CHAPTER-VI

INDIRA GANDHI’S FOREIGN POLICY
In this Chapter, a modest attempt is made to examine some important dimensions of India’s foreign policy during the Prime Ministership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. As the focus of this study is not exclusively foreign policy, the researcher has limitations to discuss all the issues of foreign policy at length. Hence, some important issues, during the reign of Mrs. Indira Gandhi which affected India’s national policy and security, against the backdrop of the changing national and international scenario are chosen. As the foreign policy is influenced and conditioned by many developments, the study begins with the background which traces the emergence of India’s foreign policy and essential elements of foreign policy focus during the Mrs. Gandhi Period.

The most immediate threat to any country arises in its neighborhood, and therefore, the maintenance of peace, stability and friendship with the countries in its neighborhood is a major concern of foreign policy. A certain blend of continuity and change is noticeable in the foreign policy of most countries depending upon the exigencies of situation. After India became independent, there was three decades of uninterrupted Congress rule and most part of the period was ruled by Mrs. Gandhi and her father, Jawaharlal Nehru and as a result, India’s political and economic compulsions radically altered certain stances that India adopted during the freedom struggle and after India became independent. The foreign policy of India must necessarily be based on the principles that have guided the congress in the past years. Those principles are promotion of world peace, the freedom of all nations, racial equality and the ending of imperialism and colonialism, friendly and co-operative relations with all nations, and to avoid entanglement in military or similar alliances, which tend to divide the world into rival groups as this endangers world peace.¹

The major problem which India faced immediately after independence was more of internal nature rather than external, although was also embroiled in controversies with Pakistan. The rivalries in the sub-continent were in fact the reason for this. The first few years had to be devoted to the formidable task of internal political and economic stability, particularly, the integration of princely states and the rehabilitation of millions of refugees who poured into India from Pakistan. Besieged with a series of domestic problems, the Indian government devoted very little attention towards foreign issues. It did not, at this stage, consider foreign policy as of prime importance and was convinced, as Nehru told the Constituent assembly on 4th
December, 1947, "Ultimately foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy, her foreign policy will be rather vague “inchoate” and will be groping. It is well for us to say that we stand for peace and freedom, and yet that does not convey much to anybody except a pious hope."  

Nehru wanted to stabilize internal affairs before he could probably take up external affairs in a big and effective way. Nehru thought India was not strong enough in 1948 to produce any effect on international relations. The main foreign policy problem about which New Delhi was concerned with in the early years was the wide range of disputes with Pakistan. Similarly, India also wanted to have world peace and conducive international environment which facilitated the economic growth of India. The Main objectives of India’s foreign policy are as follows:

1. **Non-Alignment:** Non-Alignment means that India was not prepared to join either the Capitalist block headed by America or the Communist Block headed by Soviet Russia. It was determined to keep herself aloof from the politics of cold war. This has been the most controversial issue as far as the foreign policy of India is concerned. India’s contention is that it can serve the cause of world peace only if she retains the independence of judgment. The foreign policy of India is not a passive or negative policy. It is a positive policy of helping those forces which India considers to be right and disapproving of those which it considers to be wrong. The main aim of India in embracing Non-Alignment is to realize the objective of peace, freedom and friendliness, with like-minded nations and economic development of itself and other underdeveloped nations. The policy of non-alignment was designed to secure the various aims of India foreign policy: maintenance of internal peace, abstention from conflicts of power politics, non-intervention and maintenance of India’s freedom of political manoeuvre, which in a way involves its independence and Sovereignty. Undoubtedly, this policy has affected the nature of most of the international issues.

2. **World Peace:** A lot of importance was given to the maintenance of world peace. Mrs. Vijayalkshmi Pandit, India’s representative at United Nations for instance, pointed out, “our need for peace is imperative. It is not merely desirable or preferable, but is a vital necessity and a daily prayer—we need peace not in order to become more powerful or more prosperous, but in order to exist. We need peace in order to eat, to be clothed, and made literate.” If, as Nehru believed, there was a conflict anywhere “it is apt to spread all over the world because war has become divisible, therefore Peace is indivisible.” India stands for maintenance of peace in the
world through United Nations. It has taken very active part in the work of United Nations. India has cooperated with the United Nations to solve many international problems.

3. **Peaceful Co-existence**: Peaceful co-existence is one of the basic principles of the philosophy of Panchsheel. The five principles of Panchsheel are: 1. Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, 2. Non-Aggression, 3. Non-interference in each other’s internal affairs, 4. equality and mutual benefit and 5. Peaceful Co-existence.

   Maintenance of peaceful and cordial relations among the nations of the world has also been the fundamental objective of the United Nations Charter. Peace has always been a part of cultural ethos of India. It has all along its history maintained cordial and cultural contacts with her neighbors and has never been guilty of harboring evil designs against them. Nehru always had profound concern for world peace because in peace alone he could see a chance for the developing countries including India to achieve economic and political emancipation and to join the ranks of developed nations. According to him, if we reject co-existence, “then the alternative is war and mutual destruction”.

   It was Nehru who laid the foundation of peaceful co-existence and saw its implementation in the policy of non-alignment.

4. **Promotions of self-determination**: The promotion of self-determination and freedom for people of non-governing territories is another objective associated with India’s foreign policy. India has consistently supported any country which fought for its freedom. Zambia, Kenya Laos, Malaysia are some of the examples.

5. **Liquidations of Imperialism and Racialism**: India had suffered a lot under British Imperialism. It was economically exploited; politically subjugated and culturally degraded therefore she had become deeply antipathetic towards all forms of imperialism. Imperialism in the extreme form has of course become almost non-existent. However, neo colonialism in the form of exploitation of the newly independent countries is indulged by the former colonial powers. It has been the basic principle of Indian foreign policy to oppose exploitation in any form.

6. **India and the Commonwealth of Nations**: One of the most controversial issues in Indian foreign policy is its membership in the Commonwealth of Nations after achieving her independence, notwithstanding the fact that she has followed the policy of Non-Alignment. First, the west and the Communist countries thought that India had pro-western inclinations.
India’s membership of the Commonwealth does not hinder her policy of Non-Alignment. India’s conflict with Union of South Africa on the issue of racial discrimination, in the United Nations and India’s unsatisfactory relations with Pakistan since 1947 on the issue of Kashmir policy and also the water dispute, are some of the instances of her independent policy. Both, the Union of the South Africa and Pakistan are Common Wealth countries. The influence of Asian countries on the Common Wealth is increasing and India’s advocacy of peaceful coexistence and Non-Alignment with power blocks to maintain peace and security in the world was gaining enough appreciation

7. Support for the United Nations: India was one of the few original signatories at the time of the formations of the world body, the United Nations although she was not an independent country at that time. After achieving independence, India lent her full support to the ideals and objectives of the charter of the United Nations, as a member of the United Nations. India supported the move of the United Nations even if it was directed towards any one of the member nations. India has been supporting, since 1950, the case of Communist China for the representation of that country in United Nations because she believed that the United Nations should not be made an exclusive club of likeminded nations but should reflect the world as it is. India has been supporting the issue of “Veto Power” in spite of the fact that it has been criticized bitterly by so many countries and also by the Indian press itself. India proclaims its intentions and aspirations on disarmament are complete and not partial. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved by the United Nations on December 10, 1948, was also voted for by India. India filed a complaint against the racial discriminations in the Union of South Africa in 1946. In the United Nations General Assembly: “If racial inequality is practiced, it is a menace to world peace and if it violates the principles of the United Nations Character, to tolerate it is obviously to sow the seeds of conflict.

8. Sympathy for Divided Countries: India’s sympathy for divided countries, like India, is due to the fact that on account of the partition, these countries suffer a great deal. Most of the problems between India and Pakistan are the creation of the partition of India. This is the reason why the Government of India opposed the partitioning of Palestine and suggested the establishment of a federation of the Arabs and Jews. That is the reason why India opposed the division of Korea and division of Indo-China.
On the basis of the above objectives, India’s policy has been shaped by Nehru’s successors. When Mrs. Gandhi became Prime minister in January 1966, she got over-whelming support from the congress parliamentary party. Her elections as prime minister was widely accepted and acknowledged both within the congress party and outside. The domain of foreign policy has always been the prerogative of Prime Minister and Mrs. Gandhi used that to hilt. She being daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru had acquired unique familiarity about the world of foreign policy and Indian Diplomacy. She drew inspirations and directions in foreign policy matters from her father she always placed herself in a situation of dominance on foreign policy matters. She once told the opposition leaders:”Once I make up my mind to do anything, I see that it is done, whatever the impediments." Mrs. Gandhi rejected attempts to assert a balance between India and Pakistan much before Bangladesh emerged. She appeared to aspire for a significant role for India in world affairs. She said,” because of our size and geographical position and resources, materials and men, we cannot but play a fairy large part in international affairs and the role will always be on behalf of peace. People recognize us as a power, even as a potential power." Mrs. Gandhi inherited the idealistic world view of her father, Jawaharlal Nehru. Foreign minister, Chagla was always appreciative of her decisional capabilities. She always read exclusively and articulated her own ideas in international relations. Throughout her Prime Minstership, Mrs.Gandhi indicated her desire to formulate a vision of the world and to direct India’s foreign policy. She always turned to intellectuals to supply her with a coherent world view.

Mrs. Gandhi desired India to be self reliant and also desired to strengthen its independence so that it could not be pressurized by anybody. In the subcontinent, Mrs. Gandhi’s aim was not power but peace. The non-aligned policy of Mrs. Gandhi has played a meaningful role in the management of world affairs. Her pursuit to diplomacy, her leadership and her resistance to the super power game have made her the champion of the cause of international peace and security.

India’s foreign policy during the first decade under Mrs.Indira Gandhi’s stewardship had to weather many crises. Some of the crises and threats that came from outside were potentially so dangerous that they could have delivered fatal blow to the very existence of India as an independent state. Mrs. Gandhi faced them with a skill which some of the more mature leaders in
the world could have envied. In foreign relations, the ship of the state was steered through stormy waters by the Prime Minister through a combination of firmness, flexibility and realism. The first decade of Mrs. Gandhi rule concentrated on the development of close cordial and healthy relations with a large number of countries in the world, expectedly Afro-Asian, the Non-Alignment nations and socialist world. During this period, new bridges were laid to Latin American nations and new links were forged.

The foreign policy paradigms adopted and establish by Jawaharlal Nehru has been accepted by large majority countries of world and this has led to the continuation of India’s foreign policy and the last decade of Mrs. Gandhi’s leadership has seen further development and maturity of these principles.

India took an active part in the Non-Alignment movement during Mrs. Gandhi period. Mrs. Gandhi attended both the Lusaka summit, 1970 and the summit conference of the Non-Aligned countries at Algiers in 1973. India led the struggle against foreign bases in the Indian Ocean and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said at Lusaka: “We would like the India Ocean to be an area of peace and cooperation. Military bases of outside powers would create tension and great power rivalry.” The Lusaka conference called on all states to regard the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

India has always worked for détente among the countries of the world and has persistently contributed to the easing of tensions and promotions of world peace. She said that détente cannot be limited to few countries, nor can be used to put new pressures on the developing countries of world. During the first decade of India Gandhi’s rule, India consistently upheld the principles of justice in West Asia, at the United Nations. India’s influence was exercised against aggression, against forcible seizure of the territory of Arab countries by Israel and for the restoration of the rights of the people of Palestine. This decade also saw the development of relations between India and a large number of west Asian countries in the political and economic fields. Mrs. Gandhi paid a four day visit to Iraq in January 1975.

Another significant development has been the breakthrough in the relations with Iran. The important event that took place then was the Shah of Iran’s visit to India January 1969 and Mrs. Gandhi’s visit to Iran in May 1974. Her visit to Iran was the first by an Indian Prime minister in 15 years. Both, during the pre independence period and in the early years of independence, India’s relations with newly independent countries, especially the countries of
South East Asia were very close and cordial. In 1971, India-Pakistan relations were on collision course over the Bangladesh Issue. Pakistan alleged that India was providing shelter to the rebels of East Pakistan who want to secede from Pakistan and wanted to establish their own country. Mrs. Gandhi faced Bangladesh crises with lot of courage and determination. She succeeded in securing Soviet support by concluding a 20 point Treaty of Peace, Friendship, cooperation on the 9-August 1971, and led the country to victory four months later. The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation has been described as a second liberation for India.  

Janata Party came into power in March 1977. It was also in favor of improving relations with Pakistan. The Janata party wanted to revive close relationship with India and the Soviet Union. They wanted improvement of India’s relations with the United States. Mr. Desai offered India’s assistance to Pakistan in the field of nuclear technology.

The Chinese leadership saw in the changed Indian leadership, an opportunity to reduce the Soviet influence in India. On 11 March 1978, the border issue was discussed between Mr. Morarji Desai and Wang –Pin-Nau leader of the Chinese delegation. The Chinese delegates pointed to the Indian leaders that the borders issue should be settled peacefully.

**Indo-Pak Relations:** India’s relations with Pakistan have involved the most complex internal and external problems which many a state in history had to face. The history begins with the partition of British India on 15th August, into two Independent states, India and Pakistan. It should have been expected these would be normal and friendly relations between India and Pakistan because the partition itself was effected with the consent of the leaders of the two areas. The people of the two states had shared a common history for centuries. Economically, the states were complementary to each other, and politically there was much to gain by living as friendly neighbors but that was not to be. As a foreign observer has put it, “India and Pakistan have been in a state of undeclared war, with varying degree of intensity, throughout their brief history as independent state”,

The unfriendliness has been primarily due to two causes: the haste with which partition was effected and the differing interpretations of the two states regarding the basis of partition. Partition admittedly necessary, was effected in haste, and adequate precautions were not taken to provide for the solution of socio-economic problems, which were certain to arise when millions could be expected to be on the move. Hence the mass killings, the problem of the recovery of evacuee property, forced conversion, the abduction of women and the like. These problems have
now been more or less solved; their solution involved several meetings of representatives at the ministerial and the secretarial levels, and more then once the meeting of Prime Ministers.

The partition of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan gave rise to a number of disputes—political, economic and technical—but all surcharged with intense emotion, each of them characterized out its own independent course of action in the internal field. In a message to the people on 15th August, 1947, Prime Minister Nehru said, “I want to say all nations of the world, including our neighbor country, that we stand for peace and friendship with them”. In the course of a broadcast, the Governor General of Pakistan, M.A. Jinnah said, “We want to live peacefully and maintain cordial, friendly relations with our immediate neighbours and with the world at large”. In spite of these declarations, the history of India–Pakistan relations became “one of discord—some times latent, some times manifest, but discord all the same”. Though many problems like evacuee property problem, river water dispute etc. were there, Kashmir problem was the most riveting problem which has been eluding solutions since the partition.

The Kashmir issue was the resultant of the partition of 1947 and has been lingering on for mutually acceptable solutions to both parties since 1947. The struggle for Kashmir constitutes a major factor in India–Pakistan relations. According to Michael Brecher, Kashmir symbolizes the root of the conflict between India and Pakistan. Hence, lies the last battle field over the ideological cleavage which rent the sub-continent asunder in 1947. Here is the final test of the validity of the two nations theory, the basis of Pakistan and its continuing raison d’être.

Kashmir was the result of the annexation of former native states in India and Pakistan. The dispute mainly centered around three native states they were Jammu and Kashmir, Junagarh and princely state of Hyderabad. Hyderabad, the princely state which was ruled by Nizam, a Muslim ruler had subjects who were predominantly Hindu when the ruler refused to annex his state into India, Sardar Vallabai Patel, the then Home Minister ordered police action and as a result, it became part and parcel of Indian state. Jammu and Kashmir on the other hand was ruled by a Hindu King, Raja Hari Singh. His subjects were predominantly Muslim. Pakistan’s contention was that Jammu and Kashmir being predominantly Muslim must be given to Pakistan and in fact after independence, tribal forces from Pakistan along with regular army tried to make in roads into Kashmir and they occupied 1/3 of Kashmir. Raja Hari Singh panicked and signed
the Instrument of Accession and Jammu and Kashmir became integral part of India. And Jammu and Kashmir since then has become a bone of contention between India and Pakistan both the countries have since then fought three wars.

The dispute of Kashmir was brought before the United Nations on 31\(^{st}\) December 1947 where it still lies unsettled. Pakistan, however, refused to recognize the accession and continued to assist the Azad Kashmir government –the government of that part of Kashmir forcibly occupied by the Muslim tribesmen. In a speech broadcast on 4\(^{th}\) November, 1947, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan stated that the accession of Kashmir to India is a perpetrated on the people of Kashmir. It is a fraud perpetrated on the people of Kashmir by its cowardly ruler with the aggressive help of the Government of India.\(^{22}\)

On 31\(^{st}\) December 1947, when discussion between the two nations produced no solution, India approached the United Nations for redressal of its grievence and the matter was laid before the Security Council under Act 35 of U.N. Charter and charged Pakistan with an act of aggression against India. The Security Council, after consideration, adopted a resolution on 21\(^{st}\) April, 1948, advising that both India troops and the tribesmen should be withdrawn, that an interim government should be established representing “the major political groups“ and that a five man United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan (UNCIP) should go to Kashmir to exercise its good offices, in helping the two nations restore peace and arrange a fair plebiscite. The resolution pleased neither India nor Pakistan. With the official acceptance by India and Pakistan of the commission’s proposals of 11\(^{th}\) December, 1948, a cease-fire agreement was signed. It was to take effect from 1\(^{st}\) January, 1949, with this, the first stage of direct United Nations mediation in the Kashmir dispute came to an end.

Subsequently, certain important developments took place inside Kashmir. The Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir ratified the state’s accession to India on 6\(^{th}\) February, 1954. A constitution was adopted on 19\(^{th}\) November, 1956, by which the state was made an integral part of India. On 26\(^{th}\) January, 1957, India formalized the accession of the state and made it “irrevocable”. These developments naturally irritated Pakistan. The agreement of United States to give military aid to Pakistan had been announced (25\(^{th}\) February, 1954) and India took the view that this put the whole question of relation between India and Pakistan, including the question of Kashmir on a different footing. Pakistan, frequently raised the question of plebiscite. On 27\(^{th}\) April, 1962, the Kashmir issue was again brought before the Security
Council by Pakistan. But India affirmed that Kashmir’s accession was full, complete and final. The motion in the Security Council requesting India and Pakistan to resume negotiations was vetoed by Soviet Russia. The outstanding disputes between India and Pakistan should be settled by peaceful means and not by war. In view of the Pakistan government, the Kashmir dispute has an absolute priority over other disputes. Without a just and peaceful solution of the Kashmir question it is impossible to create that conducive ambience of good will which is essential for the solution of disputes.

When the Government of Pakistan was made to realise that it would not be able to lay its hands on Kashmir with the help of the United Nations, it decided to take the help of coercive methods and formally aligned itself with the U.S. and its allies. This act of Pakistan had affected the foreign policies of both the countries. A basic postulate of Pakistan’s foreign policy, since the beginning has been to defend itself against the perceived threat to its security from India. To shield itself, Pakistan, first tried to achieve parity with India in military strength by joining the U.S. sponsored military alliance, the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and later by seeking close friendship with China. The intrusion of the U.S. into the affairs of the Indian subcontinent by signing military pacts with Pakistan had marred the prospects of an Indo-Pakistan détente and led Pakistan to drift away from her northern neighbour. At that time, the main aim of the U.S. foreign policy in the South Asian region was to have some bases in the hope of restraining the growing influence of the Soviet Union and China. Pakistan joined the military pact because the Kashmir issue had not been solved and its leaders calculated that with a weak military position, it would not be able to solve the issue. At that time, Pakistan was prepared to do anything to qualify for the supply of arms from any source to be used against India.

Growing friendship between India and the Soviet Union: The anti-Indian attitude of the Government of Pakistan its activities to strengthen itself militarily, complicating the Kashmir issue by involving the western power in it, were considered to be the main reasons which in the fifties, strengthened the relations between India and Soviet Union.

The Indo-Soviet relations were further strengthened when in 1955, the Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru visited the USSR. The Indo-Soviet friendship started growing rapidly when the Sino-Indian border difference emerged on the surface and the gap between them widened. Similarly, the Indo-US relations also started improving. But after the death of
Nehru, the Soviets, it seemed, desired to improve their relations with Pakistan also. In the mid-sixties, the Soviet Union offered economic aid to Pakistan which the latter accepted. The Soviet attitude again changed practically, when the civil war in East Pakistan started in the year 1971. To strengthen India’s hands, Soviet Union signed with India on 9th August, 1971, a treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation. When Pakistan went to war with India in December 1971, the Soviet Union condemned the Government of Pakistan and supported India in and outside the United Nations.

In the beginning, India was not willing for Indo-Soviet treaty. But circumstances forced India to have a treaty with the Soviet Union in 1971. The circumstances were I. Pindi-Peking -Washington axis was formed by 1971, mainly against the USSR to curb its influence in South Asia and secondarily against India. The refugees from East Pakistan flooded India. So, the responsibility fell on India to protect East Pakistan against the West Pakistan. At this juncture, China and USA came to support Pakistan and at his situation India was forced to have a treaty with the Soviet Union. Had India not concluded a treaty with USSR, its prestige would have been at stake. The Indo-Soviet friendship had drastically affected the relations between India and Pakistan because this pact has usually boosted the Pakistan leadership feelings to lean towards the Western countries, China and Muslim world.

**Indo-Pakistan war of 1971:** The 1971 Indo-Pakistan war was fought not to settle any bilateral problem between the two countries but to solve the persisting problem of East Pakistan. It gave a new dimension to Indo-Pakistan relations. The consequences of the war helped in relieving tension from the Indian sub-continent because it completely changed the power structure in the region. It shattered Pakistan economically and military and the elite of Pakistan started thinking on new lines i.e., friendship with India not the parity.

A full-fledged war between India and Pakistan started on 3rd December, 1971, when the Pakistan air force and ground troops launched a massive attack on the western front stretching from Jammu and Kashmir to Rajasthan. With the help of Mukti Bahini, Indian armed forces succeeded in compelling the Pakistan armed forces to surrender on 16th December 1971, and the next day, India announced a unilateral cease-fire on the western front in the hope that three would be corresponding immediate response from Pakistan. The main factor that prompted India to offer unilateral cease-fire was the fulfilment of her mission i.e., liberation of Bangladesh.
Re-Emergence of Mrs. Indira Gandhi: In year 1981, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was again elected as the Prime Minister of India. The foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao and Mr. Agha Shahi respectively had a round of talks during which they expressed that the use of force or the threat of the use of force between the two nations should be ruled out. They further reaffirmed their faith in the Simla agreement. In December, 1981, Mrs. Gandhi also expressed India’s desire to live in peace and tranquility. India has a genuine desire to improve relations with its neighbors. However, Pakistan after the Soviet action in Afghanistan, received substantial economic and military aid from the United States of America. This aid is in the form of sophisticated armaments which pose a serious threat to the security of India.

