PREFACE

The study is an attempt to analyse Russian security interests in South Asia. It primarily deals with India and Pakistan, because of their geo-political location and Russia’s security interests in the region. Such a study had become essential especially after the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991. In Soviet strategic thinking South Asia was an important region primarily for geo-political reasons. Its main concerns were reducing and if possible eliminating American and Chinese influence in South Asia. Soviet Union had good relations with India for over three decades. These relations were multi-dimensional in nature. In fact, from Soviet perspective, its relations with India were a success story; whether viewed from the perspective of national interest or ideology. Immediately after the dissolution of Soviet Union, many changes have taken place within and outside Russia. At that juncture it was thought that South Asia would lose its importance in Russian thinking and many scholars also assumed and remained skeptical about the future relationships of Russia with India and Pakistan. Therefore, the objective of the study is to examine the nature of relations (1991-2003) and the challenges that Russia has faced in its evolving relationship with India and Pakistan.

In order to understand Russia’s growing security concerns, a brief understanding of Soviet period is very important. Therefore, the first chapter focuses on Soviet security interests in South Asia. Here, the Soviet concept of security and its concerns have been discussed. This chapter also looks into the Soviet policy towards India and Pakistan in this regard.
Second Chapter is on Russian Federation’s security interests in India. In order to do so this chapter makes an attempt to analyse Indo-Russian cooperation at the regional level such as Central Asia-Afghanistan and South Asia so as to eliminate challenges like terrorism, religious extremism, drug trafficking. The chapter also focuses on the commonality of concerns faced by Russia and India in Chechnya and Kashmir respectively. It also discusses both countries’ multi-lateral approach to contain these problems. In addition, this chapter also discusses their bilateral relations.

Third chapter is on defense cooperation between Russia and India. There is a brief discussion on Soviet military assistance and the problems that arose after the dissolution of Soviet Union. This chapter also covers military, technical, cooperation and other defense related issues.

Fourth chapter is on Russia’s growing security concerns and Pakistan. This chapter is an attempt to understand Russia’s perception of Pakistan and its role in the emergence of the Taliban forces in Afghanistan and its spread in Central Asian region. It also discusses Pakistan’s role in religious extremism, terrorism and drug trafficking.

The fifth chapter is on Russia and nuclear dimension in South Asia. The main focus in this chapter is on Russia’s role in nuclear non-proliferation. It also throws light on the issue of arms race in South Asia and Russian response towards nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan in the sub continent. The final chapter is an assessment of Russia’s interests in South Asia.