Chapter One

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A reading through the statements made by the Government of India on the Indo-Soviet Treaty during the signing ceremony and the debate that was held on August 10, 1971 on the Treaty will highlight two prevailing perceptions regarding the Treaty's origin. Firstly, there was the long-term historical perspective; the Treaty was regarded as a natural culmination of nearly two decades of friendly relations that had existed between the two countries in diversified fields -- political, military and economic. This historical background of Indo-Soviet friendship made it only natural that the two countries would gradually gravitate towards codifying the existing relationship into a treaty. The Indo-Soviet Treaty was judged from this perspective as a mere formalisation of the existing relationship into a firmer legal basis. Second was the immediate context of the Treaty; the Treaty was believed to have emerged as an answer to the changing power equation that was taking place between China, USA and the USSR since 1969 through Sino-US rapprochement and its adverse impact on India's diplomacy with Pakistan on the East Pakistan crisis that had cropped up since the summer of 1971 -- having grave repercussion on India's political and economic stability. The Treaty was seen as an improvisation on the part of both the Soviet Union and India to meet these emerging international and regional developments affecting their security. Though both these dual threads of perceptions were interwoven in the Government's and general public's perception about the
Treaty, the immediate context emanating from the East Pakistan crisis was regarded to have given an urgent relevance to the signing of the Treaty by India.

The Government's statements released from India bore evidence of this. In these statements though there was an awareness to portray the Treaty as a fruitful agreement giving a strong basis to develop the historical bond of friendship between the two countries, the deterrent aspect inherent in article 9 of the Treaty which was related to the immediate security environment of the world in general and the region in particular was emphasised. The Indian Foreign Minister welcomed the Treaty as a "further step towards strengthening the friendship and cooperation between India and the Soviet Union". But then he emphasised in particular that the Treaty, in its true essence, was a "Treaty of Peace". Explaining the implication of article 9 in this context he said,

It is a Treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation. It is also a Treaty of nonaggression. It further provides a credible assurance that in the event of an attack or a threat thereof, the High Contracting Parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultation in order to remove such a threat and to take appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and the security of their countries. This should act as a deterrent to any powers that may have aggressive designs on our territorial integrity and sovereignty. It is, therefore, in essence, a Treaty of Peace against war.

That the immediate security environment necessitated this could be gleaned from his reference to rapid "changes in the configuration of various world forces". Prime Minister Indira Gandhi too, in an interview in New Delhi commented on the importance of Article 9 of the Treaty in

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countering the hostile attitudes of USA, China and Pakistan towards India's policy on the East Pakistan crisis. She said,

International relations have entered an era of rapid change....Nations are seeking new ties and cutting across old rigidities a welcome trend. But when some countries are taking advantages of these changes to embark upon opportunism and adventurism we are convinced that the present Treaty will discourage such adventure on the part of countries which have shown a pathological hostility towards us.

Then she referred to the deterrent aspect of Article 9 of the Treaty in this context. In the report of the Ministry of External Affairs of that year there was a reference to the Treaty as "solemnisation of the close and friendly relations between the two countries" on a "political and legal basis", but the reference to the implication of Article 9 of the Treaty was also mentioned. This was to be contrasted with the Soviet line of interpretation of the Treaty's relevance that focused on the historical background of Indo-Soviet friendship. Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister observed at the signing ceremony,

There are momentous events in the relations between states which come as fruits of dozens of years prepared by the previous development of these relations. The Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation which has just been signed is one such most important landmark for the Soviet Union and India...It crowns the principled and consistent policy of our two countries aimed at cooperation and friendship...[and] provides an even stronger political and legal basis for these relations.

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4Gromyko’s speech on 9 August 1971 in Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Foreign Affairs Record (New Delhi), vol.17, no.8, August 1971, p.162; henceforth to be cited as Foreign Affairs Record.
Coming to the views of the Members of Indian Parliament the almost unanimous support lent to the Treaty (excepting the Swatantra Party) which was unprecedented on any Government decision earlier and which led to its being claimed by the Foreign Minister as representing the "will of the people of India" -- was because of its *timing* which was related to the immediate context of the Treaty, i.e., the East Pakistan crisis.\(^5\) There were some veteran parliamentarians known long for their support to the cause of Indo-Soviet friendship, who made it important not to view the Treaty from such a narrow perspective and saw it rather through the long years of India's friendship with the Soviet Union which had been tested on crucial political issues, and in military and economic fields too.\(^6\) But the majority perception about the Treaty, including those from the Opposition benches, was that the Treaty had strengthened India's hand in solving the East Pakistan crisis by ending India's isolation and preventing the possibility of Chinese aggression on India, which was India's main concern.\(^7\)


\(^6\)Hiren Mukherjee remarked, "We have discovered in the Soviet Union a friend which stood by us in fair weather and in fowl and who is a friend in need"; former Defence Minister of India Krishna Menon said, "It is frightfully important that we do not present this Treaty as though it is merely a reaction to the Pakistan-China-USA collusion or allow the inference to be drawn that it is an inclusive alliance". Henry Austin referred to the "geopolitical necessity" of befriending the Soviet Union as being India's neighbour; V.K. Varadaraja Rao viewed he Treaty as nothing more than a "formalisation" of the existing level of cooperation; ibid., cols.244-6, 281, 216-17, and 304-5 respectively.

\(^7\)The party resolution of Bharatiya Jana Sangh said, "Bharatiya Jana Sangh is not prepared to extend uncritical support to the Treaty. In the immediate context...the Treaty is welcome to the extent that it counters the continued American arming of Pakistan, deters Chinese intervention in Indo-Pak affairs and ends the isolation of India"; reproduced in M.N. Ghatate, *Indo-Soviet Treaty, Reactions and Reflections* (New Delhi, Dean Dayal Research Institute).
On the basis of the above discussion the present chapter intends to enquire into the genesis of the Treaty in two sections -- the first section dwelling with the historical background of the Treaty starting from the latter phase of the Stalin period until 1968 when the groundwork for the Treaty was being laid through gradual strengthening of the relationship in various areas, political, economic and military; although occasional stress in the relationship was noted due to Moscow's balanced policies pursued since 1965. The second section will deal with the period 1969 to 1971 when the mutuality of strategic interests led to the idea of the Treaty being conceived leading ultimately to the signing of the Treaty on August 9, 1971. This will be followed by a short insight into the nature of the Indo-Soviet Treaty.

**Historical Background**

Although India's diplomatic relationship with the Soviet Union was established as early as 13 April 1947, the groundwork for friendship started emerging only after Stalin's death in 1953. Stalin had entertained no warm feelings about India and New Delhi, and had expressed his reservation about India being conditioned "largely due to the atmosphere of Cold War".1

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1972), p.29; Jana Sangh leader Atal Behari Vajpayee's own reason for supporting the Treaty was the hope that it would frustrate the belligerent attitude of Pakistan and was likely to stop any possible Chinese intervention in case of Pakistan attack on India; Lok Sabha, *Debates*, n.5, cols.265-6, 271; the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and its spokesman A.K. Gopalan viewed in similar vein that Treaty would act as a deterrent to the aggressive design of Yahya Khan talking of unleashing a war on India, Ghatate, ibid., cols.240, 297 and 300 respectively.

*Cited in Government of India, Lok Sabha Secretariat, *Foreign Policy of India* (New Delhi, 1987), p.45; henceforth to be cited as *Foreign Policy of India*.**
Stalin remained suspicious about the genuine independence of this country, which he felt was more a case of alteration of power by the British imperialists rather than an abandonment of their control.\(^9\) Naturally, the Soviet media during his time had shown no hesitation in characterising India's Congress Party leaders as reactionaries under the influence of "Anglo-American Imperialism".\(^{10}\) India's policy of non-alignment which Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru thought as indispensable to the interest of "peace and freedom" was received by Kremlin leadership with open criticism. Nehru chose non-alignment to keep away from power blocs aligned against one another which, in his opinion led to Cold Wars in the past.\(^{11}\) But Stalin perceived Nehru's policy "only as a mark to cover collaboration with Anglo-American imperialism".\(^{12}\) Such adverse opinion about India was sure to have a dampening effect on Indo-Soviet relationship as was conspicuously revealed in Soviet Union's cool reaction to Gandhiji's assassination that almost bordered on neglect.\(^{13}\) Nehru, expressing his dissatisfaction at the Soviet policy in a letter to Krishna Menon on 26 June 1948, mentioned that "the whole basis of Russian policy appears to be that no essential change has taken place

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\(^{10}\)For details of Soviet mass media's characterisation of India, see Zafar Imam, *Ideology and Reality in Soviet Foreign Policy in Asia* (New Delhi, 1975), Chapter One.

\(^{11}\)From Nehru's broadcast to the nation on 7 September 1946, cited in *Foreign Policy of India*, n.8, p.3.

\(^{12}\)Cited in ibid., p.45.

