CHAPTER-II

Relations During Suharto Era

Every country’s national interests more or less lies in fulfilment of domestic needs, which reflects in foreign policy decision making. India being a strong advocate of democracy and secularism, could not maintain good relations with Sukarno regime in the first half of 1960s. Indonesian perception about India in the post Sukarno era was endeavoured to be cooperative and friendly, but there were questions regarding Indian objectives in the region. Islamic forces started pronouncing their identity in Indonesia which had emerged as a strong political force during the Second World War. Japanese had enlisted their support by assisting various Islamic groups under one major umbrella called PETA (Pembela tanah Air) to take the allegiance of the majority community. Islamic forces always worked against Pancasila and opposed guided democracy of Sukarno.¹

Transitional Era

In the beginning of 1965, Indonesian foreign stand on India was strained in the wake of its growing friendship with Pakistan. Sukarno regime indulged in anti-India propaganda under the influence of PKI. However the developments after September 1965 reversed the situation. It effected policy changes in which rhetorics were replaced with realism.

The year 1965 witnessed traumatic developments. The six top military generals were assassinated on 30th September 1965 allegedly by the PKI. This event provoked a chain reactions which deeply influenced the pattern of internal politics as well as external dynamics of the country. The PKI and the PNI policies became the contention of reaction. The Indonesian army came into power in October 1965, after the assassination of army generals by PKI supporters.

The PKI was solely influenced by Chinese communist culture and was backed by the Chinese. The PKI, which had played a negative role in India-Indonesia relations and contributed substantially to strengthening anti-India sentiment among the Indonesians, became a target of attack from both sides. Old resentments resulting from the PKI’s one sided actions against those belonging to the PNI and NU and other Muslim parties and groups in the densely populated areas of East and Central Java and Bali in 1964, coupled with the “mental terror” which kept these dormant for so long, burst into the open.

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2. The Six generals included Lt. Gen Achmad Yani, Commander in Chief of the Indonesian Army. See Straits Times October 7, 1976. The allegation about the PKI’s involvement in the coup was made by Gen. Suharto, Commander of KOSTRAD (Strategic Reserve Command), who crushed the coup in Jakarta within 24 hours. He did it on 4 October 1965, while supervising the dead bodies of the murdered generals. See Nuroho Notosusanto and Ismail Saleh, The Coup Attempt of the “September 30 Movement” (Jakarta, 1968) p. 62. The coup leaders named it “September 30th Movement”.

3. In an interview with Arnold C. Brackman, Muhammad Natsir, former Prime Minister of Indonesia and leader of the banned Masjumi Party explained that the Post-coup murders could be characterized as a “psychological explosion” among repressed people who had suffered grievously from PKI’s “mental terror”. See “Arnold C. Brackman, “The Communist Collapse in Indonesia” (New York, 1966).
PKI kept posing a viable threat to peace and stability in Indonesia. The army leadership, established a united front against the PKI. Within two days of the downfall of Sukarno there emerged a Coordinating Body for crushing the Counter Revolutionary 30th September Movement under the Chairmanship of H.M. Subchan, a leader of the Nahdlatul Ulama. On October 8, the passions were high after the recovery of the dead bodies of the Army generals. The offices of the PKI-affiliated women’s students and labor wings and the houses of the Communist leaders were ransacked and put to fire. The people were so angry with the role of PKI that the Presidential Order of 11 March 1966, dissolved and banned the PKI in Indonesia. General Suharto, on behalf of the Mandatory President Sukarno, took fifteen ministers of Sukarno’s government into ‘Protective custody’. Foreign Minister Subandrio was one of those arrested, who had been mainly responsible for evolving a policy of “axis” with China and Pakistan.

Army leadership began to build up anti-Communist pressures and according to the Presidential Order of 11 March 1966, Sukarno agreed to relinquish his executive authority to General Suharto.

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4. D. G. Roeder, "The Smiling General, President Suharto of Indonesia" (Djakarta) 1968, p.24
7. Indonesian Herald, 19 March.
The MPRS, the highest legislative body in Indonesia called its session from June 20 to 5 July 1966, which took away powers of Sukarno and titled of ‘Great Leader of the Revolution’ was revoked. His title of President for life was withdrawn. The special Session of Parliament from 7 to 12 March 1957 the Madjelis Permusjwaratan Rakjat Sementara (MPRS) prohibited Sukarno from governance and appointed General Suharto as ‘acting President’.

The Indian Press took cognizance of the developments taking place in Indonesia, within four days of the coup. The Hindu observed in an editorial that “the collapse of the coup” meant “a defeat for the pro-communist forces in Indonesia.” It also suggested the possibility that it might make an end to the tendency of moving closer to Peking and a beginning of the “reassertion of purely nationalistic elements in Indonesia.” When within a few days the anti-Communist wave turned anti-China as well, the Times of India

9. The Sovereignty of the People rests with the People’s Consultative Assembly (MPR). Hence, the President is accountable to the MPR. The legislative power is vested in the Dewan parwakilan Rakyat (DPR) House of Representatives. The present Constitution of Indonesia is the “Constitution of 1945” (Undang Undang Dasar 1945, ‘seribu sembilan ratus empat puluh lima’). This constitution was drawn up in August 1945 shortly after the proclamation of Indonesian independence, but was abolished as a result of the Round Table Conference with the Dutch held at the Hague at the end of 1949. It was re-promulgated by President Sukarno on 5 July 1959 and became the political framework of the ensuing regime of Guided Democracy.

