THE DISINTEGRATION OF SOVIET UNION AND CHANGED INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO

The tectonic shifts in the geopolitical world caused by the implosion of the USSR have left in their wake a deeply fractured global landscape. The Soviet breakup has also upset the balance between carefully crafted networks of interstate relations based on norms and priorities of the Cold War. The crumbling of one of the two main pillars supporting the post world War II bipolar international structure signals vast and continuing systemic changes as each country attempts to redefine its world view, reassess its opportunities and threats, and recast the status and basis of its relations with other states. Nowhere is this process of redefinition and readjustment more evident than in the Indian-Russian nexus. For decades the object of lavish Soviet attention, India now finds that it cannot count on automatic Russian support in international forum for its domestic and foreign policies. Russia, for its part, consumed by domestic obstacles to economic and political reform, is caught in the vise, familiar to many Third World countries, of seeking economic assistance through bilateral and multilateral channels while attempting to preserve a measure of independence in the pursuit of its policies at home and abroad. Russia's India policy epitomizes the vagaries of this dilemma confronting its political leadership. As a result, the Indian-Russian relationship is more vulnerable to external pressures than was the erstwhile Soviet-Indian connection.¹
The Cold War and its rather dramatic demise had marked the reality that the world was evolving into a polycentric international order where a number of centers of power are adjuring to the nature of their relationship. The centre of gravity of international relations has shifted to the Asian continent and its contiguous oceans. The asymmetries in the capabilities of the leading half a dozen centers of power create the imperative for cooperation among them and relations among them would also determine their ability to safeguard and further their national strategic interest. This is where Indo-Russian dialogue, high level contacts and relations get into perspective.²

India has no direct access to Central Asian–Caspian Sea region and its economic presence there is minimal. Nonetheless, India is situated in direct proximity to the region. The developments in Central Asia–Caspian Sea region and Afghanistan tend to have a direct bearing on vital Indian geopolitical and security interests. The choice before India either to remain a bystander in the intensifying geopolitical game in the region or to astutely play its cards aimed at maximizing gains and minimizing adverse fall–out. Of late India has evinced some interest in the membership of SCA, shows that India has indirectly made known that India should not be discounted as a factor in Central Asian geopolitics. The post–September 11 geopolitical developments in the region are to India's advantage on which it can further build. The study of post–Cold War Russia–China relations clearly demonstrates their relevance for India and the growing significance of India as a factor not only in the Eurasian geopolitics, but the world at large.³
It would be in India's interest that exclusive and mutually hostile alliances are not formed in the post-Cold War world. In fact continued multi-dimensional friendship between India and Russia now formally raised after President Putin's visit to the level of 'strategic partnership' serves India's as well a Russia's long-term and short-term interests. At the same time, India must expand and consolidate ties with the West and extensively engage China through mutually advantageous multi-faceted cooperation. India is placed in an advantage is political situation in close proximity of West Asia, Central Asia and Southeast Asia. There is no reason why it cannot secure an important place for itself where it will be wooed by the major powers and its interests would not be ignored.

In other sectors too was considerable as many studies before have shown. India's neutrality on the abortive August 19, 1991, coup was a Faux pas. Indian leadership was so enamored of Gorbachev that it completely ignored Yeltsin. This fuelled hostility towards India for a time but the fact of the matter is that Russian can not afford to loose a market as big and reliable as India for its arms sales, which totaled, according to SIPRI, latest issue of World Watch, 45.2 billion dollars during 1988–1992 worldwide. Secondly, Russia directly needs consumer goods which India can supply (in fact is supplying) at competitive prices. This kind of trade which is mutually beneficial and complementary has a bright future because it makes sound economic sense. It is absolutely right in saying that "there are all the good economic reasons for the reestablishing of sound trade relations between India and the former Soviet area".
On the nuclear – strategic issue on the NPT and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) Moscow stands firmly with the West. In fact on January 14, 1994, President Yeltsin and President Bill Clinton signed a joint statement in Moscow pledging to take energetic means to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Indo-Russian differences on the nuclear strategic issues, however, were not allowed by the two sides to come in the way of further strengthening of multifarious bilateral tie.

After the end of the Cold War the United States emerged as the sole surviving super power. This was the culmination of America’s position on four dimensions as the sole super power, the only high-tech military power, the most advance economy in the global economy, and disseminator of popular culture throughout the world.5

In the post-Cold War era nations sought to move closer to the United States in the hope that a favorably inclined United States would serve their economic, political and strategic interest much better. This perception gave even a Sharpe edge to the unilateral proclivity of the United States. The threat to American security from the Soviet Union had gone but its successor Russia was still a great continental power with the largest population and the biggest land mass in Europe, with thousands of nuclear weapons, and a permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council with veto power. Although its economy was in poor shape, it had enormous natural resources. Instead of relying on its own inherent strength to lift itself from the morass in which it had fallen, Russia expected that its foreign policy being in cooperative mode with that of the United States, it would be accepted as part of the international establishment. It was too eager to "sup at the high table". But the West
saw it as a supplicant seeking favor. The G–7 countries promised a great deal of aid and delivered only a little. It announced aid package of $24 billion dollars and $28 billion in 1992 and 1993 respectively but delivered only about $16 billion and $8 billion in those years. The US argued that further aid could be provided only if Russia carried out economic reforms so that the aid given could be utilized better. The US exploited the economic vulnerability of Russia to the maximum. The experience of aid since 1991 gave rise not only to great disappointment but an anti-western and especially anti-American emotion in the Russian foreign policy elite. This trend, noted the report submitted to the trilateral commission in 1995. None the less there was no immediate change in the direction of policy either of the United States or Russia.  

