CONCLUSION

International politics has been dramatically changing since the end of cold war and the disintegration of Soviet Union. The events unfolded since then make it difficult to predict the direction in which international politics moving. The study of Russia's energy security policy in the Caspian region has been has been seen as a utmost importance due to this reason. The study reveals since year 1991 to 2004 there has been two major phases in the Russian policy towards Caspian region; first phase during the period from 1991 to 1999, under President Boris Yeltsin and the second phase started with Vladimir Putin’s ascendance to Russian president in year 2000, which is still continuing. Russians Caspian policies and foreign policy objectives are closely related. Throughout the 1990s Russia was in a receiving end due to the internal political chaos and economic decline and more over pro western neo liberal policy makers were at the helm of affairs during this period.

It is impossible to understand the energy politics studying the dynamics of an international politics, driven by the quest of control the energy resources regions of the world. The United States, the only superpower remaining after the end of cold war, has been pursuing a dangerously aggressive foreign policies around the world in the oil rich the Persian Gulf region; the standoff with Iran, war on Iraq, ever worsening Palestinian issue, expansion of NATO towards east Europe and former soviet bloc countries all are connected with one common thread: the control of Natural resources. The nearly unipolar system prevails since the end of cold war give a boost to US to pursue these policies.

After the disintegration of Soviet Union Russia gone through a phase that has not been witnessed any country in the world. Politically and economically shattered Russia lost its prominence in international politics. The privatisation policies initiated by pro western Russian neo liberals end up reaching all the public assets in the hands of few individuals. Russian economy plunged to its lowest level. A new powerful politico economic group called ‘Oligarchs’ emerged as result of these neo liberal policies and through 1990s these group was calling the shots in every decision making of Russian federation. Russia’s Caspian policy was dominated by the interest of various oligarchs during this period.
During the 1990’s Russia lost its grip over the Caspian resources. It was difficult for the newly created countries, which faced financial hardship, in the region to resist the lucrative investment and aid package from west especially US and multinational companies. United States made deep inroads to the region during this period. Countries like Azerbaijan joined with west for tapping the resources potentials of the region. The pipelines carrying crude oil and gas from Caspian region pass through Russian territory, build during Soviet Union, has given enormous advantage to Russia in the Caspian energy politics the immediate move of United States and allies was to find a transiting route for oil and gas that override Russian territory. They started building new pipelines like Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan. Another policy of united state was to promote ‘colour revolutions’ to remove governments in the region, which seems as hostile to the west.

The shift in foreign policy has come started since putin has been nominated as president. Determined to restore the glory of Russian state and to create a Multipolar world was the main objectives of Putin’s policy Putin has realized natural resources are the best and most powerful weapons on a competition driven by geo economics. Russia’s strategic retreat in the wake of the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reached an end. Putin made it clear that, the United States' unipolar world was both "unacceptable and impossible", and attempts to impose it through "illegitimate actions" and "hyper use of force" had pushed the world into "the abyss of perpetual conflicts". "One state, the United States, has overstepped its national borders to impose its laws and its entire legal system on other states in all spheres - economic, political and humanitarian.

Putin declared what many world leaders may have thought about U.S. policies but dared not say aloud. He threw down the gauntlet to America - a step unthinkable and virtually suicidal for a post-Soviet Russian leader before. But Russia today is no longer the weak state kowtowing to the U.S. that it once was under Boris Yeltsin. Having restored its integrity and regained economic strength, Russia has reasserted itself on the world stage. Moscow’s moves are devoid of the great-power ambitions or the ideological basis that drove the policies of the erstwhile USSR. Instead, they are pragmatic and tied firmly to the country’s economic interests.
President Putin has based Russia's foreign policy on two pillars - energy and defense technologies. With the global demand for oil and gas outpacing their supply, Russia has used its status as the world's second largest exporter of oil and number one producer of natural gas to advance its political and economic interests. A year into his presidency, Putin called for increases in weapons exports as "a considerable and rather effective instrument for influencing (the) processes" of the emergence of "new centers of power and new security systems around the world". Putin has championed a new energy security model. It would guarantee not only the security of supply to consumer nations, but also the security of markets for energy-producing nations through diversification of export routes and long-term arrangements between producers and consumers. The concept has met with fierce resistance from the U.S., as it would sideline the spot markets dominated by U.S. multinationals. At the same time, it would benefit the rising economies of the East, particularly India and China, to which Russia is looking to diversify its energy, flows away from the West.

