CHAPTER - II

PERSIAN GULF IN GLOBAL POLITICS

The oil producing region of the Persian Gulf had a most strategically important places in the world. Its importance lies in the fact that "under the aride soil of some sections of the Persian Gulf lies the greatest single reserve of oil, the black gold of nation," i.e. 60 per cent of the total world petroleum production. Even the superpower, who produce oil, are interested in the control of oil resources of this region to maintain their supremacy and preserve their own limited resources for the future. Access to Persian Gulf oil has widely been acknowledge as a "vital interest of the US over the past few years".¹

By 1939, U.S. oil interest in the Persian Gulf had become one of the most important of American Foreign investment. The US was the only big power that emerged unscathed by the IIInd World War. The irreconcilable antagonism of the cold war politics and ideological confrontation between U.S. and the Soviet Union began to express themselves in bloc rivalries every where. The US soon recognised that the Gulf countries, particularly Iran and Iraq, could become vulnerable to the Soviet military penetration and its own oil interest would be seriously undermined.² The Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf are not
only the centre of Gulf State oil production but also of political conservatism. United States has been able to maintain their monopoly of effective military influence in the area.³

Prior to the second world war US assumed a global leadership role in the wake of that conflagration primary US interest in the Persian Gulf region centred almost exclusively on oil. In 1908 first US shipped into the Gulf oil tent. US oil companies and US government viewed the oil producing states of the Persian Gulf as a source of revenue than one of the energy with which meet the nation's industrial demands for the next 30 or more years.⁴

The second world war temporarily interrupted this economic idyll, American's returned to their historic pattern of exploiting this increasingly important commodity.

Even since the Gulf region proved its oil worth and established its geo-strategic importance, it automatically attracted the attention of big power politics making it obvious that it would not be left alone to develop according to its own genious.

US interests in the oil rich states in the Persian Gulf region related on the one hand to the oil reserves in the Gulf and on the other to the Gulf's geo-strategic position on the South-Western flank of the former Soviet Union.⁵
The Western interests in the Gulf first by the British date back to early nineteenth century, although the involvement of the US in the Gulf is a recent phenomenon. After the Ottoman rule ended, Iraq became a British protectorate. A special relationship was established between British and Oman and bringing the later almost on the verge of total dependence on Britain while Qatar and Bahrain were British protectorate. Kuwait was under British military protection till 1961. The UAE remained under British tutelage. Only Saudi Arabia out of the Gulf countries remained relatively free of the British control. Even Iran came under the influence and control of both Czarist Russia and Britain during nineteenth and early twentieth century. All these illustrate the extent of British control over the Gulf. During the early days of the oil discoveries the British were closely associated with and beneficiary of the oil boom that took place in the Gulf. At the close of the sixties with British decision of military withdrawal from the region for the first time there was a power vacuum in the Persian Gulf. However, in the meantime, the entire Western World developed a big stake in the Persian Gulf oil. In 1973 oil embargo and later the Gulf War disrupting the flow of oil. It was only expected that the US would like to ensure the uninterrupted flow of the Persian Gulf oil to which are hinged the economy and security of entire developed world.
Persian Gulf oil use as a political weapon to achieve definite political goals, and decision of the members of OPEC (Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Abu Dhabi) to hike the oil price at the wake of the Arab-Israeli conflict 1973. Since then oil politics injected a new dynamism and orientation in international relations.

Oil was the only reason that brought US and Russia into the Persian Gulf and its present and future interests lay solely in the exploitation of oil from this region. The interest of the US and Western power in the Persian Gulf region is matched by the Russian interest-political strategic and economic - in the Indian Ocean - Gulf region. It would seem that US was interested in establishing military base in the region and Russia was interested in fostering and encouraging a pro-Russia orientation among Arab nationalist movements.

The Persian Gulf States have been keen in acquiring large quantities of weapons from wherever possible since British withdrawal in 1971. Following the oil price-hike in 1973 the Persian Gulf region became a weapon sellers market.

The United States has enduring interests in the Persian Gulf States and as one of the great world powers, it is confronted with a wide range of issues and problem in that high trouble region. These include tension between
Iran and Arab States of the Persian Gulf area the expansion of Russian influence in the eastern Mediterranean, Iraq-Kuwait crises and the West Asia.

