

'No double standards in fighting terrorism'

NEW DELHI, DEC. 4. The following are excerpts from the text of Delhi Declaration on Further Consolidation of Strategic Partnership between India and Russia issued here today after talks between the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and the Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee:

Our strategic partnership provides a solid framework for long-term and all-round development of relations. Mutual security, development and prosperity of our peoples are core objectives of the partnership. It also contributes to countering global challenges and threats and promoting strategic stability at the international level.

The established practice of holding annual meetings at summit level as well as at Ministerial and Working levels, and exchanges between Parliamentary, judicial and other constitutional bodies would be further intensified. There would be particular emphasis on deepening the economic content of bilateral relations. We reiterate our support for each other's territorial integrity and respect for each other's sovereignty, enshrined in our respective Constitutions. Neither side shall take any actions which might threaten or impair the security of the other. Both sides shall be guided by this principle in determining their security and defence policies as well as in military technical cooperation with third countries.

Respect for diversity

Bilateral cooperation as well as cooperation with other countries would be further enhanced to meet the various challenges of globalisation, in particular the mitigation of its negative manifestations. Globalisation and national identity represent complementary components of world order. Recognition of and respect for diversity is a necessary precondition for human progress, and an essential component of the dialogue between civilisations.

Enduring ties of friendship, trust and confidence and commonality of interests confer on India and Russia a unique capability to contribute to the evolu-



The Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, exchanging documents after signing the 'Joint declaration on strengthening and enhancing economic and scientific cooperation', in New Delhi on Wednesday. — Photo: S. Arneja

tion of a new world order, which would be stable, secure, equitable and sustainable and will be based on the respect for the principles of the U.N. Charter and international law. To fulfil this vision, both sides would endeavour to strengthen relevant international institutions and mechanisms.

U.N. membership

Both countries favour strengthening of U.N.'s central role in promoting international security in a multi-polar world. They stand for enhancing the efficiency of the U.N. and its Security Council and making them more reflective of the contemporary geo-political and economic realities and rendering them more representative of the interests of the vast majority of the U.N. members by completing the process of rationally reforming the organisation based on the broadest consensus of its member-states. In this context, Russia reaffirms its support to India as a strong and appropriate candidate for permanent membership in an expanded United Nations Security Council.

We take note of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development of Johannesburg and in this context,

ment of weapons in outer space, non-use of threat of use of force in respect of space-based objects and preserving the use of space for full range of cooperative, peaceful and developmental activities.

The situation in our common neighbourhood — Afghanistan and Central Asia — is of vital security interest to both the countries. We feel that there is a need to continuously assess the evolving Afghan situation and intend to continue and expand the close cooperation on Afghanistan.

West Asian conflict

We call for containment of the spiral of violence in the Middle East and resumption, in good faith, of the negotiations towards establishment of a just and durable peace on the basis of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002).

Both the countries support the continuation of political and diplomatic efforts to fully implement all the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Iraq.

India and Russia have been victims of terrorism and as democratic and open societies, have been vulnerable to the threats posed by globalisation of terror, including new manifestations of linkage between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Terrorism constitutes a gross violation of human rights, particularly the most fundamental right — the right to life — and is a crime against humanity. India and Russia firmly condemn all acts of terrorism wherever they may occur and whatever may be their motivation.

Non-proliferation Both the countries reiterate their commitment to work towards a new cooperative security order that recognises the legitimate security interests of all countries and promote global peace and stability at lower levels of armaments, and strengthens non-proliferation and disarmament goals. India and Russia are convinced that the promotion of the disarmament process, including reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, is one of the most important components of security both in Asia and in the world at large.

We call for early start of multilateral talks aimed at preparing a comprehensive arrangement on non-deploy-

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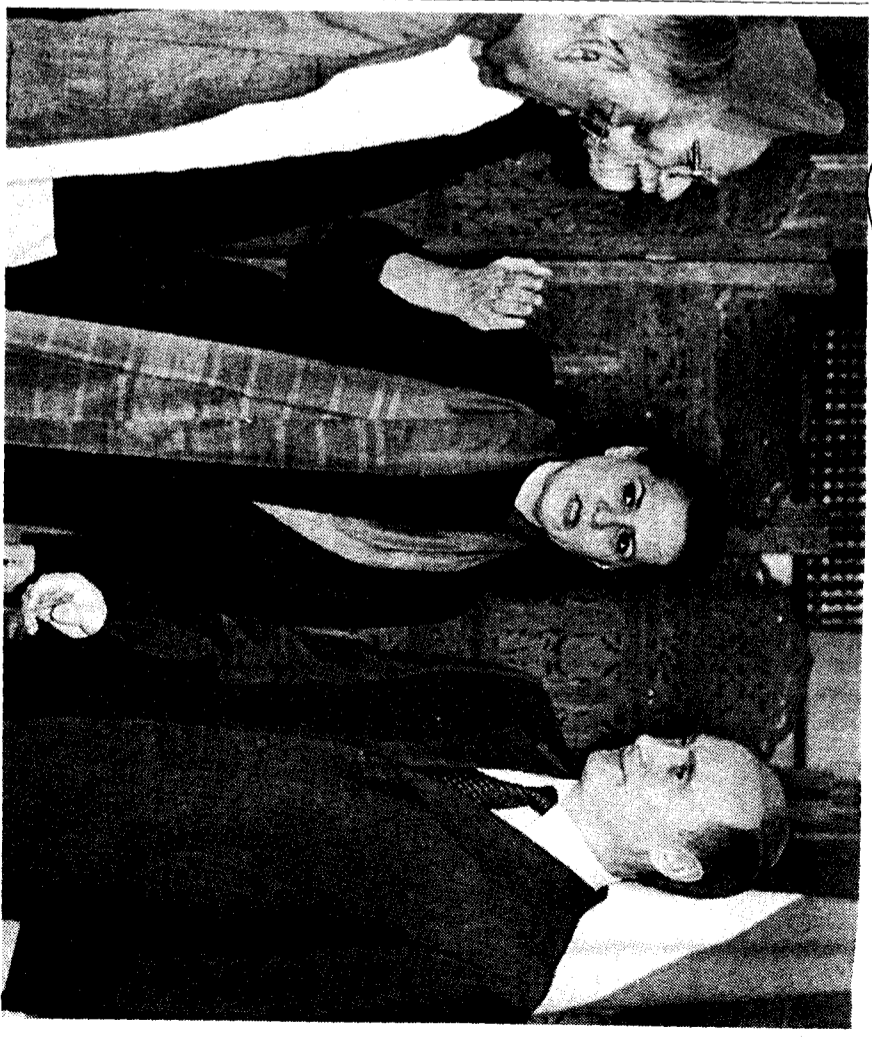
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The Opposition Leader and Congress president, Sonia Gandhi, with the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, in New Delhi on Wednesday. Senior Congress leaders, Manmohan Singh and Natwar Singh, are also seen. — Photo: Shanker Chakravarty

Trade pacts with other countries to be studied

By Amit Barnuah

NEW DELHI, DEC. 4. In a bid to boost flagging bilateral trade, India and Russia today agreed to explore joint possibilities of regional trade and economic cooperation agreements with "other countries" in harmony with their respective national interests.

This was highlighted in the "Joint Declaration on Strengthening and Enhancing Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation" signed between the two countries. Apart from this, seven other agreements, including the "Delhi Declaration" and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on combating terrorism, which envisages the creation of a joint working group on the issue were also signed.

A protocol between India and Russia on the "Protection and Use of Intellectual Property Rights" to an existing scientific and technological cooperation agreement, an MoU in the field of communications, an agreement between Karna-

taka and the Samara region of Russia on trade, economic and cultural cooperation and two agreements between Canara Bank and a Russian bank were also signed.

Canara Bank has agreed to extend a \$10 million credit line to the Russian bank. The protocol on IPRs is to address issues relating to acquisition, distribution, protection, sharing and transferring of IPRs, created in the process of joint activity within the framework of the existing 1994 agreement on scientific and technological cooperation.

The "Joint Declaration" also identified nine areas to increase business interaction and investment. These include strengthening transport links, streamlining customs administration, joint banks in Russia and vice-versa. In the transport sector, the Declaration called for special importance to forward movement on bilateral and trilateral consultations to operationalise the North-South International Transport Corridor.

Russian President calls for change in international rules, plans to lobby Washington

Putin sounds PM on nuke transfer

PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Dec. 4: Keen to do business with India in the field of nuclear energy for civilian and peaceful purposes, Russia today called for changing the existing rules that govern transfer of nuclear technology.

At the same time, it expressed concern over weapons of mass destruction (WMD) falling into the hands of terrorists, and urged the international community to bring about changes that would effectively check clandestine transfer and proliferation of nuclear technology.

Russia has been helping India in enhancing its nuclear power generation. Moscow has already supplied two nuclear reactors for the power plant in Kudankoolam, in Tamil Nadu, a few years ago.

Indications suggest that preparations are on to expand the plant's existing platform to add two more Russian reactors to increase generation by another 2000 MW.

Although Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Indian delegation led by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee discussed the issue in detail during the day, neither side is willing to acknowledge it publicly at this juncture.

"There is great future between India and Russia in the field of nuclear energy and in the past we have worked successfully on this. But we work within the existing international frame-

work and under the obligations that we have undertaken," Putin said this evening, when asked to comment on cooperation between the two sides. He was also quick to add that "existing rules and regulations needed to be improved".

Minutes earlier, while responding to a question on Moscow's concern over Pakistan's weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists, Putin said the existing rules to check non-proliferation of nuclear weapons needed to be strengthened.

"We really think we should react strongly to the danger posed by the proliferation of WMD and the possible misuse of these weapons by terrorists," he said and added that a campaign should be launched to make the world aware of the danger posed by clandestine transfers.

The Russian President's remarks on the transfer of nuclear technology are significant. Russia is a member of the Permanent Five (P-5) and one of the five recognised nuclear powers. India, Pakistan and Israel, though nuclear powers, are not recognised as none of them has signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

What Moscow now intends to do is lobby Washington and other key players to bring about a change in the existing rules to take care of the new realities.

Cooperation between India and Russia for the Kudankoolam nuclear power plant had run into

problems when Moscow decided to sell the reactors. Russia is a member of the Nuclear Supplier's Group (NSG), which makes it clear that any member that is not part of the group or is not a signatory to the NPT will not get access to nuclear technology.

The only way nuclear technology from one of the NSG members could be passed to a non-member country is if it agrees to "full-scope international safeguards". This, in effect, means nuclear technology will be given to the non-members only if they allow international inspectors to inspect their nuclear programme.

India is against this since it does not want its nuclear military programme to come under international scrutiny. But it has maintained that since its nuclear programme has always been transparent, it wants help from countries that have the technology for use in civilian sectors. Delhi is also willing to allow inspection of its projects, which it is developing with outside help.

However, India's argument has not found many takers among the NSG members. What Russia now proposes to do is work along the existing NSG framework by expanding the Kudankoolam nuclear power project.

This, the two sides feel, will enable them to circumvent the NSG guidelines without India agreeing to "full-scope safeguards".



APJ Abdul Kalam and AB Vajpayee wait to receive Russian President Vladimir Putin at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Telegraph picture

Talking shop to take on terror

SEEMA GUHA

New Delhi, Dec. 4: Besides sending a strong political signal of close cooperation between the Vajpayee and Putin governments, the signing of a memorandum of understanding to combat terrorism will have little impact at the ground level, Indian agencies privately say.

External affairs minister Yashwant Sinha and his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov signed the agreement in Hyderabad House today. Though the nitty-

gritty have not yet been worked out, a joint working group will be in place to institutionalise cooperation in fighting terrorism.

But to the people on the ground, intelligence agencies and senior officials who deal with terrorism on a daily basis, these high-profile working groups provide little help.

"The JWG's are talking shops. It is good to know Russia shares our concerns and, diplomatically and politically, this has enormous uses, but on the ground, where it matters, there is little el-

ther the Russians or the Americans can do for us," an intelligence official explained.

President Vladimir Putin's blunt statements about Pakistan, the Taliban and al Qaida have pleased India's political establishment.

"Putin's concerns about Pakistan's role in supporting jihadis, his fears about proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and these landing in wrong hands find an echo in India," a senior Indian diplomat said.

"We value Russia's role in trying to get this view across to the international community. We hope the synergy flowing from the highest political level will be reflected in all our interactions, including the Joint Working Group," he added.

Senior intelligence officials, however, concede that over a period of time, cooperation in combating terrorism could be much more effective. These officials privately say that the JWG on terrorism with the US has not been a great success.

'India grateful to Russia for support'

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, JUNE 5. India is grateful to Russia for its support in the current standoff with Pakistan, the National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, said here.

"We are heartened by the understanding and sympathy from our Russian friends in our fight against cross-border terrorism," Mr. Mishra declared after talks with the Russian Defence Minister, Sergei Ivanov, on Tuesday. "Russia has a very good understanding of the situation (in South Asia)," he said.

