium Transport Aircraft Development Programme (MTA) and joint
military exercise took place between the two. Besides these major joint productions, there are many factors which are creating problems in smooth defence cooperation such as inefficiency, delay factor, high cost, quality concern, difficulty in obtaining spare parts and Russian defence industry lacking modern technology etc.

Today, economic relationships are more important than political relations. But Indo-Russian economic relations are not at that level if compared with $ 100 economic exchange with the US and 73 billion trade in goods with China. Both Indo-Russian trade at $ 11 billion till 2012, the target was set up merely $ 20 billion up to 2015.

On political and military level, the relationship between the two countries can be termed as best in the world but the economic relations are moving at slow pace because with the collapse of Soviet Union, state hegemony over trade was over. On the other hand, In India privatisation encouraged the private players. When Putin assumed Kremlin leadership, new phase began in Indo-Russian economic relations. Both the nations have several areas which promise to take the economic and trade turnover to a higher pitch in upcoming years such as economic cooperation in the regional context, energy sector, cooperation in science and technology, medicines and pharmaceuticals, gem and jewellery sector. But there are several retarding factors which affected Indo-Russian economic relations such as cumbersome process of issue of certification and registration for pharmaceutical products, lack of proper trade routes, Russia’s lukewarm approach for North South Transport corridor, red tapism, corruption and strict visa regime etc. To improve the economic ties some bold policy initiatives are required. Both have potential, bilateral free trade agreement. Some industries in both the countries had the potential to give new direction to bilateral relations. But it is a prima facie in economic ties to not reflect the excellent as in political relations. Political goodwill, existing between the two countries needs to be translated into meaningful and mutually beneficial economic ties.