**Defining Moment**

The defining moment means here the period from the end of the Cold War that Gorbachev and Bush, Sr. had announced at Malta in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 till date. The world entered in the new era of nuclear bipolarity, economic multipolarity at the base and military unipolarity at the apex. The new architecture of international relations was under the US hegemony and that is best described as the period of new globalization. In this phase the neo-liberal economic and political agenda replaced the welfarist liberal agenda. The growth of new weak, crony, capitalist or plutocratic states replacing the socialist states. Further, unipolarity meant that the UN and the NATO, which were the Cold War constructs, were to expand themselves into world bodies as expressions of complex interdependence.
The Western approach can be gauged from the fact of the future study on Russia. There is a possibility of Russia muddling down or remaining as it is. By some accounts it is not sure direction Russia will take. At stake is future of pluralist State, electoral democracy, fair economic competition in the market, federation on the principle of subsidiary, due process of law and reduction of its great power status.\(^8\) Richard Pipes the Sovietologist and now Russian expert visualizes the following three futuristic scenarios for Russia. One self-imposed isolation that will cause decline. Two Russia playing of European sensibilities and resentment of the US power or a pro western bandwagoning.\(^9\)

The third dimension of a possible future scenario at sea, Russian Navy is a declining one. Chinese is an expanding one. US navy is dominating one. The Indian Ocean littoral favors the US and the Chinese presence. The Chinese are present in Rangoon. They may soon be at Gwador. The situation in Triconamalee is not yet decided with the Sri Lankan situation not yet sure with the LTTE. Remember the time when the Swaran Singh Butto round–of talks began they were made infructous by Pakistan before they could start. The Pakistanis had given to China territory from POK for the construction of Karakoram Road.\(^10\) Let us also remember that under the current friendly relations that the US has with India it may not directly do anything at the diplomatic level at sea. It dominates the sea. There may not be room for India to maneuver at sea without the bonhomie with the Americans. It may however allow China to proceed with Pakistan as it ignored the Chinese help to Pakistan on the nuclear and the missile Issue.
In their own foreign policy framework the Russians also came in for a rude shock. The attempt initially has been to integrate with west Europe. They were admitted to the NATO Council and the European Union, the European Bank or Reconstruction of Russia continuing to give it loans. In the process of liberalize Russian economy Yeltsin had introduced shock therapy that Professor Saichs of Harvard had recommended for it.\textsuperscript{11}

Add to this scenario a possibility of the US developing a new policy option towards China. Its aim could be to isolate India and prevent Russia from emerging as a great power, which is in any case considered by the West as a declining power. This is not a far-fetched stipulation. Let us have a closer look Recently US has expressed its willingness to reorient its strategic policy towards China by advising Israel to stop aid to China since the US is thinking of a new policy option for China. The China factor could be used to balance the Pakistan factor for India and Japanese factor to manage China. There is a China–North Korea Pakistan axes.\textsuperscript{12} that may have a wink from the US if not a direct patronage. To be more accurate there may Chinese USA understand on South Asia that may be against India.\textsuperscript{13} its parallel axis could be of China–US–Japan axis? Currently it is noted that there may be Japanese–Chinese confrontation. But in the future they may collaborate. (Robert satter) In this scenario both Russia and India will be left high and dry. Both want to be great powers. India could be isolated in South Asia and Russia could be isolated in Central Asia and needed both on Kashmir and South Caucasian and Ukraine.
Evolution of Indo–Russian Relations

Immediately after attaining independent statehood, new Russia followed a pronouncedly pro Western and pro–US policy. Moscow hoped to bring about targeted economic transformation from a centrally controlled command economy to a free market economy integrated with the rest of the world and political transformation from a totalitarian state to a liberal democracy essentially with the help of western political and financial support. India and other Eastern countries were given a rather low place in the Russian order of priorities at the time. Unlike the former Soviet Union they need not a "special relationship" with India in its politico–strategic rivalry with both the West and China. Russia did not seem to need India as "strategic ally. It was a period of uncertainty in Indo–Russian relations. In fact, low priority accorded to India in Russian policy was reciprocated by India also. India tried to adjust to the post Soviet world reality. In a reversal of cold war roles, Washington was making up with New Delhi. US arms supply to Pakistan was stopped in 1990 in view of the latter's nuclear programme and ambition on the other hand Moscow appeared to be improving ties with Pakistan. It seemed two different schools of thought existed in Russia at this time regarding the policy towards India. One opinion favored that the traditional "special" relationship with India should be retained. India should be given priority in the country's policy in South Asia, while at the same time developing good relations with other South Asian countries, including Pakistan. The other School favored that the epoch of "special" relations with India should be ended.14
To the dismay and disappointment of New Delhi, Russia in its early diplomatic moves showed greater readiness than before, to tolerate a Mujahideen government in Kabul and abandon India friendly Najibullah government. It seemed that during this period of uncertainty in Indo-Russian relations, Moscow was seeking some compromise and synthesis between the two divergent schools of thought regarding the approach to India mentioned above.