Pakistani president Zia-Ul-haq has been making proposals off and on with varying degrees of seriousness. On 3rd April, 1984, Indian forces reported that Pakistan had recently linked towns in occupied Kashmir with the Karakoram highway and it was contemplating an attack on India. He was trying his best to create more favorable pro-Pakistan climate in the United States of America.

The proposal for mutual reduction of forces was mooted by the president of Pakistan during the visit of the special emissary of Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to Islamabad in April, 1980. During the visit, Mr. Zia articulated the need for credible forces for Pakistan and India. Mr. Zia further suggested that this matter of mutual reduction of forces would be delegated to the military commanders. India needs a certain force committed to its northern borders against a much bigger powerful and not so friendly a neighbour.

The sudden and casual offer of a “no-war-pact” by Pakistan was initially made as a footnote to a statement accepting United States huge economic and military aid package on 15th September, 1981. India was informed formally of this proposal on 12th November, 1981. Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi responded on 24th November, 1981 by saying that India was willing to talk about no-war-pact if Pakistan was serious about it. India desired that the two countries should settle all mutual problems bilaterally without involving third parties. Pakistan’s military government has had success in the West with its propaganda that India wants to dismember Pakistan. Domestic critics of Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi unwillingly lent support to Pakistan’s allegation, though and its territorial integrity are conducive to India’s security. Discussions on the Pakistan offer of a no-war-pact and the India proposal for a treaty of friendship were held between the foreign secretaries of India and Pakistan from May 20th to 23rd, 1984 in Islamabad.
At the end their talks, the President of Pakistan acknowledged Indian sincerity and political will towards establishing lasting peace and friendship between India and Pakistan. It is to be hoped that Pakistan leadership would in turn be able to rise to the occasion and respond with equal degree of sincerity.

**Evaluation:** The Indo-Pakistan relations were not cordial from the very start because they are based on mutual suspicion, fear and feeling of insecurity. Three times both were involved in major clashes at the cost of sacrificing thousands of people and millions of rupees which could otherwise have been used for the benefit of the people of both the countries.

Indo-Pakistan relations occupy a central place in India’s foreign policy. India’s relations with many other countries were largely influenced by the nature of its relations with Pakistan. The partition of India in 1947 has played a supreme role in Indo-Pakistan’s relations. The Kashmir issue has bedeviled the relations between India and Pakistan. If the problems of Kashmir are solved to the satisfaction of both Pakistan and India, there will not be much to quarrel between the two countries.

During the period between Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 and the emergence of Bangladesh, Pakistan launched a propaganda campaign against India. Pakistan’s interference in the international affairs of India, border intrusion by the Pakistani troops, spoiled all hopes of good neighborly relations. After the emergence of Bangladesh, Mrs. Gandhi reminded Pakistan that their disputes should be resolved bilaterally and their interests in the long run lay in developing friendly relations. India has emerged as a major power in the sub-continent after the Bangladesh war. The Simla agreement marked a beginning of a new phase in Indo-Pakistan relations. A change of foreign policy can be seen after 1972 in the relations of the two countries. Mrs. Indira Gandhi had herself made excellent use of changes in the arena of world politics to act with extraordinary boldness during the Bangladesh uprising of 1971. Mrs. Indira Gandhi resented American attempts to assert a balance between India and Pakistan much before Bangladesh emerged. She aspired for a significant role for India in world affairs. Throughout her Prime Ministership, Mrs. Gandhi indicated her desire to formulate a vision of the world and to direct India’s foreign policy. In the subcontinent, Mrs. Gandhi’s aim was not the pursuit of power but peace. She desired sub-continental harmony. She was interested in reducing the opportunities for great power interference in the area. The Simla Summit was a good example for this thrust in
Mrs. Gandhi’s foreign policy. A change of foreign policy can be seen after 1972 in the relations of the two countries.

The Janata Government decided to concentrate on improving relations with the immediate neighbors. Pakistan was in the throes of a political crisis when Janata Party took over in India and it took some time to restart the process set in motion by the previous governments of the two countries. There was not any abrupt change in Indian foreign policy since some of the fundamentals of that policy Non-Alignment, close friendship with Soviet Union, anti colonialism, and anti-imperialism were nationally pragmatic and the basic principles on which the India foreign policy had been based. The shifts in India’s foreign policy under Janata rule are neither new nor great. They are adjustments.

The two countries India and Pakistan have a common history, common traditions, common culture and common institutions. In spite of that the existing relations between the two countries are not cordial. Instead of trying to be suspicious about each others it is desirable that the leaders of the countries should sit together in a sprit of compromise and settle the outstanding disputes between the two countries. Neither India nor Pakistan gain any thing out of the existing antagonism and they both run the risk of being weakened by their mutual differences.

After the return of Mrs. Gandhi to power in 1980, she was successful in focusing on her concerns- the withholding of arms from Pakistan and the demonstration to the Soviet Union of India’s reliability. Her only desire was to safeguard the national interest of India. She was worried about US-China –Pakistan axis. India desired to gain international peace with the help of both the superpowers. Mrs. Gandhi did not bring any change in the field of non-alignment.

On the whole, the relations between Pakistan and India have been strained. Despite the irritants, the leaders of the two countries have expressed their desire to improve relations. The reference to “genuine non-alignments” and the tilt away from the Soviet Union were not meant for the sake of novelty alone. The foreign policy of the Janata Government was a continuation of predecessor Government’s policy of normalizing relations with Pakistan following the Simla pact of 1972. The Congress government had appeared to nurse the notion that it was more advantageous for India to deal with civilian rulers in Pakistan than with military rulers. In contrast, with the Congress Government reaction in 1958 to the military take over in Pakistan, The conclusion of the Salal Pact in 1978 underscored the success achieved by the Janata government in shaping a friendly policy towards Pakistan without sacrificing vital national
interests. One of the major reasons why Pakistan was happy with Janata Government was that the rulers in Islamabad knew that the Janata leadership, which was decidedly pro-American, would make concessions to Pakistan if America wanted them to do so. In spite of best efforts of Mrs. Gandhi, there was not much improvement in Indo-Pak relations continued to persist. The bitterness that followed the defeat of Pakistan in the 1971 war continued and did not let Pakistan to mend its fences with India.

**Sino-India Relations:**

India’s relations with China antedate Indian independence and since 1947 they have been a major factor in India’s foreign policy. Immediately after achieving independence, India was so preoccupied with problems of its own and China was so deeply involved in contacts in international bodies were mostly restricted to the formalities and routine of the usual international contact.” 28 The old cordial relations between India and China tended to take a new turn at the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in March, 1947. The Kuomintang delegates objected to the display of a map of Asia in which Tibet was show as a territory outside China. They also protested against India’s official recognition of the Tibetan delegation. “There appeared to be a rift in Sino-Indian solidarity produced by newer historical forces emerging on the surface” 29 observed one writer.

India and China represent ancient civilizations which date back to five thousand years or more. During the course of this long period, India and China were never engaged in wars. Both the great countries had cultural and trade contacts. Indian spiritual leaders introduced Buddhism in China and in large parts of South East Asia. Both India and China developed their own peculiar type of philosophy and culture according to their own genius.

After Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister of India, China became an important factor in India’s foreign policy. Pandit Nehru believed that India and China could collectively refashion the events in Asia and in the world. India promptly recognized the Peoples Republic of China on 30th December, 1949. India also championed that the Chinese seat in the United Nations should be represented by the Government of Peoples Republic of China.

**Panchsheel Agreement:** The Chinese Premier Mr. Chou-En-Lai visited India in June, 1954, and the Chinese and the Indian Prime Ministers propounded co-existence. The five principles were as follows:

1. Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty,
2. Mutual non-aggression,
3. Mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs,
4. Equality and Mutual benefit, and
5. Peaceful co-existence.

During this period, India also entered into an agreement with China in 1954, whereby India recognized China’s sovereignty over Tibet. In 1955, India participated at the Bandung conference which was attended by twenty nine Afro-Asian nations along with China on 29th November, 1956 Mr. Chou-En-Lai again visited India and praised India’s efforts towards the solving of the Korean and Indo-China disputes. However, during the period 1956-1958, certain differences had emerged between India and China. India received reports of the Chinese road construction and military buildup in Tibet close to the Indian border. In 1958 China published maps which showed large areas of India territory as parts of China. Pandit Nehru wrote a lengthy letter to Premier Chou-En-Lai on 14th December, 1958, wherein the issue of India – China border was raised and China was requested to settle the question peacefully.\(^{30}\) The Chinese launched a campaign of suppression of the Tibetans and Dalai lama was forced to flee from Lhasa and sought asylum in India in 1959.

From October 1957, the Chinese border forces made frequent incursions into Indian territory and China claimed large tracts of land in Aksai Chin and NEFA. The Government of India made all efforts to bring about a peaceful solution to the border issue but it appeared that the Chinese were not interested. During the visit of Chou-En-Lai to Delhi in April 1960, the issue was raised at the highest level between Pandit Nehru and Premier Chou-En-Lai. However, no solution could be arrived at. In spite of India’s best efforts, the Chinese adopted unhelpful attitude and attacked India all along the Sino-Indian border in October, 1962.

**The Tibetan Problem:** The Government of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) proclaimed on 1st January, 1950, that one of the basic tasks of the “People’s Liberation Army” would henceforth be to “liberate” Tibet and “stand guard at the Chinese frontiers”. The Chinese Government’s determination to liberate Tibet was subsequently reiterated by responsible leaders.\(^{31}\) The Chinese announcements perturbed the Government of India. In India, Tibet was considered a buffer state guaranteeing the security of India and China and facilitating friendly relations between the two large nations along a mountainous border of some 2000 miles.
The Tibetan leaders had to agree to Beijing’s terms and they signed an agreement on 23rd May, 1951. What emerged from the agreement was not the legitimate Tibetan autonomy within the framework of Chinese suzerainty, as the Government of India wanted, but full fledged Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, with restricted Tibetan rights to autonomy in certain limited spheres. In the middle of March 1959, there was a sudden uprising in Lhasa leading to the outbreak of hostilities between the Tibetans and the Chinese forces and as a consequence, the Dalai Lama fled to India. The Government of India granted him asylum and made it clear that although they sympathized with the Tibetans, in their aspiration for autonomy they fully recognized the suzerainty of China and could not, in any way, intervene in the developments inside Tibet. The Tibetans uprising and the reactions it evoked in India strained Sino-Indian relations further.

The Border Conflict: The events in Tibet undermined India’s faith in China’s bonafides. India felt that the Chinese began, as if to retaliate against what had happened in Tibet, a series of intrusions across India’s Northern frontier. At the same time, the Chinese felt that Indian armed personnel have unlawfully intruded into Chinese territory despite solemn warning of the Chinese frontier guards. During 1956-57, the Chinese built a road across the Aksai Chin area with a view to open up Western Tibet to Chinese Immigration and diverting its trade from its traditional Southward direction, Northward into Western China and the Soviet Union. It was on 23rd January, 1959, that Chou-En-Lai in a letter to Nehru questioned for the first time the established boundary between India and China. He contended that the Sino-Indian Boundary had never been formally delineated and that so called “Mc Mohan Line was a product of British policy of aggression against the Tibet region of China” and therefore, an illegal line.

Nehru was eager to devise some via media and take action, short of conflict, in order to assuage the public opinion. The so called “forward policy” was formed in 1961, the purpose of which was to establish some symbolic posts both in Ladakh and in NEFA. It seems possible that Nehru framed the policy under pressure from the opposition parties. by the end of the year, India established about fifty posts along the border. This was probably one of the reason which provoked the Chinese to cross the MC Mohan Line in Eastern section on 8th September, 1962, and launch a large scale attack both in the Western and in the Eastern section of the border on 20th October, 1962, overwhelming the Indian frontier posts. The Government of India made the
counter proposal that the status quo on the border as on 8\textsuperscript{th} September, 1962 should be restored and the two countries should then enter into discussions. Further violation took place across the border. Suddenly, on 21\textsuperscript{st} November, 1962, the Chinese announced their unilateral cease-fire and their decision to withdraw. India declined to accept the terms but stated that it will not interfere with the previous demand for the restoration of the status quo (8\textsuperscript{th} September, 1962) in all sectors of the boundary. 36

**Colombo Conference Proposals:** In order to break the stalemate and to provide a basis for an agreed cease-fire arrangements, the representatives of six Asian – African countries viz., Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia, Cambodia, the United Arab Republic and Ghanamet in Colombo between 10\textsuperscript{th} and 12\textsuperscript{th} of December 1962, and put forward proposal, which they thought would, if accepted by both the parties, lead to substantive discussions on the border problems. 37

Although the Chinese government stated that these accepted the Colombo proposals “in principle”, they made certain reservations on the proposal. In a note dated 3\textsuperscript{rd} April, 1963 china suggested various constructive steps to resolve the problems including international arbitration. 38 After Six months, the Chinese, in a note on 9\textsuperscript{th} October, 1963, rejected the suggestions and accused India of having proposed these steps to make negotiations impossible by setting up an array of obstacles. 39 China also refused to vacate the occupied Indian territory in spite of many efforts by various states. When Pakistan attacked India in 1965, China gave her full support against India and was willing even to open a new front. In June 1967, two members of the Indian embassy at Bejing were humiliated and expelled after inhuman treatment. The Indian embassy was besieged by the Red Guards. The relation between the two countries reached the breaking point.

Many reasons have been given for unilateral cease-fire by China, a very important reason why China withdrew was that the Governments of U.S. and Great Britain promised India military help which enabled her to defend herself against China.

Indo-Soviet friendship was tested during the period of the Chinese aggression in 1960. The Chinese did not accept the McMahan Line as the Sino-Indian border and laid claims to a large part of Indian territory in the Ladakh and NEFA. The Soviet Union maintained a studied silence for a long time and then issued a statement of neutrality stating that India and China with whom USSR enjoyed friendly relations would settle their disputes peacefully. The Soviet Union
increased its economic aid and also became a supplier of military hardware to India. During the Indo-Pak war of 1965, the Soviet Union warned China to stay away from the conflict as their intervention would complicate the issue.

During Mr. Shastri’s period, relations between Pakistan and China became more intimate. The Chinese entered into an agreement with Pakistan whereby China undertook to construct roads and fortifications in Pakistan occupied Kashmir which was an unfriendly act against India. China also supported Pakistan’s claims over Kashmir and Rann of Kutch. During the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, China lent diplomatic support to Pakistan and supplied Pakistan with military equipment. It raised tension all along the India-China border with a view to pin down India’s mountain divisions and thus create difficulties for India’s mountain divisions by diverting its armed forces on two fronts.  

India’s decisive victory over Pakistan led to a cease fire between the two countries. The Soviet made all efforts to bring about a peaceful solution and due to their efforts the Taskent agreement was signed between president Ayub Khan of Pakistan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in January, 1966, in Tashkent. In 1966, China was beset with internal turmoil. It was the Soviet Union who invited Indo-Pak leaders for a negotiated settlement at Tashkent. At the Tashkent meet, India and Pakistan were made to compromise their difference. The Tashkent declaration did not settle for India any of her real problems. It was simply an approval by the super-powers on a cease-fire.

Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri continued to maintain the Nehru line on negotiations with China. During the period 1966-69, Mrs. Gandhi was beset with various domestic problems in India and, therefore could not make much headway in the field of international politics. During the general election of 1967, the Congress fared badly in the states, although it managed to secure a majority in the centre. Mrs. Gandhi’s position was not secure. India had also suffered drought conditions in 1965, 1966, 1967 and was heavily dependent on the United States for its food grains supplies. Mrs. Gandhi’s position was also challenged within the congress by the syndicate led by Mr. Morarji Desai. In order to improve her image within party and in the country, Mrs. Indira Gandhi adopted radical measures like the abolition of privy purses, and bank nationalization which led to the congress split in 1969. Mrs. Gandhi, after the congress split, emerged as the unquestioned leader of the Congress On 1st January, 1969, Mrs. Gandhi stated that the government would try and find a way of solving the dispute with China without
insisting on its acceptance of the Colombo proposal as a pre-condition. It, therefore, became clear that India was prepared to follow a more flexible approach on the border issue with China. In 1970, on the May Day celebrations, chairman Mao, spoke to India’s charge-d’affairs stating “India is a great country so as China, the two countries have been friendly before and they ought to be friends again and of course detach themselves from the two super power.”

India received the news of Mao’s smile with great enthusiasm and it appeared that at least hopes of rapprochement with China were near. However, the India response to China was conditioned by many factors; it was felt that improvement of relations with China would adversely affect India’s relations with Soviet Union. Secondly, Mrs. Gandhi was hesitant to take bold steps towards China for fear of adverse reactions at home and finally, it was felt in the Ministry of External affairs that the time was not appropriate for the opening of a dialogue with China. During the early months of 1971, China showed evidence of a genuine desire to improve relations with India. Mrs. Gandhi congratulated the people of China on their representation in the United Nations. On the 27th October, 1971 Premier Chou-En-Lai thanked India for its support on the question of China’s representation in the United Nations.

China’s representation in the Third committee of the United Nations raised the Bangladesh issue and accused India of creating the refugee problem. The Government of India viewed the Chinese outburst in the context of its pro-Pakistan bias and was not unduly alarmed. India was keen that exchanges at the ambassador level should be made immediately so that its improved relations with China would be to its advantage in its developing crisis with Pakistan over the Bangladesh issue. However, China was not prepared to jeopardize its relations with Pakistan for the sake of India’s friendship.

The Indo-Soviet Treaty of August 1971, delivered a deadly blow to efforts at normalization of relations with China. It was felt that unless relations with China improve, India could not reduce its defense budget and divert huge amounts of money for developmental purposes. It was on account of India’s Non-Alignment policy that India was humiliated and defeated by the Communist China in 1962. Had India entered into a treaty with any great power, communist China would not have dared to attack India in 1962. Infact, China’s friendship with Pakistan against India forced it to have the treaty with Soviet Union. Thus, because of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of peace Friendship and Co-operation, USSR came to India’s help against the war
with Pakistan and USA and China could help Pakistan, So India won the war, Had India not made this treaty with the Soviet Union, most probably, China and USA would have helped Pakistan in which case India’s success would have been doubtful. Indian foreign policy framers were convinced that India could not concede on the border issue and its treaty obligations with Soviet Union. Beyond these two considerations, India was willing to enter into negotiations with China. The Government of China was not happy with the turn of events in the Indian sub-continent leading to the emergence of Bangladesh. The Chinese radio accused India of trying to project itself as a super power.

President Bhutto of Pakistan paid an official visit to China on 7th February, 1972 and apprised the Chinese of the situation in Pakistan, after the emergence of Bangladesh. Both Pakistan and China concluded that the Soviet influence in the India sub-continent should be reduced at all costs and a no-war pact should be signed amongst the nations of the Indian sub-continent. This would give China a special status in the region to reduce the influence of the super power.

Mr. Bhutto’s visit to Beijing was followed by the historic visit of President Nixon to China, India viewed these visits with mixed reaction. It was felt that a new Pak-China–United States axis was in the air, Mrs. Gandhi made it very clear that any decisions resulting from the Sino-United States negotiations could not be binding on the Asian Nations.

The Chinese welcomed the Simla Agreement as it felt that India and Pakistan should solve their problems bilaterally, India’s foreign Minister Sardar Swaran Singh expressed India’s relations with China. He said “India had expressed its willingness on several occasions. It was even prepared to have economic relations with China without bringing any political differences, In spite of India’s best efforts, China harped on old grievances and accused India with designs of installing Dalai Lama in Tibet. In the year 1972, relations between China and India remained the same. China improved its relations with the United States and Japan but did not prove a serious danger as a competitor to Indian exports.

On the 15th April, 1975, India decided to restore full diplomatic relations with China at the ambassadorial level and Mr. Y.B. Chavan India’s Foreign Minister, hoped that relations would improve between the two countries.

The Janata party which came to power in March 1977, announced its policy of “genuine non-alignment” It aimed at maintaining equidistance between the super powers. The Chinese
leadership saw the change in Indian leadership an opportunity to reduce the Soviet influence in India.

On March 11, 1978, the border issue was discussed between Mr. Morarji Desai, India’s Prime Minister and Mr. Wang-Pin-Nau leader of the Chinese delegation. The Chinese delegation assured the Indian Leaders that the border issue would be settled peacefully. Mr. Yu-Chau-in an interview with an Indian journalist stated in May 1978, that India and China should settle their dispute peacefully. The border dispute which baffled solution should be taken at the last. Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Indian foreign minister payed an official visit to China from 12th to 18th February, 1979. The Chinese entertained the Indian Foreign Minister where he met Huang Hua, Foreign Minister, Teng Hsiao Ping, Vice-Primier, and Prime Minister Hua Kuo Feng. However, Mr. Vajpayee was kept in dark of the developments on the China-Vietnam border and he had to cut short his visit because of the Vietnam border development.

In 1980, the Congress Party under the leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi was returned to power by an overwhelming majority. Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, India’s new Foreign Minister, told the Lok Sabha that his government would make all efforts to improve relations with China but it was up to China to take the next step. The Chinese foreign Minister, Mr. Huang Hua visited India on 26 June, 1980 and this marked an important development in restoration of relations between India and China. During the period, 1982-84, both Indian and Chinese leaders have expressed their desire to find a speedy and peaceful solution to the border and other disputes between India and China, so that these two great nations of the world could join hands towards world peace and disarmament. China has accepted the reality of Bangladesh and the role of India as the dominant power in South Asia, China continued to feel uneasy at India’s close relations with the Soviet Union. In its global word view, it continued to see the Soviet Union as a possible aggressor and a danger to its security; It has therefore, from the strategic angle, developed cordial relations with the United States. In the post-Mao period, China has embarked upon modernization and has imported advance technology from the United States. Pakistan is important to China as a counter force to India.

A close look at China’s policy towards her neighbors, particularly the South Asian region has acquired added urgency in the context of the new and high level President Reagan’s visit to China (May, 1984) There has been a feeling that Pakistan has attained nuclear capability by stealing secrets and deriving covert support from China. The nuclear accord was signed by the
U.S. President Reagan during his visit to China in April, 1984. The China-Pakistan security concerns was demonstrated both in 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistan war and also by the unparalleled Chinese military support to Pakistan in terms of free supply of military hardware and the establishment of defense production facilities.

