

## MOSCOW PROSPECT

The visit of the Russian president, Mr Vladimir Putin, was a study in contrast. There has rarely been a visit by a head of state so rich in substance and yet so lacking in popular appeal and enthusiasm. Consider first the gains from the visit. On three issues of critical importance to India, the presidential visit has gone beyond expectations. Most important is the memorandum of understanding signed on furthering bilateral cooperation on peaceful uses of atomic energy. Although the precise details of the memorandum are not known, it signals Moscow's decision to move away from the nuclear suppliers group strategy of blanket noncooperation with India on nuclear issues until it accepts full scope safeguards on its facilities. This is extremely significant. The Russian decision will help revitalize India's nuclear power generation programme, accelerate progress on the nuclear power station at Kudankulam and could, in the long term, become the basis for a review by other countries within the NSG of their absolutist stance towards India. Simultaneously, there was substantial progress made in defence cooperation with the establishment of an inter-ministerial commission on military-technical cooperation, and India agreed to buy \$3 billion worth of Russian hardware.

No less significantly, Moscow has almost totally backed India's position on Kashmir and Pakistan. On the one hand, Mr Putin made it explicit that he believed that the Kashmir problem should be resolved bilaterally on the basis of compromise and that the line of control should be respected unconditionally. On the other, Russia agreed with New Delhi that a dialogue with Islamabad can be resumed only when "necessary measures are taken for cessation of support for cross-border terrorism." Moscow also made it clear that there were no plans for Mr Putin to visit Pakistan and corrected the apprehensions in New Delhi that Moscow was seeking to engage Pakistan in a strategic relationship that might undermine Russia-India ties. The joint working group on Afghanistan will be of critical importance to both India and Russia. It is noteworthy that both countries have agreed to coordinate their strategies to deal with a new form of religious terrorism, inspired by Pakistan and Afghanistan, that is seeking to subvert secular, multi-ethnic, pluralistic countries, of which India and Russia are among the largest. The call for sanctions against the *taliban* "unless they cease support to international terrorism, drug trafficking and conform to international norms on human rights", should be the first step in a global campaign against the medievalist regime in Afghanistan.

There was much to be happy about and little to quarrel with the substance of Mr Putin's visit. Yet, the Russian presidential visit generated little enthusiasm within the media or within the larger strategic community. Quite clearly, the United States's shadow loomed large on the visit. India's new engagement with the US has struck a chord with the elite and the establishment, and there was little chance that Mr Putin's visit would generate the same attention as Mr Bill Clinton's earlier this year. Moreover, the Russian president's visit was ill-timed. A spate of visits by foreign dignitaries, and Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to the US has fatigued foreign policy watchers. This lack of enthusiasm should not prevent the forward movement of bilateral relations. Relations with Russia, it is vital to stress, will not beat the cost of India's relations with the West. The Cold War is over; a strategic partnership with Russia is based on pragmatism and the common quest for a multipolar international system.

THE TELEGRAPH

10 OCT 2000

## Comrades in Arms

The new Indo-Russian arms transfer relationship is based on a win-win formula. The Russian defence industry desperately needs the oxygen of Indian orders to survive. On the other hand, the failure of its own research and development programmes compels India to go to Russia to help plug the gaps in its defence posture. Much of the "power" that Russia possessed in its 45-year span as a superpower came from its impressive armoury. For India this turned out to be fortuitous. In the '60s when western countries refused to supply submarines and supersonic fighters to India, the Soviet Union stepped in and sold arms to New Delhi at friendship prices, and that too in non-convertible rupees. The good times lasted till the Soviet Union dissolved and the rump of Russia remained. In the '90s, the Indian armed forces tried desperately to shake off their Russian connection but failed. Even when an alternative supplier like France was available, the cost of weapons systems were prohibitive. Besides, the bulk of the Indian armed forces were equipped with Russian weapons and systems. And again, the Russians were willing to bend the rules to assist India in its nuclear submarine and missile programme. In 1996, India took the first major step in restoring the old arms transfer ties when it signed a contract for the supply of 40 Su-30MKI fighters and the upgrade of over a hundred Mig-21 aircraft. Negotiations since then have been protracted, primarily because of Indian doubts about restoring the Russian connection.

The Putin visit, the declaration of a strategic partnership, and the signature on a ministerial-level military-technical agreement marks an end of the period of doubt and the beginning of a new arms transfer relationship. India has contracted Russia to supply over 300 T-90S tanks and signed a protocol to facilitate the purchase of the *Admiral Gorshkov* aircraft carrier. Another protocol has set the stage for the manufacture of the Su-30MKI fighter at HAL. The deals announced are only the tip of the proverbial iceberg. There are scores of small-ticket items that add up to providing the Indian armed forces a tremendous punch in the coming years. In these circumstances, some countries probably need to worry, but not China. Its own multi-billion weapons acquisitions from Russia are merely icing for the cake made from its own extensive domestic arms manufacturing base. But the view from Islamabad is bound to be bleak. There has been a distressingly triumphal air about the visits of Bill Clinton and Vlad Putin to New Delhi. The arrangements worked out with regard to Afghanistan seem designed to undermine Pakistan's victory in that country, albeit through its Taliban proxy. But Islamabad's immediate problem is how to counter the juggernaut of high-performance tanks, fighter aircraft and submarines that the Indian armed forces are acquiring in the coming decade. With no money in the treasury, hard-line Pakistani military leaders would figure that they have an approximately 18-month 'window of opportunity' to do a second Kargil on India before the new acquisitions tilt the balance decisively against Islamabad. New Delhi needs to keep up its military guard, but it also needs to redouble its diplomatic efforts to get the world community to check Islamabad's adventurist streak. /

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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## Putin, Clinton visits reaffirm non-alignment in India's policy'

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, October 7

THE CONGRESS has welcomed the 'positive outcomes' of Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit. Chairman of the Congress' foreign affairs committee Natwar Singh said this visit after an equally successful trip of US President Bill Clinton reaffirmed the continuing relevance of non-alignment in India's foreign policy.

Speaking to reporters, Mr Singh said that India and Russia had to adjust to major changes that took place in the world in the last decade. "Still both countries continue to give highest importance to a close relationship with each other. President Putin's visit has

HT-8  
further fortified this resolve," he said. Mr Singh said several important agreements were signed between the two countries which reflected the intensity of the past relationship and the promise of a new and emerging partnership.

Talking about Congress President Sonia Gandhi's meeting with Mr Putin, Mr Singh said the Russian President recalled the valuable contributions made by former Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi to consolidate this bilateral relationship.

"Mr Putin also hoped that there will be greater party-to-party contacts. This offer was welcomed by the Congress President," Mr Singh said.

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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

10 01 2000

# INDO-RUSSIAN TIES-II

## Younger Brother Embracing The Elder

**A** CONTINUOUS and enlightened Russian interest in India begins with the work of GS Lebedev (1749-1817) who is mentioned in the *Oxford Slavonic Papers* (ed., S Konvalov) as the "first Russian Indologist" and "the Founder of the Bengali theatre" (*Oxford Slavonic Papers*, Clarendon Press, Vol. vii, 1:57, p.1) Lebedev's Bengali translation of R P Jodrell's *The Disguise* was first performed on Calcutta on 5 November 1795. Lebedev's *Grammar of the Pure and Mixed East Indian Dialects* published in England in 1801 is an early Hincusthani grammar written by a European. Lebedev's Russian work on the *Manners and Customs of the Hindus of Eastern India* (1805) includes a picture of Goddess Durga as she is worshipped in Bengal.

There is evidence in this work to establish that Lebedev is Russia's first Sanskritist. In 1811 there was published in St Petersburg, in Russian and in French, an anonymous work on the affinities between Russian and Sanskrit. It is not unlikely that Lebedev had a hand in the preparation of this work. Uvarov, President of the Academy of Sciences, inaugurated Sanskritic studies in the Academy in 1818 and in the long address on the occasion, he said that "the literature of India is the first and most important and the most extensive of all oriental literatures".

### SANSKRIT

"Indian poetry", he added, "bears the imprint of elegant simplicity and at the same time complete maturity of mind and spirit". This enthusiasm about ancient Indian literature led Otto Von Bohlingk (1815-1904), the St Petersburg Sanskritist, first to bring out an edition of Panini's Sanskrit grammar (1839-1840) and then the *Great St. Petersburg Sanskrit Dictionary* in collaboration with several other European Sanskritists (1852-1875).

The distinction of being the founder of Russian Indology, however, goes to Ivan Minayev (1840-1890) who is the first European to say: "knowledge of oriental religions ... has great importance for the thinking man of modern times". Minayev was given a reception at the Asiatic Society of Bengal about which he wrote in his diary: "I am always surprised by the kindness of the Bengalis towards me: it is kindness to Russian and not to me personally". Minayev's love of India is the background of nineteenth century Russia's respect for India which was deepened by the Russian Buddhist scholar SF Oldenburg (1863-1934).

Oldenburg is a link between old Russia and the Soviet regime and it was two years after the Russian revolution that he said at a Buddhist exhibition at Petrograd in 1919: "Nowhere in the world can there have been a people who sought with such effort and intensity to find answers to questions of life and death,

of the purpose and meaning of life, as in India".

It is this passion for the Orient which prompted Dostoevski (1821-1881) to say: "Give us Asia and we shall create no difficulties for Europe". The novelist also said: "It would be useful for Russia to forget Petersburg for some time and to turn her soul toward the East". (see A Aronson, *Europe Look at India*, 1946, p.128-129).

Tolstoy turned to this East when he found in Vivekananda a great philosopher. The whole

to Tolstoy's *A Letter to a Hindu* (1909) Gandhi calls himself an "humble follower of that great teacher whom I have long looked upon as one of my guides... one of the clearest thinkers in the western world, one of the greatest writers".

That the Tolstoyan appreciation of Vivekananda and Gandhi survived in Soviet Russia we can see from AP Gnatyuk-Danil chuk's articles "Tolstoy and Vivekananda" included in Swami Vivekananda Studies in Soviet Union (1987) published by the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture. In this article Danilchuk says that

Vivekananda's works are being read with keen interest in the Soviet Union, and have even inspired our writers and poets. The article ends with a quotation from Valentin Sideyrov's poem on Vivekananda. "He was like a naked sword/ his thought ringing like a steel blade/ Glistening, sparkling, fluttering".

I confess I have no knowledge of Russian interest in Indian life and thought in the years, about decade, since the formation of the Russian Federation. Perhaps there is nothing striking and significant. But about one thing we may be certain. There is now a Russian view of our ancient thought which is a part of the modern world's approach to Hindu-Buddhist Indian culture.

### PHILOSOPHY

That view has been established by FI Shoerbatskoy (1866-1842) who has presented Buddhist philosophy as on precious possession of the modern world. Shoerbatskoy may appear to be a little too logical for those who find their truth in mysticism. But philosophy must have had a hard spine to sustain all our ideas and beliefs and give them an intelligible essence.

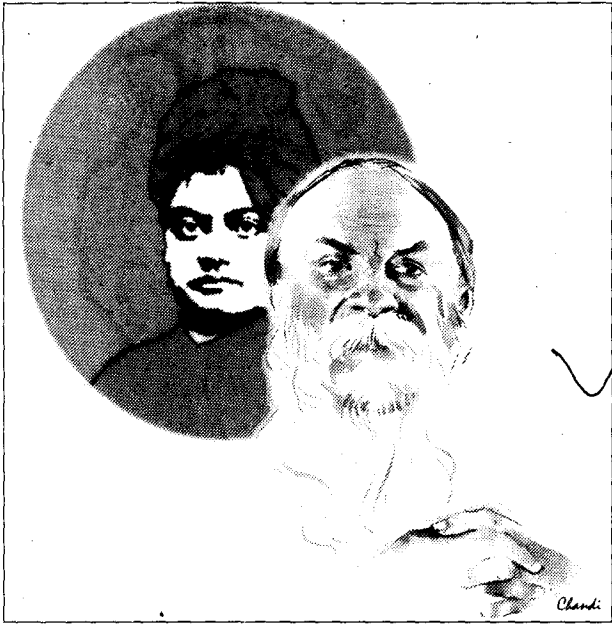
When Shoerbatskoy wrote his *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana* (1927) in English, he gave us a clear understanding of not only of Buddhist philosophy but of Indian philosophy in general. In the same way his two-volume *Buddhist Logic* (1930-1932) is an enlightened introduction to Indian thought. We must not be frightened by the severe intellectual rigour of this Russian scholar: we must master his ideas as the beginning of a grand Indo-Russian enterprise towards a new understanding of our philosophy.

A firm step towards it was taken in 1969 when Dr Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya edited Harish C Gupta's English translation of the papers of Shoerbatskoy in this city.

When President Clinton visited India, he visited a foreign country with whose people he wanted to have the best of relations. When President Putin visited our country on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, it is for him a homecoming, the younger brother embracing the elder.

(Concluded)

By RK DASGUPTA



story of Tolstoy's response to India, particularly to Vivekananda and Gandhi, is well told in Alexander Shifman's *Tolstoy and India* (Eng. tr., AV Esaulov, 1969). Tolstoy read *Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's Sayings* published in 1905 in Madras and exclaimed "wonderful sayings" and decided to bring out a Russian edition of the work which unfortunately he could not do. Tolstoy's admiration for Swami Vivekananda flowed from his respect for Ramakrishna. Asking IF Nazhivin to send him Vivekananda's *Speeches and Articles* he said: "The reading of such books is more than a pleasure, it is a broadening of the soul". In 1909, a year before his death Tolstoy said: "I love Indian philosophy. The most eminent of modern India philosophers is Vivekananda".

### TOLSTOY

Tolstoy's response to Mahatma Gandhi's ideal of non-violence is beautifully expressed in the correspondence between the two very ably edited with an introduction by Dr Kalidas Nag whose *Tolstoy and Gandhi* appeared in 1950. After reading Gandhi's *Indian Home Rule* (1909), Tolstoy wrote in his letter to him dated 7 May 1910: "I have read your book with great interest, because I think the questions you have therein dealt with are important not only for Indians, but for the whole of mankind". In his letter to Gandhi dated 7 September 1910 Tolstoy wrote: "Your work in Transvaal, which seems to be far away from the centre of the world, is yet the most fundamental and the most important to us supplying the most weighty practical proof in which the world can now share and with which must participate not only the Christian but all the peoples of the world". In his introduction

## Realism to the fore

THERE ARE few as critical and unsentimental about the Soviet Union as Vladimir Putin. In an assessment of Russia at the turn of the millennium, Mr Putin spoke of communism as a "road to a blind alley" that led his country "far away from the mainstream of civilisation". The Russian President wants his country to be part of Europe. He has no doubt a growth-driven, market-based economy is essential to Russia's resuscitation. On the other hand, he also believes the primary agent for Russian reform must be the State. A strong State, he has said, is "the initiator and main driving force of any change". Mr Putin praises democracy and liberal values but argues Russia can ill afford such luxuries. All this makes Mr Putin the latest in a long line of reformers going back to Peter the Great who have sought to modernise Russia under the crack of a whip.

Mr Putin has also outlined the sort of world the new Russia needs to keep reforms on track. He rejects economic isolationism, embraces trade and foreign investment. He also wants stability along Russia's periphery. Mr Putin is unmoved by the trappings of superpowerdom. He recently indicated a willingness to scrap most of Russia's nuclear arsenal. The Soviet Union saw India as a major geopolitical counter to China. The new Russia, with its Switzerland-size economy, is less concerned with such global games. Until the present visit, the new Russia had minimal interest in India. No Russian President had come to India in eight years. Mr Putin indicated his foreign policy priorities by visiting Europe and east Asia before coming to the sub-continent.

What the summit has done is recalibrate the Indo-Russian relationship to a lower, but more realistic level. It has dug up common interests in containing the terrorist breeding ground of Afghanistan and cooperating to get middle ranking powers some manoeuvring space in a unipolar world. This is enough to construct an Indo-Russian relationship for the next decade or two. It is not the stuff of a two-in-one world vision. For all the talk of a strategic partnership, Moscow and New Delhi do not paint the big picture in the same colours any more. Mr Putin is unenthusiastic about New Delhi's nuclear ambitions and has shied away from endorsing a permanent Security Council seat for India. There is no evidence that the economic links will go beyond the sale of jet fighters. The main accomplishment of the visit is that leaders of the new Russia now have reasons to mark New Delhi on their maps while leaders of a new India have more than just the past to make them think of Moscow.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 OCT 2000

## WFO Farewell to arms

NEW DELHI and Moscow have reportedly signed what is the largest single arms deal ever for Russia's arms industry. Under the \$ 3 billion deal, India will add 150 Sukhoi-30 Mk I fighter aircraft to its fleet over the next 17 years. The real accomplishment of the deal is that the Sukhois will be manufactured in India with Russian assistance. This should mean a complete transfer of the technology involved in making this multipurpose fighter. India expects to be able to manufacture every component of the aircraft. On paper, this is a perfect match. India needs to replace its ageing fleet of fighters and cannot get them from the West. Russia needs money to design and manufacture a new generation of such aircraft. The question that needs to be asked is whether Russia, whose military-industrial complex has shrunk 90 per cent since the Cold War's end, can deliver.

Russia is the world's fourth largest arms seller. However, it is rapidly falling behind in the high-technology aspects of warfare. The Su-30 fighters it recently sent to India have been little more than souped-up Su-27s, lacking the avionics and electronic warfare apparatus that truly determine who rules the skies. New Delhi is trying to get Israeli or French equipment to plug these gaps. While the new arms deal should provide India a lot of engineering knowhow, it will not provide electronics or software. This is not a problem so long as Pakistan remains unable to purchase weapons from either the West or Russia. However, India may find it hard to match the Chinese. Beijing gets the same equipment and technology from Russia. It also buys Russian brains: over 4,000 Russian engineers and scientists have migrated to China.

India needs to start thinking more strategically about its arms supplies. Russia's arms industry depends on advances from India and China to pay for the research and development of its next generation of weapons. But no amount of money will allow it to develop the information-based technologies that drive modern warfare. Russia will remain a good source of platforms, especially tanks and basic aircraft components like engines, for maybe another decade. The latest deal is quite likely to be the last bit of arms technology India will be able to squeeze from the leftovers of the old Soviet arms industry. And even then it will only give half an aircraft.

## Storm troopers, party-poopers

IT IS rather difficult to comment on — let alone make sense of — the latest ruckus made by a section of the Sangh parivar. In the past, these self-imposed guardians of Hindu culture have shown their antipathy to Valentine's Day celebrations, birthday cakes and beauty pageants. Just when one thought that things couldn't get more ridiculous, the Hindu Jagran Manch, yet another shopfront of the RSS, has warned the people of Uttar Pradesh against welcoming the New Year. If such a threat was not serious, one would have been bemused to see this challenge against the Gregorian calendar. Unfortunately, the parivar is, as always, dead serious. They have already warned hotels, clubs and restaurants about the dire consequences if celebrations aren't "toned down". In Sangh-speak that means no liquor, no dance, no music, but "celebrating in a traditional manner with prayers, charity and other good deeds". Making beards and *burqas* compulsory would have completed the transformation of UP into Taliban country.

Uttar Pradesh's Chief Minister Rajnath Singh has already announced a ban on beauty contests, while women in Kanpur University were recently harassed for wearing Western attire. Going by such precedence, one is unlikely to write off the latest threat. There is, however, a slight hitch. While the UP Government is only too keen to help in the civilisational battle against the "systemic attempt by multinational companies to corrupt our youth", some state ministers and bureaucrats have bypassed the 'ban' by opting to usher in the New Year in less constricting climes. Around 15 of them have already left to holiday abroad. To stop more egg yolk landing on their face, the Manch has requested the Chief Minister to put a stop to any further flight of revellers.

The Sangh parivar has once again shown that it needs to 'get a life'. If this option is unavailable to the 'custodians' of Hindu culture, they should at least stop playing dog in the manger. One can already see the next item on their hit list: the Western-style lavatory. With the party mood already in swing, all one can say to the saffron bogeymen is a Happy New Year. And while we're on it, a belated Merry Christmas.

### THINK IT OVER...

*The Puritan hated bear-baiting,  
not because it gave pain to the bear,  
but because it gave pleasure to the spectators*

— LORD MACAULAY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2000

## THE SUKHOI DEAL AND AFTER

INDIA AND RUSSIA have finally signed the deal for both purchase and manufacture under licence in India of Sukhoi-30 MKI fighter jets. One of the costliest defence deals, the Sukhoi fighters already raised a controversy when a previous agreement was signed in 1996. The question raised even then was — does the Indian Air Force (IAF) need these fighters? It was certainly not the first on its priority, as the Advanced Jet Trainers (AJTs) were. But the then Government went ahead and clinched the deal with Russia and the present regime has expanded and deepened the Indo-Russian collaboration on this front. Apart from the outright purchase of a fleet, India has contracted for the licensed production of about 140 Sukhoi-30 aircraft by the public sector Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL). The whole deal is worth about \$3 billion, to be spent over the next 15 years or so. As a result, the Sukhoi will be the IAF's mainstay for the next two decades and more. Is it the right decision? Was there a choice? Only the IAF can answer, though it is bound to argue that the failure of the HAL to come out with the LCA gave it little choice.

This deal raises several issues. Even during the 1996 agreement, there was speculation of the involvement of middlemen. Of course, the Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, has asked the Central Vigilance Commissioner to look at all the defence deals struck in the past 15 years — starting from the Bofors days. So, the CVC is likely to scrutinise all these deals and come up with his findings. This is something that needs to be sorted out one way or another. The second question relates to the sale of the same Sukhoi aircraft to China. Moscow has argued that they are not the same and that the fighters to be supplied to India will be upgraded versions, with greater sophistication. There were also complaints of the use of secondhand equipment in the initial supply of Sukhoi fight-

ers following the 1996 agreement. This must be clarified by the Defence Ministry. A third question relates to whether Sukhoi-30 MKI is really the multi-role aircraft/fighter that the IAF needs. When the Government decides to go in for such a major purchase and production programme, it has to be fully justified.

An equally debatable issue is whether India should go in for licensed production of the fighters by the HAL, when it cannot sell them to a third country. While going in for a \$3-billion deal, India should have bargained for either exports or at least supply of some components and equipment to Russia for the production of this version. If the HAL is going to produce just 140 or 150 aircraft for the IAF, what will be the economy of scale? This has always been the problem with both the HAL and the Russian deals. Without an advantageous economy of scale in production or a collaborative arrangement with Russia, what will be the return on the huge investment in the production facilities at the HAL. It can only add to the overheads and make the HAL a white elephant the country can ill-afford. The foreign policy of the country also prohibits the sale of defence items to some countries, which remain the main potential buyers. It is time for the Centre to revise its industrial policy and open up some areas of defence production to the private sector. Perhaps a private partner could have secured a better deal from Russia even for the Sukhoi fighters. Again, a disturbing element is the over-dependence on Russia or sourcing of defence equipment from it. The comforting feature of the deal, however, is that the Centre has dramatically stepped up investment in the defence sector. It must soon clinch the AJT deal with Britain. But the sudden spurt in defence spending has also sparked fears of a renewed arms race in the subcontinent.

THE HINDU

30 DEC 2000

# India, Russia sign deal for 140 Sukhoi-30 jets

Moscow, December 28

INDIA AND Russia today signed their single largest ever defence deal for the production of 140 Sukhoi-30MKI multi-role jets in India by HAL over a span of 17 years under Russian license, Interfax news agency reported.

The over three billion dollar deal was inked at SU-30MKI manufacturing Iapov aircraft plant in the Siberian city of Irkutsk.

"It is the single largest defence deal ever signed by Russia with any foreign country," Russia's main 'Ort' TV said.

High level Indian team led by Dhirendra Singh, Additional Secretary Defence Production and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) Chairman Krishna Das Nair, currently in Russia completed the formalities and inked the deal in the Siberian city of Irkutsk at local aircraft plant Iapov with the officials of 'Rosoboronprom' state arms exporting agency.

The deal provides for the full production of 150 next generation combat jets in India and has taken their defence cooperation 'far beyond' a 'buyer-seller' relationship, Russian and Indian defence experts say.

Encouraged by the professional

competence of the Indian engineers and experts, the Sukhoi Corporation has expressed its willingness to jointly develop a fifth generation fighter with India for the Russian and Indian air forces if the political leadership of the two countries decides.

The two countries had agreed for the Sukhoi technology transfer during Russian President Vladimir Putin's India visit on October 2-5, when Defence Minister George Fernandes and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Iliya Klebanov signed a memorandum.

Under the deal India would be given a 'deep' license, which provides for the indigenous production of all the components of SU-30MKI over a period of 20 years including 'AI-31FP's state-of-the-art thrust-vectoring engines.

India could use the technological spin-off of the 'MKI' project for developing its light combat aircraft (LCA).

Under the earlier 1.8 billion dollar Sukhoi deal signed with Russia in November 1966, India is to get 40SU-30MKI multi-role fighters with mid-air refuelling capability.

An additional deal was signed in December 1998 for the purchase of the 10SU-30K, which would be finally upgraded to 'MKI'. (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 DEC 2000



# India, Russia to sign Sukhoi technology deal on Dec 28

Moscow, December 26

NEW DELHI and Moscow will sign the much-awaited multi-billion-dollar technology transfer deal for the production of 150 Sukhoi 'SU-30MKI' multi-role jets in India under Russian license on December 28, defence sources here said.

The two countries had agreed on the deal during Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit in October.

A high level Indian team, led by Additional Secretary, Defence Production Dhirendra Singh, and HAL chairman Krishna Das Nair, is currently in Russia to complete the formalities and ink the deal in

the Siberian city of Irkutsk on Thursday at the local aircraft plant 'Iapo', the sources said.

Under the three-billion-dollar deal, India would be granted a 'deep' license, which provides for the indigenous production of all components of SU-30MKI over a period of 20 years, including 'al-31 FP' thrust-vectoring engines.

Moscow had signed a similar deal with Beijing a few years ago but had refused to issue 'deep' license to China, which is tightly tied to Russian engine supplies for the licensed production of older generation SU-27 bombers, top Russian defence expert Ruslan Pukhov said. The 'Kommersant-

Vlast' weekly described the Indo-Russian project as Russia's 'most-successful' defence deal specially tailored to meet buyer country's strict requirements.

Moscow cannot sell this jet to any third country without New Delhi's 'written' consent as it has been developed on Indian money and India has a share in technology rights, it said.

India could use the technological spin-off of the MKI project for developing its advanced fighter and the Sukhoi Corporation has indicated its willingness to jointly develop a fifth generation fighter with India for Russian and Indian Air Force. (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

27 DEC 2000

# 'India, Russia nuclear cooperation will continue'

By Vladimir Radyuhin HD-8

MOSCOW, DEC. 16. Russia will continue nuclear cooperation with India even if it meant reviewing its commitments under international exports controls.

The Russian Minister for Atomic Energy, Mr. Yevgeny Adamov, expressed confidence that Russia will supply more nuclear reactors to India in addition to two units for the Koodankulam power plant agreed earlier. "I am convinced there will be more contracts," Mr. Adamov told presspersons in Moscow.

As a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), Russia is under restrictions to supply nuclear technology to countries such as India which had refused to place all its nuclear programmes under full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Despite the U.S. pressure, Russia went ahead with the Koodankulam deal, arguing it had been negotiated before the full-scope rule was clamped down in 1992.

Replying to a question from *The Hindu* on how Russia's intention to supply more nuclear reactors to India could be reconciled with the NSG restrictions, Mr. Adamov hinted that Moscow could withdraw from the NSG. If current restrictions on cooperation in peaceful use of nuclear energy were not modified, there may be changes in the lists of participants in various control regimes, the Minister said.

Mr. Adamov cited the example of China, which had not adhered to the NSG inspite of being a member of the Zangger Committee of nuclear exporters. This enabled her to build a 300- MW nuclear plant in Pakistan recently, since the Zangger Committee rules did not require full-scope safeguards. Russia is a member of both the NSG and the Zangger Committee. However, Mr. Adamov was

confident that Russia could persuade the NSG to ease export restrictions.

"We should be able to bring our partners in the NSG to an understanding that the enforcement of rules which contradict Articles 3 and 4 (of the non-proliferation treaty) amounts to slapping sanctions against India and harming Russian commercial interests, the Russian Minister said.

Article 3 of the NPT said international safeguards must not hamper international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, while Article 4 urged all NPT signatories to contribute to further development of the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes with due consideration for the needs of developing areas of the world.

Mr. Adamov denounced as 'unconstructive' the Western nuclear technology boycott of India to force it to give up its nuclear option and sign the non-proliferation accords. Such attempts amounted to sanctions, he said. "We are against a policy of sanctions and did not impose them even when India conducted its nuclear tests."

Mr. Adamov's statement raised the veil of secrecy over the Indo-Russian nuclear cooperation agreement signed during the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin's visit to Delhi in October, but whose contents had not been made public. "We will do our best to participate in India's ambitious programme to generate 20,000 MW of nuclear power by 2020, he said.

The Minister said the Russian side was completing a detailed report on the Koodankulam project and hoped that a commercial contract for the supply of two reactors would be signed next year.

THE HINDU

17 DEC 2000

# USA against Indo-Russian N-sub deal

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 30. — Negotiations are on between India and Russia for the lease of a nuclear submarine but American pressure on the Putin government could scuttle the deal.

If all goes well, the nuclear submarine could be with the Indian Navy in a year, top government officials said. But the last such deal between India and Russia — for the lease of the INS Chakra in 1987 — had raised quite an uproar. The submarine was returned in 1991.

The success of the deal would depend on how Russia handles the pressure of delivering a nuclear submarine to India. The USA is against the deal as it feels South Asia is an unstable region. The Non Proliferation Treaty bars the sale of nuclear submarine to this region but a

## FIGHTER PLANES

MOSCOW, Nov. 30. — Russia will deliver the 40 Su30MKI fighter planes — the deals for which were signed recently — to India by 2004.

Test flights for the planes have already begun and serial production is expected to begin as soon as the test flights post positive test data, reaching the stipulated levels marked in the contract. — UNI

lease is one way of skirting the law.

The INS Chakra was a hunter-killer submarine and the new deal too may be for the same.

A nuclear submarine is larger and more capable than a conventional one. A nuclear submarine can remain submerged for long periods, making it less vulnerable. It is also more "silent". A nuclear submarine

has to fit in the reactor and advanced weapon systems. It also requires more personnel, including technicians, on board.

But a nuclear submarine doesn't necessarily carry nuclear missiles — they are merely powered by a nuclear reactor. The power thus generated keeps the vessel submerged for a long time. It can, however, fire other powerful missiles.

While India does not have any nuclear submarine, Pakistan has French AIP submarines which are, in many ways, superior to ordinary submarines but not as capable as nuclear submarines. The AIPs may be called a "halfway house".

The Navy and the DRDO are working on a nuclear submarine. But the vessel is not likely to be ready before 2006.

Meanwhile, the Navy wants to keep alive the training needed for a nuclear submarine. Without a new vessel, the lessons learnt from the use of the INS Chakra would be lost.

THE STATESMAN

1 DEC 2000

# Russia hails ceasefire

By Vladimir Radyuhin

between India and Pakistan," the Foreign Ministry statement said.

**MOSCOW, NOV. 23.** Russia has strongly backed India's unilateral ceasefire in Kashmir. In a statement issued on Wednesday night, the Russian Foreign Ministry welcomed the ceasefire as a move facilitating the resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan on Kashmir.

"This initiative by the Indian leadership is a fortunate step towards realisation of a willingness for the resumption of dialogue proclaimed both by Delhi and Islamabad," the Russian statement said.

Moscow used the occasion to call for Indo-Pakistani talks on Kashmir. "We are convinced that the Indo-Pakistani negotiating process is crucial for progress towards non-confrontational relations in South Asia. It is important not to lose another chance for creating an atmosphere favourable for renouncing violence, defusing tensions and building up a climate of trust between the two biggest countries in South Asia."

The Russian Foreign Ministry restated Moscow's opposition towards internationalisation of the Kashmir problem. "As regards Russia's stand on the Kashmir issue, it remains unchanged: the problem must be resolved through peaceful, political means on the basis of a bilateral dialogue

**Respond positively, says US**

PTI reports:

The United States has asked Pakistan and Kashmiri militant groups to respond positively to the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee's, Ramadan ceasefire offer saying the move is a harbinger of a sustained dialogue that could bring peace in the region.

The Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, has been in touch with Islamabad and "we certainly urge the Pakistan Government to respond to the announcement in a positive fashion," the White House spokesman, Mr. Jake Siewert, said yesterday.

The State Department spokesman, Mr. Richard Boucher, said Mr. Vajpayee's announcement was fully consistent with the President, Mr. Bill Clinton's assertion that "there needs to be restraint, respect of the line of control, rejection of violence and renewal of dialogue to settle the Kashmir dispute." He urged hardline militant groups which rejected the ceasefire offer to "reconsider their positions and to use this opportunity to begin a process to end the conflict in Kashmir."

THE HINDU

NOV 23 2001

ND-14

## Russia calls for trilateral cooperation

**NEW DELHI, NOV. 20.** Terming as "real" the terrorist danger from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, Russia today said there was a "lot of scope" for trilateral cooperation among New Delhi, Washington and Moscow to combat the menace including the threat posed by international terrorist mastermind Osama Bin Laden.

"I see a lot of scope for such kind of cooperation" among the three countries, the visiting Russian First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. V. I. Trubnikov, told presspersons here.

Replying to questions on the danger of terrorism emanating from Afghanistan, he said "I do not want to over-estimate the threat, but it is a real one."

On efforts being made to nab Afghanistan-based Osama, Mr. Trubnikov said the area of cooperation should not only be confined to Osama but its scope should be much wider. — PTI

THE HINDU

21 NOV 2000

## Russian Minister to visit India

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, NOV. 18.** The former Russian master spy, Mr. Vyacheslav Trubnikov, will visit India between November 20 and 23, for a meeting of a newly established Indo-Russian working group on Afghanistan, it has been officially announced here.

The working group, co-chaired by the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, will meet on November 20 and 21 in New Delhi. Mr. Trubnikov's visit is noteworthy in many ways. It is the first time the Army General, who made his professional career as a secret service officer in India, is visiting the country after he came out of the "woods," as the headquarters of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, SVR, located in a tree-grown Moscow suburb, is popularly known here.

Until he was appointed the First Deputy Foreign Minister three months ago, Mr. Trubnikov, 56, worked for the Soviet KGB for more than 20 years. He has been heading the Foreign Intelligence Service, which succeeded the KGB, for the past five years. He is fluent in Hindi and has spent 13 years in South Asia, most of it in India, where he reportedly earned two Orders of the Red Banner, a top Soviet military award.

It was under Mr. Trubnikov and his predecessor, Mr. Yevgeny Primakov, that the Intelligence Service dramatically increased its political role, as about the only Government agency in Russia that preserved its integrity and avoided frequent shake-up during the chaotic rule of the former President, Mr. Boris Yeltsin. Shortly before his resignation last year, Mr. Yeltsin publicly admitted that the SVR was playing a greater role in the formulation of the Russian foreign policy than the Foreign Ministry or any other institution.

THE HINDU

19 NOV 2000

**DOWN WITH FUNDAMENTALISM: PANEL TO SET WORKING AGENDA**

# Indo-Russian joint committee to delve into Afghan problem

Indrani Bagchi

NEW DELHI 16 NOVEMBER

INDIA AND Russia will hold intensive discussions on Afghanistan as the newly created joint working group meets here for the first time early next week.

Foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh and Russia's first deputy foreign minister Yuri Maslyukov will head the delegations that will set out a working agenda on Afghanistan.

Both India and Russia oppose the Taliban who, they believe, are breeding and exporting a fierce form of Islamic fundamentalism.

At the same time, the interior ministers of Russia, Pakistan and some central Asian countries are meeting in Islamabad to discuss the Afghan problem.

Sources said the meeting has been called, ostensibly, to discuss border management issues. But Pakistan will try to assuage the fears of others about the alleged dangers of Taliban rule in Afghanistan and how it makes sense for other countries to deal with the Taliban. While some Central Asian states may actually fall for this pitch, India, Russia and the US remain steadfastly opposed to the Taliban.

Recently as the Taliban has been overtaking large areas of northern Afghanistan, virtually beating at the doors of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, these countries have been caught between the devil and the deep blue sea.

Unable to protect themselves and in some cases unwilling to accept Russian military help, leaders like Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan have lately been making conciliatory noises about the Taliban. Kazakhstan last week said it was willing to deal with the Taliban, departing from its earlier stance.

Russian president Vladimir Putin, for his part, has been rallying these countries by working out details of joint military operations during a recent summit in Bishkek, but Pakistan will try to



**THE GREAT DIVIDE: An Afghan woman walks past a Titanic wedding cake ad in Kabul on Thursday. The Hollywood film is famous here though TV and video are banned in the country. The Titanic mark has also been given to a variety of goods including clothes, cosmetics, footwear and even rice. — AFP**

exploit what it correctly interprets as fatigue and collective panic in these nations.

Iran has also remained a strong critic of the Taliban and has, like Russia and the US, also set up a dialogue with India on Afghanistan. But at the recent OIC summit in Doha, Iran too failed to deny Taliban legitimacy: Taliban was a participant at the OIC this year.

Russia also weakened its stance when it decided to engage with Pakistan as a means of trying to solve the problem of Chechnya. But in the past few weeks, as Central Asian states have weakened, Russia emerged as a stringent critic of the Taliban, chastising its former republics for softening.

Sergei Ivanov, secretary of the Russian National Security Council, said sanctions against the Taliban should be intensified. Dismissing the quality of the Taliban rule, Mr Ivanov was quoted as saying, "What sort of order

is there in Afghanistan? part from medievalism and production of drugs ... there is total ideological brainwashing and the support of religious fundamentalism."

Both India and Russia will have to work overtime to keep up the pressure not only on Afghanistan, but Pakistan as well. Hence the proliferation of joint working groups on Afghanistan, as India attempts to pile on the pressure.

The US remains opposed to the system in the Afghanistan, and Indian officials have met the principal deputy under secretary of defence for policy from the Pentagon, James Bodner, over the past few days to discuss regional security and strategic issues, including Afghanistan.

Pakistan, however, will have an attractive sales pitch — that the Taliban would be best suited to bring Afghanistan stability which is vital for the energy industry to reap the peace dividend in the region.

*The Economic Times*

17 NOV 2000

## India, Russia to develop modern passenger aircraft

NEW DELHI: India and Russia have agreed to jointly develop a new generation passenger aircraft. Besides, Moscow has decided to revive its participation in the production of the 15-seater 'Saras' aircraft.

Discussions were held in this regard between civil aviation secretary A.H. Jung and Russian officials in Moscow last week. Following the talks, the two sides signed an agreement to promote aviation safety and joint development and certification of aeronautical products. An official spokesperson said the decisions were taken at the first session of the Indo-Russian working group on civil aviation, which was co-chaired by Mr Jung and deputy director general of the Russian Space and Aviation Agency, Y.A. Bardin.

According to her, it was also agreed that the two sides would continue parleys to expand the scope of the agreement. She added that aeronautical authorities of the two sides would also prepare implementation procedures for reciprocal acceptance of aeronautical products and both would explore the possibility of cooperation between enterprises on the production of aircraft parts and units.

The agreement envisages that India and Russia will conduct technical assessments to develop an understanding on each other's standards and systems with regard to

facilities, flight operations, simulators and training establishments.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Russian Ilyushin Aircraft Corporation will also continue discussions on the joint design and production of a new generation 100-seater 'Il-214' passenger plane in India.

New Delhi has shown keen interest in the co-development, co-production, maintenance and support of the Russian-origin civilian commuter and cargo aircraft in India, including the modernisation of Soviet-built helicopters currently being used in the country. New Delhi and Moscow have also agreed to strengthen the airworthiness standards of light aircraft, transport planes, engines and propellers.

### FLYING HIGH

- Pact signed to promote aviation safety
- Talks on for joint production of 100-seater plane
- Strengthening of airworthiness standards on the cards

According to the spokesperson, to do away with the certification process in both countries, it was agreed that aeronautical products developed and certified by one

country and meeting the requirements would be acceptable to the other. Mr Jung and chairperson of Moscow-based CIS inter-state aviation committee Tatyana Anodina also initialled an agreement on promotion of aviation safety. This will, if approved by the governments of the two countries, provide for mutual recognition of airworthiness certificates issued by the national civil aviation authorities. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

8 NOV 2000



## India to get 10 SU-30MKI fighters next year

**LONDON, NOV. 2.** India will receive the first batch of ten 32 Sukhoi SU-30MKI multirole fighters from Russia late next year, while the remaining will arrive before the end of 2003, *Jane's Defence Weekly* reported.

New Delhi had ordered 40 SU-30MKI fighters under a \$1.3 billion contract signed with Moscow in November 1996, but only eight aircraft have reached India since.

Delivered in 1997, these Aircraft were of the preliminary SU-30K configuration, and were not equipped with advanced features such as forward canards, thrust-vector control engines and advanced avionics, the report said.

Russia's Irkutsk Aircraft Production Association is expected to upgrade all 18 of these SU-30KS to SU-30MKI standard after 2003 through its role as prime agent for the Indian contract.

The work could also be carried out at one of the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's facilities, as the company is expected to launch licensed production of the SU-30MKI after 2004, it said.

The Ministry of Defence and Russia's Rosvoorouzhnie State Export Company are expected this month to conclude a contract allowing India to produce upto 150 SU-30MKIS, the report said quoting diplomatic sources in Moscow.

An inter-Governmental agreement covering the deal was signed during the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin's official

visit to India early last month. The 20-year accord does not include re-export rights, it said.

On October 19 India received its first four of 40 MIL MI-17-IV (MI-8MTV-2) transport helicopters ordered at a cost of \$ 170 million earlier this year.

Russia's Kazan helicopter plant is due to complete deliveries of the remaining aircraft by late 2001, after which all 40 will undergo an upgradation programme to include the installation of 12 VIKHR-M (AT-16) medium-range air-to-surface missiles. The laser-guided weapon has a maximum range of about 10 km. — PTI

### Vietnam delegation calls on Laxman

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, NOV. 2.** A delegation from Vietnam met the Bharatiya Janata Party president, Mr. Bangaru Laxman, and other party leaders for an hour at the party office today and exchanged views on a wide range of subjects.

The delegation included the Vice-Minister, Mr. Duc Luong, and the Ambassador to India, Mr. Pham Sy Tam, while with Mr Laxman were party leaders, Mr. J.P.Mathur, Mr. N.N. Jha and Mr. Ramesh Arora.

Both sides expressed satisfaction that relations between the two countries were steadily improving but felt the need for further strengthening of old ties.

THE HINDU

3 NOV 2000

# New Delhi, Moscow developing new trade route via Teheran

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, NOV. 2.** Keen to expand their trade relationship, India and Russia are developing a new cargo transit route through Iran.

New Delhi, Moscow and Teheran have signed an agreement in St. Petersburg on September 12 for sending Indian cargo to Russia through a "north-south corridor".

According to the arrangement, Indian goods will be sent from Mumbai or Okha to the Iranian hub of Bandar Abbas via the strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf. From here, containers will be reloaded on trucks or railway wag-

ons and despatched to the Iranian port of Anzali on the Caspian sea.

"The establishment of the north-south corridor is a reflection of the strategic partnership between India and Russia. We hope to include Iran and Kazakhstan as well", the Russian Ambassador to India, Mr. A. Kadakin said addressing a workshop organised by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) on "Transit route to Russia through Iran."

After transshipment at Anzali, goods will be loaded on ships and taken to the Russian port of Astrakhan. Astrakhan in past has been the springboard for expand-

ing Russia's influence towards Central Asia.

The land route from Astrakhan to the Russian mainland is straightforward as containers from here can be sent either to Moscow or St. Petersburg. Cargo can further head for European destinations such as Helsinki and Hamburg because of the availability of a well-developed road and rail network. A direct sea-riverboat link from Anzali to Moscow, Murmansk as well as some Black Sea ports to the west is also in place. Aware of the strategic location of the Caspian sea, Indian traders feel that the new route

could boost trade with Central Europe as well. Besides India and Russia, other South Asian countries have expressed interest in utilising the north-south corridor. Iran's Ambassador to India, Mr. M. Moosavi, told *The Hindu* that Bangladesh had shown interest in utilising the Iranian "land bridge" for sending its cargo to European destinations.

The north-south corridor is expected to slash costs and transit time substantially. For instance, a pilot container sent from Mumbai took only 15 days to reach Astrakhan at a cost of \$ 2,500. These advantages are fairly obvious as

trade between India and Russia is currently conducted through a much longer and cumbersome route involving the Baltic ports of St. Petersburg and Kotka, the Dutch port of Rotterdam and the Ukrainian Black Sea ports of Ilychevsk and Odessa. Several bottlenecks are yet to be cleared before the corridor could become viable. Poor banking facilities in these areas is likely to make repatriation of profits difficult. Barter trade along this route is likely to be pronounced in the future. Countries in this zone, especially in the Central Asian periphery, are also not inclined to issue long duration multi-entry visas.

# Indo-Russian group on Afghanistan set up

By Vladimir Radyuhin <sup>HO 14</sup>

**MOSCOW, OCT. 29.** An Indo-Russian working group on Afghanistan will meet in Delhi next month to discuss joint action the two countries can take to help stop the fighting.

It will be the first meeting of the working group set up under an agreement between the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, and the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, during the latter's visit to India earlier this month.

According to the Indian Ambassador to Russia, Mr. S.K. Lambah,

<sup>20/10</sup> representation in the group will be "at a high level." "We will discuss joint measures we can take at the political level and we hope to have a plan of action on Afghanistan," Mr. Lambah, told a press conference in Moscow.

International and cross-border terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking, which confront both India and Russia, were discussed "at all levels" during Mr. Putin's visit to India.

Russia appears to have stepped up military aid to the anti-Taliban opposition in Afghanistan in the wake of Mr. Putin's talks in Delhi. The Russian Defence Minister,

Marshal Igor Sergeev, had an unprecedented meeting with the Northern Alliance leader, Mr. Ahmed Shah Masood, in Tajikistan last week, expressing confidence afterwards that opposition forces would recapture Taloqan, capital of the Takhar Province, from the Taliban.

Mr. Lambah said relations with Russia were "on the upswing" following the October summit in Delhi, with the landmark Declaration of Strategic Partnership giving "a very clear cut" to the shape of bilateral ties in the 21st century. "Quick and brisk follow up action is being taken" to implement

17 accords signed during Mr. Putin's visit to India, he added. An Indian team is coming to Russia in the "next few days" for talks on cooperation in diamond-cutting. "High-level" Foreign Ministry consultations are scheduled in the next few weeks and cooperation in civil aviation will be discussed shortly at the Deputy Ministers' level.

The Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission will meet in Moscow in the next two-three months to discuss new proposals for boosting bilateral trade and economic cooperation, the Indian Ambassador said.

THE HINDU

30 OCT 2000

HD-14  
**Russia, India to cooperate** 30 10

By Atul Aneja

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 29.** As the countries of the region, including Russia and India, begin to assert themselves, the Taliban offensive in northern Afghanistan appears to be losing momentum.

