Chapter – III

Soviet Union as real friend of India
Challenges to India’s Territorial Integrity and Security: Soviet Response

The year 1962 is of vital importance in the history of India’s external relations in general and that of her relations with the Soviet Union in particular. On the three important issues, which prominently figured in Indo-Soviet relations during this year, namely, the question of Kashmir in the Security Council, the finalization of MiG deal and the Sino-Indian border conflict, the Soviet leadership took a well conceived stand. Moscow’s attitude towards the aforesaid problems proved extremely important for the safeguard of India’s territorial integrity, development of her defence potential and also for the very consolidation of the policy of non-alignment.

Kashmir in the Security Council

Hardly had the dust raised by the West over India’s action in Goa settled down that Pakistan thought of squeezing out some concessions from India on the eve of her general elections. The question of Kashmir was raised in the Security Council in February 1962 on the request of Pakistan. Since the representative of India asked for postponement of this issue until a convenient time on account of his country’s pre-occupation with the general elections, this meeting was adjourned.

The issue of Kashmir again came before the Security Council in April-June 1962. In his six-hour speech, the Pak delegate referred to the same old points that Kashmir’s accession to India was illegal and hence, after simultaneous withdrawal from this area of the forces of both India and Pakistan, a plebiscite should be held to ascertain the wishes of the Kashmiri people.1

The Soviet delegate strongly refuted the charges of Pakistan against India and observed that the basic fact was the “continuing Occupation of one-third of the territory of Kashmir”. He referred to the resolution, adopted on 13 August 1948 by the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (hereafter UNCIP), which spoke of the “invasion of the territory of Kashmir by Pak forces.” He distinguished the “warlike declarations and feverish military preparation of Pakistan” from India’s proposal of a “peaceful settlement” and the “extreme patience” shown by her. While ruling out fresh proposals on the issue of Kashmir’s accession, the Soviet delegate asserted that Kashmir was an “integral part” of India.
The stand of the US and her allies on the issue of Kashmir was in sharp contrast with that of the USSR. The US delegate maintained that the contention of Pakistan was quite in conformity with the UN Charter, Nationalist China asked for the Council’s assistance or “the help of a third party”. The British delegate was more interested in the catalyst role of the Security Council. For the French delegate also, it was a “serious problem”. The Irish delegate observed that the earlier resolutions of 1948 and 1949 on Kashmir did not lapse.

In the 1016th meeting of the Security Council, held on 22 June 1962, North Ireland brought a draft resolution urging India and Pakistan to enter into direct negotiations.

The first Para of the draft resolution reminded “both the parties of the principles contained in its resolution of 17 January 1948 and the resolutions of the INCIP of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949” respectively. The second para of this draft resolution urged “the Governments of India and Pakistan to enter into negotiations on the question (of Kashmir) at the earliest convenient time.” This Draft resolutions further requested “the Secretary General to provide the two Governments with such services as they may request for the purpose of carrying out the terms of this resolution.”

V.K. Krishna Menon, who represented India at the Security Council meetings on the issue of Kashmir, took strong exception to this draft resolution. He termed it as an unfriendly act and expressed a “sense of shock”. Menon observed that India was against this draft, because it disregarded “continual violation and flouting of decisions and resolutions” taken earlier by the UNO. He was against bringing the Secretary General into this controversy and finally against Pakistan “as though they were two peas in a pod.” “The sovereignty of a country, its independence and integrity, are not subjects for arbitration”, he declared and charged that the draft resolution, sponsored by the West, displayed “partiality” and its passage would only aggravate the situation. Menon, however, expressed India’s readiness for entering into direct bilateral negotiations with Pakistan.

Morozov, the Soviet delegate who spoke immediately after Menon, observed that the Irish draft resolution was “a photo copy of the US summary” and was “absolutely unnecessary”. While branding it as “one-sided”, the Soviet delegate added that the central idea behind this draft resolution was reassertion of the stand, taken earlier by the West, that the UN resolutions of holding a plebiscite in Kashmir were still in force even at the
present”. Morozov observed that since Kashmir had become an inalienable part of India, the draft resolution of Ireland cast doubts on its belonging to this country and hence the Soviet Union would not endorse this proposal, he asserted. “…the key reason for introducing the draft resolution is the holding of the so-called plebiscite, which in the present circumstances would be nothing but open interference in the domestic affairs of India,” the Soviet delegate emphasized. He further alleged that the troops of Pakistan still continued to occupy approximately one-third of the territory of India and that the adoption of the draft resolution “under the guise of the best and most pious intentions” would “only aggravate tension in relations between India and Pakistan”.

The Soviet delegate considered the aforesaid draft resolution as unnecessary. When it was put to vote, Rumania and the USSR voted against it, Ghana and UAR abstained. Chile, China, France, Ireland, UK and Northern Ireland, USA and Venezuela voted for the draft resolution. Due to the Soviet negative vote, it was not adopted.

The stand of the Soviet Union on the aforesaid issue was certainly not based on any prejudice against Pakistan, nor was it guided by any other ulterior motives. Its sole basis was the principle accepted in international law and in earlier UNCIP resolution, which Pakistan had been violating after joining military pacts. Any unbiased student of international law cannot but agree with the Soviet stand that Pakistan’s demand for holding a plebiscite in Kashmir lost its validity and her contention of simultaneous withdrawal of the Indian and Pakistani forces from this area did not hold any ground, because the UNCIP resolution required that Pakistan must first withdraw all her forces from the entire territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The arm-twisting of India by the West on the issue of Kashmir in the Security Council appears to be partly a reaction to India’s action in Goa. How could the West ask Pakistan, its “most allied ally” in Asia, to vacate occupied Kashmir, when instead of condemning Portugal, its NATO partner, for permanent aggression in Goa, it had chosen to censure India only a few months back? This parallel is indeed striking. On both Kashmir and Goa, there were specific UN resolutions, which their illegal occupants had been flouting. Both Pakistan and Portugal were tied to the West in a military net-work. No wonder that the West chose to support its allies.
It is ironical to note that the West did not feel bothered about the truth of the matter and assumed such a tough attitude towards India at a critical time when the Chinese menace was looming large on India’s northern border. Despite her declared stand on the issue of Kashmir that “the problem of the sovereignty over the whole of Kashmir is a question under dispute between India and Pakistan”, China accepted Pakistan’s proposal of negotiating the boundary question of the so-called Azad Kashmir on 3 May 1962. It is worthwhile to note that at that time the issue of Kashmir was being discussed in the Security Council at Pakistan’s request. China did it deliberately with the object of launching a diplomatic offensive against India, whose territorial integrity this issue concerned, and the Soviet Union, whose stand on this issue was well-known to her. Strangely enough, the West, which fully ignored China’s precipitate action, tried hard to corner India. The Soviet leadership took cognizance of all these facts and came forward to support India on the issue of Kashmir, simultaneously reiterating its desire to Strengthen India’s defence capability by signing the MiG deal with her.

