Indo-US Relations during
P.V. Narsimha Rao’s
Government
CHAPTER: 5


After the assassination of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi during the Tenth Lok Sabha elections (21 May 1991), Pamulaparti Venkata Narasimha Rao was then become the leadership of the Congrees as the party wanted an elderly, non controversial leader and finally P.V. Narasimha Rao was the most person fitted the post. After the elections with the Congress won, Rao was sworn in as the Ninth Prime Minister of India.

P.V. Narasimha Rao was the first Prime Minister outside the Nehru – Gandhi family to complete his full term in office. He was the first politician with a foreign policy background to become the head of the government i.e. he had been Foreign Minister and Home Minister. His political experience was integrate in that he was about both foreign policy and national security affairs because of the responsibility which he had nearly a decade before he become the Prime Minister of India.

During his five – year stint as Prime Minister, Rao, had received many admirers. This period marked a crucial phase in which the transformed undercurrents of international politics was getting crystallized and were making impact on the global situation. Rao’s foreign initiatives and decisions were much purposeful and significant.1

When Rao took office in June 1991, the national and international scenario was in a state of turbulence. There were a problem of Religious fundamentalism, confrontations on the issue of reservations and violence occurred in the country. Moreover, it was bound that the treasury was empty as the previous government had even pawned the nation’s gold with the Bank of England for servicing of an external loan. The disintegration of the Soviet Union also left India alone without a single friend. In such circumstance, leader required to demonstrate considerable dexterity

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on the domestic and international front. And if failure to do so, it could result in India’s permanent relegation to the status of a crippled giant.2

With the global scene undergoing head long changes in the post – Cold War era, foreign policy was naturally attracting greater attention than before. With the fast – paced, rapid- fire changes, startling shifts were taking place in traditional foreign policy stance all over the world. The Rao government too has sought to give a new orientation to foreign relations, keeping in view the harsh economic and other realities. Rao stated in the Lok Sabha; “the Government was ready to adopt itself to the bewildering pace of development at the global level and use foreign policy as a dynamic instrument for promoting national interest”.3

Hence, we can observe some far – reaching departures from traditional foreign policy postures. This lead India under Rao’s government scripted a new course in its relations to Washington and China even Israel.

Rao quickly grasped that the old posture of the foreign policy which has become obsolete. The Gulf War clearly established America’s dominance in world politics which Rao recognized the need to improve ties with the US. Rao held meetings with MEA officials and foreign policy experts for “serious introspection and a reassessment of our role in world affairs”.4

As a result of the above meeting India not only integrated its economy with the capitalist market economy but also seriously considered the Kickleigher proposals for military cooperation with USA, established diplomatic relations with Israel in early 1992 and even decided to go in for normal political, economic, technological and some defence cooperation with Israel.5 India also voted along with Western powers on the UN resolution criticizing Libya for not cooperating with investigating agencies into the terrorist bombing of two airlines in 1988.

During Rao’s period, there was also a change of government in Washington as George Bush was defeated in the November presidential election in 1992 and then

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3 K T R Menon “Major Change in Foreign Relations”, The Times of India, December 29, 1991
5 J.N. Dixit, p.1, p.218
Bill Clinton, a candidate from Democratic Party becomes the president of the United States. After Bill Clinton sworn in as president of the United States, there was belief in India that his administration would be friendlier to India.\textsuperscript{6}

The US foreign policy under Clinton administration was in search for a new direction in the international scenario of the Post – Cold War era i.e. from anti-communist to pro-democracy and from “bipolar world view to unipolar” and further “multipolaric” to polycentric perception. This was called a post-containment strategy of “Progressive Engagement”.\textsuperscript{7}

In his election campaign and the initial few months in office Clinton spoke of a foreign policy based on three pillars; restoring prosperity, modernizing the military and promoting democracy. This showed that his administration would maintain continuity in foreign policy, albeit the prime concern would be domestic and essentially economic as he vowed a focus on the US economy.

Clinton declared that “In this new era our first foreign priority and domestic priority are one and the same, reviving our economy... I will elevate economics in foreign policy, create an Economic Security Council... and change the State Department’s culture so that economics is no longer a poor cousin to old school diplomacy”.\textsuperscript{8}

The above declaration showed that economy constituted the basis for the Clinton Administration’s domestic as well as foreign policy. Externally, it envisaged an aggressive foreign economic policy aimed at opening market for American goods and creating more jobs for its citizens.

For the US foreign policy towards South Asian, under the Clinton Administration, for the first time established a separate Bureau for South Asia in the state Department and Robin Raphel was appointed as its head. John Mallot, the Deputy assistant Secretary of State has identified five pillars which would form the basis of the Unites States policy towards South Asia. These pillars were adherence

\textsuperscript{6} V.P. Dutt, \textit{India’s Foreign Policy in a Changing World}, (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 2003) p. 41
\textsuperscript{7} Gregory D. Foster, “America and the World: A security Agenda for the twenty first century”, \textit{Strategic Review}, Vol. XXI, No. 2, Spring 1993, p. 20
\textsuperscript{8} Span, May 1994
to democracy, economy, and cooperation in foreign policy, military cooperation and ensuring peace and cooperation in South Asia by reducing Indo-Pakistan tension.9

The economic reforms initiated by India in 1991 with several measures – devaluation, removal of licenses and controls, privatization, opening of manufacturing sector to foreign investment and invitation to MNCs to invest in India, and in the 1992 it followed this process and introduced more liberation in trade, industrial and commercial sphere. The liberalization of imports, decontrol, decontrol, decanalisation, partial convertibility of Rupee etc., were introduced. These initiatives of India received attracted and appreciation from the US administration and business. India appeared to the USA as a big consumer market for export of America goods and for flow of US expertise to India.

However, despite the above positive factors and the appreciation from the US, it was appeared that Washington’s primary interest in the area lies in maintaining peace and stability among a pair of the nuclear capable state; India and Pakistan. Thus, the focus of the US concern for South Asia was on crisis prevention. There was skepticism that in the name of preventive diplomacy, the US intends to meddle in the Kashmir issue. Selig Harrison wrote that “In pressing India and Pakistan to sign the NPT, the United States has presented its position in benign, altruistic terms, emphasizing its desire to help prevent a nuclear war in South Asia...this American emphasis on the nuclear danger in South Asia is viewed in India and Pakistan as at best patronizing and at worst racist.10

For a short span of time after the end of the Afghan War and the Cold War, it seemed that Pakistan was losing its importance to the United States. But the Clinton Administration again drifted towards Pakistan. For that the US amended its stringent nuclear non-proliferation law; Pressler Amendment and even denied Pakistan’s hand in trans-border terrorism. The reason that the US pro-Pakistan was simply due to its geo-strategic location as it was very significant to the US for the promotion of American interests in Central Asia and the Gulf – region to secure the Gulf oil and also to contain the aspirations of Iran as well as Russia and China.

9 “US lauds India’s performance”, Deccan Chronicle, June 23, 1993
Thus, this led the Clinton Administration to accord the same priority to Pakistan as before, and no matter it was the question of Kashmir, the issue of terrorism or human rights or proliferation of ballistic missile technology.

The visit of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to the United States in May 1994 changed the US attitude of arm-twisting to arm-holding towards India. During the visit Rao made many strategic and trade related concessions to the US and assured the US that India would not put hurdles in the way of NPT extension. Similarly India agreed to go slow on its missile programme. The US, in return, promised investment in India and recognized it as one of ten emerging big markets.

In January 1995, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and Defence Secretary William Perry visit New Delhi and the same year, Energy Secretary Hazel O Leary also visited India. First Lady Hillary Clinton visited India twice and President Clinton also promised to visit India. He agreed that the US had given insufficient attention to South Asia.

During Rao period, exchange of high-powered visits between India and the United States indicated that the relations between India and the US were at a changing point. During the visit of Rao to the US, Clinton said that Washington and New Delhi were cooperating in a number of areas including in the United Nations and peacekeeping operations in Somalia and Mozambique. They were also cooperated in the UN during the discussions on CTBT and capping of fissile material. Clinton hoped that areas of cooperation could be further depended through his meeting with Rao. The joint statement had outlined the areas of agreement as: democracy, respect for human rights, economic liberalization and global challenges posed by weapons of mass destruction, AIDS, environmental problem, population growth, terrorism and narcotics.

Referring to Clinton, Rao said as a post-Cold War President, he had a special role to play in the world on economic and political scene. He said his parleys with Clinton had been “constructive, useful and candid”. Jesse Helms, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said that the US no longer has the luxury of the Cold War days to ignore the world’s second most populous nation, which is not only a thriving democracy but also the home of an ancient civilization and culture. The
transformed scenario generated high hopes and optimism about the future Indo-US relations. However, this remained short-lived as some areas of differences remained larger than cooperation. The most serious one was that America’s renewed meddling in Kashmir and linking it with the question of human rights and the nuclear non-proliferation issue, the resumption of military supplies to Pakistan, the dispute over IPR, ecology, etc. Sumit Ganguly observed that Indo-US relations under the Clinton Administration had suffered enormously because of a number of careless, thoughtless and tactless statements and gestures by administration officials. 1

Despite the above negative factors, Rao's period witnessed an improvement in Indo-US relations. The economic factor played an important role in forging new ties of friendship. Divergent perspective and interests could not conceal the willingness on both sides to maintain a positive manner to their relationship.

**Economic Reforms; the ground for a major change in US perception of India**

Despite some political problems between India and the United States during Rao's period, Indo-US economic relations generally remained strong and stronger. The economic relationship with the US was an important imperative of India foreign policy. Even during the times when the political ties were rather brittle, the acrimony was moderated by the trade, aid and technology needs.

When Prime Minister Narasimha Rao assumed office the Indian economy was on the brink of disaster as there had been a general trend of economic deterioration all over the world and the Indian and American economics were included.

In the post-Cold War era, the economic factor has emerged as the most crucial element in the shaping of relations between nations – at bilateral, regional and global levels. The economic dimension of Indo-American relations generally seemed to be promising to the observers of both the countries. The new international forces like MNCs (multi-national companies) and new international institutions like WTO (World Trade Organization) were influencing the pattern of the relationship between India and USA. It was economic diplomacy, rather than the 1

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1 Abhay Vaidya, "US and Them", *The Times of India*, 13 March, 1994
conventional diplomacy related to the political and military interests, which has became the major instrument influencing indo-US relations.

With the domestic and international compulsions, India was forced to reframe its economic policy. Rao hinted in his address to nation as Prime Minister that a process of liberalization may wean the economy back to health. He said that there are no soft options left with government to manage the balance of payment crisis and to curb inflation but to open the doors for foreign investment.

At this critical juncture, PM Rao appointed Dr. Manmohan Singh, a renowned economist, as Finance Minister with a view to bring about an expert handling of the economy. Dr. Singh has suggested in his research as early as in 1964 that export pessimism which fuelled the import substitution idea was gross error.  

The government of India under Narasimha Rao adopted a new economic policy by liberalizing the economy and freeing it from the shackles of the License-permit Raj, and integrating it into the world market economy. While there was a debate on this change of policy, economic reforms gave a new lease of life to the sterile economy. Economic diplomacy found place of priority in Indian foreign policy. For the first time a special cell was established in the MEA to co-ordinate foreign policy with new economic policy. India’s policy shift coincided with a global paradigm shift, where economic factors acquired predominance. Looking to India’s potential as an emerging market, the global powers have been attracted toward India.

The Rao and Manmohan Singh team initiated comprehensive, multi-directional economic reforms that were not only aimed to face the immediate challenge of the stability of the balance of payments and foreign exchange crisis but with a long-term perspective to revitalize and restructure the economy, so that the ultimate goals of poverty alleviation and self-reliance could be attained.

Prime Minister Narasimha Rao said that “A bulk of government regulations and controls on economic activity has outlived their utility. Excessive controls have not only bred corruption, but they have come in the way of achieving our objectives

of expanding employment opportunities, reducing rural – urban disparities and ensuring greater social justice. India has much to learn from what is happening elsewhere in the world. We find major economic transformations sweeping large countries like the Soviet Union and China, as well as small countries in Eastern Europe. There is a change in outlook, a change in mindset everywhere. India too cannot lag behind if she has to survive as she must in the new environment”. The New Economic Policy (NEP) was a three dimensional policy of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG), with a view to ushering in an era of modernization, technology upgradation and rapid economic growth.