Recent reports from Afghanistan suggest that the anti-Taliban forces headed by the Commander Ahmed Shah Masood have not only thwarted the Taliban's recent thrust, but also retaken some of territory which they had lost to this outfit.

Highly placed sources here said that the forces of Mr. Masood have now surrounded the Taliban forces in the city of Taleqan from three sides. Taleqan, capital of the Afghanistan's Tahir province, is of great strategic importance. From here, the Taliban can launch an offensive towards the Badakhshan province in the country's north-east.

Capture of Badakhshan, in turn, can be disastrous for Mr. Masood's troops, as it would nearly wrap up the Taliban's military campaign in Afghanistan.

Sources point out that Mr. Masood has positioned himself in the Tahir province, in an area north of the Kokcha river, not far from Taleqan.

As the winter begins to descend in Afghanistan, Mr. Masood's forces are trying to disrupt the Taliban's supply lines. The road extending from Kunduz to Taleqan is the focus of their attacks. Kunduz, which has an airport, has been the hub from where supplies are reaching Taliban in the entire area. This includes Mazar-e-Sharif, the legendary Afghan city straddling the Amu Darya, which is not far from the gates of Central Asia.

Mr. Masood's recent gains have been crucial for his survival. His rearguard action around

Taleqan has ensured him a access to a land supply corridor branching out from neighbouring Tajikistan. Besides, Russia has also reportedly supplied some helicopters to him recently. The availability of these machines can help Mr. Masood send food, ammunition and clothing to his forces which are engaged in skirmishes in pockets in the neighbouring Samangan area.

The sources said that Mr. Masood's capacity to consolidate is likely to increase with each passing day. With the winter advancing, the chances are that the Taliban will be denied access to some of the key passes which are necessary for maintaining its forces and for launching fresh offensives.

One such passage is the Shah Salim pass. Straddling the Chitral area of Pakistan, it can be used for pumping in troops directly into the Badakhshan province. In fact, Pakistan reportedly did send Taliban forces across the Shah Salim pass last month, after the fall of Taleqan. The objective of this manoeuvre was to establish a link with the Taliban forces operating in the Taleqan area.

In case that link-up had been established, the Taliban offensive in Afghanistan would have entered a new phase. Analysts point out that Taliban consolidation in an arc extending from Badakhshan and Taleqan would have allowed the group to concentrate on launching an all-out offensive on Commander Masood's strongholds in the Panjsher valley.

The entire operation, however, was nipped in the bud as the Taliban could neither advance north of Taleqan and nor could it make a headway in the Badakhshan area.

The spurt in fighting in Afghanistan, nevertheless, has alarmed some of the neighbouring countries and has galvanised a more assertive response from them. Most countries in the

neighbourhood, are convinced that extremist consolidation in Afghanistan under the Taliban will destabilise Central and South Asia.

While the neighbouring countries including Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Russia fear the pan-Islamic entrenchment in Afghanistan will propel insurgencies within their borders, far away nations such as the United States see Afghanistan under the Taliban as the breeding ground for spreading international terrorism which will affect them. India, on its part, apprehends that Taliban's expansion will increase the pressure on Kashmir and extend Pakistan's strategic reach to the gates of Central Asia. Iran, which borders Afghanistan also fears that a Sunni Islamic revolution there would also undermine its national interests.

Not surprisingly, most of these countries are showing a new resolve to support an anti-Taliban resistance.

Russia, along with India, Iran and Tajikistan, is now working closely together to beef up Commander's Masood's capacity to resist. The United States too is now under considerable internal pressure, not only to endorse the regional initiative, but also to adopt concrete measures to help Mr. Masood. Influential think-tanks in the U.S. are, in fact, veering to the view that the U.S. should get ahead and arm Commander Masood. In a recent report, the Washington based Heritage Foundation has made out a strong case for militarily supporting Mr. Masood. "Mr. Masood's battle-hardened forces need anti-tank weapons, light artillery, mortars, and anti-aircraft guns. Transport is also scarce.

The U.S. should provide trucks to help move men and supplies, as well as transport helicopters capable of operating over rugged mountain terrain", the report observes.

## Putin vows to build strategic ties

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, OCT. 19. The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, has vowed to give flesh and blood to the strategic partnership with India he sealed during his visit to India earlier this month.

"The Russian side firmly intends to work for the strategic partnership declared by us in Delhi to become a real creative force oriented towards building a just and balanced system of international relations," the Russian leader said in a message of thanks to the President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, and the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, who had congratulated him on his 48th birthday last week.

In a follow-up to agreements reached during Mr. Putin's talks in Delhi, Russian and Indian defence officials are finalising a number of major deals.

A Russian military delegation would visit India next week to give final touches to a licence accord for the manufacture of the SU-30MKI fighter jets at the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL), the RIA-Novosti news agency reported on Thursday.

The delegation would visit the HAL factories in Bangalore, Nasik and Sunabed, where the planes would be built.

Russian experts would review progress in installing new facilities at the HAL for scheduled launching of SU-30MKI production in 2004, it said.

Under two contracts signed in 1996 and 1998, India purchased 50 SU-30 fighters with an option to manufacture another 140 domestically.

India was also close to signing another major defence deal with Russia for the purchase of 310 T-90S main battle tanks, a senior Government official said here.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, announced on Wednesday that the T-90 contract, under which Russia would deliver 124 fully assembled tanks and another 186 in knocked-down state, would be signed in early November.

Sources in the Russian Defence Ministry told a news agency that India and Russia had also begun talks on converting the Admiral Gorshkov aviation cruiser into an aircraft carrier in keeping with another agreement signed during Mr. Putin's visit.

## CBS programme raises hackles in Pakistan

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 19. The CBS programme titled 'Is Pakistan America's Nightmare?' has raised hackles in the Pakistani press.

A number of papers has chosen to comment editorially on the 60-minute programme telecast on the American network on Monday on the possible scenario of the nuclear weapons in Pakistan getting into the hands of fundamentalist forces.

The papers have said that more than any thing else the programme brings home the urgent need for the Pakistani foreign policy makers to wake up and correct the 'negative perceptions' of the rest of the world about the country despite repeated denials and clarifications.

As the English daily, *The News*, put it "such scare-splashing can be responded to by dismissing it out of hand, which is the preferred choice of the Musharra Government, but this way the perceptions that lie behind are not dented".

The paper has lamented that despite official denials and contradictions, more and more countries are subscribing to an 'unflattering view' of Pakistan. It said correcting the negative image posed a daunting challenge to diplomats and foreign policy makers. "They have to negate this perception methodically, meticulously and consistently. More than anything else, they have to take it seriously".

Another daily, *The Nation*, in its editorial comment said the U.S. Government's decision to 'deprive' Pakistan of the conventional weapons and implied approval of the 'Indian regional hegemony' was responsible for driving Pakistan to go nuclear.

"What is even more ironic in this situation is the fact that it is not Pakistan that has ever been an extremist state, nor has it even flaunted its nuclear capability to browbeat or blackmail other countries. It is India that has been doing it all along," it said.

THE HINDU

20 OCT 2000

# Indo-Russian nuclear cooperation

By G. Balachandran

**A**N AGREEMENT for cooperation between India and Russia was signed during the recent visit of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin. The agreement was not made public. It would not, however, be unreasonable to presume that this agreement envisages extended cooperation between India and Russia in the area of civilian nuclear technologies, especially nuclear energy. In the context of Russia's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), questions have been raised about the limits to such cooperation between New Delhi and Moscow.

This article seeks to demonstrate that not only can Russia expand its nuclear cooperation with India, this agreement can become the forerunner of similar agreements with other members of the NSG, especially France and even, perhaps, the United States.

The NSG was created in 1975 following the Indian detonation of a nuclear device in 1974. In 1978, the NSG published its guidelines for nuclear transfers, which were not materially different from those obtaining under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) provisions then, namely safeguards applied to specific installations and supplies.

The guidelines did not require then fullscope or comprehensive safeguards, i.e. acceptance of IAEA safeguards on all current and future nuclear activities. India did not have any objection to such limited safeguards agreements, and, in fact, had concluded a number of these. Between 1978 and 1991, the NSG was not active even though its guidelines were in place.

However, the NSG once again became active in 1992, following the Gulf War and the subsequent discoveries regarding Iraq's nuclear programs. It then expanded its guidelines significantly by (i) establishing separate guidelines for transfers of nuclear-related dual-use items and (ii) expanding the safeguards requirements by requiring fullscope

IAEA safeguards for future supply of nuclear-related items to any non-nuclear weapons state.

India as a non-signatory to the NPT — because of its opposition to it as a discriminatory treaty — had resisted all attempts to impose fullscope safeguards on its nuclear activities. Russia, which was a member of the NSG, had by then concluded an agreement with India for the supply of a nuclear power plant to be set up in Tamil Nadu. This plant was to

"Suppliers should transfer trigger-list items or related technology to a non-nuclear-weapon state only when the receiving state has brought into force an agreement with the IAEA requiring the application of safeguards on all source and special fissionable material in its current and future peaceful activities."

It is necessary to bear in mind three important and crucial points when reading the guidelines. First, the NSG guidelines are to be implemented by each

## *The new Indo-Russian agreement on nuclear cooperation is fully in line with all of Russia's international commitments on nuclear non-proliferation.*

NSG member in accordance with its national laws and practices. Decisions on export applications are taken at the national level in accordance with national export licensing requirements. Two, the guidelines do not mention anywhere the NPT, and three, they do not define anywhere what is meant by a nuclear-weapon or non-nuclear-weapon state.

Moreover, neither do the Russian laws define anywhere, in their national legislation, what is meant by a nuclear-weapon state. In fact, the only country that defines this term in its national legislation is the U.S. According to U.S. domestic legislation, for example, the Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act (NPPA), under which sanctions were imposed against India, defines (Sec. 830(5)) the term "non-nuclear-weapon state" as "any country which is not a nuclear-weapon state, as defined by Article IX (3) of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed at Washington, London, and Moscow on July 1, 1968".

That treaty defines a nuclear-weapon state as "one which has manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other

nuclear explosive device prior to 1 January, 1967".

India, till May 1998, had neither claimed to be a nuclear-weapon state nor claimed possession of nuclear weapons. Russia could not, under such circumstances have entered into any fresh nuclear cooperation agreement with India between April 1992 and May 1998, without either reneging on its international commitments or requiring India to agree to fullscope IAEA safeguards. The May 1998 tests have altered the situation radically; India conducted a series of nuclear weapon tests then and also claimed to be a nuclear-weapon state.

There is now a universal recognition of India as a nuclear-weapon state. It is altogether another matter that the NPT does not recognise India so. But then India is not a signatory to the NPT. Neither do the NSG guidelines have any reference to the NPT. The Russian laws do not follow the NPT definition of a nuclear-weapon state.

Therefore, it is perfectly legal, and under all its international commitments, for Russia to enter into a fresh nuclear cooperation agreement with India without insisting on fullscope safeguards since India is a nuclear-weapon state. All that is required for such an agreement is the limited safeguards requirements in line with past practice — something to which India has always been amenable.

Therefore, the new Indo-Russian agreement on nuclear cooperation is fully in line with all line of Russia's international commitments on nuclear non-proliferation. This agreement may well become the forerunner of similar agreements with other countries that have not defined the term nuclear-weapon state as narrowly as the U.S. — and that is practically all the other member-states of the NSG.

## LITTLE CHANGES!

18/10 India and Russia need each other 5/8

INDIA and Russia are hugging each other because they have only each other to hug. Russia's flirtation with the West under Yeltsin ended pretty much in a disaster, with Nato bombing Belgrade, the European Union raising human rights questions over Chechnya and the Americans threatening to deploy the Theatre Missile Defence system in clear violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Russia's membership of the G-8 doesn't mean much either, given its GDP and its position in global trade. And all the money the World Bank and the IMF poured into that country only served to underline its precarious dependence on and gradual subservience to the West.

A similar logic applies to India. The extent of our rapprochement with Russia — strategic partnership — is an indication of the lack of a fundamental breakthrough in our ties with the United States, despite official protestations to the contrary. Although, there is a better appreciation of our point of view in Washington, the US continues to believe that India's place in the global set-up is such that conflicts of interest between the two are more natural than convergences. Pressure on the CTBT is maintained, economic sanctions not yet lifted, the penetration of American MNCs into the Indian market continues to be difficult and despite the slight shift in American perspective on Kashmir, Pakistan is not persona non grata.

In spite of the measurable decline in Russia's status in world affairs, the reasons for the latest rapprochement are not very different from the ones that operated during the Cold War. In the matter of military purchases, we are subject to Third World constraints of affordability, easy credit and transfers of technology and to the concept of strategic reliability whereby it is thought that in any situation of conflict, Russia is more likely to be on India's side than any other big power, since it is the only significant supplier of military material. The same goes for cooperation in the nuclear field: the Russians have supplied a nuclear reactor for the Kudankulam power project at one-third the international price.

France and Russia both talk about multipolarity, but they do so in very different terms: the French see it as a matter of cultural hegemony, the flooding of their domestic market by American films, television and music, but on matters of security they nevertheless tend to side with the Americans. For the Russians, however, a multipolar world is essentially a security arrangement, which preserves their sovereignty and territorial integrity — the very words form part of the strategic partnership declaration. Deprived of their former zone of influence in Eastern Europe — even Yugoslavia is gone — the Russians need, if not allies in the old sense, then at least a point of support. Their willingness to promote India's case for a permanent seat on the Security Council stems from the anxiety that the principal conflict resolution forum in the world may come to be dominated by the US and its Western allies. India would be in large agreement with that point of view.

THE STATESMAN

13 OCT 2000

# INDO-RUSSIAN NUCLEAR COOPERATION

THE MOST SATISFYING and mutually beneficial outcome of the visit of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, is the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two countries on intensifying bilateral cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. If, as it is likely, this positive move by Russia is going to annoy the western nuclear powers, they should realise that the nuclear blockade could not have stopped India from going ahead with its nuclear programmes though it would have had to reckon with the stringent regulations issued by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) which could have hampered its access to advanced technology and materials for its nuclear power reactors.

The NSG, a highly exclusive cartel of advanced nations, could do with some soul-searching on the effectiveness of its uncompromising and rigorous control over the spread of nuclear technology to the rest of the world, especially at a time when there is almost an unstoppable explosion of information technology (IT) which is continuously demonstrating its capabilities to prise open everything. The nuclear weapon states should have in fact realised as early as the mid-1970s, which witnessed India's peaceful nuclear explosion, that this country was only a few steps away from the making of nuclear weapons and it was only a question of time before the nuclear monopoly was broken by the other countries. It is, therefore, unfortunate that the nuclear weapon states instead of coming to terms with such a reality had sought to protect the world from nuclear "proliferation". It will be difficult to think of another instance of the pick-up of a word with such a highly objectionable connotation which imputes stealthy moves to the efforts of the rest of the world to crack the case-hardened nuclear shell.

Mr. Putin's realisation of the futility of the nuclear weapon states persisting with their

blockade of India obviously explains Russia's decision to intensify bilateral cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. With the nuclear weapon states having already made the world a potentially dangerous planet with their huge stock of atomic armoury, there is no question of its becoming more dangerous with more states gaining entry into the exclusive club, unless there is going to be an outbreak of a global nuclear madness. The only sensible course for the nuclear weapon states, if they are serious about nuclear non-proliferation, is to reach an agreement on global nuclear disarmament aimed at a progressive elimination of atomic weapons.

The agreement signed between the two countries to establish an inter-ministerial commission on military technical cooperation as well as their identification of key areas of cooperation in the IT sector impart a much desired completeness to the task of bringing India and Russia closer. Neither of them could ever have imagined that the very close ties which they had already built up during the years when there was no indication whatsoever of the raging Cold War coming to an end and of the collapse of the Soviet Union were laying the foundations for further strengthening their relations in a world which has seen the burying of the hatchet by the superpowers. With IT racing at a speed which could make everything inclusive of military technology — whether it relates to MiG and SU 30 aircraft or T 90 tanks — an open book, there is nothing to which the U.S. in particular could object to the further forging of the close relationship by New Delhi and Moscow. The gains to all the participants would be much bigger if India, Russia, the U.S. and other countries get together to explore the possibilities of reorienting their military technology for wholly peaceful and constructive activity by turning their nuclear swords into ploughshares.

THE HINDU

12 OCT 2000



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2000

## SEEING THROUGH THE SAME PRISM <sup>HD 12</sup>

THE LITMUS TEST of a closer friendship with Russia, which stood by India on critical occasions in the past, will be the sustainability of the political momentum that has been generated on the bilateral front at this stage. The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, has offered an endorsement of India's position on Kashmir by calling for a decisive end to "foreign interference" in Jammu and Kashmir. The barely coded denunciation of Pakistan in this specific context was supplemented by his parallel suggestion for a settlement of the Kashmir dispute "on a bilateral basis through compromise". However, Mr. Putin's idea of "compromise" is conceivably a message to both New Delhi and Islamabad to strive for a give-and-take formula. While a "compromise" is ordinarily possible only if the parties do not insist on pre-determined solutions, it stands to reason that Mr. Putin, in the totality of his brief observations on Kashmir, has not bracketed India with Pakistan insofar as the relative questions of intransigence and enthusiasm for a final settlement are concerned. Surely acceptable to the Vajpayee administration is Mr. Putin's vigorous insistence on an "unconditional respect for the Line of Control" — a phraseology that has come to denote a special diplomatic onus on Pakistan on account of last year's Kargil flareup. Mr. Putin's overall language on Kashmir is outwardly in synch with that of the outgoing U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton. However, unlike Moscow despite its historical association with the India-Pakistan dialogue at Tashkent in 1966, Washington does not seem to have irrevocably ruled out the possibility of being able to play a facilitatory role if invited by both Islamabad and New Delhi to do so.

India's parliamentarians should have been generally pleased with the note of diplomatic empathy that Mr. Putin sounded in support of New Delhi's move for concerted global actions against the scourge of international terrorism. The spectre

of externally-inspired terrorism, which both India and Russia face in different arenas with some striking similarities, has been unmasked by Mr. Putin with the help of what he described as "absolutely true and verified information". A common source of inspiration for the ubiquitous "terrorist international" has been identified across a wide arc, stretching from the Philippines to Kosovo and Russia's northern Caucasus while indeed encompassing Kashmir too. Mr. Putin seems to have zeroed in on the so-called Islamic crusade as a new transnational political creed of aggressiveness. So, irrespective of the shades of India's domestic political opinion on the Vajpayee administration's fight against terrorism, the resonance of Mr. Putin's indirect recognition of Islam-based militancy as a phenomenon may be felt on the international stage.

Not long ago, a somewhat uneventful phase (if not also a vacuous spell) in India-Russia ties was broken by the post-Soviet Kremlin's tentative move for a strategic triangle consisting of Moscow, New Delhi and Beijing. Just because multipolarity has at present been spelt out by New Delhi and Moscow as an article of futuristic faith, the Vajpayee administration must not lull itself into believing that a beginning is being made towards the formation of strategic clusters of countries. To be sure, a new similarity of views against terrorism has been struck by Russia, India and the U.S., and an international alliance in this sphere may not be a pipe dream. On a different front, though, Washington can be expected to carry out a reality check of the new India-Russia concert of nuclear energy-related cooperation. Russia's commitment to the codes of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group and India's enduring opposition to a "fullscope" international inspection of all its nuclear reactors will obviously come up for a review in this regard. The new India-Russia equation will need to withstand the consequential international pressures.

THE HINDU

6 OCT 2000

# Putin wants India to sign CTBT

By Arunkumar Bhatt

MUMBAI, OCT. 5. After visiting Dhruva, one of the world's most powerful nuclear research reactors (of 100 MW capacity, fuelled by natural uranium) at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, today virtually endorsed India's stand on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

He told BARC scientists and engineers that Russia would like to see India participate in the CTBT but appreciated that it should be based on its strategic vision, national interests and needs of the people.

If the Russo-Indian memorandum of understanding for peaceful uses of atomic energy raised eyebrows among the champions of non-proliferation, Mr. Putin seemed to have ignored it. He called for a greater role for India, holding that its immense expertise in nuclear power generation could benefit the world as aimed by the International Atomic Energy Agency's project for procurement of energy. "We have every

reason to join efforts in these areas," he said.

The Russo-Indian interaction in science and technology was an important component of the strategic partnership between the two nations. He noted that cooperation between India and Russia for peaceful uses of atomic energy had started in the Seventies "and I am glad to know that it is contin-

uing". "And when I say this I mean the arrangement at Koodankulam (building of the two Russian-designed pressurised light water power reactors)," he said. Being the head of a state, the socio-economic benefits to the common man and the protection to the environment were of far greater significance to him.

He described the computer

centre being set up by India in Moscow, where the supercomputer, Param, would be installed, as a great step in cooperation.

He was all praise for BARC and paid rich tributes to Dr. Homi Bhabha, the father of Indian nuclear programme. "I am impressed by your safety records and the human factor of safety is remarkable."

The BARC tour was the last leg of the Russian President's four-day India visit. Besides the Dhruva reactor, Mr. Putin saw the permanent exhibition of nuclear power research. "We have seen ancient customs and traditions and also the state-of-the-art technology. Yesterday, I visited the Taj Mahal and today I am at the temple of science and technology."

Earlier, he was welcomed by Dr. R. Chidambaram, outgoing chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), and Dr. Anil Kakodkar, BARC director. Mr. Putin was accompanied by Prof. Evgeny Adamov, Russian Minister for Atomic Energy.

## Cheap nuclear power for T.N.

MUMBAI, OCT. 5. Mr. Vladimir Putin today said Russia was committed to provide power to Tamil Nadu at a reasonable price. Addressing BARC scientists here, Mr. Putin said the two units of 1000 mw Russian reactors (VVER-1000) at Koodankulam, which would be synchronised with the Southern grid in the coming decade, "can give electricity three times cheaper than from any future conventional power in that area".

Mr. Putin said his country had worked out a modest estimate of the cost of the power generated

by the two units of the Russian reactors. "It will be three times less than the conventional power coming up in that area," he reiterated emphatically by repeating the word "three".

The Russian Government has guaranteed a lifetime supply of enriched uranium fuel and spare parts to the VVER-1000 reactors. It has also allowed the Department of Atomic Energy to keep the "spent fuel" as per a recent agreement, in contrast to the earlier agreement where the spent fuel was taken back by them. — PTI

THE HINDU

10 OCT 1998

# New-look Russia looks for new business from India

Business Times Bureau

MUMBAI: The President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin on Thursday stressed the need for increased trade and business between the two countries and called for setting up a bilateral working group for joint ventures in civil aviation.

Mr Putin was addressing the captains of the industry at a joint meeting of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) here. He referred to the new trend in business as the rupee-rouble trade is phased out giving rise to more private partnerships.

The Russian Federation President called for increased investments from Indian firms and explained that his country had created a conducive climate for investment, had put in place a common legal system and was paring the customs duty down to a single rate.

Mr Putin said that Indian firms like Videocon and the Gas Authority of India Limited were doing business in Russia and this was an example which should be emulated by other Indian companies.

Referring to the long standing relationship between the two countries, he said, "Relations between our countries have been tested by time and our relationship has not caused harm to anyone."

Mr Putin made a brief mention of the anti-dumping measures initiated by India against Russian goods and said it was a minor issue which could be resolved.

Finance minister Yashwant Sinha spoke of the strategic partnership between the two countries and said that the rupee debt agreement reached between

the two countries has functioned well but had now become a hindrance in expanding economic ties. "We have to find out new ways and methods of doing business as the rupee payments were to be phased out in the next five years," he added.

The Russian President's speech was followed by queries and suggestions from businessmen, who wanted a share of the opportunities thrown up by the visit. The CMD of

J M Morgan Stanley Ltd, Nimesh Kampani, saw scope for collaboration between India and Russia in the field of securities, law and also in developing capital markets in Russia. Managing director of Mahindra & Mahindra, Anand Mahindra, complained that Russian regulations made it difficult for companies like his to assemble and market their products in Russia.

Russian regulations do not favour smaller players who make value for money products, he remarked.

The Chairman of Piramal Enterprises, Ajay Piramal, saw a future in cooperation in scientific research with Russia, which would challenge the monopoly of the Western world in research, while Sunil Mittal of Bharti Telecom asked for the setting up of a task force for increasing cooperation between the two countries. Aptech MD Ganesh Natarajan, on the other hand, saw scope for collaboration with Russia in making e-commerce rental models a success.

Mr Putin's response to these queries and comments was relatively guarded. He began by stating that economic stability was very important for the conduct of effective business and that the Russian economy was now stable. He said that the streamlining of the financial sector was being done in gradual steps.

Among those who spoke were the CII president, Mr Arun Bharat Ram and FICCI chairman, G.H. Goenka.

Both CII and FICCI saw scope for increased collaboration in food products, pharmaceuticals, services, electronics, information technology, biotechnology and civil aviation. CII plans to open an office in Moscow as well as tie-up with Russian business associations. Bilateral trade, which was currently \$1.5 billion, should be taken to \$3 billion and beyond, they stressed.

Also present at the meeting were the secretary for the Prime Minister of India, N.K. Singh, the Ambassador of Russia to India, A.Kadakin and the Ambassador of India to Russia, S.K. Lambah and the Maharashtra chief minister, Vilasrao Deshmukh.

## PUTIN'S POINTS

- Re-rouble trade to be phased out over next 5 years
- Scope seen for JVs in food, pharma, electronics and IT

THE TIMES OF INDIA

6 OCT 2000

## END OF GREAT GAME

The Putin visit has led to an agreement on strategic partnership and an assorted eleven other agreements have been signed on everything under the sun. During the Yeltsin period, relationships were less than cordial and this attempt at normalcy is welcome. However, the emphasis is now on commercial relationships rather than on political ones and therein lies the dilemma. At one level, commercial relationships mean defence imports from Russia. At another level, there is civilian trade, which has completely collapsed following the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. In 1990-91, the former Soviet Union accounted for 16.1 per cent of India's exports. The figure is down to 2.1 percent for Russia now. In 1990-91, the former Soviet Union accounted for 5.9 per cent of India's imports. The figure for Russia is down to 1.3 per cent now. While it is true that a figure for the former Soviet Union should not be compared with a figure for Russia now, the decline has essentially been driven by what happened with Russia rather than by what happened with other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Historically, Indo-Russian trade was governed by a system of rupee trade that was centrally planned and administered, with accounting in Indian rupees. When the former Soviet Union collapsed, rupee trade also disintegrated. Trade switched to a system of settlement in convertible currencies, with a proviso, because a legacy existed in the form of Indian debt owed to Russia. At that time, there was a debate about the appropriate rupee-rouble rate and quantification of the exact amount of Indian debt. Unsatisfactorily, from the Indian point of view, the figure arrived at in the course of President Yeltsin's visit in 1993 was Rs 32,000 crore of debt, to be settled through Indian export of goods worth around Rs 1,500 crore a year. As of now, there is thus a double channel for exports to Russia — the debt route and the convertible currency route. However, actual trade flows reveal that 80 per cent of exports take place through the debt route, which is due to end in 2004. Therefore, once the debt channel is over, prospects for Indian exports are none too bright and the reasons are easily identifiable.

Thanks to rupee trade, junk was exported to Russia — sawdust mixed in tea and non-Basmati rice masquerading as Basmati. There is no reason for Russians to import such products if payment is in convertible currencies. This is not to deny that potential exists for Indian exports: pharmaceuticals, fast moving consumer goods, tea and coffee are obvious examples. However, quality-conscious exporters have not historically exported to Russia and the trade was dominated by fly-by-night operators who thrived on arbitrage made possible through misalignments in exchange rates, and such misalignments also encouraged switch trade. Post-disintegration, reputable exporters have stayed away because of logistical (Odessa port no longer belongs to Russia and the Bandar Abbas route via Iran hasn't taken off), distribution (controlled by the mafia) and payment (not all exports were through letters of credit and insurance was unavailable) problems. Conversely, most imports from the former Soviet Union were by the public sector. Post-reforms, public sector investments have declined in India and are not always in areas where Russia has the necessary expertise. As is evident, many of the problems relate to endemic transition-type problems in Russia. It is impossible for a Putin visit to eliminate these constraints, or similar ones that plague cross-border investments. Consequently, any euphoria on commercial relationships should be restricted to defence.

THE TELEGRAPH

6 401 2000

# Putin urges India to join CTBT talks

51-8  
6/10

INDIA  
FORUM

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**

MUMBAI, Oct. 5. — Mr Vladimir Putin has urged India to take part in the CTBT talks while acknowledging that the country's stand on the treaty must be based on its national interests.

"We realise India's views on signing the CTBT are based on her strategic vision," the Russian President told scientists of Bhaba Atomic Research Centre, which was deemed a nuclear power establishment earlier this year.

Mr Putin, the first Soviet/Russian President to visit a nuclear establishment in India, also saw the Barc's Dhruva nuclear reactor.

He said that given India's advances in nuclear research, it could play a significant role in the International Atomic Energy Agency's goal of

procuring energy for the global population, as outlined at the UN millennium summit in New York. "The world can benefit from its expertise in nuclear power generation. We have every reason to join efforts with India in this area."

He called for intensive Indo-Russian cooperation in hi-tech areas. "Interaction in hi-tech areas should be an important component in our strategic cooperation."

Ancient tradition has been combined with state-of-the-art technology in India, he said. "Yesterday, we visited the Taj Mahal, an excursion into Indian history. Today, I visit the temple of science and technology of the 21st century."

The Russian leader said bilateral interaction for peaceful uses of atomic energy which started in 1970s is still contin-

uing, as in the two 1,000 MW Kudankulam nuclear reactor in Tamil Nadu. He was all praise for India's record in reactor safety.

He stressed on the importance of social and economic repercussions a nuclear project may have on the people. "I always ask myself what the consequences of any project is on the common man, economy and environment."

The cost of power obtained from the Russian nuclear reactor project at Kudankulam would be at least three times less than the current cost, he said.

Mr Putin was accompanied by the Russian energy minister, Mr Evgeny O Adamov.

He was received at the Barc by its director, Mr Anil Kakodkar, and the atomic energy commission chairman, Dr R Chidambaram.

THE STATESMAN

# Putin's J&K stand positive: Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

*9th June 51-8 6/10*  
ISLAMABAD, Oct. 5. — Terming as “positive” Mr Vladimir Putin’s call for concrete efforts to resume Indo-Pak talks, Pakistan has asked India to adopt a “realistic” approach towards the Kashmir issue.

Reacting to the Russian President’s remarks on Kashmir during his address to the Indian Parliament, a Pakistani foreign office spokesman said Islamabad has repeatedly

stressed that no problem can be solved without dialogue.

But the spokesman chose to ignore Mr Putin’s reference that foreign interference in Jammu and Kashmir should stop and that there should be absolute respect of the Line of Control.

“India should accept repeated offers for talks Gen Pervez Musharraf, who has expressed willingness to have a dialogue with New Delhi at any level, any time and at any place,” the spokesman said.

**THE STATESMAN**

6 OCT 2000

# INDO-RUSSIAN TIES-I

## Continuity In The Relationship

By RK DASGUPTA

WHEN on 25 January the third All-Russian Congress of Soviets issued a Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People and proclaimed Russia a Republic of Soviets of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants, the Indian National Congress, then representing political India, showed no enthusiasm though it was then itself demanding a Declaration of Rights. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republic was formed through the Treaty of Union adopted by the first Soviet Congress of the USSR on 30 December 1922.

In the same year Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925) said in his presidential address at the thirty-seventh annual session of the Indian National Congress, that the revolution in Russia was "an attempt to force Marxian doctrines and dogmas on the unwilling genius of Russia. If I have read the situation accurately I expect a counter-revolution" (GA Nateson, ed., *Congress Presidential Addressed*, second series, 1934, p.575).

That counter-revolution began when Mikhail Gorbachov, Secretary-General of the Communist Party, inaugurated a new age of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (reconstruction) which led to the dissolution of Soviet Russia and the emergence of Rossiiskaya Federatsiya, a Commonwealth of Independent States in December 1991.

### PATRIOTS

But the new generation of Indian patriots amongst whom the most representative figure was Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) was inspired by the Russian Revolution which, as he says in his *Autobiography* (1936) "gave me comfort and hope" (p.364). Nehru visited Russia in the company of his father Motilal Nehru (1861-1931) and seeing Lenin's embalmed body he remarked that the face had the "suggestion of pugnacity, of work done and success achieved". (Michael Edwards, *Nehru: a Political Biography*, 1971, p.62).

But not a few in Indian politics gradually developed reservations about life in Soviet Russia and one of them was Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945?) who wrote in his *The Indian Struggle* (1935, 1952) that "it would be safe to predict that India will not become a new edition of Soviet Russia" (Sisir K Bose, ed., *Netaji Collected Works*, vol.ii, 1981, p.353). Even Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) who, visiting Soviet Russia in 1930, was overwhelmed by what he saw there of life in that country was obliged to say: "there are grave defects. For this reason they will have trouble some

*The author, an eminent scholar, is former Director, the National Library of India.*

day" (Rabindranath Tagore, *Letters from Russia*, Eng.tr., Dr Sasadhar Sinha, 1960, p.4). It is almost a prophecy of what happened to the country in 1991.

When we consider Indo-Russian relations we have today three Russias in mind — old or Czarist Russia, Soviet Russia and the new Russia that came into existence some ten years ago. And this gives some complexity to the theme. The question is, is there a



unity and continuity in the relationship between the two countries covering this entire period? Strangely enough, there is. I have mentioned Rabindranath's misgivings about the polity in Soviet Russia. But his appreciation of how the people had developed their education and culture was boundless. What attracted the poet most was that there was no worship of wealth in Soviet Russia: "Russia has raised the seat of power for the dispossessed, completely ignoring the angry scowl of the west". "Here the masses have not in the least been put in the shade by gentlemen". "Popular education has made enormous strides in Russia". (*Letters from Russia*, pp.14,26,17).

### TAGORE

Such admiration for Soviet Russia made the poet unpopular in the United States. *The Literary Digest* of 1 November 1930, carried an article with the headline — "Tagore, Russia's Friend" to say that the poet "might be accepted by Soviet Russia as its most effective propagandist". Actually the poet was not felicitated in Soviet Russia with any political motive. The warm reception given to the Indian poet by the intellectuals of Soviet Russia, particularly the younger generation, was certainly more genuine than the reception given him anywhere else in the West.

Some of the appreciations of the genius of Rabindranath from Soviet writers show that communism did not destroy the country's European soul.

When we remember that during the second world war our Bengali Marxists dismissed Rabindranath as a bourgeois poet we are deeply impressed by the Soviet response to his

poetry which is seldom if ever marred by ideology. In the *Parichay* of Bhadra 1350 (1943) Achyuta Goswami wrote: "*bindu matra chinta na hare bala chale Rabindranath burjua lekhak*" (it may be said without any hesitation that Rabindranath is a bourgeois writer.)

In Soviet Russia, on the other hand, Professor Petrov said at a reception to the poet: "We know him very well as a lyric poet. But as a social poet, as one expressing the aspirations of his people for freedom, we know him much less".

What is still more striking is that in a Russian work entitled *New India and Rabindranath Tagore*, 1922, Professor Tan Bagoraz exalts Rabindranath as the "Indian Tolstoy" (*ibid*, p.137) without caring for Lenin's adverse criticism of Tolstoy in an article in the *Rabochaya Gazeta* of 18 December 1910 in which he said: "The Russian people will secure their emancipation when they realise that it is not from Tolstoy they must learn to win a better life". (*Collected Works*, vol.16, p.354) Most of the Soviet criticism of Rabindranath is in line with the mainstream of European literary culture.

When we think of European Indology we are obliged to ignore Russian response to our ancient and classical literature because it is presented in Russian works not available in English.

### CONTACT

But when we explore the subject we will discover that the Russian scholars' appreciation of the Indian genius is in line with that of Sir William Jones (1746-1794), Max Mueller (1823-1900) and Burnouf (1801-1852). It is not unlikely that Tolstoy (1828-1910) had his profound understanding of the ideas of Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi because of his knowledge of the Indian mind through the work of the Indologists of his country.

A Russian translation of the *Bhagavadgita* was published in Russia in 1788. In 1792 appeared Nikolai Karamzin's Russian translation of the *Shakuntala* in his preface to which Karamzin wrote: "Kalidas is for me just as great as Homer". (see G Bongard-Levin & A Viginin, *The Image of India The Study of Ancient Indian Civilisation in the USSR*, Eng.tr., Peter Greenwood, 1984, p.8).

Russia's direct contact with India began with Afanasy Nikitin (d.1474) who came to India in the fifteenth century, before the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama (1469-1524). Nikitan's *Voyage Beyond the Three Seas* is the first Russian account of life in India.

(To be concluded)

# India, Russia aim at multipolar world

## STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 5. — India and Russia today decided to work together towards a multipolar world and expressed concern over the situation in Afghanistan. In a six-page joint statement issued at the end of Mr Vladimir Putin's India visit said, both countries noted that the Taliban-controlled areas have become a breeding ground for religious extremism and international terrorism.

The countries called for fur-

ther measures against the Taliban unless they cease to support international terrorism, drug trafficking and conform to international norms of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Russia reaffirmed its support for India's efforts to normalise relations with Pakistan on the basis of the 1972 Shimla Agreement. It appreciated that composite dialogue could be resumed in the Lahore process only after "necessary measures are taken for cessation of support for cross-border terrorism

and respect of the Line of Control."

As strategic partners, India and Russia agreed that all threats to strategic stability and international security should be addressed taking into account the legitimate security interests of all states.

The declaration on strategic partnership signed by the two countries marks a step forward in the enunciation of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971 and other treaties signed in 1993, and 1994.

Both sides agreed to hold

annual meetings at the summit level and interact regularly at ministerial and other levels.

While working towards a multipolar world, the two countries said it would be based on sovereign equality of all states, territorial integrity and non-interference in their internal affairs. Both recognised that this is the only sustainable basis for the emergence of a just international order.

The two sides expressed their opposition to unilateral use or threat of use of force in violation of the UN charter and

intervention in the internal affairs of other states, including under the plea of humanitarian intervention.

Stressing the need to expand the UN Security Council, Russia iterated that its support for India "as a strong and appropriate candidate" for the permanent membership of an enlarged world body.

According to the statement, an eminent persons group will be established to help both governments on various initiatives, to further consolidate bilateral ties and to strengthen

cooperation on regional and international issues.

They expressed their determination to continue cooperation in peaceful uses of atomic energy and space. Russia welcomed India's voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing, and appreciated the latter's efforts to develop a broad national consensus on the BT issue.

Both sides stressed the need for full implementation, in good faith, of existing bilateral and multilateral arms control treaties, including the ABM Treaty.

THE STATESMAN

6 OCT 2001



# India, Russia plan to increase IT trade

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 4. India and Russia have identified key areas of cooperation in the IT sector. The proposed plan of action for exchanging expertise was agreed upon during a meeting between the Union Minister for Information Technology, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, and his Russian counterpart, Mr. L. Reyman.

The sectors identified for meaningful cooperation include certifi-

cation of electronics and IT products including software, cooperation in communication and network technologies including Internet, high-performance computing systems and their applications, partnership in the area of high technologies and electronic materials and cooperation in application of IT in education.

One of the highlights of the meeting was Mr. Reyman's plan to purchase computers from India for Russian schools. A proposal in this

regard would be sent soon with the relevant details. The Ministers also agreed on the need to increase the volume of trade in IT by promoting B to B linkages between entrepreneurs.

The two sides agreed to share experiences on e-governance. Mr. Mahajan spoke on the need to promote exchange programmes between students, teachers and professionals associated with the IT sector.

THE HINDU

5 OCT 2000

# Panel formed to upgrade defence ties

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 4.** India and Russia today signed an agreement to establish an inter-ministerial commission on military-technical cooperation and signed three key defence deals within the framework of their strategic partnership. The inter-governmental commission on defence, which has been set up, will control and coordinate all aspects of military hardware exchanges between the two sides. The document signed by the Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, and Russia's Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, will upgrade management of Indo-Russian defence ties from an official to a political level. This, according to analysts, is necessary to override bureaucratic hurdles which can retard acquisitions of military hardware.

After years of dialogue, India and Russia have signed the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier deal. With the nearly 40,000 tonne ship in its possession, India will not only be able to sanitise its immediate coastal neighbourhood but would also be better positioned to protect the vital commercial shipping lanes of the Indian Ocean. The envisaged presence of the MiG 29K planes and the Sea Harriers on board the Gorshkov will greatly add to its punch. With the MiG-29s air defence on board the Gorshkov, the navy can more than counter Pakistan's P3C Orion aircraft which can be used to target India's vital energy assets including the Bombay High.

The Gorshkov package includes the induction of the Ka-28 and Ka-31 early warning helicopters.

Under the agreement, the Russian side will submit a detailed project report as the framework for further commercial negotiations. The two sides also signed the deal for producing 140 SU-30 MKI aircraft under a Russian licence by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. The presence of the SU-30 aircraft in such large numbers will greatly extend the reach of Indian Air Force (IAF) far beyond its borders. It will also sharpen India's conventional deterrent by dissuading hostile intent in the region. The agreement envisages the establishment of facilities to overhaul these planes. Besides, it offers a window for cooperation between Indian and Russian scientists so that these planes can be regularly modernised during their life-cycle.

A contract for 310 T-90S tanks was also signed today. These tanks will be the first in India's armoured stables which will be equipped to fire missiles. Licence production of these machines is also envisaged. According to a Defence Ministry statement, a large number of T-90s will be transferred off the shelf for immediate deployment. The presence of T-90s can off-set the induction of Ukrainian T-80 UD tanks by Pakistan.

PTI reports from Mumbai:

Mr. Putin who arrived here this evening, was hosted a dinner by the Governor, Dr. P. C. Alexander.

THE HINDU

5 OCT 2000

TOGETHER WE SHALL SUCCEED; YOU CAN COUNT ON OUR SUPPORT

# Putin against foreign interference in Kashmir

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, OCT. 4. The collective will of Moscow and Delhi to combat the menace of the "terrorist international" with its dangerous global spread — India was as much a victim of it in Kashmir as Russia in Chechnya — was emphasised by the Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, here today.

Speaking in some detail on the Kashmir issue, he spelt out the Russian view, barely different from the Indian position. The points he made were: "Kashmir has been the cause of tensions between India and Pakistan", "foreign interference should be stopped," the issue should be resolved "on a bilateral basis through compromise", and there must be "unconditional respect for the Line of Control." The MPs gathered in the Central Hall of Parliament, where he was addressing a joint session of both Houses, applauded in appreciation of Russia's understanding of the Indian perspective.

Yesterday, the two countries had expressed their willingness to act together in relation to the developments in Afghanistan. Today Mr. Putin took forward the declared strategic partnership between the two countries saying the relations with India had been and would remain "the top priority of Russian foreign policy."

## 'Terrorist international'

Mr. Putin departed from the prepared text to share important and "absolutely true and verified information" underlining the nature of global terrorism. It was often "the same individuals, the same terrorist organisations," who were "conducting terrorist acts from the Philippines to Kosovo, including Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Russia's Northern Caucasus." It was an unambiguous reference to Russia's problems in Chechnya (although he



The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, accompanied by the Lok Sabha Speaker, Mr. G. M. C. Balayogi, arriving in the Central Hall of Parliament on Wednesday. The others (from left) are Ms. Sonia Gandhi, Congress(I) president, Mr. Jaswant Singh, External Affairs Minister, Mr. R. Venkataraman, former President, and the former Prime Ministers, Mr. S. Chandra Shekhar, and Mr. I. K. Gujral. — Photo: V. Sudershan

did not mention it directly) and India's in Kashmir in what he had described as the success of the "terrorist international".

But it was time to combat it decisively, he fully supported the Indian proposal to create a consolidated front against global terrorism and added that the participation "of all interested states was welcome."

This was Mr. Putin's last major engagement in Delhi. In the morning the Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, had called on him along with Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mr. Natwar Singh, and after addressing Parliament, Mr Putin called on

the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, to bid him farewell before

Old friend, relaxed host: Page 13  
The Putins visit Taj Mahal: Page 14

departing for Agra, from where he will go to Mumbai and then on to Moscow.

## Historic relationship

All the speakers at the hour-long event recalled the historic and long-established ties between India and Russia, with Mr. Putin noting the "warm feelings" the people of the two countries

have for each other. Contacts had taken place "at the highest levels" over decades, he said, remembering that Mahatma Gandhi had corresponded with Leo Tolstoy, recognising him as his "spiritual mentor".

Even though a summit-level meeting had not taken place for the last seven years, Mr. Putin reassured India that "nothing has changed" for bilateral relations remain as strong as ever.

In fact, he referred to India's positive experience in running a democracy as a source of strength while appreciating India's commitment to principles in the area of international relations.

THE HINDU

5 OCT 2000

# Putin strikes a nuclear deal

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, OCT. 4. The visiting Russian President Mr. Vladimir Putin, today breached the long-standing international nuclear blockade against India by committing his nation to expand atomic energy cooperation with India.

The dramatic move comes a day before Mr. Putin travels to the heart of the Indian nuclear establishment in Trombay and is likely to draw considerable international attention. Moscow will certainly be bombarded with questions from Western nations on the legal and non-proliferation implications of the nuclear deal with India.

Top atomic energy officials from both sides signed a memorandum of understanding on intensifying bilateral cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The MoU, however, is unlikely to be made public. Informed sources here say that at the heart of this path-breaking agreement is a Russian commitment to contribute to India's growing nuclear energy requirements.

The MoU is also said to

assert that the proposed nuclear cooperation would be fully in tune with Moscow's international legal obligations on transfer of nuclear technology.

The agreement will certainly boost India's plans to accelerate the nuclear power generation programme. Over the last few years, New Delhi has been looking for an external partner to rapidly increase the contribution of nuclear power to its energy market.

But nuclear cooperation with India has been made difficult by the current international rules on the transfer of nuclear power reactors.

These regulations issued by the Nuclear Suppliers Group, a cartel of advanced nations, in early 1992 demand that any nuclear sales to India must be followed by the so-called "fullscope safeguards" — or complete international control over the Indian atomic programme. India has no intention of accepting such external controls.

The current Indo-Russian nuclear power project at

Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu is based on an agreement that predates the 1992 requirement on fullscope safeguards.

France had recently shown some interest in selling nuclear power reactors to India. Paris hoped that an Indian decision to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty would allow it to press for a change in the terms of international nuclear trade with New Delhi.

Today's nuclear MoU suggests that Russia is ready to go ahead without demanding any unacceptable political conditions. New Delhi is prepared to accept facility-specific safeguards on the imported nuclear reactors, but not on the entire atomic energy programme.

How will Moscow reconcile its current obligations under the NSG with an agreement to provide new nuclear reactors to India? Will it demand a change in the NSG rules? Will other key nations such as the United States and France go along with Russia? The answers to these questions will have to wait a while.

THE HINDU

5 OCT 2000

# India, Russia identify key areas for IT joint ventures

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, October 4

INDIA AND Russia have identified key deliverables to promote a strategic partnership in the information technology sector. The focus areas for cooperation include e-governance, human resource development, business to business (B2B) linkages and development of language software.

The proposed plan of action was agreed upon during a meeting between Information Technology Minister Pramod Mahajan and Russian Minister for Communications and Information L. Reyman.