Mr. Mishra was on a one-day visit to Moscow to attend celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the Russian Security Council. For his part, Mr. Ivanov said Russia would "do everything to

defuse the conflict between India and Pakistan." He said Russia was greatly concerned over the crisis because "Kashmir lies in the middle of the 'arch of stability' Russia wants to build from Vancouver to Vladivostok."

"Agreement has been reached that the President of Pakistan (Pervez Musharraf) will visit Moscow this year, and the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, will go to Delhi," Mr. Ivanov said.

"We attentively listened to Musharraf's assurances in Almaty that Pakistan in future will not allow terrorists to act from its territory and that they will be denied Islamabad's support," Mr. Ivanov said. Russia was coordinating its moves with other

countries, including NATO and China.

"I will brief (the U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald) Rumsfeld in Brussels tomorrow on the outcome of the Almaty meetings (of Mr. Putin, with the leaders of India and Pakistan) ahead of his trip to the region," he told reporters.

Mr. Ivanov, who has just returned from a visit to China, said Beijing shared Moscow's perception of the India-Pakistan crisis.

"China shares Russia's and other countries' concerns over the situation in South Asia for the same reasons — it has been a victim of terrorism, with Uighur separatists until recently getting training in Afghanistan," he said.

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THE HINDU

Russia, India keen on preserving ties

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, APRIL 26. Keen on preserving their special relationship, India and Russia are keeping each other informed in advance on how they wish to engage Central Asia and Pakistan.

Russia is sensitive about the rising external influence in its oil-rich Central Asian periphery while India is concerned about Pakistan's external linkages, especially if they involve Moscow.

Aware of the sensitivities involved, the two sides have decided to take each other into confidence about their plans in the two regions. Highly-placed sources in the security establishment here said the Russian side, recently informed the visiting Defence Minister, George Fernandes, about its intention to enhance the frequency of its dialogue with Pakistan. This came with an assurance that the initiative will not, in any way, affect bilateral ties or undermine Indian interests in South Asia.

The Russian side has decided to steer clear of providing any military supplies to Pakistan in the future, including transport helicopters. Mr. Fernandes, while in Moscow, had met both the Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, and the Defence Minister, Sergei Ivanov.

According to analysts, Russia may wish to enhance its contacts with the Pakistanis on three counts. First, Moscow is keen to get a better insight into the Chechen problem. Pakistan can be helpful in this area as it is likely to possess information on Chechen extremists who have been trained in the Taliban-controlled camps in Afghanistan.

Second, by shoring up ties with Islamabad, Moscow may wish to "plug into" the Afghan-

Pakistan track. Sources said there were signs that relations between Kabul and Islamabad may marginally improve in the coming days.

Third, Russia, either on pure commercial considerations or in order to buttress its political goals, may be inclined to invest in Pakistan. Not surprisingly, the head of the International Affairs Committee of the Russian Duma, V.I. Rogozin, spent four days in Islamabad earlier this month.

Though he did meet the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Abdul Sattar, his main engagements were with Ministries dealing with economy, trade and investments. Russia, it is anticipated, is likely to deepen its contacts with Pakistan in the spheres of power, steel and infrastructure development for the transit of Central Asian gas.

A Russian delegation led by its Deputy Foreign Minister dealing with narco-terrorism, Anatoly Sofonov, is expected to visit Pakistan soon. The Pakistanis are also keen to receive Igor Ivanov in Islamabad.

The Indian side, on its part, has conveyed to Russia its perspective on Central Asia and its plans to acquire a higher profile in all spheres in the region. The Russians have been told that India, along with the U.S. and France, plans to locate nuclear material that lies abandoned in Georgia — a country that was at one time part of the former Soviet Union.

India's footprint in Georgia can be seen as part of an initiative driven by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to locate atomic waste that international terrorists may find useful for developing a crude nuclear device.

THE HINDU

India wants 'package deal' on Russian weapons

Srinjoy Chowdhury
in New Delhi

Dec. 4. — At the end of the talks between Russia and India on defence deals, it appeared that India wants a "package deal" on Russian weapons systems to lower the prices. Besides, there was forward movement on the sale of the Admiral Gorshkov, the aircraft-carrier, to India but the "gap" in the assessment over the price remained.

As a senior defence official said today: "They had come up with a figure, then gone down, then gone up. We have not agreed to the figure. We still have to come to an agreement."

● India also appears to be more keen on buying the MiG-29K fighters for the carrier than the French Rafale. Buying the Rafale would mean considerable modifications to the flight deck of the carrier. This will result in higher costs. Also, the fighters themselves cost less than the Rafale.

● India's other deals will extend to the lease of four Tu-22ME reconnaissance planes and then, have the option of buying it. There

have been reports about the lease of an Akula Class nuclear-powered submarine.

India is talking of a 'package' deal. This means that since we are buying a basket of equipment, the

Bonhomie lacking

NEW DELHI, Dec. 4. — Though there was tremendous synergy in thought processes between the Russian President and the Indian Prime Minister, the bonhomie in personal relations appeared lacking as they sat somewhat aloof through the signing of eight sets of accords this evening.

It could be that they had already discussed matters threadbare, but the flow of jokes and laughter on the specially created dais on the Hyderabad House lawns appeared missing. — SNS

prices could be discounted to an extent. The negotiations on all issues are still going on, the official said.

● The other big issue is of the supply of spares. Both the air force and the navy have complained about the lack of spares. The navy has recently demanded that the Russians allow sales directly from original equipment manufacturers, but the Russians want it

routed through a centralised agency. In one or two cases, Russians are allowing India to go directly, the official said. The situation with air force spares, a defence ministry official said, is critical and a large number of agreements to supply spares have been delayed by the Russians. India has spoken of quicker delivery of spares.

● India wants a list of equipment, their availability and their prices in black and white. Then, wherever India buys the stuff from, can know how much it will cost and how quickly it will be available.

● India has a long-term suggestion of production of spares in India, but long before that, it would help if the Russian companies had representatives in India to facilitate the buying and selling.

The problems, the official said, was not because of Russian intransigence, but partly because of differences in ways of accounting. "They value their products in different ways. It is not that they are being difficult and this creates troubles," he added.

Delhi deal to isolate Pakistan

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Udayan Nambodiri
New Delhi, December 4

RUSSIA TODAY joined India's call for an end to the "double standards" in the global war against terrorism. In the Delhi Declaration and Joint Statement, adopted at the end of their summit today, President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee made it amply clear that their common goal was to make Pakistan an international pariah.

Putin lay bare a new doctrine on Pakistan as he said in no uncertain terms that for Russia, this country was more than a mere South Asian neighbourhood problem — Pakistan is a transnational threat because of its deadly mix of Islamic fundamentalism and official support to terror.

So, even as he supported the recent de-escalatory steps by In-

MEETING OF MINDS, VERY ALMOST

TERRORISM	Potential	Problem
▲	Both are victims of terror; suspicious of Pak as anti-terror ally	Russia is hedging bets. Has set up anti-terror group with Pak
MILITARY EQUIPMENT	▲	Russia's arms industry is cash-starved; lacks smart weapons
▲	Russia is willing to sell fighters, ships, tanks cheap, without strings	
TRADE	▲	Businesses in both countries prefer to sell to China
▲	Russia needs cheap consumer goods; India needs machinery, oil	

dia and Pakistan, Putin called for a "system of international safeguards" to ensure that weapons of mass destruction do not fall into the hands of terrorists operating in Pakistan. He appealed to the international community to treat Pakistan as a combination of two threats —

terrorism and proliferation. Unlike leaders of other P-5 nations, Putin, charged up by the recent hostage drama at Moscow theatre by Chechen militants, seemed in no mood to mollify the Musharraf regime. An MoU envisages a Joint Working Group on Counter Ter-

rorism. At the operational level, sharing of Intelligence will be institutionalised with regular contacts between the respective security agencies. The agencies will share Intelligence assessments on groups operating in Pakistan, PoK and Afghanistan, and monitor narco-terrorism in the region. The group will meet for the first time in Moscow in February.

Vajpayee described the Indo-Russian strategic relationship as a "model" for the whole world. He joined Putin in demanding strict vigilance to ensure that every UN member fulfils its responsibilities under the Security Council Resolution 1373 adopted in the aftermath of 9/11, which calls upon each country to do its bit to wipe out terrorism within its frontiers.

Vajpayee also called for wider support for the draft UN resolutions covering nuclear terror-

ism and the India-sponsored Comprehensive Convention on terrorism.

Eight agreements covering closer strategic ties, anti-terror cooperation and economic co-operation, science, technology and telecommunications were signed in the presence of the two leaders.

Putin and Vajpayee expressed dismay at the low level of bilateral trade (\$1.4 billion annually), but pledged to inject more economic content into their relationship.

On Iraq, Putin and Vajpayee indicated that neither would tolerate unilateral action subverting the UN Charter covering non-interference in the internal affairs of member countries. Afghanistan was recognised as a grave "common neighbourhood" issue.

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Putin for trilateral cooperative initiatives

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By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, DEC. 5. The Russian President, Vladimir Putin, has stressed the importance of continuing meetings between India, Russia and China as part of the trilateral cooperative initiative.

Sources said that Mr. Putin, who left here today after a three-day official visit, raised the issue with Mr. Vajpayee on Wednesday. But the Prime Minister did not respond directly to the point made by the Russian President.

According to the sources, Mr. Putin said the Foreign Ministers of the three countries should keep meeting as they did on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly session in September this year.

Asked if there was any proposal to hold a separate Foreign Ministers' meeting (not on the sidelines of the UNGA), the sources replied in the negative.

Mr. Putin is said to have reiterated his recent remarks that Russia and India, India and China, as well as Russia and China, should continue to strengthen their relations.

The institution of annual summits between Russia and India has served to focus

attention on bilateral relations between the two countries and their efforts at multilateral cooperation.

However, just as India needs to be engaged with Russia, Moscow also needs to focus on India and the rest of Asia. Of late, the Russian foreign policy focus has been on the United States and NATO.

If, for instance, the Russia-India relationship is to transcend defence sales and cooperation, then Moscow, too, will have to do its bit in diversifying relations.

The declaration on trade adopted by the two countries is long and detailed in identifying new areas of cooperation, but is short on how this is to be done and whether there is a time frame for implementation.

But, the sources said, trade between the two countries could only grow if there was something in it for the business community. There could be no artificial thrust to the trade relationship, they stressed.

There is little doubt that the strategic concord between the two countries could be undermined if it is not based on strong trade ties. Both countries appear conscious of this issue and the need to address it.

In the field of defence cooperation, it is pointed out that the negotiations for high-

profile deals such as Admiral Gorshkov and the T-22 bomber have been long and tortuous.

According to the sources, the BJP-led Government is going slow on the deals in the post-Tehelka scenario. Given the past controversies on defence deals, the Government is keen that the best possible prices are negotiated with the Russians.

It is instructive that defence purchases are not shown as part of the annual trade turnover between the two countries. Both countries have been speaking in general and not specific terms on the defence deals. The sources, however, are confident that the negotiations will be concluded soon.

As far as the documents signed yesterday are concerned, the Russians have gone along with the Indian position on cross-border terrorism and Pakistan, while New Delhi has accommodated Russian concerns on possible deployment of weapons in space.

There is little doubt that with Mr. Putin at the helm in Russia, a business-like approach to foreign policy issues is evident in Moscow. Such an approach should find welcome in New Delhi.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2002

AN ENDURING FRIENDSHIP

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INDIA AND RUSSIA have reaffirmed a long-standing friendship through the adoption of the Delhi Declaration on Further Consolidation of Strategic Partnership and the other protocols signed and decisions taken in the course of the visit by the Russian President, Vladimir Putin. With both countries struggling to define their relations with other major players on the global stage — in a situation where the rules of international politics are in a state of flux and where the terms of the economic interaction between nations are being re-set — this specific encounter between the Indian and Russian leaderships was of significance for the affirmation of continuity and mutual reassurance that it symbolised. What has added substance is the reinforcement of the faith that there is a real convergence of perspectives on issues as wide-ranging as the phenomenon of terrorism, ensuring the security of nuclear weapon stockpiles in a world facing a new assortment of threats and challenges, the conservation and promotion of multipolarity in global politics, the need for country-specific adjustments in the course of globalisation, and on issues specific to South, Central and West Asia. Russia's belief that India can and should make a substantial contribution to the evolution of a strong global consensus on these issues was revealed in its open support of the Indian campaign for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. The two sides have also made an earnest effort to address the deficiency in bilateral trade which stands in such marked contrast to the very wholesome relationship they share in almost every other sphere.

Russia's unambiguous endorsement of the position that any dialogue with Pakistan can only be initiated after Islamabad has brought a complete end to cross-border infiltration by terrorists and eliminated the terrorist infrastructure within its soil or territory controlled by it would be welcomed by the ruling dispensation in New Delhi. So too would Russia's concur-

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rence with its judgment that the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration provide the sole framework within which any India-Pakistan dialogue should eventually take place. A note of caution would not however be out of order. If Russia has adopted New Delhi's language in the part of the Declaration that deals with India-Pakistan relations so too has India taken on board Moscow's formulations in respect of the weaponisation of outer space. Since India was among the first, and few, countries to support the space-based missile defence plans of the U.S. administration, its endorsement of the Declaration could be interpreted as signalling a reversal of its stand. The Declaration could indeed prove to be inherently weak if it is of the nature of a crude compromise or trade off rather than being the statement of a concord based on sound reasoning and principle.