The process of liberalization was welcomed by Washington and it hoped to garner significant gains in terms of trade and investment opportunities. India’s need for US markets and capital and technology imports also registered a qualitative increase. If there were problems, these related to patents, IPRs (Intellectual Property Rights) and opening of the Indian market to foreign penetration. The US was pressuring India against a limited opening of Indian market. While proclaiming its intention to adhere to the new global arrangement, the World Trade Organization, the US still wanted to retain its domestic legislation, to enforce compliance on market access to the US. The previous US Trade Representatives (USTR). Mickkey Kantor told a Senate Commerce Committee that US Trade Law under Section 301 would not lose its edge because of the emergence of a new world trade body.14

He claimed, for instance, that the manner in which the phase – out of the multi-fibre agreement (MFA) was structured, that gave a breathing spell of ten years to the developing countries, would give the ample tools to ensure a smooth transition. “USA had fought hard”, he said, to open markets abroad for US textile and apparel products. He told the committee that Washington had refused to close on inadequate offers – notably those of India and Pakistan and was pressing for improved offers from these and other countries. It is important to note here that USA was India’s second largest export market for textiles in value-added terms – to the tune of $ 1 billion. But the US was also acutely aware of the emergence of a large middle class in Asia that would be the future market for US products.15

13 Competition Success Review. June 1994, p.43
14 V.P. Dutt, p. 6 , p. 56
The US was particularly interested in the sectors of power, finance and banking, telecommunication, insurance and consumer goods. India was responsive to the power and telecom sectors, but less enthusiastic about total freedom in the banking and insurance sectors and approved selectively investments in the core sectors of the economy.\footnote{V.P. Dutt, p. 6, p. 56}

One agreement in the power sector with a US company highlighted the needs and possibilities as well as the problems. As agreement was signed on 14 September 1994 with the Dhabol Power Company, promoted by American companies Enron, General Electric and Bechtel, under which the Government of India gave counter guarantees for the first phase of 695mw of a power project in Maharashtra that was to cost Rs 3,000 crores. The second phase was for 1,320 mw with an estimated cost of Rs 3,000 crores. This was the first time that the central government was giving any such guarantees for a state project. The scheme of counter – guarantees had been conceived by the central government to encourage international investors to invest in power sector which was facing a severe resource crunch at the state level, by the state electricity boards and by the country as a whole. The counter – guarantees could be activated if only Dhabol delivered the energy but both the Maharashtra State Electricity Board and the government of Maharashtra failed to pay for it.\footnote{Ibid., p. 57}

The effort on both sides to expand economic cooperation continued. These received a major boost with the signing of twenty – five MOUs worth nearly $ b1 billion on 21 December 1994 for developing renewable energy technologies in India. The signing of the MOUs was presided over by the US Secretary of Energy and the Indian Minister of State for non - conventional energy sources. The agreements were predicted by the US department of energy to have direct positive impacts on the US and Indian economies, increasing trade between the two countries, thus increasing job creation, and economic expansion.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 57-58}

The theme of many influential Americans and Indians, especially those who were somewhat removed from the perceived compulsions of security and strategic
thoughts was that political divided but economic would united. This was summed up by Jeffery Gerten, US Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade. Speaking at the Asia society in Washington in early 1995, he urged the two counties to “work together to exchange old antagonisms for new alliances”. He noted that within the next decades also India would become one of the World’s biggest and most important emerging markets and that the US would remain the world ‘s most important and mature market.19

During the visit of the then US Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown to New Delhi, he signed a MOUs with the then Commerce Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, setting up, initially for two years, the Indo-US Commercial Alliance, a super forum for bilateral consultations aimed at forging closer business to business links. Brown said that the alliance, to be co - chaired by the two countries commerce chefs and including broad - level participation from industry representatives, meant the creation of an institutional framework to enhance trade and investment flows between the two countries. He thought that India – US trade, which stood at $ 7.4 billion, would rise “exponentially”. The plenary session of the Alliance was attended by a large US business delegation and leaders of Indian Industry.

Coinciding with the creation of the Alliance was the singing of eleven business collaborations, six in power, four in telecommunication and one in the insurance sector – envisaging US investment of about $ 1.4 billion. Many of the collaborations, however, related to old projects.20

Though there has been a close relationship between India and America on the economic front ever since India’s independence, after liberalization of the economy by the Government of India in July 1991, an upward swing was clearly visible. Recognizing this, US Ambassador Frank G. Wisner while speaking in the seminar on Indo – US Trade and Economic Cooperation organized by the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade on August 30, 1995, said that “the relationship of Indo- US trade is profoundly different from any other period. This is s situation which is better than 1950s or 1960s, 1970s or 1980s”.21

19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
The US firms were looking at the above developments with keen interest because skilled and cheap labour was available in abundance in India and huge untapped resources, as well as a large market of 200 million middle class consumers, growing at the rate of ten percent annum. In search of new markets they were looking towards developing countries. Former Indian Ambassador to the US, Abid Hussian said “what interests Americans more than missiles is whether they can do business with us. With their closet allies becoming their toughest rivals, they need markets for their products”\textsuperscript{22}. The business community of both the countries showed a distinct desire for closer ties because of the similarity of their democratic political framework, with English as the language of communication. India’s economic liberalization programme was generally welcomed in the USA but however, India’s close relationship with the USSR remained a crucial factor standing in the way of expanding business relations.

In a major development of Indo – US relations regarding to economic aspect was that the Clinton administration on June 30, 1994 decided not to take action against India under the US trade law Special 301, preferring to enter into negotiation with New Delhi on tightening up its provisions dealing with IPRs. The US acknowledged India’s recent progress toward providing modern intellectual property protection by enacting important amendment to its copyrights law and by introducing trade mark legislation\textsuperscript{23}. This development was another sign of the improvement in Indo – US relations especially in the economic aspects.

**Defence Exchanges and Military Relations**

After the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan and its subsequent collapse resulted in the Pakistan’s role in furthering US strategic goals of containing the Soviet Union became less important. This shift in strategic need coupled with Pakistan's relentless pursuit of a nuclear capability caused the US to distance itself from Pakistan, which created an opportunity for India and the US to improve military relations as in December 1990, a sizeable American defence delegation, headed by Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security, Henry Rowen,

\textsuperscript{22} Abhay Vaidya “Indian an Economic Player for the US”, *The Sunday Times of India*, 22 May, 1995
visited its Indian counterparts. The following August, Indian Army Chief of Staff, General Sunil Francis Rodrigues, visited the US. In October of that year, US Admiral Charles Larson visited India in another effort to expand military cooperation. In January 1992, a fleet of naval officers from both the US and India established the groundwork for a long-term 'forces to forces' level relationship.

The above development showed the shift in the US position and the beginning of a different relationship between the two countries. This was explicited in a new direction of defence exchange between the two countries. This was kicked off by the 'Kickleighter Proposals' which formed the basis of a new dimension to Indo-US ties. This proposals advanced in 1991 by the then commander of the US Pacific Command, Admiral Kirkleiter, which specially included annual visits by chief of staff, setting up of an Indo-US army executive steering committee, holding strategy symposiums, staff talks between the two armies, training programmes for Indian officers in the US, observation of training exercise, participation in the Pacific Commands joint committee – level meeting programmes and information exchanges.24

Thus, the Kirkleiter Proposals served as the link providing for defence consultations and joint military exercise. The discussions moved India into an arena of military consultation with the US never experienced before. However, in spite of the blossoming relationship with the US, India renewed its treaty of peace and friendship with the former Soviet Union for another 20 years.25

In 1991, during this period of improved military cooperation, the Bush administration was unable to verify that Pakistan was not pursuing development of nuclear weapons in accordance with congressional mandate. Pursuant to the Pressler Amendment, the US was required to suspend all economic and military aid to Pakistan. This action immediately led to deterioration of the US – Pakistani relationship and inversely furthered US – Indian military relations.26

24 V.P. Dutt, p. 6, p. 34
26 Ibid., p. 165
There was also some hope among defence officials that these ties might help in the Americans using their good offices to restrain Pakistan from arming and training militants in Kashmir and Punjab. Even, India had made no request for large-scale arms purchase from USA, nor had the latter offered sale of any state-of-the-art military hardware.\footnote{V.P. Dutt, p. 6, p. 35}

Another important move for the defence ties was the visit at August 1991-end of the Indian Army Chief of Staff, General S.F. Rodrigues who had meetings with the Chairman of the US Joint Chief of Staff, General Colin Powell and Deputy Secretary of Defence at Pentagon, Donald Atwood. In these meetings, the discussion was for the matters of mutual security interests and areas of possible cooperation on security questions relating to South Asia and Indian Ocean region.

In January 1992, the defence exchanges had developed to the extent that the new Indian Defence Minister, Sharad Pawar confidently told the Press Trust of India (PTI) that the two countries were poised for "openness" in relationship between the armed forces and in the defence field. He said "we are moving towards opening our forces and defence activities to each other as well as having tie-ups in ambitious defence projects like the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) "he added "such cooperation could also be with a number of other countries".\footnote{Ibid.}

Pawar Sharad noted that the US had taken a "positive stand" on state sponsorship of terrorism by Pakistan and had urged India and Pakistan to settle the issue through bilateral negotiations. This is a reasonable and sensible stand and it would be only fair on our part to reciprocate and strive towards improving relations between the two countries in all fields".\footnote{Ibid.}

Pawar Sharad made this statement shortly before the first meeting of the Indo-US army steering committee, attended by a five-member American delegation headed by the US Army Commander for the Pacific, Lt. Gen. Johnic Corus, on 24 January 1992. The committee worked out modalities for exchange of officers on courses and observes for exercises and specialized training. Indian army observers had been invited to the US 25 Infantry Division exercise in Hawaii in June. The US

\footnotesize{\textit{\textsuperscript{27} V.P. Dutt, p. 6, p. 35}}
\footnotesize{\textit{\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.}}
\footnotesize{\textit{\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.}}
delegation expressed interest in high altitude training, firing and maintenance of weapon systems, specialized food and medicines and operational logistics there. India, in turn, was interested in “force – multipliers” – subsystems like night – firing capabilities that enhanced a weapon system. The growing links were further promoted by the simultaneous visit of the Pentagon’s Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Frank Kelso, resulting in the two countries agreeing to set up a similar joint steering committee for concretizing cooperation between the two navies.30

The military exchange was further discussed during the then Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit’s visit to Washington in March that marked the beginning of a serious dialogue on political issues. While the political issues would be discussed separately, Dixit revealed that the two sides were discussing the feasibility of holding joint naval exercises.

The defence exchange dimension was broadened with Sharad Pawar’s visit to USA a month later. Pawar appreciated the US stand endorsing the Simla Agreement as the best framework for a solution of the Kashmir issue. The Defence Minister asserted that the US Defence Secretary had shown sensitivity to India’s concerns and had told him that USA was not supporting Pakistan militarily in the same manner as before. The kind of facilities available to Pakistan earlier was no longer available. Pawar believed that the Indo – US defence cooperation had started well.31

In 1992, however, improved relations between India and the US stalled. The obstacle was India’s refusal to abide by various arms control agreements. In May, India and Russia agreed to collaborate on the Indian Agni missile programme to develop ballistic and rocket technologies. The agreement jolted American confidence in India’s devotion to arms control. In response, the US threatened to suspend military and technology transfer programmes to both India and Russia entirely and temporarily imposed a two – year ban on sensitive technology exports to both.32 Given India’s dependence on Russia for the up keen of its largely Russian – made military arsenal, it should not have been surprising that India gave Indo – Russian cooperation priority.

30 Ibid., pp 35-36.
31 Ibid.
The change of presidential administrations in the US brought with yet another downturn in the US – Indian relationship. Upon his assuming office, the Clinton administration made a number of statements that supported the Pakistani position on a number of South Asian issues, particularly Kashmir. India felt uncertain and somewhat betrayed by the US.\(^3\)

As tension increased, both the countries made an effort to re-establish communication. The US conducted a 'flurry' of diplomatic contacts, to which India responded with a visit by PM Narasimha Rao in May 1994. As part of its effort, India rescinded its announced intention to mass-produce its Agni and Prithvi missiles, instead using these items as bargaining chips in obtaining concessions in its dealing with the US.\(^4\) However, India began preparing its nuclear test site in the Rajasthan desert. Then US and other nations' pressure on India persuaded its leaders to abandon a scheduled nuclear test.