The two countries have identified areas like certification of electronics and information technolo-

gy products including software, cooperation in communications and network technologies including the Internet and high performance computing systems and their applications.

The two leaders also discussed partnerships in high technologies and electronic materials and cooperation in application of information technology in education. The Russian minister has proposed to buy computers for schools from India.

The two spoke of the need to promote exchange programs between students, teachers and professionals associated with information technology.

Both India and Russia have a lot of diversity as far as language is concerned.

In order to take information technology to the masses and image it as an empowering tool for the people, the two countries have agreed upon to create a viable interface between the technology and people.

Both ministers acknowledged that it was strategically important to build the volume of trade in IT by promoting B2B linkages between entrepreneurs of both countries.

It was also agreed upon to share models and experiences between the official departments on e-governance.

The meeting between the two ministers is part of a series of meetings that have taken place between India and Russia on information technology.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 OCT 2000

# Pact on tackling Taliban high point

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri  
New Delhi, October 4

BRAJESH MISHRA had heralded the Russian President's visit to India by saying on television that Afghanistan would top the agenda. As Vladimir Putin leaves India, among the more important documents he leaves in his wake is an agreement on a closer coordination of policies on tackling the Taliban headache. But Moscow is breaking *Kabuli naan* with Pakistan as well. Besides sending his Chechnya strongman, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, to Islamabad, Putin's Foreign and Interior ministers also expect to drop by Pakistan in the next few months. Question: What makes up the Kremlin's Afghan brew?

The past year has seen another push for a negotiated Afghan settlement. While Pakistan has led from the front, Iran has lent some support to the initiative. Russia and India remain intractable opponents of the Kabul regime.

Earlier this year, after the Chechen Government-in-exile sought refuge in Afghanistan, Moscow threatened airstrikes against the Taliban. During his Islamabad visit, Yastrzhembsky provided "concrete" information about training camps in Afghanistan for Chechen rebels. India has no communication

## News Analysis

with the Taliban, full stop.

Russia and India have been consulting more often about the Afghan situation for a number of reasons. One, there are signs Iran and the Central Asians are wearying of a quarantine Kabul policy. This inspired France, who wants first dibs at building oil and gas pipelines through Afghanistan, to invite Kabul's deputy foreign minister to Paris last month. Two, the last bastion of resistance to Taliban rule, the Northern Alliance's sliver of land in northeast

Afghanistan, has suffered serious military setbacks this summer. Three, the Chechen war still festers with little sign the Russian military can decisively lance the boil. India similarly sees a steady influx of Afghan mercenaries sustain the Kashmir insurgency.

Moscow and New Delhi are following double pronged strategies to keep Kabul under pressure and ensure the Northern Alliance survives till winter. One prong is diplomatic. Russia is thus talking with Pakistan about Afghanistan, even if largely to tick them off. India has set up bilateral working groups on Afghanistan with Iran, the United States and now Russia.

The other prong is material. Until now the Northern Alliance has survived on a shoestring. Russia and Iran provided arms, Indian humanitarian supplies. With Putin's visit, it is believed the scale and lethality of such assistance will be increased. Mishra has ruled out joint military action. But Russia is still toying with the use of airstrikes.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 OCT 2000

# India, Russia seal vital defence deals

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 4. — India and Russia today raised their level of defence cooperation and signed three long-discussed acquisition deals.

By the Indian armed forces, deals were President Vladimir Putin's 'goodies' during the festive season: T-90 tanks, Su-30 jetfighters and the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier.

Both sides also laid greater emphasis on raising, to a ministerial level, the commission on military-technical cooperation. The move would facilitate

progress in training, technology sharing, and weapons transfers. The commission will meet annually.

Two working groups will function under it, and the Indian participation would be led by the defence secretary and the secretary for defence production. The aim is to elevate the relationship from a buyer-seller one to that of joint development and production, possibly even sales to other countries.

Each of the three Services got a piece of the cake as the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr I Klebanov and Mr George Fernandes signed

the parent agreement, and two of the three purchase-related protocols today.

The fourth, just short of a formal contract for the T-90s, was signed at an official level.

The first batch of tanks is expected within eight to 10 months. The initial order is for 310 units and provides for phased production in India. Initial cost estimates are in the range of \$800 million.

At least 140 Su-30 multi-role combat aircraft will be built under a licensed-production arrangement with Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.

Essentially an official expres-

sion of the intent to purchase is the protocol on the aircraft carrier.

The ship will be gifted to India. New Delhi has to shell out the cost of its modernisation and that of the fighters or helicopters on the aircraft carrier. The aircraft costs have not been worked out so far. The modernisation of the basic vessel could take 28 months.

Defence officials this afternoon pointed out that today's arrangements were not water-tight contracts, just a few steps short of that.

THE STATESMAN

8 OCT 2007

# Russia steps in to save Tarapur N-plant

Brahma Chellaney  
Moscow, October 11

DESPITE THE marked pro-US shift in India's foreign policy, Russia's vital importance for Indian interests has been underscored not only by the major agreements signed during President Vladimir Putin's visit but also by its supply of low-enriched uranium fuel for the American-built Tarapur nuclear power plant.

The twin-reactor Tarapur station has been **hungering** for adequate fuel in recent months, making its condition so grave as to threaten discontinuance of electricity supply to India's main industrial belt of Bombay.

The Russian decision to come to Tarapur's rescue is already being criticised by Western diplomats, and Russia is likely to face open flak at the next meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG), the cartel of nuclear-exporting nations. The NSG, also known by its original name, The London Club, was secretly set up after India's 1974 test and continues to meet behind closed doors with minimal transparency despite assuming a public face.

The contract for 58 tonnes of Russian fuel for Tarapur has been followed by a separate but classified Indo-Russian agreement signed during Putin's visit to co-operate on peaceful applications of nuclear energy. Putin's tour of the BARC complex - a rare honour accorded to a foreign leader - testified, in his own words, "the special nature" of Indo-Russian ties.

Russia is building two large 1000-megawatt nuclear power reactors at Koodankulam and is keen to construct more plants in India. Although France too is keen to sell reactors to India, Russia is the only NSG member seeking a change in the regime's stringent guidelines to enable such exports.

Moscow justified the Koodankulam deal on grounds that the agreement was reached in principle before the NSG tightened its guidelines in 1992 to make any export conditional on the importing nation accepting international inspections on all its nuclear facilities - a condition that in practice will strip India of its nuclear-weapons capability.

It has defended its action to rescue the fuel-starved Tarapur on grounds that it comes within

Putin's post-election Presidential decree allowing shipment of nuclear materials in "extraordinary" situations. The inflexible NSG guidelines, however, permit only safety-related exports, that too by prior consultations with members, to stave off a looming nuclear contingency.

Tarapur has been buffeted by one political crisis after another since the US stopped honouring 20 years ago a binding international pact to sell fuel. First France was brought in as a substitute fuel supplier under a 1982 Reagan-Indira Gandhi compromise deal. Then, when the original pact ended in 1993, India, instead of ending international inspections of Tarapur, agreed to their continuance forever in return for a onetime, US-backed commercial fuel shipment from China.

The punitive NSG restrictions effectively bar any nation from selling any nuclear-related item to India. Russian officials acknowledge that Moscow can sell more reactors to India only if Russia quits the NSG, of which it is a founder member; or India is admitted to the NSG as a nuclear-weapons state; or NSG guidelines are made flexible.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 OCT 2000



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2000

## A NEW CHARTER OF RENEWAL

THE POLITICAL AIM of a stylised new 'Declaration on Strategic Partnership between India and Russia' is to infuse a sense of purpose into their bilateral engagement, which has been adrift, and, above all, to try and build a multipolar global order. In a sense, the India-Russia Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in January 1993 began a process of redefining the ties which had acquired the overtones of a virtual defence arrangement in August 1971. It was then that India and the Soviet Union had for the first time entered into an extensive accord, whose centrepiece was the provision for mutual "consultations" aimed at taking concerted action to meet the military challenges or threats to either side. The new document — signed in New Delhi on Tuesday by the visiting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee — diversifies the redefinition process that was set in motion in 1993. However, the real motive force at work now is their "conviction" favouring the diplomatic imperative of a new "multipolar global structure" of states. India and Russia have however made clear that they are not seeking to weave a military-political alliance and that their new partnership is "not directed against any other state or group of states". The clarification reflects the paradigm shift on the New Delhi-Moscow front since 1971 when the dominant perception was that the Soviet Union would help deter China and Pakistan from resorting to military adventurism against India. It also takes into account the changed and friendlier relationship of both countries with the United States.

Now, there is no inherent incompatibility between the India-U.S. 'Vision Statement' of March 2000 and the present deed of an Indo-Russian 'Strategic Partnership'. But the idea of multipolarity could be decoded as implying opposition to the present-day dominance of the U.S. as the sole superpower in strategic, military and economic spheres. Mr. Putin has recently

made common cause with the Chinese leadership by advocating multipolarity as the *sine qua non* for an unborn new world order in the context of their objections to the U.S.'s plans for a space-oriented national missile defence system. If India, therefore, has chosen to cast its lot with an expanding but amorphous league of countries not happy with the present international system, it does not necessarily mean that New Delhi has suddenly begun to see the ghost of pax Americana in every shadow. The recent and definitive entente with the U.S. has already widened New Delhi's diplomatic options which evidently reflect in the desire to sustain the historic warmth with Moscow.

For India and Russia, the sweeping array of potential political opportunities is matched by the avenues for possible economic linkages including the nuclear energy facet and, more significantly, by the signs of a new quantum leap in defence ties. Russia is obviously looking for a commercial bonanza in the defence sector, despite its nuanced differences with India on nuclear non-proliferation issues, which have now been brought under the rubric of a bilateral political dialogue on a future international system. A more immediate 'strategic' gain for India, therefore, is the accomplished groundwork for the possible constitution of a joint working group on Afghanistan. The related aspect of international terrorism with direct consequences to India can also be suitably addressed, and there is a case for widening this potential forum to include the U.S. In a narrow spectrum, the Vajpayee administration may feel glad that Mr. Putin has not only acknowledged India's credentials for a bigger role at the U.N. but also discounted the fears that he might play a so-called Pakistan card. But India's diplomacy can be only as good as its strategic thinking which should not be impaired by the gravitational pull of the Pakistan factor.

THE HINDU

10/5/00

# Talks only after Pak ceases aid to terrorism

Shishir Gupta  
New Delhi, October 5

RUSSIA TODAY agreed with India that a dialogue with Pakistan on Kashmir could resume only after the termination of cross-border terrorism and called for a joint campaign to defeat the Taliban's 'externally backed' mission to destabilise the region.

In a joint statement released here after Russian President Putin's four-day visit, the two countries said: "Composite dialogue as a part of the Lahore process could be resumed only when necessary measures are taken for cessation of support for cross-border terrorism and for respect of the Line of Control."

On the nuclear front, Russia endorsed India's voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing and "appreciated" New Delhi's efforts to develop a broad national consensus on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

The two countries expressed deep concern over the situation in Afghanistan,

noting that the Taliban-controlled areas were breeding grounds for religious extremism and international terrorism. To counter the terrorist threat emanating from these areas, India and Russia have decided to establish a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Afghanistan. The six-page statement was demonstrative of the special relationship between New Delhi and Moscow. It brought out a convergence of views on issues critical to the two sides. There was also a similarity of approach on a number of international issues, be it the ABM treaty or developments in Central Asia.

In an obvious reference to Pakistan, the statement noted that there was no military solution to the Afghan problem. It urged the Taliban and its "external patrons" to negotiate the formation of a broad-based Government having representation from all ethnic groups in Afghanistan.

The two countries warned the

Taliban that "further measures" would be taken against them unless they withdrew support to international terrorism and drug trafficking. The statement urged the Taliban to conform to international norms of human rights and international humanitarian law.

India and Russia also agreed that political stability in Central Asia, bordering Afghanistan, was of "vital" interest to them. In this context, they condemned outside support to terrorist activity in Central Asian states.

In the backdrop of Pakistan's bid to extend its geo-political influence in the heart of Central Asia, the statement recognised the right of these (Central Asian) States to take all necessary measures.

The statement "stressed" India and Russia's readiness to work with others for an early commencement of the negotiations at the Conference of Disarmament for banning future production of weapons grade fissile material and other nuclear explosive devices.

While India is willing to participate in the CD negotiations, it may have reservations over this issue as the proposed ban on fissile material production has a bearing on the size of New Delhi's minimum nuclear deterrent. However, the joint statement addressed the Indian and Russian concerns over unabated proliferation of nuclear weapons and missiles in the region. The two sides felt that the possibility of a non-discriminatory mechanism to prevent the spread of atomic weapons should be explored. Opposing fresh negotiations, both sides agreed that the existing bilateral and multilateral arms control treaties, including the controversial ABM treaty, should be implemented.

During Putin's visit, a total of 17 agreements were signed between India and Russia including the Strategic Partnership document, Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Co-operation and the MoU on peaceful use of nuclear energy and space.

## Indo-Russian Statement

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 OCT 2000

# After the Putin visit

By K. K. Katyal

*India and Russia have elevated their multifaceted ties to a higher and qualitatively new level, with stress on mutual interests, commonalities and pragmatism.*

12/9/10

**T**AKING THE cue from Star TV's quiz show, "Kaun Banega Crorepati", it could be firmly said there are three wrong descriptions of Indo-Russian relations and there is only one which is right. Unfortunately, all the four often get mixed up, especially in public discussions on the outcome of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin's visit to India. The wrong depictions are: 1) the enhancement of the ties is a prelude to a strategic triangle including China, 2) Pakistan, acquiring a new relevance in the region, may cast its shadow on Indo-Russian relationship, 3) the demise of the Soviet Union meant a break in Moscow's ties with New Delhi. The correct answer is — India and Russia have elevated their multifaceted ties to a higher and qualitatively new level, with stress on mutual interest, commonalities and pragmatism. Mr. Putin's talks with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and others followed the script prepared by enthusiastic officials. If at all there was a departure, it came as a pleasant surprise to New Delhi. It is a mutually reinforcing relationship. Moscow's political support, apart from commercial defence deals, is of great value to New Delhi. On its part, Russia knows that its armament industry cannot survive without purchases by India.

Let us take the three wrong descriptions. The talk of the strategic triangle first got currency in December 1998 during the visit here of the then Russian Prime Minister, Mr. Y. Primakov who, in reply to a leading question by a correspondent, said: "If we succeed in establishing a triangle, it would be very good." His remark was blown out of proportion even though he promptly clarified that no formal trilateral bloc was contemplated. The triangle talk persisted subsequently as Russia and China consolidated their relationship, New Delhi and Beijing got over the misunderstandings that crept in after India's nuclear tests and India-Russia ties were strengthened. There was a purpose behind Mr. Primakov's remark — perhaps, he sought to guard against misperceptions in Beijing because of his presence in New Delhi and, therefore, gave a triangular twist.

The speculation continued to be stren-

thened because of the identical stand taken by them on major issues — the three of them were equally emphatic in their advocacy of a multipolar world order; they did not mince words in their disapproval of the NATO action in Kosovo; they took the same line on Yugoslavia and Iraq and against using the concern for human rights violations as a pretext for interference in the domestic affairs of any nation. And lately, their views on the U.S. programme to set up the National Missile Defence system have been identical.

As against these perceptions, the reality was different — there was little doubt about each of the three working hard for expanding bilateral relations with the others, but there was not an iota of evidence to suggest a triangular cooperation or even an approach. On the contrary, each of them — China, in particular — was at pains to deny moves for a three-way coordination. India, too, took similar precautions against misunderstandings. The triangle or any formalised cooperation did not fit in with the present-day geo-strategic reality or the global power balance. This idea did not figure at any stage in Mr. Putin's talks with his Indian hosts.

The Pakistan factor suddenly loomed on the political horizon during the run-up to the Putin trip. The visit of his envoy (dealing with Chechnya affairs) to Islamabad was used by Pakistan to create doubts about the future of Indo-Russian ties, with the suggestion that a parallel relationship is in the offing. The envoy's visit was a follow-up to a "chance" meeting of the Pakistani military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, with Mr. Putin at the U.N. at the time of the millennium summit. The categorical tone of reports from Islamabad — suggesting a Putin visit to Pakistan — caused surprise, even concern, in New Delhi. However, the Indian Embassy in Moscow was told that no deeper meanings need be read in the contact with Islamabad. At the very start of his talks in New

Delhi, Mr. Putin was forthright: "We have a problem with Pakistan," he explained in so many words, "because of the Taliban and because of terrorist activities in Central Asia and Chechnya and it is better if we engage Islamabad than if we do not." Then followed the emphatic assertion that "no new relationship (with Pakistan) was contemplated and nothing would be done at the cost of the ties with India". In his public utterances, Mr. Putin was categorical in backing India's position on its problems with Pakistan and on Kashmir. His departure from the text of his address to MPs bears repetition. Basing himself on "absolutely true and verified information", he said "the same individuals, the same terrorist organisations are organising and participate in organising, in conducting and igniting terrorist acts from the Philippines to Kosovo, including Kashmir, Afghanistan and Russia's northern Caucasus."

The joint statement, summing up Mr. Putin's talks, too contained supportive formulations — a call to the Taliban and its "external patrons, especially those states extending military support to them" to return to peaceful negotiations, concern over the growth of religious extremism in the neighbourhood of India and Russia with "official support to destabilise the entire region", Russia's appreciation of India's position that the "composite dialogue" (as different from Islamabad's demand for Kashmir-centric talks) could be resumed only when measures are taken to end cross-border terrorism and for respect of the Line of Control. The Declaration on Strategic Partnership spoke of cooperation "in the fight against international terrorism, separatism, organised crime and illegal trafficking in narcotics".

There is, however, no dearth of cynics who contend that India's relationship with Russia does not — and would not — have the breadth and depth of the ties it had with Moscow during the Soviet days. Had

not Russia, in 1993, virtually disowned the 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation and replaced it with a new arrangement, without its security provisions and ideological underpinnings? That was true. Russia did then see the 1971 treaty as the product of the Cold War and bloc rivalries. Because of this and its domestic problems, which led it to turn to the West for help, Russia was shy of owning past actions. There are no such compulsions now, what with Russia's disenchantment with the West and desire for strategic ties with India. Had that not been the case Moscow would not have agreed to project the Declaration on Strategic Partnership as an extension of the earlier arrangements, including the 1971 treaty. Or, the two countries would not have described themselves as "traditional allies".

Now the right description. The documents, released during the Putin visit — the Declaration and the joint statement — and his public utterances amplify the state of the current relationship, with its political, strategic and technology-related long-term dimensions. The logic and the momentum of the ties too are vividly reflected. As mentioned earlier, there is one pleasant surprise — the understanding by Moscow of the rationale of India's nuclear tests and its willingness to cooperate in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, notably to help in installing power plants in India. Some three years ago, Moscow apologetically defended (in the face of criticism from the West) its decision to set up two nuclear power plants in Tamil Nadu, saying the agreement predated the current international regime which barred transfer of nuclear power reactors to countries which refused to accept fullscope safeguards or international control of their nuclear programme. India's stand against such conditionalities is well known. Russia could not but have reckoned with the pressure from the West and yet chose to go ahead with its offer of nuclear power plants. What is the explanation for the change in Moscow's policy? One, Mr. Putin is not Mr. Boris Yeltsin and, two, the new reality of India's nuclear status because of which cooperation in peaceful uses is considered perfectly in order.

# Russian nuclear exports: a new approach

By C. Raja Mohan

180-14  
10/10

The latest move by Russia to expand civilian atomic energy cooperation with India reflects a significant new approach in Moscow towards use of nuclear power and overcoming the associated risks of nuclear weapon proliferation.

The Indo-Russian agreement on atomic energy cooperation signed during the recent visit of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, is bound to face strong criticism from some of its Western partners, in particular the United States, in the Nuclear Suppliers Group. But the Russian decision appears to be part of a carefully-crafted nuclear initiative that was unveiled by Mr. Putin last month at the millennium summit of the United Nations.

Two broad themes were highlighted by Mr. Putin. One is the importance of nuclear technology in the context of expanding global energy requirements and the concerns about ecological degradation arising from the excessive use of coal and some other carbon-based fuels. Russia is convinced that one of the best ways of dealing with global warming and the demand for cleaner environment is through increased use of nuclear power.

Mr. Putin's second proposition challenges the orthodox view in the American arms control community that greater use of atomic energy will result in the spread of nuclear weapons. This belief has led to a spate of American domestic and international regulations that have inhibited the promotion of nuclear power and transfer of related technologies.

The Russian President hit the nail upon the head, when he told the millennium summit that the "policy of restrictions on nuclear technology transfers to other countries and enhanced international control proved to be insufficient to bar nuclear proliferation". It is this important political recognition as well as the imperatives of commercialising its domestic civilian nuclear programme which have encouraged Russia to decide on an expansion of its nuclear exports.

Mr. Putin's new approach to nuclear non-proliferation has been driven by the dynamic Russian Minister for Atomic Energy, Mr. Evgeni Adamov, who has come up with very interesting ideas that are in tune with India's own approach to nuclear issues.

Mr. Adamov understands the public acceptance of nuclear power has gone down considerably over the years. Therefore, he is urging international cooperation to develop innovative designs of nuclear power plants that are safer than the present generation and deal more effectively with the problem of nuclear waste management.

Besides addressing the safety and environmental aspects of nuclear power, Mr. Adamov is also taking head-on the non-proliferation concerns arising out of the perceived link between civilian nuclear power programmes and the manufacture of atomic weapons.

At the recent annual General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency

## NEWS ANALYSIS

(IAEA), Mr. Adamov pointed to the new technologies that allow the creation of an "inherently safe" and "proliferation-resistant" civilian nuclear power programmes.

Many countries, cutting across the North-South and East West barriers, are interested in collaborative international efforts to develop and promote such technologies. The IAEA itself is considering a proposal to set up a task force on the "Role of Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles for Sustainable Development."

But there is no question that the Russian proposals will run into rough weather with the arms control and environmental groups in the U.S. The essential difference between the Russian ideas backed by a number of countries and the dominant nuclear thinking in the U.S. is centered around one question: How best to dispose of plutonium?

As part of their bilateral arms control initiatives, Russia and the U.S. have agreed to release what they call "excess" plutonium from

their dismantled nuclear weapons. Plutonium is also being generated by many countries by reprocessing spent fuel from civilian nuclear reactors.

The American preference is for "immobilising" the plutonium from the excess stocks and bury it as waste. They would also like to see an end to reprocessing of spent fuel to produce new plutonium that can be used in weapons.

The Russians are taking an entirely different view. They believe the best way to deal with plutonium is to burn it in civilian nuclear reactors. Russia is also for reprocessing the waste from civilian reactors and recycle the extracted plutonium as fuel for the reactors.

Such an approach, Moscow argues, will put the energy embedded in plutonium to productive use. Russia also suggests that the extraction and recycling of plutonium will make the reactor waste less useful for weapons and less-threatening environmentally.

Russian scientists argue that storing plutonium as waste now always leaves the temptation to reclaim it for weapons purposes in future. But recycling it, they insist, will reduce the risks of proliferation and make the waste disposal more manageable.

The principal argument against selling nuclear reactors to nations like India has been that the plutonium generated from them can be put to making nuclear weapons. Russia is now offering a serious and credible way to get around the problem and facilitate greater international cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

India which has strongly backed this new Russian approach needs to debate the merits of recycling plutonium in a non-confrontational manner with the skeptics in the U.S. and parts of northern Europe.

It is possible for India to generate considerable support from the nuclear industry worldwide, including in the U.S. An Indian campaign on this issue could also be the first step towards rethinking the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and making it more credible.

# Keep foreign hands off Kashmir, says Putin

Russia might be changing strategy on South Asia. Sharing India's concern over terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the Russian President asserted that foreign interference in the state should be immediately stopped and the issue resolved bilaterally between India and Pakistan.

"This (Kashmir) issue should be resolved bilaterally and on the basis of compromise. There should be unconditional respect for the line of control (LoC)," he said.

Like Mr Clinton, Mr Putin too was going to cross the divide between the half of the world that had seen the Taj Mahal and the half that hadn't.

At the Taj, he made a sartorial statement in his T-shirt, while in Mumbai, he used the same suite, Kohinoor at the Oberoi that had played host to Mr Clinton.

But unlike Mr Clinton, Mr Putin's speech in Russian didn't give him the elbow room to play to the gallery, confining him to articulating positions on terrorism and Pakistan.

However, a long standing ovation greeted his speech and the shy smile was in evidence again as he virtually fought his way through excited members of the Parliament (MPs) bent on shaking hands with him.

In fact, the grace with which Mr Putin draped the numerous angavastrams on his shoulder was only rivalled by the martial-arts bow he gave to the farewell committee as he drove away.

Supporting the Indian leadership on "the collective front to fight terrorism," Mr Putin added, "we share your concern about the violence that is going on here.

It is making relations between India and Pakistan tense." Mr Putin said: "I would like to share the absolutely trustworthy information with you that the same people are organising terrorist attacks from the Philippines to Kosovo, including Kashmir and Afghanistan and Russia's north Caucasus."

"Moscow fully supports the Indian proposal to create a consolidated front to combat terrorism. Together we shall succeed. You can count on our support," he added.

Was Mr Clinton more forceful on Kashmir? Mr Clinton was charting a shift in US policy on south Asia, while Mr Putin was only reinforcing a traditional position of an old friend.

It was probably why his statements were scrutinised with the proverbial fine-toothed comb as Indians looked for a shift of stance.

It was difficult to find and even if there was, Mr Vladimir Putin's statements left lots of room for positive interpretation, as he said things like, "the territorial integrity of countries should be protected. Russia and India are one on this."

His date with India's parliamentarians, while not quite a runaway hit, nevertheless restored the warm feeling between the two countries.

NEW DELHI 4 OCTOBER

**T**HE COMPARISONS were inevitable. In March, Bill Clinton walked into the Central Hall of the Parliament to address a gaggle of over-enthusiastic parliamentarians who gave him filmstar treatment.

On Wednesday, when the more reserved persona of Vladimir Putin walked in through the same door, India's best efforts at parity somewhere fell short.

For one, Pramod Mahajan had to work overtime last week to ensure a full house on Wednesday while in March, the crowd was almost gatecrashing. The infrequent smile on Mr Putin's face was reward enough for Mr Mahajan who greeted him with roses this morning.

Mr Putin walked the well-trodden path with his formulations on Kashmir which were intended to assuage an Indian apprehension that

# \$3-bn defence deal signed with Russia

Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 4 OCTOBER

**F**OUR CRUCIAL defence agreements worth over \$3 billion and one on civilian nuclear energy were signed between India and Russia on Wednesday, taking the bilateral defence ties to a new level. The new equipment will substantially enhance India's strike capability. The agreements were signed by defence minister, George Fernandes, for India and Russia's deputy prime minister, Ilya L. Klebanov.

India and Russia have also come to an agreement on the much-publicised aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorskov. According to the agreement, the carrier will be refitted and modernised in Russia. It will be equipped with MiG 2K fighters, Sea Harriers and helicopters — Sea King, KA 31 and KA 28 copters.

The price negotiations are on and a MEA spokesman said decisions will be made after a detailed project report is submitted by Russia. India will also purchase 310 frontline T-90 main battle tanks and a license for producing 140 multi-role Su-30 MKI jet fighters.

The two governments have also set up an inter-governmental commission on defence and technical cooperation to be headed by George Fernandes and Ilya L. Klebanov.

A separate memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was signed by Mr Klebanov and national security advisor, Brajesh Mishra.

According to a defence ministry spokesman, the accords relating to the acquisition of T-90 MBTs, Su-30 MKIs and the aircraft carrier were a "complete package."

About 100 T-90s will be delivered in knocked down condition, ready for immediate deployment in a few months. The other 210 will be assembled here.

He said Russia will transfer the technology of the state-of-the-art tank with missile-firing capability to India for indigenous manufacture and the Indian army has completed trials for the armament systems.

There had been extended price negotiations on the equipment, necessitating the defence minister's visit to Russia as well.

The acquisition of these tanks will offset Pakistan's perceived armoured superiority by its induction of upgraded Ukrainian T-80 UD tanks and delays in indigenous production of MBT Arjun.

Though officials were tightlipped about the delivery schedule, sources said they expected the induction of the aircraft carrier in 28 months. The Indian navy will be sending its officers for training on the warship in 12 months.

The carrier with over 45,000 tonnes of displacement capacity will help to fill the void created by the decommissioning of INS Vikrant three years ago. India at present has only one carrier, INS Viraat.

The third agreement relates to transfer of technology and licensed production of 140 Su-30 MKI fighter planes, their engines and airborne equipment by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.

Defence officials said the agreement also extends the possibility of joint production, joint marketing and buy-back of equipment manufactured by HAL by the Russian parent.

The agreement also opens the possibility for engineers and designers of both sides to "effect generation improvements in aircraft engines and systems," officials said.

It will also help India to acquire the Smerch multi-barrel rocket system and the S-300 anti-missile shield from Russia. Defence sources said the Smerch system will be inducted only after conducting user trials by the Army in snow and desert conditions and testing its target acquisition capabilities.

The inter-governmental panel will have under it two work groups. The first will deal with military cooperation and will have defence secretary as its co-chairman.

The other will be headed by secretary of defence production and will deal with issues on ship building, aviation and land systems.

The Economic Times

5 OCT 2001

## Infotech alliance to focus on satellite computer networks

Our Delhi Bureau  
NEW DELHI 4 OCTOBER

**I**NDIA AND Russia on Wednesday forged a strategic partnership in the information technology sector, including key areas like certification of electronics and IT products, communication and network technologies and application of IT in education. Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit provides the backdrop for this significant agreement.

In a meeting between minister for information technology Pranod Mahajan and his Russian counterpart, L. Reyman, the latter indicated that a proposal for purchase of computers for schools in Russia will soon be put forward. Russia has been keen to import computers for its school education programme under the rupee-debt repayment programme for some time now. Mr Mahajan mooted a proposal to start exchange programmes between students, teachers and professionals linked to IT. Both sides agreed to explore

the possibility of developing an information satellite computer network and the development of language software. In this direction, a proposal for both language software and systems by the Jawaharlal Nehru University is being discussed. Russia has, meanwhile, volunteered to demonstrate the use of the satellite network at the Elitex exhibition in February, 2001, in the Capital.

It may be recalled that the seventh meeting of the working group on information technology was held as recently as late September, where the two countries dwelt on cooperation on IT-related issues.

With an eye on increasing the marketability of IT products, the two sides will work mutually in testing, formulation of standards, creation of catalogues, accreditation of each other's testing laboratories and exchange of experts and training programmes.

India and Russia have already B2B linkages.

engaged in high-end computing activities with C-DAC supplying a 12-giga flop Param 1000 computing system to ICAD in June. Russia has now evinced interest in high versions of supercomputers of 36 giga flop and 72 giga flop. This will lead to joint efforts in areas like weather forecasting and parallel computing.

In the area of high technology and electronic materials, pacts with Semiconductor Complex Ltd and Bharat Electronics Ltd for the development of smart cards, six-inch VLSI chips, 4 inch gallium arsenide chips and transistor technology respectively is being envisioned.

At present, the trade between the two countries in IT is very low...about Rs 8 crore. Mr Reyman urged India to build upon the brand equity it enjoyed as a global IT player. Mr Mahajan responded by outlining the IT Vision 2008 and both countries agreed to set up nodal groups to hike volume of trade through B2B linkages.

### IT IS THE IN-THING

February, 2001, in the Capital. It may be recalled that the seventh meeting of the working group on information technology was held as recently as late September, where the two countries dwelt on cooperation on IT-related issues.

With an eye on increasing the marketability of IT products, the two sides will work mutually in testing, formulation of standards, creation of catalogues, accreditation of each other's testing laboratories and exchange of experts and training programmes.

India and Russia have already B2B linkages.

Will this visit revive the old flame?

# The Putin dividend

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**T**HE importance of President Vladimir Putin's visit and its implications for Indo-Russian relations must be assessed in the context of the developing geo-strategic environment. There have been changes in foreign policy orientations, both of Russia and India in the aftermath of the Cold War. Russia is no longer a superpower on a par with the United States. It has, therefore, re-cast its foreign policy.

The overall orientation of Russian foreign policy is Euro-centric and relations with the US is top priority for Russia. Next, Russia needs to preserve its influence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in the context of the linkages which the countries in these regions have developed over the last decade with the US and Western Europe. The re-unification of Germany, the Czech Republic and Hungary becoming part of NATO, and NATO's partnership for peace linkages with Central Asian countries, has generated some concern in Russia.

Russia remains economically dependent on the US and Western Europe. Russia is conscious of the Central Asian Republics vulnerability to the jockeying for influence among West Europe and Turkey on the one hand and Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia on the other. It is equally concerned about the US security plans in the Western Pacific, to deal with potential crises related to Taiwan and China's territorial claims in South-East Asia. This has resulted in Russia establishing cooperation with China. Overall, India's strategic importance for Russia stands diminished compared to what it was during the Cold War.

India's foreign policy also underwent a change in relation to Russia. The previous leverage which India had in structuring overall foreign policy strategies due to the 'Soviet' connection has disappeared. India decided to di-

versify its relations with the US, Western Europe, Japan and the ASEAN. These became a matter of higher priority compared to Russia. In fact, between 1991 and 1995, India distanced itself from Russia because of the latter's anxieties to be accepted by the West. This was despite Yeltsin's visit to Delhi in January 1993.

Between 1996 and 1998, Russia re-acknowledged the importance of its relations with India to balance USA's strategic postures in the Western Pacific, in arms control and disarmament and in the management of the security environment in South-East Asia. Consequently, Russia expanded its defence cooperation with China and re-emphasised its relations with

solidate Russia's strategic position in world affairs.

India and Russia have signed ten agreements during Putin's visit. The most important was the declaration of a strategic partnership. The other agreements detail the programmatic follow up the two governments will undertake to enhance bilateral cooperation across the spectrum.

The strategic partnership declaration entails annual summit level meetings of officials dealing with foreign affairs, defence, economy, and energy. Both sides have committed themselves not to participate in any military, political or other arrangements or armed conflicts threatening either side. Russia and India will cooperate in taking counter-



J.N. Dixit

**While acknowledging that India is a deserving candidate for permanent membership of the UN Security Council, Russia has not announced formal support**

India. This approach found formal expression during then Russian Foreign Minister Primakov's visit to India in December 1997. India responded because of its own defence concerns and technology requirements.

Vajpayee has no ideological inclination in his mind-set about Indo-Soviet relations of the past. Putin is not a traditional Soviet politician. He was a competent senior professional of the KGB who believes in the national destiny of Russia and is committed to making Russia a great power. He is an experienced practitioner of realpolitik and is, therefore, conscious that a certain positive equation with China and India are essential to restore and con-

measures against international terrorism, separatism, trans-border crimes and trafficking in narcotics. Deeper long-term and diversified Indo-Russian cooperation will be organised in the sphere of metallurgy, fuel and energy, IT and communications.

The most important decisions on expanding Indo-Russian relations relate to defence supplies, technological cooperation or peaceful uses of atomic energy and outer space, and the acknowledgement of a convergence of interests in dealing with Islamic extremism and terrorist violence, with special reference to Afghanistan. The Russian government has agreed to supply T-90 tanks and to their joint production in In-

dia; Russia will also supply the Su-30 fighter jets and assist in their production in India. MiG-29K air defence and the aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, will be transferred to India. These arrangements will be underpinned by long-term defence technology cooperation.

Bilateral trade is to be expanded from US \$1.7 billion to \$2.5 billion per annum initially. Institutional arrangements for discussions on Afghanistan, cross-border terrorism and narcotic crimes have been put in place. Given the Western reservation in providing defence supplies to a nuclear India, these decisions indicate a greater acceptance by Russia of India's security concerns. Putin's motivation stems from the urge to create a polycentric world order.

Having detailed the positive aspects of the visit, it is pertinent to avoid euphoria, taking note of the following facts: For Russia, China and the US are higher priorities. Russia has pulled back from the former Soviet position of categorical support to India on the Kashmir issue. There is a parallelism in the US and Russian policies now on Kashmir (as evidenced in discussions of Putin's special envoy with General Pervez Musharraf last week). While acknowledging that India is a deserving candidate for permanent membership of the UN Security Council, Russia has not announced formal support for India's candidature for the seat. Russia, even as it has shown a greater understanding of India's logic of nuclear weaponisation, desires India to fall in line with the international discriminatory non-proliferation agenda.

So it is a more down-to-earth and realistic relationship between the two countries that is envisaged by Putin and Vajpayee. One must acknowledge that Indo-Russian relations are now grounded in more tangible mutuality and equality of interests than Indo-US relations, where we have greater expectations from the US than the US has from us.

INDIAN EXPRESS

5 OCT 2000

# India, Russia sign 11 agreements

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE 5/8

NEW DELHI, Oct. 3. — The Russian President's state visit is a "milestone" that would provide a "major impetus" to bilateral relations at the beginning of the new millennium, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee said today.

Almost the entire Cabinet was present at Hyderabad House this morning for talks with the Russian team.

The two countries signed 11 agreements, including the Declaration of Strategic Partnership, that outlines the contours of Indo-Russian relationship in the 21st century. Mr Vajpayee and Mr Putin signed the document.

Some more agreements, including the Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation, are expected to be signed tomorrow.

The Strategic Partnership stresses lasting importance of the treaties signed between the two countries since 1971.

"The Declaration is not directed to any third country," said Mr Vajpayee at a press conference jointly held with Mr Putin. The Declaration binds the two countries to "non-participation in any military-political or other alliances or associations or armed conflict directed against the other side, or in any treaties, agreements, or understandings infringing upon the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity or national security interests of the other side".

Mr Vajpayee said the talks were "very substantive" and

## FB seeks Putin's help for 'truth' on Netaji

NEW DELHI, Oct. 3. — The Forward Block today sought the visiting Russian President's help for access to material reportedly in the possession of the Russians that could throw light on Netaji Subhas Bose's fate.

The FB general secretary, Mr Debabrata Biswas, drew Mr Vladimir Putin's attention to an article by one NN Koltsov in the journal Russia and India, published by the Institute of Oriental Studies, R A S Moscow.

The article reportedly suggested that unless material relating to Netaji's activities in Russia in and around 1945 is made available for study, what finally happened to him cannot be known. — SNS

efforts to reduce nuclear arms globally with the ultimate goal to eliminate these weapons. The two countries have agreed on:

- Integrated long-term programme on science and technology cooperation till 2010.
- Inter-governmental agreement in the field of agriculture
- Cooperation in postal communication services
- Treaty on mutual legal assistance and legal relations concerning civil and commercial matters

- Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between Ministries of Law, Justice and Company Affairs of both the countries
- Signing of cultural, scientific and educational exchange between India and Russia for the years 2000-2001
- Agreement on mutual protection of confidential material
- Protocol of intentions between MMTC Ltd, India, and Gokhran of Russia under the Ministry of Finance of Russia

- Agreement on cooperation in the field of processing and trade of rough diamond and precious metals
- Product sharing contract between Government of India and Public Joint-Stock Company 'Gazprom' and Gas Authority of India with respect to Contract Area Identified as Block NEC-OSN-97/1
- Agreement between India and Russia on principles of cooperation between Governments of the States and Union Territories of India and the Bodies of Executive Authority of the Constituent Entities of Russia.

THE STATESMAN

10 OCT 2000



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# Indo-Russian strategic partnership for enhanced cooperation

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 3.** The following is the text of the "Declaration on strategic partnership between India and Russia" signed here today by the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the visiting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin,:

"Proceeding from a desire to further consolidate their traditionally close and friendly ties to mutual benefit; drawing upon their rich and fruitful tradition of cooperation in various fields accumulated over half a century since their establishment of diplomatic relations; emphasizing the fundamental and lasting importance of the treaty of friendship and cooperation between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation of 28 January 1993 which was a continuation of the bilateral Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation of 9 August 1971, of the Declaration on the Further Development and Intensification of Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation of 30 June 1994, and of the Moscow Declaration on the Protection of the Interests of Pluralistic States of 30 June 1994; convinced that the further comprehensive development of their bilateral ties would promote progress and prosperity in both states and the consolidation of positive trends in the world as a whole; seeking to impart a qualitatively new character and long-term perspective to their multifaceted bilateral relations and to actively develop them in political, economic, trade, scientific, technological, cultural and other fields, in the years ahead and into the 21st century; proceeding from the conviction that it is necessary to build a multipolar global structure based on sovereign equality of all states and peoples, democratic values and justice; confirming their adherence to the common ideals of peace, democracy, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, non-violence and secularism; recognising their special responsibility by virtue of being among the largest multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious states; inspired by a desire to jointly contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security, the democratisation of international relations, as well as to the promotion of the establishment of a new, just and stable world order; reaffirming their commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations charter, declare as follows:

1. The sides hereby proclaim the establishment of relations of strategic partnership between them. Based on mutual understanding and long-term confidence in each other, this envisages the elevation of their multifaceted ties to an even higher and qualitatively new level, while imparting them with a specially close and dynamic character, both in the bilateral field and in the international arena.
2. This strategic partnership between the sides is based upon the principles of sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity of states, non-interference in their internal affairs, mutual respect and mutual benefit.
3. Such a strategic partnership would include enhanced cooperation in the following fields:

#### Political

Convening of annual summit level meetings; regular bilateral political and foreign office consultations on issues of mutual concern; closer cooperation at the United Nations, including its specialised agencies and institutions, at other international and regional fora; further intensifying their efforts aimed at strengthening international peace and security, general and complete disarmament, systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating these weapons, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful settlement of disputes; joint initiatives on key international and regional issues; informing each other of planned foreign policy initiatives in the international arena; non-participation in any military-political or other alliances or

associations or armed conflict directed against the other side, or in any treaties, agreements or understandings infringing upon the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity or national security interests of the other side.

#### Trade and Economy

Strengthening close cooperation within the framework of the Indo-Russian inter-governmental commission on trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation, as well as other joint bodies of business and industry representatives, with a view to expanding trade and economic relations; deepening and diversifying cooperation in sectors such as metallurgy, fuel and energy, information technology, communications and transport, including merchant shipping and civil aviation; further development of cooperation in banking and finance, and improving credit and insurance facilities so as to promote bilateral trade; creating a favourable environment for mutual investments and guaranteeing their protection; simplifying customs and other procedures and promoting the removal of non-tariff barriers and gradual lowering of tariff barriers, establishing effective mechanisms for interaction between Indian and Russian entities with a view to achieving sustained expansion of bilateral trade in a long-term perspective; encouraging contacts between regions in both countries with a view to promoting trade and economic cooperation. Simplifying rules and procedures for travel by entrepreneurs and businessmen of both countries; further enhancing the quality and international competitiveness of their goods by, *inter alia*, promoting the joint development and sharing of the latest technologies; exploiting to mutual benefit the new opportunities arising out of the integration processes under-way in the world economy; enhancing cooperation and coordination at international trade, economic and financial bodies; jointly exploring the possibilities of regional trading arrangements with third countries.

#### Defence

Consolidating defence and military-technical cooperation in a long-term perspective; deepening service-to-service cooperation.

#### Science and Technology

Promoting existing and new forms of cooperation in fundamental and applied scientific research, expanding the exchange of scientists and scientific information, establishing direct ties between scientific research/higher educational institutions. Cooperating in areas such as oceanology, agricultural sciences, medical sciences and biotechnology, environmentally clean technologies, meteorology, standardisation, metrology and certification of each other's products, jointly exploring the possibilities of commercial application of the results of scientific and technological research and development. Cooperating in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the peaceful use of outer space.

#### Culture

Further promoting cultural cooperation and a wider exposure to each other's cultural heritage and achievements; activating contacts between peoples and organisations including in the fields of culture, education, mass media, youth and sports. Promoting tourist exchanges and cooperation between tourist organisations in both countries.

#### Other fields

Cooperating in the fight against international terrorism, separatism, organised crime and illegal trafficking in narcotics. Cooperating in rendering mutual legal assistance in civil and criminal matters and in matters relating to extradition, as well as in other related areas.

4. The strategic partnership between the sides is not directed against any other state or group of states, and does not need to create a military-political alliance.

5. Signed on 3 October 2000 at New Delhi in two originals each, in Hindi, Russian and English languages. — PTI

THE HINDU

4 OCT 2000

# A boost to Indo-Russian defence tie-up

By Atul Aneja

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 3.** India and Russia today decided to upgrade military ties and cleared key defence agreements to substantiate their strategic partnership.

It was decided to form an Indo-Russian commission on military-technical cooperation to regularise ministerial-level contacts. "To upgrade the nature of our defence interaction, we have agreed to establish an inter-governmental commission on military-technical co-operation", the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, said in the presence of the visiting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, this afternoon.

A Joint Working Group on defence headed by government officials had so far steered military relations between the two countries. The new commission would therefore raise bilateral defence interaction from an official-level to a higher plane.

The decision to form the military-technical commission coincided with the clearance of key defence deals. "We are currently discussing military hardware exchanges which are of strategic significance," highly-placed sources in the Government said.

It was also decided to finalise the well publicised T-90 tank deal, including the transfer of 124 tanks off-the-shelf. Another 186 tanks would be produced here under a Russian licence. The total deal for 310 tanks is expected to cost India around Rs. 3,000 crores.

The T-90 deal is expected to enhance India's capability to carry out armoured thrusts, especially in the Rajasthan sector, the Army's preferred area of operation. The armed forces, are geared to undertake offensive tank manoeuvres in the deserts in the zone around Rahimyar Khan so that Pakistan's key communication nodes can be targeted. The T-90 tanks would also more than offset the acquisition of T-80UD tanks from Ukraine by Islamabad.

During Mr. Putin's stay, a new package of SU-30 planes is also likely to get the nod. Officials from the two sides are currently negotiating the transfer of technology for pro-

ducing SU-30 fighter jets here under a Russian licence. Officials pointed out that it was planned to produce at least 150 SU-30s here. Unlike the existing SU-30s with the IAF, the licence produced jets, designated SU-30MK'I' would be more sophisticated. All SU-30s with India would subsequently be upgraded to the MK'I' level. The large number of SU-30s would advance the IAF's strategic reach beyond its South Asian borders.

India had agreed in principle to purchase the Russian aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov. While the Russians would part with this platform free of cost, India would incur an expense of around Rs. 1,800 crores for its modernisation. The Gorshkov package is also likely to include the transfer of around two

squadrons of MiG-29 K air defence planes. The entire deal may cross Rs. 5,000 crores.

With the formidable 40,000 tonne Gorshkov in tow, the Navy along with the much smaller INS Viraat, can assert itself along the eastern and western seaboard as well as vital stretches of the Indian Ocean. The Navy has already contracted for three Khrivak class frigates and recently obtained two submarines capable of firing missiles.

Apart from finalising defence tie-ups, New Delhi and Moscow signed 12 agreements covering agriculture, communication, legal relations, culture, diamonds, and energy. For the first time, an agreement to regularise interaction between Russian provinces and Indian States was also signed.

## Cooperation in legal sphere too

By Our Legal Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 3.** A Memorandum of Understanding on mutual cooperation in the field of law and justice was today signed between India and Russia in the presence of the visiting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee.

