INDO-RUSSIAN STRATEGIC RELATIONS DURING COLD WAR ERA UP TO 1989

The end of the Second World War in summer of 1945 was followed by a new type of war known as Cold War in which Soviet Union and the USA were hostile rivals. In this war each side barked at other but could not dare to bite for the fear that the next war would be fought with the nuclear weapons which would cause irreparable loss of men and material on the both sides.

Cold War

The term Cold War is used to refer generally to the intense hostility and tension that developed in Soviet-American relations (and more broadly in the relations between the Communist Bloc and the Western World) after World War II. Without ever really developing into a Hot war, the cold war has involved ideological hatred; political distrust; diplomatic maneuvering; military competition; espionage and psychological warfare as well as generally less than cordial relations. The objective of a cold war is to isolate enemies and win friends.

The cold war as Jawaharlal Nehru repeatedly stated, “was merely a new manifestation of the old balance of power idea. It was a conflict between two great powers not two ideologies.” He further said that cold war was almost more dangerous than a hot war because it engendered thinking, feeling and emotions that were degrading and uncivilizing.

Cold war is a form of conflict taking place below level of hot war in a thermo-nuclear age that is as a means of pursuing antagonistic aims at a time when the full use of material power appears unbearably costly and destructive for all concerned…………………Grieves.

Relations in pre-independence period during cold war era

On October 29, 1946, addressing the United Nations General Assembly, the Soviet Foreign Minister said, “It is high time that the just demands of India were recognized…… And yet, have we not heard here in the General Assembly India’s appeal for support or assistance? We cannot turn a deaf ear to all this”. ¹ As India was a member of the United Nations, under the UN Charter, mentioned this,
the Soviet Foreign Minister declared that “India’s relationship with Britain should be based on sovereign equality.” On the next day, in an interview to Reuter, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation to United Nations Organisation, welcoming Soviet Foreign Minister’s speech said that it was “a sign of understanding and friendship between our two countries”.

On March 14, 1947 in a speech in the Central Assembly Jawaharlal Nehru stated that the question of sending an economic mission to the Soviet Union to study the results of successive Russian (Soviet) economic plans and other similar proposals would be taken up after the establishment of diplomatic relations. Simultaneous announcements were made both in Moscow and New Delhi that the USSR and India “Being desirous of maintaining and further strengthening the friendly relations existing between India and USSR, the Government of India and the Government of the USSR have decided to exchange diplomatic missions at Embassy level.” It is to be mentioned here that the Soviet Government send E.P. Yerzin to New Delhi for talks with the Indian Government for establishing diplomatic relation with India. Mr. Yerzin met Jawaharlal Nehru a number of times. Finally the decision of establishing diplomatic relations were taken by the two governments. As a result on June 25, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was appointed as the first Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union and on August 13, 1947 she presented her credentials to the Soviet President Shvernik at the Kremlin just two days before India’s independence.

**Indo-USSR Strategic Relations after India’s Independence (1947 to 1964) in Nehru Era**

India got independence on 15th of August, 1947. In Post-independence period on same day, Soviet Foreign Minister M. Molotov sent a congratulatory message to the Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, saying: “I request you, Mr. Minister, to accept the congratulations of the Soviet Government and my personal ones together with very best wishes to you and the Indian people on the occasion of the national celebration in India of Independence Day.” On October 23, 1947, the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
announced the appointment of Kyrill V. Novikov as the first Soviet Envoy to India and on December 21, he, the Ambassador designate arrived in New Delhi and on January 1, 1948, he presented his credentials to Lord Mountbatten, the Governor General of India, as Soviet Ambassador to India.

On September 9, 1949, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan presented his credentials as Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union.

In 1951, though not directly involved, India played a major role in bringing about a peaceful settlement of Korean War. She refused to support the US resolution calling China an aggressor in Korean war and supported the Soviet proposal for a cease-fire along the 38th parallel. Nehru’s appeal for ending hostilities in Korea was very well received in the Soviet Union.

This was the Soviet Union, alone among Great Powers, who from very beginning since the accession of Kashmir to India in 1947, categorically asserted that this State is an integral part of India. The Soviet Union supported India in 1948 and 1952, whenever Kashmir question was raised in the Union Nations. On October 18, 1952, Mr. K.P.S. Menon took the charge of Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union. On December 23, 1952, Soviet representative at the Security Council reiterated his country’s firm opposition to the introduction of foreign troops by the United Nations into Kashmir. On July 4, 1953, I.A. Benediktov, the new Soviet Ambassador to India, presented his credentials to the President of India. Presenting his credentials to the Indian President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, he declared: “The Government of the Soviet Union is convinced that India is also interested in strengthening peace and extension of international cooperation, and this undoubtedly will favourably influence the development of international relations.”

On behalf of the Soviet Red Cross Society, the USSR Ambassador designate Menshikov presented Prime Minister Nehru a cheque of Rs. 296,560/- for the Prime Minister’s Relief Fund as a token aid to the flood victims of the country on October 26, 1953. On the occasion of the 36th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru sent his “most cordial greetings” as well as “sincerest good wishes” to the Soviet
Prime Minister. In this message Nehru also hoped that “the existing friendship and goodwill between our two countries will be strengthened further to serve the cause of peace in the world.” The Soviet Union highly valued India’s contribution in strengthening world peace.

In April, 1954, Soviet Union proposed that the UN Disarmament Sub-Commission be enlarged and the Republic of India be included as member of the Sub-Commission. When the British representative, Sir Pierson Dixon, opposed India’s inclusion, the Soviet representative, Andrei Vishinsky, strongly demanded India’s inclusion. Here it is to be mentioned that India’s role at the General Conference was highly appreciated by the Soviet Union. Later India’s name was proposed by the Soviet Union as Chairman of three Control Commissions set up to supervise cease fire in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia as Neutral Nation’s Commission.

Nehru’s role at the Bandung Conference of non-aligned nations in April, 1955 was highly appreciated in the Soviet Union. On his arrival in Moscow on June 7, 1955, a rousing reception was given to Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of Independent India. Nehru in reply to rousing reception declared that he had come to the Soviet Union “as a pilgrim with a message of goodwill and peace” from India. During his visit, Jawaharlal Nehru addressed a public meeting at the Dynamo Stadium in Moscow of an audience of 100,000 people. But it is worth recalling that originally the meeting had been scheduled to be held in a hall which could accommodate only 12,000 people, but so massive was the enthusiasm generated in the Soviet capital by the visit of the Indian Prime Minister that the venue had to be changed at the last moment. In a Joint Indo-Soviet Statement, issued after Jawaharlal Nehru’s visit to the USSR, it was stated that “….. States of different social structures can exist side by side in peace and concord and work for the common good.” This visit has clearly given strength to the strategic relations between the two during the Nehru era.

On November 18, 1955 The General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) N.S. Khruschev and the Prime Minister of the USSR, N.A. Bulganin arrived at New Delhi for a friendly official visit to the Republic of
India for three weeks. The Soviet Prime Minister N.A. Bulganin addressed the joint session of both houses of the Indian Parliament. A Joint Soviet-Indian Statement published in New Delhi. On December 29, Soviet Prime Minister N.A. Bulganin delivered his report to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on their recent visit to India and other countries of Asia stated that “there is still a small Portuguese colony on an integral part of Indian territory – Goa. The Indians are rightly demanding that this intolerable state of affairs should be ended and Goa liberated. We have only to glance at the map of India and at these “possessions” of the Portuguese intruders to see how justified and lawful is the claim of the Indian Government that this Indian Territory should be reunited with the motherland. The Soviet Government supports this just demand....”.

With reference to the Kashmir question, the Soviet Prime Minister, in his above report, said, “As regards the Kashmir problem, it has been generated by countries pursuing definite military and political aims in this area. On the pretext of supporting Pakistan on the Kashmir question certain countries are trying to entrench themselves in this part of India in order to threaten and exert pressure on areas in the vicinity of Kashmir. The attempt was made to sever (cut) Kashmir from India artificially and convert it into a foreign military base.”

In February, 1956, in the report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the Twentieth Congress of the Party stressed the desire of the USSR “to consolidate untiringly bonds of friendship and cooperation” with India. Both the USSR and India opposed the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt and described it as a “flagrant violation of UN Charter” and a case of “clear, snaked aggression”. The Soviet Prime Minister, in a letter to the Prime Minister of India, expressed the belief that the voice of India in support of measures against aggression “could play an outstanding part” in bringing about a negotiated settlement of the Suez crisis. On January 24, 1957, The Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Zhukov, arrived New Delhi in a friendly official visit to India.

The Soviet delegate at the meeting of UN Security Council strongly supported the Indian stand that the people of Kashmir had already decided their future in a democratic way. He opposed the efforts of Western powers to utilize
the Security Council of the United Nations to increase the trouble in the Indian sub-continent. On February 18, 1957, when the Western powers brought forward a resolution providing for the induction of “a temporary UN force” into Kashmir to facilitate the holding of a plebiscite, the Soviet delegate in a hard-hitting speech termed the move as not designed to strengthen the forces of peace in the Indian sub-continent, but “no excite local conflicts and to complicate the international situation in the area.” He offered a series of amendments to the Western draft resolution to make it less harmful to the interests of peace. When these amendments were not accepted, the Soviet delegate vetoed the resolution. Again on November 5, during the discussion on Kashmir question in the Security Council of the United Nations the Soviet delegate fully supported India’s stand. The Soviet delegate voiced strong opposition to proposals involving induction of foreign troops into Kashmir or reference of the problem of demilitarization to arbitration or mediation.

On December 10, 1957, the Soviet Prime Minister in his reply to the Indian Prime Minister in response to his appeal to the governments of the USSR and the USA dated November 28 appreciated India’s efforts and stated, “As for the Soviet Government, it has paid utmost attention to your appeal to stop and nuclear test explosions and is ready to declare solemnly that the Soviet Union will not stage any explosions of nuclear weapons as from January 1, 1958, if the United States and the United Kingdom possessing such weapons also declare their agreement to stop as from January 1, 1958, the tests they are preparing.”

On July 19, 1958, in connection with the situation which has arisen in the Middle East due to Anglo-American aggression against Jordan and Lebanon the Soviet Prime Minister N.S. Khruschev proposed the convening of summit conference of the governments of the USSR, the USA, Great Britain, France and India with the participation of the UN Secretary General. In his message to the Indian Prime Minister the Soviet Prime Minister said, “By supporting the proposal for an immediate conference and by her own active participation in it, India would make an inestimable contribution to the cause of preserving peace.”

On the next day in reply to the message of the Soviet Prime Minister, Jawaharlal
Nehru, Prime Minister of India stated, “We shall gladly offer our services to it in the cause of peace if they are needed.”

On February 5, 1959, in the concluding speech at the 21st Congress of the CPSU, the First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, referring to the warm friendship between Soviet Union and India, declared that he was confident that “all the intrigues of the imperialists, who are striving to prevent the future development of Indo-Soviet friendship and obstruct our joint struggle for peace and for the triumph of the principles of peaceful co-existence” would be scotched. In October, The Third Session of the Supreme Soviet commented on the Sino-Indian conflict and regretted the incidents which had occurred on the frontier between two state friendly to the Soviet Union and called for friendly negotiations for solving the disputed frontier question.

On January 20, 1960, Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Marshal K.E. Voroshilov arrived in New Delhi on a goodwill visit to India, at the invitation of the President of the Republic of India & Indo-Soviet Joint Statement was issued. In next month February, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR N.S. Khruschev and other top officials arrived in New Delhi at the invitation of the Government of India for an official visit from February 11 to 16. The Chairman of the USSR Council of Minister (Prime Minister) addressed the members of the Indian Parliament. At the end of the visit of Soviet Prime Minister to India a Indo-Soviet Joint Statement was issued. On June 20, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India, arrived in Moscow on a goodwill visit to the USSR. President Rajendra Prasad called on the Soviet President L.I. Brezhnev. He said “Soviet people are firmly convinced that in as much as our friendly relations rest on the granite foundation of the immutable principle of peaceful co-existence and good neighbourliness, there is great scope for the further development of political, economic and cultural. Co-operation between the Soviet Union and India to the benefit of our peoples. Unquestionably the friendship between our great peoples will continue to develop and gain in strength successfully, heartening all friends of peace and progress.”11 Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India, replying to the reception
said: “…… the USSR and India have shown that two great countries, following different traditions and holding different philosophies, can freely and happily co-operate, not only in promoting peace. May this friendship between India and the Soviet Union, which is as immovable as the Himalayas, ….. remain for ever as a beacon to the policy of not merely peaceful but fruitful co-existence.”\(^{12}\)

In 1961, A.N. Kosygin, First Vice-Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, arrived in New Delhi on an official visit. On April 12, Yuri Gagarin became the first man to enter space. Prime Minister of India hailing this triumph of mankind as a “wonderful achievement” said in New Delhi that “this triumph should be considered as a victory for peace…….”\(^{13}\) On September 6, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru arrived in Moscow from Belgrade for an official visit to the USSR. A joint Indo-Soviet Statement was issued. On December 15, President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, L. I. Brezhnev, arrived New Delhi, on a 15th day visit to India.