Thus, it can be concluded that the political relations has casted its shadow on defence ties. The kind of defence cooperation that some people expected could not be achieved because the political relations deteriorated after the Clinton administration was George Bush and it tilt towards Pakistan soured political relations.

**Agreed Minute on Defence Cooperation**

During the Rao – Clinton Administration, Indo – US defence cooperation got another major boost with the US Defence Secretary William Perry’s visit to India in January 1995. Before the visit took place, a major Indo – US Naval exercise, the second in two years, took place off the coast of Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, in mid – September 1994. This was believed to have been a marine commando – training exercise and lasted for ten days.\(^5\)

During his short visit to India Perry did not discuss controversial issues but sought a basis for defence cooperation by meeting three – tier contact groups – the

\(^5\) *The Times of India*, 19 September, 1994.
military, civilian official and defence research establishments. In this visit the two sides signed an Agreed Minute on Defence Cooperation. The Agreed Minute envisaged closer ties between the uniformed services and in the field of defence production and research. The civilian-to-civilian group would provide overall guidance to the other two elements through periodic consultations between senior civilian officials of the defence ministers of the two countries and also other agencies from the two sides. It was hoped that it would provide opportunities for review of issues of joint concern such as post-cold war security planning and policy perspectives, besides guidance to the joint technical group for cooperation in defence production.\(^{36}\)

After signing the agreement Perry said, “This begins the process for deepening and strengthening the security relations between India and the United States of America. I call this significant and really historic because we have been for more than four decades without that kind of security relationship. The US and India are both great powers. It is entirely appropriate that we have normal, constructive and positive security relationships. Signing this agreement is the first important step towards achieving that objective”.\(^{37}\) While hailing the “Agreed Minute”, Perry, however, made it clear in his address at a press conference that a deepened security relationship with India would not mean tilting away from Pakistan or from the principle of a balanced US approach towards the two countries. He also ruled out joint technology development and arms transfer to India in the immediate future.\(^ {38}\)

At a dinner hosted by the Indian Ambassador in Washington, Perry claimed that the reason for the coolness in Indo-US relations had gone away as a result of his visit and that the time had come for turning a new leaf.\(^{39}\)

The ‘Agreement Minute’, as provided for closer relationships on technology and defence policies, however, has not much progress on the technology transfer issue. American strategic analyst George K. Tanham in his paper “India’s strategic concerns the 1990s” said that suspicions and distrust still exist on both sides,

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36 V.P Dutt., n. 6, p. 51
38 V.P. Dutt, n.6 , p. 51
39 Ibid.
although there is a desire on both sides to broaden and improve the relationship. India’s successful nuclear explosion in 1974 and its indigenous space and missile programme combined with its non-participation in a control regime blocked its prospects for hi-tech transfer from the USA.

However, while there was an increasing realization of the need to forge better relations, India’s progress in the technical field was seem to remain an irritant in forging closer ties.

**Kashmir and Indo – US Relations**

From 1989, the onset of a political insurgency and the rise of a secessionist movement in the Kashmir valley have made the situation very explosive. This was due to increasing militancy and continuous interference from across the border. The Indian objectives were two-fold; to counter the border crossing of Pakistan *jihad* militants into Kashmir and Punjab, and to respond to Pakistan’s enhanced military presence along the international border and the Line of Control. It was also reported that Pakistan had its nuclear arsenal on alert. The US responded to this military exercise with great concern and felt that Pakistan’s involvement in the secessionist movement in Kashmir had the real potential to escalate into a nuclear conflict in the sub-continent.

The US defence planners while analyzing the possible threat to world peace in the post–Cold War era came to the conclusion (in early 1990) that India, a fearsome hegemony and Pakistan, beleaguered friend of US were the ‘possible threat’ to world peace.

With regard to the US attitude to the Kashmir issue, the Bush administration reasserted its stance on the Simla Agreement as the only framework for the resolution of Indo–Pak differences.

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41 Bajpai, Kanti, P.R. Chari, Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, Stephen P. Cohen and Sumit Ganduly, Brasstacks and Beyond – Perception and Management of Crisis in South Asia, (New Delhi: Manohar, 1995,) p. 11
In a written statement to the congressional hearings on South Asia on 6 March 1990, John Kelly, US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, made the administration's position clear. He wrote “the United States thinks that the best framework for a resolution of this dispute can be found in the 1972 Simla Agreement, in which both India and Pakistan agreed to resolve their dispute over Kashmir peacefully and in bilateral channels, without prejudice to their positions on the status of Kashmir.”

In July 1991, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of state, Teresta Shaffer expressed concern over reported Islamabad support to terrorism in Kashmir. “Reports of support for Kashmiri militant continue. We would find any such activity dangerous and destabilizing”. The official amplified that this is something we have discussed with the Pakistan before, that if this kind of things were happening, it is something we would consider to be very dangerous and destabilizing.

The official also made it clear that Washington regarded it “impracticable” to keep harping on the UN resolutions of the forties that referred not only a plebiscite but also to a host of others things that did not take place.

When the US administration conveyed it to the then External Affairs Minister, Madhavsinh Solanki, in Washington that USA favoured the resolution of the Kashmir issue bilaterally between India and Pakistan in accordance with the Simla Agreement, the above view was taken further to a more logical standpoint. The view was confirmed by the US Under Secretary of State for International Security Affairs, Reginald Bartholomew, during his visit to India in November 1991. He was reported to have conveyed to Solanki that Washington had asked Pakistan not to be tempted to provide “aid and sustenance to militants” in Punjab and Kashmir. Washington appreciated that the abetment of terrorism would have a major impact on the Security of the region. Simla Agreement was also suggested by him in order to solve the problem bilaterally between India and Pakistan.

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44 V.P. Dutt, p.6, p.32
Regarding to the issue of human rights, the US Secretary of State reiterated the American position that India should allow Amnesty International to come in as it would raise India’s moral stature, while India’s standpoint was that such visits often only complicated issues further.\(^46\) (India, however, conceded this demand subsequently).

The US official was more forthcoming on the external support to militancy in Kashmir. He had cautioned Pakistan, he said, of the dangers of such actions, but he also advised India against over-reaction. Solanki told a local T.V. centre in New York that the US was no longer urging for a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir and favoured India and Pakistan resolving the issue in accordance with the Simla Agreement.\(^47\)

As the US strategic position changed with the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the subsequent collapse of Pakistan’s status as a front-line state, the United States also changed its stance from its earlier all-out support to Pakistan. The Bush administration decided not to blink at Pakistan’s nuclear weapons capability and at its interference in the Kashmir situation. The State Department spokeswoman, Margaret Tutwiler announced on 29 January 1991 that no US aid would go to Pakistan as “under the Pressler Amendment, Pakistan is not eligible to receive assistance unless the President certifies to Congress that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear explosive device”.\(^48\)

Pakistan was also warned by Baker that Bush administration would be forced to brand it a “terrorist state” unless it ceased its support to the Kashmiri militants. Senior administration sources revealed that Baker had conveyed this warning to Pakistan’s Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in May 1992 through a letter delivered by the US Ambassador to Islamabad, Nicholas Platt. The sources believed that Baker’s letter was prompted by the briefing provided by his point’s man for terrorism, Ambassador Peter Burleigh who had visited both Islamabad and New Delhi in April 1992. Burleigh had been provided by India with a plethora of evidence of Pakistan

\(^{46}\) V.P. Dutt, p.6 , p.33
\(^{47}\) Ibid.
\(^{48}\) The Observer, 30 January 1991
complicity in Kashmiri militancy in the Valley but he also verified this from independent sources in Pakistan.\textsuperscript{49}

**Clinton Administration and Pakistan links the Kashmir issue to the problem of violation of human rights and terrorism.**

With the change of Government in the US in November 1991, the US policy towards Kashmir issue was also changed, which resulted in Indo–US political relations once again soured because of Washington’s tilt towards Pakistan. The Clinton administration had embarked upon a considerably different track than the Bush administration did in the last two or three years of its tenure became evident from the successive statements that came from the officials of the new administration.

On May 18, 1993, John Malott, Acting Director of the Bureau of South Asia said at the India International Centre (New Delhi) that there were three basic principles governing the US policy towards Kashmir. First, the US considers Kashmir to be a disputed territory. Second, the dispute should be settled peacefully between India and Pakistan and third, the US is prepared to ‘push, prod, cajole’ and encourage both countries to move beyond rhetoric to détente. “Any solution to the Kashmir problem must take into account the view of the Kashmiri people themselves.”\textsuperscript{50}

The above three principles carried a new implication, which it might have been the position of the US all along that the Kashmir was a disputed territory. Malott followed up with a warning that India’s “human rights problem had potential to affect the overall Indo–US relations” and told the Voice of America that he had come to India to deliver a message. Obviously the message was about resolving the Kashmir problem, nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia and human rights.\textsuperscript{51}

Actually the US espousal of human rights and non-proliferation were the other reasons for the Clinton administration’s renewed interest in Kashmir. In order

\textsuperscript{49} V.P. Dutt, p. 6, p. 34
\textsuperscript{51} V.P. Dutt, p. 6, p. 42
to wrench Kashmir away from India, Pakistan has been waging a proxy war against India by sponsoring fundamentalist terrorism and subversive activities. In fighting terrorism, Indian Security forces have been accused of violation of human rights. President Clinton while accepting the credentials of Pakistan Ambassador Ms Maleeha Lodhi said “we share Pakistan’s concern about human rights violation in Kashmir”.

The Clinton administration has identified Kashmir as one of the world’s most dangerous flashpoint because of fears that the conflict could trigger a nuclear war between India and Pakistan. The US Secretary of Defence, in his speech at the Washington – based Foreign Policy Association stated; “I’d start off by observing that India and Pakistan have long – standing ethnic, religious and territorial differences dating back to their partition in 1947. These differences have caused them to fight three wars since independence. Today each of them now has the capability to build nuclear weapons. Because of this nuclear capability, a fourth India – Pakistan war would not just be a tragedy, it could be a catastrophe, so we care a lot about what happens there”.  

President Clinton while addressing the UN General Assembly on September 27, 1993 said “Bloody, ethnic, religious and civil wars rage from Angola to the Caucasus to Kashmir”. Equating the situation in Kashmir with the civil war in Angola and Caucasus was not merely for “onomatopoeic reasons” as the then Ambassador designate to India Stephen Solarz tried to convince India but it was an indicator of the US involvement in the Kashmir dispute. Robin Raphel, Head of the South Asia Bureau at the state Department, while replying to a question on why president Clinton in his UN speech had mentioned Kashmir, she said, “It was meant to say we see Kashmir on the radar screen along with Yugoslavia and Somalia and lots of other places in the former Soviet Union, Georgia, where there is a civil conflict going on. We can’t easily overlook it and there is a message in that”.  

On October 29, 1993 Robin Raphel had questioned the validity of the instrument of Accession by which Kashmir become a part of India. She said, “we do

not recognize the Instrument of Accession as meaning that Kashmir is forever an
integral part of India...We view the whole of Kashmir is disputed territory, the
status of which needs to be resolved".54 She also dismissed the Simla agreement as
no longer an effective instrument for resolving the Kashmir dispute by saying that “
it was 20 plus year old and there have been few discussions, if any, under that
accord in terms of resolving the Kashmir issue... it has not been very effective”. It
was believed that Raphel’s comment came under the influence of some published
books like Alastair Lamb’s “Kashmir: A dispute legacy”, which aver that Kashmir’s
accession to India was “through fraud and deceit”.55

The Government of India, press and opposition parties sharply reacted to her
statement. The Indian elite apprehended that this undiplomatic and insensitive
statement by the US Assistant secretary of States might encourage the secessionist
and disruptive elements in Kashmir. J.N. Dixit, former foreign Secretary of India
viewed it as “a prescription for the disintegration of Indian Union.56

Raphel’s statement was perceived in India as a shift from the Bush
Administration’s Kashmir policy and a drift towards a dangerous course. Regarding
to the statement made by Raphel, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao said that “the
statements by officials like Robin Raphel did not help the promotion of Indo – US
relations”.57

The strongest response to Raphel and other US statements came from the
Home Minister, S.B. Chavan who charged the US in the Lok Sabha on March 2,
1994 with developing “vested interests” in Jammu and Kashmir. He told a cheering
house “it seems clear to me that they are... neither interested in helping Pakistan nor
India. They will like to help themselves.” Referring to President Clinton’s remarks
on Kashmir at the time of the presentation of credentials by the Pakistani
Ambassador, Chavan said, “I am not prepared to believe that the US President was
not properly briefed”.58

54 Ibid.
19 April 1994.
57 V.P. Dutt, n. 6, p. 44
58 Cited in ibid., p. 45
However, soon after Raphel’s statement, Mike McCurry, the official spokesman of the US state Department went on record to say; “the US respects the territorial integrity of India”. Peter Tarnoff, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs wrote a letter to the Indian Ambassador S.S. Ray clarifying the US stand that the US did not regard the Instrument of Accession as disputed but that the “parties to the disputes on Jammu and Kashmir” differ in their interpretation “about the accession and other resolutions and accords. The letter also stated that negotiations between India and Pakistan under the Simla Agreement provided “the best means for resolving their dispute over Kashmir”.