\(^{13}\)For details, see T.N. Kaul, *Diplomacy in Peace and War : Recollections and Reflections* (New Delhi, 1979), p.11.
in India and that we still continue to be the camp followers of the British. That is, of course, complete nonsensical premise which is apt to go wrong".14

Paradoxically, a change in Soviet perception of India started in the last phase of the Stalin era -- and India's initiative in ending the Korean war happened to be a catalyst. Stalin was reported to have welcomed Nehru's suggestion as regards the expediency of a peaceful settlement of the Korean crisis through the Security Council with the participation of the representatives of the five Great Powers, including the People's Republic of China.15 In India's official perception it was due to India's contribution in the Korean War crisis that the Soviets started realising that "India's non-alignment was a useful factor working not only in favour of peace but also helping in the elimination of foreign domination in Asia".16 The Soviet Premier George Malenkov in his address to the Supreme Soviet in August 1953, officially expressed Soviet support to India's foreign policy of non-alignment by specially complimenting her for making "significant contribution" in ending the Korean war.17

Though the Soviet overtures to India began at the end of Stalin's life time, the real shift in Soviet attitude towards India started when Nikita Khrushchev came to power. His attitude

16Cited in Foreign Policy of India, n.8, p.45.
17Malenkov said, "In the effort of the peace-loving countries directed towards ending the Korean war, India made a significant contribution. Our relations with India and the USSR will grow stronger and develop in a spirit of friendly cooperation"; cited in For a Lasting Peace: For a Peoples' Democracy (Bucharest), no.33, 14 August 1953, p.3.
towards India was conditioned by his new strategy towards the Third World. While Stalin had largely written off the new nations of Asia and Africa as appendages to the capitalist West, Khrushchev came out of the Eurasian confines of the Soviet foreign policy in an effort to win friends in the Third World on the presumption that their opposition to the American policy of establishing military, political and economic control in these areas would make them a potential instrument in Soviet attempt to eradicate western influence in these regions. The principle of non-alignment became a more viable instrument from this perspective and India's importance got logically enhanced in Khrushchev's new strategy towards the Third World to counter the US moves for defensive alliance system in these regions.

The Conference of Afro-Asian states held in Bandung (Indonesia) in April 1955 was the first such occasion when an identity of Indian and Soviet perceptions on important political issues like colonialism was demonstrated. Nehru's effort at this conference against the incorporation of a proposal initiated by Ceylon and other pro-western regimes calling for broadening the scope of the criticism of colonialism in Asia and Africa to include Soviet imperialism did not go unnoticed in Moscow. The Soviet Foreign Ministry expressed Soviet support to the struggle of the Afro-Asian countries against all forms of colonial rule represented in the Bandung Conference. India found a laudatory reference in Molotov's famous speech at the Supreme Soviet declaring, "It is a factor of great historical importance

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that colonial India is no more and there is an Indian Republic instead". This increased India's prestige in international affairs. Later Khrushchev in his celebrated speech at the 20th CPSU Congress in 1956 made for the first time, an authoritative pronouncement of Soviet appreciation of India and the non-aligned nations in general. He hailed the emergence in the world arena of "peace-loving states proclaiming non-participation in blocs as a principle of their foreign policy" as a "vast zone of peace", working as a "mighty factor in international relations". India welcomed Khrushchev's appreciation of non-aligned nations as marking a new phase in Soviet attitude towards these countries.

The political efficacy of Nehru's stand at the Bandung Conference was demonstrated by Soviet position on the question of Pakistan's claim to Kashmir which came to emerge as a significant factor in the whole panorama of Indo-Soviet relationship. The manner in which the Kashmir question had got quagmired in the power politics at the United Nations in propping up Pakistan against India was a frustrating experience for India. The western powers led by the United States and Britain tabled several resolutions upholding the Security Council's resolution in 1948 to hold plebiscite in Kashmir which India firmly opposed. It was the Soviet veto which prevented the adoption of such a hostile resolution, helping India to counter concerted western pressures. Meanwhile exchange of visits that took place in 1955 marked the era of personal diplomacy in USSR-India relations. Nehru's first state visit to the USSR as

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21 From the 20th CPSU Congress Resolution, cited in Current Digest of Soviet Press (New York), vol.3, no.4, 7 March 1956, pp.6-7; henceforth to be cited as CDSP.

22 Cited in Foreign Policy of India, n.8, p.45.
Prime Minister in June 1955 was followed by the return visit of Khrushchev and Bulganin to India. During the visits both of them, particularly Khrushchev made public pronouncement in favour of India's position on Kashmir. Khruschev argued that since the question of Kashmir as "one of the states in India" had been "decided by the people of Kashmir", there was no question of any "change in the border of India and Pakistan as some other countries wanted to do".23

When the Kashmir issue came up for discussion in the Security Council in 1957 -- with USA and Britain reintroducing a resolution reiterating their demand for holding a plebiscite in Kashmir under international supervision, in a marathon speech India's representative to the United Nations, Krishna Menon convincingly argued that the Kashmir question had already been settled by the will of the people of Kashmir who accepted it as part of India.24 Following India's line of argument, the Soviet Ambassador strongly opposed the resolution moved by the western powers. Justifying Soviet stand (which in his opinion was objective and impartial) he maintained that the Kashmir question did not arise "among the people of Kashmir itself" but was instead consistently being created by such powers since nine years who were not motivated by a wish to solve this question according to the will of the people of Kashmir or in the interest of India or Pakistan, but were guided most of all by "their

23 Refer to the "Statement by N.A. Bulganin and N.S. Khrushchev on India, Burma and Afghanistan", New Times, Supplement, no.52, 1955, p.27; also reported in Times of India (Delhi), 12 December 1955; all references in this chapter to this newspaper are of Delhi edition.

interests to penetrate into this region which is an important strategic area", as also to "inflate" differences between India and Pakistan.\footnote{For details see the statement by Soviet Ambassador Sobolev at the Security Council, cited in ibid., p.169.} Acknowledging the Soviet gesture Nehru stated in Indian Parliament that while the West sponsored resolution on Kashmir was "unacceptable" to India the Soviet Union had persuaded the West to modify the resolution through proposals which though not completely "unobjectionable" was "better" than the western one.\footnote{"Basic Facts to Remember", Nehru's statement in Rajya Sabha on 9 September 1957, cited in Jawaharlal Nehru, \textit{India's Foreign Policy, Selected Speeches, September 1946-April 1961} (New Delhi, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1961), pp.27-28.}

It is to be noted that the immediate factor in the development of mutuality of political perceptions was USA's inclusion of Pakistan in her defence alliance network causing concern to India and the Soviet Union as well. Since Pakistan lay in near proximity to Soviet Union's southern border, Moscow perceived the US-Pakistan military alliance as having direct bearing on the security of the Soviet Union. This was discernible from the series of notes exchanged between Islamabad and Moscow during the years 1953-60 in many of which Moscow warned Islamabad of retaliatory action if Pakistani territory was used by the USA for conducting intelligence operation against the USSR;\footnote{Citation from Soviet sources in Nisha Sahai Achuthan, \textit{Soviet Arms Transfer Policy in South Asia, 1955-81} (New Delhi, 1988), p.31.} which, in fact, actualised in the U2 Spy plan episode of 1960. Moscow could count on India's support on this score since US-Pakistan strategic alliance was seen with equal concern by the Indian leadership. Prime Minister Nehru opposed Pakistan's inclusion in SEATO as also the US-Pakistan strategic agreement of 1958
arguing that notwithstanding US assurances to the contrary, Pakistan's main purpose in entering the strategic alliance was to increase her military superiority over India.\(^{28}\) Moscow, perceiving similar threat to its security from any US-Pakistan military alliance, found it convenient to express sympathy to India by publicly attacking the US-Pakistan bilateral security agreement of 1958 as being directed not only against the Soviet Union but against all her neighbours, like Afghanistan and India.\(^{29}\)

The mid-fifties also witnessed the beginning of close Indo-Soviet cooperation in another significant area i.e., the economic field. Bhilai was the first major project in which Soviet Union extended a Rs.112 million loan to New Delhi for the construction of a steel mill. A noted Western observer regarded Bhilai not only as a "showpiece of Soviet aid in India" but as a symbolisation of the "Indian aspiration for national progress equally shared".\(^{30}\) Such a view could not appear exaggerated if one considers how the Soviet Union had come forward to help India after the West had ultimately backed out on the plea that such a step could be taken only through the expansion of the existing private sector steel plants.\(^{31}\) Economists both in India and the West made favourable remarks on the technological superiority and better functioning of the Bhilai Steel Plant over the Rourkela Steel Plant which was built with West

\(^{28}\)Nehru, n.26, p.87.

\(^{29}\)Cited from Pravda, in J.P. Jain, Soviet Policy Towards Pakistan and Bangladesh (New Delhi, 1974), p.52.


\(^{31}\)For details on this see Jai Prakash Premdev, Indo-Soviet Relations (New Delhi, 1985), p.168.
German economic assistance.\textsuperscript{32} During 1962-1963 USA again turned down an Indian request to help establish another plant for India in Bokaro, the major disagreement being the US proposal that the plant would be built on turn key basis. Again it was the Soviet Union which came forward with generous assistance following which a final agreement was concluded in January 1965.\textsuperscript{33}

Another important area of Indo-Soviet economic cooperation was in the field of oil exploration where India, indeed, had been facing a crisis since independence in terms of the burden of importing oil from Anglo-American companies at high cost, draining India's scarce foreign exchange reserves. It was after these companies had given a negative opinion regarding prospects of oil exploration that the Soviet oil experts were invited to India to help her to fulfil her policy to acquire "know-how in oil and to get it from whatever source and in the shortest possible time".\textsuperscript{34} After five months of survey in India the Soviet oil experts presented a very optimistic report concluding that India had vast reserves of oil with scope for commercial exploitation and had an estimated 40,000 square miles of prospective area of oil and natural


\textsuperscript{34}The statement of D.D. Malaviya, the then Minister of National Resources and Development in India, cited in M.J. Vinod, "Attitudes Towards India : Contrasting Approaches of the United States and the Soviet Union", \textit{India Quarterly} (New Delhi), vol.XLVI, no.1, January-March 1990, pp.30-31.
gas reserves.\textsuperscript{35} Events followed in quick succession. The Government of India decided to set up the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) in 1956 which began its operation with the advice and assistance from the USSR that went a long way in strengthening India's self-reliance in economic development.