**Liberation of Goa and Soviet role at UN**

On December 18, 1961 India liberated Goa from Portuguese colonialists. The USA through a resolution in the UN Security Council accused India as an aggressor and demanded the withdrawal of Indian forces from Goa. On the other hand, the Soviet delegate in the Security Council of the United Nations declared: “…. We openly declare that we side with the people of India, with the people of Goa who are fighting to free themselves from Portugal’s colonial domination. This position may not be to the liking of some, but we consider it necessary to state it openly before the whole world.”\(^{14}\) The US resolution was negatived. President L. I. Brezhnev who had already been in India on a state visit, also warmly welcomed Indian action in Goa. He declared in one of his speeches, “The Indian people have got now the opportunity to see clearly who are their really friends and supporters of national liberation of the peoples,…..”\(^{15}\)

On June 21, 1962, when the US delegate kept on referring to the earlier resolutions of the Security Council on Kashmir, with the obvious intention of resurrecting the idea of a plebiscite to decide the future of Kashmir, the Soviet
delegate strongly dissented and remarked in course of his speech: “It is now quite unrealistic to demand a plebiscite, just as, in the words of the representative of India, obviously no one would now demand a plebiscite in Texas, Ohio or any other state in the United States of America.”

Sino-Indian war and USSR

When the Sino-Indian war broke out in 1962, USSR get confused that either it should support the nation, which had same spirit of communism or should support the country that was among the list of her friends. The situation was complicated for USSR’s think tank. There USSR showed maturity and obliged her responsibility as a world power. On one side, she made pressure on China to some strategic help stop the war and on other hand, she provided India also. The Soviet favor to India, put the thought confirm that the relations between India and USSR was stood on a solid base. But it was clear that USSR was not happy with Indian attachment with other powers of Europe and America as well.

On November 5, referring the Sino-Indian border conflict the Soviet Communist Party newspaper Pravda in its editorial strongly pleaded for immediate ceasefire and opening of negotiations for the peaceful settlement of the border conflict. On November 12, The Soviet Prime Minister expressed the ardent desire of the Soviet Union that “the great powers, People’s China and India, fully restore and strengthen their ancient traditional friendship.”

Moscow’s attitude, which apparently had not until then crystallized, became critical of the supply of western arms to India. In a broadcast on December 2, 1962, Moscow Radio attacked British and American plans to give military aid to India, and said that the “senseless fighting along the Sino-Indian border has stopped, but imperialist dealings have in no way ended.” The radio said that Britain and the United States had “even sent envoys to Pakistan to persuade that country not to raise the question, at least for the moment, of Kashmir.” This was to enable India to withdraw her troops from the Indo-Pakistani border and throw them on to the Sino-Indian frontier.
In view of this critical statement, misgivings were expressed in India about Soviet sincerity in supplying India with MIG-21 planes and in setting up a factory for their manufacture. Nehru told the Lok Sabha, two days after the Moscow, broadcast, that the Russians would fulfill their promise to establish the factory and that MIG-21 planes due for delivery that month would arrive, although there might be some delay. More than two months later, the Russian freighter, Dobrush, arrived in Bombay with four MIG-21 planes in crates, comprising the first installment of 12 promised by the Soviet Union. Two Soviet technicians also arrived in connection with the MIG factory.  

On February 24, 1964, a ten-member delegation of Soviet Parliamentarians, led by Spiridonov, Chairman of the Soviet of the Union of the USSR Supreme Soviet and Chairman of the Parliamentary Group of the USSR, arrived in New Delhi at the Invitation of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The 4th meeting of the Indo-Soviet Joint Committee on Cultural and Scientific Exchange Programme opens in New Delhi. Inaugurating the meeting Mr. M.C. Chagla said that the cultural and scientific exchange programme between India and the USSR for 1963-64 was very comprehensive and had been implemented successfully. S. Romonovsky, Chairman of the USSR state Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and leader of the Soviet delegation said that scientific and cultural cooperation between the USSR and India is developing successfully and becoming ever more fruitful from year to year. On March 2, a programme of cultural and scientific exchange between Soviet Union and India for the year 1964-65 is signed in New Delhi.

On May 27, 1964 Soviet leaders send messages of Condolence on the demise of Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India. On the next day, USSR Government delegation, headed by A.N. Kosygin, arrived in New Delhi by a special plane to take part in the funeral of the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and place wreaths by the body of late Prime Minister of India on behalf of the Soviet Government. On May 29, at a mammoth public meeting held at Ramlila grounds to pay tributes to the Late Prime Minister of India, A.N. Kosygin, leader of the Soviet Government delegation said, “The Soviet people
take this irreparable loss to their hearts with particular feeling of sorrow as every body in our country knows what invaluable contribution has been made by the departed Prime Minister to the Cause of development of Indo- Soviet relations and of strengthening friendship between our peoples, in order that our two countries, which earlier did not know each other, could become now not only good neighbours but sincere friends.”

**Indo-Soviet Strategic Relations (1964 to 1966) during Shastri era**

On August 16, 1964, a special programme, “India – Our Friend”, was televised in Moscow on the occasion of the 17th anniversary of India’s Independence Day. On August 26, a special postal stamp was issued, in memory of Jawaharlal Nehru, by the Ministry of the Communications of the USSR. On August 28, an Indian delegation, led by Y.B. Chavan, Defence Minister of India, arrived in Moscow at the invitation of the Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal R. Malinovsky. On September 11, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan President of the Republic of India arrived in Moscow on a 9 day state visit to the USSR. Speaking at an Indo-Soviet Friendship meeting in Moscow at the Grand Kremlin Palace, Dr. S. RadhaKrishnan, President of the Republic of India, said that “We have arrived at the conclusion that disputes must be settled at the conference table.” On October 12, in an interview to the Moscow Radio Correspondent in New Delhi, President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan congratulated the USSR on the remarkable achievement on the launching of spaceship “Voskhod”.

On October 29, 1964, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, India’s Minister for information and Broadcasting who was in the Soviet Union on her way back from France to India, called on the Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, A. Mikoyan and had a friendly talk with him. A.N. Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR council of Ministers received Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting and had a cordial talk with her. In November, The Indian Embassy in Moscow issued the first issue of illustrated quarterly journal India in Russian language. First issue devoted in memory of Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of the Indo-Soviet friendship.
On November 17, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, S.G. Lapin, arrived in New Delhi on the invitation of the Indian Government. On November 27, India’s Minister of External Affairs, Sardar Swaran Singh, arrived in Moscow on his way to New York for the 19th session of the U.N. General Assembly. On May 12, 1965, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Prime Minister of India, arrived in Moscow on an eight-day official visit to the Soviet Union. He was received by the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, A.N. Kosygin and other Soviet Ministers and high-ranking officials.

**Indo-Pak War 1965 and USSR**

On September 4, 1965, referring the war between India and Pakistan the Soviet Prime Minister, A.N. Kosygin in a letter to Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Prime Minister of the India, Stated that “… in the Present serious situation one should hardly place in the foreground the question of the causes of the flaring up of the conflict and find out who is right and who is guilty. The main efforts must be concentrated on an immediate discontinuance of military operations, on halting the tanks and silencing the guns”. On the same day in Security Council about Indo-Pakistani conflict the Soviet delegate declared, “In View of our feelings of sympathy and friendship for the peoples of India and Pakistan, we cannot remain indifferent to the sufferings of the peaceful inhabitants of Kashmir and to the worsening of relations between the two states”. He also pointed out that “… any further exacerbation of the conflict in Kashmir might further aggravate tension on the Asian continent. That is why at this time we should like to express our confidence that, above all, India and Pakistan themselves will find a way to put an immediate end to the bloodshed in Kashmir and to halt this conflict. The two neighbouring State must resolve the outstanding issues between them by peaceful, with due regard for their mutual interests.”

On September 11, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee L. I. Brezhnev, asked China not to add fuel in the Indo-Pakistan conflict. On September 17, A. N. Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, in a letter to M. Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister of India, again proposed the
holding of a meeting at Tashkent or in any other city in the Soviet Union to enable the two countries to state negotiations. On the next day, the Soviet delegate in course of his speech in the Security Council on India-Pakistan conflict said, “It is a well-known fact that we are bound to India by a friendship which by now has become traditional. The Soviet Union appreciates India’s peace-loving foreign policy and devotion to the principles of peaceful coexistence and non-alignment, principles of national freedom and friendly co-operation among peoples…”

Prof. Humayun Kabir, Union Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals, in an interview in Calcutta on October 17, 1965 said, “The USSR has proved that the Soviet people will always stand by India, both in times of crisis and in brighter days.”

Mr. T.T. Krishamachari, India’s Minister of Finance, arrives in Moscow to discuss with the Soviet leaders the further development of economic and technical cooperation between the two countries in November itself.

**Tashkent Declaration**

Prime Minister of India, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri on the eve of the departure for Tashkent on Jan.2, 1966 said that he was going to Tashkent in search of peace and that both India and Pakistan must strive honestly and sincerely for it. He also said, “The Soviet Union is earnestly striving for the preservation of world peace.” Mr. Shastri said, “She sincerely wants that peace must be restored in this sub-continent. On January 4, the Historic Tashkent Conference, the meeting between Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri of India and President Mohammad Ayub of Pakistan started. Speaking at the opening session, Alexei Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, with whose good officers the meeting was convened, expressed “deep satisfaction at the consent of the President of Pakistan and the prime Minister of India to meet in Tashkent in order to establish direct contact for improving relationship and ending the conflict between India and Pakistan.” Alexei Kosygin said, ‘*We want to see Pakistan and*
India living at peace and solving peacefully all the problems arising between them and successfully advancing along the road of national development.

Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri said, “First of all, I want to convey to you, Chairman Kosygin, the feelings of the sincere appreciation with which my people, my Government and I hailed your bold initiative which has brought me and President Ayub Khan of Pakistan together in this historic Asian City. Mr. Shastri said, “The Objective of peace which inspired you is indeed a noble one. Peace is vital for both India and Pakistan and indeed for the world as a whole” We have always said, “that we unreservedly accept Pakistan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and sovereignty. Respect for each other’s sovereignty is essential for peace and good relations”, said Mr. Shastri. He continued, “If India and Pakistan have to progress and prosper, they must learn to live in peace. If there is constant conflict and hostility, our peoples would suffer even greater hardships. Instead of fighting each other, let us start fighting poverty, disease and ignorance.”

President Mohammad Ayub Khan said: “History has offered India and Pakistan a great opportunity to resolve their dispute on a peaceful, just and honourable basis. We have come here determined to use this opportunity in a positive and constructive manner”. “We have come in a spirit of cooperation. We want to eliminate tensions and to promote a sense of confidence and security among the peoples of the two countries”. “We must live in peace to be able to devote all our energy and resources to the liquidation of the grim heritage of colonialism and open avenues of happiness and progress for our people. For us peace is vital- it is indispensable.” President Ayub Khan declared, “Let this Conference become a harbinger of peace and let us issue from here a message of hope for our people. Assuring the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister of India, President Ayub Khan said, “we will give our fullest cooperation in making this conference a conference of Peace in its truest sense.” And on January 10, 1966, The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan signed the historic Tashkent Declaration. In this document they “declare their firm resolves to restore normal and peaceful relations between
their countries and to promote understanding and friendly relations between their peoples.”

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Council of Minister of the USSR announced with deep grief the untimely death of the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri, in Tashkent on January 11, 1966. They sent a message to the President of India, Dr. S. Radha Krishnan and the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. G.L. Nanda, expressed deep condolence upon the untimely death of Lal Bahadur Shastri. Last Journey on January 11, Prime Minister Shastri’s body was taken out of the residence. Troops stood by in silence. The Coffin, draped with Indian tricolor flag, was taken out by the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, A.N. Kosygin, R. Kurbanov, the minister of External Affairs of India, Sardar Swaran Singh and India’s Minister of Defence, Mr. Y.B. Chavan. Mr. Shastri’s body was placed on gun carriage and the cortege moved slowly from the villa through the town to the airport. Black draped flags at half-mast in the streets of Tashkent. The casket with the body of the deceased was escorted by columns of motor vehicles with Soviet troops, followed by cars carrying Soviet Leaders and members of the Indian delegation. At the airport the cortege was joined by the USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs, A.A. Gromyko, USSR Minister of Defence, Marshal Malinovsky, Marshal Sokolovsky, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Firyubin, the Soviet Ambassador to India, the Soviet Ambassador to Pakistan and Ministers and members of Uzbek Supreme Soviet. The President of Pakistan, Mr. Mohammad Ayub Khan the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and other members of the Pakistan delegation also arrived at the airport.