In an attempt to clear up the misunderstanding, Robin Raphel visited New Delhi in March. She said that she had come to clear up the “misunderstanding”. This time she did not question the validity of Kashmir’s accession to India and also did not discard the Simla Agreement. But her earlier stand that “Kashmir is a disputed territory” and to take into consideration the will of the people of Kashmir remained unchanged, she said “we believe that Kashmir is a disputed territory. We believe that India and Pakistan need to get together to resolve this. We also believe that as a practical matter the people of Kashmir have got to agree and accept whatever final resolution is arrived at, or else it will not be stable. We finally also believe that the history of this area is not necessarily a key to its stable future. It is a tortured history on which there are many contradictory documents and so on. But our view is that India and Pakistan should sit down in 1994 and sort out a practicable solution to this dispute”.

Nevertheless, she told the Congressional Asia and Pacific sub-committee that as a consequence of American pressure “that tap” – Pakistan’s assistance to militants in Kashmir had been virtually turned off.

During her visit, she made few concessions on her earlier statements but was more careful and sophisticated in the articulation of the new American stance on South Asia. There was only one area in which there was a noticeable shift from her

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61 V.P. Dutt, n.6, p. 46
earlier comment. She was now a votary of the Simla Agreement and called for progress in resolving the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the Simla Agreement and taking into account the wishes of the people of Kashmir.62

In her effort to playdown her controversial remarks regarding Kashmir’s accession, she added that American focus “is not on how it started but on how it can be ended”.63

Raphel ‘s visit was marked by her professional diplomat like behaviour, conciliatory approach, carefully worded statements and well – briefed answers to embarrassing questions. Officials of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs were not expecting her visit to be “a great beginning” or reading too much into her tone. They also did not expect significant improvement in the downward slide in Indo – US relations triggered off by Raphel herself. Raphel’s visit, meant to clear the air and pave the way for Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott’s visit to India in early April ( 1994), which may have achieved some of that. But the bottom line remains that there could still be troubled times ahead,”64 For this, Kashmir along with nuclear non – proliferation issue, human rights violation and the sale of F-16 fighter air – craft to Pakistan were remained a crucial area in the course of Indo – US relations, especially considering President Clinton’s emphasis on human rights.

Thus, the visit of Raphel and her statement helped to de – escalate tension and the misunderstanding between India and the United States.

In May 14 – 19, 1994 when Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visited the United States. He tried to de – emphasis the Kashmir issue as in his address to the joint session of the US Congress he effectively argued against Washington’s flirtations with the secessionists in Kashmir. While he made no direct reference to Kashmir, he quoted from the inaugural speech of President Abraham Lincoln to say that “no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination”,65 and by referring to the incorporation of Texas. He quoted the US Supreme Court on the incorporation of Texas being complete and final and that when Texas became

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62 The Times of India. March 25, 1994
64 Ibid.
65 Cited in ibid., p. 89.
one of the United States, “it entered into an indissoluble relation.” The Indian position on Kashmir too is that juridically, constitutionally and on any perception based in law, Kashmir is an inalienable part of India. The Prime Minister concluded that India accept the US Supreme Court statement “as truly characteristic of a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious republic like India or the United States as totally unassailable”. 

An important result of the joint statement, which came after Rao–Clinton summit talks was that the two leaders agreed on the need for bilateral negotiations between India and Pakistan to resolve outstanding issues including Jammu and Kashmir as envisaged in the Simla Agreement. This was indeed for the first time that the US President himself has categorically stated “the US stands on Kashmir, which calls for a solution under the Simla Agreement. The reiteration in the statement of the need to abide by the Simla Agreement to resolve Indo–Pakistan differences was a remarkable achievement. It implied that any attempt by Islamabad to raise the issue at international forums will not receive much American Support as Clinton put it, the “ultimate answer is for the two great notions to get together and resolve it”.

During the visit, Narasimha Rao also reaffirmed India’s commitment to the protection of human rights but, equally, the protection of the citizen from terrorism. It was an onerous task that confronted democratic governments to maintain protection of human rights in face of the most dangerous threat to the violation of human rights, namely, the bullets of terrorism”.

Two months after the visit a clear enunciation of the US policy on Kashmir came in a letter written by President Clinton to Prakash – an active NRI group in California. The letter clearly indicated that the US policy towards the Kashmir issue has come a long way since the controversial statement by Ms Robin Raphel questioning the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India. The letter reflected the new thinking in the Administration on Kashmir.

66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
68 V.P. Dutt, n.6, p. 50
The gains for India were that the President has made the following observations;

Firstly, by stating that India and Pakistan should engage in “practical and good faith dialogue”, he has in a way accepted Simla Agreement as the final document missing from this statement is the oft - repeated “taking the wishes of Kashmiri people into consideration.”

Secondly, by urging India to “find ways to bring leaders back to the political process”, he has accepted Kashmir to be an integral part of India, political process has to be within the framework of the Indian constitution which believes Jammu and Kashmir to be part of India.

However, Clinton seemed interested in not blaming Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism against India in Kashmir when the State Department’s own reports indicated of Islamabad’s involvement and ISI’s direct hand. Passing the buck on “Private parties” for training and aiming mercenaries will not do. This irritant was thus likely to persist in Indo – US relations. At the same time Clinton admitted that Washington would have to monitor and deal with it accordingly. This meant Pakistan remained under some pressure on this count.69

The issue of violation of human rights in Kashmir

From the early 1990s, the issue of human rights violations in Kashmir Valley has emerged as one of the important areas in Indo – US Relations. This was due to the fact that a separate bureau of human rights, headed by Edward Shattuck, has been established in the US State Department, showed the significance of this issue in American foreign policy.

There was a general believes in India that Pakistan game plan to grab Kashmir was two fold – infiltration of terrorism and internationalizing the Kashmir issue. India also believed that in the effort to internationalize the Kashmir issue, the Pakistan propaganda machine has moved quickly to project Kashmir as an explosive issue.

69 Vinay Kumar Malhotra, n. 63, pp. 90-91
While on the visit to South Asian and Indian in May 1993 of the then Head of the South Asia bureau of the Department of State, John R. Malott, he asked India to take steps to curb the abuses of human rights by its security forces and give access to human rights groups there.\(^{70}\)

Moreover, while a section of American Congressmen were genuinely concerned with the abuses of human rights in any part of the world, including India, some of them such as John Burton (Republican Indiana) and Wally Herger (Republican California), find this issue useful in their usual task of India bashing. For instance, John Burton renewed his attempt to impale this country on human rights issue through an amendment motion seeking to end US assistance unless New Delhi scrapped five preventive laws. Though this move in the House of Representative was to give India a bad name and hang its head in shame met with its fully deserved fate of clear defeat, yet this highlighted the tilted vision of such Congressmen.\(^ {71}\)

Besides this, President Clinton, in his UN speech in September 1993, compared the situation in Kashmir with the event of Bosnia and allegedly implied that Muslims in Kashmir were killed by the Hindu dominated Indian state in the same manner as they were butchered by the Serbs in Bosnia. The President followed this by writing letters to leaders of US based extremist organizations related to Kashmir and Punjab as also to several Congressmen on the alleged Indian abuses of human rights in Kashmir and Punjab. Many Indian depicted these as a basic shift in US policy in South Asia that had as its objective the destabilization of India, allegedly in cooperation with Pakistan’s ISI, as the Indian Express of January 25, 1994 termed it “the key nerve center of specialists in political destabilization in the Third world.”\(^ {72}\)

The Clinton had also sent a similar letter to a Kashmiri Hindu (Pandit) organization in the US a few months earlier sympathizing with the plight of the Pandit community in the Valley. In his letter on Punjab too, he took pains to favourably note the substantial improvement in the political situation there,


\(^{71}\) Ibid., p. 98

\(^{72}\) Ibid.
presumably in an effort to educate the Congressmen who had written him on this matter.73

New Delhi has resented such intrusive diplomacy sharply and charged Clinton Administration with following a “sanctimonious diplomacy”.74 New Delhi was advised to further strengthen its newly established National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). Considering that the insurgents sometimes deliberately provoke the forces to unleash an attack in crowded areas. But the NHRC should be able to ensure that instance of rape and molestation does not go unpunished.

In recognition of the need for a greater transparency, the Indian Government has thrown open the Valley to foreign diplomats. Three groups of Delhi based envoys have visited Jammu and Kashmir in pursuance of the government’s new zeal to promote transparency in the state. In February, the European troika comprising envoys of Belgium, Greece and Germany visited the Valley and followed in March by their counterparts from Senegal, Nigeria, Bulgaria, Mexico, Venezuela, Columbia, Turkey, Indonesia, Canada and Hungary. In the end of April, the third group of Ambassadors from Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Argentina and Oman visited the Valley and Jammu region.75

It was also believed that to internationalize the Kashmir issue, Pakistan introduced a draft resolution before the 53 members UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva highlighting human rights violations by Indian security forces in Kashmir and their right to self – determination. Despite its extensive propaganda, much to the embarrassment of Islamabad when it had to withdraw its resolution at the last moment because it failed to find a co – sponsor. It was a triumph of Indian diplomacy.76 It was the US that did not make any reference to human rights violation in Kashmir. It was Iran and China that pressurized Pakistan to withdraw its resolution.

During his visit to the US, Prime Minister Rao invited the Congressmen to visit India to see things themselves rather than rely on the propaganda of the US

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73 Ibid., p. 99.
74 Swapna Das Gupta, “Clinton’s Sanctimonious Diplomacy”, World Press Review, June 1994
75 Nalini K. Jha, n. 70, pp.99-100
76 Shekhar Gupta, “triumph of diplomacy”, India Today, 31 March 1994

205
based extremists. He stated at the joint session of the US Congress on May 18, 1994 that “the task that confronts democratic Government today is to maintain protection of human rights in the face of the most dangerous threat to the violation of human rights, namely, the bullets of terrorists, India is committed to protect its citizens from terrorism and no government worth its name can shirk this responsibility. We are taking scrupulous care to protect the rights of individuals under due process of law and punish human rights violations whenever they occur”.

**Issue of three options; Plebiscite, Self – determination and Independence**

In the 1990s, even the plebiscite option became irrelevant but Pakistan’s stand on it remained the same. The US, however, no longer supports Pakistan’s demand for plebiscite. It is important to note here the report of Gary Ackerman in the sub – Committee of the House of Representative on Asia and Pacific, in this regard. The report rejected the plebiscite option as “overtaken by history” and therefore irrelevant to the present circumstances as plebiscite did not provide Kashmiris with a choice other than accession to India or Pakistan. The US now started insisting on ascertaining what the Kashmiri people want.

This meant that the US wants some other modus operandi to ascertain their wishes, probably plebiscite with the option of Independence from India and Pakistan or the right of self – determination. But as Justice A.S. Anand said, “self-determination is a one time act – the people of the state through their elected representatives in the Constituent Assembly of the state took a final decision and therefore the question of any further self – determination or plebiscite does not arise either legally or morally”.

Regarding to the plebiscite, Benazir Bhutto herself has admitted that Pakistan could lose a plebiscite if the option of “Independence” was given to the people of Kashmir. She said in an interview to the New York Times as reported by Times of

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77 Nalini K. Jha, p. 70, p. 101
79 The Times of India, 10 January 1997.
India on May 17, 1994 that “Pakistan would not agree to an independence Kashmir” and “self - determination does not mean independence for the Kashmiri”.  

India has always rejected the options of plebiscite, self - determination and the independence of Kashmir just as the US refused to permit its Southern states to secede from the Union over 130 years ago. The USA’s repeated concern for the wishes of the Kashmir people appeared to be a euphemism for secession of Kashmir from India. Some political observers were of the opinion that USA tried to get a foothold in Jammu and Kashmir was an evil design in order to used its strategic position against China in future.