\textbf{Indo-China War of 1962 : A Test of Indo-Soviet Relations}

In early fifties, Moscow's cultivation of a broad-based relationship with India was motivated by her desire to deprive the US of a solid phalanx in South Asia to contain communism. From late fifties China began to emerge as an important factor in Indo-Soviet relationship as the Soviet Union's growing conflict with China began to assume an alarming proportion. Since then the motivation of the USSR in assisting India was primarily based on the Soviet estimation of India's geopolitical importance as a partial balance to China's influence in the region. Indo-China border dispute of 1959 which finally ended with a full-scale war between the two countries in 1962 became a test case of such relationship. India was clearly beginning to emerge as an important factor in Sino-Soviet rift when the armed clashes between the Chinese and Indian forces at Longju on the eastern border erupted in 1959. The Chinese had manifested their displeasure about the continued expansion of Soviet economic assistance to India with their own share of aid being reduced.\textsuperscript{36} The displeasure only increased when

\textsuperscript{35}Cited in ibid., p.31; also see Kalinin's report in Vinod Bhatia, \textit{Soviet Union and India's Industrial Development} (Bombay, 1973), pp.35-36.

\textsuperscript{36}For details see Sebastian Stanislaus, \textit{Soviet Economic Aid to India : An Analysis and Evaluation} (New Delhi, 1975), Chapter IV.
the *Tass* bulletin issued on 9 September 1959 (after the eruption of the Indo-China border skirmishes) expressed equivocal support to its communist friend China. Although it referred to the "fraternal friendship" between the communist powers, its reference in the similar vein to "friendly cooperation between the USSR and India" only displeased the Chinese leadership. Reportedly, the official circles in India were pleased with the *Tass* statement as a fair one supportive of India's position; although there were some sceptics in India who saw in the statement a "pro-China" sentiment-pointing to the difference between the phrases "fraternal friendship" with China and "friendly cooperation" with India.

Given this pattern of Soviet neutrality over the 1959 border dispute, New Delhi was disappointed by the initial Soviet response to the full scale war that broke out between India and China in October 1962. The editorial which *Pravda* published on 25 October after five days of official silence openly sided with the Communist China. India was particularly concerned when it described the Three Point Peace Proposal for a ceasefire along the line of Actual Control as "constructive" even when the proposal had been rejected by India. The opinion among some scholars that the Soviet attitude was conditioned by her desire to enhance her bargaining position *vis-a-vis* the USA in the Cuban missile crisis by maintaining unity

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37 Cited from *Pravda* (Moscow), 10 September 1959 in Premdev, n.31, p.85.


39 This view was opposed by Devendra Kaushik in *Soviet Relations with India and Pakistan* (New Delhi, 1971), p.68.

within the socialist camp was, however, vindicated when Moscow reverted to her original position of neutrality in the Sino-Indian dispute after the abatement of the Cuban crisis. Pravda editorial on 5 November did not either ask India to accept the Chinese proposal as the basis of settlement of the conflict or term the McMohan Line as the creation of the imperialists as it had done in its editorial of 25 October 1962. It instead urged both China and India to effect ceasefire without advancing any terms and resume negotiation. Moscow, thus, appeared to be more supportive of India's position.

Notwithstanding this Moscow's initial wavering was taken due note of in India. For the first time Nehru's foreign policy received hammer blows from a militant opposition which was evident in the week long discussion that took place in Indian Parliament on China's aggression. Voices of those who justified Nehru for not expecting active assistance from the Soviet Union considering the embarrassing situation into which the Soviet Union was put in a conflict with a Communist country, got drowned in those, which expressing disappointment at the failure of the "great Soviet Union" to come forward positively in India's aid, felt constrained to observe that the Prime Minister failed to "face reality firmly and chose to live in a dreamland" by following a policy of appeasement. They still reiterated their faith in non-alignment but in the light of India's past and present experiences, that policy needed a reorientation, they pointed out. Nehru's embarrassment increased when Moscow delayed the sale of most urgently

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42 See respectively the statement by K. Santhanam in India, Rajya Sabha, Debates (New Delhi, Rajya Sabha Secretariat), vol.XLI, no.2, 9 November 1962, col.371; and the statement by (continued...)
needed MiG-21 aircraft to India on which an agreement had been already reached in 1962. Questioned about this in Indian Parliament Nehru did not clearly spell out on Soviet military aid when he referred to western aid to India during the war, but he implicitly denied the speculation in the West about the cancellation of the MiG agreement by informing that the "previous commitment" of the Soviet Union would "stand by in spite of the development". But, India had reasons for her discomfort since the MiG deal had become a prestige issue and almost a crucial test of Indo-Soviet friendship when in contrast to Soviet hesitation in supplying MiG-21 aircraft, USA responded to India's necessity in a way that seemed to convey a "new sense of priorities". Following Nehru's letter to Kennedy on 29 October, the US Government informed its decision to airlift infantry as well as heavy weapons to India at the very earliest leading to emergency shipment of $70,000,000 worth of military equipments beginning from 3 November 1962. Reeling under the impact of the contrasting responses of the US and USSR to India's military requirements, voices were raised for the first time for a modification of non-alignment with an orientation towards the West. Appreciative remarks were made for such gestures of "good neighbourliness" by the West which came forward with generous

42(...continued)
M.B. Lal and A.D. Mani in ibid., cols.365-66 and also ibid., no.1, 8 November 1962, col.269.

43See Prime Minister's statement in Rajya Sabha on 9 November 1962 cited in Foreign Affairs Record, vol.8, no.11, November 1962, p.293; see Western press comment on MiG deal in New York Times, 22 October 1962.

response to India's terms. Although, Nehru also showed gratefulness to USA and UK for their timely assistance he was unwilling to cast his lot with the West being aware of the price of abandonment of the policy of non-alignment. In his broadcast to the nation on Chinese aggression he reiterated his pledge to continue this policy by maintaining,

I believe in that [Non-Alignment] policy fully and shall continue to follow it. We are not going to give up a basic principle because of the present difficulty. Even this difficulty will be met more effectively by our continuation of that policy.

The validity of his arguments was proved when the Tass announced the Soviet decision to proceed with the MiG deal. The infusion of western and Soviet military assistances would not have been possible if India had abandoned her policy of non-alignment and joined the western bloc. True, the Soviets initially hesitated to finalise the deal but this probably was due to their anxiety of not unduly disturbing China when the Sino-Soviet rift had not come into light. The Soviet decision to finalise the MiG deal with India, however, had the symbolic value in the background of Sino-Indian war in demonstrating Soviet refusal to line up behind Beijing, which was important from India's point of view. As a noted Indian analyst stated,

New Delhi was anxious to ensure that Moscow maintained its tilt towards India and to keep the conflict with China in the perspective of a national dispute and not an ideological confrontation. India was not campaigning against communism in the world but was struggling with China as a nation state over problem purely of a national character and to which Peking was attempting to give false

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45 See for example, the views by Dr. Gopal Singh and K. Santhanam on 9 November 1962, in Rajya Sabha, Debates, n.42, cols.336 and 371 respectively.

46 Cited in Foreign Affairs Record, vol.8, no.10, October 1962, p.254.

ideological trapping. This perspective called for the maintenance of a credible non-aligned stance.\textsuperscript{48}

Prime Minister's statement in Indian Parliament indicated his sensitivity to Soviet difficulty in the situation, his appreciation of Soviet sympathy to Indian causes notwithstanding. He said,

The Soviet Union has been...consistently, friendly to us all along. [But] it has been put in a difficult position...because they have been...allies of China....we have realised that and we do not expect them to do anything which would definitely mean a breach over there...But we have had their good wishes all along even very recently and that is a consolation to us...\textsuperscript{49}

However, such a gesture did not fail to yield result. It is to be noted that China, had criticised Indo-Soviet response on the border war as an alliance between "revisionist Moscow" and "nationalist bourgeois" like Nehru.\textsuperscript{50} In fact, the Chinese leaders later went on record that their differences with Moscow started with the Soviet failure to support a fellow socialist country in her dispute with a capitalist country.\textsuperscript{51} As a noted western analyst put it, Moscow's attitude in the Indo-China war of 1962 helped India as "it forced the west to compete with the

\textsuperscript{48}V.P. Dutt, \textit{India's Foreign Policy (New Delhi, 1988)}, p.19.

\textsuperscript{49}From Prime Minister's statement on November 14, 1962 in \textit{Foreign Affairs Record}, n.43, p.314.

\textsuperscript{50}G.P. Deshpande, "Non-Alignment and the Chinese Perspective in International Relations", in Misra, n.19, p.473.

\textsuperscript{51}Cited from Chinese Press, in Dutt, n.48, p.19.
USSR; increased India's military strength; served as a warning to China and kept India from having to reach an accommodation with Pakistan in order to face China.  

**Military Dimension of Indo-Soviet Relationship : The MiG Agreement**

The finalisation of the MiG Agreement in September 1964 in the post Sino-Indian war period, indeed, heralded a new era in Indo-Soviet relationship. The value of the deal was put at Rs.142 million which included additional direct purchase of MiG-21 bomber interceptors, ninety of which were to be delivered during 1965 and 1967. It also provided technical assistance for factories to be set up for the manufacture of these planes -- about 200 to start with. The credit was on easy terms repayable in rupees over 10 years at 2 per cent which was most economical from India's point of view. With the MiG deal India became the first Third World country after China and North Korea to have been granted the favour of manufacturing Soviet weapons. With Moscow becoming an indispensable source of military hardware to India, a new era in the relationship began.

The MiG deal occasioned a debate in India as to why India abandoned her traditional western suppliers and moved to Moscow for arms. Before 1962 on the military front, there was no significant collaboration between the USSR and India. India's modest defence acquisition programme from foreign countries which actually started from 1958 after Krishna Menon took

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53 For details see "World Armaments and Disarmament, SIPRI Arms Trade Register* (Stockholm, 1975), p.34.
over as the Defence Minister of India, was confined to India's traditional western suppliers, especially Britain. The reason was that apart from the advantage of the feasibility of replenishment of spare parts which such acquisition could offer to India, this could keep with Nehru's policy of steering clear of Cold War politics by avoiding reliance on either of the Super Powers for arms aid. In mid 1956 there was a report in the western press that Moscow's offer of sale of MiG-17 was not accepted by Nehru for the fear of becoming dependent on the Soviet arms supplies although he had difficulty with the British sale of Gnat light weight fighter bomber.