To the strains of funeral music the gun carriage bearing Mr. Shastri’s body was taken to the gangway of the waiting plane and a Soviet guard of honour marched past. The coffin was borne into the airliner by Alexei Kosygin, Mohammad Ayub Khan, Sardar Swaran Singh, Mr. Y.B. Chavan and other members of the Indian delegation to the strains of anthems of India, Soviet Union and Uzbekistan. A 21-Salvo salute boomed. After the military honours on Soviet
soil the plane took off for Delhi. R. Kurbanov, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR arrived Delhi in the Plane which brought the body of the Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Shastri from Tashkent. Alexei Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers arrived in Delhi to pay last tribute to Lal Bahadur Shastri, by a special plane from Tashkent, with N. Firyubin, Deputy Minister of External Affairs of the USSR and others. On January 12, a mass meeting was held at the Ramlila grounds to mourn the death of Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri. Dignitaries representing Governments of different countries paid glowing tributes to departed Indian leader. A.N. Kosygin was the first speaker who worked with Mr. Shastri so closely at Tashkent.

**Indo-Soviet Strategic Relations (1966 to 1977) during Indira Era**

On January 26, 1966, President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet sent a telegram to the President of India in which congratulated the President and the People of India on the occasion of the 16th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic. On February 28, in a message Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi thanked the Government and people of Uzbekistan for their decision to name of street in Tashkent in memory of Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri, to erect an obelisk and to put up a memorial plaque on the building where the historic Tashkent Declaration was signed. In March, Referring to India in the Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 23rd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee L. I. Brezhnev said, “... In the period under review our traditional time-tested friendship with India and her great people has been further consolidated..............”

“The Tashkent meeting of the leaders of India and Pakistan with the participation of the Soviet Prime Minister in conformity with the Soviet Government’s proposal was an event of world-wide significance. The very fact that this meeting was held, the results achieved by it and the positive assessment of these results by world opinion speak eloquently of the great trust that the peoples have for the peace-loving foreign policy of the Soviet Union.”
In May, a three-member Soviet delegation arrived in New Delhi for the 6th meeting of the joint Indo-Soviet Committee to discuss and finalise the cultural, educational and scientific exchange programme between the Soviet Union and India for 1966-67. Indian Ambassador in the Soviet Union, Mr. Triloki Nath Kaul had last meeting with the representatives of Muscovites. Together with the Embassy officials he was present at a meeting marking the 500th anniversary of the travels of the Russian merchant Afanasy Nikitin in India on 9th June.

Despite assurance by the Soviet leadership that the policies will not negate India’s interest, a high level Pakistan military delegation went to Moscow in June, 1966 to explore the possibility of Soviet arms supply to Pakistan. New Delhi warned that this act will weaken Indo-Soviet relations while Soviet Union assured that her policy of Kashmir has not changed and they regard Kashmir as integral part of Indian Republic.

Mr. Asoka Mehta, Union Minister of Planning, arrived in Moscow on 28th June, 1966 to discuss some problems of Indo-Soviet Economic cooperation in June itself. On July 12, 1966 Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, arrived in Moscow on a five day visit to the Soviet Union. She was received at the airport by the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, A.N. Kosygin, Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, V. Dymshits and V. Novikov, Ministers of the USSR A.A. Gromyko, R. Malinovsky and N.Patolichev and others. The Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister of India discussed the international situation as well as the further development of good neighbourly relations between the Soviet Union and India, it is officially announced. The also discussed the prospects for further consolidation and development of these relations.

In mid September, The Chief of staff of the Indian Army, General P.P. Kumaramangalam, arrived in Moscow on a two-week friendly visit to the Soviet Union, on the invitation of the chief of General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, Marshal M.V. Zakharov.
On 18th October, the calls of the CPSU Central Committee for the 49th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution referred to India in the following words:

“Ardent greetings to the great Indian people! May the friendship and cooperation between the people of the Soviet Union and India develop and grow stronger!”

On 13th December, E.N. Mamedov, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Broadcasting and Television of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, arrived in New Delhi on a two-day visit to India. He discussed the feasibility for greater exchange of broadcasting programmes between India and the Soviet Union with Mrs. Nandini Satpathy, Deputy Minister for Information and Broadcasting.

Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, broadcasting on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Tashkent declaration (10th January), reaffirmed India’s dedication to peace and peaceful settlement of international differences. “The Tashkent meeting set the example of how disputed questions can and must be solved when the sovereign states rise above their differences and proceed from vital interests of the peoples, in the interests of safeguarding peace”, wrote Viktor Mayevsky, Political Commentator of Soviet Communist Party Newspaper Pravda. “It was a striking evidence of the fact,” V. Mayevsky continued, “that the times when imperialist powers decided the destinies of Asia and Africa are gone for ever.” Mr. Kewal Singh, the Indian Ambassador to the USSR, gave a reception at the Indian Embassy in Moscow, marking the anniversary of the signing of the Tashkent Declaration. The Guests included Georgy Dzotsenidze, Vice-President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Ignaty Novikov, Vice-Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers of the USSR. Rahmankul Kurbanov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Uzbek Republic, Ministers of the USSR, Rahmankul Kurbanov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Uzbek Republic, Ministers of the USSR and other officials. The Pakistani Ambassador to the USSR, Mr. Salman Ahmed Ali and his wife were also present.

On the occasion of the 17th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic of India, President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet sent a
telegram to Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, President of India, conveying hearty congratulations. The message expressed confidence that the friendly relations between the USSR and India would continue to become stronger and develop steadily. “Relations between India and the USSR have always been relations of cordiality and friendship”, wrote Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, A.N. Kosygin, in reply to his message on the occasion of 17th anniversary of India’s Republic Day.

In the last week of February, 1967, a Soviet military delegation headed by the Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, First Deputy Defence Minister of the USSR, Marshal M.V. Zakharov, arrived in Delhi, on a friendly visit at the invitation of the Chief of Staff of the Indian Army, General P.P. Kumaramangalam.

On 13th April, The Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Alexei Kosygin and the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, exchanged greetings on the occasion of 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and India. “Friendship and cooperation between the USSR and India. “Friendship and cooperation between our two countries, based as they are on principles of equality and mutual respect,” said Alexei Kosygin in his message, “meet the basic interests of the Soviet and Indian peoples, are an important factor in safeguarding and consolidating international peace.” Mrs. Indira Gandhi said in her message in part “the past 20 years were years of strengthening friendship and peaceful cooperation between our two countries and genuine mutual understanding between the peoples of the USSR and India.” President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the President of India also exchanged messages on this occasion. Mr. Kewal Singh, Indian Ambassador to the USSR, described the Indo-Soviet relations as “exemplary and cordial”. He recalled the words of the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Gandhi : “India is confident that the Soviet Union is its truest friend.” These words, the Indian Ambassador said, expressed the feelings of every Indian. Mr. Kewal Singh was speaking at a meeting in Moscow devoted to the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Soviet-Indian diplomatic relations.
In an interview to the New Delhi correspondent of Moscow Radio on the eve of India’s Independence Day, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi stressed that Soviet aid to India since independence had greatly helped her economy. On October 9, 1967, The Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, A.N. Kosygin and the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, exchanged views in Moscow on Soviet-Indian relations and international problems of interest to both countries. Mrs. Gandhi was in Moscow on a short unofficial visit on her way to Warsaw. Addressing a press conference before leaving Moscow, the Prime Minister expressed satisfaction with the development of Indo-Soviet cooperation and stated that “this friendship and cooperation have been consolidated with years”. She stressed the significance of the October Revolution. “This Revolution gave the inspiration to fighters for freedom in all parts of the globe,” the Prime Minister declared. On 27th October, 1967, “the people of India have had the greatest admiration for the endeavor of the Soviet Union to build a new society. In recent years the relations between India and the Soviet Union have grown into a friendship not only of the two governments but of the two great peoples. This friendship is based on the principles of mutual regard and benefit and it has expressed itself through cooperative action in the case of international peace and peaceful co-existence. There is no doubt that the tensions of the world have abated as a result of this cooperation”. The Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, was in the Lenin Mausoleum grandstands in the Red Square in Moscow on the festive occasion marking the 50th anniversary of the Great October Revolution.

In 1968, A. N. Kosygin, Chairman of USSR Council of Ministers and Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, exchanged message on the anniversary of Tashkent Declaration. On 25th January, A.N. Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, arrived at Palam airport on a six-day official visit. He was received at the airport by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, together with the Minister of Indian Cabinet, the three service chiefs, prominent public figures, and members of the soviet Embassy, led by N.M. Pegov, Soviet Ambassador in India. After his arrival in Indian capital, A.N.
Kosygin laid wreaths at Rajghat, Shantivana and Vijayaghat. The wreath placed on the Gandhi Samadhi at Rajghat had the words, “Champion of Independence of India” inscribed on a red ribbon. He also planted a sapling of a Champa tree in the lawns there. The wreath he laid at Shantivana had the words, “Jawaharlal Nehru- Great Son of India” on it. The inscription on the wreath at Vijayaghat read: “Lal Bahadur Shastri- an Eminent Statesman of India”. Later, in the evening the Soviet Prime Minister made a courtesy call on the President of India, Dr. Zakir Husain. On January 26, A.N. Kosygin attended the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi. Addressing Pressmen before his departure A.N. Kosygin said, “Everywhere we witnessed a friendly attitude towards the Soviet Union and our People; our people entertain similar feelings towards the Indian people”. The Communiqué stated that A.N. Kosygin and Mrs. Indira Gandhi reaffirmed the major task before all countries was to preserve peace and further international understanding and cooperation. The two sides also noted with satisfaction the successful and fruitful development of Indo-Soviet ties and looked forward to prospects of increasing trade and commerce between the two countries. They agreed to explore fresh avenues of collaboration in the economic and industrial fields.

In February second week, a seven-member naval delegation, headed by Admiral Sergei Groskov, Commander-in-Chief of the soviet Navy, arrived in New Delhi on a 10-Day friendly visit to India at the invitation of the chief of Naval Staff of India. In March last days, a Squadron of Soviet naval ships consisting of the cruiser “Dmitri Pozharsky” flying the flag of Admiral N. N. Amelko, the Commander of the Pacific Fleet, the missile ship “Gordy”, and the anti-submarine ship “Steregushchky” arrived in Madras harbor on a good will visit.

On 8th July, Dr. Zakir Hussain, President of India, arrived in Moscow at the invitation of the Supreme Soviet and the Government of the USSR. As the President and his party landed, the chief of the Guard of Honour Presented arms, and State Anthems of the Republic of India and the USSR were played, followed by a 21-gun Salvo. President Dr. Zakir Husain also met A.N. Kosygin in the
Kremlin and had a cordial talk. President Dr. Zakir Husain and Officials accompanying him next day visited the Lenin Mausoleum and laid a wreath. The ribbon on the wreath read “To Lenin, Father of the Great October Revolution, from president of the Republic of India, Dr. Zakir Husain. During their frank and friendly talk the Soviet leaders and the President of India exchanged views on Indo-Soviet relations and on current international problems. President Zakir Husain said: “We firmly believe in the imperative need of peaceful and active coexistence between states with different social and political systems.” India and the Soviet Union could cooperate in the Solution of many problems, said President Husain. President Dr. Zakir Husain was elected Honorary Doctor of the Moscow University. *A.N. Kosygin in his speech said that the President’s current visit was viewed in the Soviet Union as a new confirmation of the steadily strengthening relations of friendship and fruitful cooperation between the two countries.*

On 24th October, an Indian Defence delegation led by India’s Defence Minister Sardar Swaran Singh, arrived in Moscow on an official visit at the invitation of the Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Andrei Grechko. Sardar Swaran Singh called on Leonid Brazhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, and discussed with him questions of mutual interest. The Indian Defence delegation visited Frunze Military Academy in Moscow. It also visited the departments of military arts and engineering technology, laboratories and auditoriums. In their reception speeches, Andrei Grechko and Sardar Swaran Singh expressed confidence that the Soviet-Indian friendly contacts and cooperation would develop and strengthen in the interest of both countries.

On January 27, 1969, in her reply to the message of greetings on India’s Republic Day from A.N. Kosygin Mrs. Indira Gandhi highly appreciated the fruitful cooperation between India and the USSR in various spheres. In March, a Soviet delegation led by Y. Furtseva, Minister of Culture of the USSR, arrived in New Delhi on an official visit at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi.
On May 5, The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, A.N. Kosygin, arrived in New Delhi to represent the Soviet Union at the Funeral of Dr. Zakir Husain. Soon after their arrival, A.N. Kosygin and the officials accompanying him visited Rashtrapati Bhavan and placed wreaths on the body of Dr. Zakir Husain. A.N. Kosygin said on his return to Moscow that his talks with Indira Gandhi had been extremely useful.

A brief halt in Delhi on his way from Moscow, at the Palam Airport the Soviet Delegation was received by Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, India’s Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Dinesh Singh, and other senior officials. At Palam Airport, A.N. Kosygin and Mrs. Indira Gandhi had a long and friendly talk during which they discussed questions of further development of Indo-Soviet cooperation, strengthening of peace in Asia and other international questions of mutual interest to both countries.

