Conclusions
New Russia turned to radical reforms to cope with the economic problems and shift to free market arrangement. After years of Soviet military buildup at the expense of domestic development, economic growth was at a standstill. The new Russia finds itself confronting new geopolitical spaces where Western Europe, United States and significantly Asia have gained in economic and technological terms.

Siberia has slowly moved from a mere mercantilist colony of Russia, to a region of strategic importance on the world map. Suddenly dismissed as a ‘cold storage’ post-disintegration of USSR, Siberia has emerged once again in the limelight following a projection of Eurasian regional development.

Siberia is not limited to Siberian Federal District, which is only the administratively defined territory. Siberia (Сибирь or Sibir) is the name given to the vast region constituting almost all of Northern Asia and the central and eastern portion of the Russian Federation, having served in the same capacity previously for the U.S.S.R. and the Russian Empire beginning in the 16th century.

Geographically, it includes a large part of the Eurasian Steppe and extends eastward from the Ural Mountains to the watershed between Pacific and Arctic drainage basins, and southward from the Arctic Ocean to the hills of north-central Kazakhstan and the national borders of both Mongolia and China. The entire region is huge administrative and economic zone of strategic importance encompassing the north-east, central and far-east region of Russia. The three broad geo-economic regions of Siberia, are the East, West and Far East. Major West Siberian cities are Novosibirsk (Новосибирск), Omsk (Омск), Tomsk (Томск), Tobolsk (Тобольск), Barnaul (Барнаул) and Novokuznetsk (Новокузнецк). East Siberia’s most important cities include Krasnoyarsk (Красноярск), Irkutsk (Иркутск), Ulan-Ude (Улан-Удэ), Cheremkhovo (Черемхово), Yakutsk (Якутск) and Chita (Читинская). Far-East has strategically important locations like Vladivostok (Владивосток) and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk (Южно-Сахалинск) and Sakhalin Islands (Сахалинская).

At a time when the world is moving towards homogenizing in one global village, the world has set it sights on Siberia/Russia, a re-emerging economic giant, with a mix of excitement and trepidation. Siberia’s economic history has the early historic, Soviet, post-Soviet and the post-disintegration transition period. The common strings that run through
the various stages are the 'peopling' of Siberia and the developmental challenges that arise from the remoteness and ruthless climatic conditions. Enormous mineral wealth in the times of bourgeois-landlord Russia remained unexploited. Capitalists did not care to expend on inaccessible resources. In Tsarist Russia the natural resources were extremely inadequately studied and exploited.

However, during the Soviet period, Siberia's role has been perceived and portrayed as more than simply a storehouse of resources; its development was linked to ideological concerns. Siberia under the Soviets represented a striking example of conflict between national growth maximization and regional equalization as the two main goals of Soviet regional policy. Soviet planners focused on intensive type of development.

The break up of the Soviet Union has made the Russian planners to realise that Russia will have to become more self sufficient by trying to re-develop the vast potential resources of the Siberian region. Russia is predicted to experience the highest GDP per capita by 2050 among the four largest developing economies. Siberia has long been Russia's answer while deciding even its nuclear designs in the global scenario. In terms of energy production and distribution of infrastructure, Siberia plays a central role in the development of Russia and the world.

Siberia had been an environmentally harsh, neglected and yet a resource-rich region with large reserves of precious metals, oil and gas. Siberia possesses untold resource potential. Western Siberia is rich not only in oil but also in natural gas. East Siberia is Russia's leading producer of gold, diamonds, mica and aluminum. It has large reserves of iron ore, coal, oil, gas, graphite and non ferrous precious metals. It holds major stock of platinum and platinoids, copper, nickel, ore and deposits of gold, lead, zinc and manganese ore.

The Far East together with Sakhalin is a classic "resource economy" relying on oil and gas exports, coal mining, forestry and fishing. However, because of the arduous physical and climatic conditions and inadequate development of social infrastructure, it has been historically difficult to exploit the zone optimally.

Today's Russia is banking on Siberia to become its shining star in energy arena. It wishes to develop the vast yet economically impoverished region as a world supplier of natural gas, coal, petroleum and next generation renewable energy resources like hydropower with the controlled participation of the global powers. Another related plan is to develop
connections to the 'mainstream' world by the way of transcontinental transport routes. This way it attempts to bring the market closer to the isolated Siberia.

With the economic rise of Asia and recovery of Russia, importance of Siberia is undergoing retrieval. The Far East and Siberia of the Russian federation share border with a number of countries- China, North Korea, Japan, and the US. On the Western side, Siberia opens Russia's doors to parts of Central Asia, viz. Kazakhstan, Mongolia and China.

Siberian territory turns out to be the key to the development of economic communications with countries of Asia-Pacific region. Siberia provides the most direct and fastest way to connect the main economic and productive parts of the world- Europe, United States, North-East Asia and Central Asia, to emerge as the new frontier of development.