10. The Madjelis Permusjwaratan Rakjat Sementara (The Provisional People’s Consultative Assembly, 20th of June 5th of July 1966, special issue No.005/1966 (Djakarta Department of Information, 1966) pp.33, 35 and 37-39; See also the Statesman (New Delhi) 7th July 1966


predicted: a turning point in the hitherto friendly relations between China and Indonesia and suggested that the latest development in Indonesia will have an adverse effect on China's foreign policy. It observed editorially that it sees reasonably the concept of NEFOS or the 'new emerging forces' and Sino-Indonesian relations have been major emergence of a new leadership in Indonesia it saw an opening for India and prophesied that realism of the new Indonesian leaders would enable New Delhi to reconsider its relations with Indonesia and sought its cooperation in the cause of stability in this part of the world. An editorial in the Hindu concluded with the remarks that the old Peking-Jakarta axis has been damaged and is not likely to be rebuilt in the near future.

The Government of India took its own time to express its opinion over the developments in Indonesia vis-a-vis PKI. The cautious approach in New Delhi was quite understandable as it found power struggle. The military was pre-occupied with crushing the PKI and its sympathizers, in and out of the Press, Parliament, educational institutions and administration. They were determined to neutralizing the influence of the close advisors of President Sukarno. In an uncertain situation such as this involving a serious conflict between the new and the old leaders and the forces backing them up, it would have been premature to make an official comment on it. India wanted to watch the situation for some time until it crystallized this way or that way.

14 The Times of India, October 25, 1965.
15 The Hindu, October 25, 1965.
India also knew that besides the PKI, all the Islamic parties and groups had been privy to an open and active pro-Pakistani shift in Indonesia’s foreign policy during 1961-65. These were reasons that Pakistani anti-India propaganda had found a high degree of receptivity among the leaders of the banned Masjumi Party as well as the NU which was the religious adjunct of Sukarno’s Nasakom (Nationalism, Religion and Communism) arrangement. By April 1964, Indonesia’s hostile attitude on the kashmir issue had, demonstrated the degree of influence Pakistan had succeeded in mustering at various levels of the Indonesian leaders. It was Pakistan’s decisive gain at the expense of India. Now the Islamic parties and youth front had, after the coup, actively joined the army in settling old scores with the PKI. In such a political situation silence on the part of the government of India was all the more necessary to avoid any future complications.

On 18 March 1966 Adam Malik, a top Murba Party leader, was appointed as Foreign Minister. The other two were General Suharto, and Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono of Jogjakarta in the new cabinet. As expected, the new leaders soon came out with a new foreign policy stance. According to a press statement on 4 April 1966, made by the new Foreign Minister, Adam malik, remarked, “Indonesia’s foreign policy will be aimed at extension of economic and financial cooperation between Indonesian and the outside world, both East and West, as long as such cooperation does not harm Indonesia’s national interests.” It implied that inhibitions imposed upon Indonesia’s “independent and active” foreign policy by Sukarno’s concept of “NEFOS” versus “OLDEFOS” were

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16. With the removal and arrest of fifteen erstwhile ministers on 18 March 1966, a new Cabinet Presidium came into being: this included among others, Adam Malik, Suharto and Hamengku Buwono. Adam Malik was made Minister coordinator for Foreign Affairs/Foreign Economic Relations. See the Indonesian Herald, 19 March 1966.

17. Govt. of the Republic of Indonesia, Indonesia’s foreign Policy, Jakarta, 1966 pp.4-5.
replaced to a pragmatic policy of cooperation with all without any regard to ideology. Besides, Adam Malik’s hint at a peaceful settlement of the Malaysian question and at the possibility of Indonesia’s rejoining the UN, from which it had withdrawn in January 1965, gave clear indications of a change and that of co-existence and good-neighbourliness and cooperation.

India welcomed the changes in Indonesia. The encouraging trends that emerged in April 1966 were confirmed a month later. While addressing the Indonesian parliament (DPR) on 5 May 1966, Adam Malik expressed his government’s intention to pursue a realistic Asian African policy and put special emphasis on reconsidering relations with India. He said, “the Government intends to smoothen relations with India and thoroughly review Indonesia’s relations with that country.” Commenting on India’s importance, he observed, “it may not be forgotten that India belongs to one of the important countries in international politics, especially on Asian-African and non-bloc politics. Indonesian-Indian relations had been affected by misunderstanding towards one-another probably due to communication gap. The government shall strive to clear the atmosphere between Indonesia and India and thus smoothen by giving substance to those relations. 18

On Kashmir issue Adam Malik remarked that the Tashkent Agreement be implemented sincerely by both parties in order to help promote African-Asian solidarity. Although he expressed his government’s conviction that the best way to solve a problem like Kashmir issue is the democratic way which gives an opportunity to the people concerned to determine their own destiny 19 He left no one in doubt about Indonesia’s shift from a posture of total support to Pakistan during Sukarno era.

\[ \frac{1}{8} - \frac{1}{5} \leq \frac{1}{2} \geq \frac{1}{3} \]
Malaysian question and Indonesia’s relations with China were two other important points on which Adam Malik touched upon in the course of this speech in the Indonesian Parliament. As regards Malaysia question, he expressed his desire to settle it peacefully and thus contribute to the promotion of peace, stability and security and mutual cooperation in the region.\(^{20}\) Regarding China, he blamed it for having launched, “irresponsible” and “humiliating” provocations.\(^ {21}\)

