Chapter - 3

INDIA’S RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS (SELECT COUNTRIES)
Rajiv Gandhi inherited a virtually deteriorating and unstable political and security environment in South Asia and that was the reason that top most priority was accorded to improving relations with South Asian neighbours without whose cooperation he felt India could not visualise the realisation of common objectives with regard to the security and development of the region. It was one of the basic pillars of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's foreign policy structure and assure sincerity of his utterances he sent the then foreign secretary Mr. Ramesh Bhandari on a round of visits to the neighbouring states. Besides Rajiv Gandhi accorded due priority to develop relations with the super powers namely USA and USSR. In this chapter an attempt is made to discuss India's relations with neighbouring countries namely Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, Nepal and Bhutan during Rajiv Gandhi's term. Apart from this India's relations with USA and USSR also dealt.

One of the immediate tasks he set before himself after assuming the office of Prime Minister was to review the situation on South Asia and make immediate efforts to improve the environment. However, the basic principles remained unaltered as advocated from time to time by Jawaharlal Nehru. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi maintained continuity in the foreign policy and the objectives in pursuing the neighbourhood policy were the same as that of Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi strengthening India united and guaranteeing Indian security. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi accorded top
priority to the neighbours and he believed in improving the bilateral climate to improve regional climate. He accorded the area as one of great importance and problems to be attended to with urgency.

1. INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

India's relations with the United States have followed a zig-zag course throughout the cold war period. Sometimes warmer sometimes more troubled, occasionally abrasive, frequently soured by divergent perceptions, interests and foreign policy courses; the relationship is marked, if not marred by instability and fluctuations. At the worst of times there was considerable United States economic assistance to India and valuable amount of trade from the point of view of India, and at the best of times, Indian and United States (US) foreign policies never reached a meeting point or point of fusion. Undoubtedly India's relations with three of her important neighbours, Pakistan, China and the Soviet Union in particular and the policy towards Asia and Africa in general have been the most significant determining factors in Indo-US relations.²

As cold war got intensified Indo-US relations got further strained. While Washington considered India's policy of non-alignment or neutrality as immoral, Soviet Union took a sympathetic view of India's foreign policy. As a result, United States backed Pakistan on Kashmir and entered into a defence pact with Islamabad. While United States
was found increasingly on the side of Pakistan, Soviet Union was drawn closer to India. Thus the cold war which broke out essentially in Europe came to the door-steps of the Indian sub-continent.

The conflict with China introduced a new element in Indo-US relations. The conflict with China continued to shape Indian foreign policy response for many years to come and kept India’s relations with USA quite close and intimate. In the wake of the border war with China came the war with Pakistan in September 1965. The US had maintained neutrality in this war and reportedly refused Pakistan President Ayub Khan’s request for intervention. Washington was also reported to have privately warned China against intervention in the Indo-Pak war.³

India and United States were involved in a serious conflict situation on Bangladesh and the United States policy of militarization of the Indian Ocean. The policies of the military rulers of Pakistan created a civil war situation in their country, and India was compelled to play the host to the refugees from across the border.⁴

The external policy of the Janata Government was more an issue of minor re-adjustment than redefinition. By the end of 1970s Indo-US relations had become normal, but the possibility of a deep relationship is unlikely during the 1980s. A series of issues are likely to continue to prevent close relations between the two states: India’s refusal to
abandon an uninspected nuclear programme, the United States naval presence in the Indian Ocean, a genuine concern in the United States for the security of Pakistan and conflicting attitudes regarding a New International Economic Order.\textsuperscript{5}

The Indo-US relations during the period of 1982-84, had no material improvement in actual practice, because the US, decision to keep up and even enhance the supply of sophisticated arms to Pakistan, US apathy to NIEO, US decision to develop and deploy more and more sophisticated weapons, the US unhelpful attitude towards the issue of control of anti-India extremist groups in America, US decision to set up military activity in the Indian Ocean and particularly in the Gulf region, and India's continued and strengthened friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union, were responsible for keeping the growth of Indo-American co-operation limited to several specific areas only.

\textbf{Indo-US Relations During Rajiv Regime}

The coming into power of new and young leadership in India in 1985 elections brought with it more optimism that it would lead to a new era of improved relations between world's two largest democracies. This optimism, particularly among the western experts, was there due to several factors.
Firstly, it was believed that Rajiv Gandhi would be more receptive to the west than his mother Mr. Indira Gandhi. Secondly, it was hoped that being new to politics, belonging to a new generation, educated in the West, unorthodox in approach and with firm beliefs in modern technology, engineering and science as the essential means for rapid economic development, Rajiv Gandhi tried to radically improve India’s relations with USA. Thirdly, the growing Indian need for advance western technology was regarded as an overwhelming reason which will compelled the new Prime Minister to think in terms of improved relations with the West. Fourthly, the new budgetary and other measures adopted by new government gave rise to the view that Rajiv Gandhi was inclined towards free enterprise and liberalized trade and economic relations with the West. Consequently, many American scholars started advocating meaningful US moves and decisions for cultivating Rajiv Gandhi’s inclination in favour of the West.⁶

Soon after his election as the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi told an American correspondent, Mr. Dean Brelis that he saw “Strong relations between India and Soviet Union but that did not mean that we don’t want to be friends with the United States. We want to keep out option of individuality open.”⁷ India’s desire for a better, relationship with the United States expressed by Rajiv Gandhi was more enthusiastically reciprocated by Washington. The process of improvement, begun in
Mrs. Gandhi's time, received a big fillip with the new Prime Minister's visit to USA in June 1985. In an interview to a news agency, Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had stated on one occasion that India would strive to establish friendly and co-operative relations with both the Super Powers, USA and USSR. He had further said that India would work for regional peace, and stability while upholding fully the principles of non-alignment. In this context, he sought the cooperation of USA and USSR to defuse global tension.

Rajiv Gandhi's First visit to USA

In the mid and late 1980s, visits exchanged by the United States Secretary of defence and the Indian Minister of defence symbolized a modest but growing program of cooperation in military technology and other defence matters. The warming trend in relations between New Delhi and Washington continued with the 1985 and 1987 visits by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to Washington. Furthermore, as the United States appreciation of India's role as a force for stability in South Asia grew, Washington supported New Delhi's moves in Sri Lanka in 1987 and in Maldives in 1988. It was in such an environment that Rajiv Gandhi paid an official five day visit to USA (June 11th to 15th 1985). It formed the most crucial part of his two week tour to five countries. He held wide-
ranging talks with President Reagan and was successful in establishing a rapport with the US administration.

Rajiv Gandhi visited USA with three basic objectives- (i) achieving better understanding of the US policies; (ii) persuading Washington to use its influence on Pakistan to desist from war preparations and instigation of insurgency in India; and (iii) bringing the two Super Powers to a point where they could possibly talk to each other.

In the US the general expectation appeared to be that Rajiv Gandhi was going to fundamentally change the foreign policy and the economic policy of India. In India a wide spread view was that the US would change its policy basically towards this region.

During his first visit to United States he tried to sort out the areas of mutual differences with great understanding and cordiality. For good measure, Rajiv Gandhi did extract a commitment from the United States Administration for dealing with the international dimensions of terrorist violence aimed at India’s policy of non-alignment, its known stand on the Afghanistan question, the Indian Ocean and the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. There are also evidences to suggest that Rajiv Gandhi succeeded in impressing upon the United States Administration that the process of opening up the economy could not be absolute because of large masses of poor people in the country whose very existence called for protection from market forces.9
The two countries also discussed possible arms purchased by India from the United States. Both President Reagan and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said at the conclusion of their talks that they had hit off. Secretary of State George Schultz maintained that the visit ‘has exceeded everything expected’. Indian Prime Minister said that after his fruitful talks with the American leadership, Rajiv Gandhi felt that India cooperate to reduce differences and to work together for the common ideals of freedom and democracy. Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to US proved success for as soon after his visit, President Reagan agreed to have a summit meeting with Gorbachev in November, 1985. Also, the Indian Prime Minister could do some realistic assessment of the ruthlessly warlike policies of the Reagan Administration. But the crux of Indo-US relations is the US posture towards Pakistan and here Rajiv Gandhi’s visit failed to produce any tangible gains.

Rajiv Gandhi’s Second Visit to USA

In order to strengthen Indo-US relations, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi paid a short visit to Washington in October 1987. Prior to his visit, the US administration announced its decision to sell two Cray XMP 14 super computers to India. This was regarded by India as a delayed and isolated attempt on the part of USA towards the already agreed high technology transfer understandings. Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and US President Reagan announced after their talks that there was agreement between the two countries for the transfer of US high
technology to India in some areas and both the sides were willing to extend their co-operation in the field of defence. In all the areas—defence, science and technology, trade, agricultural research and education, the two countries agreed to extend their co-operation. Informally, Washington gave the impression that it would take necessary steps for preventing Pakistan from becoming a Nuclear weapon state. The big reversal, however, within two months of Prime Minister Gandhi’s visit to the USA, a big reversal came when the US Congress Committee, cleared the $4.02 billion (Rs.5226 crores) military and economic aid packet stalled for three and a half month because of a certain new evidence that Pakistan was clandestinely following a nuclear weapon programme. This was done despite Islamabad’s outright refusal to satisfy US Law on fugitive nuclear weapons programme.