Serious discussions are going on in the international community regarding the possibilities of Siberian resources, which can be mobilized on a global scale. The potential of Siberia's pool of resources, combined with comparatively cheap resources and skilled labour force, absence of any ecological restriction in the territory are an alluring possibility to numerous transnational corporations and political figures of the western, developed world.

Conditions in geo-political and economic-geographic position of Siberia have redefined its identity.

Siberia is projected as the newly emerging economic and strategic hub of economic development in the Russia of the 21st century. Still, Siberian development continues to present Russian economic planner with a paradox about how to focus regional development policies. In order to exploit and develop, Siberia requires disproportionately higher capital and labour inputs as compared to the more developed regions of Russia. Because of this paradox, the priority attached to Siberian development has been shifting fortunes of Siberia. The region, often termed as the "Asian part of Russia" is economically under-developed than the western part of the nation or the "European Russia".

Factors like ineffective resource utilization, shifting policy focus, lack of definition of developmental roles between the Federal government and its regional governments have
all contributed to inadequate infrastructure and a 'demographic catastrophe'. Thus, the region has eluded planners with the difficult challenge of utilizing its vast resources, including human resources. Developments in Siberia haven't always turned out to be the way planners thought out to be, and the implications have always befallen on its people.

Only from the end of 19th century its economic development started. In the 20th century, Siberia attained the most intensive development, transforming from colonial outlying district to an industrial and agrarian region playing a significant role in economic and the geo-political status of Russia. However, Siberia's destiny has been and will be tied to Russia's.

The 'peopling' of Siberia has been a contentious issue. The remoteness and ruthless climatic conditions have posed a challenge in the region's development. Despite the compelling strategic and economic importance of Siberia, its population accounts for a fragment of the Russian Federation and most of the population migrated there only in 1960s and '70s. The original inhabitants of the cold 'no-man's land' have been nomadic tribes and have suffered the most devastation through the years. Siberia's demography had been a catastrophe with high mortality and various influxes mainly in-migrations and out-migrations from surrounding regions at different stages having far-reaching implications. This has led to specific human problems like depopulation, healthcare crisis, shrinking indigenous populace and labour shortage in Siberia.

The result of socio-economic consequences is manifested in demographic changes. Unfavourable demographic situation results in detrimental circumstances for the progress of nation such as a decline in the size of the working population, a drastic increase in the costs of providing social support to the networking population, loss of defense potential and disruption of the geopolitical balance.

It is observed that socio-demographic problems at the national level get amplified at the Siberian region level, while there are other phenomena like deterioration of quality of life and problems of indigenous people peculiar to Siberia.

Siberia is plagued by the sharp drop in the birth rate, the drastic rise in the death rate especially among men, out-migration. It is also facing the situation where productive workforce is leaving the region.
Current demographic and migration trends show that large numbers of Siberians are leaving the region permanently due to its harsh conditions, and in search of high earnings, to other parts of the world and are even keen to settle down there.

The result of various policies followed through the years has been that the present gap in the manpower resources of Siberia and its economic potential is really very large.

The present conditions in Siberia leave much to be done on the manpower front, most importantly raising the level of GDP, improving living standards and enhancing the basic indicators of employment. It has the potential to offer bright future to its own and Russia’s and even international youth. For the development of Siberia’s resources, provision of a quality of life which sustains a vibrant human society is a prerequisite.

A combination economy harnesses the power of its tangible and intangible resources in an integrated method. The most important intangible resource is knowledge, a step ahead of ‘information’. Information when processed and disseminated by competent manpower results in knowledge. Human capital is a key component of value in a knowledge-based society. Social structures, cultural context and other factors influencing social relations are therefore of fundamental importance to knowledge economies.

Means of Communication is fundamental to knowledge flows. These characteristics require new ideas and approaches from policy makers, while planning future development of Siberian region.

Current demographic and migration trends show that large numbers of Siberians are leaving the region permanently due to its harsh conditions. Siberian economy could not make better use of the intellectual potential of its residents. Siberia’s economy is primarily based on extraction and utilization of raw materials. Russian policy makers failed to create a favourable environment for attracting highly knowledgeable specialists to Siberia. Modern raw materials production and refining methods are directly linked to advanced technology. There was a need to introduce new methods for developing these resources and developing their regions as a whole.

There are very large and ambitious projects underway, projects in the mining and minerals industry and in high technology. But these ambitious projects could not be properly implemented without a large supply of qualified local professionals.
Creation of a new type of innovation system is only just beginning in Russia. New innovation structures, capable of commercially attractive projects, are gradually developing (small business, industry research bodies and academic institutes) and are starting to receive financial support from efficient companies with large-scale investment programs. The two main poles of innovative activity in Russia's economy are the defense industry and fuel and power. Most science intensive companies are in the defense sector, but their R&D potential is under used due to reduction of state orders, which has made it impossible to fund large scale projects. Fuel and power are not high-tech industries, but they are among a few flourishing segments of the Russian economy, and they are building a completely new innovation model, mainly by the efforts of private fuel and power companies, which badly need to improve their levels of technology.