US has been much concerned with the equitable access to the vast oil resources in the West Asia particularly Persian Gulf with some 380 billion barrels of proved reserves, or about 70 per cent of the free world's supply of oil. These resources are of vital importance to the economies of US allies in Western Europe and the Far East. As the energy crises depended in the US in the 1970s Persian Gulf states became of increasing concern. But the US is also concerned with the peace, security, welfare and development of all the peoples of the Gulf States.

The enduring US political-strategic interests in the Persian Gulf date back from second world war. President Franklin D. Roosvelt sent an emissary to this troubled region during January-February 1941 to stimulate resistance to Nazi Germany in March 6, 1944. He declared that the US had "a vital interest in the West Asia particularly Persian Gulf", the peace and security of which were "of significance to the world as a whole".

On April 6, 1946, President Truman had declared that the West Asia particularly Persian Gulf was "an area of great economic and strategic importance the nation of which "were not strong enough individually or collectively to
withstand powerful aggression". It was easy to see how this region could "become an area of intense rivalry between outside powers and how such rivalry might suddenly erupt into conflict.

The Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf are not only the Centre of West Asian oil production, but also of political conservatism. In consequence the West has been able to maintain something of a monopoly of effective military influence in the area.

Continuing political and military weakness forced most of the countries in the Persian Gulf area to look outside West Asia for military support. US military policy vis-a-vis Iran was primarily a function of the military and political threat from the North its main objective for much of 1950s and early 1960s was to keep the Shah in power.9

The US maintained military relations with Saudi Arabia on the Southern Shore of Gulf with whom Britain had clashed in the mid 1950s during the Buraimi Oasis dispute.10

American diplomacy was aimed not simply at providing immediate protection for the Saudis but also at ensuring the longer term stability of the West Asia by bringing about an end to the Yemeni Civil War.

In the 1980s, the West Asia, particularly the Persian Gulf had become the Pivotal focus for American
foreign policy. The Reagan administration's diplomacy was to be achieved through military as well as political and diplomatic means and in a singular consistent way.\textsuperscript{11}

The Arab States of the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia and the oil Sheikhdoms, are patrimonial and lacking in traditional political systems. Even as they present a modern facade, especially in economic terms, their political systems are premodern and so are their social, bureaucratic and military structures.

US policy in the West Asia, particularly Persian Gulf must be based on reality. The realities to be faced in West Asia are three fold:

(1) Israel is the most clearly, stable, historical, and modern state in the area;

(2) Egypt and Iran are a mixture of premodern state in the area, but most important, their bureaucracies and political systems have firm historical roots; and

(3) the Praetorian States of the Arabian peninsula and the Persian Gulf have no such historical or political legitimacy; their congevity, their viability; and their stability are therefore suspect.
US military composed of naval and airborne forces is targeted on rescuing and protecting key strategic areas, areas vital to US interests, particularly in the northeastern part of the Gulf. The United States must be ready to undertake internal as well as external intervention in the lower part of the Gulf.

Saudi Arabia is a principal example of US action or US presence as vital and decisive. The Saudi regime is extremely vulnerable to subversion from the inside and outside.

In January 1980, President Carter declared, "An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the oil rich states in the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on vital interests of United States and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force." 12

Truman Doctrine (1947) and the formation of Baghdad Pact including Turkey, Iran and Iraq (besides Britain and Pakistan) had all been the part of US strategy to 'defend' its oil interests in the Persian Gulf.

US developed a vested interest in the protection of Iran and Saudi Arabia in the process of building a strong hold over the Persian Gulf region, which accounted for about two-thirds of the Persian Gulf oil production. Iran's geographic proximity with the former Soviet Union, its
geo-strategic importance in the protection of the oil rich states of the Persian Gulf and its being free from the anti-zionist obsessions were considered useful in the advancement of America's economic and military interests in the Persian Gulf region.

With the interests of United States in the cognizance of Saudi Arabia's solidarity and its total apathy towards the radical and national ideologies propagated by the frontline Arab States made it an extremely dependable ally of the United States.