India’s economic ties with the United States remained a highly significant aspect of India’s foreign economic relationship. For India, USA was too important to allow a situation of ‘benign neglect’ from the US side. Washington was still among the largest aidgivers to India. India’s trade with USA was an important component of India’s total foreign trade. But in some way this was not a very normal pattern. The US was also a major source of higher technology. Not only the economic relationship but even the political relationship got a boost when in March 1985 India and United States concluded a major deal on
transfer of high technology like Super Computers to India. Later Washington had dropped its proposal to retain rights of inspection of certain high technology items to be exported to India in the face of Indian opposition. The President described the Indo-US technology and capital cooperation agreement as the greatest thing that could have happened to Indo-US relations.\(^12\)

To conclude, Indo-US relations continued to be friendly and cooperative but without much depth and warmth because of a lot of irritants for example US tilt towards Pakistan in supplying massive quantities of armaments to it had continued to keep Indo-American relations quite cold even after Rajiv's two visits to US. Even while in America Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi did not hesitate to criticize and challenge the feasibility of the US star wars programme. He was also quite frank in criticizing the developed West for ignoring the due economic rights and developmental interests of the Third World countries. Likewise, America nowhere accepted the Indian view of the US military aid to Pakistan. In the presence of such facts the signs for any major immediate improvement in Indo-US relations appear to be not very bright. In fact both the countries need a change of outlook and tactics. USA should desist from offering and giving aid with strings. It should reconcile fully with India's non-alignment combined with affirmed friendship with the Soviet Union. Indo-American relations can be developed and made cordial within the existing framework of India's
relations with the Soviet Union. India should also accept that America's relations with Pakistan are not based on anti-India thinking. These have their basis in American global strategy. India should also desist, as far as possible from criticizing all such American policies and actions which do not directly involve India.¹³

2. INDO-SOViet UNION RELATIONS

The Indo-Soviet Union relationship has its roots on the one hand in the struggle against Western imperialism and colonialism and on the other in the national interest and requirements of India in the last twenty to thirty five years.¹⁴

Indo-Soviet relations during the Stalin era were cold. The post-Stalin leadership changed the apathetic policy towards the new nations. As the Cold War entered Asia, the Soviet perception of India gradually changed. India's strict neutral role in Korea impressed the Russians. American Alliance with Pakistan in 1954 and supply of arms to that country was as much opposed by Russia as by India. Also Russia's realisation that she needs more influence among Afro-Asian countries to counter US brought her closer to India.¹⁵

The role of Nikite Khruschev in bringing Indo-Soviet relationship on to a new course and making this relationship multisided, intimate and durable was particularly notable. Thus the Soviet Union began to play an increasingly significant, and from the point of view of India, helpful
and valuable role on certain vital issues, political, economic and strategic, which India had to contend with.\textsuperscript{16}

On August 9th 1971, the Soviet Union and India signed the 20-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Co-operation. The Government of India declared that it was not a military alliance and that it was prepared to sign similar treaties with Western Powers. No western country volunteered to do so. Be that as it may, the Soviet Union gave strong diplomatic support to India in the United Nations on the Bangladesh crisis in December 1971.\textsuperscript{17}

Throughout the seventies, India and Soviet Union maintained their close relations unaffected by some important developments at home and abroad. In 1973, Brezhnev visited India and wanted her approval for the Asian collective security plan. The internal emergency imposed by the Indian Government in 1975 received full support from Moscow, while the Western countries attacked the suspension of democracy in India.\textsuperscript{18}

Mrs. Indira Gandhi set out the framework for the new Indo-Soviet relationship. The treaty had been hailed throughout India, she noted and even the traditional critics of Indo-Soviet Friendship in many countries have recognised its importance.
The durability of Indo-Soviet ties was manifested when the Janatha Government came into power in 1977. The Janatha leaders had talked about genuine non-alignment giving the impression that they intended to distance India from the Soviet Union, but in effect Morarji Desai signed significant economic agreements with Moscow which were not exactly an indication of moving away. With the return of Indira Gandhi to power in January 1980, relations continued to have all-round development.

In the very first broadcast to the nation on November 12\textsuperscript{th} 1984 i.e., the day he attended office in the South block, Rajiv Gandhi reaffirmed his government's full resolve to maintain and develop further friendship and co-operation with all the countries particularly with India's time rested friends like the Soviet Union. The importance that India attaches to relations with the Soviet Union can be assessed from words that Mr.Rajiv Gandhi used for describing India's relations with USSR. He observed that, "We highly value the wide-ranging and time tested relationship with the Soviet Union, based upon mutual cooperation, friendship and vital support when needed."\textsuperscript{19}

From the time to time, Rajiv Gandhi has been referring to the old, well tried and dependable friendship of India with the Soviet Union. Rajiv Gandhi assured the Soviet Premier Nikolai Tikhonov on November 2\textsuperscript{nd} 1984, that his government would continue the same
policy as had been pursued by his predecessor in strengthening friendly ties with the Soviet Union and other countries. Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko said in his address on the eve of the 67th Anniversary of the October Revolution that the Soviet people wished the leadership of friendly India and staunchness in continuing the foreign policy course bequeathed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi.  

In many speeches and interviews with domestic and foreign newspapers and agencies, Rajiv Gandhi made it clear that the friendly ties with the Soviet Union would be maintained. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi went on his first official tour to the USSR from 21 to 26 May, 1985. During his May 1985 visit to the USSR, Rajiv Gandhi curtly dismissed Gorbachev's new plea for Asian security as an old concept. He expressed himself against nations interfering or intervening in areas outside their own, thus rejecting by implication the Soviet Union's claim to be considered an Asian Powers. Instead he emphasized the Indian support for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Indeed the sustained friendship and cooperation between India and the Soviet Union received a big boost by this visit. It provided ideal opportunities to both Mr.Rajiv Gandhi and Mr.Gorbachev to understand each other's viewpoint and establish a personal rapport. For Mr.Rajiv Gandhi, the visit represented a flying start to his involvement in
international diplomacy. The visit definitely provided ample strength to Indo-Soviet relations and enhanced their effectiveness in the contemporary international relations. The visit clearly demonstrated the high importance that India enjoyed in the Soviet foreign policy. It also strongly indicated the value that India attached to her friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union. The joint statement issued at the end of the Moscow visit of the Prime Minister clearly reflected the identity of views between New Delhi and Moscow over wide-ranging international issues and problems. The affirmation to promote traditional friendship and to work for the promotion of world peace and détente further made the Joint Statement a more important document of Indo-Soviet relations.

After Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to the USSR, Indo-Soviet relations continued to develop, as before, into highly friendly and cooperative relations. The Soviet Union came forward to meet Indian need for Mig 29, Mig 27, AN 12, AN 32, Submarines and other equipments. The Indo-Soviet trade turnover increased to Rs.4500 crores per year. The Soviet Union came forward to offer super thermal power station technology to India. The relations between two special friends continued to develop in a very healthy manner.23

The visit provided a big opportunity to both the countries to reaffirm their faith towards the development of Indo-Soviet special friendship. Besides signing several important agreements, the two sides issued a joint statement and supplemented it by a 10-Point Declaration,
which instantly came to be christened as New Delhi Declaration. In the Indo-Soviet joint statement, the two countries noted with deep satisfaction the successful completion of over fifteen years of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation which symbolizes the strong bonds of friendship between their Governments and people. Both the sides assessed the dynamic development of mutually advantageous economic, commercial, scientific and technological cooperation on a planned and long term basis. It was noted with great satisfaction that the direction of economic, trade, scientific and technological cooperation for the period upto 2000 A.D., as well as the agreements signed on May 22nd 1985, have enriched their cooperation with new form and content, and have further strengthened their ties.

**Indo-Soviet 10-Point Declaration**

On November 27th 1986, Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev signed a 10-point joint declaration on behalf of the one billion Indian and Soviet people, calling for the creation of a nuclear weapon-free and non-violent world and pledging the two countries to work together for the achievement of these lofty objectives. Nuclear weapons threaten to annihilate not only all that man has created through the ages but man himself and even life on earth. Humanity deserves a better fate than being a hostage to nuclear terror and despair. It is necessary to change the existing world situation and to build a nuclear weapon free world, free of violence and hatred, fear and
suspicion. They expressed that "the world we have inherited belongs to present and future generations and this demands that primary be given to universally accepted human values. The right of every nation and every person to life, freedom, peace and pursuit of happiness must be recognized. The use or threat of use of force must be abandoned. The expansion of nuclear arsenals and the development of space weapons undermine the universally accepted conviction that a nuclear war should never be fought and can never be won. We call upon the people and leaders of all countries to take urgent action that would lead to a world free of weapons of mass destruction, a world war."  

The ten-point contained in the Declaration are:
1. Peaceful coexistence must become the universal norm of international relations.
2. Human life must be recognized as supreme.
3. Non-violence should be the basis of community life.
4. Understanding and trust must replace fear and suspicion.
5. The right of every state to political and economic independence must be recognized and respected.
6. Resources being spent on armaments must be channeled towards social and economic development.
7. Conditions must be guaranteed for the individual's harmonious development.
8. Mankind's material and intellectual potential must be used to solve global problems.

9. The balance of terror must give way to comprehensive international security.

10. A nuclear weapon-free and non-violent world requires specific and immediate action for disarmament.

The ten-point New Delhi Declaration, indeed, constitutes a charter for the transformation of outlook and relations among nations from relations characterized by tensions generated by economic imbalance and the nuclear threat into relations of friendship, cooperation, peace and development. The declaration points out that the world is one and its security is indivisible. East and West, North and South regardless of social systems, ideologies, religion or race can and must join together in a common commitment to disarmament to disarmament and development.

The next year Rajiv Gandhi's visit was reciprocated by the visit of Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU) General Secretary Mr. Gorbachev to New Delhi in November 1986, and the latter was pressed time and again to reassure the public that the Soviet Union would fulfill its obligations in case the Indian security was threatened.

The General Secretary gave a positive response in general and conceptual terms. Both the Soviet Union and India have remained
faithful to their commitments and acted in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the treaty. But when he was asked specific assurances, with Pakistan and China being named, he as a statesman of sophistication, refused to commit himself.

Gorbachev’s interview to the Indian Journalists on November 26th 1986, on the eve of his visit to India, expressed that the Indo-Soviet Treaty is not a history. It is the present day, the living practice of our time.

Both Rajiv Gandhi and Gorbachev have spoken about the current relevance of Indo-Soviet Treaty. During the Banquet speech on November 25th 1986, Rajiv Gandhi categorically declared that the treaty remained a source of strength for our respective countries. It importance has increased in the context of the current world situation and recent events in our part of the world. The Indo-Soviet treaty is a sophisticated instrument to raise uncertainties for our potential adversaries but it is not a substitute for our military preparedness and will to power.25

Economic Cooperation

The economic agreement was signed on July 4th 1987, between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev during the two day visit of the Indian Prime Minister on the occasion of the inauguration of the year long Cultural Festival in the
Soviet Union. This is for the first time that the Soviet Union has signed such a comprehensive agreement on exchange of scientific and technological know-how with a country outside the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). Though operative till the year 2000, it can be extended by mutual agreement.

The economic relations between the two countries have been built on the principles of mutual benefit and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. In the late 1980's when India has already emerged as the tenth industrialised country of the world with a fairly strong industrial base and industrial infrastructure and the Soviet Union itself is engaged in the acceleration of its economic growth, new avenues of further expansion of economic cooperation and new forms are being evolved with internal adjustments in the economies of the two countries. This new trend of furthering Indo-Soviet economic cooperation and elevating it to a new level in qualitative terms has begun to reflect itself in the new pattern of trade between the two countries.\(^{26}\)

**Disagreement between India and Soviet Union**

Ever-growing Indo-Soviet time tested and traditional friendship and co-operation has been an important valuable and accepted fact of Indo-Soviet relations. However, this does not mean that there exists no disagreement between the two. India has been forthright in stating its
strong opposition to foreign interventions in the internal affairs of any
country, more particularly in the affairs of a non-aligned country. Further, India has never tried to hide its opposition to the presence of foreign troops in the territory of another state. Such an Indian view involves a direct criticism of Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi did not hesitate to state India's disapproval and disliking for international interventions practiced by powerful states against weaker countries. There definitely exists disagreement between India and the Soviet Union regarding the continued presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan.

3. INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

Ever since Pakistan's birth in 1947 the relations between India and Pakistan have never been cordial. The problems arised due to division of India in to two nations and others issues embittered the relations between the two states. The basic disputes between the two countries from 1947 to 1984 were territorial (boundary); Kashmir, Hyderabad, Junagarh, economic, financial, trade, tariff and transport, division of water resources; border relations, treatment of minorities, Psychological warfare; and general security issues. While India has shown extraordinary generosity to Pakistan in settling all those questions amicably, Pakistan's approach has been governed by suspicion and hostility. Its aggression in Kashmir has been fully
established even at the UN but with the help of its Western Patrons, it continues to occupy the so-called Azad Kashmir.

In settling the water resources disputes, Jawaharlal Nehru travelled extra miles to help Pakistan. From 1949 to 1984, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shashri, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mr. Morarji Desai and again Mrs. Indira Gandhi offered no war pacts to Pakistan but Islamabad always turned down the offers. In 1965, they invited a humiliation by attacking India in the Rann of Kutch. The then Indian Prime Minister Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri in his generosity at Tashkent, settled the issue. In 1971-72 however, they invited a major disaster for themselves when they launched an all-out invasion on India on the question of Bangladesh. India turned the table on the face of the aggressors and gangsters and a whole Pakistan army of 90,000 surrendered unconditionally in mid-December 1971. But this time Mrs. Indira Gandhi in her generosity at Shimla returned the territory lost by Pakistan in the war. The Shimla Agreement of July 2nd 1972, was signed by India with the hope that Pakistan would behave rightly but the hope was belied by Mr. Bhutto and Mr. Zia-ul-Haq.

Indeed from 1980 to 1984, the Indo-Pakistan relations were bewildered by Mr. Zia-ul-Haq policy of blowing hot and cold. But the then Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi reacted to it firmly and steadily. On the one hand, Zia was receiving all the lethal weapons
from the US and China, and, on the other he quietly announced in general terms, his so called no-war pact proposal of September 15th 1981. This proposal was made not to India but to the press as a footnote to a statement accepting $32 billion economic and military aid from the US. India was formally informed of this only on November 22nd 1981 but the US imperialist lobby began to pressurize New Delhi to accept Mr. Zia-ul-Haq offer and Mrs. Indira Gandhi told Mr. Zia-ul-Haq on November 25th 1981 that India stood by its original no-war offer made in 1949, 1965, 1968, 1977 and 1980 with no exception, no conditions and no variations.  

Between 1982 to 1984, two rounds of talks were held between the representatives of the two countries. India offered a friendship Treaty to Pakistan and asked Pakistan for a pledge that it would not give military bases to foreign powers and would settle all its disputes with India bilaterally. Instead of agreeing to this Pakistan went about its hijacking business, instigating the militant Sikhs and Khalistanis.

**Rajiv Gandhi Period**

The most important of the aspects of efforts at stabilisation of relations between India and Pakistan was the dialogue between the new Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi and Pakistan President General Zia-ul-Haq. Their first meeting was of a brief, ceremonial kind on 4, November 1984 when General Mr. Zia-ul-Haq came to attend the
funeral of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Subsequently Mr. Zia-ul-Haq told Newsweek that he was more than satisfied with his meeting with the Indian Prime Minister and now that there was a much younger leadership this must lead to a dynamic youthful approach to Indo–Pakistan relations.

**Rajiv Gandhi’s Views of Indo-Pak Relations**

In an interview to The Muslim-a Pakistan daily, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi gave a categorical assurance to Pakistan that India had no designs against any of its neighbours, especially Pakistan. India will not like to see a dismembered weak country bordering in its borders. Rajiv Gandhi, however, called upon Pakistan to stop acquiring highly sophisticated offensive weapons and respond positively to India’s fresh initiatives to establish confidence and trust between the two countries. The quantum jump in the level of arms technology in the region, resulting from Pakistan’s present policy of importing US weapons, can only work to the detriment of our people. Hoping that a more positive response would be forthcoming from Pakistan, the Prime Minister advocated the need for bringing about a sort of de-escalation through step-by-step approach for normalization. This, he said, was necessary for making successful the forthcoming ministerial level Indo-Pak Joint Commission talks on the issue of no war pact/treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation. Rajiv Gandhi cautioned against a nuclear arms race.
in the Indian sub-continent, saying it would only subject both the people to worst fate on earth.\textsuperscript{31}

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Mr. Zia-ul-Haq met again at Muscat on 18\textsuperscript{th} November 1985 and decided that Mr. Zia-ul-Haq would visit India for a few hours after the SAARC Summit in Dhaka in December 1985. According to Mr. Zia-ul-Haq, they had discussed the Siachen issue and the no-war pact. The next meeting took place in Dhaka on 9\textsuperscript{th} December and was followed by a brief visit to New Delhi by General Mr. Zia-ul-Haq on 17\textsuperscript{th} December 1985 that led to an agreement that neither country would attack the nuclear installations of the other.\textsuperscript{32}

After death of Zia-ul-Haq, democratically elected Prime Minister Mrs. Benazir Bhutto assumed the office. Mrs. Benazir Bhutto responded positively to the lengthy and warm message from India on her assumption as the Prime Mister. Mrs. Benazir Bhutto was hopeful, like the Indian Premier of better ties between the two countries. Predictably, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto has been cautious even while conveying her positive response to Rajiv Gandhi’s message. She quite openly affirmed that she wanted Indo-Pak relations to improve. In her first press conference (December 3\textsuperscript{rd} 1988) as the Pak Prime Minister, she was emphatic in rejecting the Zia-ul-Haq military regimes proposed no-war pact with India, and highlighting the importance of the Shimla Accord of 1972. All problems had to be resolved step-by-step under it, and that
included the Kashmir issue as well, she said. Even a specific query on Kashmir failed to elicit any sharp or negative reaction, Kashmir was covered by the Shimla Accord, she maintained. Her reference to the Shimla Spirit and her confidence that she and Mr. Rajiv Gandhi would be able to find a way to defuse tensions that had developed in Indo-Pak relations were also quite striking and note worthy.33

Trade Accord of January 1986

Prospects of developed economic relations between India and Pakistan received a big boost when in January 1986; the Finance Ministers of the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding for increasing bilateral private trade. The agreement allowed the private sector in Pakistan to import 42 items from India. In the public sector the two sides agreed to double the quantum of trading during 1986-87. This trade agreement appeared to be a significant step forward in the two countries search for a framework of mutually beneficial bilateralism. However, in actual practice the progress in this sphere remained very limited even after the signing of this agreement.

During 1986, Indo-Pak relations continued to develop very slowly. SAARC provided opportunity to both the countries for keeping up the process of bilateral relations in order. India continued to work for step by step normalization of relations with Pakistan. In December 1986, Indian Home Minister led a delegation to Pakistan and held useful talks. Both
the sides reaffirmed their commitment to the Shimla Agreement and to seek solution of problems discussed; illegal border crossings, terrorist problem, smuggling of arms and narcotics across the borders etc. Both the sides agreed to strengthen their border security forces and to take up specific measures such as joint surveillances of the border and joint mechanism with solemn and binding obligations. On a reciprocal basis, against allowing the use of their respective territories for any acts or activities directed against internal peace, stability and territorial integrity of the other state. However, the foreign secretaries of the two countries in their December 1986 talks failed to resolve the differences over the issue of No War Pact/Treaty of Peace and Friendship. India wanted that Pakistan must commit itself against the grant of foreign basis whereas the latter believed that there was no need to do it because of its membership of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and because it was signatory to the 1971 UN resolution on keeping the Indian Ocean a Zone of peace, free of superpower rivalry. Thus the impasse continued. Along with it, the US decision to upgrade air bases in Pakistan further dampened the enthusiasm towards an Indo-Pak Peace Treaty or no war pact agreement.34

Meaningful efforts were made during the period of a new generation of political leadership under Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Mr. Benazir Bhutto. Three agreements were signed by both the Prime Ministers in December 1988, which includes, prohibition of attacks on
the nuclear installations, and facilities avoidance of double taxation on incomes derived from international air transport and cultural cooperation. The first agreement on nuclear installations was originally signed in 1988 and instruments of ratification were exchanged in January, 1991. Given the strains and stresses in Indo-Pak relations during eighties and thereafter, the treaty on nuclear facilities is definitely a landmark.\textsuperscript{35}

It is difficult to put much reliance on Prime Minister Mr.
Nawaz Sharif's inclination or ability to change the even tenor of Pakistan's hostility towards India. Unfortunately on the substance of Indo–Pak relations, his attitude was clearly negative. He did not want trade and economic cooperation with India. He was very much doubtful that Pakistan's effort to isolate India internationally will meet with success. In South Asia, India's relations with its smaller neighbours were developing satisfactorily. Pakistan has failed to convert the SAARC process into a gang–up–against–India exercise.\textsuperscript{36}

New beginnings in Indo–Pakistan relations will have to be made if the two countries are to take advantage of the unique global situation in which peace and development have a chance of surviving. New beginnings after years of mistrust and mutual hostility can only begin if small steps are taken that contribute to a sense of trust.
4. INDO–SRI LANKA RELATIONS

The relation between India and Sri Lanka goes back to hurry past. Sri Lanka came into contact with the west in sixteenth century and was annexed by the Dutch from the Portuguese in the middle of the seventeenth century. Sri Lanka became a Crown colony under the treaty of Amiens in 1802 and achieved dominion status in February, 1948. The migration of Indian indentured labourers to Sri Lanka started in the middle of the nineteenth century. During British rule large number of Indians settled down in Sri Lanka where they were employed in tea and rubber plantations.

Soon after Independence of the two countries, the relations were strained due to the remark made by Mr. K.M.Pannikar and Dr. Pattabhi Sitharamaiah. K.M.Pannikkar had advocated the strategic unity of India, Burma and Sri Lanka which is one of the Pre requisites to a realistic policy of Indian defence. similar remarks were made by Dr. Pattabhi Sitharamaiah, the then President of Indian National Congress (INC). All these had created some misgivings in Sri Lanka. But later on, Indian Prime Minister Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, in special message to the Sri Lankan Government repudiated any such suggestion and said that India did not wish to interfere with the Islands sovereignty.