Presently, there are no concrete proposals for addressing labour-force shortages. The resource potential of Siberia can be a major stimulus for its development and has the capability to integrate the Russian economy. Political and economic changes will serve to differentiate numerous separate and distinct regions within Siberia.

Between 1992 and 1997 the education levels of immigrants from the former Soviet republics is found to be higher than those of Siberians as a whole. Their educational levels are reflected in their professional profiles. A large percentage of their population is civil servants, well-qualified specialists in the areas of education, public health, culture and science. Difficulties involved in finding work lead many migrants to take jobs that do not match their educational or professional qualifications. The educational and professional potential of those migrating to Siberia is not being tapped efficiently. This is one of the factors hindering a smooth or quick adaptation process. It is also delaying development of Siberia's human-resource potential and hence future economic growth.

Qualified migrants from over populated Asian countries could be the answer to labour shortage in Siberia, especially if the policies are well regulated. Further more, a suitable enterprise friendly environment can ensure the creation of conditions for attracting foreign investments and advanced technologies to Russia via the Asian regions.

Migration policies developed in conjunction with stake holder institutions and academicians should keep in view the long term implications. One of the aims of the migration policy should be encouraging competition on the labour market. Diverse labour
with diverse skill-sets will spruce up the flickering flame of Siberia. Fresh talent, management techniques and technology will flow in, and in time, local human resources of Siberia will become productive and globally competitive. The state should ensure that the expatriate workers hold rights as well as duties, in the light of which responsibilities of the local and national governments should be clearly defined. Protection of intellectual property rights has to be ensured.

Future development of strategies in Siberia should include creation of safe zones for indigenous people and the youth, who have a vital stake in the future of Siberia. The state should create conditions for the rapid stabilization and socioeconomic development of the region as a whole- and not exclude the 'marginalized'.

Indigenous settlements were usually located in settings of diverse and high biodiversity value, taking full advantage of what the nature could offer, and communicating with environment in ecologically sustainable manner. However, during the 20th century indigenous communities endured serious pressures on their traditional lifestyle and environment, related to the developmental interventions to the Northern territories and social reforms in the Soviet Russia, followed by the period of transition in the 90-ies. Once the former Soviet social security system collapsed, indigenous people appeared to be among the least protected, most vulnerable social groups. Low efficiency and profitability of the traditional economy and unemployment followed by decrease of the local incomes have a negative impact upon living conditions of indigenous peoples. Overwhelming majority of aborigines live in extreme poverty and very often their sources for living are limited to private gardening, hunting, fishing, wild plants harvesting and pension. Real financial income of indigenous peoples of the North who mainly live in the rural areas, is not only 2-3 times less than average level in Russia, but also by 25-30% lower than average level in the subsequent regions. At present economic situation, most important objective for indigenous peoples of the North is not merely preservation of their traditional economy but an adaptation of the latter to the modern market system.

With the changes that the indigenous groups are facing, there should be concrete steps to support sustainable livelihoods simultaneously contributing to community development.
and improvements in social services. It is imperative to preserve and develop traditional land use practices and lifestyle strengthening the legal framework concerning traditional land use by indigenous communities (land rights issues). Besides in these isolated and harsh conditions, efforts should be made to facilitate training, information exchange and networking.

From the speeches of important functionaries like then Presidential Aide Vladislav Surkov’s speech to United Russia activists showed the government is prepared to sacrifice everything to become an energy superpower. According to some commentators, the enormous social and economic costs that this objective demanded in the past should act as a motivator to discontinue the paranoid control over conventional energy resources. Siberia has not only huge reserves of fossil fuels but also enormous renewable energy resources and options to develop geothermal, wind, ocean and biomass energy. Low prices of conventional energy resources (coal, petroleum, gas etc.) further depress the development of new sustainable technology in renewable energies. No stringent legal framework exists in the regard. The lack of official data available on renewable energy investments in Russia show the neglect that this issue faces within Moscow’s policy making circles. Although, plans are commissioned for developing ‘clean energy resources’ like geothermal plants in Kamchatka, several wind farms and micro hydro power stations, Siberia is no where near developing its huge potentials. The Alternate Energy Institute warns that ‘Water will likely become one of the most fought-over resources in the coming decades’. In this regard, Siberia which holds six out of twelve longest rivers in the world and Lake Baikal, (which holds quarter of world’s fresh water) has little to scurry about. There is no other region in Russia, comparable with Siberia in potential and efficiency of utilization of hydraulic power resources. Presently Russia may find alternative forms of energy either expensive in comparison to fossil fuels or unsuitable for large-scale energy production. Even the adoption of technologies which rely on coal, combined with technologies like carbon capture, carbon storage, and zero-emission technology could provide its citizens with environmentally acceptable energy and better quality of life.

The policy directions under former President Putin renewed attention to the development
of the Siberian region. Siberia shows potential for developing as a major energy resource producer (renewable and non-renewable resources), scientific hub and a modern educational centre of not only Russia but the world.