This is the first ever MoU on mutual cooperation between institutions of justice/courts in India and their counterparts in other countries including training of judicial officers and legal education.

The MoU provides for cooperation in nine areas including mutual assistance, exchange of experience in the field of administration of justice, use of information technology, legislative drafting and exchange of professionals. It will provide opportunities to both parties for improving their drafting skill, to know the judicial system of one another and to improve upon the standards of legal education.

It will facilitate education and training of justice officials (specialists) and legal experts, assistance of educational institutions in setting up and management of law courses, in

the preparation and implementation of programmes of studies, exchange of legal literature and publications on legal subjects as well as of relevant information on legal matters.

The Institution of Legislative Drafting and Research (India) of the Law Ministry's Legislative Department will train Russians in legislative drafting and facilitate exchange of current legislation. Courses and seminars would also be conducted.

Another MoU to provide for legal assistance and legal relations concerning civil and commercial matters was also signed. As a result, it will become possible to serve summons and processes issued by courts of one party in the territory of the other. It will also enable courts and judicial authorities of one party to take evidence on the request of courts and judicial parties of the other party.

The courts in the two countries would also be able to execute decrees, settlements and arbitration awards passed in each other's territory.

THE HINDU

OCT 2000

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP SIGNED

# India, Russia to strive for a multipolar world order

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, OCT. 3. Proclaiming a strategic partnership for the new century, India and Russia today agreed to develop a common approach to Afghanistan and coordinate political, diplomatic and military steps towards the unfolding crisis there.

The decision to forge a joint strategy reflects the continuing convergence of geopolitical interests between the two nations even after the Cold War. The readiness to act together in Afghanistan lends substance to the idea of a strategic partnership in a changed world.

Dispelling widespread scepticism of the future of Indo-Russian relations, the visiting President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, signed a document on strategic partnership here.

The declaration unveils a framework for sustained engagement across a broad front — from enhanced defence cooperation to promotion of regional stability and the creation of a multipolar world order.

The declaration states the two leaders hope to “impart a qualitatively new character and long-term perspective to their multifaceted relations”. The two leaders insisted that the partnership was not a “military-political alliance” and “not directed against” any other nation. The objective they said, was to democratise international relations.

### Common plan on Afghanistan

The reiteration of the Indo-Russian strategic convergence comes amidst growing concern worldwide that the Taliban is about to gain total control over Afghanistan. The advance of the Taliban, it is feared, could give a big boost to the forces of religious extremism and destabilise the entire region.

To a specific question on Afghanistan at a joint press conference, Mr. Vajpayee said it was agreed to “evolve a common strategy” to deal with the crisis there. Mr. Putin added India and



The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, exchanging documents after signing the declaration on strategic partnership at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Tuesday. — Photo: V. Sudershan

Russia “intend to coordinate their military and political line on the situation”.

Mr. Putin said the proposed “coordination” on Afghanistan would cover “the activities of all the agencies involved, including the special services of both countries”.

Elaborating on the discussions, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, told reporters later that the setting of

an Indo-Russian Joint Working Group on Afghanistan was under consideration. But Mr. Mishra ruled out any joint Indo-Russian military operations.

Asked whether India and Russia would be prepared to bring other countries into the JWG, Mr. Mishra said it would depend on how the talks evolved in the coming days.

If there were any apprehensions in New Delhi about the re-

cent Russian overtures to Pakistan, they appeared to have been set at rest today. Mr. Mishra said India was “satisfied” with the Russian explanation that its engagement of Pakistan would “not be detrimental to ties with India”. On the expansion of bilateral nuclear cooperation, Mr. Mishra said no new agreement had been reached. But discussions were continuing. The Russian President and Mr. Vajpayee who held informal talks last night reconvened this morning for delegation-level talks at the Hyderabad House.

Praising Mr. Putin’s vision to rebuild Russia, Mr. Vajpayee told the joint press conference after the talks that India would “like to see Russia as a strong and confident state, an important constituent in a multipolar world order”.

Thanking the Indian people for the warm welcome accorded to him, the visiting President said his talks here “have confirmed the coincidence of long-term geopolitical interests between India and Russia”. He also extended strong support for India’s permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council.

### Indo-Pak. ties

In his brief remarks on Indo-Pakistan relations, Mr. Putin said Russia hoped “concrete efforts would be made in order to renew the dialogue between India and Pakistan to defuse tensions in the region”. There was a sense of satisfaction in the Government that Mr. Putin’s visit successfully consolidated bilateral relations and provided a basis for their intensification in the future.

At a banquet for the Russian leader tonight, the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, reflected on the enduring importance of the Russian connection. Asserting that a strong Russia was in India’s interests, Mr. Narayanan said Mr. Putin’s visit underlined “the inevitability of this common destiny” between the two nations.

Accords signed: Page 13

Text of declaration: Page 14

## ‘Putin will not visit Pak.’

MOSCOW, OCT. 3. The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, would not visit Pakistan as the trip was never planned, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, said today.

“The President will not visit Pakistan, and I also have no intention to undertake any such visit,” he said before leaving for New Delhi.

Reports about Mr. Putin’s visit to Pakistan first appeared when Mr. Sergei Yasdrzsembsky, a Russian official

went to Islamabad to express Russia’s concerns over the Taliban’s activities.

### Vajpayee for Moscow

In New Delhi, the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, accepted the invitation of Mr. Putin to visit Moscow. “I have accepted the invitation extended to me by Mr. Putin,” the Prime Minister said in his opening statement at a joint press conference with the Russian leader. — UNI

4 OCT 2000

# Concert of Interests

## India, Russia as Regional Stabilisers

By YEVGENY KOZHOKIN

IN the late fifties, American researcher Harold R Isaacs wrote, "The European age has ended. The centre of gravity in world affairs has shifted, Europe has to be seen as a peninsula at one end of the great Eurasian continent." Isaacs correctly sensed the growth of the role of Asia in world affairs. This trend was given a powerful impetus after the collapse of the two-bloc system. Besides, the economic successes of India and China and their ability to overcome the 1997-98 financial crisis, predetermined the growth of their importance in world economy and politics.

India and China are not *etat-nations*, but civilisation nations. The civilisation principle as the rallying factor is probably more important for India, because the dominant influence of the Han people in China is playing an exceptionally large role in terms of the unification of the country. In terms of cultural identity and territorial-state structure, Russia is also leaning towards the civilisation-nation principle. But the quick change of political-ideological and socio-economic paradigms (twice during the 20th century) forced its upper classes to doubt certain key characteristics of their country.

Today, we are witnessing a gradual ideological recreation of Russia. The Soviet past and the Russian past and present are less frequently confronted, but are accepted and evaluated as parts of the whole.

Despite the attempts of extreme liberals and some oligarchs to question President Vladimir Putin's idea of the creation of an effective state, this is supported by the clear majority of the Russian population. The new president ensures the creation of a clear-cut vertical of executive authority without renouncing the principles of federalism, which are constitutional in Russia.

The recognition of the state as an immanent value and understanding of the need to protect and strengthen it are encouraging the Russian ruling class and society as a whole to search for like-minded countries on the international scene. From the logistics of international relations today, a constructive collaboration of Russia and India is imperative for both states. On the other hand, some novel conceptual structures that originated in the West can be used as the grounds for actions that contradict the national interests of Russia and India. In particular, the concepts of "humanitarian intervention" and "limited nature of state sovereignty" can be used in certain situations to undermine the

territorial integrity of states.

The question of what boundaries of state sovereignty will exist in the 21st century is closely linked with questions about the future of such international organisations as the UN and regional organisations like NATO.

A new struggle has been launched over the future of UN peacekeeping operations. The report of a group that analysed UN peacekeeping operations, led by L Brahmini, clearly admits that in the words of the UN Charter, it was created "to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war." The fulfilment of that task is the main function of the UN and largely the gauge by which it is judged by those people for the service to which it exists. The UN failed to fulfil this task more than once in the past decade, the report says.

Both India and Russia are clear

But the Kashmir problem and the situation in Afghanistan hinder regional stabilisation. Transborder terrorism and separatist movements in the zone of India's Jammu and Kashmir threaten peace and security in the whole of South Asia. In this sense, Russia supports measures taken by the Indian authorities to strengthen the territorial integrity of the country and to resist the attempts to create a new centre of international terrorism there.

The unfavourable development of the situation in Afghanistan can have a most negative effect on the situation in Kashmir (one possibility is the growth of uncontrolled arms deliveries) and compound the threat of terrorism in the North of India. This is why Russia and India alike expressed readiness to support any peace initiatives that would restore peace in Afghanistan.

India is seriously worried by the developments in Afghanistan. The Indian government, which is traditionally pursuing a policy of secularism, fears the strengthening of the positions of Islamic fundamentalism in the region. That such threat is quite real can be seen from the promise of the Taliban leaders to wage "a holy war for the victory of Islam in the countries of Central Asia and in India." Such statements were echoed by terrorist acts in South India, staged by the militant wing of the Al-Umma Moslem group.

Russia and India are equally interested in cutting short the proliferation of Islamic fundamentalism as represented by the Taliban movement in Afghanistan. Like Moscow, New Delhi is fighting consistently and energetically all and any examples of international terrorism. India very timely drafted a convention on combating international terrorism and moved it for the consideration of the UN General Assembly.

Other unusual threats to security are appearing in the region and coming to the fore, such as the smuggling of weapons, the uncontrolled movement of refugees, and illegal immigration. The nature and scale of these problems elevated them to the plane of transborder security problems, which cannot be resolved by any one state single-handed but call for the development of regional and international cooperation. Such major Asian states as Russia and India can make a substantial contribution to these efforts.

(The author is director, Russian Institute of Strategic Studies)

### IN BRIEF

- India and China are civilisation states; Russia is going the same way
- President Vladimir Putin's idea of creating an effective state has popular support
- The situation in Kashmir and Afghanistan hinders regional stability
- India and Russia are interested in curbing Islamic fundamentalism

on the need for strict compliance with international law and the principles of the UN Charter. They also expressed their common opinion on the need to maintain the system of strategic stability. It is vital that both Russia and India regard the UN Security Council as an effective instrument of maintaining international peace.

The Soviet Union, whose legal successor in many spheres is Russia, accumulated positive experience of large-scale collaboration with Pakistan in the 1960s. New Delhi more than once demonstrated a desire to normalise relations with Islamabad in the past decade. Russia understands and upholds these initiatives. Likewise, Moscow welcomed the 1993 and 1996 documents signed by India and China, in particular the border agreement (September 1993), which settled the territorial dispute between them, and the agreement on the reduction of troops deployed along their border (November 1996).

# India, Russia iron out defence creases

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct 3. — Indian and Russian defence officials worked late this evening to iron out creases in inter-governmental defence agreements.

The decks were being cleared for 310 T-90 tanks, indigenous production of 150 Su-30 combat aircraft and acquiring the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier. The initial estimate for the first two deals would be about \$3 billion.

The formal upgrading, to a ministerial level, of the inter-governmental commission on military technical cooperation has been deferred to tomorrow. There were no problems with that 65-page document officials said, the decision had been taken in principle when Mr George Fernandes visited Moscow. Putting a package in place on a single occasion was considered more appropriate.

priate.

It is understood, however, that Indian officials were using their "home turf" advantage and the goodwill generated by President Vladimir Putin's visit to secure the most favourable conditions in terms of price, payment schedules and so.

On page 8:

- India, Russia sign 11 agreements
- Afghan furrow on Russia brow
- Another photograph

Especially for the T-90s and Su-30s, deals for which have been processed further than those for the Gorshkov.

No contracts would be signed tomorrow, but the inter-governmental agreements approved yesterday.

## RUSSIA:

(Continued from page 1)

outright, the rest transferred in semi-knocked and completely knocked down condition. With a transfer of technology, these would eventually be almost entirely built in India. "The Army is looking beyond 310 units," a defence official said this evening.

India is convinced that the Su-30 project, which takes in a phased development/retro-fit of an IAF-specific version (the Mk-I), has overcome its teething troubles. It has now decided go beyond the initial 40 B 10 order, of which 18 planes have already been delivered. Production at the Ojhar division of Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. was the logical next step.

Price negotiations have yet to get down to brass tacks but the ballpark figure mentioned this evening was in excess of \$2 billion. The IAF is looking at an eight-squadron fleet of the multi-role combat aircraft, the most advanced fighter it possesses, and the arrangement centres around producing 150 planes in India. Building up to a strength of 200, with the scope for extending/upgrading the programme.

Fewer details have been worked out so far for the Gorshkov, which has been an off-and-on affair for close to a decade.

The Russians have offered the "retired" carrier as a gift, but quoted a price of \$734 million for repairs, renovation and modernisation. Added to the bill would be the cost of the MiG-29-K fighters and the Kamov-31 helicopters on the carrier.

Initially some naval experts felt the Gorshkov would be "too big" (she displaces about 40,000 tonnes), but it appears there's no alternative available. Down to a lone-carrier fleet in the absence of a replacement for Vikrant, and with Viraat (even after recent modernisation) having only a

assured supply of spares, technology transfers and subsequent upgrades too. "They will be detailed maps of the route we wish to take," said an official. There would be scope for stretching them beyond the number of tanks or planes currently envisaged.

The T-90 tank would be of extreme significance. It has been well over a decade that the armoured corps acquired a state-of-the-art iron horse — the indigenous MBT-Atjun programme made only token progress but delayed a decision on imports. Pricing had been a problem, the Russians are said to have asked for \$2 million a piece, India tried to bring it down to \$1.25 million.

The current plans are for acquiring 310 tanks in the first phase of an open-ended programme. About 100 would be bought

■ See RUSSIA: page 8

THE STATESMAN

200

# Putin holds informal talks with Vajpayee

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, October 2

HT-1 3/10  
**R**USSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin tonight held informal talks with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee soon after his arrival here on a four-day state visit that is expected to take forward Indo-Russian relations to new heights.

Putin, the first Russian President to visit India in seven-and-a-half years, had a private dinner meeting with Vajpayee at the Prime Minister's official residence.

Earlier, Putin arrived to a warm welcome amid tight security and the expectation that his four-day visit would impart fresh direction to the traditionally close Indo-Russian ties. He was received by External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh at the Palam airport.

Over the next three days, talks between Mr Putin and his Indian interlocutors are expected to revolve around issues such as terrorism, oil, diamond trade, information technology and trade. However, at the core of the bilateral dialogue would be the strengthening of military ties between the two countries.

The future course of the multi-faceted Indo-Russian relationship will flow from the key strategic partnership document, which the two sides will sign on Tuesday. This agreement will provide the blueprint for evolution of bilateral relations in the coming decades.

The formation of the Inter-Government Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation, besides raising the level of defence ties, will set the

stage for acquisition by India of T-90 tanks, the "Admiral Gorshkov" aircraft carrier and the latest version of Sukhoi 30 fighters.

However, the terrorist threat emanating from the Afghanistan-Pakistan nexus is expected to be a major issue of deliberation between the two countries. While the Russian Federation bears the brunt of Pan-Islamic terrorism in Chechnya and in its sphere of influence bordering Afghanistan, India is the victim of cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. In both cases, the source happens to be the same.

In the discussions on terrorism, the two sides are expected to deliberate on the tactics to counter this threat. The talks will determine whether a policy of confrontation or engagement is to be adopted to contain the "jehadi" elements.

As it is, the decision by Moscow to directly engage Pakistan and the reported desire of President Putin to visit Islamabad is under intense discussions in the two countries. Some quarters believe the Russian engagement with Pakistan might have the negative consequence of according undue legitimacy to the Taliban.

In India, there are fears that such legitimacy to the Taliban could extend Pakistan's geo-political influence right into the heart of Central Asia. This obviously will also have a negative spin-off in Kashmir.

But Moscow's policy to engage Pakistan reveals its intention of adopting a mixed approach towards the Taliban. But it is rather early days to suggest that in Afghanistan, Russia's focus has shifted to the Taliban.

LS Secretariat rolls out red carpet — Page 11

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

HT-10  
29/10

# Infinite possibilities

It is not simply a question of nostalgia. JYOTSNA BAKSHI outlines how an Indo-Russia strategic alliance can counter the expanding threat of terrorism in the neighbourhood

**W**ITH THE end of the Cold War, the era of exclusive relationships is over. Every major player in the international scene is interacting with everyone else. Both India and Russia are seeking extensive cooperation with the Western powers led by the US. At the same time, the abiding geopolitical importance of India and Russia for each other cannot be ignored. Since the mid-Fifties, the two countries have shared an uninterrupted friendship through various ups and downs. The basic framework of friendly relations remains intact despite the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

It is in India's geopolitical interest that the Russian Federation maintains its strategic autonomy both vis-a-vis the West and China and contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region. Similarly, a strong India is seen as a helpful factor by the Russian strategic thinkers. The emergence of a polycentric balance of power, instead of a world dominated by the sole surviving superpower or divided into mutually exclusive alliances, would be in India's interest. Russia also favours a multi-polar world order. The two countries, therefore, can derive mutual strength by cooperating with each other.

Vladimir Putin's advent at the helm of affairs in Russia reflects the country's desire for moving ahead. Of late, the Russian economy has started showing signs of improvement. President Putin's visit to India is aimed at giving a fresh impulse to Indo-Russia cooperation at the highest level. The Declaration of the Strategic Partnership between the two countries that will be signed during the summit will provide the framework for bilateral ties.

Both New Delhi and Moscow are keen to build on the rich heritage of Indo-Soviet friendship, at the same time adjusting to post-Cold War realities. Indo-Russian cooperation encompasses a vast spectrum. Since 1993, the two countries have signed nearly 65 agreements. Further affirmation of Russian support for India's claim for permanent membership of the UN Security Council during Putin's visit will be in keeping with the spirit of friendship.

With the bulk of Indian defence equipment being of Soviet/Russian origin, there is no easy and cheap alternative to Russian military hardware. The two countries have a

## PUTIN'S VISIT

long-term programme of military-technical cooperation. The world trend is towards partnership and collaboration in defence production and R&D. India and Russia can benefit through joint ventures in defence production, R&D and designs. But care must be taken that the benefits of collaboration do not accrue to countries inimical to Indian security.

Moscow has repeatedly assured India that it would not supply military equipment to Pakistan. However, the supply of sophisticated Russian military equipment to China — in a situation when the Sino-India border issue is yet to be settled, and China's military



strategic cooperation with Pakistan, including in the nuclear missile field, continues — is a matter of concern to India's security planners. These issues as well as the possibility of the Russian equipment and technology passing into Pakistani hands through third countries may be taken up with the Russian side.

Faced with the threat of NATO's eastward extension, Moscow is seeking to retain its strategic autonomy by balancing between the West and China. Moreover, arms exports are regarded as crucial for the very survival of cash-starved Russian defence industries. Russian strategic thinkers also regard arms sales as a means of acquiring a foothold and influence in China's security set-up. Moscow is seeking to resolve its current dilemma by calling for greater cooperation between Russia, India and China. Russia, China and the three bordering Central Asian States are promoting border CBMs within the

Shanghai Forum. India can also gain by participating in the processes in her extended neighborhood. Putin has hinted at the possibility of Shanghai Forum being opened to other neighboring States, including India and Iran.

Indo-Russian trade in 1999-2000 stood at \$ 1.57 billion. Although it registered considerable improvement over the figures of the previous year, when the trade turnover was \$ 1.26 billion, it does not correspond with the possibilities and the size of their respective economies. President Putin's visit is sure to give a powerful impulse to economic and trade ties.

Although the Russian position on the nuclear issue is similar to that of other members of the Nuclear Five club, nonetheless, Russia has abstained from imposing any sanctions on India or putting pressure for signing the CTBT in the wake of Pokhran II. Despite US pressure, it is going ahead with the nuclear power plant project in Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu in keeping with the 1988 Indo-Soviet agreement. Earlier in 1993, Russia had succumbed to US pressure and modified the cryogenic engine deal with India to exclude the transfer of technology envisaged in the Indo-Soviet agreement. The recently expressed Russian readiness to cooperate with India in the field of peaceful nuclear energy is a mark of its determination not to bow to Western pressure, especially at a time when the US itself is warming up to India.

Continued terrorist menace in Kashmir, the Kargil war, the developments in Chechnya and Dagestan and increased onslaughts of Islamic extremists in the Central Asian republics bordering on Afghanistan are forcing India and Russia to regard the combat against terrorism as a priority area for cooperation and joint action. India and Russia have a common strategic interest in ensuring peace, stability as well as a secular, pluralist and tolerant political order in the areas that lie between the borders of India and the Russian Federation.

The emerging possibility of India, US and Russia cooperating in weeding out the terrorist threat is a welcome development. Being the longest and the worst victim of international terrorism, India has the greatest interest in the success of such efforts.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

3 OCT 2000

HD-13  
3/10

# Putin to seek joint action with India against Taliban

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, OCT. 2.** The impressive military gains of the Taliban forces on the border with Tajikistan have rattled Russia and given a new urgency to its President, Mr. Vladimir Putin's current visit to India.

Mr. Putin, who arrived in New Delhi on Monday night on a four-day visit, was expected to have brought concrete proposals to the Indian leadership on joint moves to prevent the Taliban from asserting unchallenged control over Afghanistan. Such an outcome is viewed in Moscow as fraught with catastrophic consequences for former Soviet Central Asia, Russia's soft underbelly.

After a series of meetings in the Kremlin on the situation in Afghanistan last week, Moscow appears to have opted for a three-pronged plan to meet the Taliban threat. It will push for greater international pressure on the Taliban, open a political dialogue with the Taliban and increase military aid to the Northern Alliance led by Ahmed Shah Masood.

Mr. Sergei Ivanov, Kremlin security chief, told the Russian state television last night that Moscow could call for an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan. Russia maintained unofficial contact with the Taliban in the framework of the six-plus-two group on Afghanistan.

Last week, Mr. Putin's special envoy visited Islamabad to persuade Pakistan to rein in the Taliban. Uzbekistan, target of ethnic Uzbek extremists based in Afghanistan, was reported to have

held talks with the Taliban in Pakistani territory today. Moscow and its Central Asian allies are trying to secure guarantees that the Taliban would not support Islamic insurgencies in Central Asia and to push for a coalition government in Afghanistan.

However, Russian leaders are sceptical of diplomatic and political measures. "I don't think it is a realistic scenario for the near future to expect Taliban hordes to sweep down on Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and other states, but the Taliban has posed a threat for the past several years, with small groups of terrorists from Afghanistan infiltrating Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyzgystan in an attempt to destabilise the situation in Central Asia," Mr. Ivanov said. "It is not a classic aggression from World War II textbooks. It's a creeping aggression, but is no less dangerous for that."

On Saturday, Mr. Putin vowed to prevent the fighting in Afghanistan "from spilling over into the former Soviet Union." The only way to do it is to make sure that the Northern Alliance continues to act as a buffer between the Taliban and Central Asian states.

On Sunday, Mr. Ivanov said Masood's forces "launched a successful counter offensive yesterday on Taliban positions." No such attack would be possible without new military aid to the Alliance. Reports in the Russian media suggested Moscow was probably ready to help Masood not only with arms but with manpower. "There is no other way to prevent the Taliban from capturing Badakhshan, as increasingly more commanders of the Northern Alliance are surrendering to

the enemy sensing an early defeat," the Gazeta.ru online newspaper said today.

Mr. Putin hopes Russia and India, which repeatedly accused Taliban militants of involvement in Kashmir insurgency, can work together to contain the Taliban. On the eve of his visit to India, he said the two countries could effectively combat international terrorism and religious extremism by pooling their efforts through "informational exchanges, political support and joint decision-making on any manifestation of extremism."

For Moscow, New Delhi's response to its proposal of joint action on Afghanistan will be the first test of strategic partnership the two countries are to formalise during Mr. Putin's visit.

## China hopes visit will bolster peace

**BEIJING, OCT. 2.** China has expressed the hope that the visit of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, to India beginning today would lead to peace and stability in the region.

"We hope that the development of the India-Russia relationship will be beneficial for preserving regional security, peace and stability," the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Mr. Sun Yuxi, said here.

"Both India and Russia are our close neighbours and friendly nations. We want to see the relations between the two countries develop." — PTI

THE HINDU

3 OCT 2001



# Indo-Russian ties will be pragmatic

By K.K. Katyal

To say that Russia of today is not the Soviet Union of the days gone by is to stress the obvious. That the bonds between New Delhi and Moscow are different now is clear too. But there is no disputing the strength and stability of the relationship, forged by the two sides since after the demise of the Soviet Union. Tested more than once in the last 10 years, these ties withstood the pressures, generated by international developments and domestic changes in the two countries. This is the setting for tomorrow's India-Russia summit, after a gap of nearly seven years. The interaction between the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the visiting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, is considered significant in many ways — particularly because it is certain to be marked by pragmatism and stress on mutualism and commonalities.

Not that there were no challenges to these ties in the last decade. First, it was the lukewarm attitude of Russia to India and others in Asia in the early 1990s as it turned to the West for a resolution of its many problems. This was manifest in 1993 when, while entering into a new treaty — of friendship and cooperation — Moscow laboured the point that it was qualitatively different from the landmark treaty of 1971 between the Soviet Union and India. That phase ended with Moscow's disenchantment with the West. The earlier tendency to downplay the 1971 document has now been given up — the Declaration on Strategic Partnership, to be signed by Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Putin, is to be projected as an extension of the earlier treaties, not excluding the 1971 treaty of the Soviet era.

At one stage, in the mid-1990s, Moscow seemed to be responding to overtures from Islamabad, to the discomfiture of New Delhi. Pakistan felt encouraged to work for a slowdown of the momentum of India-Russia dealings, both in political and defence areas. It did not work — and Islamabad gave up its efforts, seeing no chance of success. Now, we find another move by Pakistan, in the first instance, to work for reducing the distance between Islamabad and Moscow and, subsequently, for diluting India-Russia ties. India appears to have been taken by surprise at these developments in the wake of the Pakistani military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf's

## NEWS ANALYSIS

meticulously-planned bid for a brief conversation with Mr. Putin in the U.N. corridors during the millennium summit. Slow in gauging this development, India seemed to have realised its implications only after Mr. Putin's special envoy visited Islamabad. The outcome of the discussion was not fully known here, though Pakistan was quick to make full propaganda use, if only to create doubts about the momentum of India-Russia ties. This is a new situation which was not factored in when New Delhi and Moscow were engaged in the preparations for the summit. It would need to be tackled with finesse and clarity — in the spirit of the three guiding factors — pragmatism, mutuality and common interests and concerns. Russian sources here emphasise that concrete cooperation in "the belt of terrorism

in the north of India and south of Russia" remains a matter of common concern. They stress the need for institutionalised measures in regard to security, information-sharing and harmonising counter-terrorism efforts. Through the Declaration on Strategic Partnership, the two sides would be committing themselves to joint efforts to counter international terrorism, separatism, organised crime and illegal trafficking in narcotics. New Delhi's task is cut out — to ensure that these sentiments are translated into action and are not seen as mere rhetorical flourishes.

On issues arising out of India's nuclear tests, there is divergence in the positions of the two sides. But it has not been allowed to assume unmanageable proportions. The Russian stand is as follows — "We would welcome India to sign the CTBT. By joining it, India would do a great service to the mankind and the cause of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are aware of India's concerns, and India is fully aware of our position. There is a mutual commitment to the reduction of the nuclear threat. But we will not pressure India or introduce any sanctions. More than that — we are ready to continue our fruitful cooperation in peaceful exploration of nuclear energy."

The arms supplies relationship will continue to be all-important, with its long-term dimensions, apart from the stress on cooperation in political affairs and science and technology. India is central to Russia. The same way, Moscow is central to New Delhi — had that not been the case, the latest contacts between Russia and Pakistan would not have been watched that closely here.

THE HINDU

3 OCT 2000

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2000

9/22/00  
A FRIENDLY REASSURANCE 10-12

A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP is being fashioned as the defining spirit of an evolving new relationship between India and Russia. A document embodying the bilateral aspirations suited to this emerging outlook is proposed to be signed during the visit to India by the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin. The simple but profound objective is a qualitative leap to capture the dynamic mood of the present post-Cold War era in global politics. Now, a comparison between the prospective new charter of India-Russia relations and the Indo-Soviet treaty of a bygone age will obviously be inappropriate, given the present strategic flux across the world including South Asia in particular. However, Moscow's latest reassurances of direct interest to New Delhi signify a transparent attempt by the Putin administration to regain some of the mystique of the old bonhomie. The reason is not far to seek. The ongoing strategic interplay of forces, besides Russia's dramatic diplomacy of having engaged Pakistan in some critical parleys prior to Mr. Putin's arrival in India, appeared to have cast an avoidable shadow over his planned agenda for a fresh equation with New Delhi. In one sense, the controversial visit to Pakistan last week by the Kremlin's special envoy, Mr. Sergei Yastrzhembsky, was almost entirely traceable to Moscow's updated sense of urgency to try and persuade Islamabad to rein in its perceived protege, the Taliban, in its militant adventurism in areas bordering Russia's traditional sphere of influence. It is also plausible that a future dialogue between Moscow and Islamabad as a sequel to Mr. Putin's current India-agenda can stir speculation about Moscow's real motives. In the event, the reported style and substance of the Russian emissary's diplomatic foray in Islamabad sent a wrong signal, compelling the officials in New Delhi and Moscow to assert that no damage was either intended or inflicted on the expanding India-Russia equation.

Three aspects of the clarifications by some Russian officials merit attention. First, the affirmation about the centrality of the proposed strategic partnership to Russia's post-Soviet ties with India is good news. But the Vajpayee administration must guard against any triumphalism at having perceivably convinced Washington as also Moscow, in recent months, about India's strategic value to both these powers. It is premature to draw any definitive conclusion of this magnitude at this stage, on account of the imminence of the U.S. presidential poll and Moscow's transparent effort to enlarge its strategic outreach in South Asia and its environs. It is no innovative variant of non-alignment to inch strategically close to both Washington and Moscow. Second, the reported Russian disclaimer about the possibility of any defence cooperation with Pakistan is certainly logical in the present circumstances. The third but not the least relevant reality is that Russia is not inclined to mediate on Kashmir now, despite Pakistan's reported suggestion in that regard.

The Soviet Union's role in bringing India and Pakistan to the table for talks in Tashkent in January 1966, in the specific context of the lingering impact of their 1965 war, is no precedent of any real consequence to Islamabad's calculus. The Shastri-Ayub Khan parleys took place at the "invitation" of the then Soviet Prime Minister, Alexei Kosygin, and India saw Moscow's role at the time as a positive factor that influenced Pakistan, a U.S. ally, to pledge an avoidance of force to settle its disputes with New Delhi. With differing political compulsions influencing the interlocutors at Tashkent, subsequent events in South Asia, some of them cataclysmic in scope, swept that historic event itself to virtual obscurity. But the continuing relevance of dialogue and engagement to the tangled India-Pakistan ties cannot be exaggerated, the idea of external facilitation being a matter for separate debate.

THE HINDU

3-11-2000

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP, OVER 10 ACCORDS ON ANVIL

# Putin to discuss nuclear issues

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, OCT. 2. As part of their efforts to build a new partnership in a changing world, India and Russia are likely to discuss various issues relating to nuclear non-proliferation and cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy during the four-day visit by the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin.

The Russian President, one of the youngest leaders in the world today, arrived here this evening. In a special personal gesture, the Prime Minister Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, is hosting a private dinner for the Russian leader tonight. Mr. Putin will be formally welcomed tomorrow in the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

One of the highlights of the visit, first by a Russian leader in about seven years, will be a trip to the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Trombay later this week. Mr. Putin will have an extended interaction with the nuclear establishment there. That the leader of a nuclear power is

going to the heart of the Indian atomic weapons establishment is unlikely to be ignored in the rest of the world.

Mr. Putin's visit to the BARC also reflects the reality that Russia today is the only great power which is ready to cooperate with India in the atomic energy sector.

Despite unrelenting pressure from the United States a few years ago, Russia has pressed ahead with plans to build two nuclear power reactors at Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu.

Senior officials in the atomic energy establishment have expressed the hope that the on-going cooperation in nuclear power generation may be expanded further during the Russian leader's visit. Mr. Putin's top aides in the Kremlin told the press last week that the two sides were discussing various ideas for increasing cooperation in the civilian nuclear energy sector. But there was no suggestion that a final agreement had been reached. Many political obstacles would have to be overcome before substantive Indo-

Russian nuclear cooperation is institutionalised. In a recent interview to the Indian media, Mr. Putin insisted that Russia's "plans for nuclear cooperation with India are strictly in keeping with its commitments under relevant international obligations."

Moscow and New Delhi have to come to terms with the meaning and relevance of Russia's international obligations and how they relate to bilateral nuclear cooperation. While considering greater nuclear interaction with India, Mr. Putin is likely to seek India's commitment to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty at an early date. Russia has already signed and ratified the treaty.

India is likely to reiterate its decision to abide by the self-imposed moratorium on nuclear tests and refer to its efforts to build a domestic political consensus on the CTBT. India wants external cooperation to boost its sagging atomic energy programme. Besides Russia, New Delhi has been looking at other suppliers including France.

Mr. Putin has a heavy schedule in the next few days. His official meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, tomorrow will be followed by delegation-level talks.

Besides a declaration on strategic partnership, the two sides will sign more than ten agreements that cover a very broad spectrum of areas from enhanced defence cooperation to cultural exchanges. Senior officials from both sides are giving final touches to the many agreements that are to be signed.

Mr. Putin will also meet the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, the Vice-President, Mr. Krishan Kant, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, and address a joint sitting of Parliament on Wednesday. He will receive an honorary degree from the Jawaharlal Nehru University tomorrow.

After a brief visit to Agra, Mr. Putin moves on to Mumbai for extensive scientific and commercial interactions before leaving for home on Thursday.

## A historic visit

NEW DELHI, OCT. 2. The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, arrived here tonight on a four-day state visit that is expected to give an impetus to bilateral ties.

Leading a 70-member high-power delegation, Mr. Putin, accompanied by his wife, Ms. Lyudmila Putin, was warmly received by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, as he flew in by an IL-96 special aircraft. The delegation included the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, and the Defence Minister, Mr. Igor Sergeyev.

The President, dressed in a black suit, waved to reporters as he alighted from the aircraft. He was presented with a bouquet on behalf of the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan. Besides Mr. Singh, the Disinvestment Minister, Mr. Arun Shourie, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, and senior military and civil officials were present at the airport.

Tight security measures had been enforced in and around the Palam technical area and all along the route to the Maurya Sheraton hotel where he will be staying.—PTI

THE HINDU

3 OCT 2000

# Jettison Past Baggage

## Starting Fresh Relations with Russia

By MADHAVAN K PALAT

AS Russian President Vladimir Putin begins his official visit to India, we should ask ourselves where Indo-Russian relations stand given (i) India's growing romance with the US; (ii) Russia's failed romance with the US; (iii) Russia's warming up to China; and (iv) Russia's status as a regional power only.

Indo-Russian relations derive apparently from Indo-Soviet friendship. The latter was established during the Cold War to offset US hostility to India's non-alignment, and India benefited strategically. Kashmir was protected, Pakistan was dismembered, our armed forces were supplied, and there was substantial investment in the core sectors of development. Ironically, however, the Soviet Union was the problem and the solution. Without the Soviet Union, we would not have had to suffer American hostility. The Cold War has ended; the Soviet Union is gone; Russia, even as a successor to the Soviet Union, is reduced and crisis-ridden. Therefore, the US seems to be abandoning Pakistan for India. What then is the function of Indo-Russian relations in worldwide strategy?

We are not, and should not be, seeking Russian friendship to balance American pressures. Russia no longer plays such a role after its defeat in the Cold War and the many more setbacks thereafter over NATO expansion, Yugoslavia, Chechnya, economic liberalisation and IMF debt. Is Russia seeking our friendship to offset America? Not in the least, since we have nothing to offer. Both of us have to be independently self-reliant and the only method of influencing the US is through clever footwork in Washington on a bilateral basis.

The Russians acted on this principle sooner and more brusquely than we did. They apparently abandoned India during the first half of Boris Yeltsin's presidency, during Andrei Kozyrev's tenure as foreign minister, until 1996. Their approach to international strategic questions after the Cold War was dogmatic, ideological, passive, indeed naive. They imagined they would be rewarded by the West for carrying out the western agenda of overthrowing communism, ignoring traditional allies and making the world safe for the West. But essentially that action was based on the insight, no doubt accurate, that India benefited more from Indo-Soviet friendship than the Soviet Union had. India had been negatively useful for having prevented the emergence of an anti-Soviet American base. After the

Cold War, India was superfluous in strategy and had degenerated, in Russian eyes, into a bargain hunter for cheap military hardware. Kozyrev represented that position with unvarnished clarity.

But then Russia discovered itself to have become a mere regional power, no longer the equal interlocutor of the West. Kozyrev's successor, Yevgeny Primakov, registered that fall in status with his poorly-conceived suggestion in 1996 of the Russia-India-China triangle, apparently to form a bloc against US unipolarity. It was poor in conception because each of us prefer to deal with the US bilaterally, and not to act jointly against the US. Our interests are too divergent for such coalitions. Russia cannot protect Kashmir or the Indian nuclear programme.

It can neither influence China on Tibet and Taiwan, nor in the last resort, shield it from the American Na-

### IN BRIEF

- Without the Soviet Union, India would not have had to suffer American hostility
- India should not seek Russian friendship to balance American pressure
- Today, India and China are much the same to Russia
- With the past strategic considerations gone, India and Russia could form a more multi-faceted relationship

tional Missile Defence (NMD) or the Theatre Missile Defence systems, from both of which China stands to lose strategically. Neither China nor India can help Russia in any way on its economic calamity or soothe the Russian security anxieties over NATO's expansion, the Chechen war, or the National Missile Defence system which would put an end to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972. Most of all, China would be happy to see India embarrassed over Kashmir, and restrained in its nuclear ambitions. India repays the compliment on Tibet and Xinjiang, and is as yet little concerned with the NMD. It was an act of desperation on the part of Russia, a misdirected attempt to compensate for lost Soviet strategic capacity.

However, the triangle can make sense at the unexciting middle or regional level where it does not pretend to target the US. We have common concerns about narco-terrorism spreading from Pakistan and

Afghanistan into Kashmir, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Xinjiang, and we would find certain levels of cooperation despite the Chinese arming of Pakistan. That triangle would become more effective were the US to support it for these purposes, which it seems inclined to do. There would be no question of an anti-US bloc and that would not be the meaning of multipolarity.

India is a traditional friend, and China has been traditional foe, but to Russia they are much the same now. While Russia steadies itself slowly after the western onslaught, it is seeking as many openings as possible with China and India. Besides the triangle, these are primarily commercial. Russian exports are internationally competitive only in the arms bazaar and in nuclear and space technology. India is a traditional importer and China is becoming a major customer, and the two together provide the largest markets.

India may find opportunities in newer areas like information technology. Our nuclear collaboration in the energy sector would continue. All these are commercial questions with only a marginally strategic significance; and the only strategic cooperation concerns Central Asia. Growing good relations between Russia and China in no way damages India. Russia is firm on holding off Pakistan, the source of narco-terrorism. Russia is not joining hands with China to press India to give up its nuclear programme. That job is being left to the US.

In sum, then there is nothing coming in the way of the best of Indo-Russian relations. But they are limitedly strategic and overwhelmingly commercial. When they declare a strategic partnership, it would be of regional significance only, limited to Central Asia. It is the inverse of the globally strategic Indo-Soviet relationship. We are, in the most important sense, starting afresh, whatever the continuity in details. The absence of the Soviet Union and of the Cold War liberates us from the binary choice between the US and Russia. We may develop, in fact, a more multi-faceted relationship, especially cultural, than was possible during the one-dimensionality of the Cold War. Yet, we may continue every aspect of our military, nuclear, space, and industrial collaboration. In many senses, we may be poised for a richer relationship; and our leaders should seize the opportunity to act upon it.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

3 OCT 2000

# Russo-Indian trade & economic cooperation

Russo-Indian trade and economic relations have been forging ahead, since the early 1950s, on the basis of mutual benefit and in an environment of mutual confidence, stability and predictability. The policy of strategic partnership, adopted by Russian and Indian leaders, marks a natural and logical step in the development of our diverse cooperation. Over the past 50 years this has been constantly nourished and enriched not only by active and mutually beneficial trade in goods traditionally exported by our two countries, but also by large-scale and long term projects in such strategic and priority areas as the strengthening of India's defence potential and the development of its power industry, fuel branches, metallurgy, engineering, science and technology. However much remains to be done to expand and deepen mutual cooperation between Russia and India.

While keeping in mind the tremendous potential for mutually beneficial cooperation in the 'traditional fields' and in fields based on the use of 'high technologies', one should not overlook the possibilities of developing co-production and sales arrangements between Russian and Indian firms in the conversion into finished goods of mutually supplied raw and other materials, their packaging, delivery to end users, etc. Such efforts, involving interested Indian companies, have already begun in Russia's light and food industry, above all in packaging and sales of medicines, tea, coffee and spices bought in India. Such co-production and marketing can be extended to

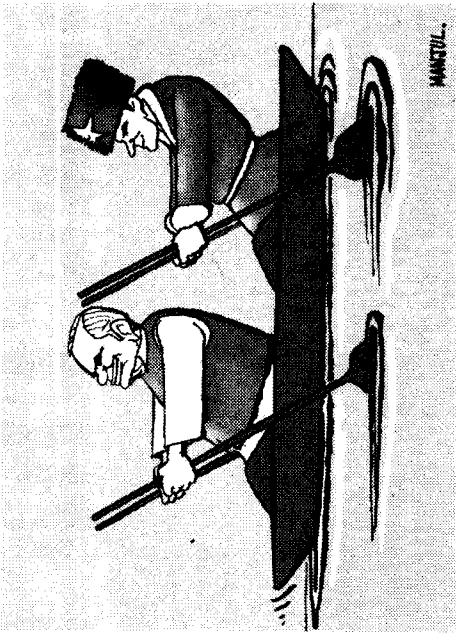
other Indian-made commodities. It is obvious that comparable work could be started in India on raw and other materials arriving from Russia. The most promising area for such cooperation would be in the cutting of diamonds, fashioning of precious metals and production of articles from them followed by co-ordinated sales of end products. Here, Russia, which is a major producer of uncut diamonds and precious metals, and India, which has at its disposal an enormous potential for faceting small grained diamonds, have almost unlimited possibilities not only for meeting our population's requirements in jewellery of the widest possible range, but also for exporting them to third countries.

A major prerequisite for success in promoting the above mentioned projects and programmes for the development of cooperation in the short and medium range is the planning and implementation of a package of enabling measures aimed at forming a 'friendly climate' for mutual investment and cooperation. It will be necessary, for example, to analyse conditions for an exchange of high-tech and state-of-the-art technologies, and to remove existing obstacles and limitations. It will be necessary to

exchanges of information between chambers of commerce and industry of our countries and other organisations of Russian and Indian businessmen will become a must.

The governments and business circles of our countries should pay serious attention to the recent steps to create a system for early anticipation of possible commercial disputes and prevention of protectionist measures in mutual trade. To begin with, it is contemplated to set up such a system in the form of a 'consultative mechanism' to regulate the consequences of anti-dumping duties and 'minimum prices' on Russian metal products, introduced in India. It is not ruled out that such mechanisms will have to be set up for other commodities which rank highly in the mutual trade of Russia and India.

Special attention in the near future will have to be paid to reforming the existing system of financing mutual trade. It is obvious that in the future, as India pays off its credit arrears, other payment mechanisms will increasingly come into use to support Russian-Indian trade and investments based, among other things, on the granting of appropriate credit lines and financial guarantees by commercial



speedily develop and strengthen appropriate market structures in our countries, above all those of them that are designed to ensure regulatory, legal, financial and information support for industrial cooperation between enterprises and organisations of our countries using such technologies.

The need to develop various forms of production and sales cooperation and mutual investments will require a substantial enhancement of mutual confidence and coordination of work among banks and financial agencies of our countries, establishment of more intensive and regular contacts between Russian and Indian enterprises and organisations, and increased representation by leading Russian and Indian companies, banks and investment funds in the appropriate countries. Regular contacts and

banks lending and financial organisations of our countries.

More efforts are required to strengthen the system of transport logistics for our mutual trade. Of greatest interest, in this connection, is the scheme to build the North-South transport corridor providing for passenger and cargo movements between India, the Persian Gulf countries and further, by transit, across Iran and the Caspian sea to Russia, CIS countries, and eastern and western Europe.

In view of the orientation of reforms going on in our countries, which promote in particular the economic initiative of regions and territories and also of enterprises and organisations sited there, support is also given to programmes and projects of bilateral cooperation between regions and territories of our countries. We expect that these processes will draw into them more businessmen from the appropriate regions of Russia and India and will help to open within regional branches of chambers of commerce and industry special structures and ginger groups to promote trade, tourism and cultural exchanges between our countries.

It is our belief that our leaders as they meet in Delhi will adopt historically important documents and decisions whose realisation will give a powerful impulse to the development of all Russian-Indian relations and will contribute to raising trade and economic cooperation between our countries to a qualitatively new level in the interest of our states and peoples.

**(The author is the Russian minister of economic development and trade)**

# Put Putin in place

Russia has more to gain from this visit than India

**R**USSIAN president Vladimir Putin's visit to India would have generated at least some euphoria had it not followed closely on the heels of a more glamorous US president Bill Clinton's immensely successful trip to India, and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's equally significant mission to Washington. With Indo-US relationship blossoming at a new high, Putin's visit almost seems like that of an old time lover snuggling over and attempting to make up. Surely the old affair was with a former superpower, the Soviet Union, and not with Russia, a country which is a distant poor cousin. After the Soviet Union was dismantled in the 1990s, several regions broke off and the rump Russia which was left with half the GDP ended up inheriting all the problems. Today, the economy of Russia, a polity struggling to stay intact, is less than a tenth of the US economy, in fact, one-fifth that of China. Although Putin is visiting India to sign a declaration of strategic partnership, it is unclear what that will involve.

The Soviets cosied up to India ever since its old comrade, China, moved close to the US. The USSR led by Brezhnev pushed for closer ties with India given the surge in defence sales to this country. The signing of the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty in 1971 just before the creation of Bangladesh was the highwater mark. However, one must not forget that it was the USSR which asked India to put an end to the war of liberation. All through, the Soviets gained much more from us than we from them. They might have invested in the power, oil and steel sectors in India, but we were the only democracy to support them on Afghanistan.

Ever since the Soviet Union collapsed, Indo-Russian relationship entered a low ebb. While the rupee-rouble troubles were definitely the lowest point in the trough, the structural crisis that broke the USSR made Russia extremely inward looking. While Gorbachev was too preoccupied with domestic problems, Boris Yeltsin began viewing Russia more and more like an European power and continued to look up to the US to bail Russia out of the impending crisis. It is only when Russia got disillusioned with the West that it began building a new Asian axis, to include China and India, against the threat from a unipolar world. As a result, the Shanghai Five (Russia, China and the three Central Asian Republics) is considering including India in the new alliance. Uniting them is the dangerous threat from the Afghanistan-Pakistan narco-terrorists. Witness the recent Shanghai Five's strong statement against the Taliban. India, facing a low intensity war in its neighbourhood, needs to unite with all against a global threat of terrorism. But neither is today's world unipolar, nor is India threatened by the West. In fact, in the post-Cold War era there has been a radical change in the international security environment. Since democracies are known for not attacking each other, India, the largest democracy, has become the focal point of Western alliance. Today Germany and Japan are competing with the US to tie up with this country. With one of the most sought after markets in the world, a competitive IT sector and an abundance of technical and managerial talents, Russians need us more than we need them.