The centuries, old ties between the two countries have been marred by the twin problems of persons of Indian origin in Sri Lanka and
the Sinhalese genocide against the Tamils of the Island. India from time to time complained against the discriminatory policy pursued by the Sri Lankan Government. However, the Sri Lankan Government did not agree with the Indian stand and deprived citizenship to a large number of people of Indian origin settled in Sri Lanka and rendered them stateless. In 1954 Indian Prime Minister Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru had meeting with Sir John Kotelawale, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and they agreed upon a formula for talking the problem of people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka. However, no permanent solution of the problem could be found.

After the coming of the Prime Minister Bandaranayaka to power situation began to take a turn for better. When China attacked India in 1962 the then Sri Lankan Prime Minister Badaranayaka sympathised with India and a peace commission comprising the representatives of six Afro-Asian countries was formed by her efforts.

A settlement was reached in October 1964 between India and Sri Lanka on the question of the future status of the people of Indian origin in the Island. According to the agreement Sri Lanka agreed to give citizenship to 300,000 of the 975,000 so-called stateless people while India to 525,000. The status of the remaining 150,000 was to be the subject matter of a separate Indo-Sri Lanka conference.38 In April 1973, it was agreed that the fifteen year period of repatriation of 5,25,000 people to India would be extended from October 1979 to October 1982.
In January 1974 the two countries also settled the question of the remaining 150,000 persons by agreeing that both India and Sri Lanka would have fifty per cent each. But the agreements were not properly implemented by the respective governments.

Relations with Sri Lanka continued to remain cordial. During the insurgency in April 1971, India along with other friendly countries provided speedy and effective assistance to the Government of Sri Lanka at their request. Assistance was mainly in the shape of small arms and ammunition. The fact that the two neighbours have successfully solved the problem of the maritime boundary between them at a time when the UN conference on the laws of the seas has once again broken up in confusion and discord is of the utmost significance.

But shortly, the ethnic problem between the Tamil inhabitants of northern Sri Lanka and the Sinhalese cropped up. The ethnic problem soon turned into an internecine war and which had involved India. Since the beginning of the trouble, the Government of India had been opposing to the demand of the Tamils of northern Sri Lanka for a separate Tamil Eelam which most of the Tamil militant groups are still demanding. Persistently the Government of India had been advocating that any solution would be within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. The problem of Tamilians settled in Sri Lanka took serious turn in July -
August 1983 when hundreds of Tamilians settled in Sri Lanka were killed by the Simhalese extremists. India promptly intervened for a peaceful settlement between Tamil militants and the Sri Lankan Government. The then Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi's special envoy G. Parthasarathy hastened to Colombo, talked with the Sri Lankan President and carried back with him a package of proposals as the scene shifted to New Delhi. During subsequent months India continued efforts of finding a solution to the problem of Tamilians in Sri Lanka.

**Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lanka**

Under Rajiv Gandhi the Indo-Sri Lankan relations received a new dimension. India has taken the initiative to bring about reconciliation between the Tamil minorities living there and Sri Lanka Government. Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi has advocated for political settlement of the ethnic question. Through its good offices India was trying to bring the two sides to the negotiating table.41

On February 15th 1985, Rajiv Gandhi ruled out military intervention in Sri Lanka. On March 24th he sent Foreign Secretary Ramesh Bhandari to Colombo as his special envoy to find a solution to ethnic violence in the island. If Sri Lanka stops involving herself in anti-India postures under the dictates of Britain, the USA and Pakistan, a solution could easily be found.42
Indo-Sri Lankan Summit

President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka and Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi held summit meeting in New Delhi for two days, June 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} 1985, and discussed bilateral relations in general and Sri Lanka's Tamil problem in particular. During the talks Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi once again explained India's stand on a political settlement of the ethnic problem. Mr. Jayawardene, rising above the policy to crack down the Tamil rebels in northern Sri Lanka, expressed his keenness for a negotiated settlement.

In the joint press statement issued after the talks, both the sides agreed that immediate steps should be taken to diffuse the mounting tension in Sri Lanka and create a proper climate for progress towards a political settlement which would be acceptable to all concerned within the framework of the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. Both sides also agreed that it was imperative that all forms of violence should cease. President Jayawardene also gave his assurance that every possible effort would be made to restore normalcy in the severely affected northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka to facilitate the early return of Sri Lankan Tamils who had fled to India. He also promised that he would declare amnesty for Tamil militants if they unconditionally surrendered their arms to the government. The Summit talks were "very cordial and frank, characterized by a sincere desire to cooperate in
overcoming difficulties and evolving a durable political solution.\textsuperscript{43} The two leaders agreed further to remain in close touch with each other.

The new understanding between the two leaders was further extended by their joint visits to Dacca as a gesture of goodwill and for expressing sympathy with the cyclone-hit people of Bangladesh. This gesture symbolized the new drive for a greater understanding among the countries of South Asia.

The Summit talks, indeed, paved the way for a fresh and bold Sri Lankan initiative for resolving the ethnic problem. The declaration of June 18, 1985 whereby Sri Lanka announced that an agreement between the government and five major Tamil groups – Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS) and People’s Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT). On a cessation of hostile acts for 8 weeks has been reached. It was indeed a bold first step towards solving the seemingly intractable ethnic problem.

Thimpu Talks and India’s Role

After the Summit, a Sri Lankan delegation headed by Hector Jayawardene, brother of the President came to New Delhi in accordance with proposal for an expert level meeting between the two countries. The delegation held discussions with Indian constitutional
experts which touched possible amendments in the Sri Lankan constitution for suitably accommodating certain demands of the Sri Lankan Tamils. It was during this visit of the Sri Lankan delegation that the announcement of an agreement between the Sri Lankan Government and Tamil separatists groups was made. By this agreement a cessation of hostile acts for 18 weeks and conducting of talks for resolving the ethnic problem were reached. It was a big Sri Lankan move to find a political settlement of the problem. Indian diplomacy played a useful role in bringing the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil leaders closer and in securing a truce and the decision to hold talks at Thimpu for resolving the issue.44

After this break-through in Sri Lanka, delegations of officials from Sri Lanka and India conferred in New Delhi on June 28 and 29 as part of preparations for the forthcoming talks between Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil militants. The first phase of the Thimpu talks between them was held in July 1985 and lasted for a week. This meeting was of an exploratory nature and both sides restated their viewpoints. It was agreed that the second round of talks would be held in August 1985.

After the first round of talks, India stepped up its efforts to make the second round a more rewarding session. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi sent a personal letter to President Jayawardene and urged him
to come out with fresh proposals which could form a framework for a solution. The Foreign Secretary of India flew to Colombo to persuade Mr. Jayawardene to narrow down the differences in larger interest of finding a solution within the parameters of a united Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{45}

In the second round of Thimpu talks between Sri Lankan Government delegation, led by Mr. Hector Jayawardene and the Tamil groups delegation led by Mr. A. Amrithalingam, both sides attempted hard to narrow down the differences in their quest for a solution to the ethnic problem. However, the talks failed to proceed because of rigid attitudes of the Tamil militants.

The Government of India continuing its efforts to find a political solution to the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka, sent a team to Sri Lanka in May 1986, headed by Minister Mr. P. Chidambaram. The talks between the Mr. Chidambaram delegation and the Sri Lankan Government paved the way for two rounds of talks in August between the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) and the United National Party (UNP) government. From these two rounds of substantial talks emerged the proposals for the setting up of provincial councils. These proposals provided for the devolution of power from the centre.\textsuperscript{46}

In mid-December 1986, an Indian delegation led by Mr. Chidambaram and Minister of State Mr. Natwar Singh visited Colombo again. As a result of talks between the Mr. Chidambaram
delegation and the UNP ministers a new proposal was evolved, which came to be known as the December 19th proposals.

The proposals essentially involve formation of a new Eastern province by excising Sinhalese majority areas (Amparai Electoral District) from the existing Eastern Province, and creation of two Tamil Provincial Councils in the Northern and the reconstituted Eastern Province. The two councils would have institutional linkages for coordination between the two, so as to make them acceptable to all concerned.

Although Sri Lankan President supported the above proposal, the Sri Lankan Government expressed reservations and resiled from December 19th position. As a result, India could not proceed with its mediatory efforts on the basis of the above proposals.47

**Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement-1987**

The historic bilateral agreement was signed on July 29th 1987 in Colombo, Sri Lankan President Jayawardene and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi signed the agreement on behalf of their respective Governments. Attaching utmost importance to nurturing, intensifying and strengthening the traditional friendship of India and Sri Lanka, and acknowledging the imperative need of resolving the ethnic problem of Sri Lanka, and the consequent violence and for the safety, well being and prosperity of people belonging to all communities in Sri Lanka.48
The agreement of accord has not been well received either by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) or by Sri Lanka opposition parties as also by some of the Ministers of Jayawardene Government. Sri Lanka President Jayawardene declared that the accord aimed to resolve the ethnic policy would bring violence to an end. Mr. Prabhakaran, Commander-in-Chief of the LTTE had rejected the agreement, but later on agreed on the basis of some assurance, given by the Indian Prime Minster Rajiv Gandhi. He had objections on various points, like the questions of Tamil home land has not been clearly explained and Tamils have not been described as a ‘nation’ but have been described as one of the ethnic groups.

So far India was playing the role of a mediator between Tamil Eelam group and the Government of Sri Lanka, India tried her best to bring the two parties of the ethnic conflict together, narrow the misunderstanding and communication gap and to make them negotiate a peaceful settlement. This role as a mediator suddenly changed. India could no longer afford ignore a final settlement of the conflict. India’s role changed from a promoter to a party to the settlement, with a direct involvement in guaranteeing and underwriting its structure and framework and in cooperating in its implementation. This was a major political decision taken by the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. It made all the difference to what appeared to be an intractable problem.
Tension between the LTTE and the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) has been mounting since early September, 1987. First LTTE did not surrender all its arms and secondly when IPKF failed to retrieve 17 LTTE men from Sri Lankan forces, who took cyanide capsule to escape from going to Colombo. In the beginning the IPKF ignored the conflict between militant faction to get out of control and failed to stop the mass killings. It did nothing to ensure that the Tigers surrendered all their arms. The LTTE violated the Indian negotiations very badly.

A new dimension has been added to the Indo–Sri Lankan relations after National Front Government (1977) assuming power at New Delhi. The IPKF interference has placed India in an extraordinary situation and resulted in much strained relations with Sri Lanka as never before. Further there was a complete loss of confidence and mutual trust between these countries. As such the National Front Government has made initial attempts to redefine the parameters of Indian policy towards Sri Lanka.

During June 1989, there developed a new political turn in Sri Lanka where the then President successfully negotiated with LTTE for cessation of hostilities and to negotiate with the government over other differences. And this in turn annoyed the Indians over his Presidents direct negotiations with LTTE and the Indian troops hesitated to leave because of logistical problems connected with the withdrawal. It has
been learnt that the National Front Government has proposed a 20 years peace treaty which will assist the process of political reconciliation in the violence prone island and will assign a new role for India to play in Sri Lanka ethnic conflict.