US military strategy in the oil rich states in the Persian Gulf is supplemented by Israel. In America the US interests in Israel was generated under pressure from the Jewish lobby which constitutes a powerful pressure group within the American body-politik. Israel has developed close identification with the US interests in the Gulf monarchis over the years.

In this three-pillar military strategy Iran, Saudi Arabia and Israel came to be regarded as key countries and became the main bases of the power of the United States in the Persian Gulf.

Iranian and Saudi regimes which between them control over two-thirds of the Gulf oil reserves and United States concentrated on developing the military potential of these countries.
Within the framework of the Baghdad Pact (known as CENTO after 1959) the US economic and military aid given to Iran during 1953-59s amounted $500 million and $400 million respectively. The arms transfer from the United States to Iran in 1970-71 amounted to more than $3.5 billion which further grew at the rate of nearly a billion a year.

In January 1979 by the Iranian revolution the happy relationship between Iran and the United States was seriously offset which overthrew the Shah of Iran and installed the conservative Mullah on the high pedestal of power. In September 1980 the out break of the Iran-Iraq war created a potential danger for US strategic and economic interests. But United States adopted an attitude of neutrality and ruled out any direct US military involvement in the Gulf affairs.

After the overthrow of Shah's regime in Iran a dangerous seat of international tension has emerged in the Persian Gulf area, which is threatening the security of oil producing states of the Gulf and Iran as well as the states in the immediate proximity to the Persian Gulf region including the former Soviet Union. In January 1980 President Carter stated that as oil import to the United States was rapidly growing, and Gulf had become vitally important for the country, the significance of the Persian Gulf as a source of oil for the entire capitalist world was great.
Carter administration warned the bellegerents that there should not be "any infringement of the ability of other suppliers to ship oil out of the Gulf,"16 and also made it clear that the two combatant should refrain from blockading the Strait of Hormuz which is of immense strategic significance in the context of oil exports from the Gulf.

In 1979 the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and its aftermath led regional developments to be regarded within a broader East-West security framework. President Carter called the invasion "the greatest threat to peace since the second world war. Carter proposed a military assistance package for Pakistan and enunciated the doctrine now bearing his name that designated the oil rich states in the Persian Gulf as a region of vital US interests.17

The security of the oil producing states was vital to the US. In 1979 the US Defence Secretary Mr. Brown said USA might use force if needed to protect its oil supplies from the Gulf area. He further replied "Protection of the oil flow from the Gulf is clearly a part of our vital interest. In protection of those vital interests we will take any action that is appropriate including military force".18

In the post World War II the oil rich states of the Persian Gulf become a wellhead not only for Europe but for
Japan and North America as well by the early 1970s. In the post World War I access to oil producing states of the Persian Gulf first emerged as a national interest of the US and reemerged after the IIInd World War, then by the early 1980s many in the US were speaking and writing of it as a truly 'vital interest, one even worth committing American military force to defend. In discussing U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf region one-secret Defence Department report of 1982 stated; our principal objectives are to assure continued access to Persian Gulf oil and to prevent the former Soviet from acquiring political-military control of the oil directly or threw proxy.19

Strategic interests of the US in the direction of the oil producing states of the Persian Gulf has gradually advanced after the IIInd World War. To sail through the stormy seventies in the Gulf US has relied heavily on the "two Pillar Policy". Through the seventies the outstanding feature of the policy was a massive transfer of weapons system to the Persian Gulf. The US had sufficient surpluses in the aftermath of the Vietnam war and Persian Gulf had sufficient finances to afford the purchase. The United States tended to depend even more on Saudi Arabia the remaining pillar after the loss of one of the pillar after Iranian revolution in 1979. President Carter proclaimed: "the future of Saudi Arabia and the future of the United States are tied together very closely in an irrevocable..."
in the Nixon Administration, when United States began to talk about a 'two-pillar' system for the security of the oil producing states of the Persian Gulf, with Iran and Saudi Arabia as the pillar. It was based on firmly established relations with both Iran and Saudi Arabia including security commitments to both of them and a strong mutual interests involving oil, trade and development. United States saw as offering the best chance for maintaining a stable balance in the Persian Gulf region, keeping former Soviet influence to a safe level and preserving the vital Western interest in access to Gulf oil.