The border problem between India and China has remained frozen for two decades. The issue was re-opened at the Chinese initiative in 1980, with the now well-know “package” presented by the Chinese Government through a press statement. As a method of negotiations although discussions were held in an amicable and friendly atmosphere, no real progress towards a solution of the border problem could be made. The territorial claims of India and China on sectors, on the borders in dispute can be seen in the light of (a) the legal position, (b) historical usage and (c) the actual position on the ground what was know as NEFA, right up to McMahon Line, has been and is being held and administered by India while what should be known as Aksai Chin is under the Chinese control. NEFA in the east, the Aksai Chin in the west are areas of critical importance, the former for India and the later for China.

India and China should take stock bilaterally of major developments around the world. They should review international issue concerning major powers in changing themselves. India has standing arrangements with a number of countries for periodic bilateral consultation on problems of foreign policy. These consultations do not impinge on sovereignty but help the participants to understand each other’s points of view even if these views are not concordant. Prior consultations avert unpleasant surprises and may at times results in co-ordination of approach between consultants whose foreign policy objective may not be in conflict.

One of the major distortions in China’s foreign policy was the complete abandonment of its earlier view of imperialism. The Chinese came round increasingly to identify imperialism with military power per se and the capacity of intervention. That this was totally non-Leninist view of imperialism may or may not be of interest to many people in the Third world. But it is a small wonder if Chinese have a hard time persuading the Asians and the Africans to balance that imperialism does not appear like what they always visualized. From the disapproval of Mrs. Gandhi to the active involvement of Zia-Ul-Huq, they do not have much to disapprove. Afghanistan is a peripheral issue as far as Chinese security or its interests in South and south West Asia are concerned.
Over a period of time, items for a common agenda for talks between China and the countries of South Asia, and more particularly between China and India, are emerging. The Chinese are rethinking on the role and contribution of Nehru. The Chinese have taken to a Nehruvian course in foreign policy. But a reassessment of the role of Nehru among the historians of Beijing cannot be entirely fortuitous.\(^{53}\)

The Chinese have always been very cautious in their endeavors in giving a boost to the normalization process which started in the mid-seventies. Their approach towards India is clear. They do not want to annoy the leadership. In fact, they have not shown any flexibility in their approach towards India and are expecting from the Indian side to offer concessions on the border issue. No Indian Government can afford to adopt a somewhat lenient posture towards the basic problems existing between the two countries. The Indian public opinion has always favoured in solving the major issues through peaceful means and has also welcomed the progress registered by the two countries in strengthening their relations.

After India became free in 1947, the first country which came forward to establish diplomatic relations with Indian was the Nationalist Government of China. However, when it was overthrown by the Communists in 1949, the Government of India recognized the Government of Red China on 30\(^{th}\) December, 1949. Many delegations were exchanged between the two countries. India left no stone unturned to bring Red China into the United Nations. When Tibet was run over by China, India entered into a treaty with Red China regarding Tibet, by which Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was recognized. When Pakistan attacked India in 1965, China gave her full support to Pakistan against India and was willing even to open a new front, China gave India an ultimatum. Even after that, China has shown her hostility towards India. China is already in occupation of Indian territory. It is true that the Government of India is adding to her military strength but it cannot be denied that the Chinese Government can be forced to withdraw from Indian territory only if the India Government uses force to throw out the Chinese from their present position. No amount of bargaining or pressure from any side is going to force China to see reason. This is for the people of India and the Government of India to decide.

One of the major distortion in China’s foreign policy was the complete abandonment of its earlier view of imperialism. India and China should take stock bilaterally of major
developments around the world. They should review international issue concerning major powers including themselves.

Both China and India are nevertheless rather acutely conscious of their roles in world affairs. With the changes of leadership at the centre in 1977, there was not much of a change with regard to foreign policy of India in relation to China. A very major and large unresolved issue, the border problem is no longer just a question of Aksai Chin and Mc Mohan Line. It is now far more complex and includes the strategically important Karakoram Highway. The border dispute constitutes the most serious issue to be satisfactorily handled by the two countries. The various thorny issues like the border dispute, the question of the Karakoram Highway, support for Pakistan in Kashmir, etc., between the two countries should be sincerely resolved as early as possible in order to establish the foundation for real, friendly relations between India and China. The search for a viable peace with must be a constant endeavor of Indian foreign policy.54

During the Janata rule in 1977-1979, Morarji Desai tried to make India’s foreign policy more evenly. After the fall of the Janata regime, the old Nehruvian foreign policy was restored by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The Janata Government continued the old policy, as it was really serious about normalizing Sino-Indian relations, and a change of policy was inescapable. One major reason behind the disaster of 1962 was the unhistorical stand of the Congress Government that the Sino-Indian boundary was traditional and settled and that China should withdraw from the territories that it had occupied which India had claimed. The Janata Government endorsed this stand. Morarji Desai supported the Lok Sabha resolution of 1962 to “drive out “the Chinese from Indian soil. The Janata Government did not allow rigidity to act as a constraint on the expansion of trade and cultural relations with China.

**Evaluations**

India’s towards China policy cannot be separated from its overall view of the world and its more long-range objectives but there are also certain special and particular Sino-Indian problems. They would be there no matter what the global situation is.

Both China and India are acutely conscious of their roles in world affairs. The strong feeling of nationalism in both China and India imposes its own requirements for a long term understanding between the two countries. The Soviet Union has been a major factor in the Sino-Indian relations some of the bittermesses in Sino-Indian relations have been the result of sharp difference in the polices of the two countries towards the Soviet Union. India’s heavy reliance on
the Soviet Union and Indo-Soviet relationship (including the Indo-Soviet Treaty) stood in the way of normalization of Sino-Indian relations. China reconciled itself to the break-up of Pakistan and acknowledged that India was not working for the dismemberment of West Pakistan. This helped relax tension over Pakistan and promote better relations between China and India, although the basic questions of India–China–Pakistan relationship do not admit of an easy solution.

A very major very large unresolved issue, one that is not easily tractable, is the border dispute between the two countries. The border problem is no longer just a question of the Aksai and the McMohan Line. It is now more complex and includes the strategically important Karakoram Highway, China’s position on Kashmir, its own recognition of the accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union and its support for Naga Mizo hostiles. All the same, the border dispute constitutes the most serious issue to be satisfactorily handled by the two countries. The year 1982 marks a change in the developments of India’s foreign policy. Through the basic principles outlined still continued to form the basis of India’s foreign policy in the post 1962 period, but it came to be characterized by greater pragmatism and realism. Improvement of relations between India and Pakistan since the Simla Agreement helped ease Sino-India relations and promote the process of normalization. Any sudden deterioration in India’s relation with Pakistan could easily bring about an equally sudden deterioration in Sino-Indian relations. India and China are neighbors and must live in peace. We search for a viable peace with China and it must be a constant endeavor of Indian foreign policy.

Before the Janata regime, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was beset with various domestic problems and therefore could not make much headway in the field of international politics, Mrs. Gandhi adopted radical measures like the abolition of Privy purses and Bank nationalization which led to the Congress split in 1969. Mrs. Indira Gandhi was of the opinion that the Government would try and find a way in solving the dispute with China without insisting on its acceptance of the Colombo proposals as a pre-condition. India was prepared to follow a more flexible approach on the border issue with China. China on its part also showed signs of entering into negotiations with India.

The Indian response to China was conditioned by three factors. Firstly it was felt improvement of relations with China would adversely affect India’s relations with the Soviet Union. Secondly, Mrs. Gandhi was hesitant to take a bold step towards China for fear of adverse
reaction at home. And thirdly, it was felt in the Ministry of External Affairs that the time was not appropriate for the opening of a dialogue with China. China’s sensitivity to Pakistan’s security concerns was demonstrated both in 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak wars and also by the unparalleled Chinese military support to Pakistan in terms of free supply of military hardware and the establishment of defense production facilities. India and China should take stock bilaterally of major developments around the world. They should review internal issues concerning major powers including themselves.

The Janata regime aimed at maintaining equi-distance between the super powers. The Chinese leadership saw in the change of Indian leadership in 1977, an opportunity to reduce the Soviet influence in India. Janata Government continued old policy although it was serious about normalizing Sino-Indian relations, a change of policy was inescapable. Morarji Desai categorically supported the Lok Sabha resolution of 1962 to “drive out” the Chinese from the Indian soil. He however, substituted “vacate” for drive out.” With regard to expansion of trade and cultural relations with China the Janata Government was flexible. The Janata Government continued the trend set by its predecessor in maintaining cordial relations with the neighbors’ countries of India -After the re-emergence of Mrs. Indira Gandhi to power in 1980, there was a change in the improvement of relations with China. The Chinese foreign Minister Mr. Huang Hua visited India on 26th June, 1980 and this marked an important development in the restoration of relations between China and India. During the period 1982-84 both the Indian and the Chinese leadership expressed their desire to find a speedy and peaceful solution to the border issue.

**Indo-Bangladesh Relations:**

India’s role in Bangladesh Independence movement has been considered as a highly provocative one by some leaders of the developing as well as the developed countries. In the opinion of some experts on international affairs, political advantages as well as concern for human rights and self defence prompted India’s action. Many people in India and other nations regarded India’s action as heroic. Many changes have taken place in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, since Bangladesh emerged as an independent nation in 1971. There are many issues between India and Bangladesh to be resolved to secure greater stability in the area. Indo-Bangladesh amity is possible when Bangladesh observes greater respect for human rights and India adopts a more flexible policy in her relations with Bangladesh.
The Indo-Pakistan war of December 1971 and the liberation of Bangladesh form a watershed in the history of the sub-continent. These two inter-related events not only drastically transformed the power balance in the subcontinent, but also radically altered the state structure in South Asia that had resulted from the agreement between the British government, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League in 1947.\(^5\)

India and Bangladesh are close door neighbors and much interaction, between the two is visible in the politico–socio-economic and cultural fields. The sovereign independent republic of Bangladesh was created in 1971 with the active moral and material support of India after the dismemberment of Pakistan. The emergence of a country in South Asia had changed the entire situation because this fact has challenged certain fundamental assumption regarding South Asian realities which the most political observers of the South Asian scheme accept. The entire concept of balance of power in the sub-continent which meant essentially military parity between India and Pakistan was discredited. The balance also tilted in favor of India and this compelled the super powers to revise postures towards India. It was felt that China would change its attitude towards India and the United States would also move towards her.\(^6\) The dismemberment of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh changed the whole situation in South Asia. Since the emergence of Bangladesh, the relations between the two countries were fraternal up to August 1975. The Government of India which played a memorable role in the emergence of Bangladesh diverted its resources sincerely in order to build the completely wrecked Bangladesh economy and social set-up and was the first to recognize it as a sovereign independent country.

Bangladesh is surrounded by Indian Territory except for a short South Eastern frontier with Burma and a southern coast facing the Bay of Bengal. About 85% of the population speaks Bengali, the state language, the remaining Bihari and Hindi. The principal religion is Islam, a small majority of people practise Hinduism.

The modern state of Bangladesh emerged from East Pakistan, one of the five provinces into which Pakistan was divided at its separation from the British India in 1947. East Pakistan and the four western provinces were separated by 1,000 miles of Indian Territory. Dissatisfaction in East Pakistan at its dependence on a remote central government flared up when Urdu was declared Pakistan’s official language in 1954, and in 1955, Pakistan was reorganised into two wings, east and west with equal representation in the Central Legislative Assembly.
As far as the role of India in the liberation struggle of Bangladesh was concerned, it was based on certain principles. The Indian government watched the whole scene with patience and used every weapon from its armoury to bring about a political solution of the issue. The statements issued from time to time by the Indian leaders and the material help which India started rendering to the people of Bangladesh can be cited as a clear evidence of Indian Government’s intentions, etc., the unity and integrity of Pakistan.

The struggle for power in Pakistan started after the first ever general election held in Pakistan in 1970. The Pakistan’s People’s Party (PPP) swept the polls in West Pakistan, while in East Pakistan the Awami League had its upper hand, According to democratic norms and traditions, President Yahya Khan should have transferred the power to the Awami League but it seems he was not in a mood to vacate the throne and started creating hurdles. These acts of Pakistan President Yahya instigated PPP Z.A. Prime Minister of Pakistan. During the military rule of Field marshal Ayub Khan (1958-69) discontent continued in the eastern wing over the small part it had in Pakistan’s army and in commerce. Sheikh Mujibur Rehman became the leader of the Awami League, which called for autonomy for the Eastern wing. He was imprisoned in 1966 and released at the fall of Ayub Khan in 1969. The first ever general elections on the basis of the adult franchise were held in Pakistan in December, 1970 and gave the Awami League a majority in Pakistan’s National Assembly. 57

Mujib Era: The emergence of Bangladesh was a major historical incident that occurred in the Indian sub-continent after the second world war and it affected the power balance in the sub-continent. The People’s Republic of Bangladesh is surrounded by Indian Territory except for a short South-Eastern frontier with Burma. The dismemberment of Pakistan after Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 helped in boosting India’s image in the world as a supporter of genuine liberation struggles. The reasons for Indian interference in Pakistan’s internal affairs were manifold. The genesis of this problem lies in the historical past. The root cause of Indo-Pakistani trouble is that India never accepted the establishment of Pakistan. 58

When on 3rd December, 1971, Pakistan imposed war on India, the latter moved its armed forces into East Pakistan and with the help of Mukti Bahini liberated East Pakistan from the clutches of the West Pakistani military junta.

On 6th December, 1971, when the war was in full swing, the Government of India granted recognition to the Peoples’ Republic of Bangladesh, while announcing the decision ,Mrs. Indira
Gandhi further said that in future the Governments and people of India and Bangladesh, who share common ideals and sacrifices, would forge a relationship based on the principle of mutual respect for each other’s sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs, equality and mutual benefits. After the recognition, the first chancery of Bangladesh was formally opened in New Delhi on 9th December, 1971 when its green and golden flag was unfurled. Between the formal recognition and opening, a movement was launched in East Pakistan against the delaying tactics of President Yahya and the circumstances compelled Mujib men to declare the sovereign republic of Bangladesh.

After the declaration, Pakistan’s army on the order of President Yahya started butchering the people’s of East Pakistan, millions of People from East Pakistan took shelter in India which resulted in shattering Indian economy and its social system. The Indian Government provided food, clothing and shelter to these refugees and also tried its best to create conditions for their safe return to Bangladesh. The, then, Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. India Gandhi and the External Affairs Minister, Swaran Singh toured the world and pleaded for the political solution to the problem and safe return of the refugees. These efforts of Indian leaders cleared various doubts from the mind of the peoples of the world regarding India. India raised the issue in the United Nations and other international forums.

The leaders of Pakistan in their speeches described Indian action as an act of intervention in the internal affairs of Pakistan; The Pakistani Government also issued a white paper in which it tried to link the so-called Agartala conspiracy case with the crisis in Bangladesh. It further stated on 7th December, 1971 that the two countries had entered into a number of agreements, covering the vital fields of defence, foreign relations and trade. The defence agreement, while pleading India’s help to Bangladesh in its struggle, made it clear that after the liberation of Bangladesh, the armed forces of India would not undertake any function. In the agreement on foreign relations, the two countries reasserted their allegiance to Pancha Sheel and alignment.

By another agreement, India decided to give at least Rs.100 crores immediately to Bangladesh for undertaking a massive programme of reconstruction. Both the governments also finalized a detailed agreement which envisaged an annual trade of Rs.1.000 crores. To strengthen the relations with India, The foreign minister of Bangladesh, Abdus Samad Azad, paid on official visit to India from 5th to 9th January, 1972. He said that his government would follow the policy of Non-Alignment and both the governments agreed to base their relations on
the principle of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, non-interference in each others internal affairs, and equality and mutual benefit.  

Sheik Mujibur Rahaman, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, on the invitation of the Government of India, paid an official visit to India from 6th to 8th February, 1972. Both the leaders (India and Bangladesh) agreed that Indian forces would withdraw from Bangladesh by 25th March, 1972, and expressed their determination to promote in every possible way, cooperation between governments and people of the two countries, inspired by a vision of lasting peace, amity and good neighbors. After the withdrawal was completed, Indian Prime Minister landed at Dacca on 17th March 1972, at the airport in a brief speech in Bengali, Mrs. Gandhi emphasized that whatever help India had given to Bangladesh was in pursuance of its own ideals and not for ulterior motives. The two Prime Minister decided that there is a need to take concrete steps by the appropriate agencies of the two governments in order to strengthen cultural relations between the two countries. The visit of Mrs. Gandhi to Bangladesh further strengthened the Indo-Bangladesh relations.

**Indo-Bangladesh Treaty:** On the lines of Indo-Soviet Treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation signed in August, 1971, on 19th March 1972, India and Bangladesh signed a 25 year treaty of friendship, co-operation and peace. It was signed by the Prime Minister Sheik Mujibur Rahaman and Mrs. Gandhi which committed the two countries to immediately enter into mutual consultations to take appropriate effective measures to eliminate the threat in case either party was attacked or threatened with an attack. The treaty was not a defence pact between India and Bangladesh as is clearly evident from Article 9 which provided only consultations and other measures to check the threat and did not allow the automatic intervention. Indo-Bangladesh treaty of co-operation, friendship and peace determined to maintain fraternal and good neighborly relations and transform the border into a border of external peace and friendship.

**India-Pakistan and Bangladesh:** After the liberation of Bangladesh, the Government of India in order to establish the identity of Bangladesh and legitimize its role during the liberation war, associated Bangladesh in the talks with Pakistan on the prisoners of war issue. The Government of Bangladesh took plea that in absence of recognition by Pakistan it was not possible to have tripartite talks to settle the humanitarian problems or have tripartite talks to settle the humanitarian problems as Bangladesh could not participate in such a meeting except on the basis of sovereign equality. On 17th April, 1973 India and Bangladesh took a major step with the
intention of ending the deadlock on the humanitarian issue by setting aside the problems of recognition. In February 1974, recognition of Bangladesh in the tripartite meeting was envisaged in Delhi Agreement.

**Growing Friendship between India and Bangladesh:** After signing of the Indo-Bangladesh treaty, the friendship between India and Bangladesh started growing day by day. To strengthen the bonds of friendship, the President of Bangladesh, Abu Sayeed Chowdury arrived in New Delhi on 27th November 1972, on a ten day state visit. The President of Bangladesh had expressed “profound gratitude” to the Government and people of India for their open hearted generosity and assistance during and since the war of independence of Bangladesh.

In response to the invitation by President of Bangladesh, the president of India Mr. V.V. Giri paid a five day official visit starting from 15th June, 1974, and addressed a special session of the Jatiya Sangshad (Parliament) in June 1974. He underscored the need for co-operation between India and Bangladesh. He underscored the need for co-operation between India and Bangladesh. He said that only through co-operation, the two neighbors can face up to external pressures and challenges in the world. A joint communiqué issue on 19th June at the end of President V.V. Giri’s visit highlighted the bonds of friendship between the two countries. From time to time, India and Bangladesh Governments held bilateral discussions, in order to sort out the difference that emerged on various issue of international situation and on problems of mutual interests.

**Summit Conference May 1974:** The summit conference of India and Bangladesh started on 12th May, 1974, in order to thrash out various questions which would help to strengthen “very friendly relations” existing between the two countries. The Bangladesh observers described the summit meeting as a milestone on the road to the sub-continent peace realized on basis of sovereign interests.

The summit conference covered almost all the aspects of Indo-Bangladesh relations. On the very first day, Mrs. India Gandhi and Sheik Mujibur Rehman met and the talks covered the sharing of Ganga waters, trade, between the two countries and sub-continental affairs. The agreements concluded had reflected that the conference was a great success, The most important agreement was of course the border agreement.
The coup in Bangladesh on 15th August, 1975, ended a golden period of Indo-Bangladesh relations. In the coup, Sheik Mujibur Rehaman was killed, his government was overthrown and a new regime under his cabinet colleague Khondakar Mushtaque Ahmed was established in Bangladesh.

Indo-Bangladesh relations during Sheik Mujib era were quite friendly. India not only actively helped Bangladesh in liberation struggle, but after the emergence of independent Bangladesh, it stood firmly with the Government of Bangladesh in the task of building an already destroyed economic, trade and social set up, by providing liberal loans and grants and signing various trade agreements. Mujib era was a golden period in the history of Indo-Bangladesh relations. It was Indian efforts which compelled Pakistan to recognize the Government of Bangladesh and respect the wishes of the people of Bangladesh.

**Post–Mujib Era:** After the murder of Sheik Mujib, political uncertainty prevailed in Bangladesh and a number of coups followed. The Indo-Bangladesh relations in the post Mujib era were more or less governed by the domestic compulsions of Bangladesh. At the domestic front, political instability and economic crisis dominated the scene. Trade between the two countries was on the decline. The political elite of Bangladesh tried to make political gains by raising the Muhirichar and New Moore Island controversies. Their main purpose was to divert the attention of people from domestic miseries. These irritants, no doubt, spoiled the relations between India and Bangladesh.

**Farakka Barrage Dispute:** The Farakka Barrage dispute which was a source of tension between India and Pakistan, before the emergence of Bangladesh, later generated tensions between India and Bangladesh. Even before 1971, several attempts had been made both by India and Pakistan to solve the issue. The efforts continued after 1971 and because of cordial relations between India and Bangladesh, the dispute would be settled. Some understanding on the issue was reached after various meetings between India and Bangladesh representatives which resulted in the signing of an agreement in November, 1977. Both the countries were satisfied with the agreement in the beginning but later domestic and political conditions in both the countries changed and there was a talk of scrapping the agreement.

As far as the 1977 agreement is concerned, there is a need to revise it because it has been established that the agreement was signed without keeping in mind the experts opinion and the national interest of India.
Farakka Issue and the United Nations: The issue was raised by the Government of Bangladesh in the United Nations by writing letters dated 22nd and 26th August and 8th September, 1976 addressed to the Secretary General and requesting the inclusion in agenda of the General Assembly’s thirty first session of an interim “situation arising out of unilateral withdrawal of Ganga waters at Farakka.” On 24th September, the General Assembly on the recommendations of its general committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and allocate it to the special political committee for consideration. This step was opposed by India. Both Bangladesh and Indian governments were provided with an opportunity to present their views. Bangladesh decision to withdraw issue from the United Nations and the consensus reached by the special political committee were welcomed in India. The Times of India described it as “a vindication of its consistently reasonable approach to the issue.” The United Nations decisions had provided another opportunity to Dhaka to discuss the issue with New Delhi in a spirit of realism and play.