The MiG Agreement

Soviet readiness to supply India with MiG fighters and to assist her in setting up factories for their indigenous production under license caused unnecessary concern in the USA and Britain. These powers tired their best to put pressures on India not to buy the Soviet jet fighters.

US Ambassador to India, J.K. Galbraith, who met with officials of Defence and External Affairs Ministries in New Delhi, expressed grave concern on India’s desire to purchase MiGs from Russia. He observed that the MiG deal was likely to have an adverse effect on America’s foreign aid programme for India. Even before India signed this agreement with the USSR, the US Senate’s Foreign Relations Committee came forward to announce a heavy cut in Kennedy Administration’s request for aid to India in 1962 and 1963. No less a person than the US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, Observed at a press conference in Washington that the US was closely following India’s proposal to buy Soviet MiGs.²

The British Government did not lag behind in advising India not to go for the MiGs. It sent a strong note to the Indian Government³ and justified its right to protest on the ground that the secrets of the war planes, already supplied to India by it, might be
easily exposed to the Soviet defence experts accompanying the MiGs to India. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan sent Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, Duncan Sandy’s to New Delhi in order to explain to Nehru Britain’s misgivings regarding the MiG deal.

From all available accounts, it becomes clear that President J.F. Kennedy and Premier Macmillan co-ordinated their efforts to advise Nehru against the Russian MiGs. Galbraith and Sandys held several rounds of talks with Nehru for this purpose. This is fully corroborated by the fact that when Nehru was asked at a press conference, held in New Delhi on 13 June 1962, as to whether the enquiries made by the USA and UK were of casual or serious nature, he curtly replied, even serious things are said casually. So much pressure was exercised on Nehru that he reportedly assured Sandys India’s willingness to consult Britain and the USA before deciding whether to buy the Soviet jets. Defence Minister V.K. Krishna Menon Admitted in Indian Parliament that the US and British Governments exercised pressures on Nehru to change his mind on the MiGs.

Washington and London this tried their best to offset the Soviet offer of MiGs to India at a very critical juncture in the country’s history when Peking was threatening to act in “self-defence” against New Delhi, Pakistan was incessantly violating cease-fire lines and Peking-Pindi axis was in the process of formation. Instead of rescuing India, both the USA and Britain chose to cajole and coerce her, apparently for the sake of their ally, Pakistan, which had already been armed to teeth by them. These friends of Pakistan first tried to help out that country in the Security Council on the issue of Kashmir, and when Soviet veto foiled their efforts, they planned to forestall the MiG deal on various pretexts.

Since Britain was India’s principal supplier of military hardware, one can very well assume the heart-burnings that the proposed MiG deal might have caused to London. Washington would have found it very difficult to bear with the ever-growing relations between India and the USSR in the military field. The attitude of the West towards the MiG deal is better understood in the light of these facts.

It would not be out of place to observe that the whole attitude of the West was based on double standards. India was already manufacturing British military aircraft and aero-engines. She was about to set up a tank factory with British collaboration and was already negotiating with a private French firm for the purchase and manufacture of
helicopters. India’s negotiation with a Japanese firm in connection with the purchase of radar equipments was also at a very developed stage. All these agreements of India did not create any furor in the West, since these transactions were both economically and politically profitable to it. What disturbed it most was the fact that the Soviets had now come forward to break their monopoly in military supplies to India.

All the pulls and pressures exercised on Nehru apparently aimed at retaining India’s military dependence on the West. The Indian Prime Minister, however, took a bold step and came out in favour of the MiG deal with the USSR. This was one of the most pragmatic and well-conceived decisions taken with strictest secrecy and utmost sophistication by Nehru in the domain of foreign policy and military matters.

It is a well-known fact that Nehru, while holding some exploratory talks with the Soviets, diligently probed all possible sources in the West for the procurement of supersonic jet fighters at competitive prices. The USA, which had already promised F-104 supersonic jet fighters to Pakistan, preferred to remain tight-lipped on the issue of arms supplies to India that at the behest of her ally, Pakistan. Britain made it clear to India that she could not cater to India’s immediate defence needs. There was, thus, no option left for Nehru, except to accept Soviet assistance, which was readily forthcoming.

Nehru’s decision regarding MiG agreement was well-timed as well. The whole negotiation with the Soviets was conducted slowly but skillfully, because, Nehru wanted to wait until the decision of the Aid India Consortium and to weather the storm arising out of the question of Kashmir, which was raised in the Security Council. The Indian Prime Minister waited further to see the fate of Foreign Aid Bill, which was due to come up in the US Congress on 8 July 1962. In addition to it, this is worthy of note, the Finance Minister of India Morarji Desai, was sent by Nehru to London, Paris, Bonn and some other European capitals in order procure additional aid for the Third Five-Year Plan of the country. The delay in signing the MiG deal was caused by these factors.

From military point of view, MiG agreement was the best of the bargains and at the same time, it was commercially also the most economical transaction, since the MiGs were available on rupee-payment. Simpler, less sophisticated and a rough-weather fighter Plane, MiG was suitable for high altitudes. No pre-conditions were attached to this deal with regard to the use of these planes on this or that front. Similar planes were being sold in the
West at higher prices and their supplies as well as spare parts too were not assured. This was so, when MiGs were offered to India on more favourable terms than corresponding aircraft in the West. Not only this, the USSR had readily agreed to set up a turn-key MiG plant in India in the near future with her own credits.

This was no small a compliment to Nehru that Moscow decided to sell MiG-21 to India in the face of Peking’s threat to this country and warnings to Moscow not to go ahead with this deal. It is also important here to observe that earlier, China, the military ally of the USSR, had been sold only MiG-15 and MiG-19. Moscow must have examined all aspects of this transaction and, at the same time, it must have found correct the records of New Delhi. MiG deal was thus a clear proof of the stage of maturity that had been attained in Indo-Soviet relations. Besides this, it bore further testimony to the fact that in China’s dispute with India, Moscow had taken a well-considered stand, which could add substantially to its own growing differences with Peking.

Seen in the light various facts we have discussed in the preceding pages, it cannot be denied that the stand taken by the Soviet Union on the question of Kashmir in the Security Council should be considered as Moscow’s commitment to the safeguarding of India’s territorial integrity. The MiG agreement helped India strengthen indigenous defence potential, and gave her the moral power as well as the military prowess to defend her territorial integrity.

**Soviet Stand on Sino-Indian Border Conflict**

Ever-growing understanding between India and the USSR was put to much more severe trial when China triggered off fresh military offensive against India in the summer of 1962 and further aggravated the border situation after 8 September. On 20 October, regular Chinese troops crossed the well-defined McMahon line and subsequently serious fighting erupted all along the Sino-Indian border.

