PREFACE

Although the Soviet-Indian relations had always been cordial and friendly since the early fifties and never faced any serious crisis, there had been an undercurrent of divergences in the approaches, perceptions and at times even the concrete objectives pursued by the two countries in the international sphere and bilateral relations, proposed study has outlined and analysed the developments in the Soviet-Indian relations in their last phase, that is from 1985 to 1991.

Nehru's pro-west tilt in the pre-1955 period notwithstanding, his tenure as Prime Minister of India witnessed a steady strengthening of the Soviet-Indian relations in both political and economic fields. Soviet-Indian relations during the regimes of Nehru's successors grew further and attained new heights.

After coming to power in 1980 Mrs. Indira Gandhi was not as eager as before to pursue the populist line of the seventies. A shift towards pragmatism and desire to improve relations with China and the United States marked her policies during the 1980-84 period. These new factors acted as a constraint on the development of Soviet Indian political relations.
Rajiv Gandhi’s tenure as Prime Minister (1984-1990) witnessed a further deepening of the pragmatic trend in the Soviet-Indian relations which first emerged under Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The growing trend towards pragmatism under Rajiv Gandhi resulted in some short-lived divergences which were ultimately overcome giving way to a new convergence on the basis of pragmatic real politic approach recognised by both sides.

The proposed study entitled Soviet-Indian relations, 1985-1991 is organised in five chapters. In the introductory chapter an effort has been made to analyse the Soviet-Indian relationship as it grew during the period of Nehru, Mrs. Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.

The second chapter discusses Gorbachev’s “New Political Thinking” and its impact on the Soviet Union’s relations with India and the third world.

The third chapter discusses Gorbachev’s visit to India in 1986 and the impact of his Asia-Pacific security proposal and the Soviet policy of fence mending with China.

The fourth chapter deals with the Indian co-operation for Nuclear Disarmament, Regional security and strengthening of the United Nations.

The fifth chapter highlights the problems and difficulties that arose in the last phase of Soviet-Indian relations and tries to identify the factors responsible for them.