Exactly after 32 months of the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement and the relations between these two countries are being reviewed in the context of the changed political scenario in both the countries. The proposed friendship Treaty shall replace the letters exchanged by the President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India on July 29th 1987. This article referred to the complete withdrawal of IPKF forces from Sri Lanka by the end of March 1990. The National Front Government has viewed that the very presence of IPKF will pose a grave danger for mutual trust and confidence building from a small nation. The present proposed friendship treaty with Sri Lanka has been spelt negatively in order to protect India’s security interests.

The withdrawal of the IPKF from Sri Lanka brings to an end; to all intents and purposes, a murky phase in Indo-Sri Lankan relations and will hopefully remove from the agenda of Sri Lankan politics India-baiting which had virtually become the trendsetter for the Sri Lankan approach to India. Does this mean that one can foresee in near future a re-ordering of Indo-Sri Lankan relations on the rational basis of reciprocity for the mutual benefit of the two countries.52
Both Tamil Nadu's pressure on New Delhi as well as the security interests of India, have displayed equal importance in shaping India's relations with Sri Lanka. However, the major question was the future of Indo–Sri Lanka relations and whether the peace accord signed between the heads of India and Sri Lanka would be honoured by successive governments in both countries. The trend of future events in Sri Lanka was bound to have long-term implications not only for the Indo–Sri Lankan bilateral relationship but also India's long-term stakes for peace and security in the regional framework.

Rajiv Gandhi's Government was not averse to sign a treaty of friendship with Sri Lanka. That will only complement the Agreement of Indian Prime Minister V.P. Singh and External Affairs Minister I.K. Gujral who have accepted the hard realities regarding the withdrawal of the IPKF by December 31\textsuperscript{st} 1989. There are no quick -fixes available in foreign affairs. In short, no U-turns in India's Sri Lankan policy.

5. INDO-BANGLADESH RELATIONS

India tried to develop very intimate relations with Bangladesh right from its inception. In fact, this state could not have been born but for the bold steps taken by the then Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the sacrifices made by the Indian Jawans in the war which Pakistan launched on December 3\textsuperscript{rd} 1971. Soon after the formation of
new state, India was the first country to accord recognition and establish diplomatic and trade relations with it.

After the establishment of Bangladesh India provided support for the economic reconstruction of the country. The Bangladesh leadership acknowledged the Indian help with gratitude and indicated its desire to work in close co-operation with India. The relations between two countries were further cemented by the visit of Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to Dacca in March 1972. The most important step taken to promote bilateral relations was the conclusion of Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Peace for 25 years on the pattern of Indo Soviet Treaty. The two countries agreed to strengthen and widen cooperation in economic, scientific, technical, trade, transport and fields of communication. The treaty paves the way for comprehensive cooperation.

The two countries also resolved the border issue through negotiations and signed a border agreement on 19th May 1974 under which India retained the Berubari enclave, while Bangladesh got Dahagram and Angarpota. The agreement fixed the boundary between two countries at midstream for Muhuri and Fenny rivers. In 1975 India and Bangladesh reached a interim agreement on the complex Farakka issue. India's relations with Bangladesh continued to be quite intimate and cordial till August 1975 when Sheik Mujib Rehman Government
was ousted through a bloody coup and power was assumed by a group of army men. The political instability which followed the coup gave a serious set back to the process of Indo–Bangladesh Co-operation.

The instability which followed the coup of Mujib Rehman Government in 1975 and the hostile attitude of the new leadership gave a serious set back to Indo-Bangladesh relations. Since the assassination of Mujib Rehman on August 15, 1975 the US-China-Pakistan axis began to operate in Bangladesh freely and instigated anti-India hysteria there. The major issue on which this hysteria was whipped up was question of the Farakka water distribution. Since the trouble on this issue was stirred up by outside forces, all attempts made by India to settle the problem reasonably failed to work with Dacca, until July 1983 when Mrs. Indira Gandhi succeeded in achieving a major break through under this agreement, 39 per cent of the water of Ganges and Teesta waters was allocated to India, 36 per cent to Bangladesh and the balance 25 per cent remained unallocated.64

Another irritant in the bilateral relations appeared in 1980 in the form of issue of Moore Island. Both the countries claimed sovereignty over this island which was first formed after the cyclone and tidal waves of 1970. The Island was first discovered by India in 1971. Bangladesh also put forth its claim to the island in 1978. In view of conflicting claims, the two courtiers agreed in 1979 to conduct a joint survey to
determine the location and ownership of island. In May 1981 the controversy between the two countries was aggrieved on account of dispatch of certain gun boats which threatened the Indian ship Sandhyak, which went there to update statistics for Joint survey, India also sent a frigate to rescue its ships. This generated a lot of tension. Ultimately the two countries decided to refer the issue to Secretary level talks to examine all available data on Moore Island dispute. However, no settlement could be arrived at. In short the relations after 1975 were not cordial and problems arised frequently.

**Relations During Rajiv Gandhi Period**

The positive movement in Indo-Bangladesh relations continued under Rajiv Gandhi’s stewardship as Prime Minister. Bangladesh President, General Ershad came to New Delhi to express condolence at the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and attended her funeral. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi made a major gesture of regional solidarity, which was considerably appreciated in Bangladesh, when he along with Sri Lankan President Jayawardene flew to Dhaka on June 2nd 1985 to express sympathy and solidarity with Bangladesh devastated by a severe cyclone leaving in its trial death and destruction on a large scale. The two Heads of Governments surveyed along with General Ershad the affected areas and India offered aid in the work of rehabilitation.
Indo-Bangladesh Ganga Waters Accord

After a year of statement India and Bangladesh were successful in reaching an agreement on sharing of Ganga waters for the next three years. The breakthrough came after Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's meeting with Bangladesh President H.M. Ershad on October 18th 1985 at Nassau (Bhamas). The two leaders also agreed to undertake a joint study of the augmentation of Ganga waters soon after the finalization of the terms of reference of the agreement. Both sides came forward to relent on their earlier stands. On the basis of this understanding a memorandum of understanding was signed by the two sides in New Delhi on November 22nd 1985. It was agreed that the joint study would identify alternatives for the sharing of the water resources common to both countries to the mutual benefit. This would include a long term scheme or a scheme for augmentation of the flow of Ganga at Farakka and on the sharing of the Ganga waters available at Farakka for the next three dry seasons.56

Border Demarcation and Indo-Bangladesh Relations

On April 20th 1986, the two countries resolved to expedite the demarcation of the 60.8 acres Muhuari Char land below the South Tripura border town of Belonia. The sides, however differed on the outstanding issues of the dispute. Bangladesh kept up protesting against the construction of the revetment work and the 1.2 km, embankment on the India side on the ground that it would prejudice the
demarcation of boundary of the disputed Muhuari Char. India overruled the protest and instead asked Bangladesh to stop the unprovoked firing by its forces upon Indian workers and justified the construction work, which was of temporary nature and which was fully covered by the provisions of the Indira-Mujib Pact of 1974. India further advocated the view that the revetment work was essential as part of “anti-erosion measures which were necessary to meet the erosion threat posed by revetment work done by Bangladesh.” The bilateral relations, as such, got strained over the issue.

**Ershad’s Visit to India (July 1986)**

In July 1986, the Bangladesh President Lt. General H.M. Ershad visited India and conducted wide ranging talks with the Indian leaders. The two countries agreed to cooperate in checking cross-border insurgency and resolved to find an amicable solution to the river water issue. Bangladesh further agreed to take back all measures for enabling the Chakma tribals, who have illegally entered Tripura. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Ershad agreed that negotiations on the maritime boundary between the two countries in the Bay of Bengal region be resumed. They also considered steps necessary for giving an imperious to the economic relations as well as accepted the need for an early convening of the Joint Economic Commission (JEC). India further assured Bangladesh of its commitment to transfer the Teen Bigha enclave. The talks were held in an atmosphere of cordiality which led to
"A greater degree of understanding between the two countries and a willingness to cooperate in solving bilateral problems". The two countries agreed to hold further talks on demarcation of maritime boundary between them and to cooperate in putting down border insurgency. Bangladesh agreed to take back the Chakma refugees (around 18000 in number) in India.

Farakka issue however continues to be the major problem of Indo-Bangladesh relations. It is hoped that the two countries would be successful in resolving the issue through mutual efforts. The commitment to keep up and strengthen further the friendly cooperation between the two countries provides a good basis for this prophecy. Bangladesh passed through a tough time because of internal troubles. The opposition parties are making it increasingly difficult for President Ershad to keep limited the democratic aspirations of the people of Bangladesh. This factor can be a source of strains for Indo-Bangladesh relations, as internal problem can force Ershad either to adopt a rigid attitude or to keep pending the issues of foreign relations.

During his Sojourn in 1985 in New York, Rajiv Gandhi had very friendly discussions with President Ershad. There has been tremendous progress in the efforts of the two countries to resolve the Ganga waters dispute. The Indian Prime Minster has also appreciated the problem of
fencing India’s border with Bangladesh. In this view something better needed to be worked out to stop infiltration.60

In 1980s India increasingly collaborated with Bangladesh for promoting regional cooperation through the creation of regional organisation maturing in the formation of SAARC, for which Bangladesh had taken initiative and worked assiduously, the roots of tension between India and Bangladesh had not been eradicated and trouble could erupt again but it had been demonstrated that given good will on both sides the issues were not intractable.61

At regional gatherings as the SAARC, the representatives of the two countries do resort to currently fashionable eulogies in extolling each others friendship and mutual cooperation. There is little doubt that India’s to improve relations with Bangladesh have to be different from those undertaken in respect of Pakistan, or for that matter any other country in the sub-continent.

Bangladesh very wisely attached the greatest importance to the SAARC as a mechanism, if only to lend respectability to greatly enhanced bilateral cooperation with India as an integral component in the scheme of regional cooperation.62
Economic Cooperation

The Indo-Bangladesh Joint Commission was set up in October 1982. It has helped nurture the growth of economic and commercial ties between the two countries. A second meeting of this body was held in Dhaka from 19-21 August, 1983 at the ministerial level. This definitely provided further impetus to the growing economic relations between the two countries.

The first meeting of the Standing Committee of this Joint Economic Commission was also held in Dhaka on 14-15, June 1983, at the secretaries level. During that meeting a government to government credit of Rs. 20 crores was extended to Bangladesh by India for the import of Indian machinery and capital goods for projects in the public sector. An agreement on cooperation with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research was also signed. The Export and Import Bank of India concluded agreements with Bangladesh banks, extending to them commercial credit of Rs. 40 crores.