India believed that China was working as a catalyst for anti-India propaganda. There had been general belief in India that every step taken by China vis-à-vis Indonesia had led Indonesia away from India, and hostility towards India was the result largely of Chinese intrigues.\(^ {22}\)

From Indian side the striving for the better ties continued in the new dispensation and on 19 July 1966, the Indonesian Foreign Minister told newsmen in Jakarta that his government had been trying to bring relations with India to normal level.\(^ {23}\) He made this observation after attending a formal ceremony at the Foreign Ministry, marking the presentation of US$ 5,000 worth of textiles and medical supplies for flood victims in /

\(^{18}\) Ibid, p.13
\(^{19}\) Ibid., p.14
\(^{20}\) Ibid. pp.7-10
\(^{21}\) Government of the Republic of Indonesia, Indonesia’s Foreign Policy as Based on the Panca Sila Principle, Special Issue 003/1966 (Djakarta, Department of Information, 1966), p 11
\(^{22}\) “India and Indonesian” (editorial), Indian Express (New Delhi), April 22, 1966
\(^{23}\) M.S. Venkataramani and S. Krishnamurti, “Political and Economic Chaos in Indonesia Lessons of an Ordial” Commerce (Bombay), Vol.12, No.2869, April 30, 1966, p.760
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Mohammad Ismacli, Chairman of the Indonesian Nationalist Party and Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admiral Kohli, Flag Officer with the Indian Navy</td>
<td>3 ships of the Indian Navy paid a three-day visit</td>
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<td>Major Gen Dr. Sjahri Thajeb, Vice-Chairman of the Indonesian Parliament paid a visit</td>
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<td>A delegation of Indian Parliament led by Shri A.P. Sharma, M.P., visited Indonesia</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>The Speaker of the Lok. Sabha Dr. G.S. Dhillon visited Indonesia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12-17 September 1970</td>
<td>At the invitation of the Indonesian Government</td>
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<td><strong>Chief of Naval Staff</strong></td>
<td><strong>Admiral Rady Sudomo</strong></td>
<td><strong>visited India</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Dr. Mohd. Hatta,</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Former Vice President</strong></td>
<td><strong>of India,</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>visited India</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>General G.G. Bewoor Chief of Army Staff,</strong></th>
<th><strong>visited Indonesia from 30 October to 5 November 1973.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Military Cooperation.</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accompanied by Mr. Bewoor</strong></td>
<td><strong>visited Indonesia</strong></td>
<td><strong>for joint exercise with the Indonesian Navy.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>visited Indonesia</strong></td>
<td><strong>A delegation of Indian naval training squadron</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Three warships of the Indian naval training squadron in September 1974</strong></td>
<td><strong>held joint exercise with Indonesian naval ship</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gen. INS Nilgiri</strong></td>
<td><strong>Three warships, Naval training 7-15 June 1973,</strong></td>
<td><strong>held joint exercise with Indonesian naval ship.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| **squadron** | **Lamburg March Kurat.** | |
Central java by the India Ambassador, Perala Ratnam. He described it as friend of friendship from India.\(^{24}\) During August 1966 while commenting on his proposed visit to several Asian and African countries, the Indonesian Foreign Minister revealed that he would first of all go to India to improve relations and to assure that Indonesia was determined to revert to its earlier policy of non-alignment, he said, "we have to convince our former friends, and also the new nations of Africa and Asia that we are going to resume once more a strong role in international affairs on the basis of a free and active foreign policy.\(^{25}\) This statement by Adam Malik, made less than a month before his \(^{26}\) day visit to India, starting from 3-7 September 1966, was significant in that it meant to restore confidence and mutual understanding with New Delhi.

The Indian side was also prompted to break the silence and extended its support to the Indonesian efforts to end Sukarno’s policy of confrontation against Malaysia. The Indonesia-Malaysian accord in Bangkok on 31 May 1966, was a welcome news to India. It represented the new Indonesian leaders’ effort re-adopt good-neighborly policy.\(^{28}\)

\(^{24}\) The Statesman (New Delhi), June 10, 1966.

\(^{25}\) News From Indonesia, August 23, 1966. The other two members of the delegation were Dharto Wahab of Duta Mashajakat (NU party language daily) and Shafiat of Mertju Suar (another language daily). News from Indonesia is a news sheet brought out by the Indonesian Embassy in New Delhi.

\(^{26}\) The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), September 24, 1966.

\(^{27}\) The Statesman (New Delhi), June 10, 1966.

\(^{28}\) The Times of India, September 22, 1966.
Viewing this as symbolic of their desire to contribute to peace, stability, and economic progress in Southeast Asia, Swaran Singh, India's Minister for External Affairs, observed “India is all for its settlement.” Agreement to end the policy of confrontation was concrete evidence of the growing capability and political credibility of the new Indonesian leaders. It was also a confirmation of their determination to pursue pragmatic foreign policy as outlined in the new Foreign Minister's statements of April 4 and May 6, 1966. Hence, it prompted India to encourage such a policy.

Swaran Singh expressed his great happiness over the steps being taken by Indonesia and Malaysia to end the unfortunate confrontation which had bedeviled their relations after two months of the above development. These are our friendly countries, he said, and added that resumption of friendly relations between the two "will contribute to stability and for lowering tension and for the development of healthy relations."