However, realising the impact and magnitude of US arms delivery to Pakistan, especially Pakistan's acquisition of several F-104 interceptors from the USA, India became less rigid on this score and this facilitated Soviet military initiative in India. In view of this the report in the Indian press about Nehru's remark after the visit of Soviet military delegation to India (headed by Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Zhukov) in January 1957 that "There is nothing to prevent India from purchasing Soviet aircraft or any other type of arms" when the Soviets had indicated their willingness in this regard does not appear unlikely. Marshall Zhukov's visit was followed by a visit by Indian mission to Moscow in October to negotiate

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54 For data on India's arms purchases from the West, see ibid., pp.33-35.


56 Indian press reported on Nehru's expressing such a view in Indian Parliament, *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), 24 June 1962.

57 *The Statesman* (New Delhi), 31 May 1957; henceforth reference to this will be of Delhi edition.
and finalise a deal on purchase of transport planes and helicopters suitable for high attitude which India required due to the emerging Sino-Indian border conflict and the Tibetan uprising in 1959. Although these served communication requirements and were not combat equipments as the Soviets were unwilling to disturb their relations with China unless Sino-Soviet rift became final,\(^{58}\) this signified an important gesture by Moscow to India on this sensitive military front.

Soviet military assistance to India started after the 1962 Indo-China war which coincided with China's final rift with Moscow. Within India there had already existed a long repeated demand from the Indian Air Force for supersonic interceptor similar to F-104 jet fighter which USA had supplied to Pakistan. In addition, there was an ongoing review of India's military needs and requirements after India's humiliating defeat in the war with China; leading to the Defence Ministry's drawing up of a Five Year Defence Plan which included an ambitious defence programme consisting of increased production at home and imports from friendly foreign countries.\(^{59}\) MiG Agreement was concluded with the Soviet Union under the pressure of these events.

Significantly, India's negotiations leading to the MiG deal revealed that initially India was not inclined to conclude the deal with the Soviets and she even leaned towards the west for acquisition of sophisticated bomber aircraft which she needed most. It was the West's

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reluctance to supply such weapons to India on conditions favourable to the latter that led India to clinch the deal with the Soviets. Moscow's offer after India's unsuccessful negotiation with the US Government for acquisition of similar bomber aircraft which USA provided to Pakistan will substantiate this. The statement that India's Defence Minister Y.B. Chavan made after his mission to USA to negotiate a deal with the country on bomber aircraft had fallen through will testify to the fact that India was rather forced to turn to the USSR as the USA was unwilling to comply with the Indian request. The US Ambassador to India, Chester Bowles, who himself supported India's request in the discussion held at Military Assistance Programme in the interest of regional stability regarded US decision as "indefensible".

Britain was equally responsible along with the USA in this regard. From a noted western account it was known that when Britain refused to equip Indian HF-24 jet fighter with her Bor 12 engine which India required, the Soviets readily agreed to supply RD-9 motors along with the facility of acquiring and manufacturing MiG-21 jet. It is evident therefore, as was noted by an eminent strategic analyst in India, it was West's unwillingness to

"Chavan wrote, "The USA had given F-104 planes to Pakistan; we had the MiG-21 which was supposed to be a sort of interceptor. We wanted a plane which could be used both as an interceptor and ground attack. We went to America with the requirement...The US government was very solicitous. But they felt...nothing should be done at the cost of India's economic development. The sum total of it all was that the US Government did not want us to have sophisticated planes, ..." Cited in T.V. Kunhikrishnan, The Unfriendly Friends : India and America (New Delhi, 1974), p.107.


"From Ian C. Graham, The Indo-Soviet MiG deal and its International Repercussion, Asian Survey (Berkeley, California), vol.4, no.5, May 1964, pp.824-25 & 831."
accommodate India's needs that led to the significant agreement between India and the Soviet Union in combat equipments that opened a new era in Indo-Soviet friendship. 63

**Moscow's Policy Towards the Sub-continent**

Indo-Soviet friendship which was evident during the Khrushchev-Nehru era suffered a jolt when a temporary chill in the relationship was noticeable due to a new strategy which the post-Khrushchev leadership adopted towards the Third World countries. The new leadership moved to a more pragmatic stance towards the Third World countries and with regard to the subcontinent. They concluded that a policy of rapprochement with Pakistan could wean Pakistan away from China, with whom she was forging military links causing concern to Moscow. Although they had no inclination to abandon the policy of friendship with India, their strategy was directed towards raising the level of friendship with Pakistan while simultaneously expanding her relations with India. Such a policy of maintaining a balanced relationship with both the subcontinental powers generated resentment in India. One observer described the Soviet attitude as that of imperial power dealing with a dependency. 64

It was the shift to a more balanced posture towards India and Pakistan that led Moscow to adopt a neutral position during the Indo-Pakistan war which broke out on 24 August 1965 as a result of an inconclusive agreement over the clash between the two countries over the Rann of Kutch a few months earlier. During the conflict over the Rann of Kutch Moscow

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63 Chari, n.47, pp.455-57.

advised both the parties to exercise restraint for avoiding the conflict.\textsuperscript{65} During the August conflict \emph{Pravda}'s reiteration that "strengthening of the relations between the USSR and Pakistan was part of a general policy aimed at ensuring peace in Asia", made clear Moscow's determination not to let her ties with India come in the way of improving relations with Pakistan.\textsuperscript{66} The Soviet leaders, therefore, gave top priority to the achievement of a ceasefire. In a parallel move with Western efforts in the United Nations Moscow issued a statement on 17 September calling on both sides to halt military operations and carry out an immediate ceasefire, affirming her own good offices to help bring it about.\textsuperscript{67} The statement highlighted Moscow's concern to main-tain a \emph{status quo} policy with regard to both the subcontinental powers. Moscow's concern in playing a mediatory role in bringing about a rapprochement between India and Pakistan was further demonstrated by Kosygin's offer to both Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistan's President Ayub Khan to meet at Tashkent at Soviet behest for negotiating a settlement.

India's initial response was negative. India was well aware that an agreement at Tashkent between India and Pakistan at the Soviet behest was primarily in Soviet interest -- the most important one being the decrease of the western (especially the American) and Chinese influence in Pakistan.\textsuperscript{68} There was also a lurking suspicion in New Delhi, as suggested by an

\textsuperscript{65}\emph{Asian Recorder} (New Delhi), 17-21 May 1965, p.6464.

\textsuperscript{66}\emph{Pravda} commentary published in \emph{CDSP}, vol.17, no.34, 15 September 1965, pp.15-16.

\textsuperscript{67}\emph{Tass} statement in ibid., vol.17, no.36, September 29, 1965, p.12.

\textsuperscript{68}Kaul, n.13, pp.159-60.
analyst, that Pakistan would utilise the agreement to secure from the Soviets a possible concession on Kashmir, as she had successfully done in the past while securing USA's and China's political and military support.69 However, close relations with Moscow was considered important in view of the pro-Pakistan stance of the West as well as China, the latter becoming particularly important in view of China's ultimatum issued during the war against India threatening her with Chinese intervention on behalf of Pakistan. In addition, the Soviet assurance that she would not take the side of Pakistan against India on Kashmir helped to allay suspicions that the agreement would dilute Soviet diplomatic support to India on Kashmir or increase Soviet military supplies to Pakistan at the cost of Indo-Soviet military cooperation.70 It was after careful consideration of these aspects that India agreed to go to the Tashkent Conference in January 1966.

Although the Tashkent agreement71 was not able to work out a basic settlement of differences between India and Pakistan, it enhanced Soviet prestige in Asia -- despite China's hostility. India, however, remained dissatisfied with the Soviet South Asian strategy of balancing Pakistan and India. Although India's official announcement hailed the agreement as a "triumph of peace contributing to the happiness of millions of people in Asia and the world",72 discordant voices were heard; though they remained relatively mute due to Prime Minister Shastri's untimely death at Tashkent following the Agreement. Instead of echoing

69 Dutt, n.48, pp.21-23.
70 Kaul, n.13, pp.160, 162.
71 The agreement in Foreign Affairs Record, vol.12, January 1966, pp.7-10.
72 Swaran Singh's Broadcast to the Nation on Tashkent Declaration in ibid., p.111.
Shastri’s hope that tangible results had been achieved through this unique international diplomacy, it was viewed in some circles as only vindicating Soviet purposes of creating a power equation in the region to isolate China, which was remotely related to bringing peace between India and Pakistan. It was also viewed by some opposition parties (Jana Sangh) as "betrayal of India's national interest and derogatory to India's national honour". The Congress leadership, however, denied such allegation and maintained that the Soviet Union was not trying to "sell any idea", and Soviet mediation was deeply appreciated and Kosygin's "full understanding of Indian interests" was duly taken note of.

Dissatisfaction over Tashkent Agreement became more vocal when the Soviet Union in the Tashkent Agreement tried to befriend Pakistan in a more tangible way through military aid to that country. In 1967 Moscow made a major concession to Pakistan by providing military vehicles and helicopters to Pakistan despite her assurance to India that she would not supply any lethal weapons to Pakistan. It is not clear whether as a Pakistan analyst has put it, Moscow shared Pakistan's primary motivation of seeking Soviet neutrality in future Indo-Pakistani dispute through enhancement of Soviet military aid to them and curtailment of the same to India. However, that the Soviet aim behind her military strategy towards Pakistan

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"See Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Foreign Minister Swaran Singh’s statement in *Foreign Affairs Record*, ibid., pp.37, 46.