While no country was specifically named in that part of the Declaration wherein reference was made to the concerns that terrorist groups might come into possession of weapons of mass destruction, Mr. Putin had left little room for ambiguity in the interview he had given to this newspaper on the eve of his visit. Although Islamabad has strenuously and repeatedly refuted Mr. Putin's charge that Pakistan's ability to ensure secure storage of its nuclear weapon material was suspect, the Russian leader has not backtracked. To interpret Mr. Putin's comments on this matter as being intended to woo India at the outset of his visit would be to read it too narrowly as there is no real need for any Russian President to vindicate some of the extreme suspicions harboured by some elements on the Indian side. In that case those charges are either based on hard evidence or were intended to deflect attention from the suspicions that have been aired, from time to time, that control over Russia's stockpile of weapons of mass destruction is not all that secure. New Delhi would do better to take a close look into this matter rather than take pleasure in Pakistan's discomfiture.

INDIA-RUSSIA DEFENCE TIES

IN THE MONTHS that preceded the visit of the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, there was considerable speculation that his trip to India would mark the finalisation of some high-profile defence deals, particularly the inking of the much-awaited acquisition of the Admiral Gorshkov. Talks have been underway to finalise the purchase of this Kiev class aircraft carrier since 1994 and both sides had in fact appeared to be scrambling to finalise the deal before Mr. Putin's visit. Russia has offered the ageing aircraft carrier free of charge, but major differences obviously persist over the cost of retrofitting the vessel. The Indian Navy is extremely keen on making the acquisition, one of the reasons being that in a few years from now the country's sole aircraft carrier, the INS Viraat, would be near the end of its service life. Some defence analysts, however, have questioned the strategic or logistic wisdom of acquiring a large and potentially vulnerable naval system for use against Pakistan. However, the reasoning behind the acquisition is possibly also larger, owing at least partly to the perceived imperative to counter-balance what are seen as external influences in waters of India's interest.

Russia remains India's biggest supplier of defence products but as the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, stressed during the Putin visit, the India-Russia defence relationship goes beyond that of merely buyer and seller as it now encompasses a wide range of activity including joint research, design, development and co-production. Given the sheer number of pending military deals between the two countries, it is more than likely that final agreements will be reached on a number of products over the next few years. The Admiral Gorshkov purchase itself is far from over and the Russians remain both keen and hopeful that the price negotiations for the purchase of the retrofitted carrier, a package which includes about 40 aircraft, the naval variant of the MiG-29. Besides the negotiations on the aircraft carrier, what will be keenly watched

is whether Mr. Putin's visit will speed up the licensed production of the Sukhoi (Su-30 MKI) as India wants. The first squadron of these multi-role aircraft are already operational but as many as 140 of them are scheduled to be made under license by HAL only a couple of years from now, after the Russians transfer technology, supply raw material and provide support technicians. Speeding up the deliveries of two Krivac stealth frigates and the progress on the Smerch multi-barrel rocket delivery system are among the other things that will count towards forging an even closer defence relationship. India has broached the subject about the possibility of leasing two Russian nuclear submarines but it is evident that any progress on this will have to be within the parameters of Moscow's commitment to the various non-proliferation mechanisms it is a party to.

Defence deals figured less prominently during Mr. Putin's visit with international terrorism and economic and trade ties occupying the top slots in his agenda. The absence of another major agreement should be viewed in the context of the fact that major defence agreements — including the finalisation of the massive T-90 tank deal and that for the Sukhoi — were concluded less than two years ago. Given the number of things ranging from surface-to-air missiles to special purpose planes and helicopters that are under negotiation, the future of the India-Russia defence relationship should be assessed not by new agreements reached but by the progress made on those that are pending. The protracted delay in the much-awaited handing over of Admiral Gorshkov to the Indian Navy is indeed puzzling. But what is really mystifying is the hold up over what is arguably the country's most urgently needed defence acquisition — the Advanced Jet Trainer. India continues to keep rival bidders on their toes even though the acquisition of AJTs, which are essential for improving flying safety, was first proposed a staggering 20 years ago.

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VLAD, THE FRIEND

India, Russia understand each other

INDIAN protocol managers, including the minister-in-waiting Vasundhara Raje, were late in meeting Vladimir Putin. The Russian president, surely not out of reciprocal spite, was late for the Rashtrapati Bhavan banquet. But tardiness remained confined to the ceremonial aspects of Putin's visit. Quick progress ruled the diplomatic, defence and business aspects of the trip. It is important not to reduce reaffirmation of Indo-Russian friendship as only a matter of New Delhi buying billions of dollars worth of arms from Moscow. Certainly, any bilateral relationship improves when one party has money and the other, the goods. India will continue to depend on Russia for a variety of reasons for its big ticket defence items as well as spare parts. And Russia, needing hard currency and markets for its Soviet-scale arms industry, will continue to see India in a special light. But there's more. That both countries, victims of separatist terrorism, understand well that Islamic fundamentalist threats cannot be left to be defined by America alone. American ambiguity, often hypocrisy, about Pakistani involvement in terrorism cannot, of course, be countered fully. But Russia is an important enough player for its clear, strong indictment of Pakistan to bolster India's case. Equally notable is that President Putin said what George Bush and Colin Powell stopped well short of saying even after revelations about Pakistan's illicit transfer of nuclear technology to North Korea. Nuclear knowhow in the hands of a unstable Pakistani establishment is a recipe for disaster.

India, however, needs to be realistic about the reiteration of proposals for a Moscow-Beijing-New Delhi triad influencing matters in Asian strategic affairs. China is currently building what it thinks are the props to its own superpower status in the near future. One part of a three cornered alliance will not interest it. Plus, the Chinese, understandably, will see little reason to upset the Americans any more than they already do by getting into an arrangement whose obvious impact will be on American influence in Asia. There's also the uneasy relationship between India and China.

Pakistan's angry reaction to Russia's unequivocal calls to dismantle the "terrorist infrastructure" is understandable. But Islamabad must understand for its own sake how dangerous a game it is playing. American support for Pakistani generals is not permanent, as General Zia's ghost can whisper to General Musharraf. Pakistan's nurturing of radical and violent Islam — more terror group leaders have been released recently — can therefore outlast US "understanding". That will leave Pakistani society even more vulnerable to some kind of theocratic/fundamentalist implosion, to say nothing about what will happen to its already bedraggled economy. If and when that happens, India will inevitably be hit by flying parts of a failed experiment. Having a friend like Russia around can be very useful.

Delhi Declaration to sharpen anti-terror tactics

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Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Dec. 5. - The Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, left for Moscow after a day of intensive talks that yielded a Declaration significant for India to shore up its tactics against terrorism sponsored from across the border.

The high-profile state visit saw him strongly backing India's concerns on Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism. The language of the Delhi Declaration was reminiscent of the 1971 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between India and the then Soviet Union.

Significantly, a clause of the Declaration says, "neither side shall take any actions which might threaten or impair the security of the other."

Both sides shall be guided by this principle in determining their security and defence policies as well as in military technical cooperation with third countries."

According to observers, this indicated that both India and Russia would consult each other on

almost every major strategic decision, and went well beyond the usual cooperation in intelligence-sharing and cooperation that is the norm in bilateral joint working groups against terrorism signed with other countries.

Absolutely condemning terrorism in all its manifestations - "terrorism cannot be justified on any grounds" - the Declaration is clearly aimed at Pakistan when it continues "both the countries strongly condemn

The Declaration says 'neither side shall take any actions which might threaten or impair the security of the other'

those who support terrorism or finance, train, harbour or support terrorists. States that aid, abet or shelter

terrorists are as guilty of the acts of terrorism as their perpetrators," the Declaration says.

That the document calls for "an early agreement on and entry into force, of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (sponsored by India at the United Nations) indicates that, even on the issue of Palestine, (the cause of which both countries strongly support) the two nations are not prepared to condone the use of terror.

Q. D. B. M. W. **Putin it straight** *65-10*
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RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin must have pleased the Indian government no end with his recent statement during an interview that, despite General Musharraf's assurances, he has serious concerns about the possibility of nuclear weapons or the technology to produce them falling into terrorist hands in Pakistan. Given the fact that India and Russia are to issue a Delhi Declaration likely to focus on the fight against terrorism, New Delhi would see this as starting off on the right note. It must be particularly heartening given the fact that Russia — a staunch ally of India in the Cold War era — had of late started making friendly overtures to Pakistan as well. President Putin's statement, in that context, could be seen as a reassurance that India remains Russia's foremost ally in the South Asian region. On the other hand, New Delhi could be worried about the significance of Mr Putin spending just one day in India and three in China. Under the circumstances, it would be no surprise if the focus of the interaction with President Putin stays firmly on strategic issues. Clearly, defence deals, always an important part of Indo-Russian ties and today the overwhelming bulk of all economic transactions between the two, will also figure prominently in the talks.

While the strategic aspect of Indo-Russian relations is by no means unimportant, it would be a pity if it were to completely overshadow the economic aspect. In the Soviet era, the erstwhile USSR was one of India's most important trading partners. Today, Russia accounts for under 2% of India's exports. This is not a particularly desirable situation from the Indian perspective. Remember, Russia is one of the fastest growing economies, averaging a growth rate of well over 5% since 1999. Clearly, the remarkable economic recovery of Russia offers opportunities for Indian business as it does for the rest of the world. The talks must explore ways in which these opportunities can be best exploited. Even from a strategic perspective, India must recognise that strong economic ties are the only guarantee of lasting strategic ties (as the shifting equations between the US, Pakistan and India bear out). Strong economic ties would also allow India to be more selective in defence deals with Russia without compromising its own interests, especially in the vital area of national defence.

(For a different view see TOI)

RUSSIA TO HELP INCREASE N-POWER GENERATION

'Delhi Declaration' asks Pak. to end infiltration

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, DEC. 4. Without naming Pakistan, the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, today called for strengthening the international non-proliferation regime to prevent weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists.

Displaying a rare, growing strategic concord in international affairs, Mr. Putin and the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, signed a "Delhi Declaration" to enhance strategic cooperation and set up a joint working group on combating terrorism, and issued a joint declaration on strengthening economic, scientific and cultural cooperation. At a brief press interaction, Mr. Putin said Russia was willing to enhance its cooperation with India to increase the capacity in nuclear power generation beyond the Koodankulam project within the framework of international rules and regulations. There was no official word on the state of different defence deals under negotiation — it appeared that the two sides wanted to avoid any reference to the delicate talks on pricing by design.

While Mr. Putin called for a resolution of disputes between India and Pakistan by "peaceful means" in his press interaction, a joint statement saw Moscow backing New Delhi's position on cross-border terrorism to the hilt. "Both sides discussed in detail the current situation in South Asia. They stressed the importance of Islamabad implementing in full its obligations and promises to prevent the infiltration of terrorists across the Line of Control into the State of Jammu and Kashmir and at other points across the border, as well as to eliminate the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-controlled territory as a prerequisite for the renewal of peaceful dialogue between the two countries to resolve all outstanding issues in a bilateral framework as envisaged in the Shimla Agreement of 1972 and the La-



The Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and his wife, Lyudmila, being welcomed by the President, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Wednesday. — Photo: Shanker Chakravarty

hore Declaration of 1998," the wordy formulation said. The two sides stressed that the "roots of terrorism" lay in their common neighbourhood and posed a threat to their security interests. "Both sides would take preventive and deterrent measures to prevent and suppress terrorism. Both sides declared their determination to enhance collective and bilateral efforts to prevent and suppress terrorism."

Mr. Vajpayee referred to the Moscow hostage-taking, the Bali attack, the Mombasa killings and the continuing terrorist incidents in India as manifestations of the common threat from international terrorism. In response to a question, he said that bilateral relations between India and Russia were "excellent" and suggested that they

were worthy of emulation. Trade between the two countries was not satisfactory, he said, and hoped that the joint declaration would redress the issue.

The joint declaration on economic cooperation recognised that energy security had become an increasingly important component of bilateral ties. "The two sides indicated their common desire to intensify long-term cooperation in this sector, which could be extended to other areas, including the Caspian Sea, and to other aspects of the energy sector."

Not for unilateral use of force in Iraq

On Iraq, too, Russia and India spoke in one voice — and strongly opposed the unilateral use of force or the threat of use

of force in violation of the United Nations Charter. "It was stressed that a comprehensive settlement of the situation around Iraq is possible only through political and diplomatic efforts in strict conformity with the rules of international law and only under the aegis of the United Nations. Both sides noted the importance of continuing intensive work with the Iraqi leadership in order to encourage it to cooperate in good faith with the United Nations."

Russia also reaffirmed its support to India as a "deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership of an expanded United Nations Security Council." For its part, India supported Russia's early accession to the World Trade Organisation.