Indo-Russian Relations should be viewed in the context of new global realities. In the post Cold War scenario United States has emerged as a sole super power, working towards establishing the new world order. Russia has been reduced to the middle level power struggling to improve its economy. If one looks at the foreign policy priorities of Russian Federation, one notices a gradual shift in Russian polices. Its priority remains the economic recovery. In the current Russian foreign policy goals one finds that the role of economic diplomacy is continuously increasing and is being reflected in its foreign policy both at global and regional level. While explaining the Russia's foreign policy goals Mr. Igor S. Ivanov stated that "The Central goal of Russian foreign policy was and remain creating the optimal external conditions for continued domestic transformation that strengthens the government, improves the economy and increase the well being of Russian citizens."

Russia had very cordial relations with Iraq during the Cold War era that was upset by the Gulf War. It had again started cultivating closer relations with Iraq. The latter owed Russia nearly eight billion dollars. Besides, much to the annoyance of the United States, it had signed lucrative trade and investment agreements with Iraq worth several billion
dollars. Russia is fully aware of the implications of the war that is knocking at the door of the world. Therefore, it has spoken against the United States attacking Iraq. It has agreed with France, Germany and China that if a war has to be declared against Iraq it must be done by the mechanism of the United Nations. This is as far as it would go. It is not as vocal and assertive as France has been for it still values its relations with the United States and the West Europe.

The emergence of the central Asian republics in the aftermath of the break-up of the Soviet Union was one such recent development, and India, given the strategic and economic importance of this region, has been quick to strengthen its bilateral relation with each of these Republics.  

India and Russia share common interests in a stable Asia and both worry about the possibility of any single power—be it China or the United States—dominating the continent. This fundamental concern is the Source of the stability of the Indo-Russian strategic alliance. Both are also, geopolitically, located in a manner that does not bring them into direct conflict with one another.  

Russia is no longer a super power but there are definite indications that it is slowly re-emerging, as a major power. Russian and Indian equations should be reassessed carefully by both the countries for arriving at mutually compatible policies developing long-term strategic relationship between India and Russia cannot, however, depend solely on arms deals, it has to encompass various political, economic, cultural and security arrangements.
The Perestroika period (1985–1990) witnessed little substantial progress in relations between India and the then Soviet Union which faced a deep economic crisis towards the end of the Perestroika reforms. The Yeltsin–Kozyrev foreign policy was only a toned down version of Gorbachev's "new political thinking". It is worthwhile remembering that Russian Deputy Foreign Minister George Kunadze in the parliamentary hearings before Yeltsin's visit to India in January 1993 had opposed Russia having "special relations" with India which in his opinion might hurt Russia's relations with other South Asian countries, particularly Pakistan. The working paper on Russian Foreign Policy finalized towards the end of 1992, called for a "pragmatic renewal" of ties with India based on "realistic possibilities and legitimate interests of both sides with an emphasis on economic stimuli." 19

Indo–Soviet relations were clearly an Outcome of both India and the Soviet Union's dissatisfaction and Contradictions with the Western military blocs. The rough period in Russian–Indian relations after 1985 clearly arose from the felt need of both to connect more seriously with the West. The re-stabilization of relations between the two after 1996, materialized again when both Russia and India experienced that the West, especially the United States did not live up their expectations and deliver its promises to both these countries. 20

Dynamics of socio-economic change goes a long way in strengthening and consolidating political freedom of a country. It is precisely this change which has made and continues to make India more and more independent. To put it in other words, the socio-economic changes in India which have taken place since independence have made
India genuinely sovereign. This among other things is due to the fact of existence of the Soviet Union and now of Russia, which opened for India other channels of economic and military cooperation. India is an outstanding example of cooperation with all the countries. She can now exercise her independence and sovereignty without any constraints because she can rely on the moral and material support of both East and West. This is a new international phenomenon. Even small countries are now in a position to maintain their sovereignty without any coercion from those countries which till recently were dominating their economy. However, the tragedy of Iraq has put a major break on this trend.\textsuperscript{21}

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the break-up of the Soviet Union in December 1991 dealt a body blow to India's foreign policy framework, necessitating a through review of the assumptions on which this framework was based. Events happened with "bewildering rapidity (to use the words of a former prime minister) for which India had not prepared itself. The shock was the more devastating as it was so unexpected and the collapse was so dramatic. The Soviet Union was succeeded by the Russian Federation and the people in Russia went through a traumatic experience which has yet to end. Slowly and gradually the pieces are being picked and a surer policy is bringing established. It has certainly been a painful experience, the almost precipitous lowering of living standards, the fall in production, the amazing rise in unemployment and the equally amazing levels of corruption, the decline in central authority, the specter of the ugly face of the mafia, the increasing disparities and so on.\textsuperscript{22}
Above all it was a question of a drift in political understanding of the world situation. Facing it was acute economic distress and political slide and the imperatives of reforms, many influential members of the Russian elite holding important positions of authority, particularly in the foreign ministry, looked up to the United States for succour and salvation. They already regarded themselves and their country as part of the Western political and economic system. Relations with India did not figure high in their worldview. Their sights were fixed on the United States. Perhaps there were some influential elements in India too who believed that India should now put all its eggs in the U.S. basket.\textsuperscript{23}