"For analysis of Pakistan’s motive, see Zubeida Hassan, "Pakistan’s Relations with the USSR in 1960s", *The World Today* (London), January 1969, pp.26-35."
was to wean Pakistan away from China and USA was admitted by the Soviet leaders to T.N. Kaul, India's Ambassador to the USSR at that time.\textsuperscript{76} India remained generally unconvinced with the line of argument and warned Moscow that such a policy would not only weaken Soviet Union's friendship with India but might even drive India into the western camp.\textsuperscript{77}

Notwithstanding this Moscow entered into the first significant arms agreement with Pakistan in May 1968 on the condition that the latter would give notice of termination of US intelligence communication centre at Gwadar. Announcement of Soviet-Pakistani arms deal of May 1968 created a great uproar in India. A section of the opposition viewed the Soviet action as a clear act of "betrayal" and accused the Government for its "pro-Soviet bias".\textsuperscript{78} Mrs. Gandhi's Government refused to take an alarming posture on this issue but the Government made known in its Annual Report of the MEA its perception of "danger to India's security arising of Soviet military supplies to Pakistan".\textsuperscript{79} Mrs. Gandhi's dissatisfaction was clearly manifested in her sharply worded statement in Lok Sabha on 22 July 1968. Although she criticised the opposition condemnation of the Congress Government for its failure to foresee the shift in Soviet policy, she conceded "...we do not question either the motive or the good faith of the Soviet Union, but we are convinced that this development cannot promote the

\textsuperscript{76}Kaul, n.13, p.157.

\textsuperscript{77}Kaul's remark at the behest of Indira Gandhi at a banquet held in St. George Hall in Kremlin in 1967 during the latter's tour to Moscow in ibid., p.175.

\textsuperscript{78}Vajpayee's letter to the Prime Minister in National Herald (New Delhi), 12 July 1968, and Piloo Mody's statement in Hindustan Times, 12 July and 13 July 1968.

\textsuperscript{79}India, MEA, Annual Report 1969-70, p.64(a).
causes of peace and stability in the subcontinent..." Swaran Singh's statement on strains on Indo-Soviet relationship also referred to this aspect of Soviet policy towards Pakistan."

India's differences with the Soviet Union were manifest in another important international issue affecting the interest of both the states i.e., the issue of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. India believed that proliferation of nuclear weapons was a big hurdle in the achievement of general and complete disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. In consonance with her firm belief that an agreement on non-proliferation was the next logical step after the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, she made efforts to get the item "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons" on the agenda of the General Assembly in 1964. However, what emerged as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) drafted jointly by the USA and the USSR and approved by the General Assembly (Resolution 2373 {XXIII}) was not supported by India, since the latter felt that the Treaty as it stood did not serve the purposes of nuclear disarmament. Addressing the General Assembly Dinesh Singh, then India's Foreign Minister stated,

...(NPT) cannot contribute in any way to a balanced process of disarmament. It seeks to bind the hands of the powerless and to license further accumulation of armaments...which threaten our very existence. It is for that reason that we remain unable to sign the Treaty."

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*Statement cited in A. Appadorai, Select Document of India's Foreign Policy, vol.2 (Delhi, 1985), pp.131-2.

*Ibid., pp.133-5.

*UN, General Assembly Official Record (New York), session 24, plenary meeting, 2 October 1969, p.13.
For India the NPT was at best a non-armament measure seeking only to prevent the emergence of more nuclear powers (horizontal proliferation) leaving the problem of existing stockpiling of nuclear weapons by nuclear weapon states (vertical proliferation) which was a major problem in the field of non-proliferation.\(^{83}\) Opposing such criticisms expressed by India and other countries disagreeable to NPT, the Soviet spokesman in the UN General Assembly Meeting of the First Committee on 31 May 1968 argued for adherence to the Treaty on the premise that the "NPT will promote the economic scientific and technical progress of the non-nuclear countries", since it had set forth definite obligation on the developed countries in offering assistance to nuclear development of non-nuclear states which are not in possession of sufficient technology for that purpose.\(^{84}\) It was clear that there were differences between the two countries on the issue which were conditioned by the then national security perspectives. It was not a mere coincidence then that India then made overtures to both China and the USA to increase her options and decrease her dependence on Moscow. The annual report of the Ministry of External Affairs reiterated India's desire to live in peace and friendship with China consistent with her national honour and territorial integrity. But these

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\(^{83}\) Ambassador Azim Hussain said before the General Assembly, "The Treaty is essentially a non-disarmament measure and does not in any way curb galloping vertical proliferation. The attempt to curb horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons in no way alters, the hegemony of major nuclear powers (vertical proliferation) ....", ibid., session 24, meeting 1706, 1 December 1969, p.2.

overtures received no positive response from China.\textsuperscript{85} India tried to improve her relations with the USA, too. But because of Nixon Administration's prejudice against India and favour for Pakistan India drew a blank.\textsuperscript{86}

The strained relationship between India and the USSR, however, proved temporary as both of them realised that there was no basic clash of interests between them. The time-tested friendship was in the interest of both countries. Moscow's support to India on crucial political issues like Kashmir, her vital contribution towards the making of a self-reliant economic and defence base in the country was appreciated in India. Moscow's perception of an increasing military threat from China during 1969-70, and her failure to wean Pakistan away from China made for a mutuality of strategic perceptions with India.

\textbf{1969-70 -- The Watershed Year : The Background to the Signing of the Treaty}

In the assessment of some eminent western analysts the Indo-Soviet Treaty of August 9, 1971 was a manifestation of Brezhnev's idea of creating a collective security arrangement in Asia through the participation of Asian states to counter the aggressive and militaristic threat from China -- an idea which Brezhnev proposed immediately after the first major border clash between China and the USSR on the Ussuri river on March 2, 1969.\textsuperscript{87} There is no

\textsuperscript{85}India, MEA, \textit{Report 1969-70}, p.33.

\textsuperscript{86}Kaul, n.13, p.175.

\textsuperscript{87}Prof. Robert C. Horn gave evidences to show that the August 9 treaty was actually drawn up two years back during that year of 1969; see his article "Indian-Soviet Relations in 1969 : A Watershed Year?", \textit{Orbis} (Philadelphia, Pa), vol.19, no.3, Winter 1976, pp.1539-63.
corroboration of such view in either the Indian or Soviet statements, but it was generally agreed that the treaty had been under discussion for two years and that a mutually agreed upon draft was prepared earlier than the treaty was actually signed in 1971. The Indian statement was clearer on this count than the Soviet one. The Indian Foreign Minister made the point before Members of Indian Parliament that contrary to the belief that the idea of a treaty was conceived due to Kissinger's dramatic journey to Peking, it was being discussed by both the countries for two years. 88 He, however, made no suggestion of the link of such of discussion with Brezhnev's collective security proposal; although his reference to "two years" that happened to coincide with the year 1969 gave rise to speculation in some quarters. 89

Brezhnev's idea of collective security was found earlier in the writing of a Soviet analyst Matveyev who called for an arrangement by Asian states like India, Burma, Afghanistan and Cambodia to counter the emergence of alliance between America, Australia and to fill the vacuum created in Asia after Britain's withdrawal from the East of Suez. After a few days of its publication, Brezhnev officially launched it at the Moscow Meeting of the Communist and the Workers' Parties by declaring:

88 Swaran Singh's statement in Lok Sabha on August 10, 1971, Lok Sabha Debates, n.5, col.338; India's Foreign Secretary was more specific on this point in maintaining that the draft was ready by 1970; T.N. Kaul, Reminiscences: Discreet Indiscreet (New Delhi, 1982), p.255.

89 Nihal Singh suggested that the Treaty was discussed by Kosygin with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi when the former visited India in May 1969; One Soviet source asserted that the USSR offered India a draft treaty in 1969 justifying the link between Brezhnev's proposal and treaty; cited in J.S. Duncan, The Soviet Union and India (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1989), p.127.
We are of the opinion that the course of events is also putting on agenda the task of creating a system of collective security in Asia. Neither Matveyev nor Brezhnev were specific on what the Soviets meant by a collective security system concentrating instead on what they were not. In the assessment of the West the proposal was primarily a kind of grouping against China and also directed against America's effort to take up the role of the British after their evacuation from the East of Suez. The Chinese virulently attacked Brezhnev's proposal as a "sinister plan" picked up by the Soviets from the "garbage heap of the notorious war-monger Dulles" in which India was the linchpin. In loud protestation against these allegations the Soviets claimed that they wished to create "a zone of peace" in Asia to oppose the "aggressive force" through a collective efforts of the countries of the region.

As the Chinese threat to Soviet security was getting sharper, India's importance vis-a-vis Pakistan increased in Soviet eyes. Soviet mediation at Tashkent had proved a failure in weaning Pakistan away from China which had been the fundamental thrust of Soviet policy since 1965. Pakistan's neutrality over the Sino-Soviet border dispute, her continued assertion of a  


91 Robert H. Donaldson after observing the increase in Soviet Ships in the Indian Ocean since 1968 came to the view that through such a proposal the Soviets wanted to alert the small states and call for an alternative arrangement with the Soviet support; see his article "India : The Soviet Stake in Stability", *Asian Survey*, n.73, pp.481-82; Robert C. Horn, viewed the Brezhnev proposal as an anti-China alliance; see his article, n.87, p.1545.


93 Quoted from Moscow Radio commentary in Donaldson, n.91, p.480.
"powerful community of interests" with China, specially as a "counterpoise to India" made obvious Moscow's failure to swing Rawalpindi away from China. Pakistan also disappointed Moscow by rejecting her call for economic cooperation as a prelude to her proposal for Asian collective security system on the premise that where "differences existed on fundamental issues, any talk of regional cooperation on economic or other issues was unrealistic". Moscow realised that her policy of balancing Pakistan and India led to her failure to wean Pakistan away from China, with the former moving further closer towards the latter. Failure of Soviet policy was also subsequently evident in India's consistent opposition to Soviet armsaid to Pakistan. This led to Moscow's reappraisal of her policy towards India. As an analyst had put it,

From Kremlin's point of view there was the growing likelihood of losing both states in the subcontinent by having its previously significant role in India reduced and not gaining a more influential position in Pakistan. Moscow could not afford to lose both the South Asian countries and therefore, had to shore up its position in the region by having at least one firm ally in India by fostering change in Soviet policy pursued since 1965.