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Defence deal with Russia imminent

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, DEC. 3. A major Indo-Russian defence deal appears imminent coinciding with the visit of the Russian President, Vladimir Putin. Though the actual agreement may be signed later, the two sides may express unanimity about it.

The deal for purchasing a berthed Russian aircraft carrier has been stuck for the past three months on the price for refurbishing it, according to Indian specifications. The pace gathered this morning after the Russian Minister, Ilya Klebanov, met the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, for an hour and told him about the 'final offer' from the Russian side, said informed sources.

Mr. Klebanov, widely regarded as Mr. Putin's pointman for defence agreements with India, has air-dashed to New Delhi for a second time in a month to impart an air of finality for selling the second hand, partially-gutted aircraft-carrier to the Indian Navy. The Russians have been locked in negotiations since February this year but there were serious disagreements on the price for fitting new equipment and making it usable. At stake is also the fleet of 40 fighter jets to be housed on the carrier.

Sources said that while a political agreement could be announced jointly by the two top leaders, the actual pact setting out the nuts and bolts of the deal may be inked later. For a vessel of the size of an aircraft carrier, there are millions of details that have to be sorted out.

Despite attempts to vilify the aircraft-carrier, India desperately requires one to replace the existing one in the twilight of its service life.

Sources said that Mr. Klebanov and Mr. Fernandes also discussed the issue of steady supply of reasonably priced spares for the air force and the navy.

The two sides are also understood to have touched on the issue of leasing two Russian nuclear



The Russian Minister for Industries, Science and Technology, I. Klebanov, with the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, in New Delhi on Tuesday. — Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

submarines. They would help India counterbalance the growing Chinese aspirations in the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal and also give teeth to the Navy in the Arabian Sea. Russia has 14 similar, silent multi-role submarines and the resources from this deal are expected to finance its ongoing work on fourth generation subs code-named Project 885.

In order to ensure that both sides do not violate the missile control regime, Russia plans to replace the submarines' 3,000-km-range cruise missiles with 300-km-range ones.

4 DEC 2002

THE HINDU

Putin 'triangle' has Delhi in circles

JYOTI MALHOTRA

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 3

HARDLY has the flight plan of a former world leader excited the imagination of so many in India. So when Russian President Vladimir Putin, taking off from Moscow a couple of days ago, arrived in the capital tonight from Beijing, a large part of the Indian political class could barely restrain itself from applauding.

FS, Minister late for Putin's Delhi arrival

■ NEW DELHI: Vladimir Putin's minister-in-waiting Vasundhara Raje and Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal didn't reach the New Delhi airport in time to pick up the Russian President when he arrived from Beijing. It was left to Russia's ambassador to India, Alexander Kadakin, to receive his president. Raje and Sibal were seen running towards the venue and barely made it for the benefit of the cameras. Raje said she was late in leaving Lok Sabha where the "important freedom of expression bill" had been tabled, while Sibal said he had been briefing the Prime Minister on Putin's visit.

Over the last fortnight, former Prime Ministers, ex-foreign secretaries and analysts have with growing zeal debated a "triangle" between India, Russia and China. Their goal: To recreate the comfortable and fa-

miliar aura of a bygone world, which would hopefully take on the "unprecedented arrogance" of the world's lone superpower, the US.

Except that they missed something: At the very first meeting between the Foreign Ministers of these three nations in New York in September, Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan raised the issue of the "tension between India and

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INDIAN EXPRESS

P.T.O.

From the front page

Putin 'triangle' has Delhi in circles

Pakistan" with External Affairs minister Yashwant Sinha, and suggested that New Delhi start a dialogue with Islamabad.

Highly placed sources told *The Indian Express* that Sinha was forced to point out to his Chinese counterpart that not only was this meeting "not the occasion" to raise such issues, but that Islamabad was the real source of cross-border terrorism.

That's not all. Over the last couple of days in Moscow, a Joint Working Group on terrorism between Russia and Pakistan has been underway, co-chaired by Russian deputy foreign minister Anatoly Sazonov and Pakistan's additional secretary Aneesuddin Ahmed.

Ostensibly to keep Pakistan "engaged" on the issue of international terrorism, the JWG met in the long shadow of Putin's remarks about the unstable cocktail that dominates Pakistan: nuclear weapons, terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism.

Reports from Russia speak of yet another meeting on "strategic stability" between Moscow and Islamabad scheduled for next year. While Indian officials pointed out that despite the "strategic partnership" between India and Russia, such a sustained dialogue on counter-terrorism still did not exist.

As if the "freewheeling behaviour" of these Asian giants vis-a-vis Pakistan was not enough, analysts here also pointed to the manner in which both Russia and China had decided to cut their own, private deals with the US on Iraq.

Barely 10 days ago, just as he readied for his Asian tour, Putin met Bush who reassured



JUST IN TIME: Vasundhara Raje Scindia and Kanwal Sibal barely made it to the airport to receive Russian President Vladimir Putin and his wife Lyudmila. *B B Yadav*

him that Washington would not only look after Russia's "economic interests" in Iraq, but keep Moscow duly informed about the decisions it took in the international arena.

Putin's pragmatic streak has certainly dominated Moscow's foreign policy since he came to power a couple of years ago. For decades during the Cold War, the former Soviet Union and China were arch-enemies. Today, as much as 40 per cent of Russia's arms are bought by China. (India is the second largest, with 25 per cent.)

Official trade figures between Russia and China are \$10 billion annually, while unofficial trade is another \$10 billion. In contrast, Indo-Russian trade is a lowly \$1.5 billion annually. And while trade between India and China is some \$3 billion, the trade surplus be-

tween China and the US, in favour of Beijing, is a staggering \$60 billion.

Moscow, meanwhile, has made no bones about its overwhelming need to integrate with the West. It has agreed to abandon the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty in favour of the US Ballistic Missile defence system, allowed the Americans into its Central Asian sphere of influence, accepted the expansion of NATO up to its frontiers, and most recently cut a deal on Iraq. China, on the other hand, for all its anti-American rhetoric, has not once publicly spoken out against US strategy on Baghdad.

Even though it is a permanent member of the Security Council, Beijing has never in recent months considered abstaining, leave alone opposing a Security Council vote on Iraq.

Putin arrives for summit talks

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, DEC. 3. A heavy bilateral and multilateral agenda awaits the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, who arrived here this evening from Beijing as part of annual, summit-level consultations with the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee. He was received at the airport by the Minister of State for Personnel and Minister-in-Waiting, Vasundhara Raje Scindia.

This is Mr. Putin's second visit to India in two years. He will be received at the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan by the President, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, tomorrow morning. Soon after arrival, Mr. Putin had an informal meeting with the Prime Minister, who hosted a private dinner for the Russian President. A similar courtesy was extended to the Russian President two years ago by the Prime Minister.

The Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani,

the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, were among those invited for the dinner. The Leader of the Opposition, Sonia Gandhi, was also invited, but she could not attend it because of her campaigning in Gujarat.

Defence deal imminent: Page 11

To boost trade between the two countries — currently less than \$1.5 billions a year — Russia and India will issue a declaration on expanding cooperation in trade, economic, scientific and technological fields.

The two countries are also expected to sign a "Delhi Declaration" on further strengthening the strategic partnership between the two countries. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) on counter terrorism, which envisages setting up a joint

^{Indo-Russian} working group between the two countries, will be among a host of agreements that will be signed tomorrow.

Iraq is expected to be a major item for discussion between the Russian and Indian leaders. That issue is likely to find reflection in the declaration that is to be issued.

Defence cooperation is part of the continuing agenda of bilateral relations and will come up for review.

Mr. Putin has a busy day ahead of him tomorrow. After paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat, there will be separate calls on him by the External Affairs Minister, the Vice-President, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Defence Minister. After addressing a lunch meeting organised by CII and FICCI, Sonia Gandhi will call on him. He will then have a formal one-on-one meeting with the Prime Minister at Hyderabad House, which will be followed by delegation-level talks.

4 DEC 2002

India prepares dossier for talks with Putin

Udayan Namboodiri
New Delhi, December 3

INDIA HAS condemned Washington's ambiguous silence on the Pak-N Korea secret nuclear collaboration question in a dossier prepared on the event of Russian President Vladimir Putin's arrival here on a three-day State visit.

Sources told *Hindustan Times* that the matter would figure in the one-on-one talks held between Prime Minister AB Vajpayee and Putin over their "private dinner" which the Russian President attended shortly after his arrival.

In the document, India has given details on how the N Koreans and Pakistanis had worked out a barter arrangement. Companies, entities and the personae involved have been named. The entire top brass of the Pakistani Army and ISI

PAK-N KOREA PACT

- India has compiled details on how N Koreans and Pakistanis worked out a barter arrangement
- Companies, entities and persons involved have been named
- The entire top brass of the Pak Army and ISI were involved; Musharraf too may have played a role
- Islamabad's links with Pyongyang indicated

were involved and General Pervez Musharraf, too, may have played a key role. Yet, the Bush administration has let him go with a warning.

The report says that Indian Intelligence agencies were in possession of vital information of the Pyongyang-Islamabad nexus. A

North Korean diplomat in Islamabad was murdered in June 1998. India suspects she paid the price for passing on vital information on the goings-on. Her husband, Kang Thae-yun, was local representative, Changgwang Sinyong, the key supplier of missile components to Pakistan and Iran.

"Though the US is trying to play down Pak involvement in the issue, it was the US which imposed sanctions on the (AQ) Khan (Nuclear) Research Laboratories (of Islamabad) and Changgwang Sinyong, their sub-units and successors, for two years, immediately after the test-firing of the *Ghauri* (an assembled Nodong) missile in 1998," the dossier says.

Sources said the coming months may see India adopting a no-nonsense approach on the issue. The idea is to call Pakistan's bluff.

11 DEC 2002

Serious and positive signals from Musharraf: Putin

ALMATY, JUNE 4. The Russian President, Vladimir Putin, today told the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, that the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, had given "serious and positive signals" to end the current military standoff with India.

"President Musharraf gave what I think is a serious and positive signal to end the mounting tension with India," Mr. Putin told Mr. Vajpayee when the two leaders met on the sidelines of the 16-nation Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia here.

Welcoming Mr. Vajpayee at the Almaty guest-house for bilateral talks, Mr. Putin said Russia was ready to contribute to the settlement of the Indo-Pakistani conflict. "If Russia could help in any way, it was ready to make a contribution to the settlement of the problem."

At the same time, both New Delhi and Islamabad must do all they can to resolve the conflict, he added.

Russia was perfectly aware of the roots of the conflict, and understood the problems related to terrorism. The relations between Russia and India in economic and political coordination, and cooperation in international organisations were developing "in a very positive way," he said, pointing to the growing joint activity of the two Parliaments. "It is very grat-



The Russian President, Vladimir Putin, welcomes the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, prior to their meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on Tuesday. — AP

ifying to note that our dialogue at all levels of State interaction is going on uninterrupted... We can always exchange views in writing or by telephone and often do so," Mr. Putin told Mr. Vajpayee.

Thanking the Russian President for his position on the fight against terrorism, Mr. Vajpayee said India was eagerly looking forward to his visit in December.

Mr. Putin, who earlier met Gen. Musharraf, candidly told the Pakistani ruler that he had the authority of his Western colleagues to convey their concerns over the prevailing situation in the Indian subcon-

continent.

"We have had many meetings, particularly Russia-EU and Russia-NATO summits... concern was expressed at the situation. The colleagues had requested me to convey this concern to you," Mr. Putin told a tense-looking Gen. Musharraf at the opening of their meeting televised by the Russian State TV, RTR.

"It is imperative to analyse what can be done, so that this conflict is not just defused, but the two sides move away from future confrontation," the Interfax news agency quoted Mr. Putin as saying. — PTI, UNI

The Putin visit

By Nirmala Joshi

Qub. Russia

Indian and Russian interests in "our common neighbourhood" coincide to a great extent, which augurs well for bilateral relations.

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THE RUSSIAN President, Vladimir Putin, has just concluded a whirlwind visit to India reaping rich dividends at the bilateral level. Russian attempts to impart fresh initiatives into the partnership that has withstood the test of time were successful. The tone of the visit was set by Mr. Putin himself — positive and constructive even before he set out on his foreign sojourn. In an interview to *The Hindu*, he unambiguously endorsed the Indian position on an issue of crucial significance to it. It must have been music to Indian ears to hear Mr. Putin extending wholehearted support on the issue of cross-border terrorism. In fact, the Russian position on this issue is the closest to the Indian one. In a similar vein, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, said "we can depend on Russia in an hour of trial". It was amidst this atmosphere of warmth and bonhomie that Mr. Putin arrived in India to a warm welcome. The focus of the deliberations was, however, on intensifying the bilateral content of the strategic partnership.

Several agreements were signed. The most important being the decision to set up a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Terrorism. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of telecommunication was another major agreement signed between the two countries. A protocol on Intellectual Property Rights was also concluded. In an attempt to diversify bilateral relations, the Karnataka Chief Minister, S. M. Krishna, signed an agreement to enhance cooperation with the Samara region of Russia. The Delhi Declaration drew pointed attention to the weakest component of Indo-Russian relations — the economic aspect. It was recognised that the true potential in this sphere has not yet been tapped. A decision to earnestly explore all avenues to strengthen the economic interaction was taken. The talks also covered issues of importance such as energy security, civilian nuclear energy and space technology. Discussions on placing the ongoing defence cooperation on an even more solid foundations were held, but no details were available.