In its stand on Kashmir, India has made it clear that it is an integral part of India and under no conditions will its secession, whether by accession to Pakistan or by Independence, be tolerated.

Hurriyat leaders also failed to convince US Congress delegation led by Gary Ackerman who made their intentions clear that the US was keen on restoring democracy and ending violence to solve the Kashmir tangle.

The Rao Government initiated the political progress and assured the people of Jammu and Kashmir that by the end of 1995 they would have their own elected government. In a gesture of goodwill, rebel leaders were released from jails. The US appreciated this move of the Indian government. Even elections could not take place during Rao regime, but he has received much appreciation for initiating the plan for making election process.

**Sikh Rights**

During Narasimha Rao, Indo – US relations was also soured due to the question of the rights of Sikhs which emerged by the end of 1993. Till 1993 the US had opposed the idea of so - called Khalistan, it undoubtedly considered Punjab as an integral part of India. A senior State Department official had stated that there was

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80 Ibid., 17 May 1994
81 Stephen Solarz, “US should be aware of Kashmir Realities”, Indian Express, 8 November 1994.
no justification for the demand of plebiscite in Punjab “you have had election there with a rather large voter turnout. Punjab is not a disputed territory”.82

But, when the issue of human rights violations in Kashmir arose, the US issued several negative statements with respect to Punjab as well.

The most significant were Clinton’s letter to a pro – Khalistan organization and another one to Congressman, Gary Condit. India rejected Clinton’s statement which called for a solution in Punjab “that protects Sikh rights”. The Minister of External Affairs pointed out in a strong statement that “a solution has indeed been attained in Punjab by democratic means, where the rights of all Indians, including Sikhs, are protected under the law, regardless of religion”.83

The Punjab Chief Minister described the US stand as “misguided” and “politically motivated”. He said that “contrary to the feeling the Sikhs were occupying high offices and are also unanimous in their rejection of terrorism. During his meeting with Robin Raphel, Siddharath S Ray conveyed India’s “deep concern” over the letter, written by Clinton. Raphel, however, took the stand that the statement had been misinterpreted in India and that the phrase “Sikh rights” had been interpreted as “independence or freedom” for Sikhs, while it had only meant that Sikhs should have the same rights as every one else. The State Department clarified that the US still upheld its previous policy with respect to Punjab and it was not advocating separatism.84

Main areas of friction in Indo –US relations during PM Narasimha Rao’ period

During the period of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, there were three main areas of friction which were considered as the most important factors in Indo – US relations i.e. Pakistan factor, nuclear proliferation and the Indian Ocean.

Even, no big issue cause direct confrontation between India and the US, India’s proximity to the USA’s adversary and vise – versa caused tension in Indo – US relations. The divergence in perception and strategy also provided grounds for

82 Manuka Khanna, p. 59, p. 59.
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid., pp. 59-60.
the conflict. This was perhaps due to the US global strategic concerns clashed with India’s regional security interests.

**Pakistan: a factor in Indo – US strategic Relations.**

From India’s point of view, Pakistan factor had always remained as a main irritant affecting in Indo – US relations, especially in developing Indo – US defence ties.

With the aid and assistance of the United States, Pakistan had strengthened its military capabilities from conventional weaponry to nuclear capabilities. But when the intelligence reports regarding Pakistan’s clandestine nuclear weapon activities that led to passage of the Pressler Amendment in August 1985 (as part of the American Foreign Assistance Act of 1961), this amendment was aimed at facilitating US military and economic assistance to Pakistan by waiving the restrictions imposed by the Symington Amendment. The Pressler Amendment which was for Pakistan specifically stated that “no assistance shall be furnished to Pakistan and no military equipment or technology shall be sold or transferred to Pakistan, pursuant to the authorities contained in this act, unless the President shall have certified in writing to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, during the fiscal year in which assistance is to be furnished or military equipment or technology is to be sold or transferred, that Pakistan does not posses a nuclear explosive device…”.\(^{85}\)

Therefore, when the Pressler Amendment was instituted it was, in fact, “an instrumentality to facilitate the continuing supply of arms through the mechanism of President Certification.\(^{86}\)

During Afghan crisis US President – Reagan and Bush had certified the nuclear non weapon status of Pakistan. But in the late 1990, when President Bush failed to certify that Pakistan did not” possess a nuclear explosive device”, was American military and economic aid to Pakistan suspended under the Pressler Amendment.


India had viewed the suspension of aid to Pakistan at this time with great relief as India’s interest was the termination of US military supplies to Pakistan under its provisions would curb the arms race and reduce tension in the region.

However, after sometime, a fresh suspicion arose in India, when American began to feel that suspension of all military and economic aid to Pakistan was unfair. In October 1993, it was also believed that the US administration persuaded Ms. Bhutto (during her second term) to roll back Pakistan’s nuclear programme to get off from the Pressler Amendment and reopening US military assistance to Pakistan again.

The State Department submitted a proposal to the Congress saying that the 1985 Pressler Amendment should be replaced by an all encompassing broad law which would not be country-specific, but would bar aid to non-nuclear weapon states that are enriching or reprocessing fissile materials for nuclear weapons development. The Bill would provide the president the prerogative to exempt Pakistan or any other nation from a total aid cut-off, if it was in the national interest.87

India viewed these moves of the Clinton Administration with grave suspicion for it would open the way for assistance to Pakistan and end the aid to India. The Minister State for External Affairs, Salmon Khursheed, told a group of visiting Senators that repealing the Pressler Amendment would legitimize Pakistan’s weapons programme and result in the delivery of F-16 aircraft. It would destabilize the South Asian region and India would be forced to reassess its own defence policies in this light.88

In order to dilute the Pressler Amendment, the internal factor was considered as the major factor in doing so, as it was pressure from arms industries of the USA and for the US economy. The US arms companies, the world’s biggest suppliers of arms, were in the grip of a severe recession.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) the value of deliveries of major conventional weapons by the US declined from $11.6  

87 Manuka Khanna, n. 59, p. 60.
88 Ibid.
billion in 1991 to $8.4 billion in 1992\textsuperscript{89} and due to military budget cuts, more than 100,000 engineers in the US lost their jobs in 1991-92.\textsuperscript{90} This was because of Pressler Amendment and it was the reason that the US moves to dilute the Pressler Amendment.

Apart from this, the geo-strategic location of Pakistan also made it important to the United States as many of its challengers like China, Russia, India or the extremist Muslim world, were all geographically situated near Pakistan. The United States viewed Pakistan as “moderate” Muslim country, facing a financial problem and tried to protect its democratic government from internal and external elements. The United States was of the view that Pakistan could help it in reducing its dependency on Gulf oil.\textsuperscript{91}

The above reasons made the Clinton Administration took an avuncular interest in Pakistan and view it as a benefit friend in safeguarding the US interest in the year to come. Thus, it was the reason that from the early 1992, the US was willing to restore military and economic assistance to Pakistan without compromising its non-proliferation principle. Moreover, according to US State Department, the commercial sale of selected military equipment was not against the Pressler Amendment. Therefore, the Clinton Administration resumed military and economic aid to Pakistan by abandoning the Pressler Amendment.

In December 1993, Clinton Administration proposed to legislate a new Foreign Assistance Act that would repeal the FAA of 1961 (including all amendments). It led to a debate in India and also in the US congress.

On February 1994, US Under Secretary of State for International Security Affairs announced that “the Clinton administration will be looking at India and Pakistan equally and together as we seek to craft a non – proliferation strategy to limit their development of missiles, to gain their support for a cut – off of … material for nuclear weapons purposes, their adherence to a comprehensive test ban”. She told to a Senate Foreign Appropriation Committee that “the goal was to

\textsuperscript{90} Amrita Abraham, “Pentagon in search of an enemy”, Indian Express, 18 May 1992
cap, then reduce and finally eliminate nuclear weapons and for that a one – time transfer of F-16 aircraft was one small credible step to achieving non – proliferation”\(^{92}\). However, to supply of F – 16 aircraft which could deliver nuclear weapons to the enemy’s territory helped the goal of non – proliferation caused skeptical for many Senators.

Another reason that the US National Security Council, Department of Defence, State Department and even arms Industries in the US lobbied extensively to resume military and economic assistance to Pakistan was that it was of the view that taking money and not delivering the F-16s was “unfair to a loyal ally”. The Pressler Amendment was considered by Robin Raphel as a major obstacle in improved US – Pakistan relations. The US Deputy Secretary of State Strabe Tabott also defended the proposed sale of F – 16s to Pakistan and argued that the Pressler Amendment could not serve the purpose for which it was enacted.

However the anti – proliferation lobby apposed the Clinton Administration’s attempt to release arms to a threshold nuclear country. The author of Pressler Amendment, Senator Larry Pressler was against the proposed sale of F-16 s and other military equipment to Pakistan. He said that “it is bad enough that the Administration wants to sell a warplane, capable of delivering a nuclear weapon to a volatile region... instead of pursuing a responsible nuclear non – proliferation policy in South Asia, It seems the Clinton Administration is conducting a Pentagon garage sale of military hardware and spare parts”\(^{93}\).

The Government of India warned that this US move would disturb the security environment, escalate tensions and lead to an arms race. But the US response was that it was a bilateral matter between the US and Pakistan and India was not concerned. Then the question was arisen that why and how the US so worried and concerned about the supply of cryogenic engine technology, between India and USSR, which was also bilateral matter between India and USSR.

In an UN sponsored International Conference on Population and Development held at Cairo, Pakistan softened its stand on the non – proliferation issue. By

\(^{92}\) V.P. Dutt, \(n.6\), p.46

\(^{93}\) Chintamani Mahapatra, “Pak Struggle Against Pressler”, \textit{Strategic Analysis}, Vol. XVII, No. 4, July 1994, p. 299
situating itself as a partner in US efforts for global and more specifically regional non-proliferation, Pakistan perhaps seeks to nullify political forces in the US who have criticized the administration’s proposal for a one-time waiver of the arms embargo”. 94 The result of this led to the announcement by the Vice-President Al Gore to give financial assistance to Pakistan in the end of 1994. In January 1995 Defence Secretary Perry paved the way for resumption of military aid again when he visited to Pakistan. Then in April 1995 when Ms. Bhutto’s visit to the US, she also won the hearts of the US public and threw wide open, the way for military and economic assistance by waiving the Pressler Amendment.

Then, the command to open up channels of military supply into Pakistan with backing of Clinton Administration was taken by Hank Brown. The Brown Amendment proposed a one-time waiver to Pressler Amendment. Harold A. Gould pointed to the fact that “it cannot be ignored that the defence contractor, Martin Marietta, builders of the Titan missile, now merged with Lockheed, the supplier of F-16s to Pakistan, is one of the largest industrial complexes in Senator Brown’s home state of Colorado”. 95 The Amendment was to be introduced in August 1995 in the US Senate for arm and economic aid to Pakistan. 96

However, the Brown Amendment could not be tabled due to opposition of the anti-proliferation lobby. But in September 1995, the Amendment was introduced in the senate as part of the Foreign Operations Appropriation Bill. This time it was adopted by a margin of 55 votes to 45 easing Pressler sanctions so that $368 million worth of US arms could be transferred to Pakistan. The Brown Amendment was also accepted by the US House of Representative.

Ultimately Clinton Administration succeeded in releasing the arms package to Pakistan it was more dismay in India that the type of weapons comprised P-3C-II Orion reconnaissance aircrafts, Harpoon anti-ship missiles, sidewinder air to air

96 V.P. Dutt, n.6, p. 52
missiles, TOW 2A missiles for cobra helicopters as well as engines, spares and support systems for F-16 aircrafts.\textsuperscript{97}

The package was not including the F-16 warplane. The US abandoned its efforts to make the F-16 warplane to Islamabad in the face of stiff opposition within the Congress. It now tried to sell them to a third party and then refund the money that Pakistan had already deposited with Washington.\textsuperscript{98}

Even the Brown Amendment was meant as a victory of Pakistan over Indian diplomacy and a biggest diplomatic triumph of Benazir Bhutto. Maleeha Lodhi, Pakistan Ambassador to Washington said, “the political significance of the congressional support for the Amendment is more important than the release of military equipment.”\textsuperscript{99} Pakistan felt that “the US promised weapons, took Pakistan money, kept it for half – a decade and citing the Pressler Amendment, did not deliver anything. Now seeking to make amends, Washington has done the only thing it could by law: sell the Pakistanis a dummy” F-16s which it desired were not delivered. Pakistan called the weapons supplied under Brown Amendment “obsolete and junk that nobody wanted” and said that with this staff no country can be a “significant military power.”\textsuperscript{100}

Therefore, even the arms package were released by the Brown Amendment but Pakistan officials were more interested in getting money back in order to buy new arms.