In any case this phase is Russian foreign policy did not last long; we need not dwell on it at any length. Disillusionment set in soon, the hoped-for massive aid turned out to be an illusion, and awareness grew that Russian had to find its own answers and that not all the Russian and American interests converged. The world was a far more complicated place and the geopolitical realities were stubborn factors in international relations. This awareness has been spreading in India too.\textsuperscript{24} This awareness had taken hold in the Russian leadership even before Kosovo and U.S. experimentation of an anti-missile shield along with his awareness the relationship with India began-to show distinct change, not just improvement but a qualitative change. It has taken half a decade for this change to mature but the face of the change is undeniable.\textsuperscript{25}

A country with a territory of about 3.3 million square kilometers and population of 1 billion, India cannot but play a special role in the world arena. Its growing weight as one of the important poles politics
owes much to the progress achieved in economic development. To date, India is on the top 10 list of nations in terms of certain indicators of industrial and agricultural production. With the growth rate exceeding 6 per cent, the GDP amounted approximately to 400 billion US dollars in 1999; it makes India the fifth largest economy after the USA, China, Japan, and Germany.\(^{26}\)

The alignment of forces in the world arena has become much more complex. The geo-political configuration of entire regions of the globe has changed. We witness the disappearance of entire states and emergence of new ones, as well as the emergence of national and regional centers of influence and interests. Strict division between East and West is the characteristic of the 20th century is becoming increasingly blurred.\(^{27}\)

The collapse of the Soviet Russia resulted in emergence of areas of instability from Baltic Sea to the shores of Pacific Ocean and Caucasus to the Pamir. Post Soviet Russia faced acute financial problems and internal unrest. An inward collapsing Russia leaned heavily on the west for financial assistance in return for an unabashed support for the policies of the western world. 1990 onwards Russia gave up the idea of having special relationship with India, attempt was also made at reducing the asymmetry which has existed in its attitude towards India and Pakistan. A disproportionate importance was now given in the working foreign policy papers to US-Russia relationship, with the hope to arrive at a strategic partnership or consensus.\(^{28}\)
With the end of the Cold War both Russia and India but especially the former will be expanding their economic and strategic relations to include many new countries. As such they will have to resituate their own bilateral relations in terms of a more interactive as well as an increasingly interdependent World. Russia, for example, as a part of the G–9 group will have an active relationship with China, USA and the Western European Countries which will be an entirely new feature of twenty first century international relations. Accordingly, India will find her bilateral relationship with Russia to be located within a more competitive framework than was the case in the last years, when the Soviet Union perceiving herself to be isolated and having to compete with, the NATO and the OECD countries saw its India connection as a special one which helped it economically and politically to mobilize support among the newly independent countries of the Non–Aligned Movement.29

The changeover from an ideologically motivated Soviet Communist State to a Republican Russian one will benefit India in several ways. The fear of India being a fifth Columnist of Communist Soviet Union intent on destabilizing market–democracies and supporting authoritarian Third–World governments calling themselves socialist would no longer be cited as a factor preventing the OECD countries from having a fulsome relationship with Russia or India. The phenomenon of a political conflict backed by an Arms race which had dominated the Bipolar World Order since 1945 will no longer overshadow Indo–Russian relations.30 In this period, Indo Russian relations did not have the same substance or positive political intensities which characterized India's relations with the former Soviet Union. As long as Gaider was Prime
Minister and Kozyrev was Foreign Minister in early 90s, India stood marginalized in Russia's foreign policy. Primakov and his successors refocused attention on South Asia, particularly India. Yeltsin’s visit to New Delhi in January 1993 began this process which is continuing on an even keel. This stands as a complete contrast to what a Russian commentator wrote in early 90s. He said that after the end of the Afghan War, the end the Cold War and the break up of the USSR, New Delhi–Moscow ties had lost their basis.\(^\text{31}\)

**Initial Pro–West Orientation**

The initial Russian foreign policy after the fall of the Soviet Union was markedly pro-West. Russia hoped to become a part of, the Western world and bring about the systemic change from the Communist political and economic system to Western-type liberal democracy and market economy with the help of Western political support and large-scale economic and technological assistance. The West was seen as a friend, a partner, and a potential ally and no longer a security threat to Moscow. Moscow hoped to attain all its major foreign and domestic policy objectives with the help of the West. Then Russian Foreign Minister, Andrey Kozyrev, who had the reputation of being pro-West and an Atlanticist, said that the most important task before Russia was political and economic integration into the West.\(^\text{32}\) He claimed that the "developed countries of the West are Russia's natural allies."\(^\text{33}\) In his talk with the then German Foreign Minister Heinnrich Gesccher in January 1992, Andrei Kozyrev called for the establishment of a "single security space from Vancouver to Vladivostok."\(^\text{34}\)
It was, indeed, the continuation of the pro-Western course of Gorbachev's policy towards the last days of Soviet Union with even greater vigor and zeal. Gorbachev was an ardent advocate of a "common European home". The threat of eastward orientation of NATO was still not on the horizon and Moscow at this time had a benign and favorable view of the West. Kozyrev was fond of saying that democracies do not wage wars and he was keen that Russia joined the "civilized democracies" of the West. It was even hoped in Moscow that a partnership between the two nuclear superpowers—the USA and Russia—would provide strategic stability to the post Cold War world. Such a policy would be the exact opposite of their global rivalry and the deterrence of mutual annihilation that prevailed during the Soviet era.

The Russian Ambassador to the USA called for "special kind" of relations between the USA and Russia. Andrei Kozyrev said in February 1992 that the Russian–US interaction could become the "decisive factor in international security today". Lt. Gen. Valerii Manilov proposed a "Grand US–Russian geopolitical partnership".