The control of the oil rich states of the Persian Gulf will be a key factor in calculations about the relative global balance of power between the Western industrial countries and the former Soviet Union. The Western countries have lost great political, economic and military leverage over the local countries of the oil rich states of the Persian Gulf after the Iranian revolution. If the former Soviet Union gain strategic control of Iran the impact upon the security of the rest of the Gulf. It will be argued that -

(1) the major threat to vital Western interests in the Gulf is the potential for former Soviet control;
that only a coherent and well orchestrated policy by the US can deter the former Soviet Union from adventurism in the region and

that without a coherent Western strategy the temptation to the former Soviet Union in Gulf affairs will grow.\textsuperscript{22}

A major change in the balance of power in Europe would have profound effect upon the Persian Gulf countries themselves; in particular and other conservative regimes. Therefore, these countries have a long term interest in maintaining a strong Western commitment to a favourable balance of global power.

Relationship between Japan and Persian Gulf is somewhat more tenuous. A collapse of the Japanese economy would probably not have the same political impact in the Gulf as a collapse of Western Europe but it would, nevertheless, represent a blow to economic development and the potential loss of a major oil market. Japan's dependency on the Gulf is great and therefore, any change in the Gulf policy with respect to oil could have for reaching domestic repercussions in Japan.

For the US, former Soviet attainment of Strategic parity has increased both the risk and the costs of super-power (US and former Soviet Union) competition in the Third World. The Gulf area emerged as both a principal stake and a
potential arena of super power (US and former Soviet Union) competition. This dual aspect of regional security was underscored by Iranian revolution in 1979 and former Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Whether or not Western dependence on a vulnerable region is exploited by former Soviet Union as a result of mainly domestic transformations, Iran and Pakistan have left the Western camp, while Turkey is dissatisfied with the fruits of its alliance. Russian physical proximity underscores the potential political utility of military power in the Persian Gulf. It may be argued that for many states what is worrisome is not the growth of Russian military power but the decline in Western power and will, and specially the loss of a measure of predictability about US responses. The growth of Russian military power, an independent and concrete source of concern for littoral states, Russian naval power and mobility - an ability to shrink the 'effective distance' from the southern Russia to the Gulf endow Russia with a new military capability.23

In the 1980s three factors stand out in Russia's relations with Gulf States: (1) the proximity of the region to Russia diminished by technology, accessible to Russian power by land and sea and increasingly seen as falling with in zone of legitimate 'Russian interest.
Western dependency on Persian Gulf oil increased in 1980s. As a result the region assumed importance as a point for exercising political pressure against NATO and Japan.

Though not as vulnerable as the West, the Eastern bloc as a whole became increasingly dependent on the region for oil. Former Soviet Union made extraordinary gains, increasing its political influence and improving its military position in 1950s and 1960s. But as one look back on that period, it is perhaps more extraordinary that the gains were not greater. Despite its failures it could be said that the US policy of containment succeeded that result was not due entirely to the skill of US diplomacy. The basic fact was that in situations where the overwhelming force at the disposal of the outside powers was not a viable instrument, the political gains they made were always subject to reversal in any local state by a change in regime or in policy.

United States preoccupation with security in the Persian Gulf diminished, after this Russia did not seem inclined to expand their Afghanistan military venture into Iran. The Iranian revolution of 1979 seemed to settle down. Beyond the two compatant the Iran-Iraq war not expand. As a result, general fear of an oil stoppage dropped dramatically.
International relations provide a good argument in favour of special relationship between the US and the oil producing states of the Persian Gulf. Abdel Aziz al-Saud, the Saudi King entered into agreements with American oil companies on oil exploration after having founded the State and expanded the country to its present borders. Al-Saud accepted grants and land-lease assistance from the US government and permitted a US base to be set up at Dhahran during the second World War. All these moves emanated from King Saud's need for money and security, but for the rapidly growing US-Saudi ties, there was one additional reason. In conflict with the British presence in the Persian Gulf, the Saudi interests focussed on three specific counts:

(I) the British policy on Palestine was a source of humiliation for Saudi Arabia;
(II) the British had special relations with rival monarchies in Iraq and Jordan; and
(III) they had true relation with the Gulf Sheikhdom. Thus Saudi friendship with US was aimed at diminishing the British presence in the West Asia.  