At the regional level, Indian and

Russian interests continue to coincide in a large measure. In fact, the compatibility of their geopolitical and security interests in the Central Asian region is the major input into the evolution of the strategic partnership. Being multi-ethnic and pluralist societies, India and Russia faced common challenges to their integrity from the forces of religious extremism, aggressive nationalism, separatism and terrorism. In addition, drug-trafficking, smuggling in small weapons and organised crime have further complicated the situation. In the Indian and the Russian perception, Afghanistan was the hub of international terrorism hence they extended support to the opposition forces — the Northern Alliance. India and Russia were of the view that the stability of Central Asia was crucial to them. Since the challenges were primarily regional in nature the presence of Russian troops on the Tajik-Afghan border was able to contain the hordes of extremism spreading into Central Asia. Russia was the chief guarantor of peace in the region and such an arrangement was compatible with the Indian interests.

The military presence of the international coalition forces led by the U.S. has radically changed the geopolitical situation in Central Asia. Terrorism is no longer a regional phenomenon, but a global one. A global phenomenon has to be fought globally. It is possible that the campaign against terrorism could be a protracted one, which means that the military presence of the coalition forces could stretch for years. In the process, the regional context has undergone a fundamental change. The U.S. is the new, powerful player in Central Asia. The military presence of the West is a factor of stability in the region. However, the earlier arrangement of ensuring security and stability has got diffused. New pressures on Indo-Russian relations are being exerted. The changing dynamics of the region have opened up new opportunities for India and Russia to

come to a better understanding with the U.S. Indian decision makers believe that the U.S. alone could restrain Pakistan and compel it to stop cross-border terrorism. For Russia, the opportunity is to procure Western credits and investments. Consequently, India and Russia have supported the American-led campaign against global terrorism.

A new trend that has emerged is the near similarity in the approaches of Russia and the U.S. on the question of peace and security in South Asia. Their paramount concern is to prevent any outbreak of hostilities between Indian and Pakistan as such an eventuality could easily escalate into a nuclear war. Another apprehension voiced by Mr. Putin recently was that weapons of mass destruction could fall into the hands of terrorists or bandits. This would give the terrorists awesome power in their hands. The Russian approach as spelt out by the Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, was to create an arch of stability in the region. Moreover, the nuclear issue could detract attention from the campaign against terrorism. In that fight the support and cooperation of Pakistan is crucial.

While cooperating with the coalition forces against terrorism, at another level Russia is trying to forge a consensus among the countries on issues of global concern. Russia is also trying to play a more active role in the region. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) now has a formal structure. The focus of the SCO is also to combat terrorism and several measures to this effect have been initiated. Possibly India could seek membership of the SCO. It has also been proposed to convert the Collective Security Treaty into a regional organisation. How effective these investments would emerge in ensuring regional security is difficult to say at this juncture. Viewed from this larger perspective of its interests, Russia has sought to engage Pakistan. On the other hand, India is maintaining its adversarial posture

vis-a-vis Pakistan.

In pursuance of this objective, Russia has not only favoured a dialogue between India and Pakistan, but had also tried to act as facilitator. At the Conference on Initiative and Confidence building in Asia (CICA) in Alma Aty in June 2002, Mr. Putin tried to bring the Indian and the Pakistani leaders to talk to each other, though in vain. However, Russia set up JWGs with Pakistan, one on terrorism and the second on stability, in August 2002. The first meeting of the JWG on terrorism, was held in Moscow recently. These differing approaches on Pakistan have not affected the friendly tenor of Indo-Russian relations. As already mentioned, the Russian position on cross-border terrorism is clear. The need to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and on territory controlled by it was mentioned in the Delhi Declaration issued at the end of the Putin visit. However, Indian and Russian interests in "our common neighbourhood" coincide to a great extent, which augurs well for bilateral relations.

It is in the context of forging a consensus among the nations of the region that Mr. Putin revived the idea of promoting trilateral cooperation among India, Russia and China. There are, no doubt, severe constraints to trilateral cooperation. Nevertheless, the idea is worth pursuing especially when the dominant tendency of the present day world order is cooperation. Russian activism in the region it hopes would lead to multipolarity.

Apart from their immediate interests and concerns, India and Russia share a wide commonality of views on the other issues. On Iraq, there was unanimity of views opposing any unilateral use of force. Both the countries would like the United Nations to play a central role in promoting international security in a multi-polar world. To conclude, India's ties with Russia are on a firm footing; Mr. Putin's visit has added new dynamism to them.

(The writer is Professor, Centre for Russian, Central Asian and East Europe Studies, School of International Studies, JNU).

Key Indo-Russian defence talks on

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, AUG. 19. High-level Indo-Russian defence talks are taking place in Moscow this week to finalise deals on the purchase of the 'Admiral Gorshkov' aircraft carrier and the joint construction of a multi-role transport aircraft.

The Indian Naval chief, Admiral Madhvendra Singh, arrived in Russia on Sunday for a six-day official visit at the invitation of the Russian Naval Commander, Admiral Kuroyedov. Apart from talks with his Russian counterpart, Admiral Singh will visit Russian shipyards and warships, including the 'Gorshkov'. "It is expected to be a final inspection of the Gorshkov before the deal is signed in the run-up to or during [the Russian President, Vladimir] Putin's visit to India in December," said Alexander Vasikin of the Indo-Russian Security Forum.

Admiral Singh will also inspect the construction of three 'Krivak' class stealth frigates at the Baltiisky Zavod shipyard in St. Petersburg. The first frigate, 'Talwar,' is to be delivered in September, two months later than planned, because of problems in integrating the latest Club-N anti-ship missile system, informed sources said. The second frigate, 'Trishul,' will be handed over as planned, in November. The Naval Chief will also be taken to shipyards in St. Petersburg and Severodvinsk, where 'Kilo' class submarines are being overhauled to give them a missile-firing capability.

In another major development, the Indo-Russian joint working group on aviation will meet in Moscow on Tuesday to discuss technology transfer for the Su-30MKI fighter and finalise a project report on the joint construction of a multi-role transport aircraft.

20 AUG 2002

India, Russia to speed up Gorshkov deal

MOSCOW, AUG. 25. The joint production of new generation "Amur" class submarines and the need to speed up the Gorshkov deal came up during the talks between the Naval Chief, Admiral Madhvendra Singh, with his Russian counterpart, Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov, during his week-long visit here, which concluded today.

The Navy chief's talks with Admiral Kuroyedov and other defence officials focused on the need to speed up the decision on the Gorshkov deal ahead of the Russian President, Vladimir Putin's visit to India in December.

They also discussed issues pertaining to the close cooperation and interaction between the two navies in ensuring the security of India and Russia.

Talks are also underway for the joint production and simultaneous induction of the new generation "Amur" class submarines.

The training of personnel and exchange of experience under the Indo-Russian Agreement on inter-services exchanges signed in December 1996 between the two Defence Ministries also figured in the talks.

Admiral Singh visited Severodvinsk, Russia's nuclear submarine building centre on the White Sea and inspected the 44,000 tonne aircraft carrier moored at the shipyard there.

He also visited St. Petersburg to see the progress of the Krivak III class stealth frigates, "Talwar" and "Trishul", to be delivered to India by the Baltisky Zavod shipyard. — PTI

Putin a trusted friend: Vajpayee

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, NOV. 30. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, will discuss ways of enhancing strategic partnership between India and Russia when he meets the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, in Delhi next week.

The ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Mr. Vajpayee as voicing the hope that the two leaders would give a new push to bilateral cooperation in a range of areas, especially trade and investment, as well as science and technology, defence, space and nuclear energy.

"Our two countries have maintained close ties, and we can depend on Russia in an

hour of trial. It is helping us a lot," Mr. Vajpayee told ITAR-TASS and Channel One Russian television on the eve of Mr. Putin's official visit to India from December 3 to 5.

India and Russia share the view that international terrorism can be defeated only through concerted international effort, Mr. Vajpayee said.

Delhi and Moscow "have taken joint efforts in the United Nations to lay a sound legal basis for cooperation in combating terrorism," he said.

India will not talk to Pakistan as long as it supports terrorists, the Prime Minister asserted, adding that terrorism against India was being encouraged

and supported from abroad.

"As long as this situation persists, there can be no substantive talks between India and Pakistan," he said.

He recalled that Delhi had more than once extended a hand of friendship to Pakistan, but it was rejected. "It takes two hands to clap," he said.

He noted the special importance of defence cooperation with Russia. "Our military-technical cooperation is an ongoing process and we rely on our friend Russia very much in some areas," he said.

"We trust each other and, therefore, our country has received technologies that other countries have not been given,"

ITAR-TASS quoted Mr. Vajpayee as saying.

Advanced defence ties between India and Russia arouse some bad feelings in certain countries.

"Not all countries are happy with close relations between Delhi and Moscow," he without naming the countries. "They do not like India to be getting technologies it is interested in."

Mr. Vajpayee emphasised a "deep personal relationship" he had developed with the Russian leader.

"Vladimir Putin is a trusted friend and our personal relationship helps deepen mutual understanding between our two countries," the Indian leader told the Russian media.

THE HINDU

1 DEC 2002

Old friends in changing times

By K. K. Katyal

Vladimir Putin's visit is meant to be used to check the practical implementation of the strategic partnership between India and Russia and to give a new push to it.

THOUGH PART of an ongoing process, within the framework of close bilateral ties, the Russian President, Vladimir Putin's visit to India this week is certain to evoke unusual interest. Even the friendliest of relationships is not to be taken for granted — it needs to be nourished continuously; one, to guard against a slip-up and, two, to update its content in the light of changing circumstances. If Moscow's close friendship with New Delhi could survive the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the cataclysmic events before and after, there is little doubt it will retain its strength and robustness and forge ahead. However, an occasional course correction — or redefinition — will be necessary. It should not cause dismay or alarm.

After the demise of the Soviet Union, the new rulers in Moscow sought to change the ground rules for the conduct of the relationship with India. Sentiment was taken out and replaced by realpolitik. This was evident from the speed with which the 1972 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was substituted by an unadorned version. Soon after, however, the tendency to romanticise bilateral ties re-appeared both in New Delhi and Moscow. Nothing very wrong about it, for after all, it flowed out of good intentions. But there was the danger of losing sight of the changed realities — in global, regional and bilateral contexts. But now again the merits of a pragmatic approach have begun to be realised — and, hopefully, would inform the bilateral dealings in the future.

There is need to take a balanced view of India's relationship with Moscow. Just because Moscow has to operate under certain global compulsions and has other priorities — such as Europe, the U.S. — one should not be cynical. In the same way, euphoria or expectations of out-of-the-way help will be misplaced.

India and Russia have a mutual relevance in several areas, especially in the geo-strategic context and as multi-ethnic societies. That accounts for their multi-faceted relationship — it encompasses different sectors, including political consultations, economic and commercial ties, cooperation in trade and economy, science and technology, culture, edu-

cation, space science and research, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, defence, energy security. Given its depth and expanse, it is rightly described as one of the most important bilateral relationships. It is marked by a wide convergence of views and interests but let it not be forgotten, differing perceptions are not altogether absent.

Trade and economic matters are the weakest links in the bilateral field. After the rupee arrangement, apparently attractive but with hidden distortions, was given up, the two sides were unable to establish a stable pattern. The switch in Russia from the command economy to free enterprise and the crime situation added to the problem. Figures tell a sorry tale, however viewed. The Soviet Union's share of India's exports used to be 18.3 per cent in 1980-81; it dropped to 16.1 per cent at the end of the 1980s. Last year, it was down to two per cent. Imports from Russia, too, dropped from 8.1 per cent in the Soviet era to just one per cent last year. This is highly unsatisfactory, for, in the long run, economic links sustain bilateral relations. Arms sales, however massive, are no substitute. There is a case for urgent, effective remedial measures.

This will be the third summit in two years. During Mr. Putin's visit to India in October 2000, the two sides signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership, establishing a framework of cooperation in the new millennium. In November last year, when the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, was in Moscow, a new declaration on international terrorism and a joint statement on strategic issues, calling for the establishment of a new "cooperative security order" emerged out of their discussions. Obviously, they intended it to lay the basis for a multipolar world. Mr. Putin's upcoming visit is meant to be used to check the practical implementation of the strategic partnership and to give a new push to it. The framework of cooper-

ation is to be enlarged with the involvement of the private sectors of the two countries, with special attention to investments by one side for ventures in the other. Several documents are to be signed during the visit — on political and economic cooperation, on issues connected with intellectual property rights, cooperation between Samara region of Russia and Karnataka and on telecommunications. And last but not the least, Iraq is certain to be taken up.