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 2 OCT 2000

Putin's visit is an opportunity for India to strengthen its historically special ties with Russia

# Old friends in a new world

*I CANNOT forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma*  
Winston Churchill, 1939

*I earnestly trust that your visit will help the great cause of peace and cooperation for which all of us stand and that you will see for yourself how the people of India are devoting themselves not only to their betterment but to the wider cause of human advancement*  
Jawaharlal Nehru, welcoming Nikolai Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev, November 20, 1955

*Finally Marx was a major historical event... No one will ever suggest that the world would be the same had Marx not lived*  
John K. Galbraith, 1977

**T**HIS IS a good occasion to look at our relations with Moscow in the perspective of history. The beginnings were not auspicious. Joseph Stalin (1879-1953) was one of the two world statesmen who did not condole Gandhiji's assassination. Stalin had unconcealed contempt for the Indian freedom movement. The 1952 edition of the *Soviet Encyclopaedia* used the choicest abuses when referring to Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Nehru's 1949 visit to the United States was looked upon with suspicion by Stalin who did not receive Vijayalakshmi Pandit even once during her two years in Moscow as Ambassador (1947-49). Her successor, S. Radhakrishnan, was received twice by Stalin, who told his interpreter, Pavlov, that "this man speaks from a bleeding heart, not like an ordinary Ambassador".

Gradually, a change came about. Our stand on the Japanese Peace Treaty, the Korean War, clearly indicated to the Soviets that India followed an independent foreign policy. With the death of Stalin in March 1953, events moved much faster. Economic and trade ties improved, the rupee trade was a very special concession to India.

By the time Nehru visited the USSR in June 1955, Indo-Soviet relations were looking up indeed. Defence links were opened and steel became a symbol of Indo-Soviet economic cooperation. Five months later in November 1955, Messrs Bulganin and Khrushchev paid a State visit to India and received a tumultuous welcome everywhere. Khrushchev won Indian hearts by declaring that

the whole of Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of the Indian Union. At the United Nations and in the Security Council, the USSR and India worked closely. Anti-Indian resolutions in the Security Council were vetoed by the USSR, e.g. Kashmir and Goa. On racial and colonial issues, the two countries were on the same side.

Strains developed in 1956 over Hungary. Nehru was severely criticised for having one standard for the Suez crisis and another for Hungary. In fact, Krishna Menon was entirely to blame for the misunderstanding over the Hungarian uprising. He disregarded Nehru's instructions.

During the Sino-Indian conflict, the Soviets did not side with China — something unprecedented in the history of Communist States.

The 1971 Treaty for Friendship further consolidated Indo-Soviet relations. Earlier in 1966, the USSR played the role of an honest broker between India and Pakistan — but this was the only time they did so. During the Bangladesh war, the USSR kept an eye on the US Seventh Fleet and was fully supportive of India.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was an unmitigated disaster for the USSR. Indira Gandhi left Leonid Brezhnev in no doubt how she felt about it. She told him, "the sooner you leave Afghanistan the better for us all". It was during Mikhail Gorbachev's first visit to India in November 1986 that he informed Rajiv Gandhi about his decision to withdraw from Afghanistan by early 1989. The rest is history.

The disintegration of the USSR in 1991 was an unexpected and immensely unsettling world event, with which the world has not quite come to terms.

Now to Vladimir Putin. He was elected President on March 26, 2000, polling 52 per cent of votes cast. Our foreign policy, based on non-alignment and peaceful co-existence, is not in conflict with Russian foreign policy. There is a desire on both sides for an all round strengthening and deepening mutual cooperation in all areas, with special emphasis on defence and security matters. The

BY K. NATWAR SINGH

Russian Ambassador to India recently said, "We consider that the strong ties of partnership between Russia and India will be a major component of a multipolar system of reference of international relations."

India does not subscribe to the 'unipolar world' thesis. But the danger exists of this becoming a reality if India, Russia and China do not put their heads together on this vital issue. As President K.R. Narayanan said during President Bill Clinton's visit, "the global village needs to be governed by a *Panchayat* and not just by a *Sarpanch*".

Both countries want to strengthen the UN. Both desire an expansion of the Security Council to reflect present day realities. Russia could be more explicit about India becoming a permanent member. Putin will do well to reiterate what Khrushchev said on Kashmir in 1955. Both countries were critical of NATO action against Yugoslavia, both desire ending the isolation of Iraq, both vigorously oppose the use of force and 'totalitarian trends in today's international relations'.

Russia has, in no uncertain terms, opposed expansion of NATO. Even George Kennan, the greatest living American authority on the Soviet Union and Russia, has opposed the extension of NATO to the borders of Russia. India and Russia oppose the creation of the Nuclear Missile Defence system which would violate the ABM Treaty of 1972.

On the CTBT, India and Russia are not on the same wavelength. Putin will ask India to sign the CTBT. At the same time, it must be noted that Russia will not pressurise India or impose any sanctions on India if we do not sign the CTBT. Both countries have serious anxieties about terrorism, fundamentalism of various hues, the menace of drugs, AIDS etc.

Russia's internal problems cannot be ignored. These, for the time being, came in the way of Moscow playing a more decisive role in world affairs. Its dependence on Western aid is very considerable. Chechnya is a serious threat to the

territorial integrity of the country. Standard of living has drastically reduced, along with life expectancy. The per capita GDP was \$ 2,937 in 1977. The following year it was down to \$ 1,888. External debt in 1998 was \$ 160 billion. The foreign exchange reserve was \$ 23 billion in 1999. Inflation was 36.5 per cent.

India exports tea, coffee, rice, leather, cotton yarn and fertilisers. India imports fertilisers, iron and steel, paper and organic chemicals. There is a visible improvement in the economy since Putin arrived at the helm. Will it endure? The defence establishment is in poor shape as was evident in the sinking of the Kursk submarine. At a deeper level, there is moral decay and social confusion.

During the Putin visit, a number of measures will be announced to further improve bilateral relations. Foreign Secretary Lalit Man Singh listed these last Thursday. These include defence, space research, science and technology. In 1993, the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed. During this visit, the most important document to be signed is the Declaration of Strategic Partnership. According to Russian authorities, "This document is intended to impart a qualitatively new character to our close and constructive cooperation as well as lay out the long-term approaches in the third millennium. The declaration itself is a novel word in Russian-Indian relations as well as a weighty statement of the two great powers in support of the formation of a multipolar world order to be created on equal and mutually beneficial basis."

The Vajpayee Government's all too obvious pro-US tilt has produced its fall-out. Putin will visit Pakistan soon, thus ending that country's temporary isolation.

In spite of horrendous internal problems, Russia remains a great power. It is a first rank nuclear power. Its potential is awesome, its reach extensive. Those dismissive of Russia need to tread cautiously. For India, the closest and good neighbourly relations with Russia are of vital importance. We have never had any dispute with the Soviet Union or Russia. Let us keep it that way and give our Russian guest a great welcome.

K. Natwar Singh is a member of the Congress Working Committee. The views expressed here are his own



## Putin in perspective

NOSTALGIA FOR the special relationship that once existed between New Delhi and Moscow would be the worst way to colour Vladimir Putin's visit to India. The two countries need to refurbish their post-Cold War relationship. Such a process must begin by recognising that the pickings on the bilateral banquet are slim. First, there is no real economic relationship. Trade has crashed from \$ 5.5 billion in 1991 to just over \$ 1 billion today. Of the remainder, 80 per cent survives on the outstanding rupee-rouble debt and will evaporate when most of this debt is erased by 2003. Trade is driven by private firms, not by Governments, and Indian and Russian firms prefer to sell and buy elsewhere. Second, a tangible bilateral bridge does exist in the field of arms. Everything in the Indian arsenal carries Russian fingerprints. This ranges from platforms like fighter aircraft, tanks, ships to knowhow on missiles and submarines. However, India needs to be wary of an addiction to Russian arms. Chunks of the Russian arms industry are disintegrating. Moscow's arms industry is driven by profit, not geopolitics. It has little compunction in selling arms to potential threats to India. Its biggest client is China. Lastly, Russia cannot make the electronic systems and software which define battle superiority these days.

What needs to be clarified during Mr Putin's visit is the degree to which the larger foreign policy goals of New Delhi and Moscow overlap. Rhetorically, the two countries could not be closer. They talk of the need for a multipolar world. Both rail against terrorism. However, cooperation has not gone beyond words. The four-point foreign policy doctrine issued by Mr Putin a few months ago has no role for India. The Russian leader has two overriding concerns: repairing his country's crippled economy and ending the insurgency in Chechnya. India can contribute little to the former and even less to the latter.

Even when it comes to balancing the global clout of the United States, Mr Putin keeps his options open. Over the US' national missile defence, for example, he signed up with China against the US and vice versa in a span of a month. Moscow spoke softly to India, but joined the United Nations Security Council and the Group of Eight in wielding the big stick after Pokhran II. India and Russia are two widely separated regional powers with weak economies. Any relationship will be severely circumscribed. Mr Putin's visit will be a success if the two Governments ensure that public expectations are kept in line with political realities.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 2 OCT 2000



# India deserves Security Council seat'

Moscow, October 1

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin has strongly backed India's candidature for permanent membership to the UN Security Council saying it is a "fitting contender" for the seat and called for joint efforts to combat international terrorism.

Stating that India and Russia were natural partners and allies, Mr Putin, who is beginning an official visit to India tomorrow, said that the two countries should pool their efforts to combat international terrorism and religious extremism.

"Exchanges of information, political support and joint decision-making on any manifestation of extremism could effectively weaken international terrorist groups," he told reporters at the Kremlin.

Referring to India's candidature for permanent seat of an expanded UN Security Council, Putin said: "It is important to expand the number of permanent members in

the UN Security Council and India is a fitting contender".

"I want to stress that, in our opinion, India plays one of the most important roles in world politics

## MPs attendance

KEEPING IN view the significance of the Russian President's visit, the government has undertaken a massive exercise to ensure that maximum number of MPs attend his address to both the Houses of Parliament on October 4. The exercise has reportedly been undertaken in view of apprehensions in certain quarters that there may be a poor turn-out of MPs since Parliament is not in session.

HTC, New Delhi

and that Russia and India naturally complement each other in many spheres," he said ahead of a four-day visit.

"We are very interested in maintaining relations with such a great power as India, especially in the

pursuit of creating a democratic multi-polar world and in bilateral co-operation," Putin said.

Stating that, over the past year, India had proven itself to be a very



reliable partner, which was highly appreciated by Moscow, the Russian President said: "As one of the biggest countries in Asia and the world, India is vital in establishing regional and international stability."

Putin said he was in favour of Russia, India and China joining efforts to promote their interests in Asia but noted that such co-operation should be open to other parties too, and should be transparent to the international community.

The Russian President and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee plan to make a joint statement concerning international and regional problems during the summit in New Delhi.

Meanwhile, in their strategic partnership declaration, to be signed on October 3, Putin and Vajpayee are likely to take a pledge not to join any military-political blocs or participate in any armed conflicts against each other, official sources said.

Moscow and Delhi would also take concrete obligations not to enter into any agreements with a third nation or group of nations, detrimental to their independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity or national security, they said.

(PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 2 OCT 2000

# India a fitting contender: Putin

**MOSCOW, OCT. 1.** The Russia President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, has strongly backed India's candidature for permanent membership to the United Nations Security Council saying it was a "fitting contender" for the seat and called for joint efforts to combat international terrorism.

Stating that the two countries were natural partners and allies, Mr. Putin, who begins a four-day official visit to India tomorrow, said the two countries should pool their efforts to combat international terrorism and religious extremism. "Exchanges of information, political support and joint decision-making on any manifestation of extremism could effectively weaken international terrorist groups," he told reporters at the Kremlin.

Referring to New Delhi's candidature for a permanent seat in an expanded U.N. Security Council, the President said, "it is important to expand the number of permanent members in the Security Council and India is a fitting contender."



"I want to stress that, in our opinion, India plays one of the most important roles in world politics and that Russia and India naturally complement each other in many spheres," he said. "We are very interested in maintaining relations with such a great power as India, especially in the pursuit of creating a democratic multipolar world and in bilateral cooperation." Pointing out that over the past year, India had proven

itself to be a very reliable partner, which was highly appreciated by Moscow, the President said, "as one of the biggest countries in Asia and the world, New Delhi is vital in establishing regional and international stability."

The Russian leader said he was in favour of Russia, India and China joining efforts to promote their interests in Asia but noted that such cooperation should be open to other parties too, and should be transparent to the international community.

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third nation or group of nations, detrimental to their independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity or national security, the sources said.

## 'U.S. no longer an enemy'

Regarding India's warming relations with Washington, Mr. Putin said: "Russia no longer views the United States as an enemy or even as its opponent."

Nowadays, America, one of the greatest countries in the world, is Russia's partner. Therefore, we can only welcome India's developing relations with all countries of the world, including the U.S."

The President admitted, though, that talks with the U.S. had not always run smoothly.

"We have different approaches to certain issues concerning mankind, security and the preservation of the anti-ballistic missile treaty," he said, referring to Washington's wish to build a national missile defence system, which would violate the treaty signed in 1972. — PTI, AFP

THE HINDU

- 2 OCT 2000

10-13  
2/10

# India, Russia to work together on n-power

**JAIPUR, OCT. 1.** The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin's visit to India is likely to open new vistas for future cooperation between the two countries in nuclear power generation, the Chairman-cum-Managing Director of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India limited, Mr. V.K. Chaturvedi, has said.

The meeting between Mr. Putin and the Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, may lead to further cooperation in nuclear power generation, Mr. Chaturvedi told presspersons here on Saturday night.

The Russians are providing the technical knowhow for the Koodankulam nuclear power project near Kanniyakumari in Tamil Nadu, for establishing two units of 1000 Mw each, he said, adding the detailed project report for the two units had already been prepared and the construction work would start in February next year.

India and Russia may also consider more cooperation in food and leather technology and crystallography during Mr. Putin's visit, Mr. Chaturvedi said.

Asked about Russia's reaction to Pokharan-II nuclear explosions, the Director of the Russian Atomic Institute, Mr. B. Malyshev, who accompanied Mr. Chaturvedi, said there was no change in

Russia's attitude towards India after Pokharan-I or Pokharan-II.

He said India had been discussing cooperation in nuclear power generation with several countries including the United States, Russia, Japan and Korea. The country would be adding one or two nuclear power generating unit every

year to meet its growing energy demand.

He asserted that there had not been a single mishap in the nuclear plants in the country which were working at 80 per cent capacity factor as against 70 per cent by the conventional power stations. — PTI

## Awadhi cuisine awaits Putin

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 1.** What does Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Yoshiro Mori and Vladimir Putin have in common apart from being world leaders? Well, all of them are ardent lovers of Indian food prepared in the legendary Awadhi style - Dum Pukht.

The Dum Pukht restaurant at Maurya Sheraton is once again bracing up to welcome another star visitor - the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, who arrives here on October two.

"We have benchmarked ourselves in preparation for the President's visit," hotel sources told PTI. Earlier, the United States President, Mr. Bill Clinton and the Microsoft chairman, Mr. Bill Gates,

stayed in the hotel during their India visits.

The restaurant in Maurya Sheraton, voted as one of the best eating places in Delhi by *Newsweek*, is spruced up to provide the choicest in Awadhi cuisine.

The cuisine whose origin dates back to the 1780s and was popular at the time of the Nawab Asaf-Ud-Daulah, the erstwhile ruler of the State of Awadh, is recreated at the restaurant. The dishes, namely Murg Khusk Purdah and Gost Biryani are high on the priority of the chief chef's menu. An advance team of Russian delegates and Secret Service staff have been pressed into action for the impending visit of Mr. Putin.

# Afghan shadow over Putin visit

By C. Raja Mohan

**MOSCOW, OCT. 1.** As the Taliban militias extend their grip over northern Afghanistan, the developments in that war-torn nation are expected to figure prominently in the talks between the visiting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and his Indian interlocutors this week.

The Taliban, backed by Pakistan, has notched up some impressive victories over the last few days over the forces of Commander Ahmad Shah Masood, who has held out so far against the Taliban which already controls 90 per cent of the territory of Afghanistan. There is a growing sense here that the latest gains by the Taliban do not represent the normal swing of the Afghan pendulum but a decisive shift in favour of the Taliban and its mentors in Pakistan.

A total victory for the Taliban marks a big setback for the interests of both Moscow and New Delhi. For Russia, it sharpens the danger of further destabilisation of the Central Asian republics that are part of Russia's extended perimeter and an accentuation of Russian difficulties in the rebellious Chechen Republic. The triumph of the 'jehadi' forces in Afghanistan will have its inevitable consequences for India in Kashmir. "The escalation of vio-

lence which continues in Afghanistan cannot help but bother us," Mr. Putin told journalist on Saturday at the Kremlin. Russia was naturally interested in safeguarding the prosperity and stability of Central Asia, a region "which is not foreign to us," he added in comments broadcast on RTR state television.

While India and Russia agree on the dangers of a Taliban victory, there may be considerable divergence on how to deal with the emerging situation. Mr. Putin and

**India fitting contender for U.N. seat, says Putin: Page 13**

the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, need to address these issues squarely and work out a common approach to stabilise the volatile region that lies between India's north western frontiers and the soft-underbelly of Russia. After threatening the Taliban with dire consequences, Russia now appears to be shifting towards a strategy of engaging the fundamentalist regime in Kabul. And it is looking towards Pakistan to facilitate a *modus vivendi* with the Taliban.

It would be surprising if New Delhi does not caution Mr. Putin against the temptation to engage the Taliban, and its controllers in Pakistan. India believes strongly

that Taliban and Pakistan are unlikely to end their support for the 'jehadi' cause in Central Asia and the Caucasus and deliver on cross-border terrorism. The Russian side will argue that they must at least try out different options.

India and Russia need to frankly discuss their different compulsions at this stage on dealing with the situation in Afghanistan. For, India and Russia will be the biggest losers from the Taliban victory in Afghanistan.

New Delhi and Moscow might have to look beyond setting up of consultative mechanisms like joint working groups and consider some decisive actions on the ground to prevent the situation from getting worse.

But there are problems on both sides. Russia does not appear to have overcome its Afghan syndrome. Hence the hesitation in confronting the meaning of a Taliban victory. India on the other hand has talked tough on Afghanistan, but brings very little to the table in terms of military steps to deal with the Taliban challenge.

Both Mr. Putin and Mr. Vajpayee will be tempted by soft options on the Taliban. But as the end game on Afghanistan begins, both sides need to remember that taking the line of least resistance could end up in an appeasement of the Taliban, the costs of which could turn out to be far too heavy.

THE HINDU

# Exports to Russia sufficient: Centre

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 30. — Haying pursued Russia's rupee-ruble route for exporting goods from India, the exporters back home feel cheated as they could have otherwise minted money. But, the Centre feels that exports to Russia are still higher than what it actually does to repay its debts.

India owes more than Rs 20,000 crore to Russia which will continue till the year 2005 as per the 1993 agreement of annual repayment between the two countries. The interest repayment starts from 2006 and will continue for 17 years.

The bilateral trade is at present based on the payment in freely-convertible currencies, also providing for arrangements such as barter, counter-

trade, buy-back and so on.

Senior officials in the ministry of commerce are of the opinion, that India is exporting more than what it otherwise requires to clear up the debt. In fact, the ministry expects a jump of 30 per cent in exports this year over last year.

About 85 per cent of the trade is on rupee-repayment track. Although the trade registered a decline of 21.4 per cent in the year 1996-97, it again picked up in 1997-98 and registered a 14.1 per cent growth compared to 1996-97, as per the figures obtained from the Ministry of External Affairs.

Exports, however, once again registered a slumpdown of 9.45 per cent in 1998-99. In 1999-2000, the bilateral trade registered a 28.75 per cent growth rate.

According to sources, the

recent level of trade is not commensurate with the true potential, even though it showed an upward trend. Between April and May this year, the trade level picked up and it registered a growth rate of 39.43 per cent as compared to last year.

The export and import figures in the bilateral trade clearly reflect that India has been importing less amount of goods than what it exports to Russia. Major export items have been drugs, pharmaceuticals, tea, coffee, rice and so on. Similarly, the principal Indian imports from Russia are fertilisers, newsprint and paper products and iron and steel.

There has been a decline on exports of tea and tobacco and the issue might come in for discussion when the Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, comes to India.

THE STATESMAN

1 1 200

## A Thought for Today

*When brothers agree, no fortress is so strong as their common life.*  
—ANTISTHENES

# Putin Order

President Vladimir Putin's visit to India has a significance that may not be readily evident; for all appearances it is just another friendly visit by the head of a country which shared warm relations with us for 45 years. Mr Putin visits India within days of Prime Minister Vajpayee's tour of the United States, a tour held to be remarkable for the change it has brought about in Indo-US relations. Indeed, in his banquet speech at the White House, President Clinton spoke of India and the US together changing the world. The Russian president will be signing a declaration of strategic partnership with India and the two countries will also be concluding a number of defence deals which will in no way irritate Washington. National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra has, in fact, referred to the possibility of Russia joining the Indo-US discussions on Afghanistan. These developments indicate a radical change in the international security environment, which many -- both in this country and abroad -- conditioned by the Cold War logic are likely to miss out. Recently, the Shanghai Five, which includes Russia, China and three Central Asian republics, came out with a strong statement against the terrorism of Taliban. The same countries are also affected by narcotics traffic and narco-terrorism. The situation in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region is becoming a matter for international security concern. India and Russia had earlier signed a joint declaration on the security of multi-ethnic states. Both countries also face threats from secessionism based on religious extremism.

Russia has a partnership with China aimed at ensuring that the world does not remain unipolar, an objective shared by India. All the three major Asian powers are threatened by religion-inspired terrorism and narcotics traffic emanating from a common source. There have been suggestions that New Delhi should join the Shanghai Five. Earlier during Prime Minister Primakov's visit to Delhi, it was suggested that Russia, India and China should come together to counter the unipolarity of the global system. While perhaps that is not a pragmatic step at this stage, Moscow is in a position to play a role in bringing Russia, China, the US and India together to contain the threat of religion-inspired terrorism and narcotics trade in Afghanistan and its neighbourhood. Russia continues to be a major arms supplier to India. Unlike the US, where the government is subject to congressional whims and fancies in regard to arms supplies, Russia has proved to be a steadfast friend. There is considerable scope for Indo-Russian cooperation in upgrading the existing armaments and developing a new state-of-the-art weaponry. India is in a position to offer its skills in information technology to Russia. India used to be a supplier of consumer goods at competitive rates to Russia before the trade between the two countries got disrupted in the early 90's. In the last few years there has been an improvement in the quality of Indian goods, and therefore, there is considerable scope for expanding trade between the two countries.

# Putin visit to hasten defence deals

Shishir Gupta  
New Delhi, September 28

APART FROM the formalisation of a strategic partnership during Mr Putin's October 2 to 5 India visit, an Indo-Russian inter-governmental commission on military-technical cooperation is to be formed.

Government sources said the Indian defence minister and the Russian deputy PM will head the proposed military-technical commission. The commission will clear—with prices to be negotiated later—the pending acquisition of the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier for the Navy, 300 T-90 tanks for the Army and latest version Sukhoi-30 MKI fighters for the Air Force.

Sources said Russia two months ago sent the draft contract for

refitting the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier. The T-90 tanks deal has been stuck over prices: Russia wants \$2.3 million apiece, India wants to pay \$2.1 million apiece.

The commission will ensure Indo-Russian defence ties are not restricted to a buyer-seller relationship and, instead, enlarged to the possibility of Moscow investing in Indian defence industries.

According to Foreign Secretary Lalit Mansingh, the two sides will explore the possibility of tapping the vast potential for enhanced cooperation in energy and hydro-



carbon sectors. The cooperation is already evident with the ONGC sending an oil-exploration mission to Sakhalin in Siberia.

India has for the first time agreed to buy uncut diamonds from Russia, the largest producer of uncut diamonds in the world. India is a leader in diamond cutting.

Regarding cooperation in the field of nuclear energy, the foreign secretary categorically said that Moscow had not placed any restriction before finalising an accord on nuclear energy.

Besides, during Putin's visit both the sides are going to firm up agreements on civil aviation, agriculture, science and technology, and culture. Mansingh said that India's recent warming up of ties with the US will not affect the close ties that New Delhi and Moscow enjoy.

# 'Russian talks with Pak. will not hit ties'

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 28.** India today reiterated that it was about to formalise a strategic partnership with Russia and asserted that Moscow's decision to engage Islamabad would not have a negative fall-out on Indo-Russian ties.

In response to questions during a press conference on the stepped-up interaction between Moscow and Islamabad, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, said the Indo-Russian relations were "time-tested and based on continuity, trust and mutual understanding." He added that the "mature" ties between New Delhi and Moscow were not affected by bilateral relations of other countries.

Asked to comment on reports from Moscow that the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence had assured Russia that it would restrain the Taliban from training Chechen rebels, the Foreign Secretary said "we are pleased to note that the ISI will restrain the Taliban."

The *Voice of Russia*, in one of its reports, said that the assurance had come during the visit to Pakistan by the Russian President's Special Envoy, Mr. Sergei Yasterzhembsky.

Interaction between Russia and Pakistan has become visible after the meeting of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin with Pakistan's Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, on the sidelines of the UN Millennium summit.

Mr. Mansingh pointed out that India and Russia would sign a historic declaration to establish a strategic partnership during the visit of Mr. Vladimir Putin to India. The two sides would also sign agreements in the fields of defence, nuclear energy, civil aviation, agriculture, education and culture. According to Mr. Mansingh, the emergence of democracy in Russia and the commitment of both countries to a market economy had added yet another dimension to the "multi-faceted" Indo-Russian ties.

On the economic side, India and Russia, have decided to trade in diamonds and expand cooperation in the oil and gas sector. Russia is the largest producer of rough diamonds while India has a 55 per cent share of small polished diamonds in the world.

India's diamond sales fetch Rs. 28,701 crores for the national exchequer. On hydrocarbons, the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (Videsh) will look for oil in Russia's Sakhalin region. The two countries also wish to work together in this sector in Kazakhstan as well as Iraq.

## Defence ties

India and Russia are also set to upgrade their defence ties. During Mr. Putin's stay, the two sides will establish an inter-governmental commission on Military Technical Cooperation at the ministerial level. According to highly placed sources in the Government, the formalisation of the commission will coincide with the finalisation of key defence

deals. This includes signatures on purchases of 300 T-90 tanks. Indian and Russian officials have been engaged in extended pre-negotiations for these tanks. While the Russian side has committed \$2.3 million per tank, the Indian side has been unwilling to budge from the price tag of \$5 million.

The sale of the Russian aircraft carrier, *Admiral Gorshkov* is also expected to be through during the visit. While Russia is willing to part with the carrier free of cost, New Delhi will pay for the modernisation of this 40,000-ton ship. The package also includes the transfer of the around 100 MiG-29 K planes which will be taken off and land from the *Gorshkov* deck.

Mr. Putin's trip is also likely to clear the avionics package for SU-30 MKI planes for India. It has already contracted for the transfer of 40 SU-30 planes from Russia. India, however, is likely to induct around 100 SU-30s in its inventory.



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## UNDER THE ROUBLE

New Russia, new India, old problems

THERE are realistically, two areas where a liberalising but still poor India and a liberalising but crisis-ridden Russia can cooperate. First, India obtaining licensing rights for Russian (or ex-Soviet) defence equipment. Second, the two countries sign a solid trade-enhancement treaty, some variant of a two way free trade regime. If Vladimir Putin's visit can at least start the ball rolling, it will have achieved something beyond the fluff of the so-called strategic partnership treaty, which is the officially-designated high point. Indian dependence on Russian defence equipment is too widespread, and the military budget already stretched, to consider diversification of sources in the foreseeable future. At the same time, our armed forces are handicapped by the chaotic state of Russian defence production. It is logical, therefore, for India to press hard for licences to Russian defence equipment. We can make the stuff here, probably even involve the private sector, and also sell it to others who still use Soviet weaponry. Russia, in return, will get the commercial privileges due to any issuer of licences. This is a sensible business proposition, and one that the Indian side should impress upon their Russian guests, who claim, these days, to understand business.

As for trade, the going will be even harder. An absurd, artificially-propped, state-mandated rupee trading system defined economic relations between India and the USSR until it was abolished in 1993. But, as in so many facets of socialism, it left a perverse legacy: India's debts to Russia in form of the civilian and defence rouble loans extended by the USSR to its "special friend". Much bureaucratic wrangling produced, in 1994, a rupee repayment system — Rs 3,000 crore per annum — that will terminate in 2005. But since Moscow can use these repayments to buy goods produced here — apart from being able to auction the debt — the majority of Indian exports to Russia is still through the rupee-rouble route. Russian exports to India, on the other hand, are via usual hard currency transactions. Another burden of the past is the habit Indian exporters got into of selling substandard goods to the USSR. State trading meant there was no one to check quality and good citizens of the socialist paradise were in no position to complain if Indian tea was mixed with wood shavings. Bad habits persist and many Indian exporters now find it difficult to compete in Russia, which is awash with exported or, as is more often the case, smuggled Western products. Add to this the modern Russian problem of poor law and order and collapsing infrastructure, which translates into high risk premia for traders, it is clear only a big policy push can restart the bilateral economic engine. And that has to be a trade agreement allowing both countries cheap access to each other's markets. Manufacturers in India, and those still left in Russia, will undoubtedly be unhappy at the prospect of a free trading system. But if new Russia and new India are to forge any kind of meaningful relationship, such protests must be ignored.

# Old friends

By K. K. Katyal

*New Delhi and Moscow have maintained a special relationship for several decades — it has survived the disintegration of the Soviet Union and several changes of guard in both countries.*

WHILE THE Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's talks with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, continue to be analysed — even overanalysed —, the focus will soon shift to another relationship, between New Delhi and Moscow, in the context of the coming visit here of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin. Certain points could be made straight away. One, the mutual ties have kept strengthening despite the change of guard in the two countries. Two, India and Russia remain strongly attached to each other, despite their internal problems. As a matter of fact, some of the domestic challenges have brought them closer — for instance, Russia's difficulties with secessionists in Chechnya and India's in Jammu and Kashmir. In both cases, subversive elements are backed from outside — by religious militants from the Talibanised Afghanistan and its creator, Pakistan. Equally strong is their worry over threats to their multi-ethnic and plural societies.

A presidential visit from Moscow, due for several years, could not materialise because of the ill-health of Mr. Putin's predecessor, Mr. Boris Yeltsin. He was last here in 1993 while two Prime Ministers, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao in 1994 and Mr. H. D. Deve Gowda in 1997, reciprocated that gesture in ample measure through their trips to Moscow. There are no political problems between the two sides — that has been evident over the years. They have a shared new vision of joint struggle against international terrorism, cross-border violence and narcotics based activities. There is an equally strong emphasis by the two sides on their opposition to the domination of one country or a group of countries over others. On various occasions in the past, India expressed its disapproval of the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and wanted the Russian concerns taken into account. They took an identical stand on the developments in Kosovo, while Russia fully backed India on the Kargil conflict.

True, the positions taken by the two countries on nuclear issues — on India's rests in 1998, other non-proliferation

measures and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty — are divergent, but Moscow has not let this cast a shadow over the multifaceted cooperation. It resisted pressures from the West against dealing with India in areas involving sensitive technology and, in particular, went ahead with its plans for setting up nuclear power plants in India. Russia was the first permanent member of the U.N. Security Council to back India's claim to accommodation in this body.

New Delhi and Moscow have maintained the tradition of special relationship for the past several decades — it has survived the disintegration of the Soviet Union and several changes at the top in Russia. It survived a major shift in the political balance in India which saw a BJP-led regime in power. The existing reality of cooperation is intended to be formalised through a Declaration of Strategic Partnership, to be signed during Mr. Putin's visit. The Russian side loves to describe it as a necklace on which would be studded gems and diamonds, symbolising cooperation in military, science and technology, economy, culture and political affairs.

This is seen as a continuation of a process that began with the bilateral Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation signed in August 1971. After the demise of the Soviet Union, it was replaced with a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, seen by some as a dilution of the earlier arrangements because of the removal of security clauses and ideological overtones.

Later, when the two countries found themselves co-victims of adverse forces of the changing world situation, especially of international terrorism, it was sought to be updated by the 1994 Moscow Declaration, which talked of the special responsibility of large multiethnic states for the destiny of the hundreds of millions of

human rights violations, the unipolar world order and the ABM treaty — it is not to be described as a triangular partnership, that is the view of both New Delhi and Moscow.

Some in the West question India's wisdom in putting all its eggs in one Russian basket because of the country's ever-weakening domestic structures. India is not oblivious of the problems confronting Moscow in the course of transition which has turned out to be prolonged and tortuous but recognises Russia's tremendous potential and has faith in its capacity to get over the mess. Had that not been India's belief it would not have worked out long-term cooperation in key areas such as defence and science and technology.

For instance, during Mr. Putin's stay, the agreement on long-term cooperation in science and technology will be extended by ten years. The two sides have already agreed on a similar ten-year extension for military and technical cooperation — a broad document covering licensed production of planes, tanks and military ships (both in India and St. Petersburg). Plans for supply of SU-30 planes and tanks and for upgrading MiG-21s are in final stages of negotiation. No less significant is the North-South corridor, along the route followed by Russian merchants 500 years ago — it will enable containers from St. Petersburg to be taken to the Caspian Sea, from there to Iranian territory for being taken to the Bandar Abbas port, for onward journey to Mumbai. Already initiated, the agreement on the corridor would cut transportation time by two weeks. Preliminaries for the nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu are near-complete. Russia does not see any problem in helping in the establishment of more such plants in India. It does not take the view, as has been done by France, that help for nuclear power reactors amounts to a violation of the London Club regime of nuclear nations. From cooperation in anti-terrorism to defence and science and technology to political-level affinity is a fantastically wide range. That, by itself, is a marathon job. The plans for enhanced cooperation will make it a rare example in international

dealings.

people and said: "They advocate unconditional observance of the principles of respect for territorial integrity and unity of the state as a key factor of viability of multiethnic states. They reiterate their support for each other's territorial integrity as constituted by law and enshrined in their respective Constitutions."

This mutuality of interests is intended to be carried further by the new Declaration — it will seek to bind them not to take part in a military or political alliance or armed conflict directed against the other. The two sides will also be required to keep off any treaty or agreement which might infringe the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity or national security interests of each other.

The enhanced cooperation envisaged in the strategic partnership may take the form of joint initiatives in key international and regional issues and bind them to joint efforts on those nuclear matters on which the two sides agree — for instance, systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the final objective of their elimination.

Care is to be taken to ensure, through a forthright statement, that the strategic partnership is not meant to be directed against any other country or to establish a military or political alliance. Not long ago, some confusion was caused by the remark by a former Russian Prime Minister, Mr. Yevgeny Primakov, during his visit to New Delhi which was interpreted as his country's desire for a triangular partnership among India, Russia and China. Even after the reference was clarified, the speculation continued. Russians have made it doubly clear that they are "against any destructive geometry in politics. Its sharp edges can pierce someone else". If the views of three major powers of Asia coincide on specific issues — international terrorism, Yugoslavia, intervention in domestic affairs in the name of

# RUSSIAN VIEWS-I

## Kashmir And The Bomb

WITH President Boris Yeltsin's resignation from office on 31 December soon after the 19 December elections to Russia's state Duma, the country enters a phase of political uncertainty. The only certainty, so far as India is concerned, is that no matter which party is in power in Moscow or, for that matter in New Delhi, Indo-Russian relations will remain close. They are based on the bedrock of mutual interest. They are not an *affaire du coeur*.

One illustration reveals the limits of the relationship in the past and now. In 1955 the Soviet embassy presented to the President a copy of the Soviet atlas in which "the India-China boundary was delineated as on the Chinese map", Parliament was informed on 22 August 1960. Neither Indian protests nor Soviet assurances proved of any avail. Now, *Izvestia* has published a map (28 May 1999) which adopted the Chinese line.

We tend to ignore the nuances in the spectrum of opinion in Russian democracy and are poorly informed of the views of leading Russian politicians and journals on South Asia. The press is remarkably forthright. DEN of Moscow published, on 17 January 1993, extracts from Yeltsin's telephonic chat with President George Bush to depict him as an American stooge.

### GREY SHADES

There are grey shades in Russia's support to India on Kashmir. Its media is as ill-informed and simplistic on the basic facts as some in the West are. It went off the deep end immediately after Pokhran II and uttered dire warnings of an Indo-Pak war in the offing. Disagreement with the official stand was not concealed. A few criticised the government for putting billions earned in defence deals with India above principle or security. Some revealed themselves to be extremely well informed on the deals. A new group of India specialists is emerging to replace the old. *Izvestia* is close to the powers that be as are *Rossikaya Gazeta* (R *Gazeta*) and *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*. The last (N *Gazeta*) is owned by the powerful tycoon Boris Berezovsky, one of the notorious oligarchs close to Yeltsin. Nikolay Paklin's long stay in India was not very instructive, one suspects. He wrote in R *Gazeta* (12 April 1995): "According to the design of the initiators of that division, those who professed Hinduism were to live in India and those who professed Islam, in Pakistan." Nor was he any the more perceptive in his report in the paper (11 April 1996) on the charade of home minister SB Chavan's talks with Kashmir's ex-militants; "field commanders", to him.

By AG NOORANI

Vladimir Dunayev believes (*Russky Telegraf*; 30 July 1998) that Pakistan "demands giving independence to the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir". Pakistan's assistance to the separatists is noted. "For ensuring the security of the Hindu minority in J&K, Delhi deployed troops in the State." Referring to the BJP's stand on the bomb he remarked: "The world community reacted to the militant nationalists of the second most populous country quite listlessly. However, when after two months of the triumph of the BJP, with Vajpayee at its head, India tested five nuclear devices, it was not a joke. There were serious apprehensions that Delhi may carry out a nuclear attack on

The author is a lawyer and commentator on current affairs.

its main enemy."

Dunayev noted Pakistan's tests and warned: "The new war between them possibly may take place with the use of nuclear weapons." Reporting from Colombo during the SAARC summit, Vladimir Mikheev asserted in *Izvestia* (1 August 1998) that "all the Muslims of the State (J&K) would vote in favour of transferring this territory to Pakistan as they are in majority here". In his view, "to put it softly, from the ethnic point of view, the state of J&K was not reasonably divided by the British in 1947, while giving independence to India". He was critical of the world's indifference to "a potential threat of a nuclear war. Even the neighbours of these adversaries do not yet distinctly realise this threat, leave alone the leading powers."

Reading Alexander Koretsky's report in *Segodnya*, one would think he was writing of the Kargil crisis in terms more hysterical than were used by any reporter. His report was dated 4 August 1998: "Today, the world is almost similarly on the brink of a nuclear war, as it was in 1962 during the period of the 'Cuban crisis'. But it is not being felt as yet with enough intensity ... heavy rocket artillery duel is taking place on the Indo-Pak border (*sic*) in Kashmir ... War has its own logic ... And if there is a gun with nuclear arsenal hanging on a wall, why not fire it?"

### ARMS LEVERAGE

He criticised Moscow for not sharing his panic. "Moscow is the strategic partner of Delhi. India is one of the main importers of Russian weapons. Possibly, due to this, Moscow is not inclined to dramatise this." In this, he is not alone. What we need to know is whether, besides the journalists, some of the politicians also hold this view. Certainly, Sergei Gully did. He wrote on Pokhran II:

"For the sake of getting commercial advantage immediately, sometimes Moscow looks on the experience of the clients indulgently. Delhi's unexpected move gives special flavour to international nuclear commerce." (*Novye Ivestia*, 13 May 1998). On the same day, Vladimir Mikheev of *Izvestia* warned: "pebbles slipping down a steep slope may cause an avalanche".

It was left to Pavel Felgenhaver, defence and national security affairs editor of *Segodnya*, to provide (14 May) a cogent explanation for Moscow's response to Pokhran II: "India buys more than \$1 billion worth of Russian arms annually and has recently signed several new arms contracts worth more than \$2 billion. India has also signed contracts to buy two Russian nuclear reactors. India owes Russia billions of dollars and is currently servicing its debt honestly. These payments may be frozen if sanctions are imposed. If Russia supports sanctions against India, its arms exports will collapse, its foreign earnings will be diminished and it will lose one of its last allies. And what will Moscow get in return? A slap in the face from Washington in the form of a second wave of Nato expansion, or sanctions for dealing with Iran."

He went on to make an important point: "If the United States had maintained the partnership with Moscow that was developing in the early 1990s and acted in agreement with Russia and other major powers, proliferation most likely would not have happened. And if it had, a genuine united action plan would have easily been put together." Indo-Russian relations are less important than a Russo-American *entente*.

Maxim Yusin of *Izvestia* (14 May) was as bitter: "In Moscow they came to the conclusion that this problem will be settled firstly by the most concerned sides - India's neighbours and the US - as Russia has lost the status of a superpower. This releases it from the obligation to do 'a dirty job'; ie to exert diplomatic pressure on Delhi, to frighten it with sanctions, etc." Among the buyers of Russian weaponry, "Delhi occupies firmly the second place, yielding priority only to Beijing".

### GREAT CANDOUR

He proceeded to drive the point home with remarkable candour: "As it had happened many times in the past, it seems that now Moscow is ready to close its eyes and not to notice the violation of rules of international law by India. Let us recall that the participation of 50,000 Indian troops in the civil war in Sri Lanka in the 1980s or the airborne landing at Maldive Islands in 1988, did not meet the rebuff of the then Soviet leadership." Disapproval is manifest here as well as in Vladimir Dunayev's remark (*Russky Telegraf*, 16 May): "For the utterly doubtful economic and political benefits, Moscow is ready to befriend even the devil."

The divide between the "idealists" and the pragmatists is sharp. Sergei Sokov injected realism (*N Gazeta*; 15 May) in pointing out that "despite the nuclear tests carried out by India, which may be followed by a potential danger to Russia of nuclear missiles race in South Asia, our country does not afford the luxury of refusing the Military-Technical Cooperation with this country". In the eighties its volume was \$18.5 billion. From 1992-96, Delhi imported from Russia arms worth \$3.5 billion. The volume for 1997 is valued at \$600 million.

However, "the most important peculiarity of Indo-Russian MTC is in the fact that today India is the sole country which not only buys arms from Russia, but also finances our scientific-research and experimental-design works in the military field. First of all, this applies to the programme of building the multi-role fighter SU-30 MKI, on the basis of fighter PUO SU-30. Under this programme, for the total value of one billion dollars, the world's most effective fourth-generation fighter will be built ... Delhi bought 9 submarines of project 877 AKM and 636." The tenth is being built at St Petersburg. "India has already ordered three frigates of project 1135 and large quantity of ship armament... Our ship-building and aviation industry and cities like St Petersburg and Irkutsk are critically dependent on Indian purchases." If Russia were to decline supplies, the space thus vacated "will in no time be occupied by our main competitors in the Indian market such as France, Britain and Israel".

(To be concluded)

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- 7 JAN 2000

# RUSSIAN VIEWS-II

## Primakov's Views Simply Deceptive

**I**N contrast "idealists" like Vyacheslav Nikonov felt that the "insolvency of American leadership in the unipolar world, however, does not give Russia any reasons to be happy with herself. The challenge is given to us, too, as one of the guarantors of the NPT. There are reasons to reproach Russian diplomacy, which is concentrating on the West vs the East, when the threat to her security is proceeding from the South, where all the unofficial nuclear states and the 'threshold' countries are situated." He made a concrete suggestion. Russia should take the initiative in convening "a Summit level regional conference on non-proliferation in which leaders of all the members of the UN Security Council could participate". He meant, apparently, the P5 and India and Pakistan — the old US formula of 5 + 2. "Russia is capable of making her influence felt, overcoming the inferiority complex in her foreign policies" (*Izvestia*; 19 May).

### LESS FRIENDLY

Leonid Gonnkin and Nikoli Dimitrev had serious news to impart in *Kommersant Daily* (29 May) — India had a neutron bomb. "According to Russian military personnel, possession of a neutron bomb may tempt India to use it even in the initial stage of conflict with Pakistan. By this, India may win at the time of a border conflict by launching precise attacks from tank formations on infantry divisions of Pakistan's army by creating radioactive congestion in the direction of the movements of the main force of the adversary".

Three features in Russian media comment stand out, disturbingly. They are far less friendly, more alarmist and, on matters of defence, better informed than many in India suspect. On Kashmir they are simplistic, if not ignorant, and are ambivalent, even when the tilt is markedly towards India. Warnings such as this were delivered freely in 1998: "Observers think that the possibility of war between India and Pakistan is very high, but the danger is that it may develop into nuclear war."

The specialist Felgenhaver was not impressed by South Asia's bombs, however. "Almost all the bombs which were exploded were quite weak" and "without a new series of explosions, Delhi will not be able to create an effective weapon as a nuclear deterrent. It is evident

By AG NOORANI

that the Indians provoked Islamabad." But, unlike the others, he felt that though the "fear has mounted manifold the possibility of war is less" (*Segodnya*, 30 May).

Some commentators thought that Russia's stand would displease China. None overlooked the Western factor. "We demonstrate with India to Nato, and to the other countries, that we do have our own interests independent of them. What it is — reasonable egotism — is also a method of demonstrating national dignity. The important thing is not to be overwhelmed by such egotism." Viktor Litovkin was being starkly realistic. (*Izvestia*, 17 June). Two billion dollars earned annually from India were not peanuts, especially "in the present condition in Russia of economic instability".

Like others, he reeled off the figures to educate his readers. In 1997 "India expressed its desire to purchase two diesel submarines like 'kilo' from us, and three modern torpedo boats (worth \$800 million), aircraft carrier cruiser (worth nearly \$2 billion), four refueller aircrafts IL-78 (\$400 million) and Zenit missile complex S-300 PMU (value to be agreed upon) are some of the contracts already signed and are being fulfilled. And Nato demonstrates its disregard for Russian interests in the Balkans..." This is a constantly recurring theme. Amidst it all, there were counsels of patience, too: "Do not underestimate India" D Kosirev wrote (*N Gazeta*; 18 July). India "should at least be listened to".

Finally, no student of South Asian affairs can ignore an article by Sergei Rogov, director, Institute of USA and Canada, Russian Academy of Sciences, a highly respected think tank. (*N Gazeta*; 5 June). It is so well informed comprehensive and incisive, as to bear quotation *in extenso*.

### NUCLEAR RISKS

"There is no guarantee that the existence of N-weapon with India and Pakistan will lead to creation of a relatively stable model of mutual nuclear deterrence, on the Soviet-American analogue. For India, even the idea of having parity with Pakistan in any field is not acceptable, leave alone the nuclear field. Both the countries have the stimulus to carry out a preventive attack on each other. The tests do not mean creation of a N-weapon, which is ready for military purpose. The side which will be able to first instal nuclear arsenal on missiles and aircraft, will get the stimulation to secure itself by destroying the nuclear potential of the opponent. Many leaders in Islamabad confirm that nuclear warheads have already been installed on Pakistani missiles.