India was of the view that the arms package to Pakistan as a serious security concern as well as a destabilizing factor in the regional arms equilibrium as consequently, a new arms race would be heralded in the sub – continent.

\textsuperscript{97} Ramesh Chandran, “Senate Okays arms Package for Pakistan”, \textit{The Times of India}, September 22, 1995.
\textsuperscript{98} V.P. Dutt, p. 6, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{100} M.B. Naqvi, “Pakistan celebrates, but it has been sold a dummy”, \textit{The Times of India}, 29 October 1995.
PM, Narasimha Rao warned the Clinton Administration that even in the absence of the F-16 combat planes, the arms supply to Pakistan would trigger an arms race in the region.\textsuperscript{101}

Admiral V.S. Shekhawat, Chief of the Indian Navy said in reacting upon the implication of the Brown Amendment that “Any accrual of arms to a belligerent neighbour is a cause of concern. It will add to their capabilities which we have to take into account”.\textsuperscript{102}

The anti-proliferation lobby Ms. Dianne Feinstein, California senator referred to the risk of delivering new weaponry to a region that resembled a tinderbox. It would provoke India to deploy her Prithvi missiles that would aggravate an explosive situation.\textsuperscript{103}

By passing the Brown Amendment, India felt this as a set-back to an otherwise improving Indo-US relationship in the post-Cold War era. The US made it clear to India that the arms package to Pakistan was not against India but to counter Islamic fundamentalism.

The US administration and the Arms Industry considered the package only a “peanut” and believed that it would not trigger off an arms race in the subcontinent and “if it does, the US will not supply arms to either country. The Pressler Amendment still stands, India and Pakistan would have to shop elsewhere”, this was assured by former US ambassador to India, William Clark Jr.\textsuperscript{104}

Thus, the resumption of military relations between US and Pakistan were perceived as one of the major irritants in Indo-US relations during the period of P.M. Narasimha Rao.

\textsuperscript{101} Vijay Kumar Malhotra, “US arms supply to Pakistan - Limited Option for India”, Indian Express, 2 December 1995.
\textsuperscript{102} Shekhar Gupta, “Blowing hot and Cold over Pressler”, India Today, 31 August 1995, p.44.
\textsuperscript{103} The Times of India, 22 September 1995.
\textsuperscript{104} The Times of India, 3 November 1995.
Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Indo-US Relations: A major issue

After assuming the office of president, Clinton has assumed a more activist role in arms control and gave top priority to the non-proliferation issue in its foreign policy agenda. The US administration under Clinton was paying attention to South Asia because it perceives this region as the most likely theatre for a nuclear conflict in the near future. The measures proposed by the Clinton Administration to prevent nuclear weapon proliferation in South Asia find a place in Administration’s report of May 5, 1993 to the Congress that “the objective of the administration is, first to cap: then over a time, reduce and finally eliminate the possession of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery”.  

The US wanted that India and Pakistan must ultimately give up their nuclear weapon ambitions and dismantle their nuclear weapon programme and sign the NPT. But India has repeatedly made it clear that while it stood committed to peaceful use of atomic energy, it would not sign the NPT because the latter is discriminatory and biased in favour of nuclear nations which will retain their nuclear arsenal while the non-nuclear nations will be debarred from having theirs.

The reasons for US renewed emphasizing on Non-proliferation in South Asia was that after the end of the cold war, the US is still in great urgency to bring India and Pakistan into non-proliferation net owing to several factors and developments. These are:

(i) The US intention to dominate in the post-cold war unipolar world by blocking emerging regional powers from developing nuclear weapons capability.

(ii) The US concern that South Asia does not export nuclear and missile capability to Iran, other Gulf and Gulf and South-West Asian countries. This development will not only enhance the power of India and Pakistan but also go against the key strategic interest of the US i.e., the oil resources of the region.

(iii) The US concern at India’s rapid development in the nuclear and missile field that has given the latter a degree of self-sufficiency. India has crossed important thresholds and acquired extra-ordinary range of capabilities in nuclear technology. It has successfully developed indigenous sophisticated technology to sustain the critical nuclear chain: fuels of various kinds, sufficient heavy water, reactors of varying degree of sophistication for both civilian and military use and reprocessing facilities capable of making weapons-grade plutonium from spent fuel.

(iv) South Asia, that had witnessed three wars between India and Pakistan, was the most likely area of the world to explode and wage a nuclear war in the next five years. According to American experts, both India and Pakistan will be able to deploy nuclear weapons and they are developing ballistic missiles that could carry the weapons to selected targets.106

Another objective of the US anti-Indian posture on Kashmir and arming Pakistan during first year of Clinton administration aimed at pressurizing India to give up its nuclear option. On their part nuclear haves have not placed their own nuclear arsenals on the agenda of non-proliferation and elimination as enjoined by Article 6 of the NPT so as to retain the monopoly of coercive power.

From 1991, the US has been asking India and Pakistan to undertake regional non-proliferation measures. The US insisted on making South Asia a nuclear weapon-free zone. The US viewed the South Asian nuclear issue as an Indo-Pakistan problem. But from Indian point of view, South Asia is not a self-contained region and the inclusion of China for any purposeful regional nuclear non-proliferation plan is essential.

By not including China in the South Asian region, the US has conveniently ignored India’s legitimate security concerns regarding a nuclear-armed China. Whenever India raises its Chinese concern, the US and other Western countries ignored it as escape route for India not joining the non-proliferation regime. Though China joined the NPT in 1992 as a nuclear weapon state, it is not a member

of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)\textsuperscript{107} and Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

As the US perceived the South Asian nuclear issue, it moved on non-proliferation in this region by

(i) asked Pakistan to accept a verifiable cap (not roll back) on its future nuclear programme. It involved some kind of international inspection of the entire nuclear programme of Pakistan. The US claimed that it would stop Pakistan from producing additional nuclear weapons from the materials it possesses.

(ii) asked India to accept a similar arrangement to halt its production for nuclear materials for weapons purposes. This would bind India placing all its nuclear facilities under international safe guards and agreeing not to produce nuclear material outside such safeguards.

(iii) asked both India and Pakistan to commit not to deploy or test their missiles.

(iv) to agree India and Pakistan to join a multilateral conference on regional security that will include the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and probably Japan and Germany as well. To make this scheme acceptable to Islamabad and New Delhi, Washington was offering incentives to both the countries – F-16s fighter aircraft to Pakistan and high-technology and economic inducements to India.

Even the US claimed in offering this non-proliferation regime to both India and Pakistan. But it was appeared to be largely eager to revive its political co-operation with Pakistan. The US arms industry and the Pentagon were particularly interested in an early nuclear deal that allowed arms sales to Pakistan and reactivate the existing passive strategic nexus between Washington and Islamabad. Therefore, India worried about this coming closer of America and Pakistan given American diplomatic activism on Kashmir and Pakistan’s propaganda on human rights and encouragement to terrorism.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{107} Ashok Kapur, “Non-proliferation – Western Biases”, \textit{The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists}, January/February 1995, p. 41

\textsuperscript{108} Vinay Kumar Malhotra, n. 106, pp. 22-23
The new US move to promote nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia aims at getting India and Pakistan to agree to cap their nuclear programmes and accept international inspection of their nuclear production facilities. However, as a matter of fact, in this approach, it had prompted earlier unsuccessful initiatives to bring about bilateral or regional accords on nuclear-free zone. Perhaps, it was designed to overcome strong congressional resistance to the Administration's earlier attempt to repeal the Pressler Amendment and supply F-16 combat aircraft to Pakistan. Originally, the administration had sought to oblige the Pakistani military establishment in return for the later agreement to verify capping of that country's nuclear programme.  

From the above analysis, one can summarize that as in case of the nuclearnon-proliferation treaty in the proposed Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) too, there were two categories of nations in which some will cut-off production but would be allowed to retain their past production of fissile material and others who would have to roll-back and then eliminate their production. Pakistan was seen in the former category and India was clearly seen by the United States in the latter one.  

President Clinton, in his September 1993 speech at the United Nations General Assembly called for “…an International Agreement that would ban production of these materials forever”. India co-sponsored a resolution with the US in late 1993 at the UN with the conviction that it would be universal, non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable. Annexure A of the resolution (48/75L) say “A non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices would be a significant contribution to nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects”. FMCT is also an endeavour towards capping the capabilities of threshold states. In the words of Frans Berkhant, “A universal cut-off would draw three de facto weapon states – India, Pakistan and Israel – into the nuclear non-proliferation regime by chopping their weapons programme and opening their

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109 Ibid.
110 Ibid, p.24
critical nuclear facilities to international inspections”. However, the proposed FMCT was not perceived in India as a nuclear disarmament measure but as a subterfuge to prevent horizontal proliferations.

In April 1994, when US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott came to New Delhi, he stuck to the American stand that India should sign the treaty and the latter steadfastly refusing to do so in its present form on the ground that it was discriminatory in nature. He was of the view that the real problem was the nuclear issue and production of fissile material which posed grave danger to all humanity. He said, that was the reason why the US government was pursuing the NPT issue vigorously in all available forums bilateral talks or multilateral consultations.

During his visit to India, decided to deal separately and on a bilateral basis, with India and Pakistan on nuclear issue. Americans reached a dead – end in dealing with India and Pakistan together on the nuclear issue as India’s stand always became a veto.

In order to cap the Pakistan nuclear weapon programme. Talbott asked Pakistan to examine the F-16s for capping proposal on its merits and not bring India in the picture as it were. Moreover, the nuclear issue was delinked from the resolution of the Kashmir dispute. Thus it indicated the US intended “to deal with India as India, and not as a function of its relationship with Pakistan”.

It is important to note here that Pakistan on April 9, 1994 rejected the US proposal for “unilateral verifiable capping “of its nuclear programme even Talbott said that supply of F -16 aircraft to Islamabad and “capping “were “inter – related subjects”. A Pakistan foreign office spokesman in Islamabad insisted on the principle of “equity, balance and even – handedness” in the obligations that were applicable to India and Pakistan on the question of non proliferation in the South Asian region.

Pakistan, has thus, turned down American proposal of unilateral verifiable capping of its nuclear programme in exchange for 38 F-16 aircrafts by a one-time

113 The Times of India, (editorial) 9 April 1994.
114 Vinay Kumar Malhotra, n. 106 , pp. 25-26
waiver of the Pressler Amendment under which US aid to Pakistan was suspended in October 1990 regarding the nuclear issue. Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said “we believe in the goal of nuclear non – proliferation either through bilateral arrangements between Pakistan and India or on a regional basis. It should be equitable and non-discriminatory and should take into account over security consideration.”\textsuperscript{115}

During his visit to India and Pakistan in April 1994, Talbott also proposed a nine – nation meeting to bring about nuclear disarmament in South Asia, which the participants would be selected by what US diplomatic circle call a 5+2+2 formula. It included the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and nuclear weapon powers – the US , Russia, China, France and UK. Japan and Germany were cleverly roped in because of their economic clout, in order to put more pressure on India as both were India’s major trade partners and aid donors.

With regard to the acceptance or rejection of this multilateral conference, New Delhi was remained puzzled for sometimes. It was apprehended that its rejection may adversely affect the prospects of PM Rao’s visit to America in May 1994. if India reject the 5+2+2 proposal outrightly, it would risks more vigorous US pressure on Kashmir and human rights, trade sanctions from the big powers and possible withdrawal of their support in the IMF/World Bank. But if accepts the formula, it would be hard to explain an irate opposition concerned about erosion of national sovereignty and consistent nuclear policy that allowed it to keep the nuclear weapons option open under different conditions for two decades.

Besides most Indian political leaders and the bomb lobby demanded its rejection. Their contention was that there was the likelihood of India being isolated in such a forum.

In this proposal the US was cleverly putting New Delhi in a bind. Sensing these moves and weighing various pros and cons, New Delhi ultimately side – tracked this proposal during London talks in the same month in which the proposal was put. India took this bold decision few days before Prime Minister Rao’s visit to the US.