Not beyond expectation, India proved outgunned, outmanned and outwitted. She had never thought of the vast military preparation China had been making over the years. On 24 October, China put forward three proposals: cases-fire, 20 km withdrawal from the line of actual control and negotiations. Nehru refused to negotiate under duress. The Cuban crisis gave China a free hand. However, when then crisis subsided, China unilaterally declared cease-fire on 27 November. The border clash thus came to a halt.
What was the Soviet attitude towards the aforesaid crisis? How did the various political parties of India assess the stand of the Soviets? What was the reaction of the West to the Soviet view of this event? Weather Soviet assessment of the Sino-Indian border conflict strengthened India’s policy of non-alignment and whether Nehru’s faith in Soviet friendship remained unaffected by all sorts of pulls and pressures, exerted on him by various quarters? These are some of the questions which need a closer examination.

**Moscow’s Attitude**

As we have noted above, frequent border incidents in the eastern sector of the Sino-Indian border were taking place since 8 September 1962. On 20 October, McMahon line was violated by the Chinese forces, which crossed into the Indian Territory. On the other hand, the military situation in the Caribbean had pushed the world to the brink of a thermonuclear catastrophe. Since the Soviet leaders were deeply preoccupied with the Cuban crisis, it seems that they opted for guarded silence on the Sino-Indian border situation and concentrated completely on how to forge unity in the communist camp so as to exert all their efforts against the US moves in the Caribbean.

President Kennedy ordered a strict quarantine of all offensive military weapons under shipment to Cuba on 22 October and further directed the US armed forces to “prepare for any eventualities”. The US President invoked Rio de Janeiro Treaty, as a result of which all ships visiting Cuba were to be inspected by America’s military personnel. Official proclamation with regard to the military blockade of Cuba was to become effective at 2 p.m. G.M.T. on 2 October. In view of this alarming situation in the Caribbean, Kennedy immediately sent Dean Acheson to Paris on order to brief NATO Council on military measures, which might be taken in the wake of naval blockade against Cuba.

In retaliation against the US moves, on 23 October, the Council of Ministers of the USSR ordered for immediate combat readiness. Marshal of the USSR and Commander-in-Chief of the Warsaw Pact Forces. A.A. Grechko directed all his subordinate officers to remain ready for any eventuality.

The aforesaid facts make it pretty clear that the Cuban crisis had really assumed alarming proportions. While taking stock of the whole crisis, Pravda editorially warned on 24 October, “If the invaders would start a war, the USSR Government would strike a
mighty retaliatory blow”. This editorial laid special stress on “negotiated settlement”, avoidance of “military measures” and observed that “the untied strength of the socialist camp was in a position to halt US aggression just at its beginning”.

The first Soviet reaction to the Sino-Indian border conflict came in the form of editorials in Pravda and Izvestia on 25 October. Pravda editorial was critical of the McMahon line and cautioned that the border conflict would disrupt the Soviet Union’s relations with fraternal China and friendly India. It expressed deep satisfaction over the development of cooperation between the Soviet Union and India. India’s contribution to the struggle for peace was applauded. Since the straining of relations between China and India would benefit only their common enemy, it was suggested to India to accept China’s three proposals. This conflict, the editorial emphasized, would serve the interest of certain reactionary circles inside India and imperialism and hence, it should be settled by peaceful means, through negotiations and without any pre-conditions. The Izvestia editorial carried identical comments.

The second Pravda editorial on the aforesaid border conflict came out on 5 November 1962. It expressed deep concern on the clashes going on between China, a socialist State, and India, “a powerful force in the newly emerged countries”. Besides draining away India’s economic resources and deflecting the Indian people from their Social and cultural regeneration, the editorial added, this conflict would encourage the anti-progressive and anti-democratic forces in India to drive her from the position of non-alignment into the embrace of the aggressive military alliances. While pointing out towards the flow of Western arms to India “phoney silence” in the West on China’s proposals for cease-fire, the editorial said that the Soviet people would not remain “indifferent”, when blood of brothers and friends-the Chinese and the Indian peoples-was being shed. This editorial asked for cease-fire and negotiation without pre-conditions.

In our view, the first editorial of Pravda was specially written for soliciting China’s support to the socialist camp at the height of the Cuban crisis. And the Soviet Union fully succeeded in getting China’s support when, along with the Governments of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Mongolia and North Korea, the People’s Republic of China also came out with a statement, in which it went to the extent of condemning the “aggressive designs of the imperialists in Cuba”. In this statement, China fully backed the Soviet Government’s aforesaid statement of 23 October 1962 on the
Cuban situation. China’s “firm support to the entire socialist camp” on the issue of the Cuban crisis became more pronounced in the editorial of the People’s Daily on 24 October, in which Peking hailed Cuba for fighting with the US imperialism”. In its statement released on 25 October, the People’s Republic of China further endorsed the Soviet Government’s stand on the Cuban situation saying that the Chinese Government “fully supports” the just stand of the Soviet Government. China offered “total support to socialist countries” in the matter of smashing the aggressive schemes of the U.S. imperialist bloc.

It is important to notice that never after 25 October, the Chinese Government supported Soviet stand on Cuba, and similarly, the Soviets never criticized the McMahon line, nor did they support China’s three proposals after 25 October 1962. Immediately after Kennedy’s withdrawal of the naval blockade of Cuba, Peking openly began condemning Moscow for its surrender to the imperialists” and appeasement of the war-mongers”.

From the aforesaid two Pravda editorials, it becomes distinct that the chief concern of the Soviet Union was the maintenance of peace as well as negotiated settlement of dispute between India and China. It should be borne in mind that at this critical juncture, the world was standing on the brink of a terrible disaster. The Caribbean crisis was heading towards a nuclear holocaust and one-third of the mankind was fighting in the Himalayas. As soon as the Cuban crisis was deescalated, the Soviet leadership paid immediate attention to the Sino-Indian conflict. In clear-cut terms on 6 November 1962, First Deputy Prime Minister of the USSR, A.N. Kosygin, regretted the Sino-Indian border incidents and asked for cease-fire and negotiations.

**Assessment of Soviet Attitude By Political Parties of India**

The apprehensions expressed in the aforesaid two editorials of Pravda regarding the Sino-Indian border conflict and their exploitation by some elements in India, and a few circles outside, came to be correct.