The Saudi rivalries with Iraq and Jordan accounted for their strange alliance with Egypt and Syria and strong denunciation of US-inspired, British-sponsored, Baghdad Pact in the fifties. The pro-US orientation was back with
the onset of civil war in Yemen by early sixties. The process of decolonization in the Persian Gulf set in around this time.

The relationship between Saudi Arabia and US based on mutual reliance is not free from strains as relationship between US and Israel is one of the important reasons for straining the relationship between two. Since the June 1967 war the US arms sales and supplies of military equipment to the oil kingdom have increased in enormous proportion.

Owing to its geo-strategic importance in East-West conflict, Iran was chosen to play the role of the 'Policeman of the Gulf' but importance of Saudi Arabia in the US consideration remained unscathed. US military sales to Saudi Arabia jumped from $1.2 billion 1972 to $6.5 in 1979 and with the loss of Iran as an American ally in 1979, the United States signed a deal for $11 billion in military contracts of which equipments worth $11 billion were delivered in 1980 and with a further increase during 1979-1984 it reached to $19,900 million.28

Another reason which is causing strains in the US-Saudi relationship is that the Saudi regime wants modern US weapons, high technology and managerial skills as well as all implicit US military protection but at the same time wants to assert its distance from the United States. The Saudis say; "Militarily treat us as your close ally; give
us large quantities of your newest and best weapons; train our soldiers; build our military infrastructure make clear to our enemies that the US will not stand idly if Saudi Arabia is attacked but do so very quickly so as to avoid antagonizing our Islamic brothers".29

United States is seeking permanent bases in Saudi Arabia, not only for its oil interests but also in view of Saudi Arabia's geo-strategic importance in the global military strategy of the United States in West Asia and Indian Ocean region. the 'arms for oil' deal has made Saudi Arabia a highly militarized state in West Asia. In 1980 its military budget of $20.7 billion ranked as sixth in the world. Saudi per capita military expenditure of $2500 is twice of Israel's and nearly four times that of the United States.30

Relationship between Oman and United States date back to 1834 when Oman and US signed a treaty of commerce and friendship. Relations between Oman and US continue to grow in more recent time. Oman replaced Iran as the major intelligence gathering base for the United States after the fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979. Oman and US entered into a wideranging military accord in June 1980 under which Oman agreed to let the US use its harbours and airports, and stockpile military supplies there in exchange for an American Commitment to defend Oman in case of an attack
bu Russia this was followed by an economic agreement, where by American government undertook to encourage private companies to invest in Oman.31

In their attitudes towards the US, Oman and Kuwait presented two poles, Kuwait striving to maintain a balance between US and Soviet Union and Oman being most pro-US of them. Oman was explicit in welcoming US intervention in regional affairs since the signing of the Economic and Military Cooperation Agreement with the US. In a typical interview King Qaboos said, "We are the gateway to Arabia and the oil route. Any air craft in the Horn of Africa, Kabul or Tashkent is capable of covering a distance of 450 miles to drop mines in the Strait of Hormuz, closing the Strait and severing the West's economic artery. What prevent such an occurrence is the acknowledge that we are friends of the West."32

In the past years Kuwait on the other hand has had several problems with the US. In the summer of 1984 the most serious one came in when US Congress agreed to sell Stinger missile to Saudi Arabia but turned down a similar request from Kuwait. The Kuwaitis retaliated by purchasing $327 million worth of Russian missiles. In early 1984 a second serious dispute centred around the nomination of Brandon Grove as the US ambassador to Kuwait. On the ground of his previous post as a Consul-General in Jerusalem made
him suspect as pro-Israeli. Kuwait refuse to accept him. The United States ultimately backed down and appointed a State Department official.