\textsuperscript{115} Cited in ibid.
After many round of Indo–US talks on disarmament and security issues in London. It could not achieved anything, on their part the Americans expressed disappointment over the lack of progress at the talks and described the Indian stand as having regressed from the earlier talks on the subject. Washington had been pressing for a multilateral forum to discuss non-proliferation in South Asia. New Delhi had told the Americans that it was prepared to discuss the concept though Washington insists that it had agreed to a multilateral conference.

Again, the same formula was propounded by the Americans during the visit of Raphel and later by Talbott. On both occasions, India stone-walled the idea by agreeing only to discuss the concept.

Finally, India reacted angrily to the American arm-twisting by declaring that it will not agree to any proposed multilateral forum on security, disarmament and non-proliferation which focused only on South Asia. For New Delhi, it was equally disappointed that the US has not accepted India’s position so far and persists with its ‘all or nothing approach’.

India argued that the logical inconsistency of the major powers keeping their vast nuclear arsenals while preaching abstinence to it and others in Asia was not palatable to the US and other Western Nations. India did not see the nuclear issue from South Asian or regional perspective, but from a global one. India was of the view that, the advanced nuclear nations like USA, Britain and France using the NPT to apply a double standard on the issue—a double standard by which they keep the nuclear bombs they have but stop them from reaching the developing Third World.

At that time, it was clearly visible that the US has continuously followed double standard in its non-proliferation policy as it has always turned a blind eye to Israel’s nuclear weapons programme. It has never scolded China for clandestinely helping Pakistan develop its nuclear capability or sell it missiles. Moreover, the US overlooked Pakistan’s setting up of facilities to make nuclear bombs in the 80s. During the past two decades also, the nuclear powers have conducted hundreds of underground tests explosions while delivering sermons to the world about the

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116 Ibid, p. 28
dangers from atomic weapons. India perceived NPT and the United States’s non proliferation policy uneven, unequal and discriminatory.\textsuperscript{117}

Apart from this, public opinion in India was highly against the NPT and US’s non proliferation efforts.

In an address to army commanders, PM Rao assured them that there will be no change in India’s nuclear policy. Rao said that in view of Pakistan having acquired nuclear weapons capability, any suggestion to restrict India’s nuclear option would be “unacceptable and unrealistic”.\textsuperscript{118}

Again, the Prime Minister Rao said at the concluding function of the All India Congress Committee session in New Delhi on June 11, 1994 that “India would like to retain the option of making a nuclear bomb as long as there was no international agreement binding all nations regarding these weapons. However, there was no question of taking a decision for or against the bomb under threat or provocation from any quarter”.\textsuperscript{119}

However, there was a significant change after Prime Minister Rao made his visit to USA in May 1994. During this visit, the two sides gave emphasis to the positive aspect of the relationship rather than the negative. They did not gloss over their real differences on contentious issues i.e. Kashmir, human rights, missile and nuclear non – proliferation. Rather, they admitted that “disagreements exist in every bilateral relationship are best resolved in the context of each country’s overall interest.”\textsuperscript{120}

Regarding to nuclear issue, both the countries agreed that the most acceptable way in under the circumstances would be to alter the agenda from a bilateral one to a larger multilateral forum to endorse the proposed global comprehensive ban on nuclear tests and fissionable – weapons production, both points which India supports. PM Rao also repeated what he had stated in his Congress speech, he was in favour of the first initiating a global agreement on non – first use of nuclear weapons and then ultimately aiming at elimination nuclear

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., p.29.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., p. 31.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{120} Berta Gomez, “Forging a Stroger Partnership”, Span. June 1994, p. 24
weapons and a Ban on Missile testing and deployment. Admiringly Dilip Bobb gave comments as “Rao, however, explained to Clinton that India’s security threat was mainly from China. Since then, all US official statements on regional non-proliferation have included China and the need for Beijing to reduce its nuclear arsenal”.

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A change in US nuclear policy in South Asia became more visible, when Defence Secretary William Perry visited China in November 1994, after the visit he conceded that India can’t be expected to consider the issue of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction only in the Pakistan context, and the non-proliferation in the region must include China.

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In January 31, 1995, Perry announced a bold departure in American nuclear policy in South Asia by suggesting that the US cease its efforts to “roll back” India and Pakistan’s nuclear capability and now only seek to “cap” their nuclear capabilities. This policy shift has opened the way for reconciliation on the non-proliferation issue that has become the most detrimental factor in Indo-US relations. Selling Harrison suggested that the US and India could resolve their differences over non-proliferation through some pragmatic bargain.

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Thus, from 1992 to 1995, the Clinton Administration and the P.V. Narasimha Rao government played a game of nonproliferation hide and seek. A zealous arms control lobby in Washington tried repeatedly to pin down New Delhi to join various regional nuclear disarmament proposals, all with the ultimate aim of “roll back” the nuclear arsenals of India and Pakistan. But it was only often the collapse of bilateral talks on non-proliferation in London and the visit of the US Defence Secretary William Perry, to India and Pakistan in 1995, as mentioned earlier, that the Clinton administration reconciled itself to the fact that regional disarmament was unsolvable. Perry acknowledged that the rolling back South Asia’s nuclear arsenal was “entirely unlikely to be successful in the absence of any global action to reduce tension in Asia.” But he also believed India, Pakistan and the US

122 Selig H. Harrison, “The United States and South Asia: Trapped by the past?” Current History, Vol. 96, No. 614, December 1997, p. 405.6
shared the same goal of concluding a CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty) and Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).  

Extension of NPT

The parties to the NPT met to discuss and decide the period that the NPT should be extended. The United States wanted indefinite extension, but India stressed accountability by the nuclear monopolists, periodically.

President Clinton said on March 1, 1995 that “nothing is more important to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons than extending the NPT indefinitely and unconditionally.”

In January 1995 a large number of NGOs and disarmament activists assembled in New York to discuss the future of the NPT. The majority opposed the unconditional and indefinite extension of the NPT. They favoured conditional and rolling extension to achieve goals of non-proliferation and disarmament. It was argued that if NPT extended indefinitely it would leave the world divided into nuclear “haves and have-nots” permanently.

The main target of the Clinton administration to get NPT extended unconditionally and indefinitely was threshold countries whom it wanted to rope through pressure play and co-operative gesture.

However, the Clinton Administration had successfully got the support of 179 nations and the NPT was extended indefinitely on May 11, 1995. The US, however, could not bring India, Pakistan and Israel under NPT.

Under the belief a global regime was impossible or a long way away, India raised no serious objections to the extension of the nuclear proliferation. It

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125 President Clinton’s address to the Nixon Center For Peace and Freedom Policy Conference on 1 March 1995, also John D. Holm, Director U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agent, Address to The National Science and Technology Council, National Academy of Sciences on March 30 1995, Cited in US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) website (http://dosfan.lib.uiuc.edu/acda) and Watergate website (http://watergate.info)
cosponsored, with the US, United Nations resolutions calling for CTBT and FMCT.\textsuperscript{127}

\textbf{India and the United States stances on CTBT}

Regarding to the CTBT, if we look back as early as April 2, 1954, Pandit Nehru was the first to demand a comprehensive test ban treaty. He called for halting tests as the first step towards nuclear disarmament. But with the Cold War psyche, the superpowers had no interest in listening to any advice that might distract them from achieving a decisive superiority over their rivals.

In January 1994, on the directives of the General Assembly, a treaty had been negotiated at Geneva, "which would contribute effectively to the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, to the process of nuclear disarmament and, therefore, to the enhancement of international peace and security".\textsuperscript{128}

As the global strategic environment changed, India and the US attitudes towards the comprehensive test ban have also changed. India's initial positive approach was inspired by the belief, since Nehru's period, that a comprehensive test ban is essential for attainment of the ultimate goal of a nuclear weapon free world. But the requirement of realpolitik demanded it to adhere to a different outlook.

India felt that accession to the CTBT at this stage (India is surrounded by NWSs with adversarial relation) would mean losing the nuclear option forever, and compromising national security.

Regarding to the shift in India's stand, Prafull Bidwai and Achin Vanaik observed that accession to CTBT would permanently cap India's weapons capability. This would eliminate its possibility of establishing a credible deterrent equation vis-à-vis China in the future and also India's potential for achieving


\textsuperscript{128} Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, Testing Times, the Global Stake in a Nuclear Test Ban, (Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjold, 1996), p. 48.
great power status for which an advanced nuclear weapons capability is perceived as necessary.\textsuperscript{129}

During the cold war days nuclear testing was indispensable but in the changed strategic environment, when the US was far ahead of other NWSs, it seeks to freeze the nuclear status quo. The comprehensive test ban would ensure its primacy among the five nuclear powers. The most important benefit the US would get through CTBT would be blocking the nuclear weapon capabilities of China and in the post cold war, through CTBT, it wanted to cap and roll back the nuclear programme of threshold powers like India.

Even no direct provision for disarmament in the CTBT draft, but it implied that untested arms will gradually become unusable and ultimately lead to disarmament. The US and its allies wanted to make the CTBT an instrument of non-proliferation rather than disarmament.\textsuperscript{130}

In India, the CTBT, an otherwise largely symbolic treaty, become more an icon of nationalism and sovereignty than a question of arms control and national security.\textsuperscript{131}

India was of the view that CTBT should be placed in a disarmament frame. Its stand was that five NWSs agree to a timebound programme for the total elimination of nuclear weapons as a pre condition to signing the CTBT. In October 1995, Roa said, India would support a CTBT in the context of obtaining a clear commitment to nuclear disarmament. He asked “if such a commitment is not forthcoming, what are we to make of a status in which a few hold on to their awesome arsenals, kept trim by sophisticated computer simulation techniques, while they want all others to watch on with empty hand?”.\textsuperscript{132}

India’s argument was that when biological and chemical weapons – the two other categories of WMD can be eliminated then why not nuclear weapons? In July 8, 1996 judgment of International Court of Justice and the Conberra Commission

\textsuperscript{130} Raj Chengappa, “India’s nuclear policy- Testing times”, India Today, 11 December 1995, pp. 66-67
\textsuperscript{131} Pramit Pal Chaudhuri, p. 127, p. 126
report also supported Indian views. Paul Keating, Australian Prime Minister, also
demanded to eliminate nuclear weapons. He said “we want the NWSs to carry out
their commitments to elimination of their nuclear stockpiles by adopting a
systematic process to achieve that result”. 133

Thus, India has decided with a national consensus to keep its nuclear weapon
option open and against the doctrine of disarmament. On January 1996, India tabled
its amendment on time bound disarmament banning all types of test. For this move
India was perceived either to escape route from CTBT or to secure improvement in
the treaty.

On June 20, 1996, eight days prior to tabling of the final draft of the CTBT
by Chairman Jaap Ramkar, India formally informed the Conference that “it will not
sign the treaty” in its present form. The Chairman’s draft text included a unique
clause Article XIV – that the ban would come into force only if 37 countries
including the big five and three threshold nuclear powers on whose territories the
international monitoring system facilities were located, sign and ratify the treaty. 134
Initially USA did not seem to be very keen on such a clause, but it suddenly changed
course and this become the position of the big powers. 135

On the announcement by India that it would withdraw its facilities from the
international monitoring system, the Chairman in a modified text listed the
ratification by 44 countries including India essential for its coming into forces. India
strongly refuted the imposition of obligations when it had clearly indicated its views
and reasons for not signing the treaty.

On June 28, 1996, the negotiations were abandoned; India showed its
resentment over this coercive diplomacy while the international community blamed
India as a spoiler. But in fact, the draft text was like a second edition of a
discriminatory NPT. Arundhati Ghosh, Indian representative to the conference said,
“Those who want a truly comprehensive treaty are labeled spoilers. Those who want
to eliminate nuclear weapons are being seen as a threat to disarmament. And a

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135 V.P. Dutt, n.6 , p. 54
timebound framework to eliminate nuclear weapons is seen as a diabolical plot to stall negotiations on CTBT". 136

India’s opposition to the proposed CTBT created very much resentment in Washington. When USA realized that there was no way India would sign the treaty, Washington asked India to get out of the way and let the draft be adopted. Washington did not really believe that India would muster the will to veto its adoption under the consensus rule and the use of the Indian veto on 20 August 1996 sent shock waves in Washington and other western capitals. The then External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee had clarified that India might be willing to let the treaty be adopted through abstention if the amendment making it contingent on India signing it was dropped, but as there was no effort to meet India’s objection based on international law, India defied the US and other pressures and vetoed the draft treaty. The draft treaty was subsequently pushed through the General Assembly on a resolution moved by Australia.137

Regarding to the view of Indian government over CTBT, the Clinton Administration has indicated that it did not want to pick a major quarrel with India over CTBT. The State Department’s spokesman Nicholas Burns expressed the hope that India would change its mind and added that “the US is well aware of the views of the Indian government, out of its historical perspective. We respect it”.138

US concerns over the spread of ballistic missiles technology in South Asia.