Non-alignment and Indo-Soviet friendship became the main targets of attacks by the right-wing political parties of India. The abuses heaped on Krishna Menon, the Communist Party of India and international communism, were just symbolic of an assault on Nehru’s course in foreign policy. All possible attempts were made to bring about a swing towards the right.
Swatantra leader Minoo Masani asked for immediate overtures to be made to the Kuomintang for settling scores with Peking. Holding international communism responsible for whatever was happening in Cuba, Vietnam, Berlin and NEFA, he openly attacked Nehru’s policy of friendship with the USSR and charged his government with “colour blindness”. In a speech in the Lok Sabha on 8 November 1962, Swatantra leader N.G. Ranga advocated the renunciation of the policy of non-alignment and friendship with the Soviet Union. He asked for attacking just “those areas and those spheres, where they (the Chinese) are keeping their own troops”. Ranga argued for massive outside military help from “parliamentary democracies and insisted on accepting Pakistan’s earlier proposal of common defence”. C. Rajagopalachari, founder of the Swatantra Party, took the strongest objection to Sino-Soviet friendship and advocated India’s immediate alliance” with the West and “attack on Chinas bases”.

The Jana Sangh demanded “immediate declaration of war on China” and “recognition of the Delai Lama’s government in exile”. The party’s journal alleged that the Soviet Union, “which used to sing for friendship with India, had betrayed her”.

On 9 November 1962, Socialist Party leader R.S. Yadav vehemently criticised non-alignment and brought a no-confidence motion against Nehru, in the Indian Parliament, which could not be admitted.

In the Lok Sabha discussion on the no-confidence motion, H.V. Kamath of the Praja Socialist Party blamed “international communism” for whatever was happening on the borders. He took great exception to Moscow’s aforesaid distinction between friendly India and fraternal China. The National Executive of the PSP “deplored” Soviet attitude toward the conflict and criticized India’s “mental as well as emotional alignment with the communist countries”.

As regards the Communist Party of India, there was a serious turmoil on the issue of Sino-Indian border conflict. Pro-Peking elements created a stir, which subsequently broke this party. Despite intra-party quarrels, the Communist Party of India took an independent stand, offered unequivocal support to Nehru and got a resolution passed by an overwhelming majority of its National Council, which condemned China as the aggressor.

Among the notable Indian leaders, Acharya Vinoba Bhave said that India’s fight was against communism. J.B. Kripalani, while criticizing Soviet attitude towards the
aforesaid issue, observed that the communist bloc through one of its members had attacked India. Insinuating against Indo-Soviet friendship, J.P. Narayana alleged that India had aligned herself in the garb of non-alignment.

The Soviet stand on the Sino-Indian border conflict was subjected to harsh criticism by some important sections in the Indian press as well. “Soviet Russia’s skin-deep deception”, “Moscow’s moral support to China”, “Pravda’s encouragement to aggression”, Soviet “inability to supply a squadron of MiG planes” to India, such were the comments in the Indian press on the Soviet attitude.

From the above discussion, it becomes apparent that all the right-wing political parties of India were swept away by their prejudices against non-alignment, Nehru’s leadership and Indo-Soviet friendship. Indeed, the pressures in Nehru were immense. He had to fight on three fronts-against the Chinese incursions on the border, right-wing parties inside the country and mounting pressures from outside.

The West reacted very sharply to the Sino-Indian border conflict. The USA and Britain immediately agreed to provide India with arms on lend-lease basis. Canada, France, West Germany and Australia promised aid to India in order to enable her to keep on fighting with the Chinese. A senior adviser to Chiang Kai-shek requested the US to let the Kuomintang Government invade China in order bring a basic solution to the problem. South Korea offered to share her experiences of fighting with the Chinese. Even the Rhodesian Government expressed its desire to help India materially against China.

It is worthy of note that whatever military and political support India got from the West, it had deep tactical considerations. The prime motive behind it was to keep the conflict continuing so as to make India dependent on it and to extract from her desired concessions under pressures. Nehru himself cautiously remarked on Anglo-US pressure tactics behind their military assistance to India during this crisis.

Provisions for the inspection of arms received from the West, conditions for their use, visit of top Anglo-US military experts to borders of extreme strategic importance, pressures on Nehru to initiate negotiations with Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir, proposals of joint military exercises and air-umbrella-these are the instances of pressures, which were being exercised on India by the West.
While holding on to its long-term policy of entrapping India into the network of its alliances, the West first implemented its short-term policy. It showed that it accepted India’s policy of non-alignment, offered to render her immediate assistance for the retention of this policy, approved of India’s friendly terms with the Soviets and, thus, tried to widen the Sino-Soviet differences in which cordial ties between Moscow and New Delhi were an important factor. It was with this objective in view that the West wanted India to remain non-aligned until Sino-Soviet rift was complete.

In Washington, the Assistant Secretary of state for Far Eastern Affairs, W. Averell Hariman, went on record to reiterate on 9 December 1962 that it was in the interest of the USA, if India maintained friendliest possible relation with Moscow. He considered Soviet assistance to India as an important element in the rift between Moscow and Peking. While referring to serious differences between the Soviet Union and Communist China, Hariman observed, “we ought to be careful not to do things that would tend to force them together”.

Comments of the Western press on Soviet attitude towards Sino-Indian border conflict were very harsh. “Jolt from the Russians”, “cancellation of the MiG deal”, “lack of reliance on Russia”, “ambivalent stand of Moscow”, “India’s abandonment by the Russians”, “return home of Indian pilots from Moscow without finishing conversion course to MiG”\(^8\) these are the few instances of the views, which were being expressed by some leading journals in the West.

**Nehru’s Understanding of Soviet Attitude**

In spite of the vast magnitude of the adverse circumstances and mounting pressures from various quarters, which we have discussed above, Jawaharlal Nehru proved supreme to the task. He knew fully well what the right-wing political parties of India and vested interests outside the country wanted. He was conscious of the price, which the world might have to pay, in case he were to abandon non-alignment, press for a showdown with Peking, inflict a blow on his personal equation with the Soviet leadership and thus ultimately join with the West. With all his might, Nehru defended his policy of non-alignment, his faith in friendship with the Soviet Union and personally refuted all sorts of anti-Soviet slander.

India’s vote in favour of the People’s Republic of China’s admission into the UNO on 30 October 1962 baffled those who were writing elegies on the death of non-alignment.
In Lok Sabha on 8 November 1962, Nehru made it clear that Western military aid to India would have no bearing on her policy of non-alignment. He observed, “this help is unconditional and without strings. It does not … affect directly our policy of non-alignment, which we value. Those countries, which have helped us, do not expect us to leave that policy”. Subsequently, he scolded the adventurists for their “hysterical chauvinism” and “venom against international communism”.