"India, for example, could try to use her overwhelming superiority in conventional armament and armed forces for not only once again devastating the Pakistani army, but also the N-facilities of Pakistan before it is ready to carry out its preemptive nuclear attack on nuclear objects of India. There are technical inadequacies which prevent the process of creating a model of mutual deterrent. The missile takes a few minutes to reach its target. But neither India nor Pakistan has the early warning system capable of warning of a nuclear attack. With the restricted quantity of N-devices, a preemptive attack gives hope of ability to disarm and to decapitate the opponent. Any measures to enhance battle readiness of nuclear power of the other country may be interpreted as preparation for attack and cause immediate reaction." He criticised, both, Russia's concern with "short-term commercial benefits", to the neglect of its long-term interests, and the US's imposition of sanctions. The tests carried out by India and Pakistan "hardly gave them enough information to unroll a reliable nuclear warhead", a view expressed by Felgenhaver, too.

Sergei Rogov gave wise counsel. First, "It is essential to concentrate efforts on averting Indo-Pak armed conflict using nuclear arms. It is the most expedient to stop the undeclared war in Kashmir, which can any moment lead to escalation with unpredictable repercussions. It is necessary to try to find ways of political settlement of the Kashmir Problem, which should be through measures of confidence and control over armaments (for example, distancing the troops of both the sides from each other and avoiding territorial action in the 'buffer zone' along the LoC)."

### NO PARTNERSHIP

Next, India and Pakistan should agree on the rules for the management of a nuclear South Asia, with assistance from the US and Russia. But he delivered this warning on anti-missile defence: "It is necessary to find political as well economic stimulus, which could serve as enough weighty arguments in favour of restricting nuclear arsenal of Delhi and Islamabad... Though the US-USSR example may not be fully applicable in the South Asian situation, the two major powers could to some extent, assist their new colleagues in understanding the rules regarding handling such a deli-

cate situation. Anti-missile defence is of special importance. It may be presumed that today's American and Russian systems of tactical anti-missile defence, which are capable of intercepting missiles of short and intermediate range, which India and Pakistan possess, may be of more interest to them. The possibility of their going for the indigenous analogues of anti-missile complex like C-300 and 'Patriot' should not be ruled out. Will the anti-missile defence play a stabilising role, ensuring non-vulnerability of N-forces for retaliatory blow, would it guarantee punishment to the aggressor, or, as in the case of USA and USSR, will it create a stimulus for forestalling strike on the N-forces of the other country, in order to intercept the targeted missiles of the enemy through the anti-missile defence?"

These are the individual views of a defence intellectual. If US-Russian relations ever result in an *entente cordiale* joint pressures on India and Pakistan will follow — on Kashmir and the bomb. Not many in this region have thought through the problem as Rogov clearly had. The views differ and nuances vary. But Russian comment on a nuclear South Asia demolishes the stereotypes to which most in India cling, with greater ardor than judgment, as they did in the era of Indo-Soviet entente. It is immature to jump at phrases thrown out by the imakovs like "strategic partnership". It is worse than unrealistic in the present context is simply deceptive.

(Concluded)



THE STATESMAN  
- 8 JAN 2000

# MiG-21 focus of Tipnis visit

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

*Tipnis 5-9 19/9*

NEW DELHI, Sept 18. — Evaluating the progress made in the MiG-21 upgrade project as well as in the development of the India-specific SU-30 combat aircraft will be important elements of the six-day visit of the Chief of the Air Staff to Russia this week.

Air Chief Marshal AY Tipnis leaves here tomorrow and his schedule includes meetings with his Russian counterpart, other senior officials of the military and the Defence industry.

While the MiG-21 upgrade has not adhered to its original schedule, the IAF continues to attach much importance to the programme. With the indigenous LCA still a long way off, the 125 MiG-21 BIS modernised planes have a crucial role to play in its operational plans.

The two planes sent to Russia as "prototypes" have completed their basic flight trials and now being put through armament trials. The trial process has involved at least 50 per cent more tests than initially planned since equipment

from various sources have to be integrated.

It is expected that the two units will return to India by the year-end and the upgrade programme will then take off. Already some equipment has moved to Ojhar Division (Nashik) of Hindustan Aeronautics and preliminary activities have commenced on eight planes. The programme is expected to be completed in three years.

The MiG-21 BIS is the first IAF combat plane to be put through a comprehensive modernisation programme and there are plans for an equally major programme for the MiG-27. Hence the Chief's visit to the project-station.

Integration problems have also hindered the development of the "Mark-I (India)" version of the SU-30, which Air Chief Marshal Tipnis will be examining in the next few days. The ambitious programme involved a phased development/retro fitting exercise in view of the delays it has been decided to contract the project from four to three stages. The IAF has received 18 planes, another 32 are on order.

THE STATESMAN

19 SEP 2000

## **Russian Minister for India**

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, SEPT. 19.** The Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, today left on a three-day visit to India at the head of a high-power delegation tasked with finalising accords to be signed during the President, Mr. Vladimir Putin's visit from October 2-5.

Mr. Klebanov, who is also the co-chairman of the Intergovernmental Commission with India, told presspersons before his departure that a key Declaration on Strategic Partnership and about 10 other major agreements are to be signed during the summit. The accords will cover cooperation in civil aviation, pharmaceuticals, computer software, as well as automobile and machine-building industries. During the summit India and Russia will also conclude an agreement for upgrading their military cooperation from secretary-level joint working group to the level of an intergovernmental commission on defence. Mr. Klebanov will co-chair the commission together with the Indian Defence Minister. In the defence sector the sides are expected to clinch deals for the supply of 300 T-90S main battle tanks and refitting and rearming the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier.

Mr. Klebanov's delegation includes the Russian Atomic Energy Minister, Mr. Yevgeny Adamov, who will discuss Russian involvement in construction of nuclear power projects in India.

Mr. Klebanov is to meet the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, the Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, who heads the Indian side of the Inter-government Commission, and other Indian officials.

THE HINDU

20 SEP 2000

# Declaration of partnership to be highlight of Putin visit

Udayan Namboodiri  
New Delhi, September 19

THE VISIT of Russian President Vladimir Putin next month may prove more important for India in terms of business and military linkages than all the structured dialogues with the United States put together.

Russia's first Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov who arrives here tomorrow is expected to finalise the details of some 21 bilateral agreements which are to be signed during the visit.

The Delhi Declaration of Strategic Partnership to be signed between the two governments will, of course, be the highlight of the three-day visit of President Putin beginning October 2. According to sources, it will be a general political document reaffirming the ties between the two countries.

The military package is expected to comprise an agreement on transfer of the Russian aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, which is to be refitted at a cost of \$ 750 million. India is also expected to buy 300 T-90 tanks and possible purchase of MiG-29 K fighters on board the Gorshkov.

The economic relationship between the two countries, which has been quite static, is expected to get a fillip in the near future.

Recently the two countries signed an agreement to set up a north-south transport corridor linking the two countries through Iran which will reduce the process of goods movement between the two countries considerably.

Of considerable importance is an agreement on civil aviation which may result in Russian short to medium haul aircraft being manufactured in India under license.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

20 SEP 2000

# India, Russia to identify key areas for forging strategic IT partnership

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, September 20

INDIA AND Russia have agreed to identify areas to promote strategic partnership in information technology sector in order to boost technology transfer and enhance trade in knowledge-based industries. The agreement was arrived at during the meeting between Minister of Information Technology Pramod Mahajan and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Llya Klebanov on Wednesday.

The proposed action plan would be finalized during discussions with the Russian communications and informatics minister, who is expected to visit India along with the Russian President next month.

Both the ministers agreed that the IT sector

provides a new dimension for strategic cooperation between the two countries. While India's strength lies in the large pool of skilled English-speaking manpower, Russia could provide the right platform for technological prowess.

During the discussion, the minister proposed that an exchange program for students could be initiated in IT-related areas. He also invited his Russian counterpart to send a delegation to visit Indian cyber cities for proper awareness regarding India's prowess in critical technologies.

Meanwhile, Russia has also shown interest in supplying equipment for hydel power projects on rupee payment. This was conveyed by a delegation from Technopromexport, TPE, a Russian state enterprise, that called on Minister of State for Power Jayawant Mehta on

Wednesday.

The delegation was led by the Russian trade commissioner in India E.A. Isayev. The delegation has shown interest in renovation and modernization of Obra Thermal Power station in Uttar Pradesh and Patratu TPS in Bihar.

The Russian deputy prime minister also informed that during President Vladimir Putin's four-day visit beginning October 2, the two countries are also expected to sign an agreement to step cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Klebanov, who is currently on a three-day visit to the country to prepare for the Indo-Russian summit, further added that both the countries are also looking forward to enhancing cooperation in terms of joint ventures and research and development activities in the field of defense.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

21 SEP 2000



# India, Russia to set up more research projects

By Vladimir Radyuhin <sup>HD-15</sup>

**MOSCOW, SEPT. 24.** India and Russia will expand their cooperation in science and technology in the coming decade and concentrate on commercialisation of joint research projects.

The two countries have finalised a new 10-year programme for cooperation in science and technology, with an option to extend it for further five-year periods. The agreement will be signed during the visit of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, to India next week.

The Integrated Long-Term Programme of Cooperation in Science and Technology (ILTP), signed in 1987 by the former Soviet Union President, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, and the late Rajiv Gandhi is expiring this year. Over the years, ILTP has emerged as the world's largest bilateral programme in science and technology generating over 300 joint research projects, of which 154 projects have already been completed.

The achievements of the ILTP include the establishment of three joint research centres in India — the Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials at Hyderabad, the Centre for Production of Oral Polio Vaccine at BIBCOLD, Bulandshahar, and the Centre for Advanced Computing Research in Moscow. A fourth centre for biotechnology is to open shortly in India.

Official Indian sources said the new ILTP would maintain the momentum of joint research in fundamental sciences, but would be oriented more towards industry to tap Russian technologies. "Despite 10 years of economic and political turmoil, Russia is still a treasure-trove of top-notch scientific knowledge and we hope to skim the cream of Russian sci-

ence and technology for many years to come," they said.

The Russian industry does not have the money to commercialise many domestic technologies and this opens a sea of opportunities for Indian industry. The mechanism of tapping these opportunities has been developed under ILTP.

Indian researchers, with active help from the Department of Science, screen scientific centres for commercially-promising technologies and work on their industrial applications jointly with Russian scientists. The Technology Development Board then steps in with loans to Indian companies willing to use the new technology.

This is how a laser-glass manufacturing facility was set up in Calcutta with a \$ 2-million credit from the Technology Development Board.

Now that the commercial value of the project has been proved, the plant is to be expanded to meet demand from the Indian industry for laser glass at one-sixth or one-seventh the price of imported brands.

Similarly, India plans to borrow the technology for producing plasma displays, in which Russia is the world leader. The technology is tipped to be used in the manufacture of future TV sets with flat screens.

Another commodity India hopes to produce domestically with Russian help is silicon chips. A joint venture is to be set up shortly in India to cut and polish silicon crystal ingots that will be manufactured at a plant in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia. The project will eliminate India's dependence on Western supplies of silicon wafers used in space, missile and computer programmes.

Under the new ILTP, India will strive to reach deeper into Russian regions to bring provincial research centres into the orbit of bilateral cooperation.

THE HINDU

22 05 SEP 2000

SEP 27

# Russia guns for Delhi defence deals

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

St. Petersburg, Sept. 26: Russia is banking on President Vladimir Putin to clinch key defence deals with Delhi during his three-day visit to the country next month.

Several deals are believed to have been lined up by Russian deputy prime minister Ilya Klebanov, whose team has just returned here from Delhi after finalising Putin's visit.

The buzz about the deals has grown louder since air force chief A.Y. Tipnis landed in Russia on an official visit.

Putin will begin his visit on October 2 and meet top leaders, including Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and President K.R. Narayanan. He will also travel to Mumbai and Agra.

The deals with India are crucial as they will help rejuvenate Russia's moribund defence industry and provide jobs to hundreds of people. India and China are the main buyers of Russian defence equipment.

Speculation about the Indo-Russian deals has been mounting since Tipnis arrived here. He has held talks with senior defence officials and visited several key factories.

Three frigates for the Indian navy are under construction in the Baltiysky Zavod shipyard. Two Indian submarines are here for overhaul.

Klebanov said he had discussed a wide range of bilateral issues and arms deals. His delegation included members of leading arms exporters, Rosvooruzheniye

and Promexport. There are hints that Russia has never signed as many deals with any other country as it has lined up with India.

The deputy prime minister said he had discussed a contract covering export and licensed production of 320 T-90 battle tanks in India, but declined to disclose when the deal would be signed.

Nikolai Malykh, general director of Uralvagonzavod which manufactures the tanks, said the deal would be signed soon. The deal, to be signed by Putin, will provide for export of 124 T-90s and licensed production of 196 of these tanks in India at a cost of \$750-\$900 million.

Another deal for licensed production of 100 Su-30 MKI fighters by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is also likely to be signed. Sukhoi chief Mikhail Pogosyan, who was in India recently, said the nations were negotiating a \$1 billion deal.

Sukhoi's rival MiG is also trying to clinch a deal, which will include retrofitting aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov. MiG general director Nikolai Nikitin is scheduled to be on Putin's delegation.

Nikitin wants to deliver 60 MiG-29K fighters, to be based on Admiral Gorshkov and a coastal air base. The deal is likely to cost a whopping \$2 billion.

Another deal for delivery of six S-300 PMU air defence systems, that have a range of over 200 km and can intercept ballistic missiles, is also being discussed. But it is not clear if this will be signed during Putin's visit.



Putin

THE TELEGRAPH

27 SEP 2001

## India against UN intervention in Kashmir issue

Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 27 SEPTEMBER

NEW DELHI on Wednesday said a firm no to a reported UN proposal to mediate on Kashmir and asserted that third parties have "no role to play whatsoever" in resolving the Kashmir issue. "There is no change in our position," a foreign office spokesman told reporters.

Reports from Islamabad had said UN secretary general Kofi Annan had expressed his willingness to help the two neighbours find a solution to the Kashmir problem and that he would visit Pakistan. The government spokesman said he was not aware of any such visit by the UN secretary general.

The spokesman made it clear that there was no question of the government agreeing to any outside mediation, intervention, arbitration or facilitation on the issue.

On reports from Washington which quoted the US President as saying Pakistan, which is aiding terrorism in India, may have to be declared a terrorist state, he said India has been pointing out the complicity of Pakistani agencies in aiding cross-border terrorism.

## Nuclear fuel pact likely with Russia for Comrade Putin

Ritwik Mukherjee  
CALCUTTA 27 SEPTEMBER

COME OCTOBER and India is likely to have Russian fuel tabs, which will eventually see India's much-hyped nuclear power station at Tarapore through. According to sources in the external affairs ministry, during Russian President Vladimir Putin's ensuing four-day visit to India beginning on October 2, at least half a dozen agreements will be signed including a broad 'strategic agreement' between the two 'friendly' countries.

According to highly placed government officials giving final touches to the preparatory works for Vajpayee-Putin talks, Russia would announce its plans to deliver fuel tabs to India for the Tarapore Nuclear Power Station notwithstanding the resentment over this among the Western countries.

Neither Russia, nor India, thinks this to be a violation of agreement among the members of Group of Nuclear Suppliers and members of G-8 nations. The G-8 meeting dedicated to nuclear security problems, had arrived at a conclusion that nuclear security must prevail over other considerations and security of nuclear energetics must consider all the stages from producing fuel for nuclear power stations to processing of nuclear wastes.

The meet also resolved that the use of nuclear energy must be carried out under the fundamental principles of nuclear security and G-8 nations must consolidate their efforts to raise the level of nuclear security across the world.

Tarapore Nuclear Power station provides some of the states with the much-needed electricity.

Our Political Bureau  
NEW DELHI 27 SEPTEMBER

TIME WAS, when the Left leadership in India was accused of bringing out its umbrellas to protect itself from showers in Moscow.

And no, the Left parties do not have any surprise in store for the impending address by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, to a joint sitting of Parliament, scheduled for October 4.

In fact, there will be no repeats of the boycott called by the Left brigade leaders when United States President Bill Clinton had addressed the Parliament in March, this year. At that time, the Left leadership had chosen to absent themselves from the Parliament while he was giving his speech on the claim that he was in New Delhi to sell his imperialist wares.

The only roadblock for MPs from West Bengal and the eastern states in attending the address is that the Durga Puja begins on that very day.

This factor coupled with the ongoing floods and a heavy down-pour in both West Bengal and Bihar, does cast some doubts as to the attendance of MPs at Comrade



Putin: Friendly visitor

Putin's address.

Putin, on the other hand, is not going to bring up the issue of Left solidarity during his trip here, a fact that appears to have escaped the notice of the Left leadership.

Nonetheless, to ensure that there are only few absentees, if any, meetings of several standing committees have been scheduled both for October 3 and October 5 here.

~~The Economic Times~~

The Economic Times

28 SEP 2000

# Joshi's Moscow visit to boost scientific cooperation

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JULY 1.** The Minister for Human Resource Development, Science and Technology, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, is arriving in Moscow on Sunday to give a further boost to cooperation in science and technology between the two countries.

The first-ever visit of a HRD Minister in recent history, Dr. Joshi has a large agenda to cover during his week-long stay. He would inaugurate an Indo-Russian Centre for Advanced Computing Research in Moscow.

The Indo-Russian Centre for Advanced Computing Research, equipped with Param-9000 and

Param-10000 supercomputers, would engage in academic research and solicit commercial projects for Third World countries in weather forecasting and computer modelling in various areas.

Dr. Joshi would discuss the renewal of the Integrated Long-Term Programme (ILTP) for Indo-Russian cooperation in science and technology, initially signed in 1987 for a period till 2000. The ILTP, the world's largest bilateral cooperation arrangement, has seen over 100 joint scientific projects brought to fruition over the past 13 years. The new programme, to be signed during Mr. Putin's visit to India, was expected to lay greater emphasis on in-

dustrial applications of scientific research.

Dr. Joshi would also hold detailed discussions with the Russian Minister for Science and Technology, Mr. Alexander Dondukov, and the Minister for Education and HRD, Mr. Mikhail Filipov, meet leaders of the Russian Academy of Sciences, research institutions, deliver a lecture on "Sustainable Development" and travel to St. Petersburg.

A memorandum of understanding on cooperation with the Kurchatov Institute of Nuclear Research is expected to be signed during Dr. Joshi's visit.

THE HINDU

- 2 JUL 2000

## DEFENCE TIES WITH RUSSIA

HD-12

THE AGREEMENT REACHED between the Indian Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, and Mr. Igor Sergeev, Russian Deputy Prime Minister, for the upgradation of military and technical cooperation and the setting up of a joint commission at the Defence Ministry level is obviously aimed at further strengthening the existing relationship the origins of which date back to October 1962.

India took a major decision to seek defence cooperation with the erstwhile Soviet Union in 1962 soon after the Chinese attack on India and its outcome was the setting up of the Ojhar and Sonabeda Divisions of the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) for the manufacture of MiG airframes and engines. The anticipated signing of the contract for the supply of the aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov, and the Russian T-90S tanks is a clear indication that the defence relationship built up since 1962 has remained highly promising for both the countries. The proposed upgradation of the defence ties should, among other things, raise the quality of the existing military cooperation to higher levels.

The limitations which India has had to reckon with in respect of the manufacturing aspects of the military equipment, principally the MiG aircraft, are quite obvious. The restriction of the production of the aircraft to the number of squadrons required by the Indian Air Force rule out the setting up of units for the making of items such as forgings and castings since it would be highly uneconomical. Since the very heavy investments incurred on the MiG manufacturing units of the HAL make it imperative that their production is sustained and their technology continuously upgraded, uninterrupted supplies of the crucial raw material and components from Russia have to be ensured. Among the problems which India had to face even much before the crumbling of the Soviet Union were those arising from either the delays in the arrivals of the crucial items or their coming in wrong sequences. The problems

could become even more complicated in the event of a breakdown in the supplies of supporting items for defence equipment having to arrive from a third country. There was an instance of this when the erstwhile Yugoslavia could not honour a contract for the supply of 150 sets of Tank Fire Control Systems for T-55s valued at \$ 10.6 millions. The present state of the Russian economy may also raise questions about whether Moscow could keep up its contractual obligations for the supply of crucial equipment. The present Indo-Russian military and technical cooperation agreement should ensure that the MiG and other existing defence programmes are kept up and upgraded for keeping pace with advancing technology.

The larger policy issues relating to Indo-Russian defence cooperation are more complex. The close ties which New Delhi was building up with the Soviet Union during the Cold War left Washington very sceptical and suspicious about India's claims about its being non-aligned. If this did not disturb India very much as long as the Cold War lasted, the collapse of the Soviet Union was indeed unsettling. The disquiet felt in New Delhi over a possible eclipse of the special relationship it had built up with Moscow in post-communist Russia was hardly dispelled by a few high level Russian pronouncements. Such coldness, however, receded quickly and cordiality was soon restored because of Russia's realisation of India's geostrategic importance. While the change in the global scenario should definitely influence Russia's foreign policy, the one unchanging and even worsening situation unmistakably demonstrated by the Kargil intrusions is the threat India continues to face on its western borders. The defence ties now being strengthened with Russia will best serve India's interests if they could effectively dissuade Pakistan from resorting to its recurring wars of attrition against this country.

THE HINDU

6 JUL 2000

HPD-14  
97

# India, Russia sign pact on nuclear cooperation

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JULY 5.** India and Russia have entered into an agreement to expand their cooperation in nuclear physics. A MoU was signed in Moscow on Tuesday between the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India and Russia's leading nuclear research institute, the Kurchatov Centre. The three-year agreement, signed by the Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Prof. V.S. Ramamurthy, and the Kurchatov Centre director, Academician Yevgeny Velikhov, will be automatically renewed unless one of the sides decides otherwise.

The visiting Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Science and Technology and Ocean Development, Dr. M.M. Joshi, did not reveal details of the agreement, but said it provided for exchange visits by scientists and holding of joint seminars.

The agreement was signed two months after Russia eased restrictions on export of nuclear material and technologies, which should facilitate its possibilities for nuclear cooperation with other countries, including India, according to Russian officials.

Nuclear physics has thus become one of the thrust areas of Indo-Russia cooperation under the 13-year

Integrated Long-Term Programme (ILTP), which would be renewed for another 10 years when the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, visits India in October.

Other priority areas of bilateral cooperation identified during Dr. Joshi's visit are information technology and biotechnology. The HRD Minister inaugurated a Russian-Indian Centre for Computing Research, which will use India's latest PARAM 10000 supercomputer to develop software for research and industrial applications. The two countries are planning setting up a satellite link between the PARAM 10000 in Moscow and the same supercomputer at C-DAC in Pune.

The two countries will set up a biotechnology centre in India. A member of the Indian delegation described the two outfits as "centres of excellence", more of which are to be created in the framework of the ILTP programme.

Dr. Joshi described his visit to Russia as "very fruitful", expressing confidence that collaboration in S&T between the two countries will "further deepen". "Together we will be able to contribute to the development of technologies helpful for developing nations".

# INDO-SOVIET LEGACY

## Western Tilt Goes With Russian Goodwill

By HARI VASUDEVAN

MR Jaswant Singh's recent visit to the Russian Federation proceeded according to expectations. He discussed President Vladimir Putin's forthcoming visit to India and dealt with matters of military hardware and oil investments. Mr Vajpayee's envoy stressed India's concern with global terrorism and sought Russian cooperation. Mr Ivanov, his Russian counterpart, whose colleagues have been vocal about terrorism, gave his assurances. Elsewhere, Mr Singh took the opportunity to air his knowledge of "Indo-Russian friendship" — that vague phenomenon, "constructed" by CPI historians and Soviet Orientalists pre-1991.

The rhetoric of goodwill fell thick, as both sides linked the Soviet legacy of "friendship" to the present. Promises to trade better, and to organise joint enterprises were heard. Both sides know, however, that nothing can be done about these issues (except in the defence sector) until the Russian economy improves, or the Russian state is able to influence the economy more directly.

The discussions took place against the background of sound sense that the days of the phenomenon of Indo-Soviet *druzhiba* are long gone.

### MISSILE CONTROL

Mr Ivanov (and Mr Putin) were well aware that South Block is courting the United States — and they hardly disapprove since they are in the same business. Mr Singh was to go on to Warsaw, where he was to meet Madeline Albright, partly to prepare for the next US-India summit. It was certain that he would demonstrate the same cordiality to the US secretary as he had to Russian statesmen. Mr Putin has been determined to win the West to his regime since he succeeded Mr Yeltsin in April.

Significantly, Mr Singh chose to make a special gesture to his hosts during his visit. Not only did he restate India's disapproval of Nato's actions in Kosovo in 1999 Spring. He expressed India's agreement with Mr Putin on Russia's refusal to accept US alterations of the international missile control regime centred on ABM accords. Washington wishes to adapt the regime to permit US deployment of a "missile shield", which involves innovations which the Russians cannot afford. Given internal political instability in the federation, and Nato habits of encouraging Russian borderlands to pursue an independent course, Moscow is sensitive to new security initiatives in the West which may leave Russia's retaliatory potential at a disadvantage. Moreover, most Russian political, economic and international concessions of the past decade have been premised on a general moratorium on the deployment of new weapons systems. And Russia considers infringements of principle a serious breach of good faith.

For Mr Singh, the quarrel over missiles was an opportunity to assert India's own principles of arms control and peace initiatives. As in the case of nuclear non-proliferation, India regards Washington's alteration of international missile control regimes as an indication of its desire to set the

terms of arms control, irrespective of other opinions. At the time of India's assertion of her nuclearity at Rokhran in 1998, New Delhi criticised the US approach; the issue of the ABM was a further opportunity.

Why Mr Singh's chose Moscow for India's criticism of US policy, and why he tagged it to Russia's sentiments, is clear. It is not because Russia is India's "natural friend". Rather, it is clearly because Russia (for all her economic and political weaknesses) is the still-influential hub of schemes to pursue a non-unipolar international regime of institutions and accords in the world. Emerging centres of authority, such as

recent integration (with Azerbaijan) into the Council of Europe at Nato's insistence.

In Central Asia, though, a pro-Russian tilt is evident — in contrast with the situation in mid-1999. Last month, at a meeting of CIS states, Commonwealth leaders (and foremost among them Central Asian leaders) decided to set up a special anti-terrorist centre in Moscow for the CIS, to deal with groups active in the area. Most Central Asian states (except Turkmenistan) responded well to President Putin's ideas for a customs union. Moscow's military presence on the Tajik-Afghan frontier continues on its own terms, with the withdrawal this month of the 201st motorised infantry division and the transformation of Russian presence into a military base.

As Alan Kasayev, CIS editor for *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, recently pointed out, such presence is welcomed.

Events last year in Kyrgyzstan, in the Batkent region and neighbouring districts showed major activity by Islamic fundamentalists and Kyrgyz, Tajik and Uzbek troops could not control the situation. Extremists making t' out of Che



India and China, recognise this and will use it to their advantage. It also costs India little to be cordial to a power which is still a major supplier of her military hardware.

Important for the pursuit of Russian goodwill is the uncertain position of US and Nato in Central Asia — a region crucial to Russian geopolitical interests. This is partly the result of US ambivalence to the Taliban regime. Recent experience of belligerence in Afghanistan and Pakistan also shows that the West is not an effective military force here — that Russian action is still a crucial ingredient in what happens. True, in Inner Asia and Central Asia, the United States and Europe have crucial oil interests at stake. But to date, they remain strong outsiders. US and European use of hitmen in the region — among them Turkey, Pakistan and Uzbekistan — has fallen flat.

### RUSSIAN TILT

Since the appointment of Mr Putin as Russian Prime Minister and his election as President, the decline of Russian influence has abated. Euro-American investments in Central Asia has grown substantially in the past decade, but as a consequence of geographic location, and linguistic affinities, Russia is most able to assist existing regimes with matters of defence and internal order. Russian contributions, moreover, are reliable. For business is with the defence sector — over which the Kremlin has a strong grip, unlike other areas of commerce and production.

The former Soviet South itself is setting up the demand for enhanced Russian presence. This is not evident in the Caucasus, where Russians are in the process of a troop pull out from Georgia, whose President, Shevardnadze, has shown interest in Nato alignment. Geidar Aliev, President of Azerbaijan, although cordial towards Mr Putin at a CIS meeting in Moscow in June, speaks of Russia's preoccupations with its own interests, and its bias towards Armenia. Armenia remains a firm ally of the Russian Federation, but the significance of the allegiance is debatable — especially after its

Central Asia could situation more than according to Kasayev which has caused Central Asian capi

### INDEPENDENCE

An important changing attitude in Russia in the region of President Uzbekistan. Last month, Mr Putin distanced himself from the Nato-sponsored pact which is a Soviet South state alliance. He also signed the CIS. Following major events in his territory and an attempt by Karimov has seen cooperation with dealing with organisations. the need to build military forces, he announced an agreement with Russia, last training of US the military in Russian Federation ensure refurbishment of hardware in industrial com

For New Delhi concerned about Pakistan political affairs requires it to keep its options open in the Eurasian region, and build up a steady relationship with Russia. Given the general cordiality of Moscow's relations with Brussels and Washington, this does not automatically undermine India's pro-US initiatives.

To criticise US weapons' policy and to demonstrate goodwill to Russia, in the circumstances, is not only an assertion of national independence, which retains some value in the moral debates of post-Soviet global politics. It is also good geopolitical strategy. A fundamental question, though, remains whether India's economic integration within a Europe-US centred "globalised" economy on disadvantageous terms renders "national independence" merely rhetorical. Given India's economic policies, it remains debatable whether gestures such as Mr Singh's Moscow speech will ever be seen as more than an impotent "cocking a snook" at the West.

The author is Professor, Department of History, Calcutta University.

# Latvians freed, Bleach left out in the cold

Ashis Chakrabarti (Calcutta) and Avirook Sen,  
www.hindustantimes.com

At 10.20 this morning, an air conditioned jeep rolled out of Presidency Jail in Calcutta, carrying five Latvians sentenced to life imprisonment in the sensational Purulia Arms drop case to their freedom. One man who couldn't find place in the jeep was the Englishman Peter Bleach.

Bleach is now the lone accused in the case still in the custody of Indian authorities. The slippery Kim Davy — the alleged mastermind behind the arms rain on Purulia four years ago — has only been heard of since his getaway from Mumbai's Sahar airport on the night of Dec. 22, five days after the deed had been done.

But the curious part of the story is that with the departure of the Latvians, everybody but Bleach, who remains entangled in the Purulia mess, represents the Indian state.

The CBI, which filed the prosecution case, has been accused of giving false evidence and forgery. And the then joint secretary, MHA,

Shashi Prakash also faces legal proceedings for not registering an FIR on the case when he had prior information about the arms drop — an act that may have prevented the crime.

The HC had admitted petitions on March 6, that implicate the sessions judge, the CBI and the home ministry bureaucrat in a case of miscarriage of justice. A hearing is expected shortly.

#### ON PAGE 3

- Lawyers divided over presidential pardon
- Latvians dodge life term, head for the pool

#### ON PAGE 8

- Release linked to Putin's visit

But what happens to Bleach in the wake of the Presidential pardon for the Latvians? Bleach's lawyer S K Khanna argued that he had a stronger case for Bleach's release after the pardon granted to the Latvians.

"It's unprecedented. While the appeals of all five against their sentence were pending with the high court and while they had been denied bail, the Latvians' release would surely strengthen

Bleach's appeal against the life sentence." CBI lawyer Sisir Kumar Ghosh says Bleach's case for release has been strengthened following the presidential pardon granted to the five Latvians.

The Russians — with the personal intervention of Vladimir Putin — have pulled off a diplomatic coup with the release of the Latvians. The Latvians, who had argued all along that they were merely the hired crew of the AN-26 aircraft and knew nothing about the nefarious designs of Davy and co, took on Russian citizenship in order to get better diplomatic leverage.

But Bleach's case is far more sensitive. His defence that he was the one who tipped off Indian authorities about the arms drop hasn't cut much ice in India. And the British have adopted a hands off policy when it has come to him, amid speculation of the involvement of British intelligence agencies in the operation which stem from Bleach's previous experience in legitimate undercover work.

As the Latvians drove away this morning, Bleach was "both sad and happy", said his lawyer.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

23 JUL 2000



India asks Russia  
to enhance tea  
purchase

NEW DELHI, APRIL 30. India has asked Russia to enhance its purchase of tea and tobacco from the country for further trade development between the two nations.

As part of the development activities, India has proposed that a suitable mechanism be put in place for providing institutional credit to Russian importers of Indian tobacco, an official statement said today.

The issue of tea and tobacco exports to Russia was raised by the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Murasoli Maran, during his meeting with the Russian Minister of Trade, Mr. M.E. Fradkov last week.

Mr. Maran also took up the twin issues of duty differential on bulk tea and packaged tea in Russia which adversely affected the export of packaged tea to the country and certification of Indian tea in Russian markets.

Mr. Fradkov assured that the issue of duty differential was being looked into by the appropriate agency in Russia. It was indicated the Tea Board of India along with its counterpart in Russia would undertake joint certification of Indian tea in Russia and the Russian body for this purpose would be designated soon. — PTI

OFFICE

3 1 MAY

## INDO-RUSSIAN NAVAL COOPERATION

INDIA'S DECISION TO place orders with Russia for three battleships, the first of which would soon be joining the Indian Navy and christened *alwar*, makes it very clear that the crumbling of the Soviet Union during the Eighties has made no difference to the continuance of Indo-Russian cooperation in all areas including the crucial defence sector. It is true that the breakup of the Soviet Union and the collapse of communism had initially given rise to apprehensions that the special relationship which New Delhi had forged with Moscow during the Cold War would cease to be of any importance in Russia's refashioned global strategy. However, India's geostrategic closeness to Russia and the shared perceptions of the two countries, with their origins reaching back to anti-colonialism and imperialism, led quickly to the shedding of all doubts about sticking to the rationale of their further strengthening the close ties they had built up over more than four decades.

The end of the Cold War has done nothing which could reduce the importance of the Russian Navy's presence in the Indian Ocean region and of the support it could extend to countries such as India, though Britain and the United States might not have reconciled themselves to this. While the cordial relationship which has continued to exist between New Delhi and Moscow should wholly justify India's decision to seek frigates from Russia, it is worth recalling in this connection the cold response India had received from the U.S. in the early Sixties to its request for the loan of a few fleet class submarines and the acquisition of a few destroyers soon after the U.S. Navy had equipped Pakistan with one of its submarines which was renamed *Ghazi* and became a menacing presence to India on its coasts. The Johnson administration's advice was that India should make its request to Britain, its traditional supplier. Britain's response was even more

negative. It went to the extent of cancelling the deferred credit of Rs. 5 crores it had earlier offered to India for the purchase of an Oberon class submarine. This astonished even Lord Mountbatten who said that this would bring to an end the long-standing flow of British ships to India. Neither Washington nor London should, therefore, have reasons to be surprised — and much less to object — when the erstwhile Soviet Union readily agreed to build Foxtrot submarines for India to be delivered within two to three years for strengthening its relations with this country. Moscow kept its word by delivering as many as four submarines starting with *INS Kalvari* by 1968 to be based at Visakhapatnam. The present agreement is for the sale of frigates by Russia being built under a \$1 billion contract to be completed by 2003. It imparts a continuity to Indo-Russian naval cooperation which began in the Sixties. An earlier proposal for the purchase of two 877 EKM submarines from Russia was based on a modality of payments in stages. They were intended to replace the Foxtrot submarines, which became due for decommissioning, and maintain the levels of submarine presence in the Indian Navy.

The induction of Russian ships into the Indian Navy had no doubt thrown up a few problems arising from the distinct features of the earlier class of submarines relating to long range sonar, hull design and under-water manoeuvrability but these have since been overcome. India has also drawn the attention of the Russians to their nuclear submarines having to be far less noisy to avoid detection by the more advanced NATO submarines on the prowl in the Indian Ocean. Russia's response to such suggestions should hopefully be more positive than India could have expected from the erstwhile Soviet Union which might not have taken kindly to what would have sounded as aspersions on the quality of its production.

THE HINDU

THE HINDU

10 MAY 1991

# Back to the future

By J.N. DIXIT

HT-13  
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**I**T WAS announced on April 29 that Russian President Vladimir Putin will come on a state visit to India during the first ten days of October. The announcement was made at the conclusion of three days of discussions between Sergei Ivanov, Secretary of the Security Council of Russia, and India's National Security Advisor, Brajesh Mishra, on April 28. India-Russia relations seemed to be completing the full circle from distances to convergences, cutting through the shifting orientations between 1991 and now.

The Soviet Union had ceased to exist in December 1991. India anticipated the inevitable changes in Russian policies towards India in the context of the political undercurrents which led to the break-up of the Soviet Union. I recall a conversation which I had in March 1992 with the then Russian Vice-Foreign Minister Kunatze about the terms on which Indo-Russian relations would be refashioned. I was leading the Indian delegation for Foreign Secretaries' level talks.

At the opening session of this meeting, Mr Kunatze told me that India should recognise that the Russian Federation is not the Soviet Union; that Russia was a successor state to the Soviet Union; Russia has a new identity; it has a new status and new interests. He went on to say that Russian foreign policy will have new orientations and that it would not have any linkages with the Soviet Union's ideology or its worldview.

Russia would have a matter-of-fact, Russo-centric, down-to-earth approach in structuring its relations with different countries in the framework of the post-Cold War scenario. He elaborated that Russia's external focus would be Euro-centric in priorities due to both political and economic reasons. Given the detente with the United States and return to normal relations with China, India's importance in foreign policy and security strategies of Russia would not be what it was during the Cold War.

Despite India's dependence on defence supplies and certain categories of technologies on the Soviet Union, India was not taken by surprise. Nor was India afflicted by foreign policy concerns because of the Russian policy stances articulated in the early Nineties. This Russian attitude suited India also, which was diversifying its external relations, seeking to establish new and substantive linkages with the US and Western democracies, with Israel and with Asean countries while at the same time normalising relations with China.

Mr Kozirov, the Russian Foreign Minister during

the early Nineties, and Vice Minister Kunatze did not attach much importance to relations with India. It is only when Mr Primakov became the Foreign Minister, and then Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, that Russia recast its strategic vision in the context of its experiences during the first half of the Nineties. The expected economic and technological assistance to Russia from Western democracies did not come.

While the former East European satellites broke away from the Russian connection, the US followed a conscious policy of getting more important East European countries integrated with its European political and security systems. The American economic and diplomatic inroads into the former Central Asian Republics of the Soviet Union also bothered Russia.

The revised renewal of the US-Japan Security Treaty in the second half of the Nineties and the plans of the US and Japan to collaborate on the Theatre Missile Defence in the north-central portions of the Western Pacific generated strategic apprehensions in the Russian power structure. Mr Primakov, during his visit to India in December 1997, even talked about the revival of strategic understanding between India, Russia and China, to counter trends towards a unipolar, US-dominated world order. The Chinese rejected the idea straightaway and the Yeltsin government moved back from the suggestion, saying that this was just a formal speculative exercise.

Contradictory trends in US-Russia relations, problems affecting their bilateral negotiations on Strategic Arms Control and the assertive and intrusive internationalism, characterising foreign policies of the Western democracies led by the US was one factor leading to the re-casting of foreign policy and strategic considerations of the Russian Federation. The second factor is the personal and professional inclinations of new Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Mr Putin is not happy about the marginalisation of the Russian Federation in world affairs. He is nationalistic and desirous of reviving the Russian

Federation's position as an important power in world international relations. He is opposed to any overwhelming US domination of the international situation and therefore believes in structuring strategic understanding with important powers in different parts of the world, particularly in the Eurasian land mass, to counter this prospect.

The visit of Ivanov, the Secretary of the Russian National Security Council, to India is an initiative transmuting Mr Putin's policy stance into a political and strategic initiative. Mr Ivanov reached New Delhi on April 25, accompanied by a large delegation of vice ministers and senior officials from the National Security Council, their foreign office and economic ministries. He reached New Delhi just four days after the Russian Federation adopted a new National Security Doctrine.

Mr Putin is in the process of defining Russia's new strategic posture early in his tenure. He indicated that articulating these new strategic postures through this doctrine is the remedy to drift and uncertainties of the last ten years. The main elements in the new doctrine are: Mr Putin discarding Mikhail Gorbachev's pledge of the Soviet Union adhering to the No First Use of nuclear weapons commitment; and the declaration that Russia will take steps to increase strategic cooperation with Asian countries, namely, with India, China to counter growing tendencies towards a mono-polar world led by the US.

Two members of the Ivanov delegation which was in India indicated Russian interest in substantive political and defence cooperation. Illiya Klebanov, Co-Chairman of the Indo-Russia working group on military technical cooperation, and Trade Minister Mikhail Fradkov were part of the delegation. Brajesh Mishra and Ivanov completed their discussions on April 28.

They signed an umbrella protocol on security and political cooperation between India and the Russian Federation. The protocol provides for apex-level regular institutional discussions between national security establishments of the two coun-



tries. It was also agreed that sub-groups and joint coordination groups would be formed within the framework of this protocol to deal with problems of national security, international terrorism, drug trafficking, separatism and secessionist movements.

The announcement at the end of the Mishra-Ivanov discussions stated that President Putin's visit to India would be aimed at establishing a strategic partnership for promoting regional stability and shore up bilateral economic relationship. A number of crucial agreements on defence supplies and cooperations were also signed during the visit to enable India to obtain sophisticated armour (T-90 tanks) and heavy artillery ammunition. Negotiations have also progressed for India to take on lease air-borne warning and control system planes from the Russian Federation for short periods.

The distance and drift in Indo-Russian relations which characterised the Nineties is about to change. These relations are poised for substantive and long-term revival. Macro-level strategic understanding between India, China and Russia will depend on the level to which Sino-Indian relations can be normalised and the extent to which the Chinese would like to participate in such an arrangement in the context of their concerns about Japan and the US.

Gradual restoration of Indo-Russian relations to the levels which existed between India and the Soviet Union is a strategically desirable long-term objective. While forging such an equation with Russia, India has to calibrate its relations with the US and China in a manner where India retains her independent position and freedom of options in dealing with the US, China and Russia.

The long-term predication on which India should structure relations with Russian Federation is that if Russia re-consolidates itself and becomes stable politically and economically, it will remain endowed with nearly 70 per cent of the resources, man-power and technological capacities of the former Soviet Union. Russia's demographic and geo-territorial characteristics make it a power to reckon with in Eurasian land mass.

As far as India is concerned, Russia has an interest in balancing the influence of the US and extremist Islamic nations in the Asian region. Ivanov's visit affirms that on this objective Russian and Indian interests converge. The revival of Indo-Russian connections is based on this convergence of long-term interests of both the countries.

# India is our trusted partner, says Russia

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, MAY 24.** India being Russia's strategic partner, there can be no arms supplies to Pakistan, the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, said on Wednesday.

Mr. Klebanov, who oversees defence industry and arms trade, said India was Russia's "Strategic Partner with capital letters".

"India is a very serious and trusted strategic partner and by virtue of this all military contacts with Pakistan are frozen," he told reporters in Moscow.

Mr. Klebanov described the acquisition by India of the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier as the most important arms deal in the

pipeline. "It's a mammoth deal, it will be practically a new aircraft carrier," he added.

Mr. Klebanov said a time frame for signing various contracts for refitting the Admiral Gorshkov would be finalised in the next few days. The overhauled aircraft carrier will be fitted with a new ski-jump takeoff and will be capable of carrying 24 MiG-29K fighters and six helicopters armed with the latest Russian missiles.

Mr. Klebanov, who visited India last month, said his talks in New Delhi centred on strategic directions of military-technical cooperation between the two countries in the light of India's plans for modernising its armed forces.

25 MAY 2000

## Putin amends decree to expand N-co-operation

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin has amended a decree signed by his predecessor Boris Yeltsin in 1992, in a bid to expand Russia's nuclear cooperation with India, official sources said here.

In his decree, signed on May 7, immediately after taking oath of office, Mr Putin, without particularly naming India, has allowed the export of Russian nuclear technology and materials in "exceptional cases" to countries, which are neither nuclear weapon states (NWS) nor have put their nuclear activities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

However, the receiving country would have to provide firm guarantees that the Russian technology will not be used for developing a nuclear explosive device, sources said.

According to the spokesman of the Russian atomic energy ministry, Yuri Bepalko, the decree expands scope for Russia's nuclear technology and equipment exports to foreign countries, and

Mr Putin had India in mind while signing it. When asked to clarify that since India considers itself a nuclear weapon state, how this decree could be beneficial to New Delhi, Kremlin sources said that Moscow was guided by the definition of NWS as given by IAEA, which gives this status to countries which had exploded their nuclear devices by January 1967.

However, Indian diplomatic sources in Moscow were not willing to make any comment till the full-text of the decree was published in the official media, though it has already been pasted on the Kremlin website.

The Yeltsin decree of March 27, 1992 was based on an agreement by the nuclear suppliers group of five official nuclear powers to check nuclear proliferation. It banned export of nuclear technology, equipment, fissile and other materials to nations which had not opened their nuclear programmes for IAEA control. (Agencies)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

15 MAY 2001

# 'Though there are problems in trade, there shouldn't be any cynicism about Indo-Russian ties'

## EXPRESS FOCUS

AS a new President takes charge in Moscow, Russian Ambassador to India, Alexander M. Kadakin, talks about the future of Indo-Russian relations and the declaration of strategic partnership that is expected to give a new direction to the relationship. Excerpts from an interview with SAURABH SHUKLA:

**■ What is the perception of India in Russia, does it still have a special place?**

India knows that every leader in Russia and the Russian people have a soft corner for India and this is especially true for President Putin. He has said in his autobiography that if he had lots of money he would have toured India. Besides, when he worked in St Petersburg, he was the closest friend of the Indian consul general. So in Putin, you have an old Indian hand keen to have a warm relationship with India. He never had the money to tour it earlier, but now he will tour it as supreme leader of Russia. His visit will bring new dynamism to

## INTERVIEW

Russia-India cooperation.

**■ Is there any concrete plan to give a new direction to Indo-Russian relations?**

When Putin comes here, he will sign a declaration of strategic partnership with Prime Minister Vajpayee. The declaration is ready and has been lying for about ten months. Now our relationship will get a new boost and new direction.

Our strategic cooperation is in practice not only in words or in politics but in things such as military cooperation, military supplies in trade, in scientific and cultural relations.

**■ Do you expect any shift in the Indo-Russian relationship in the changed global scenario?**

We feel that the future of Indo-Russian relations is bright and will remain so. Our relationship is deep-rooted in history and popular tradition.