The Soviets, therefore, had no hesitation in linking their anti-China posture with their efforts to woo India. Soviet commentaries attacked China's policy for her claim on Asian lands thus combining Sino-Soviet with Sino-Indian territorial problems. Marshall Grechko's visit to India in March 1969 which came closely on the heels of Sino-Soviet clash on the Ussuri river was such an occasion, when his talks with the Indian leaders on "international problems having defence obligation" were interpreted in the West as a Soviet effort "to coordinate

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94Citing from Chinese sources in Horn, n.87, pp.1547, 1549.
95Ibid., p.1550.
strategy with India towards China. A clearer indication of the future prospect of the development of a deeper relationship between the two countries was made by Premier Kosygin in a speech held in New Delhi in honour of the late President Zakir Hussain. His attempt to draw India into an anti-China alliance was evident in his observation that in view of the complex international situation no really peace loving state could withhold her active participation in the fight against imperialism, adding that Moscow wanted nobody to encroach on India’s interest. In her MEA Report, however, New Delhi reported only a portion of Kosygin’s statement where he referred to many “unutilised possibilities” of cooperation existing between the two countries. But that New Delhi was cognisant of Soviet urgency for a deeper relationship between the countries was evident.

India had some complementarity of interests with the Soviets as regards China who was in collusion with Pakistan. The MEA Report of 1969-70 noted no basic change in Chinese attitude towards India. On the contrary, Chinese encouragement to some section of Indian Nagas in their unlawful activities, their continuing occupation of Indian territory since 1962, the existence of Chinese troops across Indian border in Tibet and Sinkiang and their improved road links along India’s border with China was viewed with concern. Notwithstanding

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99 India, MEA, Report 1969-70, p.64(b).

these concerns India was not prepared to accept Brezhnev's proposal which had a military overtone and was directed against China. The Indian Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh's statement during a debate on Foreign Affairs on 8 April 1969 threw some light on India's perception of the issue. While observing that the historical division of border should be respected, he remarked that judging by India's own experience it appeared that China would plan border involvements in order to reopen the whole border question with the USSR. He also indicated that India's policy towards China was based on certain fundamental principles which had to be applied to a situation affecting India's national interest. While thus giving the idea that India was similarly threatened by China, at the same time he expressed India's disagreement with Brezhnev's proposal arguing that India was not pursuing the policy of filling the vacuum created by Britain's withdrawal from the Southeast Asia. India thus chose to keep her position ambiguous on the Russian security proposal.

Notwithstanding these differences, Indo-Soviet relations were moving on an even Keel. The joint communiqué released after Dinesh Singh's visit to Moscow in September 1969 reiterated the thrust towards a deeper relationship and noted that Indo-Soviet cooperation "meets the fundamental interests of the people of two countries and serves the cause of peace in Asia and the world". The Indian press saw Dinesh Singh's visit to Moscow as extending his support for the Soviet proposal for Asian collective security and a firmer commitment by

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101 *Foreign Affairs Record*, vol.15, no.4, April 1969, pp.71-72.

102 Joint Communiqué cited in India, MEA, *Report 1969-70*, p.64(b).
India against China. It was clear that mutuality of strategic perceptions regarding China was a significant factor in Indo-Soviet friendship. But curiously enough India postponed he signing of the Treaty. Speculation about the reasons specially focused on Indira Gandhi's unwillingness to get involved in a controversy over the desirability of a treaty relationship with a Super Power which could have derogatory effect on India's non-alignment particularly at a time when the Congress Party was heading towards a split. From T.N. Kaul's memoirs it is known that the Indian Government did not find that the time "ripe" for the purpose. Such a situation occurred in midsummer 1971 when the crisis in the movement for autonomy in East Pakistan led to the possibility of a third Indo-Pakistani war, necessitating India's consideration of the proposal of a treaty.

The Treaty Signed: The Crisis in East Pakistan

It is intriguing how India got involved in the crisis of a neighbouring country leading her to sign a treaty with a Super Power. The crisis arose when the ongoing movement for autonomy in East Pakistan ultimately turned into a liberation struggle calling for a separate state of Bangladesh. Despite the fact that the Awami League had secured absolute majority

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104 Prithwish Chakravarti, "Why the Treaty was Delayed?", Hindustan Times, 15 August 1971.

105 Kaul, n.88, p.81.

106 For background discussion of the crisis see K. Subrahmanyan and Mohammed Ayoob, The Liberation War (New Delhi, 1972); Mohammed Ayoob et. al., Bangladesh: A Struggle for Nationhood (Delhi, 1971); Pran Chopra, ed., The Challenge for Bangladesh (New Delhi, 1971).
(by capturing 167 seats out of 169 allotted to East Pakistan in the Assembly of 313 seats), the Pakistani President denied the party its right to form the government and instead asked it to enter into negotiation with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (leader of the Pakistan's People Party securing largest number of votes in West Pakistan) for deciding the framework of future constitution of Pakistan. Negotiations broke down abruptly due to Bhutto's call for boycotting the Assembly session which was scheduled to be held on 3 March 1971 leading to Yahya Khan's announcement postponing the Assembly Session sine die. The climax came on the fateful night of 25 March 1971 when Yahya Khan backed out abruptly from the negotiation which he was holding with Mujibur Rahman (leaders of the Awami League) under a "Four Point Programme" for future constitution, and ordered the military to undertake a ruthless military crackdown on the people of East Pakistan. In the ensuing civil war thousands of East Pakistanis including Awami League members were killed and rendered homeless. Before his arrest Mujib declared the "independence of Bangladesh". From the Awami League point of view it was the ruthless military suppression of the movement for autonomy in East Pakistan that had turned it into a liberation struggle.\textsuperscript{107} The West Pakistan Government denied such an interpretation and described the movement as a movement of secession from Pakistan. In a broadcast to the nation on 26 March 1971 justifying his action, the Pakistan President described Mujib and his party as an "enemy of Pakistan" for bringing about the dismemberment of Pakistan.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{107}See the statement of Mr. Tajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister of State of Bangladesh in exile, 17 April 1971, in J.A. Naik, \textit{India, China, Russia and Bangladesh} (New Delhi, 1972), Appendix 4, pp.130-31.

\textsuperscript{108}See the speech by the Pakistan President on 26 March 1971 Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, \textit{Bangladesh Document} (New Delhi, 1971), vol.1, p.277; for further (continued...)
India’s involvement in the crisis of East Pakistan\textsuperscript{109} started when due to Pakistani army’s brutalities a stream of refugees, initially trickling, later in a torrential flow began inundating India’s eastern region causing serious threat to economic and political stability in this sensitive area which had already rumbled with political unrest since the sixties. Before this onrush of refugees into India started Indira Gandhi’s government’s reaction to Yahya Khan’s military crackdown on 25 March was characterised by a note of restraint. India recognised the "historic upsurge of the movement" and bearing in mind India’s interest in "peace and dignity of human rights" condemned in unmistakable terms the atrocities perpetrated on the East Pakistan people on an unprecedented scale. Mrs. Gandhi was however, cautious in not taking a hasty step as was demanded by a large section in Indian Parliament and preferred to follow "proper international norm", since as she said, "a wrong step, a wrong word can have an effect entirely differing from what India wanted".\textsuperscript{110} This was also the spirit of the resolution which was passed by both the Houses of Indian Parliament on 31 March 1971 in which the Houses expressed their "profound sympathy" for the peoples of East Pakistan in their struggle for a

\textsuperscript{109}(…continued)

\textsuperscript{109}For a study of phase by phase analysis of India’s involvement and response to the crisis, see Satish Kumar, "The Evolution of India’s Policy Towards Bangladesh in 1971", \textit{Asian Survey}, vol.15, no.6, June 1975, pp.488-98.

\textsuperscript{110}Prime Minister’s statement in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on 26 March 1971, Government of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, \textit{The Years of Endeavour : Selected Speeches of Indira Gandhi, 1969-1971} (New Delhi, 1974), pp.522, 523; henceforth to be cited as \textit{The Years of Endeavour}. 
democratic way of life hoping that the historic upsurge of the 75 million of people of East Pakistan would be successful.

But India became seriously concerned when what was claimed by Pakistan as her internal problem also became India's internal problem affecting "the peace and stability" of India as the Prime Minister indicated. Therefore India raised her voice not only against the "wanton destruction of peace, good neighbourliness and elementary principles of humanity" but also for the reason that India's national interest and security were threatened by the insensate Pakistani policy of sending millions of refugees into India at the point of bayonets. On humanitarian ground, she said that India took the "intolerable burden" of providing shelter and succour to these persons but India could not allow them to "settle in her soil permanently as another instalment of refugees after the 1947 partition". For India the problem was more a political one to be solved politically than a humanitarian one. The Prime Minister said that "conditions must be created to stop any further influx of the refugees, to ensure their early return under credible guarantee for their future safety and well-being".\footnote{From Indira Gandhi's statement on 24 May in Lok Sabha and on 26 May 1971 in Rajya Sabha, cited in ibid., pp.527, 529.} She also warned the world community that without the solution of the refugee problem there could "be no lasting peace or stability in the region" and India would be "constrained to take all measures as be necessary to ensure her own security and the preservation of the structure of (her) social and economic life".\footnote{Statement in Lok Sabha on 24 May 1971, cited in ibid., p.528.}
But India's hope for an early solution receded since the world body made no effort to see the problem in the proper perspective. They appeared to be more sensitive to Pakistan's point of view who was not sincerely embarking on a path of a reasonable political solution. Yahya Khan's pronouncement of his constitutional plan on 28 June 1971 only tried to pay lip service to his promise of transferring power to civilian administration. His denunciation of the Awami League as an "unscrupulous and secessionist element" made it clear that he had no inclination of opening a dialogue with Mujib whom East Pakistan had elected as a leader. It was India's consistent stand that no worthwhile political solution could be conceivable unless Mujib was released and Yahya started negotiation with him.