As regards Nehru’s direct reactions to Soviet attitude towards the border crisis, he, in a letter to the Soviet Prime Minister on 24 October 1962, first complimented him for his Cuban policy and then added, “I shall not hide from you the fact that the recent events have aroused profound anxiety in India. Your statesmanlike wisdom has helped to remove the immediate danger.” The Indian Prime Minister subsequently spoke publicly about Soviet limitations, caused by the Caribbean crisis. In an exclusive interview to the American Broadcasting Company, Nehru observed that the Russians were very friendly to India and remained neutral throughout. In reply to a question by another interviewer, “whether the Soviet Union had not pulled the rug from under India’s feet”, he reacted sharply, “I do not think it is the correct way of discussing things”. This was even termed by him as a “balancing act” of the Soviet Union. On the 12 November 1962, Nehru told a group of foreign journalists about the “embarrassing” position of the Soviet Union because of her alliance with China and friendship with India. In countless interviews, Lok Sabha debates and public meetings, Prime Minister Nehru took special care to refer to Russia’s refusal to take the side of China and her good wishers for India. In a Lok Sabha speech on 14 November 1962, Nehru observed, “The Soviet Union has been consistently friendly to us all along. It has been in a very difficult position in this matter, because they have been, and are, allies of China, and hence the embarrassment to them as between a country, with which they are friendly and a country, which is their ally. We have realized that, and do not expect them to do anything, which would definitely mean breach over there … But we have had their goodwill and good wishes all along, even very recently, and that is a consolation to us, and we certainly hope to have them in future”.

No better assessment of the Soviet attitude towards the whole India-China border situation could be given than the one Nehru himself offered to the House. It is important to note that this attitude of the Soviets was construed in Peking as a “great betrayal”. While making it a pretext for launching a more vigorous offensive against both India and the
USSR, the Chinese leadership brought their clandestine polemics with the Soviets quite into the open.

**Indian in Sino-Soviet Polemics**

Soviet stand on the issue of Sino-Indian border conflict sparked off a serious cleavage between the two communist giants. It is no doubt true that the tinder-box of strained Sino-Soviet relations had already become full for a variety of reasons, but it was Moscow’s overall assessment of the aforesaid situation which was used by Peking for igniting the explosive situation in relations between China and the USSR.

**VIEWS FROM MOSCOW AND PEKING**

**Pravda versus People’s Daily**

The long editorial of the People’s Daily, published on 27 October 1962, came in the form of a veiled but strong rejoinder to the Soviets for their praise of India in the Pravda editorial of 25 October 1962. Just contrary to the Soviet view of India, the People’s Daily’s editorial was almost a charge-sheet against Nehru. It alleged that “Nehru’s Government depended on imperialism”, and served its interest. While asserting that “US was taking over British monopoly position in India”, this editorial criticized India’s role in international affairs right since the Korean War. After drawing an analogy between present Sino-Indian relations and Sino-Soviet relations in the thirties, the People’s Daily in conclusion dubbed Nehru as “reactionary” as Chiang Kai-shek,” “against whom the Soviet Union took strong action.

The concluding remarks of the People’s Daily editorial made it clear that Peking was directly responding to the Pravda editorial of 25 October, and chastising the Soviet leadership for adopting what it considered, a natural stand on the Sino-India border situation. Through this editorial, China condemned Yugoslav President Marshal Tito for proposing a “pacifying role” by the Soviet Union in the Sino-Indian boundary war and posed a question, “does the Tito clique think that when a socialist country is invaded by the bourgeois reactionaries of a foreign country, another socialist country should stand by the bourgeois reactionaries and play a ‘pacifying role’ in relation to the invaded socialist country”?
In the Chinese lexicon, the terms “renegade” and “revisionist” had already been acknowledged as code words for addressing the Soviet leaders, and so, it was clear beyond doubt that Peking had chosen to take Moscow to task for its views on the Sino-Indian border conflict. The People’s Daily editorial was a sort of signal to the Soviets that they could no longer be allowed to assume a “pacifying role” in China’s dispute with India.

Equally violent was Peking’s attitude towards the second editorial of Pravda on the Sino-Indian border conflict, in which the Soviet leadership had expressed apprehensions that the conflict would encourage anti – progressive and anti – democratic forces in India to drive her from the position of non-alignment. Pravda’s appreciation of India’s policy of non-alignment was fully criticized by the People’s Daily, which, without mentioning the aforesaid Soviet comments, wrote in as editorial column on 11 November 1962, that non-alignment was “a deceitful signboard”. The change in the tone and tenor of the Pravda editorial of 5 November was fully played down by this mouth-piece of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), which taunted the Soviet leaders and added, “without looking into the rights and wrongs of the wise, they even maintain that in order to enable Nehru to keep on his clock of non-alignment, China should make unlimited concessions and submissively offer its territory on a platter to India”.

Apparently in reply to the regrets expressed by Deputy Prime Minister Kosygin on the Sino-Indian border conflict on 6 November 1962, the People’s Daily editorial of 15 November outrightly condemned the policy of peaceful co-existence as a big “humbug”, and declared at revolution alone was “the locomotive of history”. The Chinese leadership’s concern over Soviet involvement with India’s case was reflected further in Peking’s outbursts against Moscow. On 3 December 1962, the People’s Daily observed that “Tito group could have no say in Sino-Indian border dispute”. In a meeting of the World peace Council, held in Warsaw in the beginning of December 1962, the Chinese delegate alleged that India’s “reactionary policy” was being backed by the Soviets, who had staged “anti-China sendal” Peking had, thus come to the extent of bracketing India with the USSR and openly intensifying its vilification campaign both these powers.

**Moscow’s Growing Concern**

The Soviet leadership must have taken into account all that was being said about it by China, which had gone too far in stretching the Sino-Indian border conflict, and, right
from the beginning, had converted this purely bilateral issue into a formidable factor in Sino-Soviet dispute. Moscow by now was completely convinced of Peking’s designs on its firm ties with New Delhi. Differences between China and the USSR had no doubt assumed dangerous proportions on scores of intricate issues, which are beyond the purview of the present study, but the way the Chinese leadership had sought to inflict injuries on the Soviets was enough to add fuel to the fire, which was already smouldering for some time past.

Moscow took a well-considered view of the situation and consulted its allies in the Warsaw Pact on the point of China’s outbursts against Soviet view of the Sino-Indian border clash. It is a well-known fact that between 30 October and 4 November 1962, A. Novotny of Czechoslovakia, W. Ulbricht and E. Honecker of the GDR and W. Gomulka of Poland visited Moscow for exchange of views with the Soviet leaders on matters of mutual interest. Naturally Moscow’s assessment of the international situation in general and the Cuban as well as Sino-Indian border situation in particular might have been discussed at these meetings.

The Soviet leaders possibly took into active consideration the valued opinions of the various communist parties of Europe, which had criticised China for crossing swords with India. It was just a coincidence that towards the end of November and the beginning of December 1962, Eighth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Eighth Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party, Tenth Congress of the Italian and Twelfth Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Parties were held. In all the meetings of these parties, charges and counter-charges were exchanged between the Chinese delegates and the representatives of other European communist parties. What is more important to stress is the fact that in the deliberations of the aforesaid Congresses, Sino-Indian border clashes were considers as “unreasonable” and “absurd”. In our view, the Soviet leadership might have taken careful note of the majority opinion on the issue of Sino-Indian border conflict, which was prevailing in the communist parties of Europe, with sole exception of Albania, an accomplice of Peking.