Russia expected and called for the unfolding of a new "Marshall Aid Plan" by the Western countries in its aid. But as Mike Bowker has pointed out, the West was neither in a position, nor willing, to give so much aid in 1992, the G-7 offered $24 billion to the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries, including $18 billion to Russia. In Tokyo, the following year, the total aid package was raised to $43 billion. But it has been pointed out that the aid was tied to the purchase of Western products; but increasing reliance on Western imports only contributed to the destruction of Russia's own industries and a steep fall in its GDP. It was reported that a large part of US aid was earmarked for the salaries and travel expenses of US consultants.35
Bilateral relations between New Delhi and Moscow suffered a temporary setback during the early years of the post Cold War period which was soon followed by the disintegration. During this phase, which lasted for about three or four years, the new ruling elite in Moscow desired to pursue a "look west" policy even at the cost of ignoring its longstanding ties with countries of the South. One wonders how those elite believed in the so-called promises of their bitter, adversaries. There was no reason why Washington should allow Moscow to play a major role in Eurasia, an area where it had long wanted to expand its sphere of influence.  

**Disenchantment with the West**

No wonder, disenchantment with the West and the Western aid began to set in by the end of 1992 and the beginning of 1993. The failure of the reforms also led to the growth of anti-Western sentiment in the country. It is widely agreed that there existed divergent schools of foreign policy thought in Russia. While in the initial period the Westerners or the Atlanticists led by the Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and his foreign Policy establishment were more assertive. Now the 'Geopoliticians' the 'Eurasists', the 'nationalists' and the advocates of great power status for Russia became more assertive and began to criticize pro-Western policy of Kozyrev as the policy of "smiles", meekly saying "yes" and making one-sided concessions to the West.  

In Jan 1996' Yevgeny Primakov replaced pro west Foreign minister Anderai Kozyrev, Primakov laid a renewed emphasis on a balanced foreign policy towards the west and the east and a shout defence of
Russia’s national interests, call for the formation of a multipolar world, it would be one of the influential poles as a great power subsequently became the leitmotif of Russian policy. In his bid to pursue a balanced policy towards the West and the East, Primakov paid greater attention to enhancing cooperation with India and China.

For the Yeltsin–Kozyrev combine, maintaining Russia’s relations with the former Soviet republics was the first priority. The second priority was to develop relations with the West. And the last priority was to establish or maintain relations with the Third World. According to another view, Russia’s foreign policy had ten priorities wherein the CIS was first and the United States, Europe and South Asia were fourth, fifth, and seventh respectively. The pro-West policy appeared to come up for review by the Kremlin as the Russian leadership began to focus more sharply on the country’s Asian neighbors. The change in Russia’s foreign policy was termed, “from romanticism to pragmatism.”

India and Russia both have made paradigmatic shifts in their foreign policies and worldviews in the 1990’s. Russia, charting its course as a new nation in transition to capitalism, made a systemic and epistemological break with its past. It rejected theories of imperialism, shunned contradictions with the West and shed belief in natural alliance with the Third World. The new and pragmatic foreign policy regime of Russia decided to accept realism as its creed and locate itself as a 'normal' state within the European Union. With similar aspirations both for its people and state.
Simultaneously, India felt trapped in a fast globalizing world. The South bloc was called upon to rethink reality and realism. Now they perceived that their allies amongst the non-aligned were either sinking into a debt trap or were forging ahead as 'local tigers' with their own set of regional alliances. India was moreover, benefit of an ally in the Soviet Union. The old problems of India on her borders remained unsolved.40

Following the systemic change after the fall of the Soviet Union, both Russia and India are pursuing policies of liberalization and seeking integration of their economies with the global economy. Thus, the conceptual–ideological template of their post–Soviet cooperation carries a completely different orientation.

The coming into power of President Putin is widely associated within Russia and abroad with the attempts to consolidate the Russian state. The new foreign policy concept of Russia emphasizes the Eurasian character of Russian state and the reach of its national interests. The need for close cooperation with China and India (in that order) is mentioned in the concept.41

In the light of changing regional and global environment since the end of the Cold War India needs to redefine the basic formulations of its foreign relations. Since the earlier rationale for pursuing the policy of non-alignment, conditioned by the bipolar world order of the Cold War era, is no longer valid in the post–Cold War era with its non-bipolar world order, India needs to stress multilateralism as the new and more appropriate basis for its policy in future. That will enable it to choose the path best suited to pursue its national interest without antagonizing other
great powers. It will also help India to be on the safe side of the American policy of unilaterialism.\textsuperscript{42}

By all standards, India is emerging as a great power and must learn to project itself as one. Since the right to choose ones policy and partners is basic to India's national policy, Indo-Russian relations will remain crucial in the context of India's Policy In the post–Cold War period. It is, therefore, Important that we start looking at relations between New Delhi and Moscow beyond the historical framework of relationship during the Cold War era and search for new rationale to further strengthen these relations which not only are of great benefit to both the Sides in furthering bilateral political, economic and military related ties but will also help stabilize and strengthen overall global world order.\textsuperscript{43}

Policy of multilateralism, commensurate with its Status as a potential great power will be a right step. In that direction strong Indo-Russian relations will contribute effectively in pursuing such a policy.\textsuperscript{44}