Janata Government and the Farakka Dispute: The Janata Party which came to power after March 1977 general election, decided to strengthen India’s relations with her immediate neighbors and was aware that Farakka dispute was alive and without a solution the relations between India and Bangladesh could not become cordial. The Government of India therefore, speeded up the negotiations on the barrage issue and made fresh efforts to arrive at an overall settlement.

On 29th September 1977, the two countries arrived at comprehensive long-term and short-term agreements on the sharing of Ganga waters. The 1977 agreement was an improvement over the interim government order of April 1975. After the fall of Janata Government, Mrs. Gandhi once again succeeded in capturing power and was critical of the 1977 agreement. The Government of Bangladesh was also not satisfied with it. The points in dispute between India and Bangladesh are of two categories (1) those rousing passions temporarily, such as the storm over New Moore Island and the border wire fencing on the Assam border, (2) those with long implications such as the Farakka water dispute and sanctuary for insurgents in North – East India.

The items of the category are generally orchestrated whenever a political groups interested in discrediting the ruling establishment in Bangladesh used it for domestic purpose. In the case of the second category the providing of sanctuary to insurgents from North-East, India.
has gone down considerably in recent years. Farakka, however is a complex issue, made worse by neglecting to treat it for years at the political level.

Relations with Bangladesh improved rapidly during Janata period. The Janata regime recognized the legitimacy of the post-Mujib regime in Decca, signed with it five year agreement on the waters of Ganga and assured it that Pro-Mujib elements would not be allowed to carry their activities against the Bangla regime from the Indian bases. Though it was Mrs. Gandhi who helped Bangladesh achieve its independence, the relations between the two countries turned sour in notime after the death of President Mujib.

**Evaluation:** With the moral and material support of Government of India, the emergence of independent Bangladesh became possible, the dismemberment of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh had changed the power structure in the Indian sub-continent. Following the liberation of Bangladesh its relations with India remained very close for a few years. In fact, in the very first year, Sheik Mujib himself enthusiastically went in for signing a treaty of friendship with India.

During the period of Sheik Mujibur Rahaman, the interactions between the two countries in the political, social economic and cultural spheres were in full swing. The Martial law proclamation issued soon after take over by General Ershad on March 24th 1982, indicated the priorities of the new regime in respect of foreign policy as follows:

1. Good relations policy  
2. Regional co-operation in south Asia  
3. Adherence to the United Nations Charter  
4. Friendly relations with Islamic countries, and  
5. Unity and solidarity with the Third world countries and non-aligned nations

International response to the Bangladesh crisis was conspicuous by its absence. The big powers were concerned about the balance of power and not with the protection of human and political rights of the people of East Pakistan. The Third World countries were not prepared to take concerted action when their interests were not directly involved. The international response to the Bangladesh crisis demonstrated that maintenance of territorial integrity has priority over the protection of human rights. Indo-Bangladesh amity is essential for the maintenance of peace and stability in the subcontinent and the world. Historical, ideological and personality factors are obstructing the
development of cordial relations between these countries, Super power rivalry in the area is further aggravating the situation. Co-operation in economic and cultural spheres helped the emergence of harmonious relations between these countries and a durable and creditable opposition to the super power rivalries in area. It is difficult to assess the role of India in the crisis in the sub-continent. The merits of the role of India in the Bangladesh independence movement can be determined only in the long run, whether it has contributed to peace and stability in region or otherwise.

A number of factors are active in the determination of interaction between India and Bangladesh. India had always been friendly towards Bangladesh and made a number of gestures concerning the Farakka issue in the hope of strengthening the bonds of friendship. The anti-Indian and pro-Pakistan lobby which got encouragement from the ruling elite after the murder of Sheik Mujibur Rehaman left no stone unturned in instigating the people of Bangladesh against the Indian government. Their propaganda had made the people of Bangladesh suspicious concerning their countries’ interaction with India. During Sheik Mujib’s regime both the Governments signed a number of agreements and treaties. The Indo- Bangladesh Treaty, The Indo- Bangladesh boundary Agreement and interim Agreement on the Farakka Barrage are a few among them.

After the murder of Sheik Mujib, a number of governments tried to control the country. Among them President Zia-Ur-Rahaman was considered to be a successful person. The political instability in Bangladesh is responsible for complicating the bilateral issues existing between the two countries. The New Moore Island controversy and the Farakka Barrage problem are the two main areas where both the governments have opposite view points. But these issues are not as complicated as are sometimes projected by the leaders and Prime Ministers of both countries. It would not be wrong if we blame both these factors for playing adverse roles for their selfish interests in deteriorating cordial atmosphere that was existing in the beginning when Bangladesh got independent.

There is a need to create proper atmosphere for the solution of the problems and it would be beneficial for both the countries if they prefer to maintain brotherly relations In 1977 when political climate changed in India, the Janata Government wanted to strength the relations with its neighbors. The agreement of Farakka signed in 1977, through bilateral in nature, failed to
satisfy both the governments and after the re-emergence of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Government of India demanded the revision of the Agreement.

Mrs. Gandhi continued good neighborly relations with its immediate neighbors. The basic principles of foreign policy remained unaltered. Relations with Bangladesh improved rapidly during the Janata regime. It recognized the legitimacy of post-Mujib regime in Dacca, It signed with it a five year agreement on the use of Ganga waters, and assured it that pro-Mujib elements would not be allowed to carry on their activities against Bangladesh from the bases. After the re-emergence of Mrs. Indira Gandhi in 1980, the Congress government continued good neighborly relations with its neighboring countries.

**Indo-Soviet Relations**

The history of Russian relations with the Indian subcontinent goes back to the remote past. However the relations took a different turn after the Russian revolution. Early Russian knowledge of India was, however, too scanty and fragmentary. Lack of direct and regular contacts resulted in a largely poetic image of the country, a distant mysterious land, fabulously rich, etc. While the old Russian folklore abounded in popular characters connected with India, a fact indicative of the strong attraction felt towards it, it did not take place until the 15th century. Educated Russians derived their knowledge about India from the works coming through the Byzantine and the Balkans. Among the writings, of this period about India known in Russia, mention may be made of the Tales about the Indian Kingdom, beside Kusma Indikopol’s Christian Topography of the stars and Alexandria which contained some stray remarks about the country. A Russian account of India from the 12th or 13th Century and a Slavonic translation of a Latin tale described India as a rich country “not on fire but shining in gold.”

The first Russian, in fact the first European- for he preceeded vascoda Gama by a quarter of a century-to have come to India was one Afnasi Nikitin. After a journey which lasted three years, and not six hours as at present, he came to India and stayed in Deccan for a number of years. He saw, observed, made notes, made friends even made love and went back to Russia. He spoke of India with complete respect. In the 16th and 17th centuries, small colonies of Indian traders had settled on the ports of the Volga River. Peter the great issued special decrees for the protection of Indian merchants, and Emperor Aurangzeb sent an elephant all the way to St. Petersburg as a present for Peter the Great. Thus began, what a Pakistan news paper called, “elephant diplomacy”, when Jawaharlal Nehru sent two baby elephants for the children of Soviet Union.
From the days of October Revolution 1917, the Soviet Union started taking keen interest in Asia. Diplomatic relations were established between India and the Soviet Union on the 13th April, 1947. K.P.S. Menon, a keen observer and a diplomat stated that during the early years, relations between the Soviet and the Indians were soured firstly because of the suspicion in Indian minds regarding Russian intentions which were fostered in India from the imperialist times: and secondly because the Soviet leadership opted a strictly Marxist-Leninist approach to world affairs. The Indians viewed the Soviets as communists ready to convert the world into communism, while Soviets saw the world as pro-communist or anti-communist. Neutrality or non-alignment was a novel concept and it took time for the Soviet leadership to understand its implications.

After the independence, the position adopted by the India on the issue of Korea and Indo-China was appreciated by the Soviet Union. The Soviet delegate Gromyko took a sympathetic view of the Indian positions and generally supported India in the United Nations. Even at this early stage, there was co-operation amongst the Soviet and the Indian delegations in the United Nations on such as the representation of People’s Republic of China in the U.N. and the condemnation of the policy of apartheid practiced by South Africa. However, it was left to the successors of Stalin to lay the foundations of Indo-Soviet friendship. They openly supported the policy of non-alignment, gave generous aid and lend diplomatic support to India on such sensitive issue as Kashmir and Goa. During the mid 1950’s, the Soviet Union showered India with promise, praise and economic assistance.

Being a big power, bulk of whose territory lies in Asia and a sizable number of whose people are ethnically and culturally Asians. The Soviet Union’s interest in the affairs of Asia, particularly in south Asia, which is its next door neighbor, is understandable. Moscow has since the very outset recognized the geo-political importance of the Indian sub-continent because of its large territory, enormous human and natural resources, and vital geographical locations. Its attitude to the area has been radically different from the attitude of the U.S.A. and Western powers. Unlike them, the Soviet Union does not visualize the subcontinent only as an arena for the balancing game of great powers and concedes it an important role in Asia and in the world. Marx, it may be recalled, had called India not a poor country but a country of poor people. The other difference in approach of the Soviet Union and the Western powers is that former has looked upon the people inhabiting their region as essentially one, ethnically, culturally and
historically contrary to the approach of “perennial hostility” and historical antagonism, between India and Pakistan alleged to be rooted in their religious differences, the Soviet Union views their discords largely as a legacy of the colonial rule.

As Vice-president of the interim Government of India, Nehru declared at his first press conference on 7th September, 1946, that it would be the policy of his government to build up good relations with both great powers –the Soviet Union and the United States. In his very statement, he outlined free India’s non-aligned policy, maintaining that it would try to keep away from power politics of group aligned against another, which led in the past to two world wars and which may again lead to disaster on an even vaster scale.76

The Asian Relations Conference, held in New Delhi in March –April 1946, was attended by fourteen delegates from eight Asian Republics of the U.S.S.R. Jawaharlal Nehru who inaugurated the conference welcomed the Soviet delegates as “delegates from the Soviet Republics of Asia which has advanced so rapidly in our generation and which have so many lessons to us”.77

During the period 1955-65, Soviet-Indian trade made rapid strides. The December 1953, Trade Agreement which laid the foundation of Soviet Indian trade relations on a considerably large scale, was followed by the second and third agreements in November 1958 and June 1963.78 Soviet support to India’s claim on Goa, similarly, support to any issue relating to the liquidation of colonialism in general, had been made public from the very beginning. On their 1955 visit to India, the Soviet leaders had hoped that Goa would soon become a part of India. When the Indian forces liberated Goa from the Portuguese, Pravda flashed the news with banner headline “Portuguese colonialists are ousted form India. Indian forces liberate Goa, Daman and Diu.” When the Indian forces marched into Goa, Brezhnev, the then president of the U.S.S.R, was in Bombay. He supported the Government’s action.

The Kashmir issue figured again in the council in early 1957, when Pakistan raised it on the ground that India was integrating the state as a constituent part of the India Republic from 26th January 1957, on 14th February, Britain and U.S.A sponsored a resolution on Kashmir. The resolution noted that “de-militarization, preparatory to the holding of a free and impartial plebiscite under the united Nations auspices has not been achieved in accordance with the resolution of the U.N. commission for India and Pakistan”, It called for the setting of a temporary U.N. force in connection with de-militarization” and authorized the council president,
Gunnar Jarring of Sweden, to visit the sub-continent for the purposes of discussing the resolution with India and Pakistan. 79

Soviet delegate, Sobolev, on 18th February, proposed an amendment to the above resolution. He argued that the situation in Kashmir had changed considerably since 1948, when the Security Council first called for a plebiscite and urged bilateral negotiations by India and Pakistan without outside intervention of any sort. In a counter resolution, Sobolev deleted reference to the use of a temporary U.N. force in connection with de-militarization in Kashmir. 80

After the Soviet amendment was rejected; the Soviet Union vetoed the resolution sponsored by the Western powers on 20 February 1957. Explaining the use of veto, the Soviet delegate said that the charter of the United Nations, however, states clearly and unmistakably that the U.N armed forces may be used solely for the purpose of repelling aggression and restoring international peace. The dispatch of U.N. force to permit the holding of a plebiscite in Kashmir would be contrary to the charter and would be insulting to the national pride of people of India, 81

Pakistan again took the Kashmir question to the Security Council in January 1962 on the ground that speeches of certain Indian leaders revealed a plan to recapture the portion of Kashmir under Pakistan. Soviet Union consistently supported India’s stand on Kashmir problem.

**Sino-Indian Conflict -1962**

The Sino-Indian border conflict of 1962 put Indo- Soviet friendship to an acid test. The simultaneous eruption of the Cuban crisis further complicated the Soviet Union’s difficulties. On 25th October, Pravda published an editorial which spoke of notorious McMohan line and supported the Chinese proposals for ending the conflict them as constructive. As the Cuban passed crisis passed, the new Soviet stand surfaced in the form of an editorial in Pravda on 5th November which almost amounted to ordering China to stop fighting India. Entitled Negotiation is the road in setting the conflict, it declared, bloodshed cannot be allowed to continue. The Chinese did not accept McMohan line as the Sino-Indian border and laid claims to a large part of the Indian Territory in Ladakh and NEFA. Soviet Russia maintained a studious silence for a long time and then issued a statement of neutrality stating that India and China with whom the U.S.S.R enjoyed friendly relations would settle their disputes peacefully. The Soviet Union increased its economic aid and became a supplier of military hardware to India. In 1964, Mr. JawaharLal Nehru passed away. There was also change of leadership in the Soviet Union. However, under the new leadership in both the countries, their relations continued to be friendly.
**Indo-Pak war 1965**

The Soviet Union was immediately seized of the situation on hearing of the war between India and Pakistan. The Soviet Union made a diplomatic effort to limit the area of conflict and brought about pressure to bear upon both Pakistan and India to stop hostilities.\(^8^2\)

The Soviet Union also warned China to stay away from conflict as their intervention would lead to further escalation for which China would bear the consequence,\(^8^3\) it was the Soviet Union who invited the Indo-Pak leadership for a negotiated settlement at Tashkent and it was the untiring Soviet efforts which ultimately led to the Tashkent agreement. It may also be borne in mind that because of the climate of détente, the United States also supported Soviet moves to find settlement.\(^8^4\) The Soviet efforts were very ably summed up K.P.S.Menon, one of architects of the Indo-Soviet friendship when he described it as an epitome of Indo-Soviet friendship whose purpose is not to threaten or encircle any nation but to promote the cause of peace in the world more particularly in the East Asian region.\(^8^5\)

From 1967 to 1969 there were important exchanges at the level of heads of states between Moscow and New Delhi and these visits helped to further improve relations between the two countries. The Soviet Union had sought to improve its relations with Pakistan during this period. They had made it clear to India time and again that this would not be at the cost of their Indian friendship, but nevertheless, it was resented in India. Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi openly reacted stating we are not happy over Soviet decision to supply arms to Pakistan. According to Mr. Girilal Jain, a certain amount of resentment was unavoidable after the honeymoon.\(^8^6\) However, the Prime Minister made it clear that India’s policy towards the Soviet Union would remain unchanged.\(^8^7\) During this period, the Soviet Union continued its help to India. An Indian military mission went to Moscow in August 1963 to procure equipment, including missiles, to be used for India’s defense against China.

India and Soviet Union came close because they have common feelings against colonialism, imperialism and racialism. But the Soviet Union was closely associated with China and also wanted to maintain cordial relations with Pakistan against India’s wishes. The Soviet
Union kept itself neutral on Indo-Pakistan wars of 1947 and 1965. During Sino-Indian war 1962, when India approached the Soviet Union, it said that blood is thicker than water and further said that Chinese are my brothers and Indians are my friends. It shows that the Soviet union was in favor of China. In fact the USSR did want to help India but because it has to face USA in the Cuban crisis and did not want to have enmity with China, USSR acted as if it was close to China. Actually, USSR wanted to curb China’s influence in Asia but it could not, because of the Cuban Missile crisis in 1962. The world situation has changed by late 1960s; in 1969, USSR totally stopped arms supply to Pakistan. Pakistan played a mediator role between China and USA which resulted in the rapprochement between USA and China. At this juncture, the Soviet Union started coming closer to India. By 1971, Pindi-Peking-Washington axis was initiated and with American President Nixon’s visit to China in 1972 and the Sino-American détente started, But the Soviet Union could not do anything because of the détente between USSR and USA and started increasing its support to India, and also establishing friendly relations with West Germany and Japan. Finally, the Indo-American détente had a great impact on power relationships in the region and a large extent prompted the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace Friendship and Cooperation on 9th August 1971.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister of India in 1966. By the year 1970, she started playing a remarkable role in the international field she had very much strengthened her position in the country. After the split in the Congress, she emerged as the undisputed leader in the party. Mrs. Gandhi has adopted certain radical measures in India such as the Nationalization of Banks, Abolition of privy purses and the establishment of the socialistic pattern of society. The Soviet Union very much appreciated these developments in India. In the International field also these changes brought far-reaching consequences. The ideological rift started deepening between the Soviet Union and China. India was threatened by China and Pakistan. The United States openly supported Pakistan. Under these circumstances, India and Soviet Union came closer.

During the decade of 1970, the Soviet Union had become the second largest buyer of Indian goods. She had helped India is setting up of heavy industries. The Soviet Union was chief source for the supply of sophisticated military equipment. There was considerable diplomatic cooperation between the two countries in the United Nations. At the United Nations, the Soviet Union consistently supported India on the Kashmir issue. Both the countries had similar views
on all issue of West Asia. They supported each other on the disarmament problem. However, on some issue the views of the Soviet Union differed from that of India. On the question of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Soviet Union supported it and India refused to sign it. During this time, the relations between the United State and China became closer. The Soviet Union and India coordinated their moves. They realised that Indo-Soviet relations would be better attended to, if they entered into some treaty. Ultimately, Indo-Soviet Treaty was signed on 9th August, 1971.  

The Indo-Soviet Treaty 1971

In an atmosphere of mounting tension between India and Pakistan, caused by an unending flow of millions of refugees from East Bengal, helpless victims of mass terror, perpetrated by the West Pakistan military junta to crush the popular movement for a wide political and economic autonomy, and growing thereat of war, the Indian peninsula caused by the moral and material support of Washington and Beijing to Islamabad India and the U.S.S.R concluded a 20 year treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation on 9th August 1971 signed between India’s Foreign Minister Sardar Swaran Sigh and the Soviet Foreign Minister A.A. Gromyko at New Delhi.

The Indo-Soviet Treaty put a stamp of legality on the rapidly developing friendship and co-operation between the two countries over the years and elevated their mutual relations to a new and higher stage of development. In the preamble of the treaty, the contracting parties reaffirmed their faith in the principles of peaceful co-existence and co-operation between States with different political and social systems and their determination to abide by purposes and principles of the United Nations charter. Article 4 of the treaty records India’s respect for the peace-loving policy if the U.S.S.R. aimed strengthening friendship and co-operation with all nations and for India’s policy of Non-Alignment constituting an important factor in the maintence of universal peace and internal security and in the lessning of tensions in the world. A positive Soviet stand towards Indian policy of Non-Alignment has been time and again stated in the various state and party documents. It was prominently mentined in the Brezhnev’s Report to the 24th Party Congress in March 1971,
Mr. A.G.Noorani has elaborately written about the genesis and origin of the Indo-Soviet Treaty. He was of the opinion that the idea of the treaty was being negotiated between India and the Soviet Union since 1969. Mr.Pran Chopra stated that timing of the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty was very significant, although work on it was going for an year. The treaty is not a military alliance as NATO or SEATO. One of the clauses provides deterrence against a possible aggressor and further provides Indo- Soviet joint consultations in the event of aggression on any of the contracting parties. It also provides economic and cultural co-operation.

The Indo- Soviet friendship had proved the test of time and the relations continued on the basis of mutual understanding. The Soviet Union welcomed the Simla Agreement and supported the Indian initiative to resolve outstanding issues bilaterally. The Soviet Union welcomed Mrs. Gandhi’s stand on the Indian ocean being made a zone of peace. Mr.Leonid Brezhev’s visit to India in November 1973 further improved Indo- Soviet relations in the field of science, technology and trade.

Indo- Soviet treaty was an absolute necessity. At the time, when it was signed India had been humbled by China in 1962. China had threatened to attack India in 1965. At that time when war between India and pakistan was going on. Even in 1971, when the crisis in Pakistan developed, China categorically declared that it would back Pakistan against India. The attitude of Nixon administration was not one of neutrality. The United States made it clear to India that in the event of war between India and Pakistan, India should not rely upon any support from United States and Kissinger wanted the US to tilt in favour of Pakistan. Under the circumstances, there was no other option for the leaders of India but to enter into an agreement with the Soviet Union. Luckily for India, the Soviet Union also wanted India’s help on account of her differences with China. Experience has shown that the signing of the treaty was more than indicated in December, 1971 when Pakistan attacked India, On account of the Soviet support, both inside and outside the United Nations, India was able to stand against Pakistan, China and United States.

Indo-Soviet relations are age old. They have common interests since time immemorial. The Indo-Soviet relationship is the first of its kind, between countries of different political systems. Historically, the demands and aspirations of both the Soviet and Indian people tally in some respects with the socialist goals. During Lenin’s period, India and the Soviet Union had relations which inspired Indian national leaders towards freedom movement. After Stalin came
to power, the relations between these two countries were somewhat cold. Following Stalin’s death and with the emergence of Khrushchev leadership in the Soviet Union, once again relations between the two countries returned to normality. However, these relations have taken a new shape—a new direction only with the assumption of the Prime Ministership in India by Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

**The Bangladesh Crisis**

With the partition in 1947, the emergence of East Pakistan, with its independent identity in the sphere of culture and language and its acutely strong national consciousness, created regional economic disparity in the very structure of Pakistan. Ever since the birth of Pakistan, politics in East Bengal largely centred round the ventilation of regional grievances and out these emerged the demand for regional autonomy which was denied by the president of Pakistan. This led to the crisis of 1971 that brought about the birth of Bangladesh.