Moscow was fully aware of all the reactions which were being expressed in India, the West and China in connection with the border crisis and Soviet assessment of the same. It had to take into account the mounting pressures on Nehru from various quarters. Something more tangible had to be done for strengthening Nehru’s position both at home
and aboard. The worst had come and gone. All along Nehru’s faith in non-alignment and friendship with the Soviets had succeeded in withstanding all pressures on him. His stand was largely appreciated in the non-aligned countries. Such being the state of affairs, India had to be reassured of Moscow’s friendly gestures in a big way and China’s vituperative campaign had to be strongly rebuffed. No more suitable occasion could be available than the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet, which began in the Kremlin on 12 December 1962.

**Moscow’s Open Admonition to China**

In the report presented at the aforementioned session of the Supreme Soviet, Premier Khrushchev elaborated Soviet stand on the Sino-India border conflict. The Chinese leadership was criticised for taking “Trotskyite position”, for using force to attain their goal, which would alienate millions and millions of people from the world communist movement. The report laid emphasis on peaceful coexistence, and observed that only defensive war and freedom struggle could be justified. While referring to Albania’s criticism of Soviet action in Cuba, the report lashed out at the critics of peaceful coexistence, who considered “war as the sole method of settling disputes”. The report hailed India for her armed action in Goa—“a vestige of colonialism on the Indian soil”. Then coming down heavily upon the Chinese for preaching war elsewhere but themselves “tolerating colonial repression in Macao and Hong-Kong”, the report noted that “the aroma coming from these places is not a bit better than the smell from colonialism in Goa”. The report paid rich tributes to India’s policy of non-alignment, which had achieved “great moral and political weight in the world”. It observed: “we adhere to Leninist views on the issue of border disputes, which should be settled without resort to arms. This is the stand from which the Soviet people judge the events on the Chinese-Indian frontier”.

**China’s Accusations**

This report at the Supreme Soviet was published in Pravda on 13 December 1962. Within just a couple of days, i.e. on 15 December, the People’s Daily came out to decry the “self-styled Marxist-Leninist for having cast Marxism-Leninism to the wind”, and for “never bothering to analyse from the class viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism the Nehru Government’s reactionary policy of provoking the Sino-Indian boundary conflict”. In reply to Pravda’s editorial bracketing fraternal China and friendly India, this mouth-piece of the
CPC editorially observed, “… those, who accuse China of having pushed the Nehru Government to the West, are mistaking the very cause for the effect. Throughout the Sino-Indian boundary dispute, they have all along confused right with wrong, pretending to be ‘neutral’, calling China ‘brother’, while actually regarding the Indian reactionary group as their kinsmen”.

Peking had taken an extremely serious view of every word, which was being uttered in Moscow, with regard to the policy of Nehru, his friendly terms with the Soviets and India-China border conflict. In several special articles, commentaries and editorials, which were published in the People’s Daily throughout the year 1963, China critically referred to the role of India in world affairs and censured the attitude of the Soviet Union towards Nehru’s Government.

The People’s Daily columnist alleged on 16 July 1963 that India was making capital out of Sino-Soviet rift in the escalation of which Nehru had taken keen interest. The Prime Minister of India was quoted as saying that Indo-Soviet friendship was worth 20 divisions, and that Soviet neutrality in India-China border war was of much greater help than all the help received from the West. While referring to Nehru’s cautious remarks on Sino-Soviet differences, the People’s Daily commentator alleged that Nehru was wooing the Soviets, whereas he was attacking the Chinese. He maintained that Nehru was getting the support of the Soviet Union, an ally of China, and with the help received from Moscow, he continued to “wear the cloak of non-alignment,” “bluffing and playing tricks” in the international arena. India was “poisoning Sino-Soviet relations”, “not opposing imperialism”, … the Soviet Union was happy with her aid to India, because, the commentator remarked, “in the case of a joint stock company, … he, who makes the biggest investment, always has the last word ….”

On 22 August 1963, the People’s Daily published its editorial entitled “No One Can Save Indian Reactionaries From Their Political Bankruptcy”. This editorial criticised Soviet attitude towards Sino-Indian relations in the most vehement terms.

Peking alleged that Soviet military aid was given to India in collaboration with the US imperialism in order to ally themselves with India against China. “The more frenzied the Nehru Government became in its anti-China campaign, the greater were the large-scale increases, which the Soviet leaders made in their aid to India”. “From 1995 to April 1963”,

48
the People’s Daily added, “the Soviet Government agreed to give India 5,000 million rupees in aid, two-thirds of it after India provoked the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1959”. The Soviet Government was chastised for giving military equipments, including aircraft, to New Delhi after the recent border conflict. The editorial further alleged that the Soviet Union was actually helping Nehru going over to the US imperialism, which was “the big share-holder” and the Soviet Union was “the small share-holder” in India.

The editorial departments of the People’s Daily and Red Flag brought out a sizable article on 6 September 1963, which was entitled, “The Origin and Development of the Differences between the Leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Ourselves”. This leading article enumerated in much greater detail China’s differences with the Soviet Union right since the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU, touched upon several ideological points of difference and laid some stress on Sino-Soviet difference on account of favourable treatment of India by the Soviet leadership. It further referred to the TASS statement of 9 September 1959, which, as it side, was intentionally issued on the eve of Khrushchev’s trip to Washington. This statement was issued “as ceremonial gift to Eisenhower so as to curry favour with the US imperialists” and create the so-called “spirit of Camp David”.

**Moscow’s Rejoinder**

As we have seen above, the Chinese leadership was getting extremely vocal against Indo-Soviet relations on one pretext or the other. It was being keenly observed by Moscow, which thought that it was high time to hit back. A well-written rejoinder was rushed on 27 August 1963 in the form of an article in Izvestia, which supported India’s case in her border dispute with China, and asked for a settlement by negotiations. It laid stress on respecting the existing border, because, as it argued, any other means would be fraught with the danger of war. Izvestia went ahead, and asserted that good-neighbourly relations could be built between the socialist countries only on the basis of recognition of the historically established borders. “To base one’s claims on the basis of ancient data and graves of forefathers would not serve any purpose”, Izvestia affirmed.