India's discomfort increased when the UN itself helped Yahya Khan to sidetrack the real issue of political solution. Following Pakistan's line of argument, it posed the problem basically as a humanitarian one to be solved through refugee repatriation before an attempt towards political solution was made. Proceeding on this line, in an Aid Memoir issued on 19 July 1971 the Secretary General of the UN, U Thant appealed to both India and Pakistan to cooperate in refugee repatriation with the help of stationing of UNHCR representatives along both sides of the border. The proposal was in line with Islamabad's policy, which through the involvement of the UN in the affair wanted India to give up her support to the Mukti Bahini

For the text see Robert Jackson, South Asian Crisis : India, Pakistan and Bangladesh (London, IISS, 1975), Appendix 6, pp.174-83.

See Prime Minister's statement in Rajya Sabha on June 15, in The Years of Endeavour, n.110, p.532.

For details on UN's stand, see Jackson, n.113, pp.61-74.
which in their opinion as obstructing the task of refugees repatriation. This became more prominent when U Thant in an unusual step, presented a memorandum to the President and Members of the Security Council on 20 July 1971 urging them to reach "an agreed conclusion and take appropriate steps". His reference in the memorandum to "border clashes, clandestine raids and acts of sabotage" was obviously a hint at Pakistan's allegation of India's effort to sabotage refugee repatriation through her encouragement to Mukti Bahini's activities on the border. Mrs. Gandhi, in response to U Thant's Aid Memoir expressed India's disapproval of policy in this regard by pointing out the need for a political solution acceptable to the people of Bangladesh.

India's dissatisfaction with the United States was no less. In all official communications with the US India consistently called for release of Mujib and opening of a dialogue with him by the Pakistani Government which in India's view was the only solution for the refugee problem. But the US administration did not think that way. In his message to the Congress the US President expressed the belief that the return of the refugees could be ensured through a political solution based on some form of autonomy for East Pakistan. But instead of following an active policy, he preferred a "quiet diplomacy" of persuading Yahya Khan towards that solution. He looked at the problem more as a humanitarian one than a political one and stressed

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116 For the text of Aide Memoir see Bangladesh Document, n.2, pp.638-40.

117 For Mrs. Gandhi's letter to UN Secretary General issued on 29 August 1971, see Foreign Affairs Record, n.4, p.147.

118 See T.N. Kaul's dialogue with Henry Kissinger on political settlement in East Pakistan, in his book The Kissinger Years, Indo-American Relations (New Delhi, 1982), pp.42-43, 48; also see V.P. Dutt's dialogue with Foreign Ministry official, n.48, p.81.
on refugee repatriation and rehabilitation to precede a political settlement.\textsuperscript{119} The US administration avoided an active policy towards Islamabad because it did not want any confrontation with a country which was the only channel for USA to reopen USA's link with China. It was because of this that Kissinger had told T.N. Kaul during their conversation that India should not condition the return of refugees on a certain type of political settlement involving Mujib.\textsuperscript{120} Although USA knew that independence of East Pakistan was a certainty, she wanted it to come through gradually without a severe shock to the unity of the country, which they regarded as an ally in their crucial phase of new China diplomacy.

One result of such divergent views on the nature of political settlement to be achieved in East Pakistan was the continuation of US military and economic aid to Islamabad even after the military crackdown of March 1971 which compounded India's difficulties with the USA. Despite India's call for suspension of military aid to Pakistan, USA continued this policy leading the Indian Foreign Minister to remark that there had been no change in US policy and that the military equipment in the pipeline had "dangerous implication" for peace of the region.\textsuperscript{121} To India's dissatisfaction the US Government also refused to throttle economic aid


\textsuperscript{120}Kaul, n.118, p.142.

\textsuperscript{121}See Swaran Singh's statement in India, Lok Sabha, \textit{Debates}, series 5, vol.4, session 2, 24 June 1971, cols. 265-6 on the report of American ships carrying arms to Pakistan; also see his statement in Rajya Sabha on 19 July in Rajya Sabha, \textit{Debates}, vol.77, no.1, 19 July 1971, col.87.
to Pakistan when Britain, Sweden and West Germany suspended their economic assistance programme to Pakistan due to the leakage of the controversial Cargile Report.\footnote{122}{See The statement of the US Secretary of State, William Rogers in \textit{Daily Telegraph} (London), 5 August 1971 and India's reaction in \textit{Times of India}, 15 July 1971.}

The policy pursued by the USA in the UN in fact encouraged Yahya Khan to threaten India with a "total war" if any part of East Pakistan territory was occupied by the Mukti Bahini for rehabilitating the refugees.\footnote{123}{Foreign Minister's statement see in India, Rajya Sabha, \textit{Debates}, n.121, col.87.} A speedy solution of the refugee problem was necessary to preserve the economic and political viability of India. But there was little chance that the Provisional Government and its Liberation Army could deliver the goods notwithstanding the financial and the military assistances they were receiving from India in training the Mukti Bahini. It was only if India through a surgical military operation could transplant the provisional Government in Dacca by transferring power to the Awami League that the refugees could be persuaded to go back. Such an indication was given by the Prime Minister in the middle of June when she categorically stated that for India the only concern was her national interest and security and for that India would be constrained to take any step necessary.\footnote{124}{Statement of the Indian Prime Minister cited in \textit{The Years of Endeavour}, n.110, p.532.}

\textbf{Why the Treaty became necessary}

While India was thinking of a military solution of the problem and continuing her efforts to solve the problem politically, President Nixon's announcement on 15 July about his
impending visit to China in 1972 formalising the Sino-US rapprochement forced India to think of putting the Indo-Soviet relationship on a firmer juridical basis of a treaty. India, as was indicated in Foreign Minister's statement in Lok Sabha on 16 July, had welcomed Sino-US rapprochement if it "would be a step leading towards reduction of tension" and not conceived within the "framework of power polities or real politic". 125 But in the specific context when India was facing the possibility of a war with Pakistan which was being jointly supported by USA and China, the President's announcement changed the whole international context in which India had to conduct her diplomacy on the Bangladesh issue. As an eminent analyst argued, on a broader level any alteration of relation between China and USA was bound to have impact on Asian polities which rested on the compatibility between American and Chinese interests in the region. On the specific issue of Bangladesh, it was bound to have adverse effect on India since both the powers would be united to prevent the break-up of Pakistan which provided them a foothold in the region by facilitating détente between them. 126

The specific anxiety of India on the newly emerging balance of power was related to the possibility of China's involvement in the crisis on behalf of Pakistan. A well known

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strategic analyst in India thought that the probability of such a situation was low, but New Delhi did not appear to think that way.

The Defence Minister's report in 1970-71 stressed that there was no "significant change" in the military threat from China maintaining 1,00,000 troops in Tibet that could substantially be increased. The growing stockpiles of nuclear weapons by China was also stated to cause "concern" in India. India's anxiety with China was made clear by T.N. Kaul when talking to Dr. Kissinger he said,

You must appreciate that we have a threat from China which we cannot ignore....Almost two-thirds of Indian forces were actually tied up with the Chinese border...After 1962 we cannot afford to take any risk.

India must also have noted the key passage of Chou-en Lai's letter to Yahya Khan on 13 April 1971 in which he pledged to Pakistan Chinese people's support to her struggle to safeguard state sovereignty and national independence if the "Indian expansionist dared to launch aggression against Pakistan Government and people".

Viewed against this perception of India's "China threat", the US-China rapprochement created for India a different and a more problematic situation than that had existed prior to

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127 The view by K. Subrahmanyam, Director of the IDSA in a paper presented at the seminar on "Bangladesh and India's Security : Option for India" (arranged by the Council of World Affairs under the Chairmanship of Jai Prakash Narayan on 3 July 1971) cited in his Bangladesh and India's Security (Delhi, 1972), pp.113-19.


130 The text of the letter in Jackson, n.113, Appendix-6, p.174.
1971. The whole scenario suggested, as a noted analyst stated, that a Sino-American convergence was replacing the Soviet-American convergence in Asia and that a new balance of power was being sought by Peking and Washington in which the possibility of American support to India against China became remote.\textsuperscript{131}

In fact, the American policy shift just after Kissinger's secret trip to Peking in mid July substantiated such observation. During his stay in India prior to such visit, Dr. Kissinger had assured India that under no conceivable circumstances "even under the probable situation of US-China détente" would USA "cooperate with China" directly or indirectly in any move that was designed against India. He even agreed with India in depicting China's aggressive tendencies by describing the latter as a "formidable country with lamentably aggressive tendency".\textsuperscript{132} But after his visit to China and after Nixon's announcement of his intended China visit, he reversed his stance. The Indian ambassador was informed about Washington's neutrality in case of China's involvement on behalf of Pakistan (which he thought was certain) if India was involved in a war with the latter.\textsuperscript{133} India realised that unlike in the 1960s it could not count on USA's support to it if China happened to intervene. In the changed power alignment there appeared no possibility of the convergence of both the Super Powers' interest against China.


\textsuperscript{132}See Kissinger's dialogue with T.N. Kaul in Kaul, n.118, p.48.