On April 19, 1970, a ten-day “Lenin Mela” was inaugurated at the Red Fort in New Delhi by India’s Defence Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh. President V.V. Giri sent India’s greetings to the Soviet people on the historic Day of Lenin’s birth centenary. In a message to the Soviet President he said, “Allow me the convey to you, Mr. President and through you to the Government and people of the USSR, my hearty greetings and best wishes on the historic day of the 100th birth anniversary of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin”.34

India’s Minister for External Affairs, Sardar Swaran Singh, said in an interview to a TASS correspondent, given on the occasion of Independence Day, “I do not doubt the durability of Indo-Soviet Friendship and that this friendship meets the national interests of both the countries and also the interests of universal peace.” President V.V. Giri arrived in Tashkent on a state visit to the Soviet Union at the invitation of the presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Soviet Government. Commenting on the significance of President V.V. Giri’s visit to the Soviet Union she told to a TASS correspondent, “I am sure that the visit of President Giri to the Soviet Union Will be a new link in the chain of friendship between the peoples of India and the Soviet Union.”35
In October, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, arrived in Moscow on her way to New York to attend the Jubilee Session of the United Nations General Assembly. The heads of two Governments had a cordial talk on Indo-Soviet relations and noted with satisfaction their successful development in the interests of the peoples of the two countries and the cause of peace. They also discussed topical international problems of interest to both sides. On 1st July, 1971, The President of India sent a message of condolence to the Soviet President.

**The Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation between the USSR and India**

In the month of August, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, arrived in New Delhi on an official visit at the invitation of the Government of India. He was received by India’s Minister for External Affairs, Sardar Swaran Singh, the Soviet Ambassador in India, N.M. pegov, diplomats, officials and a large number of people.

On 9th August, the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation between the USSR and India was signed at a solemn ceremony in New Delhi enclosed as Annexure-I. On behalf of the Soviet Union, the treaty was signed by Andrei Gromyko and on behalf of the Republic of India, by the Minister of External Affairs, Sardar Swaran Singh. On the next day, The Soviet Communist Party newspaper Pravda said in its editorial, **“The Treaty signed in Delhi is a Genuine act of peace; Its signing advanced Soviet-Indian friendship and cooperation to a higher level and conformed to the policy and active defence of peace and consolidation of international security.”** On August 14, 1971, The President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet signed the Decree on the ratification of the Soviet-Indian Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The Soviet-Indian Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation came into force with the exchange of Instruments of ratification in Moscow from 18 August, 1971. The treat offered credible assurances to India of Soviet assistance in the event of attack by China or Pakistan.
After the treaty, on September 27, Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, left for the Soviet Union on an official visit at the invitation of the Soviet Government. During the talks, questions of further strengthening and development of Soviet-Indian relations in the light of the Treaty of peace, Friendship and Cooperation between the two countries, and also important foreign policy problems of mutual interest were discussed. Speaking at a lunch in the Kremlin in honour of the Indian Prime Minister, Alexei Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, expressed concern over the situation in the Indian Sub-Continent caused by the events in East Pakistan and called on President Yahya Khan of Pakistan to take effective steps to liquidate the tension in the area.

**Emergence of Bangladesh and USSR**

Indo-Pak war in 1971 December broke out and Bangladesh emerged as a new nation instead of East Pakistan. The Soviet representative to the United Nations, Y. A. Malik, told the UN Security Council that “the aggravation of the situation in the Hindustan peninsula is a result of the policy of Pakistan’s military authorities.” The USSR voted against the US-sponsored resolution because of its one-sided approach to the question discussed. Y. A. Malik pointed out that a ceasefire without a simultaneous political settlement would be anfractuous. In New York, Y.A. Malik, the Soviet representative, in his speech at the meeting of UN Security Council said that the Peking leadership had played an unsavoury and provocative role, facilitating aggravation of the situation in the Hindustan peninsula. The Security Council, he said, had been unable to arrive at a correct decision because the delegations of the USA and the People’s Republic of China had opposed an immediate political settlement in East Pakistan on the basis of expressed will of the people. The Soviet Union voted against the resolution sponsored by the USA.

Analyzing the causes of Indo-Pakistan conflict and the possibilities of settling it, V. Shuryagin said in an article in Pravda that the restraint, sober approach and self-control of the Indian Government must be highly appreciated. Soviet newspaper Pravda and Krasnaya Pravda (Red Star)
commented on the provocative dispatch of a group of United States naval ships into the Indian Ocean. “What business has an American naval squadron in the Indian Ocean?” asked Pravda’s commentator Konstantin Geivandov. “Why should they turn up in direct proximity to the area of military operations between the Pakistani army on the one side, and the Mukti Vahini detachments and the Indian troops, acting jointly with them, on the other?” In an article, “Indian Ocean is not an American Lake”, V. Pustov said in Red Star that the dispatch of US Warships into the Indian Ocean was to bring “Psychological Pressure to bear on India.” In this way, there was a heavy criticism of American 7th fleet who patrolled in Indian Ocean to help out Pakistan or pressurize India all over world and by USSR in particular.

The Soviet Union played a crucial role by preventing US and Chinese intervention in the sub continent and also deterred US 7th fleet. Its diplomatic support at UN front and outside both was remarkable and significant. The Hindustan Times wrote on Dec.16, “The Soviet Union has stood by this country and has shown genuine understanding of the underlying forces at work in South Asia.” It was also claimed that Nixon also tried to influence Moscow to put pressure on Indira Gandhi to terminate the war.

On January 24, 1972, “Friendship between the USSR and India has become a matter of Interest to the wide masses of our countries,” said Nikolai Goldin, President of the Society for Soviet Indian. Cultural Relations, Speaking at a meeting organized in Moscow to mark the 22nd anniversary of the Republic of India. “The friendship between the USSR and India has stood the test of time, and we are proud of this”, President V.V. Giri said in an interview in TASS in New Delhi.

On 21st December, speaking on Soviet-Indian relations in course of his report to the joint celebration session in the Kremlin devoted to the 50th anniversary of the USSR, L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, said, “The friendship between the Soviet Union and India, one of the biggest peace-loving countries on our planet, is exercising a strong positive influence on the international situation as a whole… Now that our relations are
based on the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation we feel that they will come closer still. This is borne out by the consolidation of the progressive, anti-imperialist forces in India. It is also borne out by the policy of the Indian Government, headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi.”

Indo-Soviet relations are a model of relations between the States following different socio-economic systems. These relations are deeply embedded in the common historical destiny of socialism and national liberation and in their common objective of achieving economic and social progress, in giving rebuff to the intrigues of imperialism and reaction, in averting the holocaust of nuclear war, and safeguarding the world peace and international security. And which, in the words of L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, can be described thus, “It can be said with certainty that in developing relations of friendship between the Soviet Union and India, we are doing a good thing and not only for the present generation of our peoples but also for the coming generations and for mankind’s peaceful future.”

Mrs. Indira Gandhi has justly said: “our two nations have endeavored unremittingly for peace and cooperation. We can justly claim that Indo-Soviet friendship has been an enduring factor for peace and stability in the world”.

In 1973, January 14, a Soviet naval squadron Commanded by Rear Admiral Vladimir Kruglyakov docked in Bombay on a Friendly Visit. The squadron consisted of the cruiser Admiral Sinyavin, destroyer and a submarine. On January 17, Mr. A.K. Damodaran, Chage d’ Affaires and interim of India in the USSR signed on behalf of India the convention on banning the development, production and stock piling of bacteriological (biological) and toxic weapons and on their destruction.

The first meeting of the Joint Indo-Soviet Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical cooperation began in New Delhi on 9th Feb., 1973. A “Mig-21M” plane which rolled out from the Nasik Division of the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) was handed over to the Indian Air Force on 15th February by Mr. V. C. Shukla, Minister of Defence Production. Handing over the
aircraft to Air Marshal O.P. Mehra, Chief of the Air Staff, Mr. Shukla observed
that this was a new landmark in the history of HAL and had been made possible
by the friendly cooperation of the USSR.

Union Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals Mr. D.K. Barua said at a
meeting on 16th April in New Delhi that the friendship between India and the
Soviet Union was based on the “Indestructible bonds of the peoples of the two
countries who sincerely wanted to create a new life for the common man.” The
meeting had been organized to celebrate the 26th anniversary of the establishment
of diplomatic relations between the USSR and India.

In month of July, L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central
Committee, received in Kremlin Dr. Sankar Dayal Shama, President of the Indian
National Congress. They exchanged opinions on current international problems of
mutual interest and questions concerning and further development and
strengthening of Indo-Soviet relations. The meeting took place in a warm and
cordial atmosphere that reflected the friendly character of relations between the
Soviet Union and India. A meeting was also held on 30th July in New Delhi to
observe Soviet Navy Day.

“The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation of
August 9, 1971, symbolized our success in building strong ties of friendship and
cooperation. It heralded a new stage in the relations between our two
countries,” India’s External Affairs Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh told a Tass
Correspondent in New Delhi on 1st August.

On the eve of second anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of peace,
Friendship and Cooperation between India and the Soviet Union, India’s Prime
Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, on behalf of the Government and people of India,
conveyed congratulations to the leaders and peoples of the Soviet Union. In an
interview to a Tass Correspondent, she said that the treaty was playing its part in
the establishment of a climate of peace and mutual understanding, and added that
it had led to further strengthening of the foundation of good relations and
cooperation between the two countries. Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of
the CPSU Central Committee reviewing the international situation at a celebration
meeting on 24th September in Tashkent hailed “the outstanding place held by India in the moulding of Asia’s destinies.” He referred to the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation and said it provided a reliable basis for long-term good and friendly relations. “India has made many valuable contributions to world politics and we are convinced that its role will grow. Indo-Soviet friendship is growing stronger with every year and there is no doubt that the future will see new steps in this direction to the great benefit of the peoples of our countries and the cause of universal peace,” L.I. Brezhnev said.

On September 29, The Soviet Union announced the supply of two million tones of food grains to India as loan. A communiqué in this connection issued in Moscow stated, “As a result of adverse weather conditions and natural calamities, serious difficulties have arisen in India in the provision of food to the population. “Guided by a desire to help the friendly Indian people at a time difficult for them, the Soviet Union expressed readiness to give as a loan of a certain amount of grain including rice to India.”

On November 26, 1973, The Indian capital gave festive reception to Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on his arrival. At the palam airport, Leonid Brezhnev and other dignitaries accompanying him were welcomed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi and other state leaders. Mrs. Gandhi welcomed Leonid Brezhnev and those who had arrived with him, stressing the great importance of his visit to India for the further development and deepening of Indo-Soviet relations of friendship and cooperation. L.I. Brezhnev thanked the Indian prime Minister for the rousing welcome accorded to him in India. The two leaders continued to discuss problems linked with broadening of Indo-Soviet cooperative and urgent world problems. Leonid Brezhnev, in a rousing speech, assured India of continued Soviet help, at a mammoth public meeting at the Red Fort grounds. Mrs. Indira Gandhi in her speech answered critics of Indo-Soviet Friendship and said that this friendship had never impinged on the country’s sovereignty. Mrs. Gandhi outlined the efforts of the Indian Government and the people of India for the development of India’s economy. The Prime Minister highly appreciated Indo-Soviet cooperation in economic and other
spheres. Leonid Brezhnev spoke of the Soviet Union’s Policy aimed at the consistent assertion of the principles of peaceful coexistence in international relations, at the defence of the cause of freedom and independence of people. They exchanged views on a number of international problems of interest to the Soviet Union and India. Leonid Brezhnev emphasized the great role that India was playing in the international arena, specifically in creating an atmosphere of peace, mutual understanding and cooperation in Asia. Mrs. Gandhi highly assessed the peaceful policy of the Soviet Union and the contribution that the Soviet state was making for ensuring a just and durable peace and international security. Addressing the joint session of the Indian Parliament Leonid Brezhnev said that “the Soviet Union attaches great significance to the strengthening of friendship, the all-round development of its relations with India.” The Joint Indo-Soviet Declaration was signed by Leonid Brezhnev and Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Leonid Brezhnev and Mrs. Gandhi also signed the Agreement for further development of Economic Cooperation and Trade between the USSR and the Republic of India. “The results of the visit signify a new major step in the development of Indo-Soviet friendship”, said L.I. Brezhnev before leaving Delhi on Nov. 30, 1973.  

On January 21, 1974, The new Soviet Ambassador to India, V.F. Maltsev, in reply of President V.V. Giri said that friendship between the USSR and India rested on mutual understanding and confidence and found expression in the growing cooperation between the two countries in the political, economic, cultural and other spheres. He said that the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and cooperation of 1971 was a logical culmination of the development of close ties between the two countries over the last quarter of the century and a good basis for the further expansion of all-round cooperation. On April 16, The Soviet Union was among the first to welcome the historic event of attainment of independence by India and to establish diplomatic relations even before India had been formally declared independence on August 15, 1947, recalled L.M. Morozov, First Secretary of the USSR Embassy in India. He was speaking at the House of Soviet
Culture in New Delhi at a meeting held to mark the 27th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Soviet Union.

In July, Dr. Sankar Dayal Sharma, president of the Indian National Congress, welcomed the results of the talks in Moscow between Leonid Brezhnev and Richard Nixon as a new step on the road to relaxation of international tensions.