In December, 1970, Mujib’s Awami League had a landslide victory of 168 seats out of 169 reserved for East Pakistan in the National Assembly of 313, with the record polling of 72.6 per cent of votes cast. In contrast, Bhutto’s people’s party could capture only 81 of the 144 seats earmarked for West Pakistan. Bhutto emerged as a pronouncedly negative character in East Bengali’s just demands. After Mujib’s call on March 7th, 1971 to prepare for non-cooperation, the isolation of military junta was complete as evidenced by the refusal of the East Pakistan judges to conduct swearing in of the new Governor General Tikka Khan on March 9. Followed by Mujib’s announcement on March 15, that he would be taking over the civil administration of East Bengal. The liberation of Bangladesh become the reality with the surrender of pak army at the fall of Dacca on December 16th, 1971.

The Soviet president during the Bangladesh crisis wrote several letters to president Yahya Khan for a negotiated settlement with the leaders of the Eastern wing of Pakistan. During the crisis, it became evident that the Washington-Beijing axis was determined to support Pakistan and to deter India from intervening in favour of Bangladesh. On 9th August, 1971, the Indo-Soviet Treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation was signed, The United States and China decided to help Pakistan against Bangladesh and India. India was in a great need of internal support to defeat United States—China designs in the region.

The role of the Soviet Union during Bangladesh crisis was remarkable. Its consistent support was a great strength to India. On 3rd December, 1971, Pakistan air force mounted a
massive air attack on India’s Western border. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in a broadcast to the nation declared that India was at war with Pakistan. The United States raised the issue at the United Nations Security Council supporting Pakistan and demanding immediate cease-fire. The Soviet Union opposed the United States and used its veto power in favour of India. The Indian press including the Indian Express, and the Times of India, praised the Soviet Union for its great support to the Indian stand at the United Nations Security Council. The Lok Sabha passed a resolution stating “The entire country was greatful to the Soviet Union” for its efforts and support to India. The Soviet Union had taken measures to open a diversionary front in Sinkiang if Chinese decided to intervene in the Indo-Pakistan war. On 16th December, 1971, the Pakistan forces in Bangladesh surrendered before the Indian army. On 25th December 1971, the Soviet Union recognised Bangladesh and Mrs. Gandhi was grateful to the Soviet Union. She informed the Soviet leaders, “It was undoubtedly your standing by us during such an hour which gave us new encouragement and we could further cement our longstanding friendship”.

After the emergence of Bangldesh, the Soviet Union considered India as the dominant power in South Asia. The Indian nuclear explosion in Pokhran (1974) was a subject of severe criticism by almost all nuclear powers except the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union maintained a steady silence. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Soviet Union far from condemning the Indian explosion seemed to endorse it which on the basis of known Soviet views represents a real Soviet concession to India. When the Allahabad High Court declared Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s election invalid, the Soviet press sympathised with her. The Soviet paper Pravda supported Mrs. Gandhi’s declaration of internal emergency on 25th June,1975, and considered it an expedient decision. The Soviet leadership supported Mrs. Gandhi’s continuance in power as a guarantee against Western capitalist monopoly.

Mrs. Gandhi acquired a socialist image from the time of the Congress split in 1969. Her measures like banks Nationalisation, Abolition of privy Purses and her principle of “Garibi Hatao” enhanced her status in the Soviet Union. The Indo-Soviet position in Bangladesh had weakened after the assassination of Shaik Mujibur Rehaman.

India and the Soviet Union have been supporting each other in almost all major world issues but differed on very few occasions. There is more convergence in their attitude towards major world issues than divergence. In the case of Arab-Israeli war of 1967 and 1973 both India
and the Soviet Union wanted to get the right of self determination to Arabs for which they have been fighting for a long time. India supported Egypt because it had a close strategic interest in the Suez Canal which was crucial for her trade routes. India greatly benefitted by forming a close alliance with Egypt which for many years prevented her rival Pakistan being able to rally support by an appeal to Arab countries. India and Egypt are among the founders of Non-Alignment policy. India did not give a chance to Pakistan to come close to Egypt, which is an Islamic country. Apart from all these, India and Egypt are traditional friends, whose relations go back to centuries. Whereas Soviet Union helped Egypt because she could not see the Arab armies, which she had equipped, being smashed time and again. She also felt that the Arab because of regaining the occupied territories was quite popular with most of the countries of the world. Soviet Union was determined to guard against the possibility of damaging the détente and it wanted to help Arabs to put an end to the American influence over West Asia and to have its control on it.

India and the Soviet Union differed with each other in the context of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) towards disarmament. India was one of the countries who abstained from this in the UNO. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty created an area of some friction in Indo-Soviet relations. Among the Third world countries, India has been contributing towards disarmament right from the beginning but disarmament was given practical direction under the leadership of Mrs. Gandhi.

In March 1977, Mr. Morarji Desai became the Prime Minister. At a conference held soon after assuming office, Mr. Morarji Desai said that his Government would follow the policy of proper Non-Alignment. He also said that his Government would not wish to have any special relations with any one country. Commenting on the Treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation, the new Prime Minister said that if it maent that India should not have friendship with other countries then it would have to change. Atleast we will not act upon it in that manner. Again four days later addressing the 1st joint of the sixth parliament, the acting President stated that the new government would follow a path of genuine non-Alination.

The Soviet leadership and mass media was critical of the Janata Party during the emergency years. It appeared that with the defeat of Mrs. Gandhi, Indo-Soviet relations would suffer a set-back. The Soviet Foreign Minister A.A. Gromyko paid a hurried visit to New Delhi to improve relations with the new Janata Government. After staying in office for sometime,
the Janata government realized that foreign policies do not change with the change of
Governments, as they are based on national interests. Mr. Desai emphasised that Indo-Soviet
relations were not based on ideological but on national interests. Pravda on 10th May 1977,
described the Janata Government’s decision to welcome the Soviet Foreign Minister as a
practical step affirming continuity of friendly policy of India towards Soviet Union. In the
Indo-Soviet communique signed, before A.A. Gromyko Left for moscow, on 27th April 1977,
the two countries reaffirmed their faith in the spirit of the treaty and noted with satisfaction their
“identical or close position on many important world problem.”

India’s External Affairs minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, assured the Soviet foreign
Minister that the bonds of friendship between our two countries are strong enough to survive the
demands of divergent systems, the fate of an individual or the fortunes of a political party.
As he left New Delhi, the Soviet foreign Minister observed that he had useful and constructive talks
during his three days visit.

As the Janata Government surveyed the international scene, it realized that India was still
dependent on the Soviet Union on a number of issues of foreign policy and that the two
countries had many common purposes. Prime Minister Desai therefore readily accepted the
Soviet invitation to visit Moscow. The Indo-Soviet relation was evident when, in disregard of
protocol, president Brezhnev himself turned up at the Moscow Air Port on 21st October with the
entire top brass of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Soviet Government to welcome
the Prime Minister. In his speech in Moscow, Prime Minister Morarji Desai emphasised that
Indo-Soviet relations were not, based on personalities or ideologies but on equality, national
interest and common purposes.

Atal Behari Vajpayee gratefully recalled the consistent principled support given by the
Soviet Union to India on matters of vital interest to us. The joint Indo-Soviet declaration
signed on 26th October, 1977 indicated the various important issues on which India had received
help and would continue to receive, Soviet support. It also revealed that two countries still had
many common purposes. One such purpose—and an important one at that—is to prevent the
spread of Chinese influence in South Asia. If the Soviets need India in their plan to encircle
China, India too cannot afford to give up its special relations with the Soviet relations as long as
China is a threat to its security.
The Janata Government’s posture towards the Sino-Indian border dispute appears to be more rigid than that of the Indira Gandhi’s Government. Speaking to a Japanese news agency on the issue in November, 1977, the Prime Minister of India said, that China had been in occupation of over 14,000 square miles of Indian territory since the 1962 border operations and that unless this question was settled, there cannot be complete understanding between our two countries. Another common purpose is to minimise the influence of outside powers in Pakistan and persuade Pakistan to settle down to good neighbourly relations with India. India wished Soviet leaders every success in their efforts to urge Pakistan to improve its relations with India. And the Soviets continued to do so right 1971, when Bangladesh crisis threatened peace in the region.

Another common purpose is to prevail upon outside powers, at least to reduce their military activity in the Indian Ocean if not complete withdraw. Apart from their common security interest, India and the Soviet Union had close economic links when the Janata Government came to power in March 1977. The development of trade and economic ties between India and the Soviet Union figured prominently in the Desai-Brezhnev talks in Moscow in October, 1977, and the Indo-Soviet Joint declaration issued at the conclusion of the talks, envisaged the establishment of groups of experts of two countries to study and define prospects of cooperation in such areas as iron and steel and non-ferrous metallurgy, oil and coal industries, agriculture, irrigation, etc., as well as cooperation in assistance to Third world countries in economic development.

Soviet help in building up India’s defence capability has been substantial. Soviet Union played a crucial role between the mid-sixties and the mid-seventies in strengthening and modernizing India’s armed forces and defence production. This increased India’s dependence on the Soviet Union in matters of defence.

Mrs. Gandhi came to power in 1980 with a massive mandate from the people. The Janata leaders had been rather critical on the occasion of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. Mrs. Gandhi’s response to the Soviet action was reasonable. She voiced her opposition to all forms of outside interference in the international affairs of South East Asia. She hoped that the Soviet troops would leave Afghanistan as soon as the normal conditions are restored.
Indo-Soviet relations have been dominated by India’s security requirements. As a consequence of increased military and economic aid to Pakistan by the U.S., the situation changed. U.S. felt that Pakistan was a frontline state designed to check Soviet importance. Indo-Soviet relations in 1980s are based on the fact that Soviet Union and Indian interests in the region have become the same. Indo-Soviet relations would reveal that in future their national interest would not collide. The Soviet Union would continue to support India and accept India as a dominant power in south Asia. The friendship between these two countries is most essential to check the growth of U.S.-China –Pak axis. The Soviet Union supported the Indian polices to strengthen the non-Aligned movement.

Today, India is anxious to colloborate more closely with the Soviet Union, particularly in defence supply and production, in order to bridge the gap in the degree of armaments sophistication vis-à-vis Pakistan. India was making a conscious efforts to diversify its defence purchases and thus reduce its dependence on a single super power source. The Soviet Union needs the Indian connections not only as a counter-balance to China, but also as an access point to the Third World countries represented by the Non-Aligned Movement. Ever since the first kashmir veto in 1957 in the United nations Security Council, the Soviet Union has stood by India in practically every case. The only exception was the Chinese attack in 1962, but the Soviet Union then had genuine problems arising out of its fraternal and ideological links with China. India is getting closer to the Soviet Union in a variety of ways. It was the United states that pushed it closer. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi very much favoured the continuing friendly relations between the two countries-India and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union and India have the same perceptions regarding peace in the Indian sub-continent and Indian ocean. This remains the bedrock on which Indo-Soviet friendship rests.

The importance of Mrs. Gandhis’s visit 1983 to the Soviet Union is assessed from several angles. The Soviets whole heartedly endorsed the Indian stand on the principle of international peace. Frienship with the Soviet Union remains a crucial ingredient of Indian foreign policy because the consistent Soviet support to Indian security is as welcome as it vital, but the relationship has nothing to do with either ideology or sentiment. It is based entirely on the compatability of the national interests of the two sides. And while India and Soviet Union need each other, neither can or should take the other for gramted. This is the message Mrs. India Gandhi has tried to convey not only to Moscow but also to world capitals.
Apart from the bilateral economic and other issues, Pakistan inevitably figured in Mrs. Gandhi’s discussions with Soviet leaders. The joint declaration during Mrs. Gandhi’s visit to the Soviet Union in 1983 did not mention Afghanistan. Mrs. Gandhi at her press conference reiterated India’s known position, “we are against any type of interference but the issue was complication by the flow of arms from outside the country to the rebels who are fighting the Kabul regime”. China too figured at the talks between Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Brezhnev when he assured Mrs. Gandhi that any improvement in Sino-Soviet relations could not mean dilution of the quality of Indo-Soviet relations. As a results of Mrs. Gandhi’s visit the Indo-Soviet Treaty has been restored to its original status. The Janata Government downgraded it. During Mr. Desai’s visit to the Soviet Union, the Indian experts had presented a new formulation “spirit of the treaty”. The Soviets were unhappy but accepted it.114 Hailing India’s foreign policy and her role in the international arena in a message to President Zail Singh and Prime minister Indira Gandhi on the occasion of the 37th Independence day of the country, the presidium of the USSR, supreme Soviet and council of minister said that it was with authority that India as a chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, resounds in the struggle for preserving peace, eliminating the threat of a nuclear war, curbing arms race and for equitable cooperation among states. The messages described growing Indo-Soviet friendship and multi-faceted ties as a “valuable asset” of the people of the two countries. India is a beacon to other developing countries, showing them the principal landmarks of their own way to genuine independence.115

Mr. Arnold Ruter the visiting Soviet Vice-President and President of the Republic of Estonia remarked “the 1971 peace friendship treaty between India the Soviet Union was a treaty for co-operation for peace in Asia and the world and the progress of the two countries.116 It is important to note the interest the Soviet Union is taking in India’s progress and the help in the economic development of the country and also in times of peace and war,

Mrs. Gandhi in her address to the United Nations General Assembly in 1983 questioned the indulgence in the armament race. She said the earth belongs to us all. Let us cherish it in peace and true brotherhood based on the dignity and equality of man. She added, I am here to give this message to the entire world and I am here on a quest of peace and co-operation. I have the privilege of addressing not only on behalf of the people of India but also on behalf of 100 other members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Mrs. Gandhi continued when the Non-Aligned plead with the aligned to give up confrontation and conflict, it is not presumption. We are aware
of our own weakness, of the unnecessary discords and disputes between ourselves, but beign militarily weak, we do not have find justification for strength. Being familiar with pain and suffering we do not want them.  

The Soviet Union and India have been admiring each other in their policies on anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism. India has been the champion of the liquidation of imperialism and coloniakism and the Soviet Union is the champion’s champion towards this. Soviet Union’s interest in peace and stability in an area close to its southern borders still remains pivotal to its foreign policy. And good relations between the “blood brothers” India and Pakistan are vital for attainment of peace and stability. But a marked difference in the situation arising in 1965 and the other in 1971 precluded the Soviet Union from following a Tashkent type initiative where as the 1965 Indo-pak conflict had at its root the old dispute between the two states over territory of Kashmir. But the situation in 1971 was radically different. First, the movement in East Bengal had all the characteristics of a national liberation movement. Secondly, the Sino-United States axis, largely a post 1965 development, contributed its full share in encouragement to West Pakistan military regime not to go in far a political settlement with elected representatives of East Bengal. The Soviet Union took the line of opposition to proposals for a cease-fire not because it favoured continuation of armed conflict between the two neighbours in the subcontinent but because it thought that in absence of a political settlement between the West Pakistani rulers and the representatives of East Bengal, no durable peace was possible. It acted without any bias against Pakistan in opposing cease-fire proposals and showed genuine concern for peace by insisting not only on a cese-fire between the armies of the two countries but on cessation of blood shed.

The emerging Beijing-Washington axis towards which Islamabad also contributed its might egged on the Paksitani rulers to continue their reprisals against the people of Bangladesh and took a right posture of hostility towards India. Washington’s chorus of balanced relationship of the subcontinent with the outside world had been joined by Beijing. By the Nixon-Chou communique both USA and China sought to arrogate to themselves a superiir role in ordering the affairs of the region. But in their statements, Soviet leaders have been time and again emphasising the inalienable right of the states of the area to determine their pattern of relationship with the outside world and solve their intra-regional problems through their bilateral efforts without outside interference.
Indo-Soviet friendship safeguarded some vital political, economic and military interests of India and the Janata Government did not endanger those interests. The Congress Government deserves credit for putting Indo-Soviet friendship on a firm foundation. The Janata Government’s credit not just for ensuring the continuance of friendship but also for strengthening it further. For eg., the Indo-Soviet protocol of 1978 provided for an almost painless transfer of Soviet capital resources to India, for a transfer of technology more sophisticated than what had been supplied till then to India, and for India’s right to use this technology even in plants set up without Soviet aid.

With the split in the Indian National Congress in 1969, Indira Gandhi successfully projected a radical image of herself. The Soviet press and leaders sincerely believed that she represented the progressive force in India, that her commitment to socialism was deep and firm, and that her opponents who established the Janata party eventually in 1977, were all reactionaries representing pro-western, pro-monopoly and anti-communist, Hindu-chauvinist elements in the Indian politics. When Indira Gandhi clamped emergency rule in the country in June 1975, and when the Government arrested most of those who formed the new cabinet in March 1977, Moscow strongly and consistently backed her.

A few weeks in office, the Janata Government realised the realities in politics among nations which conditioned foreign policies that radical changes in their basic content became almost impossible, no matter how great the change in the government might be. Janata Government realized that India was still dependent on the Soviet Union on a number of issues of foreign policy. The Janata Government continued the policy of friendship with the Soviet Union. India and the Soviet Union had close economic links when the Janata Government came to power in March 1977. After Indira Gandhi came to power she cozied up to Soviet union and the warmth and sincerity that prevailed earlier was restored.

**Evaluation**

The development of Indo-Soviet relations contributed greatly towards peace, stability and progress in South Asia. The friendship and co-operation between USSR and India have been an important factor in international life. They are exercising a favourable influence on the
solution of the most pressing and acute international problems existing in Asia and the World. The Soviet Union and India, together with the other peace loving countries have been making vigorous efforts to resolve the major problems of today which are vital for universal peace. These include the political settlement of the Middle-East crisis, the ensuring of the relaxation of tensions. The final and complete elimination of colonialism and racism, the attainment of general and complete disarmament, and the disbandment of all aggressive military blocs. On most of the internal issues, both the countries agreed with each othert.

Based on mutual trust, equality and respect, the close ties between the USSR and India meet the basic vital interests of the two countries. The conclusion of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation placed these relations on a more stable economic and political foundation. This treaty is not aimed at against any third party. It is a genuine act of peace, raising Indo-Soviet friendship and co-operation to a new stage, and accorded with the interests of the active defence of peace and the strengthening of security in Asia and the world as a whole. This treaty marked a change in India’s foreign policy. It was the first political treaty concluded by India with a big power.

Though there were minor irritants at times, between India and Soviet Union, they were not beyond solution. The Indo- Soviet relations stood the test of time. India has not shown any hesitation in being close to the Soviet Union. In no way, the Soviet Union poses a military threat to the subcontinent. Friendship with India has served the Soviet Union’s interest too. The Indian Government and the great majority of the Indian public favour close ties with the Soviet Union because ties helped India in building her economy and defence potentials.

During the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962, Soviet Union extended support to India. During the Indo-Pak War of 1965, Soviet Union played an important role in bringing about a cease-fire. Convergences between the Indian and the Soviet foreign policies lay in areas of vital interest to both the states. Differences between the Indian and the Soviet foreign policies arose from their origins, their ultimate objectives, and from the different capabilities of the states. None of these were synchronised. India’s foreign policy was rooted in the concepts of autonomy, humanity and development. Indian and Soviet Governments chose to build their relationship on the basis of conveniences in their policies, rather than emphasize their differences. Circumstances made this attitude mutually advantageous especially during Mrs. Gandhi’s term in office. This was
especially due to the fact that India lacked the power to oppose both the super powers at the same time and the Soviet Union lacked allies in Asia and looked for friends.

During the late 1970’s, the Janatha Government differed with Moscow on Vietnam’s military intervention in Kampuchea and on Idi Amin’s brutal regime in Uganda. The, then, Prime Minister, Morarji Desai had publicly talked about abrogating the Indo-Soviet treaty. The relations between India and Soviet Union during Janata rule continued to be as cordial as before. Though the Treaty of 1971 marked a change in India’s foreign policy, the relations between India and the Soviet Union grew closer over the years.

Apart from their common security links India and the Soviet Union had close economic links when the Janata Government came to power in March 1977. The Janata Government did not maintain any “special” relations with any country but after staying in office for some time, the Janata Government realised that foreign policies do not change with change of governments as they are based on national interests. It also realized that India was still dependent on the Soviet Union on a number of issue of foreign policy. Mrs. Gandhi succeeded in securing Soviet support by concluding a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation. After his reemergence the Indo-Soviet relations improved further. Mrs. Gandhi favoured the continuing friendly relation between the two countries. Mrs. Gandhi maintained very intimate relations with Soviet Union.

**Indo-U.S. Relations**

India and the United States are thousands of miles apart. These two countries have different races, cultures, habits and geographical settings. The social structures, political systems and economic organizations are strikingly different. After the end of Cold War, United States is the sole superpower left on the world stage and continues to call shots all over the world. Indian happens to be one of the poorest comes in the world and because of other factors like size, military strength and its location is a leading middle-power. Despite these differences, the two countries have much in common. They cherish and relish common ideas of democracy, liberty and racial equality. Both reposed immense faith in the United Nations as an instrument to bring world peace and international harmony. The two great democracies can ignore each other at their own peril. Each of them exerts its influence on international affairs in their own way-the United States very much more than India. Both their foreign policies often clash with each other largely on global issues and not so much on bilateral issues. After the Second World War, the United States emerged as one of the two superpowers. The major objective of American foreign policy
in the post Cold War era can be summarized as the containment of communism and the expansion of Soviet Union by rearmament, military alliances and economic and military aid to those countries which profess its ideology. As the Cold War intensified the American fervor for containment of communism increased by leaps and bounds. After China became communist, the United States leaders were fully convinced that the communist threat to Asia was real and that military alliances were necessary to check the spread of communism in Asia.

**India’s Policy of Nonalignment**

Thus, while the United States embarked on a policy of military alliances, establishing military bases all over the world and giving military aid to its allies, in the name of containment of communism. India having a different view of world politics and international communism opposed the Cold War and the block system in international politics. It decided to follow a dynamic and positive policy of nonalignment. Nonalignment, as explained by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, meant noninvolvement with any military bloc. India wanted to be friends with all countries of the world and would not join any alliance. Nonalignment did not mean neutrality and was not a negative policy. It was a dynamic and positive policy.

This Indian stance was in direct confrontation to the American foreign policy of containment of international communism. For the US, the dominant issue was to check the so-called aggressive and expansionist nature of international communism, all the issues, such as European colonialism, racial discrimination and other issues pale into insignificance and were of secondary importance. It was under a belief that once international communism was tackled and contained, the other issues relating to Afro Asian countries and other issues of the world at Lord’s could be easily tackled and solved. As a self assumed and self-declared leader of the “free world”, United States nurtured fond hopes that India, a non-Communist country would appreciate its stand and support in the containment of communism. American leadership was so much obsessed with the idea of containing international communism that any country which refused to extend cooperation in this aspect was treated to be its enemy and who was undermining American national interest and foreign policy objectives. They suspected India’s nonalignment indirect support to the communist block headed by Soviet union. The American Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles once declared: Those who are not with us are against us.