**■ What kind of cooperation do you envisage in the nuclear and military fields?**

We are now talking with India about building Koodamkulam nuclear power station, work for which has al-

**Our position is similar to the American position (on CTBT). However, there is some difference — we are not pressurising and not shouting about it at every corner of the world about it.**

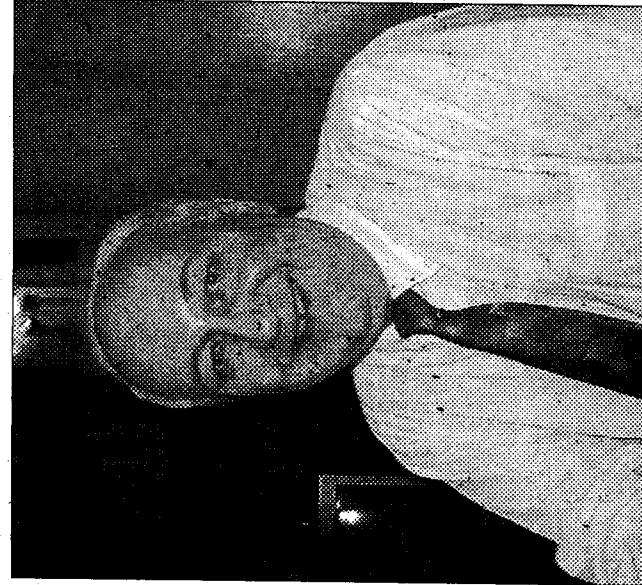
ready begun. We are still negotiating on the carrier Groshkov, I heard that you liked our T-90 tanks that were tested in the Rajasthan desert.

**■ When do you think is the visit likely?**

to happen? The President's inauguration is on May 5, then there will be about two weeks for government formation. His schedule for India can be worked out from June onwards, any time depending on the convenience of the two countries.

**■ What does Russia feel about the fact that Indo-US relations are warming up and New Delhi is making efforts to engage Washington?**

It will not affect the Indo-Russian relationship, Russian-Indian relations have an independent nature and they have been developing quite smoothly for decades in spite of India's relationship with any great power, whether it is US, Britain, France or China. It is only natural when one global country has a dialogue for a better understanding (with another). We are also seeking



better understanding with the United States like India.

**■ What does Moscow feel about New Delhi's stand on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty?**

We would be happy if India signs the CTBT, and our view is that India will do a great service to the cause of non-proliferation if they sign the CTBT. We are well aware of India's concerns and India knows our position well, our position is similar to the American position. However, there is some difference ever, there is some difference — we are not pressurising and not shouting about it at every corner of the world about it.

**■ Economic aid at one time was the cornerstone for the Indo-Soviet ties, but now it seems there are some differences as Russia is busy getting its own economic situation in order?**

A: There shouldn't be any cynicism about our ties, there are problems in trade but they are not problems from our side. They are problems from the Indian side, our Indian friends are not as active as people from the West in entering our markets. A businessman in India still thinks that Russia is ruled by the polit-

bureau, and if politbureau takes a decision to import 5 million sweaters from Ludhiana this must be done. This is not the case now, though it was there in the past.

Indian business should be more enterprising, it shouldn't be just sell-and-buy, but they should invest in Russia in joint projects, and Russia should invest here. This is where the future lies.

**■ What is the Russian stand on Kashmir and Pakistani involvement in cross border terrorism?**

Our stand on Kashmir has been consistent for more than five decades now, it should be solved peacefully and bilaterally between the two countries and not on the battlefield in the spirit of Shimla and Lahore. Our view is that Pakistan is initiating international terrorism, even those fighting in Chechnya came from Afghanistan and even Pakistan with the full knowledge of Pakistani government. We understand that India is facing a similar problem in Kashmir and in other parts, and we support all Indian initiatives in fighting international terrorism.

# IAF acquires two Russian 'spy' in the sky

Shishir Gupta  
New Delhi, April 5

INDIA'S ASPIRATIONS of having a truly strategic air force took a leap this week with the arrival of two Russian A-50 airborne early warning and control systems (AWACS) here. The systems have possibly been acquired on lease.

Highly-placed Government sources said the two AWACS, mounted on an IL-76 M platform, are presently stationed at Chandigarh air base for a pre-induction extended trial and demonstration. It is learnt that a Russian crew has also arrived here to give Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots the first-hand experience of how to handle these "force multipliers".

The AWACS or "eye in the sky" is basically used to detect low flying aircraft, cruise missiles

and direct fighter operations in war. These aircraft are used to strengthen the observation grid and are also used for extended range surveillance purposes.

IAF had been looking for leasing AWACS ever since the Defence Research and Development Organisation's bid to build it indigenously turned out to be a fiasco with one of its prototype — essentially a rotordome mounted on an AVRO platform — crashing at Rajaji Naval base near Chennai last year.

Defence analysts say that with the arrival of AWACS and IL-78 refuellers in the pipeline, the IAF is all set to beef up its air domination capabilities. With the IAF having long-range operational capabilities, an adversary will think twice before enacting a Kandahar again. The A-50 AWACS, according to Russian claims, matches the capability of US Boeing E-3C

Hawkeye.

Russia had offered India AWACS and a host of other military aircraft under a 10-year protocol signed in Moscow, last December. These issues were discussed during the visit of Russian Vice Premier Iliya Klebanov to India last year.

The need for an AWACS was sorely felt by the Indian armed forces during the Kargil war as the domination of tactical battle zone (covering a 10 km circumference in the mountains and 40 km in the plains) could not be achieved. The IAF was forced to use Cheetah helicopters, vulnerable to Stinger missiles, as forward air controllers in order to direct bombers and strike aircraft to their targets and the Indian artillery could not map the Pakistani guns.

Interestingly, the Chinese air force has contracted with the Israel Aircraft Industry for the supply of four A-50 I AWACS.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 APR

## **Putin endorses extradition <sup>40-13</sup> treaty with India**

**MOSCOW, APRIL 9** The Acting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, today endorsed the Indo-Russian Extradition Treaty and pact on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, *Istar-tass* news agency reported.

The agreements had been unanimously ratified by the two chambers of the Russian Parliament.

Following this, Mr. Putin, in accordance with the Russian Constitution, signed two federal laws today to enforce the crime combating treaties signed with India in New Delhi on December 21, 1998 during the then Premier, Mr. Yevgeny Primakov's visit.—PTI

10 APR 2000



## '3-D mechanism' for Indo-Russian ties

NEW DELHI and Moscow are to set up a '3-D' mechanism to implement their 'strategic partnership' during the Indo-Russian summit to be held next month when President Vladimir Putin visits India, sources here said. **11/9**

Besides signing the 'strategic partnership' declaration and 7-8 bilateral documents, leaders of the two countries are also expected to sign an agreement on creating a mechanism for "dialogue, discussion and quick decision" for prompt resolution of various issues, sources said without divulging any details. However, no new arms deals are to be signed during President Putin's four-day visit to India from October 2.

PTI, Moscow

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

11 SEP 2000

# Joint training programme on with Russian Air Force

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, April 12. — Specialists of the IAF have begun to get a "feel" of how Airborne Warning and Control Stations enhance the delivery of air power with the commencement of a joint-training programme with the Russian air force using an A-50 aircraft. The Russian AWAC arrived at the Chandigarh air base a

few days ago and the four-week effort involves over 50 IAF pilots, radar operators, fighter controllers, and overall commanders. Operating in teams, they will be learning, and gaining "hands on" experience in the force-multiplier effect that an AWAC provides.

The action in Chandigarh is more than an exposure. AWACs are high on the IAF's "wish list" and it is not insignificant that

the aircraft deployed on the exercise has been configured with Israeli avionics — which the IAF is favouring in its electronics-upgrade programme.

The IAF had long ago projected a requirement for at least two AWACs, and with the virtual collapse of an indigenous development programme, Russia would be the most obvious supplier. A lease arrangement has also been suggested. Since the A-

50 is based on the IL-76 (which the IAF uses as a heavy transport), basic flying and maintenance skills are available.

Apart from AWACS, the IAF is also keen on acquiring similar aircraft modified as airborne tankers so that it acquires air-to-air refuelling capabilities which also contribute to extracting more "punch" from the existing fleet of combat aeroplanes.

THE STATESMAN

13 APR 2000

## ENVOY PLEADS FOR COMPASSION

# 'Harm to Latvians may threaten Indo-Russian ties'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CALCUTTA, April 14. — Any harm to the five Latvians found guilty in the Purulia armsdrop case might threaten India's relationship with Russia, the Russian ambassador to India said after meeting the Latvians at Presidency Correctional Home today.

The five Latvians and Briton Peter Bleach have been sentenced for life.

Mr Alexander M Kadakin stayed with Igor Moskvitin, Oleg Gaidach, Alexander Klichin, Igor Timmerman and Evgueny Antimenko in their cell for over an hour, discussing the possible support the Russian government can give them.

The judicial process had taken considerable time, the Russian ambassador said and urged the authorities to speed up the next phase — whether in the Supreme Court or High Court.

Though he pleaded for mercy and compassion for the Latvians, he clarified that he had no intention to interfere in the process. He said the men did not know what they were throwing from the aircraft. "God has forced them much suffering," he said referring to the Latvians' deteriorating health.

Mr Kadakin said the five families have been writing regularly to the Russian government for help, and Russia was giving all consular support to the prisoners. The Consul General in the city has been asked to provide all legal assistance to them. The consulate doctor, too, visits them twice a week.

"Their condition is appalling, though none has complained about the jail condition", Mr Kadakin said. Moskvitin is suffering from TB, and Anitmenko has had two heart attacks.

Mr Kadakin said that "Every life was important for new Russia and particularly the lives of the five Latavians are of much value. We have been under great pressure from the parliament and the media in our country to ensure their release."

The Latvians, he said, were hoping for a generous outlook from the government. The ambassador said he had been assured by the external affairs ministry that it would look into the matter, once the trial is over.

STATESMAN

15 APR 20

# Putin ratifies extradition treaty with India

## Agreement aims at combating terrorism

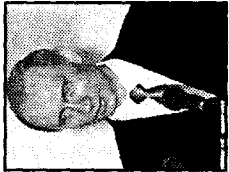
Moscow, April 15

IN HIS first major international initiative after winning the Russian presidential polls, President-elect Vladimir Putin has ratified an extradition treaty with India aimed at curbing terrorism. Mr Putin signed the treaty yesterday, *Voice of Russia* reported.

This is the first time that the two long-time allies have entered into such an agreement. India had ratified the treaty earlier, and Russia's action comes at a time when five Latvian pilots convicted in the Purulia arms drop case are serving life terms in India.

In its commentary, *Voice of Russia* said Moscow hoped that mercy would be shown on the pilots, but did not say whether Russia would seek their extradition under the treaty. "We hope the Russian pilots will be granted mercy at the highest level in India, an indication of which was given to Duma Speaker Gennady Seleznev during his meeting with top leaders in Delhi recently," the commentator said.

Incidentally, Moscow Radio lauded the independence of the judiciary in India. The judiciary, it said, is



Vladimir Putin

absolutely independent of the executive.

Mr Putin also signed another document on mutual assistance between the two countries in carrying out investigations into criminal activities of their citizens 'in each others' territory. Though nothing big happens, some minor offences involving small-time operators of both countries do crop up from time to time, Mr Georgy Varentsov, the political commentator of Moscow Radio said.

**Arms exports:** Russia will become the world's second biggest arms exporter after the United States within "two or three years", according to Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov. "At the moment, we are in fourth place after the US, Britain and France," Klebanov said yesterday on his return from Malaysia, where he attended an international arms show.

Klebanov ruled out Russia regaining the top spot, once held by the Soviet Union, but reaffirmed his January prediction that "arms exports will bring the country \$ 4.3 billion". "Our target for next year is \$ 5 billion," Interfax quoted Klebanov as saying in an interview to be published today by the *Kommersant* daily. "It is a large sum, and if we continue doing as well as we have, we will rank as the world's second arms exporter after the US in two or three years," Klebanov added.

(Agencies)

16 APR 2001

## Russia for close ties with India

MOSCOW: Russia is committed to its close relationship with India and would exploit the whole potential of the ties to strengthen the regional security in Asia, a senior Kremlin official said on Thursday. <sup>(M-A)</sup>

"Russia is committed to the close relations with India... And will exploit the whole potential of the relationship in strengthening regional security in Asia," secretary of the Russian Security Council Sergei Ivanov told the XI general assembly session of the organisation of *Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA)* here.

Mr. Ivanov also named India among the 'power centres' in Asia along with US, Russia, China, Japan and ASEAN and said in post-Yeltsin era Moscow will adopt a 'balanced' approach in interacting with each of them. "Multipolarity is not the remedy for Asia, which is already multipolar," Ivanov said justifying Russia's concept of a 'balanced approach' with each of the 'power centres'. (P77)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

21 APR 2000

# India shops for \$3 b military equipment from Russia

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, April 25. — Final negotiations with Russia for the purchase of military equipment valued at \$3 billion (Rs 13,000 crore) begins tomorrow with the arrival of Mr Ilya Klebanov, Russian Deputy Prime Minister in-charge of defence.

Preliminary negotiations for the purchase of an aircraft carrier, 40 MiG-29 K naval fighter-bombers and six trainers, four TU-22 reconnaissance-cum-attack aircraft, around 300 tanks and two eyes in the sky — AWACS aircraft — have already started after a junior Russian minister reached here today, defence ministry officials said.

The Russians are expected to sign an intent-to-purchase agreement with India during Mr Klebanov's visit. The final deal may be signed during the Russian President Mr Vladimir Putin's scheduled visit later this year. Payment for the deals is likely to be made in long-term instalments — perhaps over 10 years.

The Russians clearly mean business as they have slashed the price of the Admiral Gorshkov — the 40,000 ton aircraft carrier — from \$1 billion to \$734 million. The carrier was actually

offered free and \$1 billion charged for for refurbishing and fitting new equipment.

To go with the carrier, Russia offered the MiG-29 K or the Sukhoi-33. The Indian Navy chose the former, quoted at Rs 120 crore each. Defence ministry officials hope to bring down the figure by 20-25 per cent as negotiations have just begun. The big acquisition will be the TU-22 aircraft for reconnaissance.

The deal for the T-90 tanks is also through and the Indian price-negotiation committee — headed by the army deputy chief Lt-Gen SS Mehta — has reached a settlement. The initial talk was for 300 tanks and spares at about Rs 4,500 crore.

The Army pushed for the tank but the deal was deferred after former Prime Minister, Mr HD Deve Gowda, said the tank was purchased without summer trials and instead, spoke for the cheaper T-72S. The summer trials were conducted successfully, Army officials said.

The Air Force also benefits from this deal. Negotiations for AWACS are going on and the IAF, which has already leased one, hopes to get two and follow it up with a transfer of technology. Russia is particularly keen that the deals are signed as they need the foreign exchange, the Rupee-Rouble exchange having ended with the fall of the Soviet Union.

STATESMAN

STATESMAN

26 APR 1991

# India, Russia to chalk out plan to bust terrorism

28/4

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, APRIL 27.** India and Russia are getting ready to formalise interaction between their national security establishments to counter international terrorism spreading across the strategic arc extending from Afghanistan to Chechnya.

The first ever visit to India by the head of the Russian National Security Council, Mr. Sergei Ivanov, will see both sides on Friday signing a protocol regularising exchanges between their national security councils.

In a press statement, Mr. Ivanov pointed out that the security councils of the two countries will now regularly analyse the "military-political" situation in South and Central Asia, including ways to combat the scourge of terrorism which has infected this zone. On Central Asia, it is likely that they will discuss ways to tackle the possibility of a combined terrorist onslaught involving Uzbek dissident groups and elements of the Pakistan-backed Taliban on the Central Asian Republic of Uzbekistan from Kandahar in Afghanistan.

According to sources, Uzbekistan is the key to the spread of terrorism across Central Asia

because of its geographic location. Uzbekistan's "pivotal" location is evident as it shares common borders with all its other Central Asian neighbours — Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan.

Russia feels that containment of terrorism in Central Asia is vital for its security. Moscow is keen that insurgency in the Caucasus revolving around Chechnya is kept separated from the insurgent rumblings in Central Asia. India, on its part, is keen to keep Central Asia sanitised as extremism in this region will affect its security interests in Kashmir.

Aware of the threat from terrorism and the need for combating it collectively, Russia is establishing a counter-terrorism center which includes former Soviet Republics as members. Besides, it is holding joint exercises with its Central Asian neighbours on counter-terrorism.

According to Mr. Ivanov, both countries will now compare their "strategic doctrines", hold regular consultations and expand interaction between their security specialists.

Mr. Ivanov's visit is also likely to see both sides finalising military hardware deals. Not surprisingly, Mr. Ivanov is accompanied by

the Russian Vice-Premier, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, who is in charge of overseas military-technical cooperation. The delegation also includes Mr. Alexi Ogarev, who heads the Russian arms trading house, Roosouverezhenie.

The two countries are currently negotiating the purchase of around 300 T-90 tanks, air-to-air refuelers and the Aircraft Carrier, Admiral Gorshkov. Diplomatic sources point out that the T-90 deal is likely to be wrapped up quickly.

Mr. Ivanov's trip is likely to pave the way for an early visit to India by the newly-elected Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin. "Active preparations" for the summit are under way. The two countries during this visit are likely to sign a key document formalising a "strategic partnership" between New Delhi and Moscow.

Mr. Ivanov today held extensive discussions with his Indian counterpart, Mr. Brajesh Mishra. He will also call on the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, and hold talks with the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, tomorrow.

## PROTOCOL ON DEFENCE TIE-UP

# Putin coming in Oct. to seal strategic link

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, APRIL 28.** The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, will visit India in "the first 10 days" of October to establish a strategic partnership for promoting regional stability and shoring up the bilateral economic relationship.

Mr. Putin's visit is being preceded by a revamp of the Indo-Russian institutional framework in the political field. The two sides today signed a protocol which will, for the first time, establish a direct apex link between their security establishments.

Unlike in the past, when the relationship revolved around close inter-ministerial contacts, the new arrangement will bring the security advisers of the two Heads of Government into regular contact. The protocol on the Indian side was signed by the National Security Adviser and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra. The visiting Secretary of the Russian National Security Council, Mr. Sergei Ivanov, signed the protocol on behalf of his government. This pact is expected to be formalised into an agreement during Mr. Putin's visit. The two sides also agreed to form sub-groups to tackle the menace of international terrorism, arms and drug trafficking and separatism.

The "Joint Coordination Groups" were formed within the framework of the Indo-Russian protocol on cooperation. A Foreign Office press statement said the two bodies would also look at the economic, legal and ecological dimensions of security.

Mr. Ivanov handed over a letter from the Russian President to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. According to the statement, the letter talks about the



**Mr. Brajesh Mishra, Security Adviser to the Prime Minister, with Mr. Sergei Ivanov, Secretary, Security Council of Russia, after signing an agreement in New Delhi on Friday.** — Photo: Anu Pushkarna

importance of Indo-Russian relations for stability and security in Asia and the world. It also calls for cooperation in combating international terrorism, drug trafficking, religious and political extremism.

Mr. Mishra, who along with Mr. Ivanov interacted with mediapersons after the signing ceremony, was cautious in his comments. According to him, the new arrangement was part of a web of institutional contacts between New Delhi and Moscow. Mr. Ivanov, on his part, said the new link was an important element in the overall framework of Indo-Russian contacts for encouraging "strategic stability" in the world.

On Thursday Mr. Ivanov had said the two countries under the new framework would jointly analyse their "strategic doc-

trines", ways to counter international terrorism in the region and expand interaction between security specialists.

India and Russia have come closer to finalising crucial military hardware deals. Russia's Vice-Minister in charge of military hardware exports, Mr. Ilya Klebanov, who is accompanying Mr. Ivanov, held detailed discussions with officials in the Defence Ministry. India is keen on buying 300 T-90 tanks as part of its post-Kargil modernisation plan.

The two countries also signed an agreement for the transfer of Krasnopol precision-guided shells for the Bofors howitzers. Russia has also sent its Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) planes to India on a short-duration lease.



# India, Russia discuss trade

10-17

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, APRIL 28.** India has raised many trade issues with the Russian Federation, including the installation of a suitable mechanism for providing institutional credit to Russian importers of Indian tobacco.

The other issues that figured during a meeting between the Commerce and Industry Minister, Mr. Murasoli Maran, and the visiting Russian Minister for Trade, Mr. M. F. Fradkov, here today include exports of Indian tea, duty differential on packaged and bulk tea, a possible shorter transportation route for bilateral trade and possible sale of civilian aircraft and helicopters by Russia to India.

During the meeting, Mr. Maran proposed a mechanism for providing institutional credit to Russian importers of Indian tobacco and the Russian side agreed to that. Details of the mechanism were to be worked out soon. Mr. Maran also brought up the twin issue of duty differential on bulk tea and packaged tea in Russia and certification of Indian tea in the Russian market.

Mr. Fradkov said the issue of duty differential was being looked into by an appropriate authority in Russia. On the issue of certification of Indian tea, it

was indicated that the Tea Board of India along with its counterpart Russian body would undertake joint certification of Indian tea in Russia and the Russian body would be designated soon.

From the Russian side, a proposal was made for a new trade route through Iran, the Caspian Sea and Astar Khan which would be shorter than the traditional route. Mr. Maran agreed that such a route would be more economical in facilitating trade and felt that the proposal could be followed up.

Mr. Fradkov also mentioned the Russian interest in the sale of civilian aircraft and helicopters to India and expressed concern over anti-dumping investigations in India on some Russian products. The Indian side pointed out that a mechanism had been put in place for holding consultations between the industry of two countries in this regard.

Indo-Russian trade stood at Rs. 5,558 crores in 1998-99. During the current financial year, data available up to December 1999 showed there was a positive trend with exports from India to Russia increasing by over 45 per cent to Rs. 3,163 crores against Rs. 2,178 crores during the corresponding period of last year while imports from Russia increased by 20 per cent to Rs. 2,081 crores from Rs. 1,731 crores in the same period of the previous year.

29 APR 2000

# Putin visit: Bid to end diplomatic drift

Fred Weir  
Moscow, April 28

**R**USSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin's decision to visit India this October is a clear move to restore the priority of Russian-Indian relations after a decade of disarray and drift, experts say.

"A visit to India at highest level has been planned for several years, but always postponed for certain reasons," says Tatiana Shaumian, deputy head of the Centre for Indian Studies, a semi-official think tank, in Moscow.

"Now the fact that a newly-elected Russian President has made a point of scheduling a summit in Delhi as one of his early decisions demonstrates that he wants to restore the traditional close, regular and warm relationship with India".

The Kremlin announced on

Friday that Mr Putin would visit India in October, probably in the early part of the month.

"Putin pays serious attention to developing Russian-Indian relations," said Russian National Security Council chief Sergei Ivanov, who was visiting Delhi this week.

"Our country pays great attention to the forthcoming summit".

At the top of the agenda is the signing of a long delayed declaration on strategic partnership between the two countries. "This declaration has been ready for signing for a long time, but it fell victim to the lack of focus on the Russian side in recent years," says Ms Shaumian.

She is referring to the lethargy of former President Boris Yeltsin's



Quadr. Linn

last term, in which an ailing President, corruption scandals and constant Kremlin power struggles kept the country from following any consistent path in foreign or domestic policy.

Global events, such as the Western military alliance's attack on Yugoslavia, have underlined the need for closer cooperation between countries that lie outside the US-led bloc.

Russia and India also share a common position on domestic threats of separatism and terrorism.

"Russia has been very satisfied with the Indian position on many things," says Ms Shaumian.

She says Moscow was particularly pleased that India voted against a Western-sponsored resolution to

Nations Human Rights Commission for its military campaign against the breakaway region of Chechnya.

Military cooperation between Russia and India has remained an important mainstay of relations, but trade in other spheres languished during the Yeltsin years.

"There is so much potential for increased trade," says Ms Shaumian. "India has become a major exporter of software and high-tech products that Russia desperately needs".

She says that Mr Putin's visit will clear away some political logjams at the highest levels, but also give impetus to grassroots developments that are already underway.

"Few people know that direct relations are already developing between Russian and Indian regions. This is a new area of relations for our two countries, with big growth potential, she said."

# India, Russia join hands against terrorist forces

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

INDIA announced on Friday that Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit the country in October this year and signed with Moscow a protocol to enhance cooperation in defence and to fight international terrorism and religious extremism. Putin will be visiting India in the first ten days of October this year when he and Prime Minister A B Vajpayee will sign a joint declaration on strategic partnership, National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra told reporters here.

"We are looking forward to the visit. The agreement on strategic partnership between Russia and India will give concrete substance to the relationship and make it truly a relationship of partners and allies," visiting Russian Security Council Secretary Serge Ivanov remarked after signing the protocol on cooperation between Secu-

city Councils with Mishra.

Ivanov, who is Mishra's counterpart, called on Vajpayee and handed over a letter from Putin which refers to the importance of Indo-Russian relations for stability and security in Asia and the whole world. The letter calls for cooperation in combating international terrorism, drug trafficking and religious and political extremism.

Vajpayee told Ivanov "Putin will be an honoured guest and would be accorded a warm welcome". Putin, who is at present President-elect, will formally take over on May 7.

Besides the joint declaration on strategic partnership, Putin and Vajpayee would also sign a number of important documents during their summit. Ivanov, who is here on a two-day official visit, met External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and Defence Minister George Fernandes and held talks with Mishra on bilateral, regional

and international issues. He is accompanied by a top level 20-member delegation that includes Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov who oversees the defence industry and arms trade and Trade Minister Mikhail Fradkov. Sources said the Russian delegation may put final touches on two major defence deals for acquisition by India of 310 T-90 battle tanks and two early warning AWACs.

An External Affairs Minister spokesman said the protocol signed by Mishra and Ivanov seeks to strengthen national security of the two countries through politico-legal means and enhance cooperation in international, economic, defence, information, ecological and other fields of security. The protocol lays down the parameters for mutual cooperation in areas relating to suppression of crime, international terrorism, religious and political extremism, illegal trafficking in arms and drug trafficking.

INDIAN EXPRESS

30 APR 2001

# Russian-built submarine to join Navy soon

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, June 10. — The INS Sindhu Shastra, a Russian-built submarine, will join the Navy later this month.

The second of two submarines, ordered after the number of submarines the Navy had was reduced with the retirement of the antiquated Foxtrot class vessels, will be commissioned and handed over to the Navy chief, Admiral Sushil Kumar, on his way back from Britain, in St Petersburg, later this month.

The Navy already has four

German HDW submarines, some Russian Foxtrots and a handful of KILO-class submarines.

INS Sindhu Rakshak is an advanced KILO class vessel and will carry the highly potent Klub-class missiles which have a range of over 100 km. The median cost of a KILO-class submarine is about Rs 800 crore.

Similar missiles are being fitted on to the 1135.6 Krivak warships, which are being manufactured for the Indian fleet in Russia. These were ordered as the Indian yards, especially the one at Garden

Reach, failed to keep pace with the Navy's demands and the number of principal combatants of the fleet fell to low levels in the mid '90s compared to the mid-'80s. This was because the defence budget provided little for building warships, which take seven to 10 years from the design to the commissioning stage. Work on the Krivaks, initially delayed, has picked up and they may be delivered on time. Each Krivak will have 16 Klubs on it.

The Russian KILOs are effective submarines as they have diesel engines that are silent even by Western standards and

they are likely to be useful as the Pakistan Navy has acquired French-built Agosta class submarines that have special capabilities.

Meanwhile, the Navy has sent one of its newest ships — the INS Mysore, a destroyer — to USA to participate in its Millennium Independence Day functions on 4 July. INS Mysore was commissioned a few months ago while its sister ship, INS Delhi, will be going to China and Japan. "The advantage of long cruises is that sailors will have practice. It will also be a friendly way of showing the flag," a senior naval official said.

THE STATESMAN

7 7 JUN 2000

149-1

# Purulia may sour Jaswant's Moscow trip

1576

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JUNE 15.** The case of five Russian pilots convicted in the Purulia arms-drop case may cast a shadow over the coming visit of the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, to Moscow.

The fate of the pilots, sentenced to life by a Calcutta court in February, is expected to be raised in Mr. Singh's talks with Russian officials. During a three-day official visit between June 21-24, the Minister will meet the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, the Security Council Secretary, Mr. Sergei Ivanov, the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Viktor Khristenko, who is Co-Chairman of the Indo-Russian Intergovernmental Commission, and hold extensive talks with the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov.

Moscow has been enraged by the handling of the pilots' case. The Russian media accused Indian security services of framing charges against the pilots to cover up their failure to nab the men behind the arms-smuggling operation. Notwithstanding a public uproar, Moscow's official reaction was initially restrained.

However, the mood in Moscow changed as its numerous interven-

tions failed to carry weight. The Russian Orthodox Church complained that a letter from its head, Patriarch Alexy II, to the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, remained unanswered.

By contrast, the Russian President promptly responded to the Patriarch's appeal. In his letter to Alexy II, Mr. Putin voiced concern over "the unexpectedly and disproportionately harsh" life sentence and warned the incident could "have a negative impact on bilateral relations between Russia and India".

The Russian leader openly questioned the fairness of the verdict. "Taking into account the state of the pilots' health, such a course of events could lead to tragic consequences for them and this will have a negative impact on bilateral relations between Russia and India." The problem has become an irritant in bilateral relations. When there was still hope that the Russian pilots could be acquitted, the Kremlin said India would be one of the first countries Mr. Putin would visit. However, later Moscow announced that India's turn will not come until October, after Mr. Putin would have visited a dozen other countries.

THE HINDU

15 JUN 2000

## Purulia arms drop: India turns down Russian request for pilots' release

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, June 19

RUSSIA'S REQUEST for the Vajpayee government's intervention to secure the release of four pilots convicted in the Purulia arms-drop case cannot be considered by New Delhi. Over the past few months, pleas for a "political settlement" have been made frequently by the church leaders and eminent personalities in Russia. However, at a time when External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh is about to visit to Moscow, a senior ministry official said the government would not interfere in the judicial process.

Mr Singh, who visits Moscow between June 21 and 24, is learnt to be preparing to take some negative Press and stern questioning from the Russian government in his stride.

The four pilots - Yevgeny Antimenko, Alexander Klishin, Igor Moskvitin, Oleg Gaidash and Igor Timmerman - along with Peter Bleach, the British commander of the AN-24 aircraft which air-dropped weapons over Purulia (West Bengal) in December 1995, were sentenced to life imprisonment on February 2. They, now lodged in Calcutta's Presidency Jail, are awaiting disposal of their appeal pending before the Supreme Court.

The head of Russia's Orthodox Church, His Holiness Alexi the Second, is learnt to have written twice to Prime Minister Vajpayee seeking the release of Russian pilots who, Russian public opinion has it, are innocent. Significantly, Russia's President Vladimir Putin wrote to the Patriarch on March 22 agreeing that the verdict of the court was influenced by pressure of "Indian special agencies".

President Putin promised the Patriarch that if the verdict is not changed on appeal to Supreme Court, "the intervention of the Russian leadership may become necessary in order to seek a political settlement". His letter also carried a warning in the direction of New Delhi that if the present ill health of two of the imprisoned crew (Moskvitin and Antimenko) leads to tragedy, it "can also have a negative impact on bilateral relations between India and Russia".

Sources said that the Russian government is looking for a "Kandahar type resolution" to the impasse. However, New Delhi is urging Moscow to look beyond this issue and consider the "entire gamut of co-operation" that could fructify out of the October visit of President Putin to New Delhi, for which Mr Singh's tour is an important preparatory. Over the next few months, Defence Minister George Fernandes and HRD Minister Murli Manohar Joshi will be visiting Moscow to pursue deals in defence and information technology.

For now, neither Mr Singh nor Mr Vajpayee would be in a position to compromise the independence of the Indian judiciary. But knowing the feelings aroused in Russia by the issue, they will apprise the Putin government of the jail conditions eased for the inmates.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

24 JUN 2000

# India, Russia working to open a new chapter in bilateral ties

Indrani Bagchi

NEW DELHI 19 JUNE

THERE IS a satisfying reversal of technology flow in the strategic relationship between Russia and India, as Russia becomes one of the first few buyers of the Indian Param supercomputer. On the eve of the Indian foreign minister's visit to Moscow, therefore, a long-standing relationship may well find itself on new ground.

While the two nations shared a cordial relationship since the Cold War, it is in the new millennium that the relationship will probably be redefined.

Mr Jaswant Singh's visit to Moscow will give India a chance to gauge the new Russian leader's attitude. Soon after his election to the presidency in March, Mr Vladimir Putin had sent the right signals towards India.

But Mr Singh's visit will give any Indian leader the first opportunity to interact directly with Mr Putin.

Mr Singh will also hold discussions with his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov. Talks will be on several key international issues like international terrorism, nuclear disarmament, missile defence and Nato expansion.

Not only bilateral economic issues will be discussed but also it will be assessed how Russia and India relate to the west (read US).

India has readily embraced the knowledge economy of the new millennium. Russia is emerging from a decade of democracy with a collapsing economy. Mr Putin, from all accounts, has focused his energies on making Russia strong economically. This is not only reflected in his choice of Mikhail Kasyanov as the Prime Minister, but the recognition that Russia's economic reforms should be in tune with the US. Both the countries, thus, work towards carving out a strategic space for themselves armed with strong eco-

conomic fundamentals.

On a bilateral level, however, the Indo-Russia economic relationship is going nowhere. Though bilateral trade figures for April 1999-January 2000 registered a 34.13 per cent rise at \$1.31 billion from \$1.25 billion in 1998-99, over 50 per cent of the trade is the debt-repayment process. Since Russia auctions the rupee payment, there have been talk of reinvesting the money in Indian joint ventures, like modernisation of Iisco, cooperation in projects in the petroleum sector, banking and insurance matters, including a credit line from India's Exim Bank for export of engineering goods to Russia.

But there are anti-dumping issues against Russian steel for example. Russia too has recently indicated that it prefers packaged tea from other countries rather than importing bulk tea from India.

The Economic Times

19 JUNE 2000

# India, Russia yet to concretise new ties

AJNOKHITA MOJUMDAR  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

MOSCOW, June 21. — Have new friends replaced old ones? This is a question that will be looked at closely over the next three days as India's external affairs minister engages with the top leadership of the Russian Federation.

While imbued with the bonhomie over Indo-Russian brotherhood that emerged from the Cold War, the bilateral relationship has failed to keep pace with dismantling of the bipolar world. While considering themselves allies, the two countries have failed to move towards concretising their rhetoric into new forms of partnership. Both have mended fences with past

opponents, integrating into the new world order, but they have failed to take the relationship beyond post-Cold War lethargy.

Proof of this is evident in trade figures decline and their inability to pool their strengths. The positive aspect is the absence of animosities or deep differences. Terming it a problem-free relationship, a senior MEA official points out that even with its new ally, the USA, India has to manage problem areas.

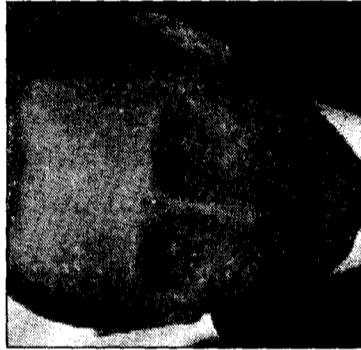
The issue of incarceration of the Russian pilots convicted in the Purulia arms-dropping case has, in fact, left the Indian government unfazed. Saying it is not a problem between the two governments at all, an official suggests that the Russian gov-



Mr Jaswant Singh

ernment continues to raise the issue because of its populist appeal rather than a lack of understanding of Indian laws.

Once the potential of the Indo-Russian relationship was concretised, says an analyst,



Mr Vladimir Putin

rich dividends could flow. Pointing to the scope of future ties, the Indian Ambassador to Russia, Mr SK Lamba, says:

"Let us not forget, Russia has 3 per cent of the world's population and 20 per cent of its

resources."

Mr Jaswant Singh's visit will set the tone for this direction, being a precursor to the visit of President Vladimir Putin to India. Mr Singh, who arrived here this afternoon, said his visit would include discussions on the visit of President Putin. Mr Singh's is the first high-level visit to Russia since Mr Putin assumed office.

That Mr Singh will meet Mr Putin is being seen as an indicator of Russia's eagerness to keep its ties with India intact.

A significant area of interest that the two sides will explore will be the prospect of India's investments in the Sakhalin oil project. Ambassador Lamba says it could turn out to be one of India's largest investments.

Unofficial estimates have already pegged it at \$1 billion. Energy security forms an important part of India's defence and foreign policy.

The two countries will discuss terrorism. Apart from the joint secretary, East Europe, the joint secretary in charge of the India-Pakistan-Afghanistan desk, will be present. Officials said cooperation at the UN will be discussed and the two countries would have meetings at the official level before the UN General Assembly session.

India may raise the issue of extension of integrated long-term programme for cooperation in science and technology and press the need for joint sector projects as part of the rupee-rouble debt payment agreement.

THE STATESMAN

22 JUN 2000



# India, Russia chalk out plan for Putin visit

AUNOHITA MOJUMDAR  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

MOSCOW, June 22. — India and Russia today chalked out a 90-day action plan, which is expected to add momentum to efforts to formulate and finalise the substantive component of the forthcoming visit of the Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, to India. The two countries also discussed the possibility of joint cooperation in combatting international terrorism.

India backed Russia on its stand on the ABM Treaty, a stand that received endorsement at the meeting of the CIS countries yesterday. India also assured Russia that its concerns about the Russian pilots convicted in the Purulia arms dropping case were being looked into by the Indian government for a possible resolution within the four corners of the law.

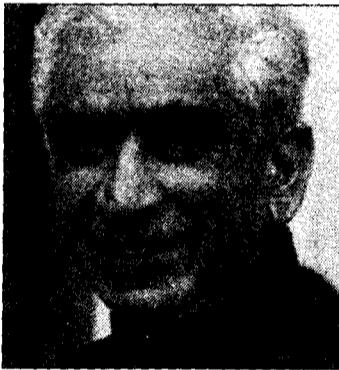
While the Strategic Declaration that will be signed during the October summit has already been finalised, officials will now work on a range of agreements that cover every aspect of Indo-Russian bilateral relations. Discussions in the run-up to the visit will finalise the issues that would provide the meat for the visit, senior officials of the ministry of external affairs said here today.

The Union external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, had meetings with the Secretary of the National Security Council, Mr Sergei Ivanov, and the Deputy Prime Minister and co-chairman of the Indo-Russian Joint Commission, Mr Viktor Khristenko. During his interaction, Mr Singh proposed

the 90-day action plan in the run-up to the presidential visit. This will work out agreements in six or seven areas of cooperation, especially in the fields of oil, energy, diamonds and transportation.

Officials said that while political relations between the two countries were excellent, a lot more could be done especially in the field of economic and trade cooperation.

The two countries have agreed on an inter-session meeting of the inter-governmental Indo-Russian Commission on trade, economic, scientific and technological cooperation before the



Mr Jaswant Singh

October summit as also meetings of the various working groups under it. The issue of utilisation of the rupee debt and for trade and investment was also discussed. During his meeting with Mr Ivanov, Mr Jaswant Singh spoke of the scimitar of international terrorism, saying joint action was necessary to counter this menace.

After the meeting, Mr Singh told newsmen that the shared concern of India and Russia did not arise simply because the two countries were affected by it, but because it was a global

concern. It was not only because the two countries were troubled at the moment by this menace but because this issue had to be addressed as a matter of principle. It was necessary, therefore, for the two countries to exchange ideas and thoughts on this issue. A statement issued by the Russian National Security Council said, the two sides had discussed a number of problems on ensuring mutual and international security.

Senior officials said the two sides were exploring avenues of joint action against terrorism and the enabling protocol signed during the visit of Mr Sergei Ivanov to Delhi in April would help in establishing the coordination groups, including on terrorism. Officials as also the Security Councils of the two countries would discuss this. The situation in Afghanistan, concerns about the Taliban as also India's concerns about Pakistan were discussed.

During the meeting, Mr Ivanov also briefed Mr Singh on the meetings of the CIS countries yesterday. Mr Singh and Mr Ivanov discussed the ABM Treaty and Russia's concerns and support for its position in regarding the ABM Treaty as a factor of strategic stability.

After the meeting Mr Ivanov described the discussions as very good and said the two sides had discussed ways of strengthening and deepening bilateral ties and on how to give shape to agreements.

The statement of the Russian National Security Council said Mr Ivanov had described fruitful cooperation with India as one of the priorities of Russia's foreign policy.

THE STATESMAN

23 JUN 2000

## 'Need to expand economic ties with Russia'

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, JUNE 22. Russia and India are bound by a relationship of strategic partnership and are on course to strengthen their cooperation, the Russian Security Council chief, Mr. Sergei Ivanov, said at a meeting with the visiting External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, in Moscow today.

For his part, Mr. Jaswant Singh noted that the two countries have "excellent political relations" but should do more to expand their economic ties, a senior Indian diplomat said.

Mr. Ivanov was the first Russian official Mr. Jaswant Singh met after his arrival in Moscow Wednesday for a four-day official visit to prepare a visit to India by the Russian new President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, in early October.

The two officials discussed bilateral, regional and international issues, including international terrorism. They shared the view that what Mr. Singh described as "the semintar of international terrorism" was a threat not only to their two countries, but was a global concern. They said a protocol on cooperation between the Security Councils of the two countries should be taken forward and coordination groups on international terrorism set up.

THE HINDU

2 JUN 2000

# Oil's well: India may sign major oil deal with Russia

Arun Mohanty  
MOSCOW 22 JUNE

**E**XTERNAL AFFAIRS minister Jaswant Singh's visit here could result in a major oil deal that will help meet New Delhi's growing energy requirements.

The deal, envisaging substantial Indian investment in the Russia's oil industry, particularly in the Shakhalin-1 project, has already been under discussion.

Mr Singh, who arrived on Wednesday, accompanied by officials, is likely to discuss the issue with deputy Prime Minister Victor Khristenko, who looks after the oil industry and co-chairs the Indo-Russian Inter-governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological & Cultural Co-operation.

If the oil deal clicks, it will be the largest-ever foreign invest-

ment in Russia's oil industry, involving several hundred millions of dollars. Indian Ambassador Satinder Lamba, during a recent visit to Sakhalin, had discussed the issue with the regional governor and ONGC Videsh Ltd chairman Atul Chander is virtually camping in Moscow to take the negotiations forward.

Mr Singh's discussions in Moscow are likely to provide a strong boost to the important deal.

The general secretary of the Russian foreign ministry, Vladimir Grinin, Russian Ambassador to India Alexander Kadakin and other top Russian officials were present at Moscow's Sheremotovo airport to receive Mr Singh on his arrival.

Mr Singh, who is visiting Moscow for the second time in about a year, noted that his "pre-



**Jaswant: Rendezvous in Russia**

sent visit to Russia is the first high-level meeting between the two countries after Vladimir Putin

was sworn in as President of Russia.

Details of Mr Putin's official visit to India, likely to take place in early October, will be discussed, among other issues, during his three-day official visit from Thursday, he told journalists on arrival. Five to six bilateral agreements, currently at different stages of discussion, are likely to be signed during President Putin's visit to India, the most important being formalisation of the growing strategic partnership between the two countries.

Mr Singh is scheduled to meet

Mr Putin, secretary to Russia's powerful security council Sergei Ivanov, Khristenko and his Russian counterpart, Igor Ivanov.

Foreign policy observers here noted that Mr Singh is the first foreign minister from an Asian country to meet Mr Putin after he assumed office.

Mr Singh's meeting with President Putin, who has plunged into hyper foreign policy activities during past one week with visits to three European countries and summits with heads of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), is considered an indicator that India remains at the top of Russia's foreign policy priorities.

Apart from finalisation of the agenda of Mr Putin's visit to India, Mr Singh will discuss bilateral issues and problems of regional and international significance.

The presence in Mr Singh's delegation of Mr Vivek Katju, joint secretary (Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran) in the external affairs ministry, indicates that Afghanistan and Pakistan, which both New Delhi and Moscow consider as the fountainhead of international terrorism, will figure prominently in Mr Singh's discussions with the Russian leaders.

Indian ambassador Lamba, briefing Indian journalists here, also said Afghanistan and Pakistan will be discussed during Mr Singh's talks in the context of international terrorism. The issue assumes additional significance in the background of the decision by the just-concluded CIS summit to set up an "anti-terrorism centre" here for defending the CIS countries from the scourge of terrorism. — IANS

# India, Russia sweep aside differences

AUNOHTA MOJUMDAR  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

MOSCOW, June 23. — India today walked the extra mile to ally itself with Russia on the contentious issue of the ABM Treaty and the two countries swept their differences under the carpet in a bid to project an unswollen image of continuing friendship and cooperation.

The Union external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, said India believed the National Missile Defence system "in fact moves towards militarisation of space against which we have always stood". The NMD was, in fact, destabilising the strategic stability achieved through the steps taken by Russia and the USA in the past two decades, he said.

Mr Singh's statement, which runs the risk of annoying the USA, went far beyond the careful but restrained support extended to Russia by India so far. India had earlier restricted

itself to saying it was against any unilateral steps that would disturb strategic stability.

The minister's explanation came at a joint press conference with the Russian foreign minister, Mr Igor Ivanov, this afternoon following talks during which the issue was discussed. His comments also reflected the remarks of Mr Ivanov who said the security of one country should not be strengthened at the cost of another and that the 1972 ABM Treaty was the basis of strategic stability.

Mr Ivanov also claimed India had extended its support not only on this issue but also to the Russian initiative for a global centre for non-proliferation and control of missile systems. He said relations between the two countries in the field of military and technological cooperation were growing even while stressing that this was not directed against any other country. The Russian foreign minister brushed aside questions on the differences

between the two countries on the issue of nuclear proliferation.

The emphasis at the joint public appearance of the two ministers was on what Mr Ivanov described as the coincidence of approach and similarity of tasks of the two countries and in projecting the forthcoming visit of the Russian President as a landmark event. Enabling the two countries to steer clear of controversies was the tightly controlled press conference with a limited number of questions being allowed to both Russian and Indian journalists.

The two countries would now follow the 90-day programme in order to put into place agreements on a wide range of issues in addition to the Declaration of Strategic Partnership that was expected to be signed, Mr Singh said. They would work so that Mr Vladimir Putin's visit really became a defining moment in Indo-Russian relations.

In response to a question on growing Indo-US ties, Mr Ivanov said India as

an independent sovereign country was developing ties with all countries of the world. Russia did not have any objections to this and believed that international cooperation was necessary for stability.

Mr Ivanov said Mr Putin's visit would be a step to enhance the trust and political dialogue between two great powers that were playing an important role. Russia considered India to be a strong and worthy candidate for permanent membership of the UN Security Council if a decision was taken to expand it, he added.

The two leaders also iterated their commitment to international cooperation to counter global threats of international terrorism. Mr Singh said India supported the ideas of an anti-terrorist centre in Moscow that had been agreed upon in the meeting of the CIS leaders.

On Afghanistan, he said India believed that conflict and instability in that country radiated outwards,

destabilising and disturbing all neighbouring and contiguous areas. India had been in touch not only with Russia but also CIS countries over the issue. On the situation in Kosovo, Mr Singh expressed India's concern pointing out that it had not encouraged bombing or other actions against Nato.

On whether the NMD would give a boost to India's missile development programme, Mr Singh said India's missile programme was indigenous and not dependent on any other country, certainly not the USA.