During the first session of the Rajya Sabha, this became obvious from Government replies to questions relating to India-Indonesian relations in the Rajya Sabha on 23 August 1966. the Minister of State for External Affairs, Dinesh Singh, expressed
his government’s distress at the mass murders in Indonesia. He rebuffed a Communist
member, Niren Ghosh’s charge that the Government of India was jubilant over a
“reactionary turn as was evident from the butchery of the People” in Indonesia. But he also
refused to identify the new Indonesian leaders with “reactionary trends,” and put the
blame for these killings on the old regime. He observed: “unfortunately this reactionary
trend came to Indonesia a few years ago.”

While justifying his Government’s warm responses to the overtures for amity
made by the new Indonesian leaders, Swaran Singh put the blame for sharp
deterioration in relations in 1965 on certain “forces” belonging to the old regime. He remarked that “as
soon as those forces which were keeping the normal thinking and the normal reactions of
the people suppressed were relaxed and the people came into their own and our relations
with the people and the government of Indonesia are now good.”

However, he again at a later stage termed the relations as leading to ‘fast
deterioration’ and then to “climax” during the Indo-Pakistan conflict. He further said
despite all the odds the relationship is hoped to improve in near future. Indian side did
not take any chance and despite persistent opposition by communist bloc, government of
India came out clearly in favour of improving and strengthening close relations with
Indonesia. During question hours in the Rajya Sabha on 23 August 1966, the Government
view on the subject drew applause from all sections of the House except the Communists
who were isolated.
In the following month of September as a number of delegates from Indonesia made good will visits. Indonesian Foreign Minisiter Adam Malik, made a five-day visit to New Delhi which provided a platform to the Indian leaders to forge good relations and to know, at first hand, attitudes on political and economic problems.  

The Indian press by giving a wide coverage to visit of Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik considered it’s as of great significance for the two countries ‘relations’. The Indian Express commented that it marked ‘the beginning of a new chapter in Indonesia’s history’. Viewing retrospectively, it observed that, in the pre-coup period Indonesia’s anti-Indian policies on Sino-Indian conflict as well as on Kashmir issue, under “Chinese machination “had led Sukarno and Subandrio to offer ‘Moral as well as material help to Pakistan.”

New order regime in Indonesia began to feel that China was unfriendly and expansionist. Outstanding reasons for the above development were the activities of ethnic Chinese bagging more or less 99% of the business opportunities that floated from China. Chinese involvement in business particularly in the urban areas who more affluent than

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35. Ibid. col.3540.
36. Foreign Affairs Record Vol. 12, No.8, August 1996.
37. Times of India, (Bombay, August 24, 1966)
38. See the table No-1
the indigenous people. These Chinese had backed the PKI, which had finally culminated into massacre massive violence in Indonesia in 1965.

Adam Malik addressing a Press Conference in New Delhi on 5 September 1966, regretted that China had not “reciprocated” Indonesia’s “good intentions”. “We are going to resist any influence forced upon us from outside,” he noted, while commenting on the prospects of Sino-Indonesina relations.39

On the kashmir issue there was a distinct shift in Indonesia’s position. At his Press Conference, Adam Malik reconfirmed his earlier views on the Kashmir question and said, "The Kashmir question can be settled on the basis of the Tashkent declaration without interference of a third party.”40 The above views concided with the Indian views on the Kashmir issue.41

Adam Malik’S visit was reciprocated by Indian External Affairs Minister, M.C. Chagla, after few months in January 1967. Now the political atmosphere was quite different from the one witnessed by Swaran Singh in April 1964 and by C. Subramaniam, leader of the Indian delegation to the Tenth Anniversary Celebrations of the Bandung Conference (Sasa Warsa Celebration), in April 1965. Replying to a newsman at the welcoming ceremony he remarked that the two countries’ relations had been clouded in the past, “but the Sun is visible now.”43

39. Indian Express (New Delhi), 3 September 1966, and the Hindustan Times (Calcutta. 6 September 1966)
40. The Times of India (Bombay) 6 September 1966.
41. Ibid
43. Ibid, p.231
In January 1967, M.C. Chagla revealed that during his talks with the Indonesian leaders he had discussed the issue of Pakistan’s “collusion” with China in the latter’s aggressive policy towards India. Spelling out implications of arms supplies to Pakistan and his government’s reactions to it, he observed: “Pakistan faces no threat from China or from Russia or from India. Therefore any military assistance or supply of arms to Pakistan by anyone would mean strengthening China. India made it clear that any supply of arms to Pakistan will be considered a hostile act against her.”

It represented an Indian effort to convince the new Indonesian leadership that Pakistan’s thesis of anticipated threat of aggression from India or from any other quarter was just a pretext to seek more and more arms against India. In effect, it strengthened China which colluded with Pakistan against India. The Indonesian leaders were receptive to his arguments. PTI sources, in New Delhi reported that Indonesia would not give arms aid to Pakistan. It also referred to assurances by General Suharto and Adam Malik, that any commitment for military assistance to Pakistan as given by the previous regime would not be honoured. Adam Malik also spoke that the naval crafts and military personnel stationed since then in the Pakistani water or Pakistani territory have been withdrawn.