Persian Gulf is vital important and prominent region for oil. As late as second world war it become a strategic commodity by fuelling the US war efforts. Production of the Persian Gulf oil, a number of interrelated factors, growing share of oil in the energy consumption, economic growth, depleting oil reserves of the West European States, in 1973 oil embargo and the subsequent price rise and Russia threat, altogether placed Persian Gulf prominently in the USA's oil strategy.\(^\text{33}\) In 1980s importance of oil had relatively declined; but not to much effect. It still remain a central feature of the US policy in the Persian Gulf.

In the Iran-Iraq war in 1987 the US directly intervened when Iran threatened to strangulate its oil supply by attacking oil tankers of the Persian Gulf States. In the latest Persian Gulf crisis, US military involvement centred around the security of oil supply.\(^\text{34}\) Hence security of trade water and the oil producing countries is the single largest factor behind the US interests in the area. In October 1984 the United States sent its largest multi-power armada, comprising fifty warship, close to the Straits of Hormuz in the wake of Iran's threat to blockade
the oil supply, and again in August-September 1990 against Iraq.

Oil producing states of the Persian Gulf puts the region on top of other oil producing region. Oil producing States of the Gulf have an added strategic significance because oil supply is intermingly linked with the politics. Oil embargo associated oil with the Arab-Israeli or Palestinian issue.

The Russia threat, and regional war, keeps the USA pre-occupied with this region. Nixon doctrine was concerned with the safety of oil. Oil was also the raison 'd' etre of the Carter Doctrine which implicity threatened Russia with military attack if the latter disrupted the US and the West's oil supply. Reagan followed the same policy. To police the Persian Gulf and intervene militarily in the latest Persian Gulf crisis primarily for preventing Iraq from controlling the oil reserve of Persian Gulf. To quote Robert J. Leiber, "oil is as essential as food or water and unlike food and water the US is insufficient in oil. The Persian Gulf market was the 15th largest export market of the USA in 1985. The USA exports to Saudi Arabia expanded from $3000 m. to $ 9 billion from 1973 to 1982.

In Persian Gulf oil gave opportunity to the USA to acquire political influence at the expense of Russia. The 1973 oil embargo created chink and fissures in the US-NATO
relations. Similarly the Russian control over oil could take away the US hold over the regional and world balance of power. Oil is also a destabilizing factor in the US relations with its allies in the region.

The Persian Gulf has been vital to the US for its regional and global involvement and also holds the key to the US future strategic posture. And here in lies the immense strategic value of the region which even transcends its obvious economic value.\textsuperscript{40} The Gulf crisis is the first crisis confronting the world in the post-cold war era. In the early hour of August 2, 1990 it has received worked wide attention, disapproval, condemnation and reprisal. Right from the beginning the US response has been aggressive and pronounced. It is too early to predict the success or failure of the US power or its policy of Pax Americana. By careful mix of political will, military might and economic incentives as well as due to the negligence and inability of others US has taken the leadership role in this region.

On August 8, 1990 President George Bush defined the basic objective of American policy as:

(1) Immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait.

(2) Restoration of legitimate government in Kuwait.
(3) Security and Stability of the region.

(4) Protection of lives of American abroad.\textsuperscript{41}

The nature of US response to the crisis is virtual unanimity on the safe and uninterrupted flow of oil. The truly vital US interests in the Kuwait crisis were to ensure that the Gulf was the secure and stable source for the industrial West of reasonably priced oil."\textsuperscript{42} The main objective of the Carter Doctrine of 1980 was to prevent "any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region." A decade later, the challenge, however has come from within.

The Persian Gulf would become more and more important for the West. Therefore, the stability and survival of the pro-Western regimes becomes the vital interest of the US. Internal changes in the major oil producing countries of the Persian Gulf proved detrimental to the US since the mid-fifties; it lost Iraq in 1958, Iran 1979 and now Kuwait in 1990. Iraq now controls about 40 percent of the known oil reserves of the West Asia, with the annexation of Kuwait. This largely explains the quick and massive response from the US and its allies.

Saddam Hussain became an important instrument for US to contain Iran during the prolonged Iran-Iraq War. Under Ayatollah Khomeini, a victorious Iran was perceived to
be a threat to vital US interests in the Gulf — stability and survival of Sheikdoms and therefore Iraq became an ally. Therefore, the West became an important arms supplier to Iraq and even intelligence sharing was not excluded. The Iraqi use of chemical weapons against the Iranians as well as native Kurds was overlooked.