The objectives of the Indian foreign policy during the early years of independence were to eliminate the Western presence from Asia, and to establish a group of states which could
powerfully sponsor Asian objectives used in the global arena. It wanted the like-minded non-aligned nations to work together. India was emerging as an independent regional power with a certain role to play. All this came into conflict with the American policy of forging world-wide cooperation and alliances against international communism.

**The China Question**

Closely related to the issue of the containment of communism was the China question which figured largely in the relationship of United States in India and strained it. When the new Communist Government under Mao Tse-Tung came into existence in the mainland China and the Nationalist Government of Chiang Kai-Shek retreated to the island of Formosa in 1949, both India and China found themselves poles apart in their relationship with the regimes. American Government with its inimical attitude towards communism considered the new Communist government in China as an hostile one and refused to extend diplomatic recognition to the new regime in mainland China. It recognized the Chiang’s Nationalist regime in Formosa is the only real and illegitimate government of China because it perceived the friendly Nationalist government of Formosa is vital for its security interest in East Asia.

India, on the other hand, extended its diplomatic recognition to the People’s Republic of China on 30 December, 1949, acknowledging it as the only legitimate government of China. India believed that because of the geographical proximity with China, it was in its best interest to maintain friendly relations with the People’s Republic of China. India did not recognize the Nationalist Government of Formosa. The Indian leaders considered that the government in Formosa depending upon the American support represented a new kind of imperialism in Asia.

Soon after the establishment of the People’s government in China, both India and the Soviet Union began to support the representation of the regime in the United Nations. This created an additional hostility between the United States and India, as the United States by the vehemently opposed the entry of China into the United Nations. Both United States and India had their own arguments for and against the admission of Communist China into the United Nations. While the Indian government advocated China’s case on the principle of universality on which the United Nations should be based, America opposed it maintaining that the commonest government in China was not the true representative of China. The United States continued to oppose the move to admit Communist China as a member of the United Nations till 1971.
However, in 1971, it changed its stance and supported China’s representation in the United Nations is the year saw other important changes in the US policy towards China.

With the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, the ‘China question’ assumed a new dimension in Indo-American relations. The American Government perceived that the attack South Korea was the result of a crafty and evil design planned by Soviet Union in collaboration with China. The American Government hoped that India would now seek Communist aggressiveness and stop championing the cause of China’s entry into United Nations. The American delegate urged the United Nations to condemn the Chinese aggressiveness, which India did not support. On the other hand India continued to insist that China be admitted into United Nations.

At this juncture, Pakistan’s another important state in the Indian subcontinent came onto the scene. Its acrimonious relationship with India and its desire to be at par with India military made it to align itself with the United States. Though superficially it professed that it was cooperating with America to contain communism, its main intention was to strengthen itself militarily against India rather than the containment of communism. Skilful Pakistani diplomacy also managed not to annoy the United Nations at the same time by its continuing friendly relations with People’s China with whom the United States still had an adversarial relationship.

During the entire 1950s, Pakistan’s supported the United States on most of the international issues. In the entire history of Indo- US relationship, Pakistan’s remained an important factor influencing their relationship.

**United States and the Kashmir Issue**

Kashmir has been a bone of contention between India and Pakistan. American posture and Kashmir issue created lot of resentment in India. Because of the US attitude to the dispute in the form of the support to it in the United Nations and US military assistance to Pakistan, it caused a lot of heartburn and a rift in Indo- American relations until the middle of 1960s. The American stand on the Kashmir issue from the very beginning was pro-Pakistani and unsympathetic to India. The Indian stand was that Pakistan being an aggressor in Kashmir is asked to vacate the territory it illegally occupied. Pakistan, in order to divert the issue, racked up other issues like Junagarh, other states inKathiawar along with the Kashmir issue. America supported the Pakistani stand and said that the discussion of the question of Kashmir did not exclude the consideration of all the questions that were involved including that of Junagarah. The
United States did not, however, challenge the legality of Kashmir’s accession to India and recognised India’s sovereignty over Kashmir. United States declined to call Pakistan an aggressor in Kashmir. It continued to maintain that the invasion of Kashmir by Pakistan did not constitute an act of hostility. While United States overlooked the well established facts of Pakistani aggression on Kashmir, it greatly emphasised on the need to settle the issue by means of plebiscite. The cold-shouldering attitude of United States towards India’s complaint against tribal invasion aroused furious resentment in India. It was felt for the Indians to understand how on the one hand, the United States conceded that the Kashmir’s sovereignty had been transferred to India and on and refused to support India’s case that the tribal invasion aided and abetted by Pakistan constituted an act of aggression.

Jawaharlal Nehru had declared that the plebiscite would be held in Kashmir under the supervision of the United Nations and the issue will be decided as soon as the invaders had been driven from Kashmiri soil. The United States, however, insisted on India holding the plebiscite in Kashmir. While speaking in the Security Council on 10th February 1948, Nehru reiterated the same line of argument. There seemed to be no other way of bringing peace to that part of the world but only through Plebiscite. Free, fair and just. There is nothing between our vision that will induce the tribesmen to retire except such an arrangement as that. Thus the United States neither criticised Pakistan’s for its sinister role in Kashmir not brought any pressure on it to withdraw its groups from illegally occupied Kashmir. But the American government as well as the American press continued to criticise India for not abiding by United Nations resolutions and the proposals of various United Nations Comissions on Kashmir. The United States along with other Western countries pressurized the Indian Government to accept to conduct plebiscite under the United Nations aegis. They put so much pressure that India had to come out openly against such British and American pressure. The Indian representative in the Security Council was deeply depressed. Here remarked”. it is incomprehensible to us why pressure should always be brought to bear on India to acquiesce in the wrong and why, for a change, some pressure should not be brought into bear on the other side to acquiesce in the right on the same grounds. Prime Minister Nehru also protested against such Western pressure. While addressing his monthly press conference, he said:” The Government of India would not give in on the question of Kashmir, whatever be the pressure tactics employed by some countries-India would under no circumstances allow herself to be stampeded into yielding to pressure tactics. In February
1954, the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir unanimously ratified the accession to India; an action which India claimed was equivalent to a plebiscite.

At the request of Kashmir, the Security Council resumed the discussion on the Kashmir issue in 1957. On 24th of January, the United States along with Australia, Columbia, Cuba and Great Britain submitted a draft resolution. It reminded the governments of India and Pakistan of the principles embodied in the previous resolutions of the Security Council and the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan, namely, that the final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir would be in accordance with the will of the Kashmiri people expressed through the Democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the direction of United Nations. It specifically declared that the convening of the Constituent Assembly and any action taken by such an Assembly or any party would not constitute a disposition of the State in accordance with the above principles. 124 There was a widespread feeling in India that the United States wanted a pro-Pakistani solution of the Kashmir question because it had its eyes on the strategy location of Kashmir, and while Pakistan became a US military Ally, India had refused to align with it in the Cold War. Indo-American relations were very much strained due to the India support to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.

The Korean War

After the Kashmir issue, another issue which put to test the Indo-American relations was the Korean War which took place in June 1950. Both India and the United States considered the outbreak of hostilities is a threat to the peace and stability of the East Asian region and in fact to world peace. India supported the American stand during the initial phase of the war. The Security Council met to consider the Korean situation and passed on 25th of June a resolution branding North Korea as an aggressor and calling upon the North Koreans to withdraw to the 38th parallel and end of hostilities 125 On 27th of June, the Security Council passed another American sponsored resolution asking member states to furnish assistance to South Korea for repulsing the armed attack and for establishing peace and security in the region. 126 Along with the United States, India supported both the resolutions of the Security Council. India’s support to the Security Council’s resolutions of 25th of June and 27th of June, 1950 was highly welcomed in the United States as it had sponsored both the resolutions. Nehru was greatly admired for his thoughtful action. The New York Times in one of its editorials wrote: “India’s decision to accept the United Nations resolution calling for a military support to South Korea will be received
throughout the democratic world with the profound satisfaction. One can almost say that it puts the finishing touch to the bulwark that the Free World was erecting against the North Korean aggression.\textsuperscript{127} But the identity of Indo-American attitude on the Korean issue and the consequent American praise of India did not last long. On 7\textsuperscript{th} July, 1950, the Security Council passed another resolution which the United States supported, but India abstained on it. By this resolution, the Security Council asks member states of the United Nations “to furnish such assistance to the Republic of South Korea as may be necessary to repeal the armed attacks… And make such forces and other assistance available to a unified command under the United Nations.” By this resolution, the Security Council also requested the United States to nominate a commander for the Indian forces in Korea.\textsuperscript{128} As India had supported the earlier resolutions of the Security Council, asking member states to furnish assistance to South Korea, its abstention appeared to the United States as withdrawal from its military commitment, and being hypocritical. Consequently, the United States felt disappointed with India’s approach. In truth, India’s viewpoint on the Korean issue greatly differed from that of the United States. Being an infant republic which won its independence only three years ago, it hesitated to involve itself in a military commitment abroad. However, it gave its moral support for the U.S action. It also sent a medical team to South Korea as a gesture of its support to the UN action. Speaking in the Parliament on 3 August, 1950, Prime Minister Nehru said that the best assistance India could render in that grave crisis was to help limit the area of conflict and try to end it. He declared that to provide military assistance was beyond India’s capacity and that such assistance, further, make little difference.\textsuperscript{129}

**American Arms Aid to Pakistan**

United States decision to give military aid to Pakistan was another thorny issue in Indo-American relations for many decades and which provoked strong anti-American feeling in India. The Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement between the United States and Pakistan which was made in May 1954 facilitated in US military aid to Pakistan and it gave a severe jolts to friendly relations between India and the United States. It came to India as “a bombshell” the shock of which was perhaps” next only to that of Pakistan’s abetment of the tribal invasion of Kashmir in 1947.”\textsuperscript{130}
The major concern of the US foreign policy makers during the early years of the Cold War was national security. The chief foreign policy object of America was to contain communism by encircling both Soviet Union and communist China through a system of military alliances. India, it believed, would not be won over as an American military ally in this Cold War, as it adopted the policy of nonalignment. America’s next choice was Pakistan which was too willing to tow American line. The strategic location of Pakistan was very important in US security considerations. West Pakistan was close to the borders of the Soviet Union, while those of East Pakistan were close to the Communist China. The United States would build military bases in both wings of Pakistan to watch over the Soviet and Chinese military and nuclear developments. It was also hoped by the United States that a strong Pakistan could be a formidable force against the Soviet-Chinese expansionism. Further, the United States wanted to build a militarily strong Pakistan as a counter force to non-aligned India.

Considering all these factors, the Eisenhower Administration decided to comply with Pakistan’s request for military aid. On 24th of February 1954 President Eisenhower informed Prime Minister Nehru about the American decision to give military aid to Pakistan. In this letter, the President assured him that the military assistance given to Pakistan was intended specifically for the purpose of strengthening its defence against Communist aggression; that it was in no way directed against India; and that every care would be taken to prevent any diversion of the American military aid for use against India. He also promised India that if India wanted military aid and made a request to the United States for such aid he would give it most sympathetic consideration. On 19th May 1954, the United States and Pakistan signed the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement. Under the Agreement, the United States undertook to provide military equipment and training assistance to Pakistan.

The reports projecting United States military aid to Pakistan were received in India with severe shock. India could hardly ignore the direct and indirect consequences of such military aid to its own security and international interest. The results of such a military pact are serious for India and the whole of the Indian subcontinent. It would bring the Cold War to the doorstep of India. India considered the Afro Asian countries “as a no war area”. It had hoped until then that Pakistan also belonged to that area and would not therefore be a party to either of the Cold War blocs.
Delivering the presidential address at the Kalyani session of the Congress party, Prime Minister Nehru said “the Asian countries attained freedom from foreign domination after a long struggle. Once they started depending upon others to retain their freedom, they would lose it soon. It would be the reversal of the process of liberation for which we have all struggled in Asia for generations past and which at least yielded results.” Therefore, he appealed to the Asian nations not to accept any foreign military aid as it would jeopardise their interests. Apart from these, India believed that military aid to Pakistan could pose a possible threat to its national security in future. Prime Minister Nehru believed that the proposed military aid would create conditions that will facilitate and encourage aggression.

Indian apprehensions were not unfounded. Officially, the Pakistan government accepted the American condition that its military aid could only be used in the case of aggression from any Communist country. But the Pakistani leaders in their speeches made it clear that Pakistan entered into military alliance, not because of the fear of attack either from the Soviet Union or China; they wanted to build up their military strength, not for defence against possible communist aggression, but for use against India, the staunch enemy. The US Government was aware of it. President John F. Kennedy is on record as complaining to his cabinet members that the Pakistanis never understood that the American alliance with Pakistan was aimed at the Soviet Union and China and not at India. Though Pakistan was not immediately harbouring any armed aggression against India; it wanted to build up its military strength as the bargaining factor in dealing with India on various issues, including the Kashmiri issue. Pakistani leaders thought that Pakistan would not be in a position to deal with India diplomatically if it was not militarily strong. Pakistan had an eye on Kashmir. It had unsuccessfully tried to grab it by force in 1947. And it wanted to try its luck again using American arms. Border hostilities from Pakistani side increased after Pakistan received American arms aid. Actually Pakistan deployed US arms and ammunition against India during Indo Pak war of 1965. As Pakistan became a member of American sponsored Western military pacts like SEATO and CENTO, US military assistance to Pakistan increased enormously during the late 50s. It caused bitterness in India and as a result the United States was criticised for lending its support to Pakistan.

**India’s Liberation of Goa and the United States**

India’s relations with United States again took a downturn when Indian forces liberated Goa, Daman and Diu from Portuguese colonialism in December 1961. The American criticism
of India’s action aroused anti-American feeling in India. As stated earlier, the major objective of American foreign policy in the initial years of Cold War was the containment of international communism. The US government wanted to achieve it with the help of its European colonialist allies. Portugal, which had its overseas colonies, i.e. Goa, Daman and Diu, was also its NATO ally while India which wanted to liquidate the Portuguese colonial empire from its territory was pursuing non-aligned policy which was detrimental to the interests of America. Thus, India’s stand on war issue was not appreciated in the United States. The American Government and public had no sympathy for the Goan struggle against Portuguese rule.

The Soviet leader, Khrushchev when he visited India in 1955, condemned the European colonialism and in particular Portuguese colonies on the Indian soil. The speeches of the Soviet leader provoked the American Government and public opinion. The American Government supported the Portuguese stand that Goa was a province of Portugal and not a colonial possession and it took India completely by surprise. The Indian Government strongly condemned the attitude of America towards over and India. In the later years, the American leaders in their statements were careful not to take any definite side on the Goa issue. They supported neither the Indian nor Portuguese stand. They wanted that both India and Portugal mutually settled the issue by peaceful means without involving force. The United States tried to persuade Portugal to enter into friendly negotiations with India concerning the relinquishing of its colonies but Portugal continued to refuse to talk.

When India pursued its military action against the Portuguese in Goa on 17 December, 1961, the United States was very much disturbed. The immediate American reaction was of shock and surprise. The American State Department immediately issued a statement expressing regret that India resorted to force in Goa. The American President John F Kennedy said that he considered “the Goa invasion most unfortunate because in his opinion, the Portuguese, like the British and French, would also have been forced to withdraw from the colonies in India. India’s resort to arms damaged its reputation and standard.”

Almost every US leader who criticised India argued that India should not have resorted to armed action to settle the issue of Goa especially because the peaceful methods prescribed in the United Nations Charter had not been exhausted. But, India had tried peaceful methods for the last 14 years with the Portuguese government, but with little success. Portugal refused to discuss the subject of the transfer of sovereignty over these Portuguese territories on the specious plea
that there was, and could be, no district about the territory which allegedly was an integral part of Portugal, legally, constitutionally and politically. The Portugal government was willing to talk only on the basis that Goa was an integral part of Portugal. When the United States Government’s efforts failed to convince Portugal to vacate its territories in India, Prime Minister Nehru had no choice but to take military action.

Although the incident of Goa created bitterness in both the countries, no serious and long-term damage was done to the relationship. The American Secretary of State, Dean Rusk said early 1962 in an interview that the United States had a basic interest in the social and economic development of India. It had commitments to India’s long-term development programme and the United States Government had not abandoned the policy of that interest as a result of the Goa question. And, a year later, soon after China’s invasion of India in 1962, the United States along with other Western nations came forward to assist in the defence of India.

**The Sino–Indian Border Conflict-1962**

The episode of Goa as an important irritant in the Indo-American relationship quickly faded out. Another event in the year 1962 i.e. the Chinese aggression on India provided an opportunity to the United States to improve its relationship with India. The Chinese invasion began on 20 October1962. The initial American official reaction was one of shock at the violent and aggressive action of Communist China and sympathy for India. The US responses was not limited only to verbal sympathy as the later developments proved. When the Government of India made an urgent appeal to Washington and London for military supplies to meet the Chinese aggression, India received an immediate United States pledge that arms and ammunition would be rushed to India. In a speedy response to the Indian military requirements, the United States provided small arms and equipment of the Value of $ 5 million. Washington was so quick in coming to the rescue of India that it sent arms and munitions without waiting for the conclusion of a formal pact between the two countries. It is to be noted that the first consignment of US arms arrived on 3rd November 1962, while the pact between the two countries was signed on 15th November 1962. There was a widespread fear in India that while accepting US military assistance, India had to abandon its policy of nonalignment and join the military bloc of the Western nations. But the United States military aid came without any political strings attached to it. By 20 November, 1962 and the Chinese soldiers had broken through the last line of Indian defence and almost reached the borders of Assam, the Indian government made very urgent
request to the United States Government for more arms aid and similarly Prime Minister Nehru made a desperate appeal to President Kennedy for air protection to back its fighting armed forces. But before the United States and Great Britain could take any action, China announced a unilateral ceasefire.

Pakistan strongly protested against the supply of American aid of arms and equipment India. The Pakistani leaders argued that India was just playing the “Chinese bogey” in order to fetch more military aid from the United States. They expressed the fear that India would use those arms against Pakistan. The United States Government told Pakistan in a public statement that the military aid was made purely for defensive purposes, against the Chinese, and that it would take appropriate action to prevent its misuse in any kind of aggression against Pakistan. The implication of the statement seemed to be that Pakistan should not resent American military aid to India.

The prompt and timely arms aid from the Western nations, particularly from the United States, despite their simultaneous pressure to solve the Kashmir dispute, enhanced the United States image in India. The newspapers in India wrote editorials profusely praising the United States and Great Britain. Political leaders and intellectuals in their speeches and writings highly appreciated this fine gesture of friendship. Prime Minister Nehru’s speech in the Lok Sabha reflected the nation’s feelings. “Arms aid,” he said, “can and will never be forgotten by the grateful Indian people.”

**Indo-Pakistani War of 1965**

Three years after the Sino Indian War, which created lot of warm and goodwill for America in India, another issue aroused anti-American feelings in India-the Indo-Pak war of 1965. India had often expressed his fears that the American arms and ammunition to Pakistan would ultimately be used against India and the United States would not be able to prevent Pakistan from such misuse. Indian fears came true and Pakistan tried to solve the Kashmir issue a second time in 1965 by means of force. The United States expressed deep concern for the second Kashmir War between India and Pakistan that broke out in September 1965. The US government felt that the war not only posed a threat to the peace of the subcontinent but also represented a potential threat to the world peace which could involve more countries. Throughout the war, the United States maintained a stand-of strict neutrality; it avoided blaming either India or Pakistan for the war. It sought to enhance the peacekeeping efforts of the United
Nations. Choosing between India and Pakistan for criticisms would have a wrecked United Nations efforts for mediation. Thus, without pointing out as to who fired first, the United States, along with Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the other countries appeal both to India and Pakistan to seize armed hostilities and return to negotiations.

The United States was providing military aid to Pakistan to make it military strong to face any Communist aggression. But the United States found that it had misused the arms against India in the war, and thus betrayed the purpose of United States military aid. The US government felt that the continuation of the US military aid to Pakistan would prolong the war. Both the countries could not continue war for a long time without outside military aid. So, the United States stopped military and economic aid to both India and Pakistan. India strongly resented the US stoppage of aid. The Indian Government was angered that the American government, without taking into account which country was wrong, equated the aggressor and the aggrieved party. Similarly, the Indian Government was also angry with the United States because it felt that every Indian casualty in the war had been due to American equipment which despite India’s strong protests, America had supplied it to the Pakistan.

**The Indo- Pakistan War of 1971**

During the 1965 Indo - Pakistani war, Washington assumed a posture of neutrality. However the role of United States Government in the 1971 Indo Pakistani War was much different. A lot has happened under President Richard Nixon. He had developed a deep prejudice against India and a strong liking for Pakistan ever since he became the vice president of the United States in 1953. When he became president in 1968, the United States moved closer to Pakistan. New developments were also taking place in the international arena. The growing Sino-Soviet rift and a nuclear parity Soviet Union achieved with the United States, motivated the Nixon Administration to normalise its relations with People’s China. Pakistan helped the United States in securing hands of friendship from China. In July 1971, the Pakistani Government arranged a secret visit by Henry Kissinger, Richard Nixon’s National Security Advisor to Beijing. Besides, the US government was watching with grave concern the growing Indo- Soviet intimacy which finally culminated in the Indo -Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1971. These developments made the Nixon Administration tilt towards Pakistan.

Thus, when the Indo Pakistani War broke out in December 1971, the American government under President Nixon, in utter disregard of American public opinion, and of
Congressmen, Senators and other sections of the American public not only openly backed the West Pakistan military Junta but also held India responsible for the Bangladesh crisis. It levelled all kinds of accusations against India, even alleging the dismemberment of Pakistan. The Prime Minister of India Mrs Gandhi strongly condemned the accusations levelled against India by President Nixon. She said, “America instead of seeing the things in true light is levelling accusations against India instead of finding fault with Pakistan, the actual aggressor and the tormentor. The Bangladesh crisis deepened in March 1971 following the Pakistani military crackdown on the people of East Bengal. Thousands were killed and millions left their homes and fled to India for safety. The Indian government faced the tremendous problem of providing shelter, food and clothing to these refugees, as its resources were meagre to meet the situation. The initial response of the Nixon administration was that it was an internal affair of Pakistan. Henry Kissinger, the National Security Advisor to President Nixon said that the events in East Bengal were the “internal problems of a friendly country”  

Mrs. Indira Gandhi, made an appeal to the world powers, including the United States to exert pressure on the Pakistani President Yahya Khan to stop the genocide in what subsequently became Bangladesh and find a political solution to the crisis, so that the refugees could return to their homes.  