The resolve of the two sides to counter international terrorism may be given a concrete shape, with the plans to set up a joint working group — of the type already in place as part of India's dealings on this subject with the U.S. and U.K. During the previous two summits Mr. Putin's stand was conspicuously forthright. During his New Delhi visit, for instance, he, on the basis of "absolutely true and verified information", underlined the nature of international terrorism thus: the same individuals, the same terrorist organisations were conducting terrorist acts from the Philippines to Kosovo, Kashmir, Afghanistan and the Northern Caucasus (a reference to Russia's problems in Chechnya). And during Mr. Vajpayee's visit to Moscow, the Russian President disapproved of the "double standards" of the international community in the fight against terrorism. The joint statement issued then stressed that "international law" needed to be the basis for "decisive measures against all states, individuals and entities which render support to harbour, finance and instigate terrorism" and against those promoting terrorism in other ways. Then there was the joint call for the completion of talks under the U.N. auspices on the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and for suppression of nuclear terrorism.

On Kashmir, too, there was no ambiguity about Russia's stand — it wanted "foreign interference to be

stopped", the issue to be resolved "through compromise" and called for "unconditional respect for the Line of Control". At the same time, Moscow made no secret of its preference for the resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan. There is nothing to suggest a change in Moscow's line, though Russian sources now hint at appreciation of New Delhi's caveat that a conducive atmosphere needs to be created, with an end to infiltration of terrorists across the LoC.

New Delhi will do well to realise that the present Moscow line on Pakistan may not remain frozen for all time to come and that, at some point, the two sides may start interacting with each other. Some two years ago, the visit of Mr. Putin's special envoy, dealing with Chechnya affairs, to Islamabad led to fears about a "parallel relationship". It had followed a "chance" meeting between Mr. Putin and Pakistan's President, Pervez Musharraf at the U.N. Millennium Summit and reports from Islamabad of a possible Putin visit to Pakistan. And, at Almaty, Russia appeared closer to Pakistan than to India as regards the resumption of an India-Pakistan dialogue. Moscow, however, said that nothing would be done at the cost of its close friendship with India.

Russia seems alive to India's concerns on several other matters — on New Delhi's claim for a permanent seat in a reformed U.N. Security Council (it is an academic issue, at the moment) and its anxiety to play a role in Afghanistan. It takes a positive view of India's keenness to associate with the Shanghai Forum of six (Russia, China and four Central Asian republics) on counter-terrorism in the region.

However, the temptation to over-interpret the pro-forma talk in the last three or four years, in reply to media queries on a strategic triangle, comprising India, China and Russia, has to be resisted. Somewhat inexplicably, it was taken as a serious proposition. The contradictions between India and China or Russia and China had not been fully resolved. Also, a triangle is bound to be perceived as an anti-U.S. bloc. Each of the three countries is trying to be close to Washington and would not like to be seen to be gang-ing against it. At present, the triangle will be no more than the sum total of the bilateral ties of these countries.

2 DEC 2002

THE HINDU

Putin comes calling

9/28/02
Welcome a friend, but hedge your bets

President Putin's forthright remarks about the threat posed to the world by Pakistan's nuclear weapons landing in rogue or terrorist hands give Indian diplomacy a leg up, and are of course to be welcomed. Without taking away from the seriousness of the concern expressed by Putin, however, **one must** also note the overall context in which Putin's three-day visit to India is taking place, a principal focus of which will be weapons sales and strategic cooperation. Putin comes to New Delhi from Beijing, where he signed with Islamabad's principal backer what was billed a "good neighbourly treaty of friendship and cooperation under the new situation". The threat posed by Pakistani nuclear weapons is in part due to China, which provided men, materials and knowhow. Despite this there has been talk, by both the Russians and Chinese, of a Moscow-Beijing-New Delhi axis, which Beijing forgets to remember about when it lays claim to Arunachal Pradesh, or when it invariably tilts towards Pakistan in case of a dispute with India. Even while Putin is in India, there will be a delegation in Moscow from Pakistan's foreign ministry, shopping for arms. Moscow claims it will impress upon Islamabad to wind up its terror training camps, and there is no doubt about its sincerity, but Moscow's leverage over Islamabad is minuscule. Much as Putin's statements about Pakistan may gladden Indian hearts, therefore, New Delhi needs to deal with him with blinkers off.

In the area of defence purchases this should mean dealing with Russian offers strictly on their merits. About the most controversial item is the proposal to sell India the 20 year old aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov*, which could not be inducted into the Russian Navy due to teething problems and has since been mothballed. The decrepit aircraft carrier is now sought to be refitted to carry heavy Mig-29K fighters, for which it wasn't initially designed, and sold to the Indian navy for \$2 billion. Russian military technology isn't always the best, the saving grace being that the Russians, unlike the Americans, are willing to offer us the best they have but *Admiral Gorshkov* clearly don't look like one of these. Strategic ties with Moscow don't mean one should repeat the story of the IAF's Mig-21s, 53 of which have crashed in the last four years alone. While defence ties may be only one of the many facets of the Delhi-Moscow relationship that will be discussed during Putin's visit, they already look like being its most important and most controversial aspect. By contrast, whatever uncertainties there may be and are in American arms supplies, and it does not come cheap, no one has ever been able to question its quality. New Delhi would do well to hedge its bets.

3 DEC 2002

THE STATESMAN

After US, sensor offer from Russia

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, July 11: Following in the footsteps of the US, Russia has offered India sensors and other equipment to check infiltration across the Line of Control into Jammu and Kashmir.

Though Moscow has already made the offer informally, it is likely to be raised again at the Joint Working Group meeting of India and Russia on Afghanistan beginning in Delhi next week.

Israel and Britain have also offered India sensors to man its border with Pakistan, particularly across the LoC.

The strong relations with India notwithstanding, the Russians are aware that in the face of competition from the US on the sensors to man the borders, they don't stand much of a chance. But Moscow is trying to be a serious contender by offering Delhi equipment at a much cheaper rate and easier terms of loan.

The Indian leadership has been assessing the offers made to it by different countries and will take a decision only when the standoff with Pakistan is broken and temperature in South Asia is lowered considerably.

Russian deputy foreign minister Vaschily Trubnikov will lead the delegation from Moscow for the two-day working group meeting between July 17 and 18. Foreign secretary Kanwal Sibal will lead the Indian side.

This will be the fourth round of meeting of the group on Afghanistan since it was set up during Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India in October 2000.

Trubnikov is also scheduled to meet foreign minister Yashwant Sinha and national securi-

ty adviser Brajesh Mishra. He may also call on deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani.

One of the main focuses of the group will be terrorism and how the two sides can co-ordinate better to fight the menace.

The two are also thinking of setting up a similar group on counter-terrorism, but indications suggest that it will only be formally announced during the Russian President's scheduled

roads, mobile hospitals and warehouses — sectors where the two sides can pool in resources and work jointly to execute them.

India will explain its stand on the military standoff with Pakistan and stress on the Pervez Musharraf regime's failure to stop infiltration and highlight the new terrorist camps that have sprung up in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in the past few months.

It will also clarify why no further de-escalatory measures were possible unless Pakistan showed positive signs of acting against the terrorists.

Russia, on its part, will share its experience in dealing with the terrorists in Chechnya and the two sides may also compare notes on the al Qaida members active in the region and the terrorist camps still in operation in South Asia.

As Moscow has started playing an active role in defusing the crisis in the region, Indian leaders feel it will be useful to keep the Russians apprised of what Musharraf has been promising to the world and the ground situation in Jammu and Kashmir, to pile pressure on Islamabad.

Russia and India have been working closely with each other on Afghanistan for several years, particularly when the Taliban regime was in Kabul. The two countries and Iran were trying to prop up the Northern Alliance, the only pocket of resistance against the student-militia.

In the new Afghan administration, the Northern Alliance's clout has been considerably reduced, though its members still hold the two important portfolios of defence and foreign affairs.

Lambah quits

New Delhi, July 11: India's special envoy to Afghanistan Sati Lambah has resigned. A retired IFS officer, Lambah was appointed as envoy last November.

No particular motive was attached to the resignation. The foreign ministry said he gave up his post "voluntarily and was not asked to leave".

India was one of the first countries to appoint a special envoy, soon after the launch of the US-led military campaign in Afghanistan that led to the overthrowing of the Taliban regime in Kabul.

visit to India at the year-end.

Next week's meeting will give the two sides an opportunity to exchange views on the recent developments in Afghanistan, the extent to which the al Qaida network has been destroyed by US troops and terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir and Chechnya.

On Afghanistan, the two sides are likely to discuss projects in hydel power generation, construction of bridges and

THE TELEGRAPH

17 JUL 2002

Gazprom proposes shallow-water pipeline

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, AUG. 11. In a new twist to the current power play on moving Iranian natural gas to India via Pakistan, Russia is coming up with an offer of its own. The Russian energy giant, Gazprom, is ready with plans to build a natural gas pipeline from Iran to India via the Pakistani coastal waters.

Russia's new energy diplomacy in the region is likely to give Moscow a political opening in Islamabad. The Gazprom energy initiative could inject

some economic content into Russia's ties with Pakistan and comes amid preparations for the visit of the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, to Moscow later this year.

A joint committee of Indian and Iranian experts has been studying various options for the supply of natural gas from the South Pars field in Iran to the markets in northern and western India for some time. The committee has authorised two feasibility studies — one for a pipeline running overland through Pakistan and the other resting on the deep seabed. New Delhi has strong reservations on the first, given its security concerns about relying on an energy line coming through Pakistan. The deepwater option is far too expensive and rules itself out.

The Gazprom proposal straddles the middle ground. It wants to lay a shallow-water pipeline that runs along the Pakistani coast. It avoids the excessive costs of the deep-sea pipeline as well as address some

of the security risks associated with an overland structure.

In India, key sections of the security establishment remain opposed to pipeline proposals that have anything to do with Pakistan. The Russian proposal will not overcome the argument that a pipeline running through the territorial waters of Pakistan retains Islamabad as a key actor in the project.

Like the overland option, the Russian proposal too will yield considerable revenues to Pakistan as transit fees. Media reports from Russia say Gazprom

has already embarked on consultations with Iranian and Pakistani officials on its proposal. It has also reportedly sounded out Indian companies.

Besides the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline, Gazprom is also interested in a stake in the proposal to build a natural gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to

Pakistan via Afghanistan. Gazprom, which holds nearly one-fifth of all the world's known reserves of natural gas, is emerging as a powerhouse in the politics of building natural gas pipelines.

The logic of the market should take this pipeline too to India. But in an agreement signed earlier this year in Islamabad, the Presidents of Pakistan,

Afghanistan, and Turkmenistan have chosen to look at a proposal that will take the pipeline to Pakistan's Arabian Sea coast and export the natural gas in a liquefied form.

Of equal interest to India are the political

consequences of Russia's energy diplomacy in its Western neighbourhood. Russian energy giants are now private corporations, flush with Western equity investments. In partnership with the American majors, Russian energy giants are aggressively refurbishing the industry at home and seeking opportunities around the world.

That new found activism has brought Gazprom right into Pakistan. In the last few months, there have been intensive contacts between Gazprom and the Pakistani establishment. Gazprom is also looking at reviving the cooperation between Moscow and Islamabad in the energy sector, some of it dating back to the 1960s.

Russian energy activism in Pakistan is a new reality India will have to come to terms with. Instead of raising political eyebrows at the new Russian economic focus on Pakistan, New Delhi should explore ways to convert the international interest in the trans-border energy projects into an advantage.

India, which is the largest market for natural gas in the region, has an extraordinary leverage in shaping the mega energy projects that could integrate the Gulf and Central Asia to the Indian economy.

Creative Indian diplomacy could help transform Pakistan into a bridge state between itself and the energy-rich Western neighbourhood.

A central premise of such diplomacy would be to stop treating Pakistan as a political barrier that New Delhi avoids dealing with.

India, Russia looking at joint ventures in aviation

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, APRIL 21. A leading Russian aircraft manufacturer is proposing a strategic partnership with the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. Pooling of resources is the only way for both India and Russia to survive as aviation-manufacturing nations, said Alexei Fyodorov, president, IRKUT aircraft building corporation, which is producing the SU-30MKI multi-role fighters for the Indian Air Force. "Neither Russia nor India can compete on their own with four to five aerospace giants, such as Boeing, Lockheed-Martin and European Aeronautic Defence and Spares Co. (EADS), which are pushing for global domination," Mr. Fyodorov told *The Hindu*. "Our aviation industries face the choice of either becoming appendices of Western corporations or joining forces with each other to win a share of the aerospace market."

This idea will dominate Mr. Fyodorov's address at an Indo-Russian seminar devoted to reforms in the defence sectors of the two countries. The seminar, organised by the Indo-Russian Security Forum at the India Habitat Centre, Delhi, on April 23-24, is expected to be addressed by the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, the Deputy Director of Russia's Rosoboronexport arms exporting monopoly, Viktor Komardin, as well as the CEOs of leading defence companies of both the countries.