After the visit of M.C. Chagla, the relationship between the two countries started changing. He successfully impressed that Kashmir, being a Muslims majority state, was a symbol of India’s secularism. China was perceived as a threat by both the countries and

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44. The Hindustan Times, 17 January 1967.
they viewed China as aggressive and expansionist. India was satisfied that now Indonesia too viewed China as an aggressive, expansionist state, threatening the security and integrity of its neighbors. M.C. Chagla disclosed at his Press Conference on 19 January 1967, that the two government had similar views about the “danger to world peace from China, he also indicated agreement between them that “expansionism of China should be contained not through military methods but with the economic development of Southeast Asian consolidated forces. The economic prosperity in the region can contain Chinese expansionism and it is for India and Indonesia to strengthen themselves economically. 

Indonesia expressed their disapproval of China about restoration of its seat in the Security Council. The Indonesian Ambassador to the UN, Roeslan Abdulgani, made a distinction between the legal and political aspects of the question of China’s representation. He said: “We uphold peaceful coexistence based upon mutual benefit and interest, and reject at the same time interference in the domestic affairs of other.” Expressing Indonesia’s new mood towards China, he said regretfully but emphatically: “We cannot remain passive towards hostile and unforunded allegations. The more so since what was vitally at stake in the October events last year in Indonesia was the very survival of our state. Ideology the ‘Pancasila’ stand against dogmatic, intolerant and

47. Hindusan Time (new Delhi) 21 January 1967.
extreme left radicalism, using and misusing political opportunism and economic adventurism.\textsuperscript{49}

The next step was to reconcile its differences with Malaysia. Indonesia did not take much time to show its readiness to ending a long era of Sukarno’s confrontationist policy against Malaysia. India offered its moral support and encouragement to this policy as it arose out of a shift in Indonesia’s scale of priorities from politics to economics.\textsuperscript{50,51}

In the meantime Indian newspapers also expressed applaud for the thaws in relationship with Indonesia. The Indian Express and The Hindu and other regional newspapers expressed satisfaction.\textsuperscript{52} Commenting editorially, Hindustan Times expressed happiness over the turn of events in the two countries’ relations. Viewing retrospectively, it attributed the Indian-Indonesian strains during the Sukarno era to “erratic policies” of Sukarno rather than to “a clash of national interests”, and observed. “India and Indonesia are by far the most important countries in the Indian Ocean region and their security is interlinked. The misunderstanding between them which developed some time ago could have undermined the security of the whole region.\textsuperscript{53}

A five member parliamentary delegation of Indonesia led by H.A. Sjaichu, the speaker of the Indonesian parliament (DPR-GR), visited India in October 1967. The

\textsuperscript{49} The Statesman (New Delhi) 20 January 1967.
\textsuperscript{50} GAOR, session 2, plen. mtg. 1479, November 28, 1966; pp.11-12.
\textsuperscript{52} The Hindustan Time 21 January 1967.
\textsuperscript{53} The Statesman (New Delhi) 19 January 1967.
Indonesian speaker came to India at the joint invitation of the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and the speaker of the Lok Sabha. Being one of the top leaders of the NU, Sjachu's visit to India was quite significant because he was the leader of one of the largest Islamic party of Indonesia who was known for its pro-Pakistani attitudes.  

After assessing the developments Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India resumed interaction with General Suharto. She paid a five-day official visit to Indonesia from 28 June to 2 July 1969. This was Indian Prime Minister's visit to Indonesia after 14 years of gap. It was hailed in Indonesia as a historical event of great significance.  

The two sides exchanged views on various international aspects and those relating to China, Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent. The similarity of approach was reiterated and confirmed. The joint communique noted a common approach of the two countries towards issues such as Vietnam, strengthening the UN and the growing disparities between the developed and developing countries. It also called for promotion of trade and economic relations among the Asian nations on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. The two sides considered such cooperation as necessary in order "to further consolidate peace and stability in the region and to give meaningful expression to economic and social progress in the countries of Asia."  

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54. Indian Express (New Delhi), 23 January 1969.
56. Cite in K.N. Ramchandran, "Indian-Indonesian Relations" in K.Subramaniam, ed., Self-Reliance and national Resilience (new Delhi), 1975, pp.131-78. This is a collection of papers submitted at the Indo-Indonesia Seminar held at New Delhi from April 23 to 25, 1975 under the joint auspices of the Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses (Ministry of Defense and the Government of India) and Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Djakarta.
57. The Times of India (Bombay) 29 June, 1969.
Foreign Ministers of the two countries visited each other's countries alternatively and exchanged their views on different international, regional and bilateral matters. An important ministerial level talks between India and Indonesia was held in New Delhi from 30 March to 3 April 1973.\(^{58}\) Indonesian delegation led by Dr. Adam Malik discussed bilateral relations and international development. India welcomed the progress achieved by the countries of ASEAN and reiterated the support of government of India for the Kuala Lumpur Declaration calling for a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia. The Foreign Ministers also discussed various ideas regarding wider regional cooperation in Asia. They reaffirmed that the elimination of great power tension and rivalry from the India Ocean would contribute greatly to peace and stability in the region and felt that India and Indonesia should have more frequent exchange of views on this subject and cooperate closely in the UN Ad-hoc committee.\(^{59}\)

The visits of high delegation also comprised visits and exchanges of the civilian and military leaders.\(^{60}\)

An Air agreement was signed between India and Indonesia in September 1968. In terms of this agreement, the services of Air-India through Jakarta and those of Garuda Indonesian Airways through Bombay which were hitherto operated on the basis of

\(^{58}\) The Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs Report (New Delhi) 1973-74) pp. 31-32

\(^{59}\) Ibid.