In an interview to TASS and Soviet Television on the Occasion of the third anniversary of the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi said that India had been linked with Soviet Union through many years friendship. “Our Treaty” she went on to say, “gave it, if one may say so, a more official framework. We are cooperating on a broad scale and taking agreed upon stands on many political issues in the international arena. The Soviet Union is assisting us in the up building of our economy.” Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, the President of India said that The USSR, as a true and genuine friend of India, had always stood by it at crucial periods of history, had always rendered it necessary aid and support both in international arena and in the solution of its domestic economic problems. The ties between the two nations, he said, had been greatly strengthened and consolidated as a result of the signing of the 1971 Treaty. The two countries had come closer after the visit to India of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Leonid Brezhnev.

On December 31, 1975, A.N. Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, sent a message to the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, expressing his grief over the chasnala Mine disaster. A group of 15 Soviet experts arrived in New Delhi with equipment to assist in the rescue operations at the Chasnala colliery in Bihar.

On January 15, 1976, in an article in the Soviet Weekly Moscow news, the Charge de’ Affairs of India in the USSR, Mr. P.L. Sinail said, “The growing friendship between the 600 million people of India and the 150 million people of the Soviet Union in accordance with the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and
Cooperation between our two countries, is not only, mutually beneficial, but is a factor of peace and stability in Asia and the World.”

In the Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party, made glowing references to India on February 24. “To begin with, a few words about our multi-aided co-operation with India. We attach special importance to friendship with that great country. In the past five years Soviet-Indian relations have risen to a new level. Our countries have concluded a Treaty of peace, Friendship and co-operation. And even this short period has clearly shown its tremendous significance for our bilateral ties, and its role as a stabilizing factor in South Asia and Continent as a whole. “Close political and economic cooperation with the republic of India is our constant policy. The Soviet people appreciate and more are in solidarity with India’s peace loving foreign policy and the courageous efforts of her progressive forces to solve her difficult socio-economic problems. We wish the people and government of India Complete success in these efforts.”

In April, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, A.N. Kosygin received the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission of India, Mr. P.N. Haksar, who arrived in Moscow to attend the third session of the Inter-Governmental Soviet-Indian Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation.

On April 28, I.V. Arkhipov, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, arrived in New Delhi on an official friendly visit to India at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to participate in the inauguration of India’s biggest hot strip mill at the Bokaro Steel Plant. On May 1, 1976, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi inaugurated India’s biggest hot strip mill at Bokaro Steel Plant being built with Soviet assistance. The Inauguration ceremony was attended by I.V. Arkhipov, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, A.I. Alikhanov, Deputy Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, and V.F. Maltsev, USSR Ambassador in India. Speaking at the inaugural function Mrs. Gandhi underlined the significance of the
friendship between India and the Soviet Union. Which, she said, was friendship not only between the two governments but also between the two peoples. Bokaro and Bhilai, and indeed many other projects, she said, were symbols of this friendship, which had withstood the test of time. Addressing the meeting I.V. Arkhipov, dwelt on the significance of Soviet-Indian friendship for peace and international security. “The Soviet people”, he said, “View with sympathy and with a feeling of profound understanding the courageous struggle of the progressive force of the country of the accomplishment of the complicated socio-economic and social progress and the peace-loving foreign policy of the Government of India headed by the outstanding state leader, Madam Indira Gandhi.”

On 8th June, the prime Minister of the Republic of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, arrived in Moscow on an official friendly visit to the USSR as the guest of the Soviet Government. Within four hours of Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s arrival, Soviet Indian talks began in the Kremlin. An exchange of views took place on wide range of subjects as well as some major international problems. L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee had a meeting with Mrs. Indira Gandhi prime Minister of India, In the Kremlin. They discussed bilateral Indo-Soviet relations and also major international problems of mutual interest. They emphasized the great importance of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of peace, Friendship and Cooperation which had given a fresh impetus to the development of equal and mutually advantageous cooperation between the Soviet Union and India and Which was a stabilizing factor in Asia and through out the world. The two sides discussed the expansion of all round Indo Soviet friendly relations, based on the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, and exchanged views on international issues of mutual interest. The Joint Declaration on further development of friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and India was signed in the Kremlin by L.I. Brezhnev and Mrs. Indira Gandhi. “I can say that the talks were friendly and successful. We are satisfied. The talks were very cordial, friendly and frank covering a wide range of subjects, bilateral as well as international.” Mrs. Indira Gandhi told at her
return that her visit to the USSR had been fruitful and had served to further strengthen friendship between the two countries.

On October 15, 1976, Mr. Inder Kumar Gujral, India’s Ambassador to the USSR, expressed the confidence that Indo-Soviet friendship would keep going from strength to strength because it was friendship between two peoples who had an optimistic attitude toward the future. On December 17, in a message of greetings to Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central committee, on his 70th birthday, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi said, “On the auspicious occasion of your seventieth birthday, the Government and people of India join me in sending you our warm greetings and felicitations. We greatly value your contribution to friendship and cooperation between our two countries and to the cause of peace in the world. WE wish you many more years in the service of the Soviet people.”

On February 12, 1977, L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU and the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, A.N. Kosygin conveyed condolences on the demise of President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed.

**Indo-Soviet Strategic Relations (1977 to 1980) during Janta Period**

In the month of April on 13th, the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and India was extensively observed throughout the Soviet Union. The Prime Minister of India sent a message to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, A. Kosygin expressing thanks for the warm message on the occasion of 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Soviet Union.

On April 27, Talks between Soviet Foreign Minister and Indian External Affairs Minister were concluded. They signed two new Indo-Soviet agreements on economic and technical co-operation and on cooperation in the creation of troposphere communications. Later, a Joint Indo-Soviet Communiqué was signed by A.A. Gromyko and Mr. A.B. Vajpayee. The Joint Communiqué said, in part, that “the two sides expressed their satisfaction with the development of the time tested relations of traditional friendship and cooperation, of mutual respect and
confidence that have been established between the Soviet Union and India.” The determination of the sides to continue to follow the course towards the further strengthening of equal and mutually-beneficial cooperation in the spirit of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation of August 1971, was stressed.

The First Indo-Soviet seminar on international law ended in Moscow on 1st July. Soviet experts were headed by Dr. U.N. Kudryavtsev and the leader of the Indian team was Dr. Nagendra Singh. Mr. L.K. Advani, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting of India inaugurated an exhibition on 4th July on the “USSR Today” at the India International Centre in New Delhi. On September 14, the Governments of the USSR and India have decided to upgrade the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation. I.V. Arkhipov, Vice-Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, will be co-chairman of the Commission from the Soviet side. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, External Affairs Ministers of India will be the co-chairman of the Commission from Indian side.

The Prime Minister of India, Mr. Morarji Desai, accompanied by India’s External Affairs Ministers, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, arrived in Moscow on 21st October, 1977 for an official visit in the Soviet Union at the invitation of Soviet leaders. Talks were held in Kremlin between L.I. Brezhnev and Mr. Morarji Desai and Mr. A.B. Vajpayee. During talks there was an exchange of views covering a broad range of subjects concerning Indo-Soviet relations. L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary and Mr. Morarji Desai, Prime Minister of India, signed a joint Indo-Soviet Declaration in the Kremlin. During the day Mr. Morarji Desai speaking at a press conference, stressed that the just concluded Indo-Soviet talks would promote the strengthening of friendship and establishment of closer mutual understanding between the peoples of the two countries would undoubtedly impart a new content to the traditional Indo-Soviet friendship and cooperation. A public meeting was inaugurated by Mr. Morarji Desai, Prime Minister of India at New Delhi to celebrate the Revolution.
L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, sent a message of greetings “To the National Committee for Celebrations in India of the 60th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, to the participants in the Jubilee Meeting of the Representatives of the Indian Public.”

On November 18, the Soviet Delegation to the Festival of Soviet Art and Culture, led by the USSR Deputy Minister of Culture, V.I. Popov, was received by the Prime Minister of India.

On November 26, L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and A.N. Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers sent a message of sympathy to the President of India, Mr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, and Prime Minister Mr. Morarji Desai in connection with the natural disaster which cause great damage to the eastern parts of India. “We request you to accept our sincere sympathy and to convey our deep felt condolence to the bereaved families,” the message said.

On March 6, 1978, at the closing plenary session of the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation in New Delhi a protocol was signed on the drawing up of a long-term programme extending over the next 10 to 15 years. The Fourth Soviet-Indian protocol on planning between the State Planning Committee of the USSR and the Planning Commission of India initialed in New Delhi this day.

A public meeting was held in New Delhi on 17th April to mark the 31st anniversary of Indo-Soviet Diplomatic Relation. The Defence Minister of the Republic of India visited Moscow on 22nd May. India’s Minister of Defence inspected the combat equipment of the Division and attended tactical exercises of a battalion. I. Arkhipov received an Indian delegation on 10th July which was in Moscow to take part in the meeting of the Joint Soviet Indian Working Group on the drafting of a long-term Soviet-Indian economic, commercial and scientific-technical cooperation programme. Seven-day long official friendly visit of the
External Affairs Minister of India to the Soviet Union concluded. After the visit, a Joint Indo-Soviet Communiqué was issued.

A protocol was signed between the Soviet Union and India in New Delhi on 20th October. The protocol envisaged cattle and fine-fleece sheep husbandry, exchange of specialists, scientific and technical information and experience of animal breeding, and exchange of the genetic found of cultural and wild plants with a view to using it for increasing their productivity. On November 22, a high-level nine-member delegation from the Soviet Union led by N.N. Inozemtsev, Deputy Chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee, arrived in New Delhi to finalise the draft of a long-term programme of economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation covering the period up to 1990, between the USSR and India. In December, a long-term programme of Indo-Soviet cooperation in the fields of economy, trade and science and technology, covering a period of 10 to 15 years, was initiated in New Delhi.

On January 23, 1979, “There is every reason to say that today the friendship between the Soviet Union and India has transcended the limits of official relations and has become the cause of all the people, and N. Goldin, President of the Indo-Soviet Friendship Society and USSR Minister of Heavy Industry Construction at a meeting devoted to the 29th anniversary of Indian Republic held in Moscow. On 2nd of March the Soviet Ambassador in India presented a large number of books to the Lok Sabha Library on behalf of the Soviet Parliament at a solemn ceremony held at the Parliament House, New Delhi. A protocol was signed in New Delhi between the Soviet Union and India on the exchange of scientific-technical information within the framework of the 1972 Indo-Soviet agreement on cooperation in applied sciences and technology.

On 9th of March, Alexi N. Kosygin, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers arrived in New Delhi on a seven-day official visit to India at the invitation of the Government of India. Negotiations opened. The sides noted with satisfaction that the relations between the two countries were fruitfully developing on the strong foundation of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and cooperation between the Soviet
Union and India signed in 1971. Both sides expressed the desire to exert fresh efforts with a view to expanding and strengthening Indo-Soviet relations. The Chairman of the USSR Prime Minister of India signed two major documents at the conclusion of their talks: a long-term programme of economic cooperation for a period of 10 to 15 years and the agreement on cooperation in the field of medicine and public health. The two sides also signed a cultural agreement for the period 1979-80 and two other protocols. Under one of the protocols the Soviet Union gifted to the State Farm in Suratgarh a large number of farm machinery and vehicles. The other protocol was on Soviet supply of 600,000 tonnes of crude oil in exchange of India rice. The two sides “reaffirmed their determination to continue joint and active efforts bilaterally and in international forums towards the strengthening of international peace and security.” The sides reiterated their “firm support for the idea of converting the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace.”

Here it is pertinent to say that there had been regular conversation for growing cooperation and never been a single occasion when there had been a dispute on any of the issue. Cooperation between the Soviet Union and India, linked by traditional friendship, was strengthening with every passing year and this served the vital interests of the peoples of the two countries, said L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and the President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in his dinner speech in the Kremlin in honour of the visiting Prime Minister of India on 11th of June, 1979. The Prime Minister of India, in his reply speech, said, “In India the Soviet Union has a steadfast friend whose policies are not guided by or founded upon the shifting sands of transient considerations and temporary advantages, but are based upon a bed-rock of warmth, goodwill and recognition of mutual interests.”

The fifth meeting of the Inter-Governmental Indo-Soviet Commission for Economic and Scientific-Technical Co-operation opened in Moscow. The Soviet delegation was led by the Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and the leader of the Indian side was the External Affairs Minister of India. Indo-Soviet documents were signed in the Grand Kremlin Palace. A statement of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Republic of India was signed by Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and by the Prime Minister of India. An agreement also signed between the Government of the USSR and the Government of India, on cooperation in building of a steel plant in Visakhapatnam. The agreement was signed by the Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers & the Indian Minister of External Affairs. The fifth session of the Inter-Governmental Indo-Soviet Commission on Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation ended in Moscow. On June 14th, in a joint statement the Soviet Union and India noted with satisfaction that Indo-Soviet relations were developing dynamically and fruitfully in a friendly atmosphere with strict observance by both sides of the principles of respect for sovereignty, equality and non-interference in each other’s internal affairs.