Asked about the imprisonment of the Russian pilots involved in the Purulia armsdrop case, Mr Singh said he was aware of the sensitivity of the issue.

He would look for a lasting solution as early as he could within the legal parameters. Mr Singh is scheduled to meet the Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, later in the day after which he leaves for St. Petersburg.

24 JUN 2000

HD-13  
29/6

## India backs Russia on missile defence

W

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JUNE 23.** India and Russia today reaffirmed their commitment to building a just multi-polar world and preserving the strategic stability on the basis of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

At a joint conference with the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, the visiting Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, reiterated New Delhi's support for Moscow's stand in opposing the United States' plans to build a National Missile Defence (NMD) in contravention of the ABM treaty.

The "NMD moves towards militarisation of space, against which we have always stood, and is undermining the strategic stability achieved by Russia and the United States over the past years," Mr. Singh said. He denied, however, that the U.S. missile plan could affect India's nuclear and missile programme.

On his part, Mr. Ivanov asserted that Russia's plan to build a joint missile shield with Europe and the U.S. would not lead to a new rift between the North and the South. India had backed the Russian proposal to set up a global system of control over the non-proliferation of missile technologies. Another Russian initiative — to establish a Russian-American

early missile warning centre — was also open to other countries.

Mr. Ivanov reaffirmed Russia's support for India's bid to join the United Nations Security Council. "We consider India a strong and worthy candidate for permanent membership of the Security Council if agreement is reached to expand the Council," he said.

The two sides also reaffirmed the importance of stepping up efforts to combat international terrorism, separatism and other forms of extremism. Mr. Singh said India was engaged in constant consultations with Russia on the situation in Afghanistan, which radiates instability and conflict in the region. In particular, the two sides discussed Moscow's plan to set up an anti-terrorist centre for the post-Soviet Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which has been approved this week at a CIS summit in Moscow.

Mr. Ivanov refuted speculation that Russia was irked by India's stronger ties with the U.S. saying, "India is a great sovereign nation which is developing relations with all states. This is a normal process and far from evoking our concern, it helps strengthen stability and security in the world."

THE HINDU

24 JUN 2000

# India, Russia to upgrade defence ties

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JUNE 27.** Russia and India have agreed to upgrade their military and technical cooperation and set up a joint commission at the Defence Ministry level, diplomatic sources said.

The agreement was reached at a meeting between the visiting Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, and the Russian Deputy Prime Minister in-charge of the defence industry and arms exports. The new arrangement will raise coordination of bilateral defence cooperation to the level of defence chiefs of the two countries, the sources said. Until now, the main coordinating body has been a joint working group headed by the Defence Secretary for India and a Deputy Defence Minister for Russia.

The Interfax news agency also reported that contracts for the



**The Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, with his Russian counterpart, Mr. Igor Sergeev, in Moscow. — Reuters**

sale of Russian T-90S tanks and the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft

carrier to India may be signed "in the nearest future." Mr. Klebanov

told the news agency after his meeting with Mr. Fernandes, that the two contracts may be finalised and signed in the run-up to a planned visit by the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, to India in early October. The Indian defence chief, who arrived in Moscow on Monday for a four-day official visit, is scheduled to call on Mr. Putin on Wednesday. He is also to meet the Security Council Secretary, Mr. Sergei Ivanov, and hold talks with the Defence Minister, Marshal Igor Sergeev.

The RBK news agency said the discussions will include among other things the US plans to build a National Missile Defence. "American plans to walk out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty evoke concern both in Russia and its strategic partners in the Asia-Pacific region," the news agency said.

THE HINDU

13 JUN 2000

# Jaswant vision sweeps time, space boundaries aside

AUNOHITA MOJUMDAR  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

ST. PETERSBURG, June 24. — Mahabharat, British colonialism, World War II, and even the Russian painter Nicholas Roerich were all brought into play as the Union external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, wooed the intellectual audience of St Petersburg today, establishing historical linkages and geographical contiguity between Russia and India to emphasise the importance of future ties.

Speaking to students, teachers and intellectuals at the Faculty of International Relations at St Petersburg State University, Mr Singh also placed multipolarity as an essential requisite of international stability. The world, he said, could not go back to "unstable undefined colonialism" in which the unilateral prevailed.

Would the world be ordered through the prism of one? It was necessary to ensure that we be con-

cerned about the role and relevance of the UN, the distribution of power against the centralisation of authority. "We believe in the collectivity of mankind, not the supremacy of one," he said.

In what he himself termed a thought-provoking exercise, the minister raised questions about the future challenges to individual nations, international cooperation, and the future of mankind. Departing from the substance-specific approach of the last three days of his bilateral visit, Mr Singh spelt out the larger vision of India's foreign policy and its concerns.

Foreign policy was determined by several fixities, amongst them geography as was evident from a comparison of the history of India and Russia during the 17th and 18th century. While Russia had made assertion of control over the Baltic region to ensure the essential of trade as one of the important factors of its foreign policy, India had failed to recognise the concept of sea power

## CABINET APPROVES INDIA-RUSSIA DEAL

NEW DELHI, June 24. — The Union Cabinet today gave ex-post facto approval to the joint document on development of trade, economic, industrial, financial, scientific and technological cooperation between India and Russia. The document will help enhance the potential of cooperation between the two countries by deepening and diversifying the bilateral trade. It will also boost economic, industrial, financial, scientific and technological cooperation on a long-term basis. The document had been signed with the Prime Minister approval in December 1998. The document has come into effect on the date of its signing. — UNI

and had thus been colonised.

Geography also provided opportunities to be used to advantage and as an answer to today's challenge. India and Russia had now thought of the North-South corridor to out-flank the overhang of history and had jointly envisioned a means of reaching from Europe to the waters of the Arabian Sea.

The second determinant was technological mastery, which could lead to transformation of state power. The invention of the stirrup had been as important to warfare as had

the internal combustion engine and the splitting of the atom. However, mankind had reached a stage where it was confronted by the dilemmas of technology.

The sheer velocity of change was so rapid that it was terrifying. The comprehension of transformation, was slower than transformation, and humankind could no longer use it for betterment.

Mankind, the minister said, had not yet been able to find an answer that would ensure sufficient sending power. It became the government's

duty to ensure this, he said. In foreign policy, foreign economic policy had assumed ascendancy over political policy though it might not carry the same appeal.

India, he said, had been able to withstand the sanctions imposed on it because of the creative genius of the people. Universalism, he said, was the mantra of the 20th century, without which the challenge of the 21st century could not be met.

**Roerich:** The external affairs minister today promised the citizens of St Petersburg that their request for the burial of the Russian painter Nicholas Roerich would be considered. The Indian government would try and fulfil the wish.

in the day the Minister held meetings with the Governor of St. Petersburg, Mr Vladimir A. Yakovlev during which the two discussed all aspects of cooperation. St. Petersburg is considered second in importance only to the city of Moscow and the dockyard builds and repairs India's naval ships.



The Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, (right) greets Mr Jaswant Singh at the Kremlin in Moscow on Friday. — AP/PTI

## Fernandes to lead defence team to Russia

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, JUNE 25.** The Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes is leading a nine-member delegation to Russia on Monday as part of an effort by New Delhi to intensify its high-level contacts with Moscow after the election of Mr. Vladimir Putin as President.

During the visit, the two countries will sign a protocol strengthening bilateral defence cooperation.

Mr. Fernandes will hold extensive talks with his host, Marshal I. Sergeev and also call on President Putin. He is scheduled to meet the Secretary of the Russian Security Council, Mr. S. Ivanov and other dignitaries including the Commandant of the Leningrad Military District.

Mr. Fernandes will witness a flight demonstration of the SU-30MKI, a version of the SU-30K fighter jet which has been cut out to specifically meet the requirements of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

The Defence Minister is slated to visit the Baltisky plant of the St. Petersburg shipyard and the Admiralty shipyard where submarines, frigates and other warships of the Indian navy are constructed.

Other members of Mr. Fernandes' delegation include the Defence Secretary, Mr. T.R. Prasad, the Additional Defence secretary, Mr. Dharendra Singh and senior officers of the armed forces as well as the Ministry of Defence.

THE HINDU

25 JUN 2000



# Purulia case will be resolved soon, Jaswant tells Moscow

By Vladimir Radyuhin

*NDV*  
*24/6*  
*India*  
*Russia*

**MOSCOW, JUNE 23.** The visiting Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, has vowed to resolve soon the problem of Russian pilots sentenced to life in the Purulia arms drop case.

Stating that India "recognises the sensitivity of the issue", Mr. Singh reassured the Russians that he was "personally seized of the matter" and was sparing no effort to achieve "the earliest lasting solution of the problem within the four corners of the Indian law." Russian diplomatic sources interpreted the statement as a promise that the five Russian pilots jailed in Calcutta would be granted pardon by the Indian President.

Addressing a joint news conference with his Russian counterpart, Mr. Igor Ivanov, on Friday, Mr. Singh said he was "entirely satisfied" with his "fruitful" visit to Moscow. On his proposal the two sides will set in motion a 90-day economic action plan in the run-up to the planned visit of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, to India in early October. The plan calls for identifying joint projects in six or seven areas of cooperation, especially in the fields of oil, energy, diamonds



**The Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov (left), with his Indian counterpart, Mr. Jaswant Singh, after their meeting in Moscow on Friday. — Reuters**

and transportation.

Mr. Ivanov said his talks with Mr. Singh had confirmed the identity of long-term national and geopolitical interests of the two countries and their shared goals in the international arena.

Mr. Putin's coming visit to India will be "a new major step in deepening the trust-based political dialogue" between the two nations. During the visit a Decla-

ration on Strategic Partnership would be signed, Mr. Ivanov said.

"We are deeply satisfied with our talks, which have demonstrated again that the time-tested traditional partnership between our two countries is a major stabilising factor of strategic importance in Asia and throughout the world," he said.

**India backs Russia on NMD: Page 13**

THE HINDU

2004 JUN 24

# Russia to supply 100 T-90 main battle tanks to India <sup>Gr-16</sup>

MOSCOW: Russia and India will shortly sign a deal for the 'T-90' battle tank and jointly produce an anti-aircraft defence system, Russian vice premier Iliya Klebanov said on Tuesday. "The necessary papers will be ready within two to three weeks for the signing of the tank deal, under which Russia is expected to supply 100 of the most advanced T-90 main battle tanks and transfer the license for the production of 200 tanks at Avadi Heavy Vehicles Factory in India to phase out the T-72 production," he told reporters, after holding talks with visiting defence minister George Fernandes here.

He also said that India and Russia are to jointly produce an anti-aircraft defence system.

Mr Klebanov said that within the framework of bilateral military-technical cooperation, India and Russia are to work on several projects for the joint production of weapon systems, primarily in the

field of air defence.

The Russian vice premier said that during the India-visit of president Vladimir Putin in October, New Delhi and Moscow could sign major defence deals, including that on the transfer of aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov.

Mr Fernandes is scheduled to meet President Putin on Wednesday, reliable sources say. Russian defence ministry spokesperson for foreign affairs Gen. Leonid Ivashov indicated that the two sides were to discuss further expansion of relations between the armed forces and the defence ministries of the two countries.

Russia annually supplies weapons worth \$ 1 billion to India.

A final decision on licensed production of 'SU-30' multi-purpose fighters in India is likely to be taken soon.

Earlier, Russia had agreed to deliver 40 Sukhoi combat aircraft to India at a cost of nearly \$ 2 billion.

Mr Ivashov spoke of the "good prospects of cooperation as well as resolving some of the existing problems," but did not elaborate.

Leading Russian defence analyst and columnist Valentin Kunin has underlined the importance of the decision of the two long-time allies to set up joint ventures and develop state-of-the-art weapons for sale in other countries.

The joint ventures are to be set up in Russia and India, he added.

Though Mr Kunin claims that both countries have already signed an agreement for the transfer of Russian aircraft carrier 'Admiral Gorshkov' to India, Voice of Russia on Monday said that this would be one of the issues to be taken up for discussion.

The spokesperson spoke of the significance of widening defence deals between the two countries, as 70 per cent of weapons and military equipment of the Indian army are manufactured in Russia. (Agencies)

THE TIMES OF INDIA  
THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

THE TIMES OF INDIA

2007.11

# India-Russia pact may ease technology transfer

SR-8  
29/6  
**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**

NEW DELHI, June 28. — The new military technology pact between India and Russia has set the stage for closer cooperation between the two countries, specially in the fields of technology transfer and joint production.

The commission on technical cooperation will be co-chaired by Mr George Fernandes and the Russian deputy Prime Minister, Mr Ilya Klebanov. Defence ministry spokesmen today said the decision was taken at a recent meeting between Mr Fernandes and the

Russian defence minister, Mr Igor Sergeev. There will be two working groups, one chaired by defence secretary Mr TR Prasad and his Russian counterpart, and the other by the secretary, defence production, Mr Ravindra Gupta, and his Russian counterpart. This could ease technology transfers. There is already talk of production of the Su-30 at the Hindustan Aeronautics in Bangalore.

The two defence ministers also discussed Mr Vladimir Putin's visit to India later this year. Decisions on a large num-

ber of purchases, including that of an aircraft-carrier, MiG-29K planes, the Backfire Bomber, air-to-air refuelling planes and T-90 tanks, will be taken during the Russian President's visit. Mr Fernandes and Mr Sergeev also discussed the situation in Sierra Leone — where Indian soldiers are being held hostage — and Fiji.

India and Russia have expressed concern at the spurt in international terrorism and religious extremism. Both countries have agreed to discuss the issues with other countries of the world.

THE STATESMAN

29 JUN 2000

# Joint Indo-Russian defence panel on cards

Arun Mohanty  
MOSCOW 28 JUNE

INDO-RUSSIAN defence cooperation will get a further boost with the setting up of a joint commission headed by the defence ministers of the two countries, official sources here said.

Until now, the main decision-making and co-ordinating body for defence cooperation was the joint working group headed by the Indian defence secretary and the senior deputy defence minister of the Russian federation.

Defence observers here drew attention to the fact that India would be the first country with which Russia had established such a high-level commission on defence cooperation.

The decision to set up the commission was taken at a meeting between visiting defence minister George Fernandes and Russian Deputy Prime Minister



**OLD COMRADES: Defence minister George Fernandes with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin on Wednesday** AFP

Ilya Klebanov, who is in charge of Russia's military-industrial complex, a diplomatic source said.

The new arrangement would shift coordination and decision-making responsibilities in this strategic sector to the level of

defence ministers, the source said. The two sides had been discussing the need to upgrade defence cooperation for some time, he said.

Russian press reports have suggested that the deals for the sale of 310 T-90 tanks and the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier to India are at a final stage and would be signed in the near future. Russian deputy Prime Minister Khlebanov has been quoted by the Interfax news agency as saying that the two deals would be finalised and signed in the run-up to President Vladimir Putin's planned visit to India in early October.

Mr Fernandes, who is here on a four-day official visit, has already held discussions with Mr Klebanov and Defence Minister Marshal Igor Sergeev. He is scheduled to meet Mr Putin on Wednesday. —IANS

The Economic Times

3 JUN 2000

## Indo-Russian JWG to be upgraded

410-13

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, JUNE 29. Defence cooperation between India and Russia will be raised to a new higher level, the Defence Ministers of the two countries announced at the end of their talks in Moscow.

The visiting Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, and his Russian counterpart, Marshal Igor Sergeyeu, spared no words in praising the results of their three days of negotiations that ended on Thursday.

While Mr. Fernandes described his discussions with the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and Marshal Sergeyeu as "path-breaking", the Russian Defence Minister said the talks had been "extremely successful and fruitful".

The five-day visit of Mr. Fernandes was part of preparations for a bilateral summit in early October, when Mr. Putin will go to India to sign a declaration on strategic partnership.

The two sides decided to upgrade the apex coordinating body for bilateral defence cooperation from a joint working group headed by Deputy Defence Ministers to a ministerial-level joint commission to be co-chaired by Mr. Fernandes and the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Ilya Klebanov. The commission "will enable us to see to it that the ongoing cooperation is raised to a higher level and ev-

ery issue of mutual security be taken care of," Mr. Fernandes said at a joint news conference with Marshal Sergeyeu.

At the end of the talks, which included a meeting of the joint working group on defence cooperation, co-chairmen of the working group, the Defence Secretary, Mr. T. R. Prasad, and the First Deputy Defence Minister, Mr. Nikolai Mikhailov, signed a protocol setting out guidelines for further bilateral interaction.

According to Mr. Fernandes, the protocol deals with security issues, military technologies and weapons. Marshal Sergeyeu said it called for expanding defence cooperation both in traditional forms, such as training of military cadres, and some new forms. Russia would expand its training programmes for Indian specialists to facilitate license production of Russian military hardware in India. (A UNI report quoted Mr. Fernandes as saying that the \$ 400 million deal with Russia for the supply of 100 T-90 main battle tanks and procuring the license for producing another 200 MBTs would be finalised this week.)

"As far as defence-related issues and partnership in technology sharing are concerned, Russia and India are the closest allies," Mr. Fernandes quoted the Russian President as saying and stressed that "on all issues discussed our views were identical".

The Indian Minister said Russia reaffirmed its support for New Delhi's membership of the UN Security Council. He was particularly gratified by the Russian President's stand on Sierra Leone and Fiji. Mr. Putin directed his Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, to get involved and take care of India's concerns in the two regions, Mr. Fernandes said.

India in turn backed Russia's stand against the United States' plans to deploy a national missile defence and withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. "The current balance in strategic weapons and mutual security should not be disturbed," Mr. Fernandes said.

Summing up the result of the talks, the Defence Minister said the visit "has raised our relationship to a still higher level".

### Pledge to fight terrorism

The two countries also reiterated their resolve to combat international terrorism and religious extremist jointly and with third countries. "We have pledged to support each other on combating cross-border terrorism and other security threats," Mr. Fernandes said.

"Combating terrorism was one of the top issues on our agenda," Marshal Sergeyeu said adding that the two Ministers devoted "at least half the time" during the talks to discussing the problem.

THE HINDU

30 JUN 2000

# Ties with others not at India's cost: Russia

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, JUNE 29. Russia has pledged to take into account India's security concerns in its relations with third countries. The Russian Defence Minister, Marshal Igor Sergeyevev, assured his Indian counterpart, Mr. George Fernandes, that Moscow would not take any steps in its defence dealings with other countries that could impair India's security.

"Russia's friendship with any other country will not in any way affect its friendship with India," Mr. Fernandes said in reply to a question whether India was worried by Russian arms supplies to China. New Delhi had conveyed its concern to Moscow recently over Russian involvement in the development and arming of China's FC-1 jet fighter that Pakistan wants to acquire. Mr. Fernandes said he did not raise this issue with Marshal Sergeyevev but the Russian side is said to have assured the Indian Minister that it would take care of India's concerns.

"As regards supplies of Russian-made weapons and military hardware to other countries, including China, Russia is above all guided by the principle of doing no harm to the existing Russian-Indian relations and maintaining

stability in the region," General Leonid Ivashov, head of the Russian Defence Ministry's international department, told *The Hindu*.

Marshal Sergeyevev also promised that a proposed Russian-American early warning missile centre would not be used to infringe on India's security. The centre is being set up by Moscow and Washington to monitor each other's missile launchings, but in theory can also be used to spy on missile programmes of other countries.

A Russian radar situated in Tajikistan can scan the whole of South Asia and the U.S. could get information on Indian missile tests if Moscow opens its monitoring data to Washington.

However, Marshal Sergeyevev ruled out such possibility saying "the early warning centre will only serve to monitor Russian and American launchings and will not in any way affect India," he told a joint press conference.

"The centre will also be open to other countries — we have already invited observers from Europe — and if India is interested it can send its observer."

**JWG to be upgraded: Page 13**

THE HINDU

6 JUN 200

# Common threat draws Delhi, Moscow closer

NEW DELHI, JAN. 31. India is happy that the warmth and close cooperation with Russia have been retained at the high level even after the change of guard in Moscow — with Mr. Vladimir Putin, becoming President after the retirement, for health reasons, of Mr. Boris Yeltsin. Based as it was on their enlightened self-interest and the shared experience as pluralist societies, the kinship has grown as both the countries face identical threats of trans-border terrorism. This is evident from the tone of the messages from Moscow on the occasion of the Republic Day as also Mr. Putin's gesture — the only one of this type — in telephoning the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, for felicitations on the occasion.

*Indu Rana*

The bilateral relationship between New Delhi and Moscow had remained "special" even after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, with the mutuality of interests and commonality of principles providing the main anchor. Only for a brief while in the last decade, Pakistan felt encouraged that it would be able to slow-down the momentum of India-Russia dealings, both in political and defence supplies areas. However, it had to give up its efforts, when it saw no chance of success. Of late, Moscow has been forthright in its denunciation of Islamabad's support to all manner of terrorist outfits in the region. The Taliban's recognition of Chechnya has served to reinforce Moscow's belief of Pakistan's backing of subversive elements which had been active in Central Asia, apart from the Russian territory. The Russian Foreign Ministry's statement on the subject last week did not

receive adequate attention in India — both in its tone and content, it provided the harshest yet indictment of Pakistan from anyone from the world community.

The following portions of the Moscow statement are revealing in several ways: "Delhi's accusations against Islamabad of their (backing) for cross-border terrorism are beginning to seem more grounded.

"Due to the lack of a clear-cut official response from the Pakistani administration in response to the opening of a Chechen 'embassy' in Kabul, we are much less inclined to trust assertions that the (Pakistani) authorities have no control over extremist and terrorist organisations based in Pakistan, and assertions about the so-called 'full independence' of the Taliban.

"Such statements can be only be a justification of the lack of desire to corroborate the declared rejection of terrorism by concrete deeds.

Despite Pakistan's official renunciation of all forms of terrorism, several extremist organisations continue to act in an unhindered manner on Pakistani territory and to call for a jihad (holy war) against sovereign nations.

"If the Pakistani military are really unable to control the growing illegal activities of extremist formations, a more worrying question arises about who really sets the rules of the game there (in Pakistan). The fast growth of inter-ethnic and inter-denominational radicalism, separatism and terrorism in Pakistan can have the most grave consequences for the stability of all countries in the region without exception, as well as for Pakistan's very statehood.

"The so-called 'recognition' of Chechnya by the Taliban, which is being openly

backed by Islamabad, can be only viewed as another link in the emerging chain of national terrorism."

The Taliban's "recognition" of Chechnya as an independent State was announced after the visit to Kandahar on January 16 of a six-member delegation from there. In practical terms, this step would not make any difference because the Taliban regime itself has not been accepted by the world community (it has been recognised by only three countries — Pakistan, UAE and Saudi Arabia). Intended to be a goodwill gesture by Kabul, it serves to confirm the charges of its support, in men and material, to the secessionist republic.

The Pakistani press has shown understanding of the stand taken by Taliban, even though there is a varying degree of enthusiasm about it. This is evident from the editorial comment by *Daily News*: "The Russians, who have branded the Chechen fighters as Islamic terrorists, have also been accusing the Taliban of involvement in the Chechen war — a charge the Taliban have denied. The hostility is mutual as it dates back to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Moscow has since not come to terms with Taliban's triumph in the Afghan civil war, and has been in the forefront of the campaign to impose sanctions against the Taliban regime.

Little wonder Mullah Omar, in his Eid message, urged the Muslim world to "hear the cries of the Chechen Muslims" and put pressure on Russia to "stop its naked aggression". The Taliban's latest initiative may have been deemed necessary to express solidarity with Muslim brethren in distress, but it may be seen in the West, particularly by the USA, as compounding

the 'fundamentalist threat', more so because the Taliban are already under fire for harbouring Osama bin Laden."

The messages received from Mr. Putin on the Republic Day were notable for warmth and emphasis on what binds the two countries together. What greeting the President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, Mr. Putin drew attention to the point that India and Russia were "united by the affinity of fundamental national and geo-political interests, adherence to the ideals of peace and democracy, international stability and security." He was convinced that "constructive Russian-Indian interaction, which is successfully advancing along the way of strategic partnership, will remain a weighty factor in world politics in the new millennium".

Similar statements were contained in the message to Mr. Vajpayee. It said: "The fact that over many decades our countries have been bound by the ties of all-round and mutually beneficial cooperation, trust and understanding gives us particular satisfaction. Today, against the backdrop of emerging multipolar world, Russia and India strive to enhance constructive interaction in bilateral and global affairs in the interests of strengthening international stability and security.

"I am convinced that the growing strategic partnership between our countries based on trust will become an important element of the world order in the third millennium."

Mr. Putin's telephonic conversation with Mr. Vajpayee, among other things, reflected their joint resolve to combat terrorism.

# Armsdrop case ruling 'shocks' Russians

4/2  
By Vladimir Radyuhin HO-14

MOSCOW, FEB. 3. Life sentences handed down in Calcutta to ethnic Russian pilots for an arms air-drop in India has caused shock and indignation in Russia and may tarnish the image of India as a Russian friend. The Russian Foreign Ministry voiced the hope that Indian authorities would "soften the sentence taking into account friendly relations between our countries and humanitarian considerations."

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said Moscow "will not be indifferent" to the fate of its citizens. Four of the five crew members, who hail from Latvia, have been given Russian citizenship and Russia's private NTV Television said the case of the fifth was being considered.

Russian media and human rights activists have been more outspoken in their reaction. A popular daily said the charges against the Russian pilots had been "framed-up" by Indian security services to justify their failure to nab the men behind the arm smuggling operation.

"The secret services really screwed up and in order to cover their shame, they've handed over innocent people instead of the criminals," said the *Novyie Izvestia* newspaper.

Members of the Moscow-based International Committee for Humanitarian Assistance to the crew members denounced the verdict as unjust and falsified.

"The trial has failed to prove the pilots' guilt," said Mr. Grigory Kovrizhenko, the committee's

deputy chairman. "We closely watched the hearings and were amazed at the dirty handling of the case. The CBI proved helpless, indulged in falsifications, and supplied forged documents, which came to light at the trial."

Mr. Kovrizhenko said his committee would appeal the verdict and take the case to the UN Human Rights Commission.

Mrs. Karina Moskalenko, a Moscow lawyer of the Russian pilots, said the crew "had just discharged their professional duties, they did not and could not be aware of the weapons on board."

The Indian embassy in Moscow has been at pains justifying the sentence given to the Russian pilots. "It's not that they are terrorists - it's that they were involved in the act of abetting terrorism," an embassy spokesman told the Moscow Echo radio. But the incident may put to test India's image as one of Russia's most trusted friends. Russian media have been shaken by what they said was 'inhuman' treatment of the inmates in the Calcutta jail.

The *Novyie Izvestia* daily described conditions at the prison as 'abominable' and said the Russians "would have probably died had it not been for the constant attention of the press."

The Russian crew's lawyers said the men were seriously ill and some of them might not live to see their case appealed. Mr. Igor Moskvitin is said to suffer from tuberculosis, while Mr. Yevgeny Antipenko has had three heart attacks since his arrest.

THE HINDU

- 4 FEB 2000



There's new relevance in an old relationship

# Remember Russia

98-8  
17/2

**C**OPING with the hostilities of Pakistan, sustaining the tenuous thaw in relations with China, anxieties and expectations regarding Clinton's forthcoming visit to India, have been the operational focus of our foreign policy over the last six months. In the process, the fourth point in the quadrangular terms of reference as far as power equations go, namely Russia, has faded from our attention. But Russia cannot, and should not, be ignored.

At the end of a decade after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the Russian Federation, the country is undergoing significant political changes which we should take note of. These developments have to be assessed in the context of the travails and transformations which the Russia Federation has been undergoing since 1991. Much has happened since Yeltsin mounted a tank in August 1991. Yeltsin's charisma has sustained democracy, but not good and effective governance. Liberation and economic re-structuring has polarised the Russian economy and subjected large sections of Russians to economic pressures. The situation has been compounded by disjointed autonomies disrupting its industrial and manufacturing processes. Initial expectations of the Russians about external inputs from the West have not been met in full measure.

At the political level, there were conflicts between the legislature and executive, culminating at one point with the latter undertaking military operations against the Duma in October 1993. There have been frequent changes of prime ministers and in the Cabinet. Ethno-religious centrifugal movements in Dagestan and Chechnya pose a danger to the stability and territorial integrity of the country. The Russians have a profound angst about losing their importance as an influential nation-state and superpower. A groundswell of nationalism is finding expression amidst the

claims of various political parties and factions, particularly that of the Communist Party. Russia's foreign policy since 1991 has gone through differing orientations from being Euro-centric and pro-American to asserting its position as a Eurasian power. There have been resentments about the expansion of NATO and related arrangements with the resulting focus on Japan, and China and to a lesser extent on Southeast Asia. The Russian focus on these two important Asian neighbours is subject to historical threat perceptions about both countries, which are shared by the emerging generation of Russian politicians.

It is in this context that elections to the Duma took place on December 19, with Vladimir Putin, the present prime minister, emerg-



J.N. DIXIT

**It would be pertinent to point out that Russia has shown a greater understanding of India's security concerns, despite its formal position on non-proliferation**

ing as an important figure in Russian politics. On all counts, the new Russian Duma is dominated by members of the Centre-right parties, whose economic policies would be reformist and whose defence and foreign policy orientations would be nationally assertive. Though the Communist Party has gained the largest number of seats in the lower house of the Parliament, Putin's Unity Party has the second largest number of seats. The seats acquired by Grigory Yavlinsky's Yabloko Party, the union of Rightist forces led by Anatoly Chubais, and the Fatherland Party of former prime minister, Primakov, and the major of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, could result in

tempering the influence of the Russian Communist Party in the Duma. Of particular significance is the extreme nationalist group led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy emerging with greatly diminished membership in the Russian Federation in the clear and missile weaponisation. The presidential elections to be held this year. The conclusion to be drawn is that the Russian people, despite all the uncertainties which they have faced, have decided to sustain the democratic experiment in that country.

One has indulged in detailing developments in Russia because of Indo-Russian relations will be gauged by partner and source of defence supplies. In-Links with Russia would be a positive factor in facilitating India's relations with not have the same sub-countries of Central Asia and China. Instance or positive political dia's foreign policy should be guided by intensities which characterise these considerations.

terised India's relations with the former Soviet

the illusions of acquiring a purely western European or trans-Atlantic identity because Western attitudes towards the Russian Federation remain sceptical. Richard Pipes, a professor of history at Harvard, articulates this scepticism succinctly when he says: "The political and economic culture of a nation cannot be radically changed by Government decrees. Values and attitudes inculcated

Union. As long as Gaidar was Prime Minister and Kozyrev was foreign minister in early 1990s, India stood margin-

to alter them significantly." It would be logical to presume that the wielders of power in Russia would be aware of this kind of assessment and react to it. This reaction, in the broadest political sense, would be to revert back to Russia's ing on an even keel. However, over the last three years or so, Indo-Russian relations seem to be in a drift, although it is a positive drift.

What seems lacking is a certain dynamism which is called for, given the evolving strategic and security concerns about Pakistan, US and China, pre-occupy us, we would do well in the region. There have been no high level political visits between India and the importance of our relations with Russia.

INDIAN EXPRESS

17 FEB 2000

# 'India, Russia together can change world order'

Fred Weir  
Moscow, February 27

**N**EWLY RE-ELECTED Speaker of the State Duma Gennady Seleznyov begins a four-day visit to New Delhi and Hyderabad on Monday, bringing with him the message that Russia and India must step up trade and strategic cooperation in an increasingly dangerous world.

"Both Russia and India possess all the potential to become two powerful poles in the new world order," Mr Seleznyov told Indian journalists before his departure from Moscow. "Cooperation between them creates a wide area of stability in the Asiatic space, rendering positive influence on the entire future world situation".

Mr Seleznyov, a Communist, is accompanied by a nine-member delegation representing all factions in Russia's freshly-elected Parliament.

They are expected to hold meet-

ings with the Vice President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Leader of the Opposition. A session of the Lok Sabha, with Mr Seleznyov's participation, will be devoted to holding the first meeting of the Joint India-Russia Parliamentary Commission.

Russia is currently in the midst of Presidential elections and its acting President Vladimir Putin so far lacks a popular mandate.

In a wide-ranging interview, Mr Seleznyov stressed that Russia's Parliament stands as a guarantee of stability and continuity in Moscow's policies, despite the temporary absence of an elected President in the Kremlin.

He also expressed strong support for India's position in Kashmir, said Russia is grateful for Delhi's understanding of the difficult fight against terrorism and separatism in Chechnya, backed India's candidacy as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, and called for more

strategic coordination between India, Russia and China.

"Russia will have Presidential elections on March 26, but irrespective of the results, the most important priority in our foreign policy remains close and trust-based relations with India," Mr Seleznyov said, adding: "This is a political and strategic imperative for Russia".

The views of Russia and India have grown closer together on most key global issues in recent years, he said. These include a common opposition to the Western military alliance NATO's attack on Yugoslavia last year, and attempts by the United States to alter the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 and thereby subvert the foundations of nuclear arms control.

On Security Council seat for India, he said: "I would like to reiterate that Russia considers India as a strong and worthy candidate for permanent membership in a reformed UN Security Council".

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
28 FEB 2000

# Russia stands by India in fighting terrorism

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, FEB. 27.** Russia applauds India's call for forging an international front to fight terrorism and supports its crackdown on trans-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

10-19 28/2  
The Speaker of the State Duma, Mr. Gennady Seleznyov, who is leading a parliamentary delegation to India, said Russia and India should work together to oppose international terrorism.

"Russia welcomes India's position in favour of setting up a common anti-terrorist front by all interested states aimed at isolating extremists and bringing concerted influence on a number of Muslim governments," Mr. Seleznyov said in written answers to questions filed by Indian correspondents in Moscow on the eve of his departure to India.

A 10-member Russian parliamentary delegation left Moscow on Sunday on a four-day visit to India. The Russia MPs will call on the President, Vice-President, the Prime Minister, the External Affairs Minister, and the Speaker of Parliament, as well as travel to Hyderabad and hold the first meeting of the Joint India-Russia Parliamentary Commission set up in 1998.

Speaking about transnational terrorism, Mr. Seleznyov specifically mentioned Pakistan. "The situation in some regions of immediate interest to Russia and India, where terrorist-training centres are being set up and ideas of militant fundamentalism are gaining ground, is causing serious concern and worry."

"The so-called 'recognition' of Chechnya by the Taliban, which enjoys open support by Pakistan, cannot but be regarded as one more link in the emerging chain of transnational terrorism."

Mr. Seleznyov expressed gratitude for India's "principled and consistent stand" on Chechnya and said Russia "in turn firmly stands for the territorial integrity of India and supports its position on the resolution of the Kashmir problem on the basis of the 1972 Simla Agreements."

Voicing strong support for In-

dia's efforts to curb terrorism and separatism in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Seleznyov said Russia "takes the view that certain quarters in Pakistan are trying to create one more hotbed of tension in the region, which undoubtedly threatens stability on the subcontinent and beyond its borders."

Mr. Seleznyov reiterated Russia's support for India as "a strong and worthy candidate for permanent membership in the reformed U.N. Security Council."

Recalling the rejection by Russia and India of the unipolar model of the world, he said both nations "possess all the possibilities to become two powerful poles in the new world order."

He also urged closer cooperation between Russia, India and China on regional and global issues, arguing that the three nations bore "growing responsibility for forming a solid system of security and stability in Asia and throughout the world."

Touching on the Presidential elections in Russia, the DUMA Speaker voiced confidence that "irrespective of the voting, close and trust-based relations with India will remain a major priority in (Russia's) foreign policy."

"Relations between our countries and peoples are not subject to political change," said Mr. Seleznyov.

"Indo-Russian relations have continued to develop in a stable manner, reaching the level of strategic partnership."

The Speaker described the current level of bilateral trade and economic ties as "not commensurate with the potentials and requirements of Russia and India" and called for broader cooperation in constructing new and modernising Soviet-built industrial projects in India and promoting direct tie-ups between Indian and Russian provinces.

Asked to clarify the Russian Parliament's position on the case of Russian pilots sentenced to life imprisonment in India, Mr. Seleznyov said MPs considered the sentence to be "excessively severe," even though Russia shared India's stand on separatism and terrorism.

THE HINDU

28 FEB 2000

## Russian Dy. PM arriving today

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JAN. 12.** The Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Mr. Viktor Khristenko, is arriving in India tomorrow for high-level talks on bilateral cooperation.

Mr. Khristenko, who is the co-chairman of the Indo-Russian Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) for trade, economic, scientific and cultural cooperation, is leading a 70-member strong delegation for a two-day plenary session of the IGC, held alternatively in Delhi and Moscow every year.

The visit carries added significance as it is the first high-level contact between the two countries since the Russian leader, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, resigned and appointed his chosen successor, the Prime Minister, Mr. Vladimir Putin, as Acting President.

With Mr. Putin strongly favoured to win the presidential elections scheduled for March 26, Mr. Khristenko's visit offers India an early opportunity to probe the foreign policy priorities of Russia's new leadership.

**THE HINDU**  
13 JAN 2000

## India, Russia trade protocol

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 13.** India and the Russian Federation have agreed to take steps for diversifying and expanding bilateral trade especially in high quality and hi-tech items.

The total Indo-Russian trade turnover during 1998-99 was Rs.5259.2 crores. During the first six months of the current financial year 1999-2000 (April-September), the turnover has reached Rs.3186.3 crores and, therefore, the bilateral trade turnover for the full year is expected to be considerably higher than last year. However, both sides underlined that the existing volume of bilateral trade did not reflect the potential for cooperation between the two countries and emphasised the need to expand it further.

This is indicated in the protocol of the 6th session of the Indo-Russian Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation which was signed here today by Mr. P.P. Prabhu, Commerce Secretary and Mr. J.L. Mitrofanov, Deputy Minister of Trade of the Russian Federation, on behalf of their respective governments. The Indian delegation included Mr. U.S. Bhatia, Joint Secretary (East Europe), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Mr. S.D. Kapoor, Chairman and Managing Director, MMTC Ltd, Mr. S.M. Dewan CMD, STC, Mr.S.S.Ahuja, Chairman, Tea Board and other senior officials.

India and Russia have also agreed to intensify bilateral cooperation in the field of diamonds. In this context, they agreed on the

signing of a protocol between MMTC of India and Gokhran of the Russian Federation.

The Russian side agreed to examine positively the issues raised by India regarding exports on consignment basis, making available the facility of storing in Custom Bonded Warehouses for Indian tea and tobacco and the issue of VAT exemption for Indian goods under the consignment export scheme.

The Russian side also noted that relaxation of value addition norms for goods had created a favourable basis for increasing the volume of trade through the expansion of import of hi-tech items from India.

Both delegations discussed and finalised the draft guidelines for the utilisation of Russian rupee-debt funds for investments in projects in India and agreed that banking arrangements between the two central banks would be amended appropriately.

On issues relating to transport, it was agreed to take steps for operationalising the joint liner service by the end of March.

It was also agreed to have a trilateral Russian-Iranian-Indian meeting to consider issues connected with the project for bilateral cargo transportation via Iran.

With regard to banking and financial matters, India raised the issue of settlement by the Russian Federation of pending claims pertaining to export of Indian goods to the republics of the former USSR. The Russian side agreed to expedite the matter, according to an official release.

THE HINDU  
14 JAN 2000

# India, Russia sign protocol to expand trade

HT Correspondent

New Delhi, January 13

INDIA AND Russian Federation have decided to step up bilateral trade by focussing on high value-added items like diamonds, hi-tech exports, trade facilitation measures and launch of a joint liner service. Co-operation in the financial sector would also be stepped up and duty concessions would be exchanged for mutual benefit, according to decisions taken at the sixth session of the India-Russian Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation.

The existing volume of bilateral trade was growing at a satisfactory rate but did not reflect the full potential, according to the protocol

signed by the two sides at the end of a series of negotiations. During the first half of the current financial year exports to Russia grew by 25 per cent while imports from the country registered a 36.8 per cent growth. The protocol was signed by Commerce Secretary P Prabhu and Russian Federation's Deputy Minister of Trade J L Mitrofanov.

According to decisions taken by the two sides, public sector trading house MMTC Ltd would sign a protocol with Gokhran of Russia for trade in rough diamonds. Rough diamonds would be sourced from Russia, which is a large producer of this commodity and supplied to the processing units in India. The Russian side has agreed to help consignment exports from India,

especially to store tea and tobacco in bonded warehouses. The Indian side has demanded VAT (value added tax) exemption for consignment exports and reduction in customs duty on packaged tea.

The Russian side expressed concern over anti-dumping actions initiated by India. India's rupee debt would be utilised for investments here and the problems faced in trade through this route would be ironed out. Increased cooperation between financial institutions of the two sides was also discussed as a mode for boosting economic relations.

The two sides also agreed to hold joint consultations with Iran for a project to facilitate cargo movement through Iranian ports.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

14 JAN 2000

# Indo-Russian meet after March election

Moscow, January 15 <sup>167</sup> HC-14

THE INDO-RUSSIAN summit which had been repeatedly put off due to the constant ill-health of former Russian President Boris Yeltsin, will now take place shortly after the presidential elections in Russia, scheduled for March 26, Kremlin sources said.

A joint declaration on 'Strategic Partnership Between the Two Countries' will be signed during the summit, sources said here yesterday.

A meeting of the Indo-Russian inter-governmental commission on economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation in New Delhi, which ends today, has already given shape to major projects for collaboration between India and Russia.

**US POLICY ON TERRORISM FLAYED:** Russia has accused the United States of adopting a double-edged policy on terrorism in light of a recent meeting between a rebel minister and US officials which it says may impede improvement in their bilateral relations.

Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said the meeting between Chechen Foreign Minister Ilya Ahamedov and US officials at the State Department in Washington this week gave "respectability to (the) outlawed terrorists". It contradicted the American stand against one of the world's most wanted terrorists, Osama Bin Laden, he added.

He said the meeting might prove to be an impediment to improvement in US-Russian relations.

Meanwhile, Iran has extended its "full support" to the Kremlin in its "measures towards resolving the Chechen crisis". Teheran's National Security Council Secretary Hassan Rowahani met Kremlin leaders and said his country recognised Moscow's right to punish "terrorists and bandits".

**UNITED NATIONS:** The UN has voiced concern over statements by Russian commanders that males between 10 and 60 would not be allowed in and out of Chechnya as the number of Chechens returning from Ingushetia dropped sharply over the past few days. (Agencies)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
16 JAN 2000

## India supports Russian drive in Chechnya

19/1/00 By Atul Aneja RD-13

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 18.** Without criticising the Taliban, India today expressed solidarity with Russia in its confrontation with Chechen rebels.

Reacting to reports of the recognition of Chechnya as an independent State by the Taliban, the foreign office today side-stepped criticism of Afghanistan's Islamic extremists.

Instead, its spokesman focussed on New Delhi's backing to Moscow's drive against the Chechen rebels.

"The Government and people of India have expressed their full solidarity with the Government and people of the Russian Federation as they tackle the grave crisis confronting them in the Republic of Chechnya in the Russian Federation.

The Government of India fully supports the Government of the Russian Federation in the steps taken by it in the protection of its constitutional order and territorial integrity and does not welcome encouragement to forces which undermine this", the spokesman said in response to a query.

This reaction assumes importance in the light of what analysts here described as New Delhi's "softness" towards the Taliban ever since the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane to Kandahar.

**THE HINDU**

**19 JAN 2000**



# Putin reaffirms strategic partnership with India

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, JAN. 26.** The Acting Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, congratulated India on its 50th Republic Day today, reaffirming Moscow's consistent policy of building a strategic partnership with it.

"We cherish the close relations with India," Mr. Putin said in a message to the Indian President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan.

"Our states are united by the similarity of basic national and geopolitical interests, adherence to the ideals of peace and democracy, international stability and security."

This is the first time after taking over from Mr. Boris Yeltsin on New Year's eve that Mr. Putin has gone on record to assert his commitment to the former's policy of forging a strategic relationship with India, which he described as "one of the poles in the modern world order."

"I am sure that constructive Indo-Russian interaction, which is successfully moving on the path of strategic partnership, would be weighty factor in world politics in the new millennium," Mr. Putin said.

Mr. Putin, who is concurrently Prime Minister, also sent a tele-

gram to his Indian counterpart, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, expressing "satisfaction that over a period of several decades, our countries have been bound by relations of multi-faceted and mutually beneficial cooperation, trust and mutual understanding."

"I am confident that the strengthening of trust-based strategic partnership between our two countries would become an important element in the international order in the third millennium," the message said.

Mr. Putin, who is confidently predicted to win the presidential elections in Russia, in March is expected to pay "one of his first visits abroad" after the elections to India, according to the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Viktor Khristenko, who earlier this month led a Russian delegation to the regular session of the joint Inter-Governmental Commission in Delhi.

In what could be a sign of a revived interest towards India, Russian print and electronic media marked the golden jubilee of the Indian Republic with a series of stories and interviews with Mr. A. B. Vajpayee and the Indian Ambassador to Moscow, Mr. S. K. Lambah.

THE HINDU  
27 JAN 2000

## India for ties with Russian provinces

By Vladimir Radyuhin

27/1  
10/14  
MOSCOW, JAN. 26. To tap the vast potential of Russian regions for bilateral trade, the Indian mission in Moscow is launching an ambitious project to disseminate information on India and its business opportunities to all the 89 provinces of Russia.

Under the project, the Indian embassy, in cooperation with Russian scholars and experts on India, will arrange seminars and conferences in eight to 10 regions every year.

A Memorandum of Understanding signed this week between the Indian embassy and Russia's Institute of Oriental Studies calls for the establishment of a joint group, tasked with planning and organising Indian activities in the regions.

Speaking on the occasion, India's Ambassador to Russia, Mr. S.K.Lambah, said India attached great importance to the promotion of direct ties between the regions of the two countries. A separate Working Group on Regional Cooperation had been established for the purpose within the Indo- Russian Inter-Governmental Commission.

The first regional seminar will be held in Ryazan, a large industrial regional capital, 175 Km south of Moscow.

THE HINDU  
27 JAN 2000

# Putin congratulates Vajpayee

29/1  
By Vladimir Radyuhin 410-12  
MOSCOW, JAN. 28. Russia's Acting President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, will visit India after the March 26 Presidential elections, which he is strongly favoured to win.

9 - Russia  
Mr. Putin conveyed his plans for an India visit in a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, on January 27, diplomatic sources said. The Russian leader, who also holds the post of Prime Minister, called his Indian counterpart to congratulate him on the 50th anniversary of the Republic of India.

During the 30-minute conversation, the Russian and Indian leaders reaffirmed their intention to sign a declaration on strategic partnership between the two countries during the coming summit, the sources said.

The summit has been repeatedly postponed due to the health problems of Russia's former President, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, who resigned ahead of his time on December 31.

The Kremlin press service said the sides "expressed satisfaction about the proximity of approaches of Russia and India on the main international problems."

"The leaders noted the commonalities of views related to the need for unity of action by the international community with the aim of liquidation of the threat of international terrorism and extremism," the Kremlin press service said.

The diplomatic sources also said Mr. Putin and Mr. Vajpayee had agreed to work together to combat international terrorism.

On Thursday, Moscow blasted Islamabad for engaging in cross-border terrorism against India and harbouring terrorist groups on Pakistani territory.

THE HINDU  
29 JAN 2000