\(^{60}\) The Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs Report, (New Delhi, 1968-69), and in the year of 1970-71, p. 22.
temporary authorizations issued by the respective governments, were placed on a permanent footing.

In 1974 one of the most substantive issues which India discussed with Indonesia was the demarcation of its border. This was the first agreement with Indonesia on the delimitation of continental shelf boundary agreement. It delimited the boundary of India and the Indonesian continental shelf in the area between Great Nicobar (India), and Sumatra (Indonesia). The total length of the demarcation line was 48 nautical miles which is represented by straight lines connecting 4 points. These points are equidistant from the outermost island or islet belonging to the respective countries. The agreement was rectified in New Delhi on 17 December 1974.

However, the differences remained on some issues because of Cold War dynamics. Indonesia planned to organize an international conference on Cambodia in 1970. India favoured a conference of “uncommitted Asian nations to discuss the situation in Cambodia in order to find a solution to the impasse there. While India did not formally reject the Indonesian proposal, it implied India politely declined to participate. Indonesia went ahead to organise 11-nation conference on Cambodia in

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61. As the Vietnam War was on its middle phase, Lon No.1 in April 1970 overthrew Prince Norodom Sihanouk-led government in Cambodia. Soon after the South Vietnamese army and the American forces launched massive attack on Cambodian territory with the objective of destroying the Vietcong sanctuaries and cutting off its supply lines along the Ho Chi Minh trail. Thus for the first time the war on Vietnam was extended to Cambodia in a direct fashion. This clearly exposed the connivance of the United States with the development in Cambodia. on the other hand, Sihanouk established a government-in-exile in Peking with the clear objective over throwing the pro-US government led by Marshal Lon-No.1. It is in these circumstances that President Suharto’s government initiated the move for organizing a conference on Cambodia in order to explore the possibilities of bringing about peace in that country.
Jakarta in May 1970. India was skeptical about the outcome of such Conferences. And believed that it would only serve to legitimize the gains of General Lon No! and American intervention.

Indonesia opposed the issue of admission of the Royal Government of National union of Kampuchea (RGNUK) the Government in Exile headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG-RSV) at NAM summit in Lusaka in early September 1970. Joined by Malaysia, Singapore and Laos, it again strongly opposed the move when, at their meeting in George Town (Guyana) in February 1973, the Foreign Ministers spoke in favor of admission of the RGNUK and the PRG-RSV. Indonesia, Malaysia and Laos even went to the extent of walking in protest against this recommendation. Indonesia once again protested when the preparatory meeting of the non-aligned countries in Kabul in June 1973 recognized the status of the RGNUK headed by Sihanouk. The admission of these two governments to the non-aligned movement became a highly controversial issue. Indonesia and other Southeast Asian non-aligned states such as Malaysia, Singapore and Laos, opposed their admission because, according to them these were not legally constituted governments.

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62 The times of India 5 September 1970
63 Swarn Singh made this observation in a statement in reply to Rajya Sabha debate on Foreign Affairs in New Delhi on 26 August 1970. For text of Swarn Singh's statement, see Government of India Foreign Affairs Record, New Delhi, (MEA), Vol. 16, No 8, August 1970.
Indonesia thus continued to oppose the representation of de facto regimes in Cambodia and South Vietnam at the non-aligned meetings. At the fourth conference of the non-aligned countries in Algiers in September 1973, Indonesia joined by Malaysia and Singapore, refused to accept the part of the Declaration of the Conference which called upon the non-aligned countries to recognize the RGNUK and the PRG-RSV. The countries protested against the decision to seat these two governments at the Non-aligned Conference and entered their reservations to this effect.64

The government of India, however, supported the admission of the RGNUK and the PRG-RSV at the non-aligned preparatory meeting at George Town and Kabul. This was in spite of the fact that it continued to have diplomatic relations with the Cambodian government based in Phnom Penh and Consular relations with the South Vietnamese government based in Saigon. It seemed the Government of India assessed that the tide of events in Cambodia and Vietnam were clearly in favor of the RGNUK and PRG-RSV and that America backed governments of Cambodia and South Vietnam had no longer any possibility of Survival.65

Subsequently, there came another problem which Indonesia assessed rather differently, was the liberation of East Pakistan (Bangladesh). Indonesia was not

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convinced of the action taken by India in the liberation of Bangladesh. Indonesians were viewing this as an intervention of a neighboring state in the domestic matter of other country. However, Indonesia was acquainted with the reality that President Yahya Khan was involved in brutal military repression in East Pakistan. The sympathies for the oppressed Bangladeshi people existed in Indonesia.  

India understood Indonesians, External Affairs Minister Swaran Singh decided to visit Indonesia in 1971. He explained the economic and political problems faced by India by the exodus of people from East Bengal. In the joint communique issued on 14 August 1971, Swaran Singh and Indonesian Foreign Minister, Adam Malik, expressed the "urgent need" for the creation of such conditions which would be "conducive for the return of East Bengal refugees to their homes." This implied Indonesian agreement with the Indian view that the responsibility for the present unstable situation in the subcontinent lay with the Pakistani leaders themselves. On the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country in December 1971 Indonesia did not take long to recognize the realities and accorded diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh on 25 February 1972.