Russian energy and defense supplies have formed the core of strategic partnerships Russia has promoted with India and China, which it sees as the rising centers of a new multipolarity. Russia has joined hands with China to promote the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a powerful regional security group that also includes Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The SCO has undercut the U.S.'s strategic position in Central Asia. It called on the U.S. to set a timetable for the withdrawal of its forces deployed in the region after 9/11 to support the anti-Taliban campaign in neighboring Afghanistan. It also encouraged Uzbekistan in 2005 to disallow a U.S. air base on its territory. Last year, the SCO greatly expanded its regional reach by granting observer status to India, Pakistan and Iran.

Moscow has utilised its energy resources to consolidate its leadership role in the former Soviet Union, binding ex-Soviet states closer to itself through substantial investment and reduced gas and oil prices. It has thus thwarted Washington's efforts to strengthen its foothold in the region through "orange revolutions". In Europe, Russia has offered lucrative energy deals to core members of "old Europe" - Germany, France and Italy - rebuffing U.S. efforts to build a common European front against "Russian expansionism". Russia signed a long-awaited deal with Bulgaria and Greece to build a
Balkan pipeline to bypass Turkey's crowded Bosporus Straits. The pipeline will strengthen Russia's position in the European energy market and undercut U.S. plans to promote alternative export routes for Caspian oil.

Russia has been the moving spirit behind the idea of a 'gas OPEC', an organisation of natural gas producing nations. It will unite Russia, Iran and Qatar, which between them account for 60 per cent of global gas reserves, with Algeria, Venezuela and Central Asian gas-exporting countries. Russia has swapped energy assets and developed joint upstream and downstream projects with all of these countries. The idea of a gas OPEC has rattled the U.S. and Europe as it would shift the alignment of forces in the energy markets and leave them out in the cold. Russian politicians admit that the gas OPEC will be called upon, among other things, to offset Western efforts to control the energy markets. In contrast to Europe and the U.S., India could benefit from the establishment of a gas OPEC. A priority task for the gas cartel would be to carve out gas exports markets to reduce competition among its members. This could lend greater momentum to plans to build the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline, which would help Russia avoid clashing with Iran on the European gas markets by sending Iranian gas to Asia. Putin has confirmed Russia's support for financial and technological resources for the project.

Putin has used the knockout combination of Russia's energy resources and arms export potential to project its influence across the world. Moscow defied U.S. efforts to isolate Iran. It was the biggest of several defense contracts between Moscow and Teheran since 2000, when Putin lifted an arms embargo imposed on Iran during Yeltsin's rule. Notwithstanding the nuclear controversy, Iran, armed with Russian weapons and pursuing a common energy strategy, may emerge as Russia's strategic partner in West Asia. Russia has rebuilt close ties with its traditional ally Syria. Moscow has resumed arms supplies to Damascus and plans to set up a naval base in the Syrian port of Tartus. Russia's weapons-cum-energy diplomacy has been most successful in Algeria, where Lukoil and Russian gas giant Gazprom gained exclusive access to some of Algeria's largest oil and gas fields.
The pragmatic policies using energy and geopolitics as tools have clearly changed the nature of international politics. These policies forced the west European countries especially France and Germany to redrawn its century old hostile policies towards Russia. Often indifferent and neutral attitude of these countries towards the expansion of NATO to the door steps of Russia, against the wish of United States has to be seen as the impact of Putin’s policies. Russia’s emerging role as an Energy producing and supplying country has to be seen as a good omen for developing countries in the light of dominance of United States in the Persian Gulf region. Russian energy security polices under Putin resulted the reemergence of the geopolitical rivalries in the region. The NATO expansion, US plan to Deploy Nuclear missile defense systems in the east European territory , the growing alliance between Iran and Russia, talks of transforming Shanghai development corporation into a military alliance all have to be understand seen as a the result of growing Geopolitical and Geo-economical rivalry.