At the second meeting of the Bangladesh India JEC, which met in New Delhi in October 1984, new proposals for economic cooperation between the two countries were formulated. The JEC has taken positive steps towards removing imbalances in trade and commerce between the two countries. India had earlier agreed to buy 20,000 tonnes of newsprint from Bangladesh annually for three years, beginning
in 1983–84, besides increasing import of urea, bitumen and printing paper to help India balance the two way trade. In return, Bangladesh offered to import more Indian coal instead of obtaining it from other countries by paying heavier freight charges.

In the sphere of science and technology, another agreed area of cooperation, the two countries have charted out a new programme for 1984–86 covering areas ranging from new and renewable sources of energy to meteorology and medical research. This programme was finalised at a joint official level meeting in August 1984 in New Delhi. Also significant progress in cooperation in the industrial sector has been finalised.

More than hundred scholars have made use of scholarships offered by India during recent years. They are engaged in higher studies in Indian Universities and Technical Institutes. Training facilities have also been made available to Bangladesh personnel especially in railway management.

6. SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS

India and China have maintained close relations since ancient times. The foundation of these relations was laid by the Buddhist preachers who went to China and spread their religion through the breadth and length of the country. A large number of Chinese scholars and students came to India for literary purposes. In the modern times
India expressed full sympathy for China when was subjected to Japanese aggression.

After India attained Independence in 1947 it established relations with the Nationalist Government of China which was then in power. India followed a policy of friendship towards communist China and in 1949 accorded recognition. India was also enthusiastic about the entry of Communist China in the United Nations. During the Korean War when China entered the war on the side of North Korea, the sympathies of the people of India were on the side of China.\(^63\) After their success in the Korean War, the Chinese began to talk of liberating Tibet. The Government of India adopted a temperate but firm line. It asked the Chinese to settle the matter with the Tibetans by peaceful negotiations.

In October 1950 China established its military control over Tibet and an alternate communist Government was installed there. India refused to accept China's claim of Sovereignty over Tibet. India sent a strong note of protest to China to which Chinese authorities reacted sharply, unmindful of Indian protests China declared Tibet as an integral part of China. When Mr. Dallai Lama raised the issue in the United Nations India neither condemned nor supported Chinese aggression.

In 1954, a treaty of friendship was signed between India and China. By that treaty, India and China pledged themselves to follow the five principles (Panchsheel) in their relations with each other. In June
1954, Chinese Premier Chou En-lai, visited India and he was given a rousing welcome. There was talk of *Hind- Chini Bhai Bhai*.

Inspite of this, the Chinese officially protested on July 17th 1954 against the presence of Indian troops in Barahoti, in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The border incidents multiplied and between 1955 and 1962 i.e, between the period covered by Bandung to Bomdila there were more than thirty clear cases of the violation of the Indian frontier ultimately leading to a full scale Sino-Indian war in October 1962. The war of 1962 put a very severe strain on the relations of India with China. The humiliation and self-respect of India prevented her from opening a dialogue with China. For about a decade after 1962, India-China relations continued to be tense and hostile, and there was hardly any contact between the two. The diplomatic relations between the two countries were down graded to charged Affairs level.

During Indo-Pak war of 1965 China extended full moral, political, psychological and even military support to Pakistan. China tried to help Pakistan by increasing tension on Indo-China borders. Again, during the Indo-Pak war of 1971, China bitterly criticised India’s role in Bangladesh crisis and extended full support to Pakistan. On the question of Kashmir also China openly supported the Pakistan stand. In short the relations between India and China during the period 1962–1971 were quite tense and hostile.
After the victory of India in 1971 war, the then Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi took the initiative in 1973 to sound China for normalisation of relations and settle boundary dispute. In April 1976, India and China resumed diplomatic relations for the first time since the 1962 war.\textsuperscript{65} The Janata Government led by Mr. Morarji Desai also made efforts in the same direction. With Mrs. Indira Gandhi's return to power in January 1980, China suggested in June that the border problem be settled on the basis of the existing line of actual control which implied India's acceptance of the fruits of China's aggression in 1962. The talks actually began on December 14\textsuperscript{th} 1981 at Beijing after a gap of 20 years but the eight rounds of talks between the two countries from December 14\textsuperscript{th} 1981 to December 1988 did not yield any results.

**Rajiv Gandhi Period**

Pronouncements both by the Indian and Chinese governments after the inauguration of the Mr. Rajiv Gandhi administration reflect more than diplomatic niceties. They manifest a positive frame which has emerged in the recent years for a steady development of India–China relations. Addressing the Congress–Parliamentary party on the eve of the first session of the New Lok Sabha, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi expressed his satisfaction over the progress made in the talks with China, but he also cautioned that the way towards a full agreement was very long. The President's address to Parliament on January 17\textsuperscript{th} 1985, also indicated the same situation. He said, "Our relations with
China have shown improvement. We shall preserve in seeking a solution to the boundary question.\textsuperscript{66} The Chinese have warmly reciprocated these feelings.

The meeting between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the Chinese Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang at New York in October 1985 provided a good background to the Sixth Round of Sino-Indian Talks (New Delhi, November 11\textsuperscript{th} 1985). But it could make little substantive headway. Both sides discussed the boundary issues and reviewed the eastern sector. It was agreed to review the western sector boundary in the next round. A free and frank discussion on the progress of bilateral relations also took place. The two sides agreed to exchange delegations in the field of agricultural education, computer industry, plasma physics and bio-technology. It was also agreed to hold a joint seminar in China on socio-economic planning. However, the failure to make a headway over the boundary issue kept the talks limited.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has reiterated that the border question was central to the Sino-Indian relationship but could take time to be resolved. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had talks with his Chinese counterpart Zhao Ziyang at New York at the time of the 40\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the United Nations in October 1985. Both these leaders have felt that the Sino-Indian border question is not an insurmountable problem.\textsuperscript{67}
Even as the two countries were interacting frequently and the thaw in their relationship was melting slowly, their differences continued on issues like Vietnam, Kampuchia and Afghanistan, Tibet continued to be an important irritant in their relations. There was no let up in China's military assistance to Pakistan. Above all serious development occurred on the northern frontier over the Sumdorong valley in 1987. Both the armies moved close to the border and there was speculation that the two countries might go to war. It appeared that the steady process of mutual dialogue would come to an abrupt end. However, political leadership this time demonstrated greater restraint to bring down the tensions and retained the tempo of mutual contacts.

In order to secure a break throw in the stalemate in Sino-Indian relations and the boundary talks, India decided to change the level of Sino-Indian official talks to a political dialogue. Accordingly India's External Affairs Minister, Mr. N.D.Tiwari, on his way back from Pyongyang NAM conference decided to have a stop-over at Beijing and use the opportunity for holding talks with the Chinese counterpart. Mr. Tiwari observed that the purpose of the visit was "to review our assurances that we want a full normalisation of our friendly relations with China, that we want to settle all our outstanding differences, including the boundary dispute, through negotiations, and that there is no need or any conflict or anything like that. You can settle the whole thing by negotiations, even though it may take time." He had talks with
Chinese Prime Minister, Mr. Wan Li and the Vice Foreign Minister Mr. Lin Shuging. Mr. Tiwari was successful in impressing upon the Chinese the need for determined efforts towards the full normalization of friendly cooperation between the two countries.

The high point in Sino-Indian relations came when Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited China in December 1988, thirty four years after Nehru visited that country. Both countries forged a commitment to resolve their border issue peacefully through negotiations on a fair and reasonable basis. A joint committee at the ministerial level to promote scientific and technological cooperation and the first science and technology agreement between India and China was signed. So much so that when the government changed in New Delhi the main anxiety of Beijing was to make sure that Rajiv Gandhi's China policy would continue. In a press conference held on June 29th 1987 Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi observed that both India and China now had a positive view on the border issue and shared the desire to find a solution.

The Sino-Indian Border Talks (1981-1988)

Inspite of the expanding horizon of cooperation between the two countries the crucial irritant of the border dispute persisted and the domestic political situation in the two countries were no less significant in this context. When Deng Xiao Ping announced a package deal in Sino–Indian border on June 1980, the Indian Government played it cool.
After all late Premier Chou-En-lai had proposed practically the same thing in the New Delhi talks of 1960 and the Indian side had rejected it. Deng Xiao now proposed that in the eastern sector China could recognise the Mac Mohan line as demanded by India; in return, India could concede Aksai Chin to China in the western sector. Indian public opinion reacted cautiously to this proposal noting that Deng Xiao’s package had unfrozen the issue just as the late Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s decision to resume ambassadorial relations in 1976 had done.\textsuperscript{70}

The Eight Rounds

Most of the Indian officials who were closely connected with the process of border talks between 1981 and 1988 Chester the eight rounds into two groups. Though the specific divisions varied, they all agreed that the first four deal with basic principles and the last four with the situation on the ground.\textsuperscript{71}

The first Round: The first round of talks in Beijing in December 1981 drew up an agenda for talks which included not only the border but also avenues of cooperation.

The second and third Rounds: The first round ended without accomplishing much beyond agreeing to meet again. The second and the third rounds, held in New Delhi (May 1982) and Beijing (January 1983) respectively, made very little progress on the border issue.
However, both sides used the occasions to expand cultural, technical and economic exchanges.

**The fourth and fifth Rounds:** The fourth and the fifth rounds, which took place in New Delhi in October 1983 and Beijing in September 1984 respectively, were described by both the sides as constructive and useful. At the fourth round the Chinese side gave up their insistence on the package deal and India's sector-wise deliberation. On the other hand, both sides started to formulate commonly agreed principles for approaching the border problem. In the fifth round, some extremely general principles were formulated which allowed both sides to exercise a degree of flexibility around the table. This gave rise to some optimism for a break through in the next round.72

**The sixth Round:** The sixth round of the Sino-Indian border talks took place in New Delhi in November, 1985. While no headway was made in these talks, the two countries decided to discuss in detail the central and Western sector in the next round to be held in Beijing. However, the two sides did achieve the removal of an irritant in bilateral relations by resolving the issue of Indian Embassy property in Beijing seized by the Chinese in 1967. The question of compensation was also sorted out. Also, China and India decided to exchange delegations in computer industries, agriculture, education, plasma physics, laser technology and
bio-technology. Some proposals were made in the field of cultural exchanges in Beijing on socio-economic planning in India and China.73

The seventh Round: The seventh round of border talks were held as planned in July 1986. The Sumdurong Chu incident which had made the Indian side quite circumspect and the Chinese side intransigent was actively discussed in this round. The package proposal was simply not mentioned and little substantive agreement was reached. The only positive development was removal of a minor irritant, a settlement over the acquisition of some property for the Indian embassy in Beijing as compensation for some land seized by the Chinese during the Cultural Revolution. Following the round, the new Indian Foreign Minister, Mr. Shiv Shankar, met Wu Xuigian in New York where both leaders agreed on the need to prevent incidents of the kind that had just occurred.