66. (East Pakistan), the Pakistani military leaders resorted to brutal repression there. This led to an exodus of about nine million refugees into the contiguous Indian states. Over burdened by it and highly disappointed by with the intransigent attitude of the Pakistani leaders India decided to support the liberation struggle in East Pakistan. This eventually led to the separation of the East Bengal from Pakistan and the emergence of the new sovereign political entity, Bangladesh in December 1971.

Indonesia under Suharto remained skeptical of Indo-Soviet Friendship. The Indo-Soviet-Friendship Treaty signed in August 1971 created an impression in Indonesia that India had abandoned the policy of non-Aligned. 68 During his visit to Indonesia, Swaran Singh sought to dispel Indonesian's misgivings about it. In course of his talks in Jakarta, he explained India's position in the matter and, to an extent, succeeded in convincing the Indonesian leaders that India's non-aligned and independent policy had remained unaffected by the Indo-Soviet Treaty. Nevertheless, divergence in the Indian and Indonesian perceptions of the growing Soviet influence and role in the Indian Ocean littoral as well in Southeast Asia continued. There were fears in some Indonesian circles that ever-increasing ties between India and the Soviet Union might have an adverse impact on future relations between India and Indonesia. 69

Despite divergence of approach, the decade of the nineteen seventies was characterized by a serious search in fields of bilateral cooperation. The growing interaction offered opportunities for exchange of views and coordination of approaches to various regional and international issues, and to establish new bridges of friendship and cooperation.

In 1975 India's President Fakhrudin Ali Ahmad's paid a five-day state visit to Indonesia from May 26 to 30. On this occasion President Suharto observed:

68. For the assessment of the Indonesian views, see V.I. Sambadan, "Renewal of the Friendship with Indonesia" The Hindu, 26 June, 1975
69. The Time of India (New Delhi) 9 August, 1975
The scope for the interaction between our two countries is accordingly vast and I am confident that the efforts we have jointly been making to identify specific areas for economic cooperation will yield positive and mutually beneficial results in the immediate future. This visit also provided the Indian President an occasion to discuss Indochina following the withdrawal of American forces and installation of new regimes.

The discussions on bilateral relations were resumed during Foreign Minister Adam Malik’s six day visit to India from 27 July to 1 August 1975. Close on the heels of the Indian President’s visit to Indonesia in May 1975, it provided still another opportunity to the leaders of the two countries to exchange views on regional and international issues. The joint statement issued on the conclusion of Adam Malik’s visit showed the two sides had identical views on important issues.

India and Indonesia also entered into an agreement relating to airways and press release on this agreement was released on March 23, 1976 in New Delhi. According to this both Garuda Indonesian Airways and Air India were permitted to introduce wide bodied aircraft excluding supersonic aircraft on their services to and fro India and Indonesia. They also ratified the agreement on the extension of the 1974 continental shelf boundary agreement concluded on 14th January 1977 in the Andaman Sea and in the Indian Ocean. The instrument of ratification were exchanged

   Also see the Times of India (New Delhi) 27 May 1975.
72. Ibid.
between the Indian Ambassador Sri B.B. Misra and the Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik at a ceremony held in Jakarta in August 1977.74

In 1978, the bilateral relations between the two countries witnessed positive developments when foreign ministers of both these countries Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India and Dr. Mochtar Kusummatmadja of Indonesia signed a communique in New Delhi in November 1978. The two foreign Ministers noted satisfactory development of bilateral relations between the two countries since the last round of talks had contributed to deeper understanding and better appreciation of each other's interests and laid the foundations for closer cooperation between them at the international forums.75 India and Indonesia also signed a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) to coordinate the use of UNSAT-1A and PALAPA domestic/satellite system on 23 January 1979. This formal agreement in effect completed the process of international coordination of INSAT-1A network in accordance with the regulatory procedures of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Possibilities for mutual cooperation between the two countries in the field of telecommunication, with special reference to application of communication satellite technology to domestic services were also considered. Both sides agreed that as the

74. Ibid Vol XXIII, No 8, August 1977
75. Asian Recorder, Vol XXV No 1 (1979)p 14666

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two countries of the developing countries worked to embark on domestic communication satellite system, there is considerable scope for exchanges of expertise.\textsuperscript{76}

The ASEAN started emerging as a strong regional grouping after 1979. India did not have positive opinion about ASEAN in the beginning and similarly ASEAN also had critical opinion about India. The connection with the Soviets and close links with Vietnam and Cambodia during 1979-89 were disturbing for the ASEAN. India's concern flowed from the fact that the entire ASEAN condemned the Vietnamese action against Pol Pot government in Kampuchea. The ASEAN called for withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops and viewed it an expansionist adventure.\textsuperscript{77} The ASEAN did not seriously try to include India in its deliberations. On 15 and 16 May 1980 when ASEAN tried to discuss regional issues with India, the differences were apparent.

The Indian delegation led by Eric Gonsalves, Secretary (East) Ministry of External Affairs, sought to convince ASEAN about compulsions for recognition to the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea. The ASEAN however, wanted India to "delay" recognition till the UN General Assembly session in October 1980.\textsuperscript{78} Keeping in view the genocidal nature of Pol Pot regime Eric Gonsalves disagreed with the assessements of senior ASEAN officials on the issue of withdrawal of the

\textsuperscript{76} Government of India. Foreign Affairs Record, Ministry of External Affairs (New Delhi) Vol.XXV, No 1 January 1979, pp.15-16.

\textsuperscript{77} India. Lok Sabha Debates. Series, 2, Vol.10, No.10, 17 December 1957, Cols. 5880-1.