The debate, started by Izvestia, in response to Peking’s bittier accusations against Moscow, was more vigorously continued by Pravda, which published (on 19 September 1963) an editorial article entitled “A Serious Hotbed of Tension in Asia”. After giving an
over-view of China’s insinuations against India and the Soviet Union, this article justified
Soviet economic assistance being given to India and then, it reproached the Chinese for
adopting a border policy towards this country, which was clearly against the combined
course of the Marxist-Leninist parties based on peaceful co-existence and support to the
national liberation movement. Pravda blamed the Chinese for reversing the 1957 line,
which said that the peace-loving states of Asia and Africa were an important factor in the
struggle for peace in collaboration with the socialist countries.12

The Pravda article, referred to above, justified the TASS statement of 9 September
1959 and laid stress on peaceful solution of border disputes. It asked the Chinese leaders,
“did they perhaps think to settle the border conflict by military means and hope to obtain
support from the Soviet Union”? “The Soviet Union will do everything possible to end
hotbeds of international tension …”, it re-affirmed in unambiguous terms and observed,
“the Soviet Union always thought and still thinks that there were never reasons for border
conflict between India and China”. The Pravda article pointed out that China had settled its
unresolved territorial issues with Nepal and Burma; and rebuked her for not doing the
same with India. It charged Peking for not listening to the voice of reason expressed by the
leading Afro-Asian powers in the form of the Colombo proposals and held China
accountable for the consolidation of reactionary forces in India. The authors of the Pravda
article remarked, “the Soviet Union understands that good neighbourliness is possible only
when there is respect for the boarders that have existed between State”. By thus advocating
the maintenance of existing borders, as is quite evident in the aforesaid Izvestia and Pravda
articles, the Soviet Government offered support to India’s claims on the basis of the
McMahon line.

On 21 September 1963, Pravda published a long statement of the Soviet
Government, which was aimed at a well-documented and fully authoritative interpretation
of Soviet view on the Sino-Indian border question. This statement of the Soviet
Government observed that since 1959, the Soviet leaders frankly advised their Chinese
friends not to aggravate the border crisis in the Himalayas, because large-scale military
conflict would lead to useless consequences for India, China and the world at large.
Through this statement the Government of the USSR laid stress on the Leninist principle
of the solution of border dispute through peaceful means. It further remained the Chinese
leaders that due to their provocation, the unity of anti-imperialist forces was broken,
progressive forces in India were under fire, and China’s prestige in the Afro-Asian world suffered a set-back. This statement observed: “it was with bewilderment and anguish that the people witnessed one of the socialist countries, which itself had won freedom only some time ago, and had served as an example to them, entering into an armed conflict with a non-aligned state, and thereby try, by taking undue advantage of its military superiority, to solve this question to its own advantage…” The “CPC did not listen to the friendly suggestion of the brotherly socialist countries”, this statement of the Soviet Government observe and it added further that China connected her differences with the Soviet Union with her own border provocations against India, felt insulted on not getting unconditional support from the Soviet Union as well as other socialist countries.

The aforesaid statement of the Soviets Government criticized the Chinese for “flirting with reactionary regimes in Asia and Africa, including countries which had joined imperialist bloc”. It remarked that till 1959, China shared Soviet view of India. Regarding the often cited Chinese allegation of the use of Soviet arms by India against China, this statement commented, “if such logic is to be accepted, the Indian Government would have much firmer grounds for declaring that the Chinese troops were using Soviet arms to fight against India …’.

**Chinese Response**

In reply to the aforesaid views expressed by Izvestia and Pravda on the Sino-Indian border conflict, the editorial department of the people’s Daily brought out a lengthy article entitled “The Truth About How the Leaders of the CPSU Have Allied Themselves with India Against China”. China alleged Soviet “complicity” with India against her since 9 September 1959. It contained several unfounded allegations against the Soviet leadership. It appeared that he issues of general disagreement between the two countries came on the surface along with the outbreak of the Sino-Indian border conflict. Their divergent attitudes towards this issue no doubt constituted one of the important factors in the further estrangement of their mutual relations.

**China’s Real Motivations**

Among all the charges leveled by China against India, which we have discussed at some length in the foregoing pages, Peking’s foremost contention was that “it had been
Nehru’s policy to exploit and widen the differences between Moscow and Peking”, and it was with this objective that he sought the conflict. Many scholars have taken this leaf from China’s book. They maintain that India adopted a policy of double-alignment with both the East and West Bloc countries specially against People’s China.

The other thesis is also of Chinese origin. China argues that throughout the Sino-Indian boundary dispute, the Soviet Union pretended to be “neutral”, but actually regarded the Indian reactionaries as its “Kinsmen”, and even “bolstered up Nehru to aggravate the border dispute in collusion with the United States”. While tracing the long history of Sino-Soviet differences, most of the scholars on the West have chosen to be governed by China’s point of view. They hold that Soviet strategy to minimize China’s role in Asia, and to magnify that of Indian on order to prepare a counter-weight to China led to the start of Sino-Soviet and Sino-Indian differences, of which the border crisis of October 1962 was a direct manifestation.

A peep into the history of China’s relations with both India and the Soviet Union during the few years before and after the outbreak of the border conflict on October 1962 would sufficiently testify to our view that it was China’s own acute distaste for India’s policy of non-alignment and Soviet policy of peaceful co-existence, which ultimately brought her to the path of confrontation with both Indian and the USSR.

It would be not exaggeration to say that China actually wanted her own détente with the USA, planned her own peaceful co-existence with Pakistan and she practiced her own non-alignment with the communist bloc countries. Certainly these policies of the Chinese Government were largely accountable for its conflict with New Delhi and Moscow.

**China against Non-Alignment**

As regards China’s attitude towards India, she used the border issue as a pretext for starting military offensive against this country to dislodge Nehru from the respectable position he had earned due to his policy of non-alignment. China’s co-authorship of the five principles called Panchsheel, Tibet Agreement (1954), ten principals of Bandung (1955) and Chou En-Lai’s personal assurances to Nehru that after mutual consultations only any change in the existing situation on the border would be brought about-all these made obligatory for China not to use force in settling any dispute with India. How China’s
words differed from her deeds becomes crystal clear from the fact that during the whole post-Bandung period, China very carefully started occupying the disputed territory all along the Sino-Indian border.