India and Russia have been struggling to come to terms with a world that has change fundamentally since the Cold War. Then ties between them were broad, deep and durable. Now India has to deal with a Russia that is erratic, Eurocentric, economically dependent on Western largess, and has neither the interest nor the resources to prop up Third World regimes. Bilateral trade has collapsed to less than one-third of its 1990 level of $5.5 billion. Some previously convergent interests have dissipated and there is potential for a clash of some redefined interests. But on the other hand, some previous differences have now disappeared, some interests that were common have survived the transition to the new era, and fresh complementarities are also emerging.
The quasi-alliance between India and Russia aimed in part to counter common antagonists. Soviet interests in checking U.S alliances and Containing Chinese influence once dovetailed with India's policy of nonalignment. The 1990s completed the triumph of the U.S. political, economic and diplomatic systems. Both Russia and India now attach higher priority to relations with the U.S. than with each other and have greatly improved relations with China. In entering into economic relations with India, the Soviet Union sought to erode Western influence, export socialism and secure an outlet for its own expand in economy.

**Changed Global Milieu**

The Disintegration of the USSR (1999) and the preceding developments in Eastern Europe (1989–91) have significantly transformed the existing world structure. The so-called new world order is neither benign nor one in which conflict is inevitable. This emerging world is full of complexities, uncertainties and asymmetrical power configurations. In which form these will transform the present conditions are very difficult to predict. The geo-strategic considerations have now been replaced by geo-economic thinking: "cooperation–competition" in the economic sphere is likely to be the hallmark of the present times. Global warfare has also been replaced by rising regional and local conflicts, ethnic strives, and trans-border terrorism.\(^4\)

At this juncture, it depends on Russia and India as to how both adapt themselves to the changing international milieu. Their new position and role will determine the intensity of their future relationship. The overall global trends and the implications thereof will ordain the commonality/divergences between the two states.
At present, both Russia and India are in the midst of their economic reforms and Liberalization process. Consequently both are looking for investment from abroad, particularly from the advanced Western capitalist economics. Though the context and situation of reforms and economic scenario between the two countries are not parallel, both are desirous of coming closer to the West. However, the situation of Western aid, investment, and technological transfer to Russia is not optimistic. Hence, it will have to search for an alternative to this in other parts of the world. Besides, Russia, unlike India, is not in need of highly sophisticated technology. In this context, India could be the second best bet for Russia, which could be suitably reciprocated the former's need for space and defence related technologies.\(^{46}\)

In the post–Cold War era, when the importance of the economic factor is Predominant in the relation building among states, it is certain that both Russia and India are likely to follow a common approach in the Asia–Pacific region. Russia feels that its improved understanding of the area would facilitate domestic reforms as well as a significant increase in its influence on general political and economic process in the world and the exposure of its unique Eurasian potential.\(^{47}\)

The United States is presently hamstrung by its own economic debt problems and for this reason Congress is not likely to authorize American military interventions in the Asia–Pacific region however, the Persian Gulf is 'the one region that has the oil wells vitally needed for industry in the Western world.'\(^{48}\)
The Indian foreign policy also came for review because of the end of the cold war and adoption of the policy of economic liberalization by Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao. In June 1991 when he assumed the country's leadership problems were mounting in Indo–Soviet trade relations because of erratic supply of Soviet goods.

India had already been facing acute problems of irregular supply of spare for Soviet weapons. For India the problem was further aggravated as the Gulf War offered three lessons for Indian Defence policy that were inimical to the Delhi–Moscow relationship. The previous history of uninterrupted delivery of Soviet arms during a war is no assurance of continued deliveries in future conflicts, Soviet war fighting doctrines have critical flows, and technological gap between Soviet and US weapons systems is widening to dangerous dimensions for Indian security.

International relations are bound to be affected by the changes that are sweeping the, globe and certain aspects of the foreign policies of many countries are likely to undergo a change. India, one of the major players on the international scene, is bound to be affected by these changes. Although the broad Principle underlying India's foreign policy have remained unchanged since independence, there have been significant shifts of emphasis in its application. Incidentally, the collapse of the Soviet Union prompted rethinking and reorientation on the part of India in its foreign policy orientation vis-à-vis players, including Russia.
Moscow is beginning to realize that unless it formulates a consistent coherent and conceptual policy in Asia and above all towards India, it cannot play a weighty role in world politics. Moscow had moved India up on the scale of its strategic priorities by promising to meet all Indian requests for military hardware.

Experience in the last decade showed that such a global order would lead to domination and to double standards. The painful experience of the last few years also proved that this scheme of things would mean a cardinal change in the founding principles of international law substituting them by the so-called Doctrines of "limited sovereignty" and "humanitarian intervention". The military action of NATO in Yugoslavia demonstrated the application of the doctrine means the return to a Confrontational system in the world.\(^50\)

Russia and many other countries, including India and China, suggested different global model. This model would ultimately lead to the creation of a multipolar world. Russia's foreign minister Igor Ivanov very rightly stated that interdependence and sovereign equality of all the members of the international community would bring together the potentials of all the states and regions in order to meet the present challenge, and create efficient instruments able to combine national and international efforts.\(^51\)

The strategic view of the West is clearly to weaken and isolate Russia. Examples abound. Consider the agreement supported by the West between Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Georgia regarding the construction of the oil pipeline of Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (the Turkish port
on the Mediterranean) bypassing Russia. The project's main purpose is to undermine Russia's position in oil transportation to the West, although it is doubtful whether it will succeed, because there is no certainty that Azerbaijan possesses huge oil deposits.\textsuperscript{52}