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Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea. He had already spoken about at India’s approach to the issues relating to Indochina at the Press Conference in Singapore on 11 May 1980. He had observed that India and ASEAN had common objective of not getting involved in Great Power rivalries, alliances and confrontations. Nevertheless, the ASEAN group differed on how to achieve a settlement of the problem in that Coutnry.\textsuperscript{79} Clarifying India’s position, he observed: “I don’t think ostracizing Vietnam or isolating Kampuchea is the answer to the problem”. He stressed that this would further increase Vietnamese dependence on the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{80} After two-day talk with the senior ASEAN officials in Kuala Lumpur, Eric Gonsalves stated on 17 May 1980 that there would be “anarchy” in Kampuchea if Vietnamese troops withdrew right now. India like ASEAN was against the presence of foreign troops, but there are certain realities about the Kampuchean situation from which one can not shy away. He assured that the ASEAN views would be considered while India recognized the Heng Samrin-led government and said: “We do not consider ASEAN’s view on this matter as an interference in other’s internal affairs”. Appreciating ASEAN’s interests, he asserted that India’s opinion on the destiny of Kampuchea was not different from ASEAN’s long term objectives even though they adopt different lines of action.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid, 11 June 1980
\textsuperscript{79} The Times of India (New Delhi) 12 May 1980
\textsuperscript{80} The Statesman, 122, 1980 The Hindu 12 May 1980.
\textsuperscript{81} The Times of India, New Delhi, 12 May 1980

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India-ASEAN relation perhaps faced setbacks when India’s Minister for External Affairs, P.V. Narasimha Rao failed to join the meeting for a dialogue with the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and its dialogue partners in Kuala Lumpur on 27 to 29 June 1980. Although, according to an official spokesman in New Delhi Narasimha Rao’s visit to Kuala Lumpur had been cancelled because of his mother’s illness.\(^{82}\) Indonesia and other partners of ASEAN in the group expressed disappointment over the inability of the Indian External Affairs to take part in the dialogue. Some of the participants interpreted it as an indication of the impending Indian recognition of the Heng Samrin led Government.\(^{83}\) The ASEAN leaders felt that even if India recognize the Heng Samrin-led government in Phnom Penh, they cannot muster enough votes to help the toppled Pol-pot government retain its seat at the UN General Assembly.\(^{84}\) As to their general stand on the developments in Kampuchea, the joint statement issued by the Foreign Ministers of the ASEAN on this occasion called for the establishment of a neutral and independent government in that country based on the principle of self determination and complete withdrawal of foreign forces from there.\(^{85}\)

At this crucial juncture President Suharto visited New Delhi during 1-4 December 1980. During this visit the two sides agreed that in keeping with their support for the concept of ZOPFAN all the countries would endeavor to keep the region free from

\(^{82}\) The Indian Express, 27 June 1980  
\(^{83}\) Ibid, June, 1980.  
\(^{84}\) Ibid, 27 June 1980.  
\(^{85}\) The Tribune, (Chandigarh) 9 July 1980 also see Manmohini Kaul, “ASEAN-Indian Relations During the Cold War (an edited book, “India and ASEAN: The Politics of Look East Policy, Manohar Publication, 2001, New Delhi, pp.41-63
big power intervention and interference.\textsuperscript{86} Suharto’s visit was reciprocated by Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s visit to Jakarta on 23 September 1981. In this meeting Mrs. Gandhi did not emphasize her differences on the Kampuchean issues. She merely stated that both India and Indonesia favored a political solution of Kampuchean issue.\textsuperscript{87} The differences on Cambodia continued in subsequent years also as evident at the time of President N. Sanjiv Reddy’s visit in December 1982 and Foreign Minsiter Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao’s visit in June 1984.\textsuperscript{88}

The critical attitude towards Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and call for self-determination was different from that of Kampuchea. Mrs. Gandhi had reiterated her belief that quiet and friendly persuasion rather than harsh condemnation would be more effective in ensuring a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. At the joint communique issued in New Delhi on 4 December 1980, the President of Indonesia and the Prime Minster of India expressed their full support for the independences, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan and other countries of the region.\textsuperscript{89} They urged the concerned parties to work towards a settlement which would ensure that the Afghan people would determine their own destiny, free from foreign interference and intervention.

\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Patrot}, 3 December 1980 and \textit{Indian Express}, 5 December 1980
\textsuperscript{87} \textit{The Statesman} 25 September 1981 and \textit{Asian Recorder}, Vo;XXVIII No.2 (1982) 163\textsuperscript{89}
\textsuperscript{88} \textit{Indian Express} 13 June 1984 and \textit{Foreign Affairs Record}, Government of India, Minsiter of External Affairs (new Delhi), Vol XXVI, No 12 December 1980, p.279
\textsuperscript{89} \textit{Indian Express}, 13 June 1984.
Suharto regime was friendly to the US and had great reservations about the Soviet block. India, being friendly to the Soviets, were also not fully trusted. Moreover, India always supported democratic movements in the region. It expressed critical views about the rise of military dictatorships. On the other hand, Indonesia advocated dwifuncti and thereby justified the role of the Armed Forces in the politics of the country. Thus the perspective of the two differed from one another from time to time. However the position of Suharto became shaky after the financial crisis in 1997-98. He had to resign from the post of President in May 1998. His exit heralded a new era in Indonesia wherein democracy and human rights got prime importance in the politics of the country.