During the post–Bandung period, while working hard for a military confrontation with India, China launched diplomatic offensive against her, and started flirting with Pakistan with a view to opening a second front against New Delhi. In Bandung, Chou completely ignored Pakistan’s vote against China’s entry into the UN, her membership of the SEATO and her “opposition to China’s participation” in the Bandunge Conference itself.\(^\text{15}\) The Chinese Prime Minister rather took delight in holding out an olive branch to his Pakistani counterpart, with whom, it is curious of observe, he expressed community of views on important international issues. Pakistan’s Premier reciprocally whispered into Chou’s ears that his country’s membership of the SEATO was not directed against China. In September 1995, China took care not to share Soviet “anxieties” on Pakistan’s alignment with the Baghdad Pact’.\(^\text{16}\) Despite Ayub’s proposal (made in 1959) of joint defence with India against “inexorable push of the north”\(^\text{17}\) his open advocacy of the sanctity of the Mc Mahon line, and Pakistan’s negative vote on the issue of China’s admission to the UNO till 1960, China went on ignoring Pakistan’s actions consistently with a view to coming closer to her. More than once China gave Pakistan her moral support on the issue of Kashmir. Pakistan also mended her ways and went on gradually loosening her ties with military pacts, while, step by step drawing nearer to China after 1960. Precisely this was the time when relations between New Delhi and peking deriorated beyond rapier. And Pakistan observed this carefully. In 1961, she voted for Chin’s entry into the world body and in 1962, when peking reciprocated by accepting Pakistan’s request for border demarcation in the so-called Azad Kashmir area, Pakistan came forward and ceded away 1500 square miles of Indian territory of Pak-held Kashmir to China. By so doing, in fact, China completely reversed her own stand on the whole issue of Kashmir. China’s hobnobbing with Pakistan stood in full contrast with her drifting away from India. It is worthwhile to mention here that in the summer of 1962, China expressed her unwillingness to renew the agreement on the five principles of co-existence, signed earlier with India.

Seen in the background of these facts and China’s huge military preparations before she sparked off the conflict on India’s territory, any impartial observer would agree
that Chin’s motive behind her military offensive against India in October 1962 must have been the Maoist calculation: to throw India into the Western camp, and thus, to prove that her championship of the policy of non-alignment was a big farce. At the same time, China wanted to show to the Soviet leadership that its adherence to the policy of peaceful coexistence was untenable and their “wooing of India”, “a protégé’ of US imperialism’ and “a den of anti-revolutionaries”, was absolutely wrong.

**Peking’s Disapproval of Peaceful Co-existence**

China’s neo-nationalism, global designs and her concept of Sino-centrism surfaced more vividly during the same period in her relations with the USSR. One of the zealous sponsors of the Bandung Conference and a front-rank promoter of the policy of peaceful co-existence, China dramatically relinquished her declared adherence to peace immediately after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU. At the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, the Chinese delegate, Vice-President of the People’s Republic of China, Chu Teh, hailed the principle of peaceful co-existence as “a great contribution, to the cause of international communism”. Chairman Mao Tse-tung spoke very highly of the USSR and the decisions of this Congress in his speech at the Eighth Congress of the CPC, which was held closely after the aforesaid Congress of the Soviets.

Strangely enough, despite its profession of faith is the policy of peaceful co-existence and firm friendship with the USSR, the Chinese leadership hastened to disagree with the soviets on all matters of mutual interest immediately after the Twentieth congress of the CPSU. The role of Stalin, Polish riots, Titoist brand of socialism Peking came out with altogether different view on all these issues. Mao’s invention of the theories of “Paper Tiger”, “Big Leap Forward”, “Communes” and his erratic views on peaceful co-existence, transition to socialism, inevitability of war, his rejection of disarmament and adventure during the Taiwan crisis, his dissatisfaction with Moscow during the Middle Eastern crisis of 1958, disapproval of the “Camp David Spirit” and the proposed Paris summit all these are major instances which speak of China’s acute differences with the Soviet Union.

It is true that Peking endorsed the Moscow Declaration (of 22 November 1959), the Bucharest Communique (of 24 June 1960) and the Moscow Statement of the 81 Communist Parties of the world (as published in Moscow on 6 December 1960). But it is equally true that immediately after signing these documents, the leaders of China started
differently interpreting all these agreements. It is a well-known fact that in late fifties, the Chinese delegates had begun confronting their Soviet friends in international organizations like the world peace Council, the world Federation of Trade Unions and the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee.

By 1960, China started intruding into the Soviet territory and scrapping several technical as well as economic agreements with Moscow. On the eve of the Moscow Conference of fraternal parties held in November 1960, Peking required from the Soviets immediate revision of all the previously concluded protocols on scientific, technical and economic matters and it remarkably reduced the volume of trade with Moscow.

**Border War: Great Trial of Indo-Soviet Friendship**

From the above discussion of China’s attitude towards India and the USSR, it becomes clear that in view of its own sky-rocketing ambitions, peking had taken strong exception to Soviet friendship with India. As a result of Moscow’s propagation of the policy of peaceful co-existence, its approval of India’s policy of non-alignment and its championship of peace throughout the world, India was getting political support, economic assistance and military aid from the Soviets and her independent socio-economic development was getting added strength from them. New Delhi’s international status had shot up and last, but not the least, India had succeeded in obtaining huge credits from both the power blocs.

Peking’s insatiable aspirations and its aim of dominating the Third World were not being fulfilled, because, as the Chinese thought, India and the USSR were their chief rivals in this field. Nehru’s personal prestige and status in the non-aligned movement was an eyesore to the Chinese leadership, which had dreamt of carving out a place of pre-eminence in the developing countries. Moscow’s authority in the communist world was not allowing the spurious ideology of Mao Tse-tung to prevail.

Difference between Moscow and Peking, born of multiplicity of reasons, were undoubtedly reaching the point of no return for several other reasons. But in our view, it was the border war between India and China, which contributed to the crystallization of Sino-Soviet rift. The Chinese leadership thoughtfully picked up the border war with India with a view to completing the great split in the communist camp, a dangerous path it had chosen to tread since the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU.
China’s extremely subjective view of the world situation, coupled with her crude attitude towards both her northern and southern neighbours, the Soviet Union as well as India, goaded China to adopt the course of collision, which was ultimately accountable for Peking’s bid for the mastery of Asia and the monopoly of the communist bloc. The border conflict with India or with the USSR a little later was made by the Chinese leadership just a pretext for settling its scores with its rivals in New Delhi and Moscow. No wonder, why People’s China, which readily agreed to sign border treaties with all her neighbours, singled out only India and the USSR for inflicting blows. It is worth remembering here that of the five countries with whom China signed border agreements, Pakistan was ruled by Field Marshal Ayub Khan, Afghanistan by King Md. Zahir Shah, Burma by General Ne Win and Nepal by Maharaja Mahendra. Only Mongolia was a comrade-in-arms!

Soviet friendship with India was no doubt put to the most severe trial by the Chinese action on the northern border of India. Moscow knew that in case it tried to placate Peking beyond a certain point, India might feel constrained by intriguing circumstances of China’s making to abjure her faith in non-alignment and helplessly accept conversion to alliance with the West. Nehru’s devotion to the cause of non-aligned movement had inspired a large number of un-committed newly born nations to keep way from the West. Since one of the architects of this policy, and a co-author of India’s friendly ties with the Soviets, the Indian Prime Minister was being personally attacked by the Chinese, Moscow rightly considered the latter’s denunciation of Indo-Soviet friendship as an alarming affront to itself.
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