Between the seventh and eight hand final round of talks, an important episode punctuated, relations between the two nations, on December 8th-9th 1986, the Indian Parliament conferred full Statehood on Arunachal Pradesh, the disputed area in the eastern sector. From the Indian stand point, this was simply a logical evolution of the administrative process. The Chinese, however saw it as a possible legal erosion of their claim in the eastern sector. Despite the statehood and the demonstration of Indian military capacity by General Sunderji’s operation Checkerboard, the eighth round of talks were held as
planned. On a more positive note, India carefully continued to avoid giving China any grief on the Tibetan upraising by defining it as an internal affair of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

The eighth Round: The need to avoid military confrontation was apparently stressed on both sides in this round of talks, and greater interest in economic cooperation and trade was expressed. Clearly, the upshot of the talks seemed to be that the border issue could not be settled at the bureaucratic level and that a political initiative was necessary. To that end, after much deliberation, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi decided to visit Beijing in December 1988.74

Rajiv Gandhi Visit and Aftermath

Rajiv Gandhi's decision to visit China stemmed from a variety of concerns. First, the talks in the words of a prominent Indian diplomat, had reached a diplomatic cul-de-Sac, without political intervention; little more could be accomplished. Second, the specific timing of the visit was influenced by considerations of domestic politics.

The China trip appears to have achieved three specific objectives. First, it addressed a long standing Chinese complaint that an Indian Prime Minister had not reciprocated Prime Minister Chou-En-Lai's visit. Though merely a matter of protocol, Indian diplomats claim this was an important matter to the Chinese. Second, the visit led to the creation of a joint working group to deal exclusively with the border question. Third,
it has contributed to a more relaxed climate in Sino-Indian relations, and while this may not seem like a substantive accomplishment there may be significance to it. Though Indian diplomats were reluctant to divulge any details during the course of numerous interviews conducted in New Delhi in January 1989, they hinted that measures to maintain peace and tranquility on the border, might include prior notification of military exercises and other confidence building measures.\(^{75}\)

The talks began on December 14\(^{th}\) 1981 at Beijing after a gap of 20 years. But the eight rounds of talks between the two countries, have not yielded any results. As to what lies in store for the future of the Sino-Indian border question, much depends on the domestic political leadership in both countries. The joint working group may continue to slowly inch its way toward a political settlement.

The Chinese leadership attached the highest importance to the Indian Prime Minister's visit. The outcome of Rajiv Gandhi's discussions with Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng was positive. Both countries had many miles to go but the first step had been taken. For the first time the most sensitive Sino-Indian issues were discussed at the highest level in a friendly atmosphere. The result was that tension on the border was appreciably reduced, the possibility of an armed conflict was diminished or at least became remote. Sino-Indian diplomatic contacts witnessed warmth and cordiality totally missing for nearly three decades. A joint
working group at the official level was set up to deal with the boundary question.\textsuperscript{76}

During Rajiv Gandhi’s visit, an Indo-Chinese Joint Working Group (JWG) for the border issues was constituted. It has maintained peace and tranquility along the line of actual control running along the Himalayan ranges.\textsuperscript{77}

7. INDO-NEPAL RELATIONS

India and Nepal had very close ties and political links. In July 1950, the two countries signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation which was in force up to 1980s. India had materially helped Nepal in breaking down the thraldom which the Ranas had imposed on the king and his subjects. But unfortunately, after the death of king Tribhuvan in 1955, his successor developed lust for power and by 1960 he had wiped off the tender plan of democracy in the Himalayan Kingdom. He inflamed anti-Indian sentiment amongst the Nepalese who, egged on by the Chinese, began to demand the ouster of the Indian military Mission.

King Mahendra began to draw closer to China and Pakistan and even advocated a confederation of Himalayan states-Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim-Under the leadership of Nepal. He began to play up India against China, and Nepal increasingly became unreasonable. After India’s military debache in the India-China war of October 1962, Nepal
became more recalcitrant. It was only after India frustrated Pakistan's aggression in 1965 and completely defeated Pakistan in the Bangladesh war of 1971, that Kathmandu was shocked into sanity. But despite this India continued help Nepal and gave large amount of economic aid.\textsuperscript{78}

In 1970s one of the important irritant in Indo-Nepalese relations was the extraordinary restrictions imposed by New Delhi in October 1976 on the travel of Nepalese nationals in certain border areas in India, including parts of North Bengal, Sikkim, Parts of Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and three districts of Uttar Pradesh.\textsuperscript{79} These areas were designated as prohibited and protected areas for foreign nationals on economic, political and security grounds. The relations between two countries further deteriorated due to Nepal's opposition to Sikkim's merger into Indian Union in August 1975. India disapproved such opposition and recalled its Ambassador from Kathmandu.

The return of the Nepali Congress leaders, B.P. Koirala and Ganeshman Singh to Kathmandu along with some associates of theirs on December 30\textsuperscript{th} 1976 after their 8 years long self exile in India removed one of the major irritants in Indo–Nepalese relations.

During the Janata Party regime Nepal felt disenchanted with India when several Janata Party leaders issued statements appealing to King
Birendra to release B.P. Koirala and his associates from detention and restore democracy and human rights in Nepal. The then Home and Panchayat Minister of Nepal declared that the remarks made out of sympathy for Koirala could not whitewash the crimes perpetrated by him or stop the legal action initiated against him. At the same time he said he felt confident that the Government of India would not be carried away by the irresponsible utterances of some Indians trading the wrong path. Since the Janata Party rule in India was short lived, the return of Mrs. Indira Gandhi Congress rule in 1980 revived the neighbourly relations between the two countries. In fact a good deal of economic assistance was provided by India to Nepal.

In March 1983 the Indo-Nepalese Inter-Government Committee agreed to extend the treaty between the two countries on trade for a further period of five years. They also agreed on a number of steps to facilitate the movement of cargo from Nepal through India. In 1984-85 India provided Nepal an aid of Rs. 180,000,000 for 21 development projects.

**Relations During Rajiv Gandhi Period**

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has stepped up the drive to secure more friendly and cooperative relation with the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal. New Delhi has shown full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and stability of Nepal by giving due-importance to Nepal. The
emergence of SAARC has indeed helped and is bound to strengthen further the economic trade and cultural cooperation among the countries of South Asia in general and among India and Nepal in particular because of deep and historical ties between these two countries.

In January 1985 the two countries agreed to establish a joint inspection team along 1000 km open border in order to control unauthorised trade. However, in subsequent months fresh tension was generated in Indo-Nepalese relations due to Nepal's condemnation of Indian action of air-dropping of relief supplies in Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka. The question of displaced Nepalese from Meghalaya also contributed to this tension. Another irritant in the relations between two countries was Nepal's decision to introduce work permit for foreigners. Despite these irritants, in June 1987 India and Nepal signed an agreement for setting of a Joint Commission to increase economic cooperation, trade and transit, industry and water resources.81

The Nepal King's visit to India in 1986 has helped the two countries to review their relations. Difference over zone of peace status for Nepal continued to surround the talks. However, both the Nepalese King and Indian Prime Minister, did not allow this negative factor to adversely affect the course of growing Indo-Nepalese friendly cooperation in economic trade, cultural and technological spheres. Both
accepted that the Panchsheel spirit and five principles constituted the best basis for conducting their bilateral relations.

Thus India and Nepal continue to fulfil their desire to increase bilateral cooperation and to strengthen the bonds of friendship. India fully respects the sovereignty of Nepal and deals with Nepal on an equal basis. Realising the strategic importance of Nepal, India's foreign policy has now very actively engaged in the process of developing Indo-Nepal ties. Nepal also now realises better the importance of its relations with India. It has become confident that India does not want to interfere with the internal political affairs of Nepal. The development of trade links and economic relations have helped Nepal in achieving the objectives of its national policy. Both the countries are now working towards the further cementing of their relations. In the current scheme of things, writes Dr. Bimal Prasad, "Nepal is likely to develop cooperative relations with India on the basis of co-equality, co-sharing, non-dominance and non-dictator". The only outstanding issue that needs careful handling is the Nepalese proposal for getting the status of a peace zone. Indian diplomacy must come forward to amicably sort out and settle the issue.

A fresh tension was generated in Indo-Nepalese relations towards the end of March 1989 on account of differences between the two countries over the signing of new trade and transit treaties. While India insisted on one consolidated treaty Nepal insisted on two separate
pacts. On account of these differences the earlier Indo-Nepal Transit Treaty of 1978 lapsed in March 1989 and traditional friendly relations between the two countries got strained due to acute shortage of diesel, petrol, coal and other essential goods in Nepal. Nepal even tried to internationalise the issue and resorted to heavy imports of petroleum, kerosene and other essential commodities from China and Singapore with a view to pressurise India to resume supplies at favorable terms without giving anything in return. India however, took the stand that the whole gamut of relations with Nepal must be reviewed before anything could be done on trade matters. India also refuted the charge of Nepal that it had imposed a blockade on the Himalayan Kingdom. On the other hand Nepal took this issue before the United Nations and charged India of suddenly abrogating the treaty and causing the people of Nepal much economic hardship. As a result, the representatives of the two countries for the first time clashed in the United Nations. It was true that Nepal’s economic difficulties increased due to non-renewal of treaty but Nepal itself was to be blamed for the plight of the people as the Nepalese authorities failed to respond favorably to India’s repeated suggestions for resumption of talks on the dispute on equitable basis. In short, lot of tension was generated in Indo-Nepalese relations.83

The sudden deterioration in Indo-Nepal relations following the expiry of the two bilateral treaties on trade and transit on March 23rd 1989 has been most unfortunate indeed as it has heightened tensions
between the two countries which have been bound by political, economic and cultural ties for centuries. The Government of India has of course been at points to point out that the deterioration in relations was not that sudden since strains had developed in bilateral ties for a considerable length of time. However, there was no mistaking the fact that at the popular level, in Nepal in particular, the result of these strains found manifestation only in the period since March 23rd 1989. And the popular outcry against India to a large extent orchestrated by the Nepalese official circles in the light of those developments, has found an echo in the international sphere as well, adversely affecting India's global image in the process.

For almost four decades, that is since the time of the signing of the Indo–Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship (on July 31st 1950) the two neighbouring countries of South Asia have enjoyed a unique relationship on the basis of the provisions of that Treaty.