On 12th of October, 1979, the Indian delegation to the first meeting of the Indo-Soviet Sub-Commission for Cooperation in Science and Technology headed by the Secretary in the Department of Science and Technology, met V. Kirillin, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Chairman of the Committee for Science and Technology in Moscow. The first session of the Indo-Soviet Sub-Commission for Cooperation in Science and Technology ended in Moscow. A protocol was signed on guidelines for the promotion of scientific and technological cooperation between the USSR and India at the end of the session.

However, India was soon faced with a few problem- the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. Charan Singh’s government had expressed its deep concern over the Soviet action and had warned Moscow that it would have far-reaching adverse consequences. Charan Singh had also demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops.43

India has recognized the April Revolution. It was the second country to do so after the USSR and had hoped that Afghanistan would return to normalcy. However, foreign interference continued, and Washington lifted its arms embargo on Pakistan in order to channel arms to the Afghan rebels. To India, this was a more serious development than the revolution in Afghanistan and its aftermath.
Indeed from India’s point of view, US arms supplies to Pakistan were far more dangerous a development than the Soviet military intervention, for while Soviet troops might one day be withdrawn, the arms would stay on in Pakistan to haunt India. India made it clear to Washington that its new move would create fresh tensions in Indo-Pak relations. However, the Carter administration assured Delhi that the arms were meant to contain Soviet ‘expansion.’ Delhi was not impressed by this plea, for such assurances had been belied earlier.

There is no doubt that Indira Gandhi saw the Afghan development in the light of India’s interests. She told parliament that India judged such issues ‘from the point of view of national interest as well as from the ‘interest of world peace.’ India neither wanted a fundamental regime in Afghanistan nor a one dominated by Pakistan or the USA. **So, when the issue of Soviet intervention was raised before the UN Security Council on US initiative, India chose to abstain.** When the issue was transferred to the General Assembly, India did not depart from its basic approach. On the resolution, sponsored by 17 non-aligned members condemning the Soviet action, and calling upon all nations to refrain from interfering in Afghanistan and asking Moscow (not by name) to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, ‘immediately unconditionally and totally’ the Indian representation at the UNO, Brajesh. C. Mishra said : “India cannot look with equanimity on the attempts by some outside powers to interface in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by training, arming and encouraging subversive elements to create disturbances inside Afghanistan. However, the Indian representative also emphasized, “we are against the presence of foreign troops and bases in any country** and further said that the Soviet government had assured India that its troops went into Afghanistan at the request of the Afghanistan government under the 1978 Treaty and they would withdraw when requested to do so by the Afghanistan government. He hoped that Soviet troops would not stay a day longer than necessary, and asserted that India had no reason to doubt the assurances of a “Friendly country like the Soviet Union, with whom we have many close ties.”
Indo-Soviet Strategic Relations (1980 to 1984) during Indira Era-II

After assuming Office in 1980, Indira Gandhi said that no country was justified in entering another country and that she ‘disapproved’ of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Her main objective was to prevent a major global response to the Afghan developments and prevent a regional explosion that might threaten India’s interests and security. Moscow highly appreciated India’s stand, especially in the light of the fact that the western world, the non-aligned and the Islamic Conference had largely lined up against it on the Afghan issue. In fact, Indira Gandhi had pointed out at Dares-Salam during her visit there, “There who are talking most loudly about the interference of Soviet troops did not say a word when China invaded Vietnam.”

The Visit of Gromyko to India at this time (February, 12-14) was significant. He wanted first to all the reassure Indira Gandhi that Moscow continued to support her, his objective was not only to resume friendly contacts but also a secure India’s understanding and support for the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. He explained the causes for the Soviet intervention, but was at pins more to give the details of the nature of US, Pakistan and Chinese interference in Afghani affairs, The main thrust of Gromyko’s contention was that Washington and Peking had jointly created this crisis in order to foster a new hot spot in the region so that the US presence in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean could be justified, as also its arms build up in the region. India’s reaction were, however, moderate though a statement issued by the External Affairs Ministry stated that the US was obstructing efforts to get Moscow withdraw its troops.

On January 22, 1980, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minster of India, said in an interview on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of India’s Republic Day that “the Soviet Union has been a good friend of India”. It had helped India in its economic development and on many important international issues. On February 15, 1980, a Joint Statement on the official friendly visit of A.A. Gromyko was issued in New Delhi. It noted that “the meetings and talks had promoted the strengthening of mutual understanding of the two sides.”
I.V. Arkipov, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, arrived in India on 21st February to attend the celebration functions of 25th anniversary of Indo-Soviet Economic Relations at Bhilai Steel Plant. A Soviet delegation on science and technology led by L.N. Yefremove, First Deputy Chairman of the USSR State Committee on Science and Technology, arrived in New Delhi, on 27th March on an official visit. A three years programme of cooperation in science and technology between the Soviet Union and India was signed in New Delhi.

The Soviet Union, however, was not fully satisfied with India’s position and continued to hope that India would give stronger support to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. The Visit of Firyubin in April 1980 was part of this continuing dialogue to persuade India on the issue. During the celebrations connected with the 25th anniversary of the first economic agreement of February 1955, Kosygin visited India and had talks on further steps to increase Indo-Soviet cooperation.

In the meantime, Indira Gandhi decided to re-negotiate the defence deal with Moscow, which was almost finalized by the Janta government. In May 1980, a new Defence Ministry delegation visited Moscow, when a major agreement was concluded for the purchase of defence equipment, for which Moscow placed a substantial credit at the disposal of India. The Purchases included MIG-25 aircraft, attack boats with missiles, T-72 tanks and others. It was agreed that India should produce T-72 tanks under Soviet license.

Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, Minister for External Affairs of India arrived in Moscow on an official visit to the USSR on 3rd of June, 1980. A joint statement was released to the press at the end of the official friendly visit of Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao to the USSR. The statement said in part: “The two sides reviewed the development of their bilateral relationships and also a wide range of international questions of mutual interest. They agreed to continue in future as well as exchanging views on such questions through appropriate contacts.”

On Gandhi Jayanti, speaking on the Soviet Television, President N. Sanjiva Reddy said that his talks with Soviet leaders were marked by cordiality,
which was characteristic of the close relation existing between the two countries.

A statement on President N. Sanjiva Reddy’s visit to the USSR said that

“the Soviet Union and India express the resolve to continue cooperation intensively and fruitfully in the interests of consolidating détente and ensuring international security for the benefit of entire mankind.”

Moscow Television telecasted a discussion between two leading Soviet Indologists, Academician Y. Primakov and Academician G. Kotovsky, on India’s foreign and domestic policy in October itself. On October 30th speaking on the results of his visit to the USSR, Mr. N.D. Tiwari, Indian’s Minister for Planning, said in an interview to APN that the two sides had discussed the ways to implement the general principles of the long-term programme of cooperation.

S Skachkov, Chairman of the USSR, Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, stated that Leonid Brezhnev’s visit to India would give a fresh impetus to the extension and development of bilateral economic and technical cooperation between India and the Soviet Union. Lenoid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, arrived in India on an official friendly visit from December 8 to December 11, 1980. On the second day of visit, Leonid Brezhnev addressed the members of both houses of the India Parliament in the Central Hall of Parliament. After the talks between Soviet and Indian leaders several Indo-Soviet documents were signed for further enlarging and widening bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The joint Indo-Soviet Declaration was signed by Leonid Brezhnev and Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The two leaders also signed an agreement on economic and technical cooperation. Indo-Soviet Programme of exchanges in culture, science and education for 1981-82 and an agreement on co-operation in cinematography. He was given a warm and ceremonial send-off. On December 13, 1980, the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and Council of Ministers fully and wholly approved the results of Leonid Brezhnev’s Official friendly visit to India from December 8 to 11, 1980.

Indo-Soviet cooperation got a big boost during Brezhnev’s visit, for the two countries signed a major agreement particularly to boost India’s energy sector
(oil, coal and power). The two countries signed a new trade agreement for the period 1981-86, which envisaged a doubling of trade. The Soviet Union had already emerged as an important trade partner of India. Another major gesture was Bezhnev’s decision to increase crude supply to India by one million tones per year. This was of great importance to India since its own sources of supply (Iran and Iraq) were partly disrupted by the Iran-Iraq war. No wonder Brezhnev declared, “I make no secret of the fact that we have always had a particular liking for Mrs. Indira Gandhi that outstanding political and state figure of contemporary Asia.” Thus, the Brezhnev visit restored the close relations between the two countries, which were clouded during the Janata Period.

On January 15, 1981, all groups of Soviet experts headed by V.I. Litvinenko, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Committee for Foreign Economic Relations arrived in India to take part in the sixth session of the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission. I.V. Arkhipov, First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Co-Chairman of the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, arrived in India to participate in the sixth session of the Commission. A protocol on the sixth session of the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission was signed by I.V. Arkhipov and Mr. P.V. Narasimbha Rao.

A nine-member delegation of Soviet planning experts, led by Prof. A. Bachurin, Vice-Chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee arrived in New Delhi on March 23 to participate in the fifth session of the Joint Indo-Soviet study group on cooperation in the field of planning. A protocol on Indo-Soviet Cooperation in the field of planning was signed in New Delhi.

In an article A.A. Gromyko, Foreign Minister of the USSR, observed that while framing one’s policy, whether in relation to the Soviet Union or to India, no state could afford to disregard the Indo-Soviet Treaty. The Treaty constituted a basic document in international affairs, he added. The article was written especially for Soviet Land magazine on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Indo-Soviet Treaty.
A Protocol was signed in Moscow between India and the USSR on cooperation in planning on 12th October, 1981 after the conclusion of the sixth session of the Joint Indo-Soviet planning group. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, in an interview to Tass said that the people of India held Leonid Brezhnev in high esteem and regarded him as a friend. The Soviet leader, Mrs. Gandhi said, had contributed greatly to making Indo-Soviet friendship an important stabilizing factor in international life. “We have received principled support from the Soviet Union in many moments of difficulty,” she added.\(^5^0\)

On 16th December, 1981, a protocol on further cooperation in the field of machine-building between the Soviet Union and India was signed in New Delhi. A book entitled “A True Friend of India” was released in New Delhi on the occasion of the 75th birthday of Soviet President L.I. Brezhnev. In her telegram of greetings on the 75th birthday of L.I. Brezhnev, Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi said that over the year, Soviet-Indian relations have been demonstrating their firmness, being a model of peaceful cooperation and a factor of peace. “You have made an outstanding contribution to the comprehensive promotion of peaceful relation”, she noted.

USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade I.T. Grishin arrived in New Delhi on 20th December at the head of a Soviet trade delegation to sign the Soviet-Indian trade protocol for 1982-1983. India and the Soviet Union signed in New Delhi a trade protocol for the year 1982 which will raise the annual turnover to Rs. 3,260 crores. The protocol was signed by USSR Deputy Foreign Trade Minister I.T. Grishin and Abid Hussein, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India. On 31st December, 1981, India and the USSR signed in New Delhi a contact for the preparation of the first stage of the feasibility report for the construction of a dam in Himachal Pradesh by directional blasting technique.

A ten-day festival of Soviet-Indian friendship to mark India’s national holiday, the Republic Day, was launched in all the 15 Union republics of the USSR.
On 9\textsuperscript{th} March, the first session of the permanent Soviet-Indian working group on coordination and control over the fulfillment of the long-term programme of economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries opened in Moscow. The Soviet delegation was led by N.N. Inozemtsev, Vice-Chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee, and the Indian delegation was headed by Dr. Manmohan Singh, Member Secretary, Planning Commission of India. A round-table conference organized by the “Soviet Land” publications to mark the 35th anniversary of Indo-Soviet diplomatic relations was held in New Delhi. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Charanjit Channa, India’s Minister of State for Industry, Steel and Mines, said: The Soviet Union with a missionary zeal assisted India in developing its economy.

On 26\textsuperscript{th} March, Semyon Skachwov, Chairman of the USSR State Committee on Foreign Economic Relations, and Avtar Gill, Secretary of the Indian Ministry of Steel and Mines, held talks in Moscow. The discussed question of bilateral co-operation in iron and steel industry, specifically the progress of joint work in building a big metallurgical complex in Vishakhapatnam.

The Indo-Soviet Friendship Festival started in Leningrad on 5\textsuperscript{th} of April lasting for a month. Its programme includes photo exhibitions and lectures on India and the development of economic and cultural relations between the Soviet Union and India. On 13\textsuperscript{th} April, on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Soviet and Indian leaders exchanged greetings. The Indo-Soviet Friendship Month devoted to the 35th anniversary of diplomatic relations ended in Moscow. Celebration meetings, photo and book exhibitions, film festivals in the framework of the Month were held in 20 cities of the Soviet Union. A three-member Soviet delegation, led by A. Zverev, Minister of Forestry of the Russian Federation, arrived in New Delhi to participate in the first anniversary celebrations of the Friends of the Soviet Union.