Two main trends dominate world politics. The first attempts to create a structure of international relations that is based on the domination of the world by western countries, led by the United States. The experience of the last decade shows that this tends to result in one-sided decisions regarding key concerns of world politics, often by sidelining basic norms of international law. Besides, most of these decisions are often carried out by the use of military force. The second trend favors the strengthening of economic and political positions of a large number of countries, including Russia, India and China. It stands for the creation of a multipolar world, which presupposes a collective management of international affairs.\textsuperscript{53}

After the collapse of the USSR, and result of a decade long crisis, Russia's authority in the world has decreased significantly. Naturally, it had a negative effect on Russian-Indian relations. While, on the one hand they can still be characterized as relations of natural friends and good neighbors, on the other, we are witnessing a much more pragmatic approach of both countries in their bilateral interaction and in their cooperation on the international arena.\textsuperscript{34}

The issue of the international political implications of the American NMD project has already become one of the most critical problems of the global policy. We as well as many states of the world
have every ground to suspect that the creation of a global missile Defence will cause break–up of the Treaty and thus undermine the entire existing system of agreements in the field of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation based on that document.

Paradoxically enough, neo–post Cold War security and strategic structures following the collapse of bipolar Cold War structures have tended to accelerate the process of uncertainty in every region of the world. In fact, profound changes in the dynamics of world politics have once again obliged ruling elites, legislators, intellectuals, NGOs and the influential public opinion making sections to rethink viable policy options and offer efficacious strategies to deal with the increasing swing, rather than shift, to an ever deepening uncertainty and unpredictability of the state system of regional actors and national leaders. Of course, both theoreticians and practitioners of foreign policies and diplomacy are wrestling with new puzzles of the emerging post–Cold War world to adjust their foreign policy requirements to the goal of achieving a peaceful and cooperative order.55

The USA and its allies in West dominate the international system as it obtains today. After the disintegration of the USSR the international power structure has undergone decisive change some say it has become unipolar while to others it appears to be multipolar. The fact remains, however that the contours of the emerging power structure is yet to crystallize and in the meanwhile, the US will dominate the foursome time to come because it combines military, economic and cultural power. The international system appears to be multipolar to some because European Union and Japan have economies comparable to the USA and their
economical interests, at many points intersect with those of the USA. Moreover, China is growing militarily as well as economically Russia, though economically weak, continues to hold nuclear arsenals comparable to the USA. The world is thus "militarily unipolar but technologically and economically multipolar". Many of the scholars of India and Russia share this perception and consider unipolar world as a threat to just, equitable and peaceful world— and in real terms to their own respective national security. The US thus dominates the international system through what has been called "the new institutionalism". The UN has been completely marginalized by the US and its allies. The US puts in inexorable pressure on the developing countries through the UN, the World Bank and the IMF. A variety of US–brokered and US led regimes are affecting the foreign policy autonomy. The integration of the economies of India and Russia to the economy of laissez faire and liberalization that is emerging as the undisputed model at the International sphere has been a rather reluctant affair.56

But the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the cardinal change of the international environment, serious internal and external changes in India itself, which is turning from a big regional country into one of the superpowers of the world, demanded introducing serious changes in the relations between Russia and India. It was necessary to address the challenges of the twenty-first century. It is noteworthy that a good answer to the challenges was found by both countries.57

It seemed important to resolve several knotted issues and put relation with New Delhi back on the rails. The former Soviet Union was India's second largest trade partner. It was becoming increasingly clear
that the West would not shoulder the burden of the economic transformation of Russia. Criticism was growing amidst Russia's strategic community against the totally submissive pro-Western and particularly pro-US policy of Kozyrev and his team. The need to pursue a more balanced approach towards the countries of the West and the East was increasingly realised. 58

Kremlin leaders could no longer ignore the basic geo-political fact that because of its size, central location, level of economic and technological development, stability and maturity of its democratic system, India was by far the more important partner in South Asia in comparison with Pakistan. India and Russia shared many common interests. At the very minimum, their basic geo-political interests did not clash. On the other hand, Pakistan's inability to keep religion and politics apart and its support to Islamic extremist elements in the civil wars in Afghanistan and Tajikistan as well as other parts of the former Soviet space, tended to put Moscow off. 59

There is no doubt that the disintegration of the Soviet Union has caused a diminution of Moscow's weight and clout in world politics. India has found it necessary to come to its own in the Defence and promotion of its national interests without relying on any single great power. In fact, India has strongly claimed that it should be recognized as the great power and given the permanent membership of the UN Security Council. It is clear that with the weakening of the economic, political and military power of Moscow, there has taken place a certain shift in the geo-political balance of power towards the East, and West. Other power centers have gained at the expense of Moscow. 60 The initial policy of
total orientation towards the West and "meek submission" to the latter on all issues has been given up. It is being stressed that Russia would be guided by its own national interests and follow a balanced policy towards the West and the East.\textsuperscript{61} Both India and Russia occupy a position of predominance in their respective regions—Russia in the former Soviet space, and India in South Asia. Both recognise each other's important position in their respective regions. The striving for a multipolar world in contrast to the unipolar world dominated by the sole surviving superpower has become Moscow's new leit motiv).\textsuperscript{62}

Close Soviet–Indian ties had developed gradually, in response to shared socialist sympathies (however diluted on the Indian side) and a shared anti–Westism (which in India was a direct offshoot of anticolonial tradition). Above all, however, were geopolitical realities in which India, by its vigorous pursuit of a nonaligned foreign policy, and the USSR, through its aggressive efforts to supplant Western (usually American) influence in various regions of the world, were faced with a triangular association of strategic convenience Pakistan, China, and the United States. Today the emerging, but as yet shaky, links between Russia and America raise many questions with regard to the nature of the U.S. and Russian roles and, specifically, of changing Russian and American interests in the Indian subcontinent.