The American Consul-General in Dacca (East Pakistan) was sending cables to Washington urging the US government to criticise the Pakistani repression. The American ambassador in New Delhi, Kenneth B. Keating also told Washington that he was greatly concerned at the United States damaging its reputation by associating itself with reign of military terror. President Nixon found the actions of his Consul-General in Dacca ”outrageous” that his diplomats were sending “petitions, rather than reports. And ordered that the Consul-General be transferred from Dhaka and chided Kenneth B. Keating for having been “taken over by the Indians.”  

Surprisingly, the US government threw the blame for the situation mainly on India and tried to bail out the West Pakistani military government from the critical situation. The American government issued a detailed denunciation of India’s responsibility for the fast spreading crisis in Bangladesh. A senior State Department official said in a statement that the Indian policy led to the deepening of the crisis he cited three areas where the Government of India had thwarted U.S. efforts for peace. The official also blamed Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for refusing to use Indian influence to help to arrange talks between Yahya Khan and the representatives of
Bangladesh. On the military front, he said, India not only trained and equipped Bengali guerillas, but the Indian forces were engaged in direct support of the rebels border crossings into East Bengal. In the humanitarian efforts, he said India had hurt relief to the people of East Pakistan by refusing to restrain the East Bengali rebels trained on Indian soil from attacking the transport system essential for moving relief supplies. The Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi linked the return of the refugees to East Pakistan a political settlement in Pakistan, rather than dealing with the issue on a purely humanitarian basis.  

The US Government, in order to ward off mounting domestic criticism also claimed that it was engaged behind- the- scene diplomatic efforts to achieve a political settlement between Islamabad and the representatives of Bangladesh Government in exile. A White House official said that the US government was at the point of getting General Yahya Khan’s acceptance of the proposal to grant virtual autonomy to East Pakistan. But India did not wait for a political solution and started military action. New Delhi refuted all these accusations. India’s Ambassador in the United States, K.Jha described the State Department’s criticism as a “distortion of facts” Prime Minister Indira Gandhi herself said that it was mischievous to say that India had anything to do with what happened in Bangladesh and added:” if we wanted to create trouble for Pakistan, we could have done so but we did not want to do so.” She blamed Pakistan for what happened in East Pakistan. She argued that the repressive measures of the Pakistani military Junta in East Pakistan had been driving millions of refugees into India, imposing a great strain on its resources and that Pakistan’s internal matter had become India’s problem. She therefore wanted conditions to be created in East Pakistan under which refugees could return to their homes. New Delhi also asked Washington to put pressure on Islamabad to come to terms with the elected representatives of East Pakistan.

India’s External Affairs Minister, Swaran Singh, under the orders of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, visited Washington in June 1971. He appealed to President Nixon to persuade Pakistan’s to find a political solution to the crisis in East Pakistan and accused it of economic and military aid to Pakistan. The US government not only ignored the India’s plea to suspend economic and military aid to Pakistan but also continued to press India not to intervene in East Bengal. The Nixon Administration reportedly warned India on 31 July, 1971 that if by chance India intervened in East Pakistan, it would have to pay very dearly for it.
B. Keating conveyed the US warning to the Indian Government that if India did not stop aid to insurgents in East Bengal, Pakistan would attack from the West. The US Secretary of State also reportedly threatened to stop the economic assistance to India.

The Soviet Union was one of the few countries which not only condemned Pakistan for its atrocities in East Bengal and asked the Pakistani authorities to reach a political settlement with the elected representatives of East Bengal but also supported India’s stand. It was only natural thereafter that India moved closer to the Soviet Union and entered into a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation on 9th August 1971. With the arrival of more and more West Pakistani armoured divisions in East Pakistan, the Bangladeshi rebels also enormously increase their activities. The Civil War in East Pakistan continued unabated and the influx of refugees into India continued ceaselessly. During October-November, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi visited Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, Federal Republic of Germany and the United States in order to inform the leaders of the Western world the reality of the situation prevailing in East Pakistan. Speaking at a dinner in Washington she said: “Today by some countries wanting to support the prestige of one man, they are threatening peace in the entire subcontinent. I do not personally think that they can save Pakistan or keep it united or keep it strong by supporting a person who is not an elected person, who is a military dictator. Indira Gandhi said that India would not tolerate the influx of millions of refugees. She warned that she was sitting on the top of a volcano and that if no situation was found in a few weeks, the volcano was a bound to erupt. In reply, President Nixon listed the gains the United States had made through negotiations with the Pakistani government and the Awami league leaders in the appointment of a Syrian governor for East Pakistan, proclamation of general amnesty Yahya Khan’s willingness to talk to some Bengali leaders. Nixon told her that the outcome was bound to be autonomy for East Pakistan leading to independence. He only asked the Indian government to be patient for some time and allow the United States Government to complete its round of negotiations with Islamabad and Bengali leaders. The situation on the Indian border started deteriorating. The Pakistani troops started selling the Indian borders. And the Indo Pakistan war of 1971 started.

After the outbreak of war, the American attitude towards India hardened further. In the United Nations the American representative, George Bush requested an urgent session of the Security Council to examine the deteriorating situation in the Indian subcontinent. The Security
Council met on 4th December 1971. George Bush accused India of “incursions across the border of East Pakistan” “and blamed India for not cooperating with US peacekeeping efforts.”

The actions of the Nixon Administration in the Security Council fully exposed the anti-Indian bias of the United States and the extent it would go to back Pakistan according to Jack Anderson. President Nixon ordered Henry Kissinger to tilt the American policy in favour of Pakistan. When president Nixon failed in his diplomatic efforts to force India to end military operations against Pakistan, he pursued gun-boat diplomacy. He ordered the USS Enterprise, a nuclear powered aircraft carrier of the Seventh Fleet, to sail towards the Bay of Bengal. The intention behind the deployment of the US Seventh Fleet was intended (a) To compel India to divert both ships and warplanes to shadow the task force; (b) to weaken India’s blockade against East Pakistan; (c) possibly, to divert the Indian aircraft carrier INS Vikrant; and (d) to force India to keep planes on defence alert, thus reducing their operations against the Pakistani ground force.

Needless to say, the United States pro-Pakistani role during the War aroused strong anti-American feelings in India. Perhaps there had never been as many anti-American rallies and demonstrations in India before as the 14 days of the war. Indian public opinion was as hostile to the United States as to Pakistan. Indo-American relations reached the lowest ebb during the war. It was the worst phase ever in the relationship of the two countries. Indian public opinion held the Nixon administration largely responsible for the Bangladesh crisis. The American Government had suffered two diplomatic defeats. Firstly, it failed to convince the Bengali leaders to reach an agreement with Pakistan, and secondly it could not avert war between India and Pakistan. It also failed to help Pakistan to retain its Eastern wing. There was bitterness in the United States Government circles over “this disaster to American prestige and posture throughout the Democratic world.”

India regretted that even after the war, the Nixon Administration continued to blame India for the dismemberment of Pakistan. The victory of India in the war convinced the United States that India as a major power was bound to play an important role in Asia. For the first time, President Nixon acknowledged that India as “South Asia’s most powerful country”. He stated: “We are prepared now for a serious dialogue with India on the future of our relations. They will depend not on an identity of policies, but on respect for each others’ views and concerns they should go both ways.” In his foreign policy report of 1973, President Nixon
specifically declared that India and the United States had no conflicting interests. The new relations were to be based, not on emotions, but in realities, on reciprocity and mutuality of interests. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger visited India to convince Prime Minister Indira Gandhi that the United States government carried no hostility towards India. There was some improvement in the relations of the two countries. But it was short lived. Indo-American relations again received a severe jolt when India began to criticise United States for setting up a military base in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean and the United States attacked India for its explosion of nuclear device at Pokhran in Rajasthan in May 1974 and for not signing the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. In 1977 elections, Mrs. Indira Gandhi lost power and Janata party came to power in India. There was healthy relationship between India and United States during the Janata regime and President Jimmy Carter of United States paid a visit to India. 1980 Mrs. Gandhi came back to power. The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979 proved to be an irritant between United States and India during Indira Gandhi’s regime once again. Indira Gandhi vote and covertly supported Soviet invasion of Afghanistan while America suspected the intentions of India. Indo-American relationships during the Cold War era was a roller coaster ride. It was only after the demise of Cold War that the relationship between the two countries improved steadily and two presidents of United States namely President George Bush and President Obama paid a visit to India and there have been a slew of agreements between the two countries and the most important among them is the Indo-United States civilian nuclear agreement signed in 2005 July by the President of United States George Bush and the Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh which promised cooperation between the two countries in the arena of civilian nuclear energy.

Evaluation

Owing to different perceptions of the national interests, both the United States and India pursued foreign policies which often clash with each other. Also there were many issues that divided. The two countries differed on questions like representation of China in the United Nations, the Korean War, the Vietnam war, the Hungarian crisis the question of Indochina, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, its support to Pakistan over Kashmir, Sino- Pak-US access etc. India pursued the policy of nonalignment which in the beginning was regarded by American leaders and presidents as “pro—Soviet” and “immoral”, while the United States Government followed the policy of “containment” of communism entirely disapproved by the Indian
leaders. Despite these differences, the American Government always give due importance to India, the largest democracy of the world having vast economic resources, internal strength and strong leadership. After the downfall of the Americans supported ChiangKai-Shek regime in China, the United States looked to India as a logical alternative leader in Asia. In the beginning, the United States Government tried its utmost to win over India, rather than Pakistan (which was of no match India in any respect) as an ally to check the expansion of communism in Asia. But the Indian leaders, pursuing a policy of nonalignment and peaceful coexistence with both the power blocks refused to ally with American headed Western bloc. It was only then that the American choice fell upon Pakistan.

Though pro-Pakistan in certain respects, the United States Government never lost sight of the importance of India. United States leaders found high American stakes in the survival and development of democratic India. There was a competition between the communist system of economic development in China and the democratic system in India. The success or failure of democracy in India, American leaders felt, would have highly influenced the course of events in other countries of Asia. Washington wanted to build India as a showpiece of economic development under a democratic setup in contrast to the communist system of economic development in China. To bolster the weak Indian economy, the American Government provided economic and technical assistance in the form of loans and grants. It is true that while giving economic aid to India, the United States Government adopted an arm twisting policy in order to influence India’s foreign policy which irked India. But the United States had vital stakes in the survival and development of Indian democracy. It was determined to see that Communist China did not engulf Democratic India. This is evident from the fact that America and Great Britain’s military supplies to India were prompt during the Chinese invasion of 1962. Again, during Indo-Pakistani war of 1965, when China threatened India to open its northern front, the United States wanted China to keep off the Indo Pakistan war, otherwise, the United States would come to India’s defence. The United States defined its basic interest in India in terms of the success and survival of an effective democratic model which could counter the Chinese and also Soviet influence in southern Asia. But more importantly, American interests also demanded a balanced relationship and stability in the region. The 1971 war had changed the balance of power in the region with the emergence of Bangladesh and the reduction of the size and power of Pakistan. India had also emerged as a
most powerful nation of the region. The United States wanted no further flareup of any regional war which would upset the balance of power and stability in the region.

After the end of Cold War in 1991, United States became the sole superpower and India wanted to befriend it. The post Cold War period saw improvement in relations between United States and India. Two presidents of United States, George Bush and Barack Obama visited India and the relationship culminated in the signing of Indo American civilian nuclear peaceful agreement in July 2005. Of late the relations between India and United States are running on even keel and in the days ahead are going to show signs of remarkable improvement.

**Indira Gandhi and Pokhran –1**

**(India’s Nuclear Explosion)**

It is conventional belief that India’s nuclear tests on May 11th and 13th, 1998 were an epochal event that propelled it into the ranks of the nuclear weapons states. But it is pertinent to note that India entered the ranks of this hallowed group fully, a quarter-century earlier on 18th of May 1974 with its 'peaceful nuclear explosion' in the deserts of the Pokhran firing range. Different facets of this episode are of interest. How was this decision taken? What are its implications-political, economic and strategic and one these taken into account?

The International relations literature informs that nations have gone nuclear either to ensure their security or gain prestige. Thus, reasons of security motivated the United States, Soviet Union and China to acquire nuclear weapons whereas prestige considerations are believed to be the reasons for the United Kingdom and France to acquire nuclear weapons. The decision by India to conduct Pokhran-I cannot be compartmentalised into this simple binary motivational pattern. Its origins are traceable to India’s traumatic defeat in the Sino-Indian border conflict in October-November 1962, which was closely followed by China conducting its first nuclear test on 15th of November 1964, and China’s ambiguous warning conveyed to New Delhi during the 1965 India-Pakistan war. These events posted the Chinese nuclear threat on India’s security horizon, requiring a credible response. Immediately after the Chinese nuclear test, an alarm was raised in the Indian Parliament and the Government of India sanctioned a Subterranean Nuclear Explosion Project (SNEP) which authorised the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to conduct research into nuclear explosive technology”up to a point when, once the go ahead signal was given, it would take three months to have an explosion”.
It is popularly believed that the sudden deaths of principal actors—Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Chairman AEC Homi Baba—led to this project being abandoned, when India could have proceeded ahead to explode a nuclear device, but this seriously oddly states the case. The technical dimension be given more weight. The plutonium reprocessing plant in Trombay, required to separate the fissile plutonium from the spent fuel was still at the commissioning trial stage and as a result, it was not possible to make the nuclear device as the nuclear fuel was not available. On the political front, it is doubtful whether the weak and unconfident Indira Gandhi, who came to power after Shastri’s untimely demise would have proceeded with the SNEP and conducted a nuclear test. The successful prosecution of the Bangladesh war in 1971 invested her with an unrivalled authority thereafter to proceed in his direction. However, it is unlikely that theoretical work on the SNEP stopped at any stage; there is no evidence to either support or dispute this conclusion.

These are speculative questions. But, the decision to conduct the nuclear test was taken around mid-1971 and had a strong nexus with national security. The security scenario for India at that time was critical. Pakistan’s military crackdown in East Bengal in March-April 1971 resulted in a massive refugee outflow into the neighbouring states of India; simultaneously, an American-Sino-Pak axis evolved the consolidated after Henry Kissinger’s secret flight to Peking from Pakistan in July 1971. Finally, the incursion of the Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal during the India-Pakistani War 1971 was a transparent excise in gunboat diplomacy with the nuclear weapons to intimidate the Indian forces moving towards Dacca. The security impetus to the decision to test a nuclear device is obvious.

But why did this enterprise continue after 1971 with Pakistan comprehensively defeated, the emergence of Bangladesh, and China and the United States suffering acute discomfiture. The most plausible explanation is that the program continued on its own momentum since it was not halted. Meanwhile the Purnima reactor became critical on 18th of May 1972. It was an important requirement for manufacturing the Peaceful Nuclear Explosive (PNE). By mid-1973, it became necessary to discover a suitable test site, especially a deep boring. The nuclear tests had to be conducted underground since India had joined the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963, which prohibited “any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion being conducted in the atmosphere, including outer space, or underwater, including territorial waters or high seas.
Only the underground media was thus available for conducting nuclear tests, until such time as the conclusion of a treaty resulting in the permanent banning of all nuclear test explosions.”

Locating a suitable test site was not easy since it involved both the geological and political factors. An important consideration was the absence of underground water, which could get polluted; besides explosion should not prove hazardous to the neighbouring population. Ultimately, the Pokhran site was chosen due to the desert terrain, paucity of settled villages, and availability of an army firing range to ensure security. An Army engineer Regiment was deployed to undertake the boring, construct the building is required to assemble the device, lay a Rail track to carry the device to the shaft and lower the device into it.

It should be emphasised that all these preparations were made in absolute secrecy which is quite remarkable. All discussions relating to the nuclear test were confined to a very few individuals in the relevant organisations. A series of meetings were held to deliberate on the economic and political implications of the nuclear test. The final meeting was presided over by Mrs Indira Gandhi. There was a heated discussion. P.N. Dhar who was the principal Secretary to the Prime Minister was adamantly opposed to the explosion as he felt it would damage the Indian economy. In spite of some reservations in the team, Mrs Gandhi decreed that the experiment should be carried out on schedule for the simple reason that India required such a demonstration.

Did domestic political scenario enter these calculations? Were these the only reasons why India had to demonstrate a nuclear capability? Consider the internal situation at the time. A serious drought in 1973 and 1974 had caused great economic distress and social unrest in the country. The Jaya Prakash movement (J.P. movement) had started in Gujarat and was channeling the growing disenchantment New Delhi-India’s success in the 1971 war had become a dim memory in public memory. At this critical juncture, a railway strike was called by George Fernandes in early 1974. It was taken very seriously. Intelligence reports revealed a diabolical plan had been formulated by the union leaders to bring the economic activity in the country be a standstill. This was the backdrop for the “ruthless suppression” of the railway strike, the arrest of George Fernandes, his chief lieutenants and trade union leaders, leading to a predictable outcry in the media that democracy was being suppressed and a dictatorial regime had been unleashed on the people and so on. Thus the domestic situation along with the external scenario was an important consideration for the nuclear test being proceeded. Many people opined,” no single
The causative factor or motivation was underlying the Pokhran tests; they were diverse and evolved over a period of around three years. Probably security threats, bureaucratic/scientific pressures and prestige entered the decision-making process, but in different measures at various points in time.\textsuperscript{161}

The explosion of India’s first nuclear device on 18\textsuperscript{th} of May 1974, coming in the wake of rising domestic difficulties, therefore, not only deflected attention from these problems but also boosted the nation’s morale. It also gave rise to many questions and doubts regarding India’s nuclear policy and the implications that this might have on its foreign policy and also its claim of not wanting to be a “power” of any kind.

Statements made by leaders and government officials at various national and international forums repeatedly emphasised the peaceful purposes of this experiment in an attempt to check doubts or criticisms regarding India’s intentions. The explosion, it was pointed out, formed an integral part of India’s policy of “carrying out research and development into meaningful applications of nuclear energy for economic development”. They argued that it was an important step in the country’s search for alternative source of energy. Further, a distinction was made between a nuclear country and a nuclear weapons country: “There is a difference between a nuclear country and a nuclear weapons country; we don’t have any bombs. We don’t intend to use this knowledge or this power for any other than peaceful purposes. Our neighbours need not fear. Quite honestly, we view the explosion as an extension of our work of research and keeping abreast of developments in science and technology, we are not viewed it in the light of strengthening or creating fear or any of those emotions.\textsuperscript{162}

Besides, as stressed by the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Leader of the Indian delegation to the 18\textsuperscript{th} session of the General Conference of International Atomic Energy Agency at Vienna, on 18 September, 1974, India has not violated any agreement, bilateral or multilateral nor any agreement involving IAEA or the Partial Test Ban treaty.\textsuperscript{163} Not all nations, however, were willing to give India the benefit of doubt. Disapproval was directed at India’s seemingly irresponsibility and power ambition. The explosion was viewed as an extravagant act on the part of India at the expense of what was felt it’s more imperative need for economic development. It was believed that funds which would have been used for developmental purposes had been unduly diverted for a project which was not essential to India’s needs. In an interview to the American Broadcasting Corporation Television \textsuperscript{164} Mrs. Gandhi clearly set the record straight--deflating the argument
that the explosion had been carried out “at the cost of some very valuable and vital food in the mouths of some 560 million people,” she revealed that the cost of it was “about Rs. 3 million rupees”--a small fraction in the country’s outlay in development. No new budgetary provision had been made for it, it was added, neither was any foreign exchange nor foreign help involved.

Despite all assurances, India’s sincerity was questioned by many. Not only was it feared that this explosion would lead to indiscriminate nuclear tests by many other nations, it was also suspected that India’s foreign policy would now tend to take on a more belligerent approach. For, even if a developing nation, India could not be regarded as a small power. Now, with nuclear technology at its disposal, India could prove a powerful threat as well, so it was thought.

Commenting on the reactions of different countries, Mrs Gandhi told the Lok Sabha that while developing nations had, by and large, welcomed experiment, advanced nations with some exceptions had not shown equal understanding. She said that while United States had expressed satisfaction that India had not violated any agreements set down by the International Atomic Energy safeguards system it had nevertheless reiterated that its policy was against nuclear proliferation. The Soviet Union, she continued, had noted India’s experiment as an attempt to keep India’s technological development on a level with world technology on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The French Atomic Energy Commission had sent a congratulatory message on the success of the experiment, while China had reported the event without any comment. Japan, on the other hand, expressed its regret. Canada, a major collaborator of India’s nuclear research program, while expressing concern that India was setting the wrong example in worldwide efforts to prevent nuclear explosion technology, it had felt slighted that India had gone ahead with the experiment without its knowledge. Probably, what had been disconcerting to many Canadians was the fact that a year before, Mrs Gandhi, during Canadian tour, had told a select gathering at Toronto on 20 June, 1973 that “we did not seek conventional military strength. We are not interested in becoming a power-major or minor and certainly not a nuclear power.”

Mrs. Gandhi’s intention here was simply reassure her audience that India was not interested in competing for military power and certainly not for obtaining nuclear power for military superiority and to also reiterated India’s dislike of being labelled a “power” of any sort. Her declaration taken out of context, however, could be misleading.

India, therefore, regretted the Canadian reaction. Speaking in the Lok Sabha on 22 July, 1974, Mrs. Gandhi said: “I have repeatedly reaffirmed our policy of using nuclear energy for
peaceful purposes and have specifically stated that we have no intention of developing nuclear weapons…. Our Atomic Energy Commission has been reviewing the progress in this technology from the theoretical and experimental angles. This intention was not kept secret and was made known to the world. If differences of interpretation have arisen between the Government of Canada and the Government of India, it is the Government of India’s hope that they will be satisfactorily resolved in the discussions which are underway between the representatives of the two countries.\textsuperscript{167}

Pakistan’s apprehensions, however, may well be understood, despite explanations and reassurances by the Indian government. Prime Minister and Mrs Indira Gandhi herself had addressed a letter dated 22 May, 1974, to Prime Minister Bhutto of Pakistan. She gave the assurance that, “We remain fully committed to a traditional policy of developing energy resources entirely for peaceful purposes. The recent underground nuclear experiment conducted by our scientists in no way alters this policy…. Every country has the right to develop technology for various economic uses of nuclear energy. Every country has the right to develop its natural resources and this is especially so at a time when the world crisis in raw materials and energy resources has demonstrated that the tapping of all forms of energy resources is essential to our survival. Indian had advanced scientifically in nuclear research to develop its nuclear technology for the utilization of its indigenous resources for peaceful and economic purposes.