The HAL and the IRKUT corporation, which have a long history of cooperation in building military aircraft are now working to change their relations to move from production under licence to joint projects, such as the construction of a new multi-role transport aircraft (MTA). Plans are afoot to set up a shareholding joint venture company which will handle R&D, production, marketing and after-sales

servicing of the new MTA, to be built on the basis of the Russian IL-214T medium-haul transport plane. The MTA is expected to make its maiden flight in five to six years, Mr. Fyodorov said.

Military aviation is one of the more advanced areas of Indo-Russian defence cooperation, with Russian-built or designed aircraft accounting for about 80 per cent of the IAF inventory. Now the industrialists of the two countries are working to extend their cooperation to civil aviation. "We are willing to invest in the Indian aerospace industry," Mr. Fyodorov said, ahead of his departure to Delhi. "By promoting a network of JVs and other joint projects, as well as by unifying our standards, technologies and personnel qualifications, we can gradually work our way towards the establishment of a joint Russian-Indian aircraft manufacturing sector capable of preserving its independence in the face of transatlantic domination."

APR 2002

410-8
2/4

India, Russia to make fighter variant for Malaysia

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, APRIL 20. In a move of far-reaching consequence, India and Russia will work together to produce a variant of the state-of-the-art Su-30 MK 'I' fighter jet for Malaysia.

With India set to manufacture 140 SU-30 MK 'I' aircraft in India under Russian licence, the acquisition of similar aircraft by Malaysia can affect the region's security balance. The presence of Su-30 jets by India and Malaysia can to some extent neutralise the Chinese numerical lead in fighter aircraft in the region. China has a large fleet of the less superior Su-27 fighter jets and is expected to acquire a Su-30 variant by 2005.

According to Alexey Fedorov, president of Irkut Corporation, the manufacturers of Su series

of aircraft, his company is well disposed towards the Indian strategy of mastering the full cycle of the creation of an aircraft, right from research and production to upgrades. Mr. Fedorov's observations have aroused much interest here, especially in view of his visit to India next week to participate in a seminar on the new challenges and opportunities in Indian and Russian defence industries.

Irkut is refashioning itself because of the global trend towards consolidations. Today, the trend is to form four or five aerospace corporations on a global scale, which will tend to divide among themselves the major markets of military and civil aviation equipment. India figures prominently in this strategy.

According to Mr. Fedorov, Irkut, engaged in many countries of South-East Asia and the Asian Pacific region, is already feeling the synergetic effect of the Russian-Indian interaction. "I mean our participation in the Malaysian tender," he underlined, adding that the Su-30 MKM offered to Malaysia is basically a derivative of Su-30 MKI. "The positive mood of Malaysia with regard to Su-30 MKM aircraft in many respects stems from the successful implementation of the MKI project and the practical result achieved by the Russian and Indian participants in the project."

During the course of talks held with Malaysian officials, Irkut was busy exploring the possibility of setting up a regional centre for integrated lo-

gistical support for Su-30 MKI in India. The Sukhoi chief was confident that in future Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) will be active in cooperating with the Malaysian Air Force in providing their Sukhoi fleet with spares and technical service.

"Convergence and mutual interpenetration of Russian and Indian high-tech complexes must follow the chosen logic of further augmentation and expansion of cooperation between the leading aircraft manufacturing corporations.

This logic is fully in line with the political reference marks outlined by the top management of both countries and the realities of strategic partnership," he observed during the Defence Minister, George Fernandes' recent Moscow visit.

21 APR 2002

THE HINDU

India and Russia to jointly design weapons

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, APRIL 11. The level of trust between India and Russia enables us to jointly design and produce weapons, the Russian Defence Minister, Sergei Ivanov, said after talks with the Defence Minister, George Fernandes.

Mr. Fernandes, who is on a four-day official visit, will call on the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and meet other officials.

"We have gone beyond the buyer-seller relationship in our military-technical cooperation for several years now and have undertaken projects that involve not only technological but also scientific collaboration," Mr. Ivanov said, citing the examples of SU-30MKI fighter plane and the BrahMos antiship missile.

"Our countries trust each other so deeply that we can go in for joint design and production of weapons." Neither of them dis-

closed the details of the talks they had, but both said they discussed new research and development projects in the defence area and voiced satisfaction with their discussions.

Their talks on Thursday — first in a one-on-one format and then at the delegation level — went on for three hours instead of one-and-a-quarter hour envisaged in the programme.

"The further development of military-technical cooperation stands on very firm foundations and is poised for further growth," Mr. Fernandes said after the talks.

The two Defence Ministers also discussed regional and global security. In particular, Mr. Ivanov voiced full support to India's stand on terrorism. "We unequivocally share India's position on cross-border terrorism in South Asia," Mr. Ivanov said.

"Terrorists are active in this region and

this is a fact that cannot be denied. What brings us closer together is that our two people know from their own experience what terrorism is," Mr. Ivanov said.

"We've been going through continuous cross-border terrorism and we are grateful to you for the support you have been giving us in fighting it," Mr. Fernandes said addressing his Russian host.

Mr. Ivanov said India and Russia took "identical or very close" stands on most issues of regional and global security, above all on Afghanistan. For his part, Mr. Fernandes stressed the strategic dimension of Indo-Russian cooperation.

"Our discussions today once again reconfirmed our desire to further strengthen this strategic partnership with the objective of optimising our relations to make sure that both sides get the best out of it and we realise the full potential of our cooperation," Mr. Fernandes said.

APR 11 2002

THE HINDU

'Alliances have corners that are always sharp'

Alexander Kadakin, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to India and former Ambassador of the USSR to Nepal, has long been associated with this country in his capacity as an Indologist. In this interview with ADITI BHADURI, he shares his views on issues ranging from Indo-Russian ties and cross-border terrorism involving Kashmir to American interests in Central Asia and developments in Afghanistan. Excerpts:

As an Indologist, you've been connected with India for the last 30 years, much before you became Ambassador. In your view of Indo-Russian relations in the new world order, does there seem to have been a decline in interest in our countries towards each other?

Well, our countries went through a difficult period but there has never been a decline of interests because we've always had a mutual love for each other. Yes, the Soviet Union collapsed in the early '90s, we were transitioning from the rigid regime of socialist economy to a free market economy and, of course, this cannot be built overnight. It's taken India 55 years to attain what it has achieved till now and, moreover, it's had its economic reforms, like liberalisation. So our countries were preoccupied with their own problems, but things have been straightened out and we're now close as never before, not even in Soviet times.

But we still have a long way to go in our trade, which is a particular sticking point in bilateral relations.

Of course. While we have excellent cooperation in defence, in economic interactions, we shall be building the nuclear power plant in Kadankulam and we have agreed to modernise several of India's power stations in different states. We also have excellent cooperation in outer space, space technology, in together working out the most updated technology and armaments.

You may recall that last June we test fired a joint Cruise missile which was a product of our joint efforts. Unfortunately against this bright and progressive background we are lagging behind in trade so much. There are several reasons why. Unfortunately our Indian colleagues in business cannot rid themselves of the old mentality that if the CPSU Politburo would pass a decision to buy 1,120 tons of tea from India everybody would comply. But now we have neither the CPSU nor the Politburo to take such decisions. That is why I always urge entrepreneurs to be more aggressive in Russian markets, for ours is a thriving free market economy and they have to be more active in that market.

What exactly do you mean by "more aggressive"?

Well, they shouldn't be afraid of investing in joint ventures because Russia today has one of the most favourable investment climates in the world, at least in Europe. The tax percentage is only 13, the lowest in Europe. But Indian entrepreneurs prefer to stick to the older model when times are changing.

How significant was Prime Minister AB Vajpayee's visit to Russia?

It was not only significant, it was an important milestone in bilateral relations and it has also become a very important landmark in international politics. It is no secret

that India and Russia are strategic partners, something that lays much responsibility on both countries. When President Putin came here in October last year, he and Mr Vajpayee signed the famous Declaration of Strategic Partnership which provided for annual summits between our two countries. In early November last year, another summit took place in Moscow. The two leaders covered the gamut of bilateral ties — from a joint exploration of space earth to working out and designing fifth generation combat aircraft, tanks, submarines and frigates which Russia is helping India to build, and jointly working on prospects for natural gas in the Bay of Bengal.

The Moscow summit came out with a Declaration...

Yes. The Moscow Declaration on combating international terrorism was a logical outcome. After the barbaric and outrageous acts of international terrorism on 11 September last year, the bombings in New York and Washington, it was only natural the two leaders cover the area. At the top of the agenda was how India and Russia should combat international terrorism. For our two countries it is an everyday reality. We're combating international terrorism in Chechnya and we know how our Indian friends suffer from everyday terrorism in Kashmir. In every aspect, the Moscow summit was very important and productive, as was emphasised by Mr Vajpayee.

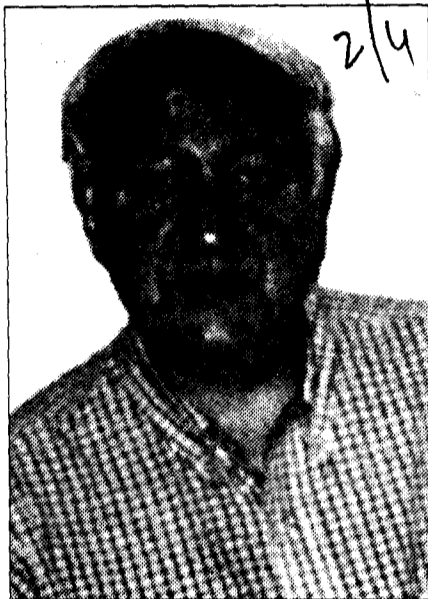
And Russia's stand on cross-border terrorism in India?

As I just said, New Delhi and Moscow know this from experience. When Mr Putin visited India last year and spoke in your Parliament, he put aside his prepared speech and said Russia and India, together and separately, were warning the world of the real danger of international terrorism. He said, "We know very well how much sorrow India experiences as a result of trans-border terrorism in Kashmir." We have never doubted the territorial integrity of India and for us the geographical and geo-strategic belonging of Jammu and Kashmir is very clear. It is a geographical entity of the Indian Union. That is why, though some journalists at times write about a kind of a change in our position, there is nothing of the sort. We have never doubted the territorial belonging of Kashmir and we stand against acts of trans-border terrorism committed in India. We want India to live in peace, with peace on its borders. And we want the Kashmir problem, we call it a problem and not a dispute, to be settled not on the battlefield but through peaceful bilateral negotiations without outside interference, in the spirit of Simla and Lahore.

Many Russians have been advocating a Russia-China-India

alliance...

Actually I'm against any type of alliance — triangles or pentagons — because "corners" are always sharp. It must first be understood that the talk is not about alliances, but about attaining positive goals. When the position of these three powers coincide, as it did regarding the aggression against Yugoslavia and the events in Kosovo, Kargil and Chechnya, we should simply work together, but not against somebody. This is the formula for such possible three-way



Russian Ambassador to India Alexander Kadakin. 'Russia has never equated Islam with terrorism.'

cooperation. Do you see a rise of religious extremism in Central Asia?

I don't. If you take the former Soviet republics that are now independent countries, like Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, they have traditionally always been very secular and secular they remain.

It is another matter that this scourge, this infection of obscurantism, of militant religious extremism, is spreading and that is the whole aim and goal of anti-terrorist campaigns of which India, Russia, the USA and a host of other countries are participants. We are against this evil of fundamentalist extremism, not against Islam as such. Russia has never equated Islam with terrorism. In fact, if you talk about

Russia's Islamic culture, percentage wise we are more Muslim than India because we have a 20-25 per cent Muslim population while India has only 15 per cent.

How does Russia view the developments in Afghanistan?

We have been intimately linked with that process. The Russian Federation and India were the only two countries that, just a year ago, were helping the Northern Alliance. All the others doubted whether the Northern Alliance would stand or not, whether they were controlling one per cent or five per cent of the population and then nobody believed the NA would win. India and Russia were saying that even if the NA controlled zero per cent of Afghan territory we would never recognise the obscurantist Taliban movement.

So, I think we have every reason to be satisfied with what is happening, and we wish that the Afghan people speedily settle their internal problems. They now have an interim government headed by Mr Karzai and this seems to be the first step on the long road back to normality. We shall do whatever we can to help rebuild their war-ravaged economy, their democratic institutions and their return to normal life.

It is well known that the Americans are seeking a foothold in Central Asia for the oil and gas of the region. Is Russia sceptical?

Russia isn't alarmed because from what we hear from our American partners they tell us they are not going to settle down there. In fact, all along we have advised them not to settle down especially in Afghanistan for we know from our own unfortunate experience that settling down in Afghanistan will never bear good fruit. And the message we get is that they will not be settling down in Central Asia.

Russia has been sympathetic towards America after the 11 September attacks. There has been a lot of cooperation among the two countries but there seems to be a feeling in Russia that the USA had it coming.

No, not in Russia. You see, Russia had the same experience when terrorists in Chechnya were, in the wee hours of the morning, blowing up enormous apartment complexes in Moscow, in Volgograd, other cities.

It didn't evoke such a reaction at that time, maybe because it was not televised live on CNN, but we passed through the same kind of tragedy as the Americans. But yes, there has been a lot of cooperation, an unprecedented sharing of intelligence.