Since the Gulf ceasefire in August 1988, a number of events reduced Saddam's utility to the US. Khomeini passed away and emergence of Rafsanjani as the moderate leader changed the regional complex. Moreover Saddam was unwilling to confine himself to Iraq to play the role of a pro-Western Arab leader.

The US objective, therefore, larger than Kuwait. It has succeeded this objective with the international community's outrage over the Iraqi invasion. At the same time regional powers and groups which have an interest in the peaceful resolution of the crisis abdicated their responsibilities. And above all, the Cold War is truly over.

The Soviet Russian Interests:

Following the Truman doctrine of 1947, with the increasing US involvement in Iran and Turkey, Russia during this period also shifted its strategy from seeking direct
control over the bordering areas to countering the US influence through 'soft diplomacy' which manifested in a number of offers made by Russia to Iran and Turkey. In December 1954 the agreement signed between Iran and Russia provided for the repayment of $86 million debt and return of 11.2 tons of gold to Iran besides the settlement of the border problem.43

The Russians call the region the persidski zaliu or the Persian Gulf. It is significant that Russia has insisted on referring to the Gulf by its traditional name unlike most of the world that has tended to drop the prefix "Persian" in favour of "the Gulf" or even "Arab Gulf" in defence to the Arab sensitivities.

The Russians have legitimate interests in the Persian Gulf. The strategic and oil importance of the area, and US interests in the region — all tend to enhance Russian anxiety about the happening in the Persian Gulf. The Russian concluded a treaty of friendship with Iran in 1921, under articles five and six of which they gained the right to send troops into Iran, should a third party intervene there or use Iranian territory as a base for an attack on Soviet territory. The Arab Gulf States were more or less insulted from Russia influence till 1972 when the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Iraq gave the Soviet their first home port facility at Basra.
The Russian interest in the oil producing states stemmed not so much from the importance of oil in the overall energy requirement of Russia but from a variety of reasons connected with its economic, political and ideological objectives. Russia is self-reliant in oil and maintains a fairly high level of production at home but its interest in the trading of oil necessitates access to the Gulf oil. Russian entry in the world oil market in 1957 gave a serious jolt to the position of the oil companies of the West.

Russia's strategic interest in the Persian Gulf was probably, greater than that of the USA and the West. Russia's access to the Persian Gulf and the ability to control choke points enabled it to control the oil-sea Lanes and installations before the USA could resort to massive retaliation. The Soviet-Iraq treaty extended Russia's influence at the head of the Persian Gulf. Iranian revolution and overthrow of Shah coincided with the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. These two developments on the one hand weakened the US position and enhanced that of the Russia, on the other. Russia being adjacent to the region as well as expanding itself into the region, "cast" a long shadow over the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula, political and military influence at the both ends of the area counterbalanced the US influences in Saudi Arabia and the smaller Persian Gulf States.
Persian Gulf oil was the important factor of Russian interest in the region. Russia could not be indifferent to Persian Gulf oil affairs if she was at all concerned with the politics of the region.

Russia's desire to continue its oil exports to the West European States and Japan made it increasingly interested in the oil, from the rich States of the Persian Gulf, which was cheap and easy to get. Russia desired to increase its capability to obstruct the flow of oil to the West by controlling the outer ring of the Arab States surrounding the oil producing pro-West monarchies and Sheikhdomes. Russian interest in the Persian Gulf manifested in terms of under cutting the Western political and economic influence rather than fostering communist take over.45

The oil yielded political benefits to Russia on the issue of nationalization of oil industry and oil embargo as of 1967 and 1973, it reaped benefits out of surrounding the war between local government and the multinational companies.46 The USA's oil import policy was an issue in the hand of Russia which it could exploit to malign the US image and enhance that of its own.47

Persian Gulf oil was Russia future source of supply. Import of oil from North Rumeillah field of Iraq was a good will gestures more than a necessity. Nor did Russia ever turn as the total or partial importer of the Persian Gulf oil. Russia also does not seem to be so in near future48
Yet, at the present rate of consumption and production of oil, Russia and other breakway republics have to import to the Persian Gulf oil at least "for advantage if not for necessity", in future unknown but also not far away.