\textsuperscript{133}Reported later by Inder Malhotra in, \textit{The Guardian} (Manchester), 28 July 1972; also see Henry Kissinger's memoirs, \textit{The White House Years} (London, 1979), p.862.
In such a situation Soviet Union remained the only friend of India which due to her parallel hostility towards China, could act as a powerful deterrent to any probable Chinese machinations. The Soviet Union, too, contemplated President Nixon’s proposed visit to Peking with much misgiving. An analysis of the articles published in the Soviet Press would show that the Soviet Union clearly saw in this emerging rapprochement an anti-Soviet design on the part of Peking and Washington.\textsuperscript{134} It was apparent that she would not be able to hold her own against the combined might of China and the USA. She, therefore, started thinking of a countervailing alignment to stand up to this challenge in which India stood out to be a fitting country in contrast to Pakistan, which in spite of Soviet overtures chose to befriend China and Washington. On India’s side, India’s link with Moscow was justified in the prevailing situation to maintain balance of powers in the region. It was maintained that it would be “thoroughly unjustified” if India opted out of this emerging pattern of power contest in the world out of sheer panic, since the whole business of international politics was about alignment and realignment and not how to remain non-aligned. The criteria for non-alignment was not one of “ideological affinity but one of balance of power”.\textsuperscript{135} An eminent Indian journalist justified India’s Moscow link in this connection more clearly. He wrote,


\textsuperscript{135}See the view by Sisir Gupta, "Changing Power Pattern : Grim Implications", \textit{Times of India}, 19 July 1971.
If India decides to refuse to accept subordination to China it can only do so by an association with the Soviet Union, the only country which in the first place had a symmetrical motivation for India, in the second place, has the means to make its motives effective and, yet, needs in the third place, as any power must in handling such a large fact as China, the support of other countries which share the motivation. This meant Mr. Nixon and Mr. Mao have conferred a community of interest upon the Soviet Union and India which they would have found difficult to develop without the Indo-Soviet treaty.\textsuperscript{136}

Indo-Soviet strategic link was thus justified widely as maintaining the balance of power in the region in the background of the emerging US-China alliance and especially when there existed an increased possibility of Chinese complicity in the probable Indo-Pakistan war. It must have also been noted in India that the Soviet Union happened to be the only Super Power to condemn Pakistan's action, and that she was in favour of a political solution. Soviet President Podgorny's letter to Yahya Khan released on 2 April 1971 urging Yahya Khan to put an "immediate end to bloodshed" was highly critical of the genocidal action of the military regime of Pakistan on 25 March 1971, but Moscow's preference for a political solution which kept intact the vital interest of the entire people of Pakistan indicating her concern for Pakistan's unity caused anxiety in India.\textsuperscript{137} In fact the Soviet commentary up to that time indicated an "identity of views" with India concerning the "creation of condition for refugees to return to their homeland in condition of safety and dignity", but never endorsed the Indian view that only a specifically political settlement would enable the refugees to return.\textsuperscript{138} Nevertheless it did not conflict with Indian interests directly as did the US and


\textsuperscript{137}Podgorny's letter cited in Jackson, n.113, Appendix 4, p.172.

Chinese policy towards the East Pakistan problem. New Delhi, therefore, was thinking of reformulating a suitable response to the emerging situation by forging her friendship with the Soviet Union on a firmer bond. This was made clearer in the Indian Foreign Minister's statement before Lok Sabha on 20 July 1971. For the first time he admitted that India was helping the freedom fighters in East Pakistan in consonance with the pledge that was taken on 31st March resolution to render "whole-hearted sympathy and support" to the movement that was going on in East Pakistan. He also informed the members about India's determination to defend the country's sovereignty if she was threatened by Yahya Khan as a pretext to the activities of the freedom fighters, indicating that the decision makers in New Delhi by that time were thinking of a military solution of the problem if effort towards political solution failed. He added,

I sincerely hope that any Sino-American détente will not be at the expense of other countries, particularly in this region. However, we cannot at present totally rule out such a possibility. It would have repercussion on the situation in this subcontinent as well as in this region. We, have, therefore, for some time, been considering ways and means of preventing such situation from arising...

Then he added the significant words,

In this we are not alone and there other countries, both big and small who may be more perturbed than we are. We are in touch with the countries concerned and shall see to it that any Sino-American détente does not affect us or the other countries in the region adversely.\(^{139}\)

With the benefit of hindsight one could speculate that the Foreign Minister by referring to India's considering "ways and means" from preventing Sino-US rapprochement and that

\(^{139}\)From Foreign Minister's speech in reply to the demands for grants to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lok Sabha, *Debates*, series 5, vol.6, 20 July 1971, cols.259-63.
"India was not alone" was just hinting at the Indo-Soviet Treaty which was in the making at that time. It is clear that although the Treaty could be viewed as a culmination of decades of friendly relationship between the two countries in diversified fields, its immediate relevance for India lay in the set of regional and international circumstances prevailing at that time. The scenario of another Indo-Pakistan war on the worsening East Pakistan crisis amidst the emerging Sino-Pak-US combine against India, moved India towards seeking a closer bond with Moscow through a treaty.

**Nature of the Indo-Soviet Treaty**

Discussion about the genesis of the Treaty will also give a hint on the nature of the Treaty. The Indo-Soviet Treaty was basically a political one but with a difference. Enumeration of important security provisions in the Treaty (articles 8-10) which are not generally found in a political treaty gave it a distinctive feature. In fact, the essence of the Treaty lay in these security provisions which was also the Government of India's interpretation. With these provisions in the Treaty the two countries sought exchange of specific assurances rather than vague expression of mutual goodwill which was something that qualitatively changed the existing pattern of Indo-Soviet relationship. Article 8 forbidding the treaty partners to "enter into a military damage on the other High Contracting Party"; Article 9 putting specific obligation of taking "appropriate effective measures" in case any party was involved in a war or threat of war with a third country followed by Article 10 forbidding entering into any obligation with a third country causing "military damage" to the other treaty partner -- were provisions which definitely strengthened the Indo-Soviet relationship through guarantee of
specific security commitments. This lent a new dimension to Indo-Soviet relationship especially in the context of the grim situation that India was facing due to the East Pakistan crisis.\textsuperscript{140}

Doubts were, however, raised about the serious implication of these provisions on India's independence, sovereignty and above all her non-aligned status. While agreeing with India's Foreign Minister's contention that these provisions had no resemblance with those found in a so called defence pact which led to automatic involvement of one treaty partner in a conflict involving the other treaty partner, their contention was that the "effective measures" stipulated in the August Treaty could well mean serious compromises on India's independence so long India remained a weaker partner in the Treaty with a Super Power. Some even went to the length of anticipating as did Piloo Mody of Swatantra Party that through these provisions Soviet Union could militarily intervene in India, as Brezhnev did in Czechoslovakia in 1968 talking of "limited sovereignty of Socialist states" as a theoretical justification.

On the whole, the Treaty made the critics speculate on its probable effects on India's future policy on important issues relating to the region as well as the world as a whole, -- like India's policy with regard to China, Pakistan, her future stand on nuclear issues, Indian Ocean diplomacy in relation to USA her stake in maintaining her non-aligned status; and above all India's future policy in transacting economic and military relationship \textit{vis-a-vis} the Soviet Union and the West. While they agreed on the Treaty's utility from immediate perspective they questioned about its utility from long-term perspective.\textsuperscript{141}


\textsuperscript{141}See the views of Piloo Mody, Samar Guha, S.L. Saksena in Lok Sabha, \textit{Debates}, n.5, (continued...)}
These apprehensions appeared to be overstated when viewed in the context of other provisions in the Treaty. The fear of India's independence being curbed by the Soviet Union was unwarranted since in the very first article it was laid down that the relationship would be conducted on the basis of "equality and mutual benefit" and on principles of respect for "independence sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's internal affairs" (article 1). Of further importance in this context was article 4 in which the Soviet Union -- a communist Super Power for the first time made a public commitment to respect India's non-alignment as an important factor in the maintenance of universal peace and international security. Although India made parallel commitment to recognise the "peace loving policies" of the USSR aimed at strengthening friendship with all nations, Soviet recognition of non-alignment made India immune from a possible Soviet pressure on India to compromise non-alignment; on the contrary as the Foreign Minister indicated, it made non-alignment more "dynamic", acquiring the flexibility to accommodate the changing demands. Moreover, although the unusual backdrop of the Treaty was the reason for its security orientation it was not meant to be purely a security agreement between the two countries. There was a cautious assertion on the part of both the treaty partners that this backdrop would not take them away from the more permanent features of their relationship existing in other areas. Thus the concern for each other's security was connected with their international policies, namely commitment

141(...continued)
cols.309 and 311 and 311, 327 and 329 respectively; the views by M.R. Masani and Acharya Kripalani at the seminar on Indo-Soviet Treaty reported in Times of India, 6 September 1971; For views of political analyses, see Ashok Mehta, "India Bound to Russia", The Statesman, 7 September 1971; K. Rangaswamy, "Indo-Soviet Treaty : Was the Treaty Necessary", Motherland (Delhi), 23 August 1971; Kapur, n.73, p.470; Ghatate, n.7, pp.3-4.
to work constructively to "halt arms race and achieve general and complete disarmament" (article 2) and to "support the just aspiration of the people in their struggle against colonialism and racial domination" (article 3); along with these, there was a detailed codification of the non-strategic and purely non-political bilateral cooperation in economic, technical and scientific collaboration on a "mutually advantageous" terms (article 6). The twenty-year term of the Treaty with its provision for automatic extension for successive five years (article 11) was meant to underline that the two countries had conceived it in a long-term perspective and saw it as a model of cooperation between states with different social and political systems.

The signing of the 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, thus represented an important "milestone" not only in the history of India's foreign policy but in the history of international relations as well. This important document enabled India -- a large democracy in the world to effectively use her relationship with a Super Power which happened to be the largest socialist country in the world. This contributed not only to further strengthening of the relationship between the two countries in multifaceted areas and of preservation of peace in the region and the world as well, but set a new example in the relationship between a Regional Power and a Super Power. The Indo-Soviet Treaty, thus could be emulated in the world as a "model of cooperation" between two countries coming from different social, economic and political moorings.\(^42\)

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\(^42\)See in this context the views of Indian Foreign Minister in Lok Sabha, *Debates*, ibid., col.337; and also the statement by Dr. M. Muhammad Ismail, and those of Krishna Menon in ibid., cols.319 and 283 respectively.