In an interview to the Indian newspaper Patriot, Soviet Prime Minister N.A. Tikhonov on 2\textsuperscript{nd} of June, 1982 said that the joint efforts of the USSR and
India would continue to promote the cause of peace in Asia and in the rest of the world. He emphasized that “Indo-Soviet relations sealed by the Treaty of peace, Friendship and Cooperation, exerted and continue to exert a positive impact on stabilization of the situation in Asia”. A protocol providing for Soviet help to India in upgrading its oil technology in recovery of oils from the old wells of Gujarat and in seismic surveys and drilling in West Bengal was signed in New Delhi. The protocol signed by the USSR Oil Industry Ministry N.A. Maltsev and India’s Minister for Petroleum, Chemicals and Fertilizers P. Shiv Shankar. The protocol also covered other aspects of cooperation between the two countries in the field of oil exploration and utilization.

Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev congratulated Zail Singh on his election as President of the Republic of India on 19th July, 1982.

In September, 1982 on the eve of her visit to the Soviet Union, India’s Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi told Soviet journalists in New Delhi in an interview, there is nothing today more important than the struggle for peace and international détente. India’s External affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Minister I.V. Arkhipov signed the protocol on Indo-Soviet scientific-technical and economic cooperation, in Moscow. Narasimha Rao termed the signing of the protocol as “optimism and hope” for future, and I.V. Arkhipov as “mutual desire for growth” in bilateral economic and technology cooperation. The Prime Minister of the Republic of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi arrived in Moscow on an official-friendly visit on 20th September, 1982 at the invitation of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Council of Ministers of the USSR. A profound exchange of opinions on key matters of Indo-Soviet relations and on a wide range of problems of the present-day international situation was held at the talks proceeding in the atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding. The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Government of the USSR gave a dinner in honour of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Leonid Brezhnev and Mrs. Indira Gandhi exchanged speeches at the dinner. “Equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for each other’s sovereignty and independence are distinguishing features of Indo-Soviet
cooperation in all fields without exception,” Leonid Brezhnev said. “World peace”, Mrs. Indira Gandhi said in her speech “needs our two countries to cooperate so that our joint population of nearly 950 million is involved in working for reconciliation among peoples”. A joint Indo-Soviet declaration was signed in Moscow by Leonid Brezhnev and Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Speaking on the occasion, Mrs. Gandhi said, the whole gamut of cooperation between India and the Soviet Union gives satisfaction. It has benefited millions and harmed none. Our friendship has contributed to the easing of tension and the promotion of complementary interests.” Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi appeared on Soviet Central Television. As one of the leading world power the Soviet Union is persistently coming out for a turn from conflict to positive moments leading to peace, she said. “I have spent here three days under the sunny skies and in the sunshine of friendship and I think that this reflects the general state of Indo-Soviet relations”. India’s Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi said at a press conference in Moscow. The Soviet Union and India express their grave concern over dangerous situation in the Indian Ocean and call for the dismantling of all foreign military and naval bases and condemn any attempts to build up foreign military presence in the Indian Ocean. The two sides call the early implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and support the decision of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to convene a conference on the Indian Ocean in the first half of 1983. They reiterate their support for the just claim of Mauritian Sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago including Diego Garcia. Indira Gandhi visited the Star City to meet the Indian cosmonauts under training there. Talking at the star city she spoke highly of the growing cooperation between India and the Soviet Union in the space programme. “It is another link in strong chain of friendship between our two countries,” she further added to strengthen the relations more.

The summit meeting between President Leonid Brezhnev and Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi marks another important milestone in the growing friendly relations between India and the Soviet Union which acquired new dimensions after the historic Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and
Cooperation and subsequent agreements, said C. Rajeswara Rao, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, in an interview to Tass in New Delhi.\textsuperscript{52}

On September 29, 1982, an Indo-Soviet scientific symposium opened in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajkistan, a Soviet Central Asian republic.

The years 1983 and 1984 saw Indira Gandhi engulfed in domestic issues of a serious nature. She visited Moscow for the funeral of L.I. Brezhnev and made acquaintance with Yuri Andropov, Brezhnev’s successor. The holding of the 7\textsuperscript{th} non-aligned summit in New Delhi was the high watermark of Indira Gandhi’s second term. The summit which was held in March 1983 was less radical in the stand of the movement compared to the Havana summit, but in view of the continuing aggravations in the ‘arc of crisis’ it became a memorable meeting for its forthright stand on global issue. India took an openly anti-US stand on issues like Afghanistan, Kampuchea and the Indian Ocean. As the host country, it had produced draft resolution reflecting its own stand on the global and regional issues. However, the opposition to Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan and Vietnamese military presence in Kampuchea continued in the movement. However, on global economic issues, the non-aligned stood as one in their demand for a new global economic order and called an international conference on monetary issues.

In December 1983, the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission met in New Delhi. Arkhipov’s visit in connection with this meeting led to further development of Indo-Soviet economic cooperation in Industry, agriculture and science and technology. The main thrust of industrial cooperation had already shifted to fuel and power and the Soviet Union offered further assistance for power development as also for coal mining.

In February 1984, Indira Gandhi was again in Moscow, this time for the funeral of Yuri Andropov. She had talks with his successor Konstantin Chernenko, who assured her that the Soviet leadership would further strengthen Moscow relations with India. It was in pursuit of this objective that the Soviet leadership sent a high-level military delegation headed by Soviet Defence
Minister Marshal Dmitri Ustinov, to India during March, 1984. On the Working of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, he said that the two countries had “advanced towards the correct direction. The Ustinov delegation visited a number of military establishments, including the Nasik aircraft factory, Vishakhapatnam, naval establishment, the Avadi tank factory where T-72 tanks were being produced under Soviet License and the Indian Military Academy. He told workers at these places that India-Soviet relations had become a “Deep-rooted tradition” meeting the interests of both countries.

In April 1984, the Indo Soviet Joint space flight took place. It was in a way the climax of Indo Soviet cooperation in space research which started in 1972. India’s first cosmonaut Rakesh Sharma made history. Wing Commander (Retired) Rakesh Sharma was selected for Indo-Soviet space flight in 1982 and subsequently flew an 8-day near orbit mission as part of a three-member Indo-Soviet international crew from 03 April to 11 April 1984. He was awarded the Ashok Chakra by the Government of India and Hero of the Soviet Union and Order of Lenin by the Government of the Soviet Union. Studies on board the Salyut -7 covered several areas, including earth resources and medicine. The flight also enabled a through assessment of India’s territory and the Indian Ocean areas through observation and photography. Special focus was on the Himalayas and the Thar Desert for hydro-resources and the evaluation of timber wealth and oil and natural gas bearing structures, inland and off-shore. Cooperation in space research is based on agreements between the USSR Academy of Sciences and the Indian Space Research Organisation. The USSR had already helped India to launch its first research satellite, Aryabhata, in 1975 by a Soviet rocket from a Soviet cosmodrome. The Aryabhata between the two countries in this field continues, and a new satellite is to be orbited in 1988.

Throughout the rest of Indira Gandhi’s life, Moscow continued to express sympathy for India’s internal difficulties especially because of the Punjab tumults, running a campaign against external forces which were at the back of extremists. The death of Indira Gandhi brought a profound shock to the Moscow
and to the Soviet people as well. They expressed their love for her in many different ways—by naming their children “Indira”, raising institutions in her name.

**Indo-Soviet Strategic Relations (1984 to 1989) during Rajiv Gandhi Era**

Soviet Prime Minister Tickonov visited India for the funeral of Indira Gandhi. He assured Rajiv Gandhi of the Soviet Union’s Continuing support to the Indian people. He hoped that under the youthful leadership of Rajiv Gandhi, Indo-Soviet friendship would continue to grow. The Politburo of CPSU also noted that the Soviet Union had been and would continue to remain a reliable friend of India. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was not new to the Soviet people. One of the first major foreign policy initiatives of Rajiv Gandhi, as Chairman of NAM, was to make a joint appeal to the two global powers in January 1985 on behalf of India. Argentina, Mexico Tanzania, Sweden and Greece (the “Delhi Six” as they came to be called later) for limitation of the arms race on earth and for its prevention in space. The Soviet Union made a positive response to the appeal, and came forward with a unilateral declaration of moratorium of nuclear tests, initially for five months.

On March 11, 1985 Konstantin Chernenko, the Soviet President, died, and Rajiv Gandhi visited Moscow for the funeral. He met Mikhail Gorbachev, the new General Secretary, who, he felt, had a “clear perspective” of the global problems. He said that Indo-Soviet relations were tested by time and that no one could detract its significance.

Rajiv Gandhi made his first official visit to the Soviet Union in May 1985. Gorbachev welcomed it as a “big event”. He said, “We think that a united, strong and peace-loving India is essential to the world today”, and characterized Indo-Soviet relations as a “unique and priceless heritage.” Rajiv Gandhi, in his interview to TASS, spoke highly of the Soviet contribution to peace and Gorbachev’s initiatives of advance the process of disarmament. In his reply, Rajiv Gandhi assured the Soviet leader that friendship with the USSR had become an essential elements of India’s foreign policy and that the Indian people regarded the Soviet people as “friends” who had “Stood by them in times of need”. He
promised to improve the “splendid record” of Indo-Soviet relations.56 He expressed his deep concern over the growing militarization of the Indian Ocean and foreign interference in the South Asian region. India and the Soviet Union signed two major economic agreements during Rajiv Gandhi’s visit, one to provide guidelines of cooperation for the rest of the country and the other, on Soviet assistance for specific projects for which the USSR advanced 1000 million roubles (Rs. 1200 crores) on very favourable terms. The larger part of this credit went to the development of the Steel and energy sectors. Finally by giving a square her name (Indira Gandhi) during the visit of Rajiv Gandhi in Moscow in May 1985 at a function attended by 1500 people. Rajiv Gandhi said that “it is a symbol of profound and durable friendship between India and the Soviet Union”. He said that Indira Gandhi had special regard for the Soviet Union and for the Soviet people also.

Rajiv Gandhi made a stopover at Moscow on his way back to India from the USA. The Soviet leader also cut short his visit to Sofia to meet Rajiv Gandhi. Their main discussion was centered on peace and security, including India’s security. While Rajiv Gandhi briefed Gorbachev on his talks with Ronald Reagan and the discussions at the Commonwealth meeting, Gorbachev informed him of the meeting of the Warsaw Treaty countries. The main purpose of these discussions was however, to prepare ground for the Geneva Summit between Reagan and Gorbachev. The Rajiv Gorbachev talks revealed that the policies of the two countries were almost identical in most areas. India supported Gorbachev’s proposals to eliminate nuclear weapons in Europe including Moscow’s initiatives at Geneva for arms reductions. Both Moscow and New Delhi considered that the US arms supply to Pakistan, and US encouragement of Pakistan’s nuclear ambition, were dangerous to the peace and tranquility of the South Asian region. On Afghanistan, India appreciated the complex nature of the issue as it had always looked at Soviet intervention of Afghanistan in the context of the interference in Afghan affairs by the USA, Pakistan and some other countries. The Soviet Union had always considered the implemented of the nuclear programme by Pakistan would lead to the bomb, and had therefore shown
“great understanding” of India’ apprehensions on this account, where as Reagan had made no positive response to reassure India.

At the April 1986 meeting of the non-aligned Foreign ministers, India put forward a declaration to welcome to Soviet 15-year proposal for the total elimination of nuclear weapons by the end of the century, which was announced by Gorbachev in January 1986. The Foreign Ministers called it a “timely” measure, and opposed US efforts to militarize space.

On July 28, 1986, Gorbachev made his famous Vladivostok speech, in which the elaborated his Asian security plan, which he had already discussed with Rajiv Gandhi during the latter’s visit to Moscow in May 1985. The speech, which was mainly addressed to Asian and Pacific nations, made certain concessions to Asian and Pacific nations, made certain concessions to China, and also announced the Withdrawal of six Soviet regiments from Afghanistan. Gorbachev made an eloquent reference to “great India” and appreciated India’s leadership of the non-aligned movements and its moral authority and traditional wisdom. He reiterated that the friendly relations between the Soviet Union and India were a contributing factor to establishing the world situation. 57 While presenting his proposals for Asian security, Gorbachev made every effort to avoid misunderstanding. He said that the USSR did not advance any claim to privileges or special position in the Asia Pacific area, and promised not to make ‘egoistic” attempted to secure Soviet security “at someone else’s expense”. He said : Our interest is in the pooling of efforts and in cooperation, with full respect for each people’s right to live as they choose and resolve their problems in their own way in conditions of peace. We are in favour of building together new, fair relations in Asia and the pacific.58 He said that his proposals were based on the experience of the past, and the needs of modern times.

At the Mexico summit of the “Delhi Six” in August 1986, a Declaration was issued on end all nuclear explosions by the USA and the USSR. In response, the USSR extended the moratorium on nuclear explosions until January 1987. In a latter of appreciation to Rajiv Gandhi, Gorbachev said that if only the USA jointed the USSR in the moratorium, a significant step would be taken towards
nuclear disarmament. He appreciated the offer of the “Delhi Six” to provide their services to oversee nuclear test ban.