The Government of India and Nepal agreed to grant, on a reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property participation in trade and commerce, movement and other privileges of a similar nature.

The trade treaty was to lapse on March 24th 1988 but it was extended on March 14th 1988, first by four months and thereafter by
three months. In the meantime, certain steps were taken to streamline Indo-Nepal trade. In June 1987, Nepal had through a budgetary exercise at tariff rationalisation, completely removed all tariff advantages available to Indian goods in Nepal vis-a-vis those of third countries. Besides a 50 per cent basis customs duty, 55 per cent additional customs duties were also imposed on certain categories of goods imported from India. As a result there was a decline in the Indian exports to Nepal by half in 1987-88.

This issue was taken up with the Nepalese Government by the Indian side. Nepal promised to remove the additional customs duty on Indian goods. But that never materialised. India decided to drop the idea of signing the new draft trade treaty. Instead it sent on March 1st 1989 its own proposal for a unified trade and transit treaty to which Nepal reacted with excepted fury.

Actually the Government of India had reason to feel annoyed and angry. While Nepal resorted to feet-dragging on the question of waiving additional custom duty on Indian goods, in December 1988 it issued a notification granting a 60 per cent concession to Chinese goods entering Nepal. This was a case of gross discrimination that went against the spirit of the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship.\textsuperscript{84}
On March 23rd 1983 the transit treaty also expired. It had actually expired in March 1985 but was extended till the end of 1988 and thereafter for a period of four more years till March 1989. Under this treaty Nepal was granted 15 routes through Indian Territory for its transit and trade with third countries.

Thus while India did not in the last curb or curtail any of the facilities enjoyed by Nepal both in its bilateral trade with that country as well as in the sphere transit given to Nepalese goods, Nepal not only distanced itself from India but also indulged in activities which were downright prejudicial to India’s interests.

In the eighties, Nepal openly violated its written understanding with India, made in the mid sixties and invited China undertake economy projects in the Terai region bordering India. Indians were debarred from functioning in any place within 10 kms of the Sino – Nepal border.

India like Nepal had not gone public on such issues that were building up tensions in Indo–Nepal relations. Perhaps that was a tactful and wise step. But once the trade and transit treaties were allowed to lapse resulting in problems in Nepal and a hue and cry was raised in Kathmandu against Indian high handedness. India had no option but to bring to light the relevant measure of the Nepalese authorities that had caused consternation.85
8. INDO-BHUTAN RELATIONS

After India's independence in 1947, relations with Bhutan have received new dimension, inspite of small size of the later. From the Indian point of view, Bhutan has great strategic importance, as it located between two big powers China and India. Before Independence the British Indian Government conducted its relations with Bhutan in accordance with treaties of 1865 and 1910. As per these treaties, Bhutan's external relations were regulated by the British Indian Government and it enjoyed complete autonomy in the sphere of internal affairs. It means that it was recognised as a semi sovereign foreign state, unlike that of Sikkim's formal protectorate status.

Before India attained Independence Bhutan signed a standstill agreement, which came into force from August 15th 1947. After the British left India, Bhutan expressed its desire to put its relations with India on a new booting. On account of security considerations the two governments concluded a Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship on August 8th 1949. Most important in the Treaty was embodied in Article II, the provision stating that India would undertake to exercise no interference in the internal administration of Bhutan. On its part the Government of Bhutan agrees to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in regard to its external relations. The two also agreed on mutual extradition of the criminals. In short it can be said
that the treaty of 1949 was a continuation of the policy, the foundations of which were laid in the beginning of the twentieth Century.

After the suppression of Tibetan Revolt by China in 1959, Bhutan draw closer to India. The events in Tibet in 1959, increased the tension already brewing and reports of Chinese troop movement in the border, caused great concern. It was left to India to take action, not only in its own security interests but also for Bhutan as per its Treaty (1949) obligation, where by it was responsible for Bhutan’s foreign affairs. On August 28th 1959, the then Indian Prime Minister Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru declared in the Lok Sabha that, the Government of India is responsible for the protection of the borders of Sikkim and Bhutan and of the territorial integrity of these two states and any aggression against Bhutan and Sikkim will be considered as aggression against India. In September 1959, the then Chinese Premier Chou En-Lai declared that China has no design to occupy Bhutan.

During India-China war of 1962 China repeately violated the air space of Bhutan, for which India strongly protested. But the China reflected India’s allegations. Later in 1966 the King of Bhutan during his visit to India, issued a statement appreciating India’s help and advice and its technical and financial assistance for the economic and social progress of Bhutan. In 1971 India recognised Bhutan as an Independent state and sent its representative to Thimbu on July 15th.
1971. Earlier Bhutan set up Royal Mission in New Delhi on May 17th, 1971. The same year Bhutan was admitted as a member of the United Nations Organisation (UNO). In 1978 Bhutan renamed its Indian mission in New Delhi as Royal Bhutan Embassy, which was symbolic of qualitative change in Indo-Bhutanese relations.

The economic ties between the two countries were strong since India’s Independence. In January 1972 India and Bhutan signed a Trade Pact to regulate trade and commerce. In March 1972, India helped Bhutan to modernise its monetary system. In short, India played a key role in the development and modernisation of Bhutan and helped her to claim sovereign status. Bhutan fully appreciated the help of India and pledged to continue friendship with India.

India’s Relations with Bhutan in the 1980’s

The king of Bhutan visited New Delhi in 1982, and he had talks with the then Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi and in separate meetings with other ministers wherein the details of bilateral economic and technical cooperation were discussed. Both leaders agreed to strengthen their friendship and further expand bilateral cooperation. The king of Bhutan said that Bhutan has no problems with India. His visit, he added was intended to reaffirm and strengthen the Indo–Bhutan relations.
India's relations with Bhutan mainly centred around economic and technical cooperation. India had decided to make a contribution of Rs. 134 crores towards Bhutan's fifth plan during the period 1981-87. As part of this contribution, India pledged a grant of Rs. 25 crores for the year 1982-83. India's economic assistance to Bhutan was not restricted to plan support only. The Government of India was engaged in constructing and financing a number of other development projects like the Chukha hydro-electric project at a cost of Rs. 180 crores (grant-cum-loan in the ratio of 60:40), which would produce 336 MW of power, the Indo-Bhutan microwave line, the penden cement plant which was just completed and handed over; and the construction of roads and bridges.\textsuperscript{90}

Rajiv Gandhi stressed the need for closer ties between India and Bhutan. The Prime Minister assured the people of Bhutan in his visit (1985) there that India's involvement in Bhutan's development programme should not considered as aid but as one of sharing of resources for common benefit.\textsuperscript{91}

\textbf{Rajiv Gandhi and Bhutan}

Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi made his journey to Bhutan in 1985. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit gave boost to the time tested friendship. Rajiv Gandhi stated that, India and Bhutan are the members
of the same Himalayan family and should live as friendly neighbours helping each other.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in Harare in September 1986 and the SAARC summit in Bangalore in November 1986 offered an opportunity for discussion on subjects of mutual interests at the highest level between the king of Bhutan and the Prime Minister of India Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. Both meetings were marked by close identity of views on matters of mutual interest reflecting what prevails between the two countries. In fact, the various important political and administrative functionaries met in Thimpu including king Jegmesingye Wang Chuk gave the impression that they were satisfied with the Indian leaders perceptions of the current situation in Bhutan. The traditionally close and friendly relations between India and Bhutan were further strengthened with the good-will missions from both sides.

The holding of SAARC Meeting in Thimpu as well as the Tamil-Sri Lankan talks at Thimpu, has infused a new confidence in Bhutan as a country with respect, prestige and role in international relations. Bhutan fully realises and appreciates India's efforts in securing her national interests without in any way injuring the prestige and status of Bhutan in international relations. Rajiv Gandhi's initiation to encourage and develop more mature and deep friendship and cooperation with India's neighbours has given further strength to the cause of Indo-Bhutanese
highly friendly and cooperative relations. Bhutan also fully realises the fact that because of the topography and geo-politics of the area the security and progress of the kingdom stands related to the concept of special relations with India. Bilateral friendly cooperation between India and Bhutan, as well as co-operation as members of the SAARC has been developing in a very satisfactory and healthy manner.
Mr. Rajiv Gandhi took the reins of the government when South Asia was facing political turmoil. Hence, he has given topmost priority to improve relations with neighbouring countries. Since Independence in 1947 India’s relations with Pakistan were not cordial and during his reign, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi tried to repair the damage through negotiations. His negotiations with the then Pakistan ruler General Zia-ul-Huq led to the conclusion of an agreement, that neither country would attack the nuclear installations of the other. Later Rajiv-Benazir signed three agreements for the improvement of their relations. With regard to Sri Lanka the India’s relations, were cordial up to early 1980’s. The relations turned sour with the communal riots of 1983. India always tried to safeguard the interests of the Indian origin Tamils of Sri Lanka. But the ethnic conflict turned violent with the emergence of LTTE. To safeguard the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and to end ethnic violence, he concluded an agreement with Sri Lanka in 1987. Through this agreement Indian troops were sent to Sri Lanka to restore peace and stability in the island.

It is India, which played vital role in the creation of Bangladesh. After the liberation of Bangladesh, India provided financial help for the reconstruction of the Bangladesh. But after the demise of Mujib Rehman the relation between two countries were not cordial. During Rajiv Gandhi Regime, India’s relations with Bangladesh have taken new direction. Rajiv’s thrust of regional solidarity was appreciated by
Bangladesh. With regard India’s relations with China have taken new direction during Rajiv Gandhi regime. He recognized the importance of solving border disputes with China and at the same time he realised that the border disputes have to be resolved in course of time. His visit to China in 1988 proved successful to start a new era of relationship with mighty neighbour. The old age ties with Nepal have given further impetus during Rajiv Gandhi’s era. He made every effort to solve contentious issues with Nepal. Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to Bhutan in 1985 boosted the ties between the two countries. He extended economic assistance for the development of tiny Himalayan Kingdom. Apart from developing healthy relations with neighbouring countries, he also tried to improve India’s stature in comity of nations.

Apart from the said he also visited other nations like Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Japan, Britain, Bhutan, Bahamar, Netherlands, Cuba, Maldives Egypt, France, Algeria, Switzerland etc. The France visit of Rajiv Gandhi in June 1985 had assumed importance following the involvement of a few French diplomats in the spy scandal in India. During his visit India and France signed two agreements—one relating to the cleaning up of the Ganges, and the other, for setting up an Indo-French center of advanced research in New Delhi. Rajiv Gandhi’s tour of African Countries Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola and Tanzania is intended to boost their morale in their grim fight against apartheid, colonialism and state of terrorism and to strengthen the struggle of Namibian Independence.
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