Persian Gulf was the most vital to the Russia, as the land and waters of the region were the hostile military plateforms for aerial and naval attack against her. Persian Gulf affected political, cultural and social trends across the border made a great impact on the Russia's domestic and external security. After the demise of Soviet Union Islamic resurgency recently reemerged in the region.

The Persian Gulf also helped Russia achieve its objectives in the Indian Ocean, crucial to the Russia for both military and commercial purpose. The Russia presence in the land and the waters of the area also provided safety to the Russian commercial inter-course with the Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent and Far East. The region's proximity to Russia further increased its security sensitivity, particularly within the framework of East-West relations. Even if Russia, having the largest reservoir of crude oil and natural gas, may not need the Persian Gulf oil or be capable of exploiting them, their denial of the same can spell disaster for Western economy and security.
In the crisis in the Persian Gulf of 1991, the Russian responses were conditioned on many factors:

(1) the rapid normalization of US-Russia relation,
(2) end of the Cold War, and
(3) impact of the internal economic situation on the Russian foreign policy.

Official statements of the Russian government described on August 2, 1990, Iraqi action was not only against the interests of the Arab people but also went against the "positive tendencies" in the direction of improvement of the international climate. The statement further said, "that unconditional withdrawal of the Iraqi troops from Kuwait's territory" and the restoration of Kuwait's territorial integrity would help resolve the crises.51

The joint statement of US and Russia brought out the four important elements of the Soviet response to the crisis.

(1) Soviet Union condemned the aggression
(2) it was prepared to alter the complexion of its ties with Iraq which had committed aggression;
(3) it was prepared to cooperate with US on the Gulf Crisis
(4) it wished to see an international action against the aggression under the UN aegis.
Most Russian observers have explained the Russian response to the Gulf Crisis in the light of the rapid normalization of Russian-US relationship. US and Russia have condemned Iraq's aggression in the identical terms, demanded the restoration of the status-quo ante and supported the relevant UN Security council Resolution. The Russians did not object to the transfer of US military units to Saudi Arabia or US naval ships to the Persian Gulf.\textsuperscript{52}

Since the Gulf War, Russian relations with Arab Gulf States had been gradually improving when Gorbachev's support for the anti-Iraq coalition had secured major loans from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. However, the hopes for entry into the lucrative arms markets of the Gulf States failed to materialize and after absorbing the enormous costs of financing the Gulf War, there was little desire in the GCC to invest in the volatile Russian economy. Russia has been keen to ensure that its rapprochement with Iran was not gained at the expense of its political and economic interests in the Arab Gulf States.

In the aftermath of the August 1991 Coup, it appeared to be accepted in Moscow that Russia has ceased to be a significant regional power in the Persian Gulf. Russian relation with Iran had advanced to the stage where Yeltsin was considering making an official visit to Iran by
the second half of 1993. Russia is determined to follow a pragmatic policy towards Iran, which would reward Iranian concessions to Russian economic penetration of the Persian Gulf region.

There was a major Russian push to try to entice the Gulf States to make more extensive arms purchase. In January 1993 Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev travelled to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), promoting Russian arms through the somewhat disingenuous argument that their T-72 tank proved itself brilliantly during the war against Iraq as a part of the Syrian troops arsenal", conveniently forgetting the fate of the T-72 tanks in Iraqi army.53

Russian policy towards Iraq throughout 1992, was uncompromising in its refusal to contemplate any change in the UN sanctions regime. Foreign Minister Kozyrev constantly referred to the example of Russia's support of the UN policy towards Iraq as the test of Russia's unswerving commitment to the anti-Iraq coalition, which he argued had been undermined by Gorbachev's hesitations during the Gulf War.54

There has been no change in Russian policy towards Iraq since then. In January 1993 after the US attacks on Iraq, Russia expressed its concern over the scale of the
attacks and gave warning that such attack might require a new mandate from the Security Council. First Deputy Minister of the Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations of Russia visited Iraq in August 1993 and expressed the desire to resume 'economic and commercial relations with Iraq.
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