In November, 1986 Mikhail Gorbachev made his first visit to India. It was “historic” and a “milestone” in the history of Indo-soviet relations, as Rajiv Gandhi described it. The Visit added considerable depth to the bilateral relations between the two nations. Mikhali Gorbachev, who had already won considerable respect and admiration in India, was given a rousing welcome. Rajiv Gandhi welcomed his as a “Crusader” for peace, “not only as a world statesman, but, most of all, as a friend” and spoke of the “tried and tested” nature of Indo-Soviet relations. He hoped that the Gorbachev visit would be a turning point in Indo-Soviet relations. He said: “Our friendship is testament to the historical imperative of a world order based on co-existence and cooperation.” In his reply, Gorbachev said that Indo-Soviet relations were built on “trust, equality, respect and careful consideration of each other’s special needs and interests.” Gorbachev observed that both Soviet and Indian societies were undergoing important transformations and that their cooperation would benefit both. Rajiv Gandhi reiterated India’s support to Gorbachev’s efforts to ban nuclear weapons and to prevent an arms race in space. He also welcomed the profound analysis of the Asian and Pacific situation contained in Gorbachev’s Valadivostok speech and assured him that the people of India had cherished for decades “the vision of a resurgent, prosperous Asia.

In his speech at the House of Soviet Science, Culture and Art on November 27, Gorbachev again pointed out that the Indo-Soviet Treaty was in the interest of both nations and that it served as “an instrument of peace and stability in Asia- and beyond it”. He made a Solemn declaration that “We shall not make a single step in our foreign policy that could damage India’s real interests.” He appreciated the difficulties India was facing in the South Asian region and the foreign pressures to which India was subjected. However, he was confident that India would follow its independent foreign policy, he declared that no one would be able to call in question, let alone diminish, India’s real and
tremendous contributions to the contemporary development of Asia and of the world civilization.

The visit of Gorbachev to the India led to significant developments in Indo-Soviet economic and trade cooperation. Apart from offering a new credit of Rs. 2000 crores to India for four major projects (the construction of the Tehri hydro-power complex, modernizations of Bokaro steel plant, development of four coking coal mines and exploration of hydrocarbons in West Bengal) the two countries decided to raise their mutual trade by 2.5 times by 1992. The highlights of the visit, however will remain the “Delhi Declaration”, a testament for a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world. The two countries also signed an agreement on the holding of their respective Festivals in 1987 to mark the 40th anniversary of Indian independence and the 70th anniversary of the October revolution. The Gorbachev visit proclaimed once again that India was not alone and that it had a reliable friend.

Indo-Soviet friendship is a decisive factor in global development today. The foreign policy of no nation can be realistic, if this factor is not taken into consideration. The Indian and Soviet Peoples constitute a fifth of the humanity. For the past over four decades, their friendship has grown steadily, from strength to strength.

Differences in their social systems as Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had said during his 1985 visit to Moscow, do not preclude their cooperation, because they are working for a larger cause – the cause of peace. Without it all our dreams will be of no avail. We have no doubt, “Rajiv Gandhi had said, “that in the quest for peace, our two countries will always to together. 62

The principles that have bound the two nations are not transitory, “years and decades pass”, Mikhail Gorbachev had said, “*But Soviet-Indian relations have continued to grow* because, as he said, these relations are built on the basis of equality and mutual respect, on the co-incidence or similarity of the positions of the two countries on basic problems of our times. Above all, their friendship has been tried and tested. “You have stood by us”, said Rajiv Gandhi, “in our difficulties. It is adversity, which tests friendships and the
Indian people regard the Soviet people as reliable friends. That is why both nations have declared that promotion of mutual friendship has become an integral part of their foreign policy. If peace is their primary goal, their second goal is to bring about favourable transformations in the world. In this crucial task too, the joint effort of the two nations is crucial for its success.

In these days, Indo Soviet cooperation has become multi-dimensional. It is free from strain. The Soviet Union has given its best to India. It wants to see India grow into a powerful factor in global affairs. Gorbachev had said, “We proceed from the view that a united, strong and peaceful India is an Inseparable and highly necessary part of today’s world”. This has been the Soviet position for long time.

In the meantime, Indo-Soviet cooperation has branched out into all aspects of life. If India has achieved a measure of self-reliance and economic independence in the last 40 years, it very fine saying is thanks to certain wise decisions it look at the dawn of independence. The adoption of planning and the creation of a public sector were the most significant of them. Soviet assistance to India has been impressive. It has emerged as a model, worthy of emulation, in which both the nations continue to maintain equality and derive equal benefits. Soviet assistance to India has been significant in the fields of steel, non ferrous metals, oil and oil refining coal, generation, heavy machinery (to produce power equipment, mining equipment as also equipments for other industries), pharmaceuticals, instruments, communications and other, not to speak of its assistance in the frontier areas like space and nuclear energy. Thus, the USSR provided a firm foundation for India’s industrialization. It helped the growth of a powerful public sector; in turn the public sector helped the general growth of the private sector. India, thus, has emerged as one of the top ten industrials nations of the world. Simultaneously, the USSR provided assistance for research, and development of technologies, as also for manpower development. India did not have to spend any hard currency for all these services, nor was it saddled with a debt problem.
From the eighties, Soviet assistances have been directed to the development of fuel and energy in view of the Oil crisis. In any case, further growth of the Indian economy depends on this.

The basis of Indo-Soviet Cooperation was laid during the visit of Rajiv Gandhi to the USSR in 1985. Since then the visits of both Gorbachev (November, 1986 and of Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Soviet Prime Minister, in November 1987 have brought additional and massive support to India’s economic development. In the mean time, the two countries have signed a long term 15-year agreement for science and technology cooperation.

Soviet credits in the pipelines are more than enough to meet the foreign exchange needs of most of projects. Over 5 million KW of new power generation capacity is to built in the next 15 years, while the total capacity of the 16 power stations built earlier with Soviet assistance was only 3 million KW. As for coal, of the 146 million tones new production to be achieved by the year 2000, over 60 million tones will come from Indo-Soviet projects. The coal gasification is a new technology that India will master in the coming years with Soviet assistance, which will help the country to exploit its vast inferior coal resources. With regard to oil, three major basins are to be developed – Cauvery, North Cambay and West Bengal. Simultaneously, both Bhilai and Bokaro steel plants are to be modernized and work is going on in a number of earlier projects in order to modernize them.

There are a number of other minor and major projects to be built during the coming 15 years and some of them are in the fields of agriculture, and science and technology. There is considerable emphasis on extending irrigation in view of the continuing drought conditions.

Thus, it is clear that Indo-Soviet cooperation is poised for great achievements. Both countries are working out new forms of cooperation with India’s private sector- a new development- One can see great possibilities and potentialities for the future. Already both nations have identified over 175 fruitful areas for production cooperation and more than 130 areas for joint ventures in India and 20 in USSR. Collaboration with Indian Private Companies to modernize oil projects for the production of spares and components and for repair activities-
these are other lines already explored. Indian companies would increasingly take part either in joint ventures or in turnkey projects in Soviet territory. Already contracts have been signed with Indian companies to construct three hotels in the USSR. About 30 more are envisaged by the end of the century. The Soviet Union is interested in such activities in a number of other fields.

The turnover of trade in 1986 was about Rs. 3600 crores. This is expected to touch Rs. 4000 crores in 1987 and the estimated figure for 1988 in Rs. 5000 crores. It is planned to raise trade turnover by 2.5 times the 1986 level by 1992.

The year 1987 will ever remain memorable to the peoples of the Soviet Union and India for the respective Festivals. While Rajiv Gandhi visited the Soviet Union in July to open the Indian Festival in the USSR, Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Soviet Prime Minister came to open the Soviet Festival in India in November. The Five day visit of Ryzhkov also saw a major effort to enlarge the scope of Indo-Soviet bilateral relations. Ryzhkov announced another credit of Rs. 1000 crores to finance two major projects, a refinery of six million tone capacity and a thermal power plant. Yet another agreement was signed to promote production cooperation between Soviet organization and the Indian private section. New steps are being taken to facilitate joint ventures between the two countries.

Nikolai Rzyhkhov’s visit ended with the revival of the USSR’s offer of a nuclear power station and the acceptance of India of a proposal for a joint collaboration space research centre. The Soviet offer of a nuclear station was originally made some years ago but was quickly dropped at the time of Gorbachev’s visit to India last year apparently after Soviet officials had given their verdict against it. Later a committee headed by Prof. M.G.K. Menon reviewed the property of importing a Soviet nuclear station; Ryzhkhov admitted that more practical details of the offer were under discussion. In the scientific circles in India, it was regarded as a retrograde development in so far as the import of a foreign plant would only tend to undermine the indigenous nuclear efforts that were being made in the country. Besides, the plant, based as it was on enriched uranium fuel could not possible fit into the Indian programme and would indeed perpetuate the country’s dependence.
President R. Venkataraman began his 7 days official visit to the USSR on 6 July 1988. The main purpose of his visit was to preside over the closing ceremony which took place on 8 July of the year long India festival in Moscow. He described it a great and historic venture of voyage of discovery, of understanding and friendship.

The President who had the opportunity of assessing at first hand the significance of perestroika reforms initiated by Gorbachev extended India’s good wishes for the success of the initiative were a major milestone in the annuuals of the country’s history. They were bringing about fresh and exciting changes in the economic life of the Soviet Union. India; he assured, was following these changes with interest as we were also engaged in our own form of restructuring in combining the ancient heritage with contemporary requirements.

Gorbachev deprecated attempts by Pakistan to interfere in India’s internal affairs and said it was a wider strategy to prevent India from becoming a strong power. To India the supply of sophisticated weapons to Pakistan and part of a wider strategy to keep India facing a perpetual threat to its security, whereas, Gorbachev said, his country wanted India to remain strong as it was necessary for peace in the region and the world. Rajiv Gandhi visited Moscow in 1989 and both agreed for setting up a 2000 MW nuclear power plant in India.

Indo-Soviet Strategic Relations up to 1989 during National Front Government

The Congress government was replaced by the Janata Dal coalition in the general elections held in December 1989. The New Prime Minister V.P. Singh, clarification of the new government’s policy towards the Soviet Union in a statement reiterated his government’s commitment to continue strengthening bilateral friendship and cooperation.

The Soviet Union welcomed this gesture and as concrete manifestation of his goodwill, Gorbachev sent his special envoy Yulu Vorontsove to Delhi in December 1989 with a letter for the prime minister. In the light of the far reaching changes that were being introduced in the Soviet economy, relations between the
two countries would be further strengthened. The Soviet leaders were keen to continue to assure the new government here that the political change in India was an internal matter which would not in any way affect their mutual relations.\textsuperscript{65}

The Soviet Union, on its part, surrounded as it was by hostile forces and vilified by the cold war propaganda, found in the newly free nations a force which was not only in favour of peace but also for a new world order. In India, one of the leaders of the non-alignment movement, the Soviet Union saw a firm and consistent adherent of the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle. The fact that India has not departed from this position in the last forty years led to Soviet trust in India’s policies. Thus, it is on common goals, inspired by mutual trust, that the solid base of Indo-Soviet friendship is founded. It has benefited the two nations in the last forty years and will continue to serve them in the rest of the century and beyond.
REFERENCES

2. Ibid, p.3
3. Ibid, p.4
4. Ibid, p.9
5. Ibid, p.9
6. Ibid, p.9
7. Ibid, p.9
8. Ibid, p.10
9. Ibid, p.10
10. Ibid, p.13
11. Ibid, p.15
12. Ibid, p.15
13. Ibid, p.15
14. Ibid, p.16
15. Ibid, p.16
21. Ibid, p.21
22. Ibid, p.25
23. Ibid, p.26
24. Ibid, p.26
25. Ibid, p.27
26. Ibid, p.28
27. Ibid, p.28
28. Ibid, p.29
29. Ibid, p.31
30. Ibid, p.35
31. Ibid, p.41
32. Ibid, p.43
33. Ibid, p.48
34. Ibid, p.62
35. Ibid, p.66
37. The Hindu (Madras), 10 August, 1971
39. Ibid, p.95
40. Ibid, p.99
41. Ibid, p.143
42. Ibid, p.144
44. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol.1, No.3 January, 1980, p156-157
46. General Assembly Official records, 1980, p 34
47. Ceylon Daily News (Colombo) April 18, 1980
49. Statesman December 9, 1980
51. Ibid, p.175
52. Lok Sabha Debates Vol.1 No.3 January, 1980, p124
53. Times of India, March 15, 1985
54. Indian Express, May 20, 1985
55. Ibid
56. Times of India, May 22, 1985
57. Pravda, July 19, 1986
58. Ibid
59. Times of India November 26, 1986
60. Ibid
61. Ibid
63. Ibid
64. Hindustan Times 10 July, 1988