In the post Cold War period, the spread of ballistic missiles technology become one of the US serious concern for non – proliferation regime. On April 19,1994, the Clinton Government in its third report to Congress as titled “Update on progress toward regional non – proliferation in South Asia” said “we are convinced that the retention of a nuclear weapons option and the acquisition of a ballistic missile delivery system undermines, not strengthen, the ability of India and Pakistan to meet their security requirements. The perception of a short-run military advantage of such weapon will open up the risk both strategic instability and an expensive

137 V.P. Dutt, p. 6 , p. 54.
138 Nicholas expressed in his briefing on June 20, 1996, Daily Press Briefing , Department of State , 20 June 1996.
Indo-Pakistani competition to manage it”. The Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) which was established in 1983 has developed and produced four missile systems – namely Prithvi, Akash, Trishul and Nag. The fifth system related to an intermediary range missile – the Agni.

In short period India has achieved great success in missile technology. While Akash, Trishul and Nag missiles were aimed at replacing the existing weaponry available with the Indian Defence forces, Prithvi was of immense strategic importance to India that will provide the armed forces with the capability to deliver conventional as well as nuclear warheads with precise accuracy. In Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto called Prithvi a threat to Pakistan. The US also waned against testing and developing of Prithvi in an attempt to nip the Indian missile programme in the bud.

However, the Prithvi test – fire was suspended during Rao’s visit to the US. This was for creating an ambience of goodwill. But after Rao returned from the US-India immediately conducted two trials of Prithvi missile. This Indian adventure was, however, criticized as “a mistake”. The US hoped that India would not repeat this again.

Due to the US opposition and cost considerations, Prithvi has not been deployed in on operational position. But Rao has also warned the United States that his hand may be forced by Indian public opinion, if the US continued to be pro – Pakistan.

On February 19, 1994, India’s third successful launch had taken place from the test range in Chandipur – on – sea. The Clinton Administration was again warned India against the Agni and Prithvi missile programmes and asked India to halt them. It was suggested that India join the Missile Technology Control Regime as the first step towards preventing a missile race in the sub continent.

Under US pressure, India temporarily put off the Agni project. The Defence Ministry Report on Agni said, “the project which is one of technology provide, has

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been completed” for about two years, the Agni project was put in cold storage. But after successful launch of Prithvi II, the Agni project was also revived. Rao in his letter of congratulation to the chief of the Defence Research and Development Organization A.P.J Abdul Kalam and his team wrote “I have no doubt that this is not the lost significant milestone to be achieved”. Kalam’s answer was “the flame of Agni is still on”.

This was indicated by Rao in Parliament that more tests of Agni were planned.

In response to the Indian Missile programme, A.Q. Khan Research Laboratories of Pakistan (in Kahuta) developed Hatf I and Hatf II short range missiles. The third missile Hatf III has been developed in collaboration with China.

Due to the above development of missile programme of India and Pakistan, the US felt that acquisition of ballistic missiles by both the countries was tantamount to destabilization of the South Asia region and strongly insisted both not to deploy them.

An effective missile defence system which could protect the US mainland against ballistic missile attack was the thing that the US had long been looking for, as the Clinton Administration has proposed the Theatre Missile Defence plan for its national missile defence grid. TWD is a vision of the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) which known as “Star Wars” and which was developed during the Reagan Administration.

Finally, regarding to the non – proliferation ballistic missiles technology, we can say that while the US perceived the missile programme from the proliferation aspect, but India saw it from a security perspective. The Clinton Administration was determined to scuttle India’s missile programme for the purpose of regional non-proliferation. But India considers it essential for self defence as it is surrounded by missile capable neighbours.

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143 Bharat Wariavwalla, “The nuclear option – circumstances demand that India abandon it”, Indian Express, April 2, 1992.
US interest in Indian Ocean Region in the post Cold War

During the Cold War period, an important aspect of the Indian Ocean policy of India was to declare the Indian Ocean region as a zone of peace. In order to keep the superpowers out of the region and let the countries of the region develop in peace.

In December 1971, The United Nations in its resolution declared the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. But “during the Arab – Israeli war in October 1973, the Iran – US crisis, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the Iran – Iraq war and Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in August 1990, an unprecedented number of various types of warships, nuclear submarines, guided missiles etc., took position for offensive and defensive action in the Indian Ocean and threatened world peace in general”.

In the post – Cold war, the region become more significant as the strategic, economic and political dynamics were slowly drifting towards the Asia – Pacific region and simultaneously the oceanic focus has been shifting from the Atlantic – Pacific to the Pacific – Indian Ocean region. The Indian Ocean was likely to be the “ocean of destiny in the 21st century”.

The changed scenario of the Indian Ocean in the post Cold War with the disintegration of the erstwhile Soviet Union has also brought the US Naval policy changed toward the region. The 1991 Gulf war changed the US perception of threat from global threat to one of regional challenges and opportunities. The US doctrine of fighting at high seas changed to one of power projection and of influencing events in the littoral regions such as the missile projection after the bombing of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

The US, in the post Cold War era has focused its naval policy toward regional challenges. The white paper on US maritime strategy “From the sea”

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145 Ibid.
147 “...From the sea,” at http://www.militaryinfo.com (website of US Navy)
(1992), stressed the withdrawal of forces from overseas bases and underlined joint military operation and cooperation of services in the 21st century. The Navy’s abandonment of its traditional blue water strategy in favour of focus on the world’s coastlines or littorals was described as “Forward from the sea”. 148

Under the above strategy, Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) would undertake many missions that include long range strike operations and early forcible entry to enable the arrival of follow – on forces. The key of such an enabling mission was domination and exploitation of the littoral battle space during the earliest phases of hostilities. The three components of forward forces were peace time engagement, deterrence and conflict prevention and ability to fight and win war. 149

In a matter of fact, the Indian Ocean region, particularly the Middle East and Diego Garcia was the only regions where the US military and naval presence was growing in the post Cold War era. The US Fifth Fleet was recommissioned in July 1995, as a permanently deployed fleet for any part of the Indian Ocean, with surveillance coverage of the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea and the western Indian Ocean. The Fifth Fleet was the equivalent of the Sixth and Seventh Fleets of US Navy, composed of a CVBG (an aircraft carrier, four principal surface combatants, two nuclear powered submarines and a support ship and an ARG and MEF). 150

Thus on the average its commander has some 15 -35 major warships under his operational command at any given time. 151

Geo-politically speaking, the Fifth Fleet’s regional role was complemented by the fact that many of the regional states in Indian Ocean Region, especially those in the Middle East were virtual US protectorates. Regional states that oppose the American role were subjects of littoral attack (Iraq), moral vilification (Iran) and economic and other sanctions (Syria, Libya and Sudan). 152

149 “Forward From the Sea”, at http://www.militaryinfo.com
151 Ibid.
It is well known that the strategic objective of the US in Indian Ocean region was to maintain its control over oil resources of the Gulf region, protection of sea lanes of communications, safeguard passage of oil imports and exports of its allies and extend its military influence into the heart of Central Asia, particularly Uzbekistan and Tazikistan.\footnote{S.D. Muni, "The Emerging Cold War In Asia; India's Option", \textit{Strategic Analysis}, Vol. 19, No. 12, March 1997, p. 1603}

\textbf{Indo–US Naval Cooperation}

The changed in the global and regional strategic and security environment due collapse of the Soviet Union, was the major factor redirected India's maritime strategy in Indian Ocean. Realizing the American naval preponderance and hence the altered power paradigm, Indian chose naval cooperation with the US Navy as the best strategic option. For US too, India was an ideal choice as a regional power with the largest navy in the Indian Ocean region to help Washington maintain strategic balance in the region as India has the capability to absorb the technology quickly and also provide the kind of cushioning that would normally cost US a lot if it has to maintain on its own.\footnote{"Indo – US Naval Exercise" \textit{Asian Recorder}, 7 July 1992, p. 22404.}

At the same time Indian was perceived as a buffer for a possible conflict either in West Asia or with China though not necessarily military. The Indo-US naval cooperation has opened up new dimensions of India's role in the Indian Ocean and East Asian Hemisphere, while the US objective was to draw India gradually into its strategic ambit.\footnote{Ibid.} The security of India also become more concern, and to be focused due to the steady involvement of extra – regional powers like China, Australia and Japan in the Indian Ocean region.

Indo – US naval cooperation also helped the Indian Navy to increase its expertise in safeguarding in its territorial needs as well as a reliable navy to the other countries in the region against piracy, rescue operation and gunrunning.

Both the Indian and American navies began joint exercise, as part of mutual strategic engagement in the Indian Ocean, from early nineties and ever since both expanded their activities together to other sub regions of the Indian Ocean region.
The first joint naval exercise between India and the US was conducted in May 1992. It was a round the clock exercise conducted on the Molabar coast in Arabian Sea involving four warships, INS Rajput, INS Gomati, USS Vandegrift and USS Dovid R Ray. On the whole it was an attempt to test each other’s naval capabilities, timing and response. Such joint exercise has further followed in the later years.

By cooperating with Indian Navy, the US was not only helped the Indian Navy to improve its operational capabilities but also intends to neutralize the nuisance value of the Indian fleet for safe routing of its merchant vessels in the Indian Ocean. Further an oil tanker supplier vessel accompanied the Indian ships.

Regarding to the issue of transfer of sophisticated weapon technology, the US maintained a complete silence, but India was optimistic that it would be benefited from an input of American technology. With the combined strength of Pakistan and Iran, the Arabian Sea would be under the control of Islamic maritime powers. Thus, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism during this period was also a factor to compel the US and Indian to come closer to each other in extending defence cooperation. This shown that the US under Clinton Administration approved of India’s presence in the Indian Ocean region.

Overall improvement of Indo–US relations under PM Narasimha Rao 1991-96

To finalize the nature and the overall improvement of Indo – US relations during 1991 – 96, which mostly over the Clinton–Rao period, it is very important to note here that the shift in the Indo – US relationship began with the disintegration of the erstwhile USSR and the need felt by Indian to find an acceptable alternative to the discredited socialist path of development.

The initiation of Gorbachev era end the bipolar rivalry which reflected in improving US – USSR relations was another factor which was clearly visible in Indo – US relations.

157 Ibid.
The economic liberalization and policy changes in India under the impact of its internal as well as external environment gladdened the USA, and it decided to respond more positively to India's needs.

Apart from the above mentioned development, the Indian decision to upgrade relation with Israel, the Indian vote in the United Nations over the resolution against the equalization of Zionism with terrorism as well as in favour of American moved for collective security war over the Gulf and later on for imposing socio-economic trade sanctions against delinquent Iraq and the Indian decision to hold joint Indo-US Naval exercises in the Indian Ocean in particular was much appreciated by the United States and the US decision-makers in favour of supporting and encouraging democratic India to become more stable and well functioning member of the international community.

In addition to these, the US dissatisfaction with Pakistan as threatening nuclear weapon state, its role as an Islamic fundamentalist country, as a country which played a double role in the Gulf war by sending Pakistan troops to fight the war and by simultaneously supporting Iraq as a Muslim country, the US apprehensions of the strengthening of Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asian republic and West Asia, the virtual liquidation of communism and the end of the need of Islamic states as counterpoise to communism, the US viewed India as a counterpoise to Communist China, the loss of all these made the US relies more fully the importance of India in world politics, particularly in Asian Region.

Thus, as Islamic fundamentalisms become more significant throughout the Islamic world, American and Indian interests were indeed increasingly converging.

However, the study of Indo-US relations during Rao period shown that there were mix aspect of divergence as well as convergence. Apart from the positive factors as mentioned earlier, there were also the negative factors such as the Kashmir issue, non-proliferation and much more important was that the third country has always been a negative factor in Indo-US relations. These countries, of course, were China and Pakistan in particular.

To conclude the environment of Indo-US relations during 1991-96, it can't be denied that there were a mixture of a cooperative and confrontational attitude
which as a matter of fact, has been visible since the Cold War period and continued prevailing during the post Cold War period. There continued to present several road-blocs which both the countries failed to overcome or ignore for making the new optimism.