PREFACE

The bright outlook for the growth of energy sector in Russia in the new millennium has been used as an effective instrument of Russian foreign policy under Putin. While retaining some of the vestiges of Soviet ‘hard power’, including nuclear weapons, Russia has now regained the position of USSR in energy markets. But Moscow is not using its new energy revenues to boost its military spending and to consolidate its hold on the East Europe. Instead, it is harnessing its new-found economic resources as ‘soft’ power to encourage neighboring states to cooperate more closely with it. However, there is no denying the fact that, Russia under Putin, also looks to its energy resources as an effective means for ensuring its re-emergence as a ‘Normal Great Power’ aspiring to become a new power centre in Eurasia. This perfectly legitimate desire of a state of the size and resources of Russia is being viewed as challenge to the US dominated unipolar world system. For this reason the neo-conservatives in America started crying hoarse about the rise of Russian imperialism under Putin.

The study consists of six chapters. The first chapter, “Introduction and historical background” focuses on a brief history of the development of oil and gas industry in Russia and the erstwhile USSR since the nineteenth century. It also discusses the rationale, background and scope of the study, research methods used along with a detailed review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature.

The second chapter, “Structural changes in the energy sector under Yeltsin” analyses the disastrous and chaotic situation in the Russian economy during the Yeltsin period, particularly in the oil and gas sector which registered a big decline due to the predatory activities of the new oligarchs and the corrupt bureaucracy. It highlights the unholy nexus between the Kremlin and the new oil barons.

The Third Chapter, “Role of the state in the energy sector under Putin” critically examines Vladimir Putin’s course of making the Russian state the key player in the energy sector. It also highlights the policy of “Commanding Heights” pursued by Putin as
a means of regaining the great power status of Russia to be used as a clout in achieving the foreign policy goals.

The fourth chapter, “Energy factor in Russia’s foreign policy” discusses the various aspects of Putin’s foreign policy in the regional and international settings concentrating on the dexterous use of Russia’s energy clout by Putin in relations with the former Soviet republics, West Europe and China.

The fifth Chapter, “Russia’s perspective on global energy security”, describes and analyses Putin’s vision of global energy security. It also discusses about Putin’s emphasis on the interests of both consumers and producers of energy to ensure stable cooperation.

In the concluding chapter an attempt has been made to summaries the main findings and implications of the study.