There are no political or foreign policy implications of this test. We remain committed to settle all our differences with Pakistan peacefully, through bilateral negotiations, in accordance with the Simla Agreement.\textsuperscript{168} As indicated by Bhutto’s reply, dated 6 June 1974, however, Pakistan was not going to readily accept that economic compulsions had motivated the Indian nuclear explosion. Bhutto argued that “the testing of a nuclear device is no different from the detonation of a nuclear weapon”. Further, he charged that Indian explosion had been carried out at a time when India was rapidly developing its defence capabilities. Besides, assurances could be changed or ignored in subsequent years, but “the acquisition of a capability, which has direct and immediate military consequences, becomes a permanent factor to be reckoned with.” He suggested instead that the nuclear weapon powers should jointly or individually undertake to protect a non-nuclear weapon state against any nuclear threat and also that a nuclear state wishing to forsake the development of nuclear weapons should be allowed to do so only under one or more binding agreements between itself and one or more nuclear weapon state.”\textsuperscript{169} India,
however, held that it was unable to comprehend Pakistan’s repeated talk of Indian nuclear blackmail. It had in fact stated its willingness to share its nuclear technology with Pakistan, as with other countries, provided “proper conditions for understanding and trust were created.”

Pakistan’s conditions for making the development of nuclear power were also not considered seriously. For, India had not been willing to accept two features of nuclear activity on points of principle. One was the safeguards proposed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on India’s nuclear activity and the other was the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. According to India, both were discriminating factors, as, the right of external powers to impose control on a domestic program was questionable, especially when those powers, and many others besides, were not willing to accept such conditions on themselves. Talking to newsmen at a luncheon hosted by the Foreign Correspondents Association of South Asia on 15th of June 1974, in New Delhi, Mrs Gandhi had emphasised:

“we are against the non-proliferation Treaty merely because we thought that it is discriminatory and unequal. Now, if there is an agreement which applies equally to everybody, then, naturally we have to think about it, but here what is happening is that a few nations are exempt from non-application and they are allowed to stockpile nuclear weapons whereas other nations, who do not want to make war, or not even allowed experiments for peaceful purposes.”

On the same day in Vienna, at a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Indian Representative had assured the gathering regarding safeguards that, “we shall certainly consider this possibility when all the member states of the Agency, and indeed others to outside the Agency, voluntarily place all the nuclear activities, civil and military, under the Agency’s safeguards.” It was inevitable therefore that Indo-Pak relations which had been making some progress according to the provisions of the Simla Agreement received a setback. Pakistan called off talks for normalisation of relations scheduled on 10th of June, on the plea that India had vitiated atmosphere by its nuclear experiment. Although the talks were eventually resumed by September, other developments springing from India’s nuclear explosion, followed. An important byproduct of the Indian explosion was Pakistan’s interest in developing its own nuclear program with the assistance of France and China. The explosion also had its impact on the nuclear advanced countries which expressed the need to strengthen the existing non-proliferation machinery by developing new safeguards and securing strict adherence to them. As a result, some countries, including Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United
Kingdom, the United States as well as the Soviet Union, met in London in April 1975 for what later came to be known as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). In addition, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union at the non-proliferation Treaty conference decided to press for a firmer reaffirmation to non-proliferation principles.

In May 1998, following the footsteps of Mrs Indira Gandhi, the BJP government, under the leadership of A.B. Vajpayee conducted five nuclear tests at Pokhran in order to develop a full-fledged nuclear deterrent safeguard India’s security. India also indicated readiness to discuss ‘no first use’ agreement with Pakistan and other countries, either bilaterally or multilaterally. India also indicated its willingness to take part in the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off Treaty. These tests established that India has a proven capability for weaponised nuclear program. The present scenario existing in India’s neighbourhood in particular and in international scenario in general vindicates the stand taken by Mrs. Indira Gandhi India ought to be a nuclear power not only to protect its frontiers and its territorial integrity and also to be recognised as a great power. India’s nuclear policy right from the time of Mrs. Gandhi to the present is that India’s nuclear weapons are “weapons of self defense”. They would ensure that India is not subjected to nuclear threats or coercion.

**Evaluation**

It is a conventional belief that India’s nuclear tests in May 11th and 13th, 1998 were an epochal event that propelled it into the ranks of the nuclear weapons states. But it is pertinent to note that India became a nuclear power on 18th of May 1974 with its ‘peaceful nuclear explosion’ in the deserts of the Pokhran firing range. India’s desire to become a nuclear power can be traced to India’s traumatic defeat in the Sino-Indian border conflict in October-November 1962, which was closely followed by China conducting its first nuclear test on 15th of November 1964, and China’s ambiguous warning conveyed to New Delhi during the 1965 India-Pakistan war. These events posted the Chinese nuclear threat on India’s security horizon, requiring a credible response. Immediately after the Chinese nuclear test, an alarm was raised in the Indian Parliament and the Government of India authorised the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to conduct research into nuclear explosive technology.

In 1971, the security scenario for India was critical. Pakistan’s military crackdown in East Bengal in March-April 1971 resulted in a massive refugee outflow into the neighboring states of India; simultaneously, an American-Sino-Pak axis evolved and it got consolidated after Henry
Kissinger’s secret flight to Peking from Pakistan in July 1971. Finally, the incursion of the Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal during the India-Pakistani War 1971 was a transparent exercise in gunboat diplomacy with the nuclear weapons to intimidate the Indian forces moving towards Dacca. The security impetus to the decision to test a nuclear device in the light of emerging situation in south Asia is obvious.

When the nuclear test was conducted in May 1974 at Pokhran, the Soviet Union had noted India’s experiment as an attempt to keep India’s technological development on a level with world technology on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The French Atomic Energy Commission had sent a congratulatory message on the success of the experiment, while China had reported the event without any comment. Japan, on the other hand, expressed its regret. Canada, a major collaborator of India’s nuclear research program, while expressing concern that India was setting the wrong example in worldwide efforts to prevent nuclear explosion technology, it had felt slighted that India had gone ahead with the experiment without its knowledge.

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Foreign Policy and Non-Alignment

We could well echo Mahatma Gandhi’s words when he said that India wants to be independent of everybody who wants to own this country. We do not want a change of masters. We want to be masters on our own soil. These words characterize the political foundation of non-alignment.
Indira Gandhi’s pledge to follow the basic policies of India is interpreted as the resurrection of Nehru’s ideals. The Nehru version of non-alignment, i.e, friendship with all and enmity with none, continued unchanged during her tenure. She was of the opinion that the concepts of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence have served the world well as they have reduced tension and promoted friendship. Indira Gandhi said that they are as valid that day as they were decade ago.

**Indira staunch follower of Non-Alignment**

Like her father, Indira is an outspoken and abrasive spokesperson of Indian attitude in world affairs; no country could deter her from calling a spade a spade. Her image as a staunch follower of Non-Alignment, who acted independently of power blocks and great power conflict, clearly emerged.

Indira Gandhi steadfastly followed an independent foreign policy; she pursued the policy of non-alignment and peace. Non-Alignment did not mean neutrality, nor was it an expression of passivity. It was an active policy of friendship with as many countries as possible without entanglement with power blocks. It was really alignment with right, justice, freedom, development of nations and international peace. It meant no indifference to what happened outside India and in other parts of the world. It involved un-obtrusive contribution to the furtherance of world peace and international co-operation and active support of the United Nations Organization and sincere commitment to the United Nations Ideals. It required uninhibited, independent decision on the merit and nature of each particular problem as it arose without bias or prejudice. In pursuit of the above policies and objectives, Indira travelled far and wide, met heads of states and foreign dignitaries at home or abroad, welcomed them to India, discussed with them matters of mutual interest and of national and international importance with a view to finding satisfactory and peaceful solutions.

Nehru was the pioneer of the philosophy of non-alignment and co-existence. Indira Gandhi took up the work of her father and worked hard for strengthening non-alignment and co-existence and promoting peace. She attended the Third Non-Alignment summit conference at Lukasa (Zambia), which opened on 8th September, 1970. She reiterated India’s view that the Indian ocean should be an area of peace and co-operation and that military bases of outside powers would create tension and great power rivalry. She emphatically declared the relevance of
non-alignment to the world and expressed satisfaction that the non-alignment world could take credit for the improvement it induced in world diplomacy.

**Non-alignment countries’ passion for Peace**

She called upon the non-aligned powers to gather strength from one another and carry forward, the unfinished revolution of the time, political and economic. “We shall not yield to the threats of any” she declared.  

A passion for peace united the non-aligned countries. She said that the non-aligned nations should make determined efforts to help themselves without endlessly waiting for a change of heart among developed countries and work together on bilateral, regional and multilateral basis. She further said that they would attain their cherished objectives if they worked together therefore should have faith and confidence in themselves and give assurance that however long and arduous the journey ahead be, they would not falter to reach their destination.

She had thorough conviction that a country’s foreign policy cannot be divorced from its internal policy. Any country, any government, any political party, she believed, must decide what it believes in, and all its polices must then flow from this basis conviction or belief. What is our foreign policy? some people take the word non-alignment to represent the whole of our foreign policy In a way we not so attached to the word non-alignment as to what it stands for, namely we believe in judging all issues independently we do not wish to be tied to any group or to any country, she affirmed.

She opined that we are getting closer and closer to the twenty first century. But unfortunately we find that in large portions of the world, the basic thinking is still very much that of the nineteenth century, the world has changed, we helped change it because of India’s freedom movement, because of India’s gaining independence and other countries in Asia and Europe becoming free. This has been the greatest change in the world. Although it was obvious to us that we would become free and that our freedom would lead to the freedom of other countries. This process comes somewhat as a shock to the colonial powers.

Speaking of getting aligned with cold war Blocks, Mrs. Gandhi said that some say that non-alignment has served our purpose or that it has not been a success. But what is the alternative? Alignment ? If we should be aligned, then with whom?The two major block are what are
commonly know as Eastern and western blocs. To which should we be aligned? Alignment itself has had many cracks in the last few years in both blocs.

Mrs. Gandhi makes it abundantly clear that India will never join any power block come what may. She declared as follows. “I am sure anybody who looks clearly at this picture will immediately come to the conclusion that it would not be in our interest to join any block. Therefore we are back to the third position, which is outside of blocs I do not think it is an idealistic position, I think it is only hardheaded, practical path that is open to any country which wants to keep its independence”. 175 She refuted allegation of some of the critics on India’s foreign policy of non-alignment and defends that India has followed and has been following the policy of non-alignment in its true sense; she makes this clear in the following words.

“Many of those who have been against non-alignment all these years and who criticized my father and me for trying to pursue this path no longer attack non-alignment as such, but allege that we are not truly non-aligned. The attack today, the sharpest weapon used against our foreign policy, is to allege that in effect we are following the soviet line perhaps they think their saying so will frighten us into abandoning our friendship with the Soviet Union, perhaps they think that they will be able to blur the independent image which we have gained with our own people and in the word on many occasions when we have supported western countries, the Eastern group has criticized us and interpreted it as weakness. Similarly, when we supported the Soviet Union, or more likely the African-Asian group countries, the western world has attacked us”. 176 Mrs.Gandhi had no belief in war as an instrument for settlement of international disputes. She beleved in discussions and negotiations as the best methods for the settlement of such disputes and she made this amply clear and said that we have believed –and we do believe now-that freedom is indivisible, that peace is indivisible, that economic prosperity is indivisible, And these are the fundamentals on which our policy is based , both inside the country and outside . We have stood for freedom of all countries; we know that joining forces with Afro-Asian group is not immediately going to strengthen the countries of Africa and Asia who belong to that group. But we know that in the long run this is the only way. We share common problems, common difficulties, and common threats. And we can face them only by trying to stand on our own feet, by having stability within our countries and by having economic progress.

We also believe that as long as there are poor nations and rich nations, there is bound to be tension. The tension is not only between the poor and the rich but also among the rich because
of their desire to control or to influence the developing nations. This has been the cause of most wars in the past and this account for much of the tension today. Yet, in spite of the difficulties some countries do pursue the path which we have advocated, the path of conciliation, of trying to solve problems by means of negotiation rather than by conflict.

Recent history provides us with two good examples of that policy. No two countries could have fought more bitterly than the Soviet Union and Germany. There have been many wars, but I do not think any has been fought with such great bitterness as the one which took place between these two countries. In Stalingrad, the fighting was not merely nation to nation, not even province to province, it was house to house, almost a fight for each brick of the city, perhaps you still remember that while the men were fighting the women were picking up the bricks to show that Stalingrad was determined to survive and build, what tremendous feeling and personal involvement there was among the people and yet those two countries have been able to come to an agreement to try and solve their difficulties through talking about them only, forgetting the hatred which went so far back into history, similarly negotiation has now been accepted generally as the only possible method of solving the problem of what we call western Asia and what in the western world, is called the middle East.

Foreign policy has to be based on one’s historical and geographical backgrounds. In other words we see the world from where we stand. Each country sees the world from where it is located, so we cannot possibly have exactly the same angle. Certain countries are our neighbors. So our relationship with them is especially important If we are a long way from the countries, we look at them from different angles. We also find that in devising the foreign policy of any country and perhaps especially that of India certain intangible elements can be extremely important or decisive, It may be easier for a rich and powerful nation to press forward its policy and to fashion relations with other countries. India is neither rich nor powerful and we have to keep that in mind. Right from the time India adopted the policy of non-alignment whose architect was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mrs. Indira Gandhi has been consistently and persistently following and supporting this policy, one of the elements of our foreign policy has been keeping away from military alliances. This part of our foreign policy has been reiterated clearly by Mrs. Gandhi when she said that right now we find ourselves in an extremely difficult economic and political situation. We should either stand firm on our convictions or make tremendous efforts to strengthen ourselves or try strength through alliances, As I have pointed out, some people believe
there is greater safety in alliances. In my opinion such borrowed strength cannot enduring and
the feeling of security would be rather deceptive. It would make us complacent and could lead us
into dangerous situation later on. The only read security is to strengthen our own people and to
be confident of ourselves.

She further said that earlier because we were in the forefront of the freedom struggle, we
enjoyed a certain influence. We also had leader of stature who were able to give inspiration to
other country in a position similar to our own. The situation has changed, these countries have
been free for a number of years they are all attempting to develop their own personalities and
none of them would like to be guided by others. They would like to have friends, but they would
not like to feel that any one country is superior to them we would not like that either. So we can
understand the sentiments of other countries-especially smaller countries. We would be very
careful at all times not to give an impression of wanting to take a dominant position.

Mrs. Gandhi further said that India in all international forums has stood by its
convictions, regardless of consequences, that is why we are respected. Nobody will think ill of
us because of our understanding with some smaller countries even if we do have some
differences of opinion with them, on the contrary people will blame us for trying to throw our
weight about or trying to pressurize small countries when we disagree with them. In all such
matters when we disagree with them In all such matters national interest and international
honour must come first, but we must not confuse this with any narrow chauvinistic attitude.

As a true statesman, Mrs. Indira Gandhi recognized the need for some flexibility in so far
as the foreign policy of our country is concerned and to the extent it does not affect our national
interest and prestige this is revealed from the following words of Mrs. Gandhi.“A British
statesman said that no country is a permanent foe or a permanent friend. All countries must try to
be on good terms with as many others as possible. Our policy is to strengthen existing friendship,
to changes indifference into friendship, and where hostility exists, to lessen it. Sometimes it is
asserted that India has no friends, this is indeed a strange statement. What is the measure for
friendship? Is it a count of countries that would help us in a war? How many countries whom we
call friendly would really be able to help? The fact is that, India today has about as many
friendship as any other country. How we keep our friends does not depend merely on how we
act, but also on what happens to their national interests at any given time. If it is in their interest
to be friendly, they will be so, but if they believe their national interest lies elsewhere, they will
not be our friends no matter what we do so, while we must try to multiply our friendship, we
must always be prepared for situations when, conversely, a hostile one may decide for varies
reasons to become our friend. Our attitude must be flexible in these matters.

At no time does it help to speak ill of a country. If there are strong reasons, let us take
some steps. But if we do not consider such action desirable, it hardly serves any useful purpose
merely to shout. Even the big powers say that war should be avoided. But situations have been
created when even a big army, with all its power and influence, has not been able to save them
from a mess. Basis conviction and belief in certain principles cannot change. That is a constant
feature of both domestic and foreign policy." 178

Mrs. Gandhi made it crystal clear that India is not a satellite of either US or USSR but
pursues an independent policy. It is allergic to any kind of pressure from either of the two big
powers. She declares rigidity that courage and conviction must be allied to an astute, hardheaded
analysis of international affairs and events. At all times this analysis has to be devoid of emotion
or sentiment. The growth of military power in the hands of a few countries is producing its own
antithesis; Nations with military stockpiles of unimaginably destructive potential are unable to
use that power. One gun-boat could do much more in olden times than what very much greater
arsenals are able to do today, because of the fear of the consequences of using them.

She further said, "We are friends of the USA and USSR, as well as of many other
countries, we are getting help from many of these countries but we have tried not to be
dependent on any of them. My government did not yield to any pressures. We did not find it a
problem except that we found that an entirely wrong image of India was projected. That was the
only way in which they could retaliate. They could not make us change our policy by threat or
pressure of cajoling or any other way". 179

Mrs. Gandhi emphasized that India’s foreign policy aims at friendship and mutual help,
without political strings. She is against spheres of influence by big powers. In her view spheres
of influence by the big Flowers may lead to neo-colonialism. Further, Mrs. Gandhi is of the
opinion that conferences of non-aligned countries would be useful if they are convened
periodically. These conferences go a long way in strengthening the bond of friendship among the
nations of the third world. These ideas find expression in Mrs. Gandhi’s philosophy of Indian
foreign policy in the following way
“We know that the allied countries are not very happy with the non-aligned group. Neither of them like it. Most big powers would like to have spheres of influence. Although we are very friendly with them, we do not agree this attitude of theirs and we are certainly not going to help them develop their spheres of influences. The only sphere of influence we want is one of friendship and of mutual help, and I think that in conference of non-aligned countries, there is much scope for mutual help especially in the economic field, if we are able to help one another to a small extent even to understand the pressures, the conferences will serve a useful purpose. We do not want a balance of power in favour of power, but in favour of peace through friendship it is possible to out-manoeuvre hostility. Indian history indicates that this indeed is the sum total of our tradition from the days of the Buddha and the Emperor Ashoka right down to our times of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. These great personages have showed us the essence of our tradition and Gandhiji specially brought it out from the safe keeping of an ideal into the very business of daily living, the hurly-burly of political and economic policy”.

She opined that Indian people have stood and worked as one man in every crisis which the nation has faced, knowing that they shall defend our freedom, if need be with our bare fists. That has always acted as a deterrent with those who may have had other designs on us. But if we permit this will and determination of ours to be weakened and softened by internal conflict then no amount of arms can help us. Arms used by people without conviction cannot provide any credible backing for foreign policy while we must arm to defend our country from any aggression, military strength must be supported by conviction in our ideals and confidence in ourselves. Both equally potent weapons and without them, other weapons can be dangerous to ourselves and also useless to our defense, this is the essence of our foreign policy:

Defending Indo-Soviet friendship treaty, she declares emphatically that this treaty is not a blow to our policy of non-alignment. She observes as follows: “India has signed the twenty year Treaty of peace friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union. Some people said that the treaty marked a departure from India’s traditional foreign policy. But this is not so, In those days, the Pakistan was boasting that everybody was with them, that the whole world was on their side. So in India morale was rather low, The Soviet Union stood by us when our morale was rather low. The Soviet Union stood by us during Indo-Pak War, but the treaty contained nothing to change our non-alignment. In fact, there is a specific clause which says that India is a non-aligned country and will remain so, besides, our friendship with the Soviet Union will not come
in the way of relations with any other country. But the treaty is being used by many countries as an excuse to take a hostile attitude towards India”. 181

Regarding Afghanistan situation and the interference of the big power in it, she declared, “We are all deeply distressed at events in Afghanistan. The unhappy conflict in west Asia between two of our own brothers has adverse consequences for the peoples of these two countries as well as other non-aligned nations, these developments have given encouragement to forces which work against our movement and have increased the risk of intervention. Let us hope that big powers will not be tempted to take advantage to enlarge local disputes into wider confrontations. In the name of peace and the future of mankind, we plead with the combatants, and appeal to those who are waiting in the wings, to call their Youngman back to their homes”. 182

Unity of the Non-Alignment

Further she says,”At every meeting of the non-aligned, big powers seem to redouble their diplomatic and publicity campaign to sow suspicion and division within us. As free people we must stand together. Working in unison on the basis of our original principles and purposes will fortify us to withstand pressures. Divided we are vulnerable, united we can and shall prevail. Let this simple truth guide your deliberations in the next few days. We are here not to juggle with words but to find a way to reinforce the authority and effectiveness of the Non-Aligned movement”. 183

Explaining the underlying philosophy of India’s policy of non-alignment, Mrs. Gandhi said “we want to be friends with all. India’s policy is to consolidate friendship where it exists, where there is indifference, to create understanding and interest, and where there is hostility; to make every efforts to minimize it . It is also our endeavour to find common areas, however small between us and other nations and to enlarge them”. 184

The non-aligned movement originally developed in the context of a bipolar world. In course of time other centers of power came up and used their military and economic capacities to bend the policies of newly-free or small countries to fit in with their strategies. Today even this Multi polarity is less in evidence. Peace is vital for evolution of mankind to the fullness of its promise and potential. But the prospects for peace have receded. The nuclear race carries with it
the probability of nuclear war just as rain-clouds bring rain. Saving the world from nuclear war and other wars must be one of our foremost concerns. She says further,” Non-alignment is neither neutrality nor indifference. It involves active and free exercise of judgment on certain principles. Peace is not passive”. 185

Evaluation

The policy of Non-Alignment which was first espoused and practiced by Nehru in the context of cold war was also carried forward by his daughter and successor, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. She was of the firm belief that the answers to the problems besieging India could not be found by joining any of the power blocs but by following independent foreign policy steering clear of power blocs. In the Non-aligned meetings and in other conferences she always championed the cause of Third World countries and exhorted them to stay united and advised them to extend cooperation among themselves for their bright future. She was of strong perception that joining the power blocs will deprive them of their independence and makes them slaves once again.

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