With the disappearance of the sure compass of the East–West axis, political alignments of the past have come unhinged. In South Asia, the United States and China have emerged as primary beneficiaries of this process of post–Cold War realignment. The United States, as the sole superpower, is in a position to exercise leverage in the Indo–Russian
relationship, especially because current domestic economic priorities and policies in both India and Russia require for their success a favorable relationship with the United States. Correspondingly for China, the Soviet eclipse has improved prospects for projecting power in the South Asian region and the Indian Ocean, which is bound to complicate the attainment of a nuclear-free South Asia.

The first of these was the pro-Western stance adopted by the Russian leadership, marginalizing India as a Counterweight to American and Chinese influence and requiring Russian policy makers to give greater weight to U.S. concerns and priorities in the area. However, Russia's pro-Western strategy to falter, perhaps through disillusionment with the West (particularly the United States), failure of domestic reform, or the predominance of a conservative chief executive, the search for a kindred spirit in a "neocolonial" North–South contest might well lead Russia to look toward India (and perhaps China).

When Russia abandoned the Soviet Union's global ambitions, India lost its earlier leverage as a "balancer" in the U.S.–China–USSR triangle. The disappearance of the Soviet threat in Afghanistan likewise reduced Pakistan's importance to the United States. During the last years of the Bush administration, American concern over Pakistan's attempts to build a nuclear bomb led to the termination of U.S. military supplies to that country, which had been for a long time the favored channel for American arms sent to stem the Soviet tide in South Asia. The loosening of Pakistani–American ties paved the way for a brief improvement in the Indo–American relationship; but having resisted Soviet attempts to establish hegemony, the United States is not interested in promoting India's go of regional leadership.
These global shifts have broken many long-standing patterns. Hence we see duplicated in the larger South Asia environment the same ad hoc quality that now marks the Indo-Russian relationship. Thus, on the issue of human rights we may see the United States pitted against China, India, and even Russia. On nuclear proliferation, Russia and the United States may take positions opposed to those of India. And with respect domestic economic needs India, Pakistan, and Russia may each sometimes woo U.S. investment and assistance but at other times inhibit or repulse American involvement when it appears adversely to affect sovereignty or national self-conceptions. In other words, we are likely to see in post-Cold War South Asia the internationalization of single-issue politics, both in the relationship worked out by New Delhi and Moscow and in the complex of bilateral ties among all the countries whose interests intersect with those of India and Russia.

The dramatic changes in the global set-up during the last decade of the 20th century have undoubtedly transformed the scale of imperatives influencing the evolution of our bilateral ties in the 21st century. Ideological motives have receded into the background. New generations of Russians and Indians are in a way different from their parents or grandparents. But, one thing remains unchanged they carry forward into the 21st century the baton of our amity and togetherness in a new environment.

The current system of international relations is in a state of flux and transition. The process of formation of a new world order replacing the international architecture of the cold war has turned out to be more protracted and complicated than we could imagine way back in early
1990s. There are attempts aimed at the creation of a unipolar world based on diktat of one country or a group of military or economic powers. There are instances of unilateral coercive steps violating the UN Charter and the international law.

The issue of the internal political implications of the American NMD project has already become one of the most critical problems of the global policy. We as well as many states of the world have every ground to suspect that the creation of a global missile Defence will cause break-up of the Treaty and thus undermine the entire existing system of agreements in the field of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation based on that document.

With the demise of the Soviet Union, India and Russia became competitors in capital markets, but the double mismatch of a parliamentary democracy–communist regime and a mixed economy was removed. There is accumulated goodwill and a reservoir of mutual affection on both sides from the days when India was the centerpiece of Moscow’s Asian policy.

Modernized, dynamic and vibrant Indian economy could prove useful to a Russia interest in throwing off its own economic shackles. Similarly, success for Russia in forging closer links with Western economies would ameliorate the growing gap between the needs and stages of the Indian and Russian economies. Moscow and Delhi are also united in opposition to fundamentalist and ethnic movement.
FOOTNOTES


13. Rajinder Puri, Quoted in ibid.


17. Ibid page 80

18. Ibid page 85

19. Ibid page 92


23. See for instance Fred Well’s dispatch from Moscow in the Hindustan Times, 10 Feb 1997.

25. Ibid page 27.

26. Ibid page 44.


40. Ibid Page No. 177.

41. Ibid Page No– 252.

42. Ibid page No. 7.

43. Ibid page No. 7–8.

44. Ibid page No. 8.


48. Ibid Page No. 1243.


50. Ibid page No. 43–44.

51. Ibid page No. 43–44.

52. Ibid page No. 46–47.

53. Ibid Page No. 53.

54. Ibid page No., 55.

55. Ibid page No. 73.