What would Russia's position be in case of a US attack on Iraq?

Russia is absolutely against the proliferation of anti-terrorism. We will not welcome it and we would not like anti-terrorist operations to be expanded to other countries.

You must have heard of the Justice Mukherjee Commission that is looking into the disappearance of Netaji Subhash Bose. You probably know Grigory Grigoryevich Kotovsky, also a famous Indologist, was in India last year and said there were no documents relating to Netaji's disappearance in Russia. And yet the Commission recently received classified documents in this connection from three different archives in Russia. What can you say about that?

As far as I know, I agree with Dr Kotovsky's view that there were no documents related to Netaji Subhash's death. There might have been some regarding his visit to Moscow on his way to Germany. If I remember correctly, he was in Moscow for two-three days to garner support, but it was many, many years before his death. In the foreign ministry, we received these queries on several occasions from the Indian Embassy in Moscow, from the Indian government. As far as I remember the Foreign Ministry was digging into all our state archives and we found nothing, and we accordingly informed the Indian side that we did not have anything related to Netaji's death in a Russian prison.

There's the similar case of the Swede, Raul Vallenberg, who was assassinated by the Soviets in 1944. This was all along denied by Russia until it was recently made known that he had indeed been killed by the Soviets in 1944.

There's actually no parallel because the circumstances were different. When Budapest was liberated, Vallenberg was arrested by the Red Army and then all trace of him was lost. He may have been captured by Soviet Intelligence and there was a kind of, so to say, Russian-Vallenberg contact in Budapest. With regard to Netaji, I haven't heard of any contact between him and Russia at that time. As you know he was travelling by plane, far beyond Russia's borders. He was flying to Japan, not to Russia, and that crash happened, I think, in Formosa.

What about West Bengal?

We're always ready to cooperate with the state. We had a very good experience in our cooperation with West Bengal during Soviet times and I'd say the emotional attachment to this state is something very special in Russia. And I'm not talking about the former ideological affiliations.

We are open and ready for talks, for deeper cooperation, but it is upto West Bengal to choose a partner, a sister or a brother out of the Russian Federation.

How do you find Kolkata?

Oh, I love the city. It has a charm you find nowhere else in India. Of course, every metropolis has its own charm but Kolkata has its own rhythm, its own colour, its own mood. This is my eighth or 10th visit and I can see many good things happening here. The city has become cleaner, especially in the central parts.

And the Indian Museum is so beautiful. Then there's the immortal Victoria Memorial which houses the second largest painting in the world — Vasily Vereshagin's 'March of the Elephants'. I especially like its people. They're very artistic, which is characteristic of Bengalis as a whole, I think. Kolkata has a very affectionate and warm aura and is deeply rooted in tradition. It was

the Russian dramatologist Lebedev who introduced the European model of theatre here. (The author is a freelance writer.)

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S	L	F	H	O	I	O		
E	E	T	C	D	A	U	2nd Letter Double	RACK 3
T	O	I	C	E	E	R		

PAR SCORE 180-180
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (Merriam-Webster) and OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW 10-10-01 © 2001, United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

SCRABBLE® YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION BY JUDD

E	N	O	L	A	V	E	RACK 1 = 98
H	E	R	N	I	A		RACK 2 = 9
L	Y	C	E	U	M		RACK 3 = 28
A	S	H	R	A	M		RACK 4 = 19

PAR SCORE 78-88
JUDD'S TOTAL 122

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'Russia will supply to India 10 Sukhoi 30 MKI by May'

Alexey I. Fedorov, the president of the Irkutsk Aviation Industrial Association is better known as the Sukhoi chief. Fedorov is the man who will deliver to India the most advanced combat aircraft next month. Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov, during George Fernandes' recent visit to Moscow, talked of developing the fifth generation fighter. But Fedorov, who calls the Sukhoi 30 MKI the closest thing to it, is no hurry to develop a fifth generation aircraft yet. Fedorov tells SONIA TRIKHA that this is the best plane, and that he wants to make this one last.

When does the first batch of the Sukhoi 30 MKI arrive in India?

■ THE Sukhoi 30 MKI is not in operation yet. We are just finishing the development with the Indian team in Russia. But we should be able to supply 10 Su 30 MKI by May-June.

You are negotiating with China for the Sukhoi 30 aircraft. Will it have the same standard of preparation as the SU 30 MKI that is being supplied to India?

■ THE plane for China is a different aircraft from a different company from the far east in Russia. It has different capabilities. The one for India is a much more advanced version. It is a new aircraft with a new radar and new engine. The plane for China is very much like the Sukhoi 30 that is already existing in India. The aircraft for India is the most advanced Russian aircraft, that is the SU 30 MKI. We are not negotiating the same for China.

There has been a great deal of talk about the fifth generation fighter. What are your plans for that?

■ IT is just an idea right now. We are still discussing what will be the technology. What kind of an aircraft is needed by different air forces in the world? Which speed will it fly and what armament it will carry? What material to use for making it? It'll certainly be a multi-role aircraft but we are still at a very preliminary stage of discussion.



'The Sukhoi for China is a different aircraft from a different company from the far east in Russia. It's like the plane that already exists here. The one for India is much more advanced, with a new aircraft and a new radar and engine'

We have to remember that it is not a plane just for India and Russia. It will be available for any country that has those aviation needs. We still don't know what the size will be. No one knows whether it is a one engine or two engine plane. We do not have an idea of a time-frame either. For our needs — India and Russia — it will probably be ready for 2015-2020.

Why do you say that?

■ BECAUSE the Sukhoi 30 MKI is very good. Besides, it can be upgraded in airborne equipment and armaments for future use. For the Indian Air Force this aircraft is good for the next 20-30 years.

You are saying the SU 30 MKI already comes close to the fifth generation aircraft?

■ IT comes close to the fifth generation aircraft, certainly. This one must have a long life. We will upgrade it

several times. We can upgrade it to the fifth generation standard. I think the need is to talk about the next generation of combat aircraft that can be this one.

There's been an acceleration in joint collaboration between India and Russia in recent times. Given the level of military cooperation between the two shouldn't it have happened earlier?

■ RUSSIA has always been ready. This cooperation did not happen earlier because India was not yet ready. They did not have the experience and the level of industry and science was not high enough. Now, it is fine to join the world. The Indian air space industry is really good for joint development.

There is criticism that Russian military technology is inferior to western technology and so countries like India and others who have been traditional buyers should make a switch.

■ I SEE these reports as a type of competition. They are not right. If you want to know about Russian military technology ask your air force. They have been flying the Sukhoi 30 for five years, ask them, they have experience.

Civil aviation is different. There, the leaders are Americans and Europeans, companies like Boeing and Airbus Industrie. In military technology we are more advanced. But if Russia has to integrate into the world economy then we can't be the best in all things. It is difficult to produce all products in the same country, we have to buy some technology. For instance, the Americans are better at engines and avionics. In some Russian aircraft we use western engines and avionics. To grow in quality we have to buy western engines.

Integration is about buying some things and selling some things. To have fusion. So I'd say western technology is better for civil aviation but for military aviation we have the same level of technology.

Russia is confident of its share in Indian defence market

By Rajat Pandit
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Even as the U.S., Britain, France, Israel, South Africa and other countries eye the growing multi-billion dollar Indian defence market, Russia seems quite confident its long-standing 'special' strategic relationship with New Delhi will continue to make unbridled progress.

Russian defence industry officials, in town for a seminar, say Moscow and New Delhi are discussing several ambitious projects for joint development and production of weapon systems. Several deals, including the much-talked about ones for aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov* and the TU-22m3 long-range strategic bombers, are in the pipeline.

"We are certainly not worried about the competition. We know our positive and negative points," said Victor M Komardin, deputy director general of Russia's state-owned weapon supplier Rosoboronexport, while talking to TNN on Monday.

While Russia manufactures sturdy weapons meant for 'waging war', the West makes weapons 'with comfort in mind, for peace time', claimed Mr Komardin, whose agency exported armaments worth \$ 4.2 billion dollars last year. "India, more and more, wants to go in for licensed production and this will continue, especially in big proj-

ects," said Mr Komardin.

Practically all major contracts between the two countries, like the T-90S main-battle tanks and Sukhoi-30MKI multi-role fighter jets, have provisions for licensed production in India.

In the future, the focus will increasingly shift to joint development, production and sale of high-tech weapon systems. The 'BrahMos' supersonic cruise missile is one such project. Discussions are also on for co-development of a 100-seater multi-role transport aircraft and a fifth-generation combat fighter. "Russia is open for all this," said Mr Komardin.

IRKUT (Sukhoi) corporation chief Alexei Fedorov, for instance, is proposing a strategic partnership with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited to jointly corner a share of the world aerospace market. Towards this, Russia wants New Delhi to take part in developing Sukhoi jets for Malaysia as they will basically be 'derivatives' of the SU-30MKIs being manufactured for India.

Russia is also keen to sell a whole range of military hardware and software to India. These range from "Smerch" and "Grad" multiple-launch rocket systems and "Amur-1650" and "Amur-950" diesel-electric submarines to the "Kamov" and "Mi" combat, multi-purpose and anti-submarine helicopters.

24 APR 2002

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Defuse crisis, Russia tells India, Pak.

223
By Vladimir Radyuhin 119-12

MOSCOW, MARCH 21. Russia has voiced concern over the persisting tension between India and Pakistan and called on both nations to act with restraint and work for defusing a "dangerous crisis." Moscow's anxieties were conveyed to Pakistan's Additional Secretary, Anisuddin Ahmad, during bilateral Foreign Ministry consultations in Moscow on March 19 and 20. The envoy discussed Russian-Pakistani relations, including the fight against terrorism, religious extremism and illegal drug trafficking, in separate meetings with the Russian Deputy Foreign Ministers, Alexander Losyukov and Anatoly Safonov, the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Talking to the press here after the discus-

sions, Mr. Ahmad described the bilateral relations with Russia as "very promising." The two countries had opened "a new page" after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S. and had put behind them "all frictions." "We are both part of the global coalition against terrorism and are on the same side of the table as regards Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda and regional cooperation," Mr. Ahmad said.

Contacts between Moscow and Islamabad have recently intensified. Mr. Ahmad is the third Pakistani envoy to visit Moscow in the last two months. The head of Foreign Relations Committee of the State Duma, Lower House of the Russian Parliament, Dmitry Rogozin, will pay a visit to Pakistan in mid-April, Mr. Ahmad said today. The last time Russian parliamentarians visited Pakistan was in 1999. The Pakistani diplomat also

said a "high-level" delegation of the Russian Foreign Ministry would visit Islamabad in May.

"We also hope the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, will visit Pakistan in the first half of this year," Mr. Ahmad said. However, the Russian side said Mr. Ivanov's visit would take place if Pakistan cracks down on terrorist outfits operating from its soil. On Monday, Moscow reiterated this demand in a statement on the terrorist attack on a church in Islamabad on March 17. "This act of terror underlines again the need to take effective action against Pakistan-based terrorist and extremist organisations in keeping with a plan of struggle against them announced by President Musharraf on January 12," the Russian Foreign Minister said in a statement.

THE HINDU

22 MAR 2002

Russia ready to invest in Indian defence sector

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, FEB. 17. Russia sees the proposed privatisation of the Indian defence industry as a welcome chance for its arms manufacturers to consolidate their foothold in the Indian market.

"The Russian weapons industry is ready to look into opportunities for investment in the Indian defence sector," said Viktor Komardin, deputy chief of the Russian arms exporting monopoly, Rosoboronexport.

Integration of the Indian and Russian defence industries would be in line with the current shift from the buyer-seller relationship to joint development and production of new weapon systems.

"We have joint R&D projects with India in almost all types of military hardware," Mr. Komardin said, citing as examples the Brahmos cruise missile, built last year, and a medium-haul transport aircraft, to be developed jointly on the lines of the Russian-built Il-214 plane.

Mr. Komardin will lead a high-power delegation to the Defexpo India'2002 arms show, which opens in Delhi on February 19. The Russian display, likely to be the largest among foreign participants, will feature over 400 samples

of defence, dual-purpose and civilian-use products manufactured by 29 Russian defence industry companies. Russian entries will include the high-end T-90 main battle tank, recently purchased by India, the latest diesel-electric submarines in the Amur-1650 and Amur-950 series, various helicopters, gunboats, air-defence weapons and an array of small arms.

The Russian delegation includes top defence factory managers, who will be looking for strategic partners in India. "We take interest in the privatisation of India's defence plants," said Mr. Vladimir Korenkov, General Director of the Bazalt factory, Russia's leading manufacturer of unguided munitions. "If Russia and India are strategic partners, it would be logical to integrate our defence industries".

Bazalt, which has been supplying airbombs and artillery shells to India, is now proposing joint development of new-generation munitions, such as winged airbombs that enable the pilot to hit targets 6 km to 15 km away while staying out of range of enemy air defences.

"We're prepared to consider setting up a joint venture with an Indian entity and manufacture new munitions

for our two countries, as well as for export to third countries," the Bazalt manager said.

Participation in India's defence sector disinvestment programme can also help Russia face up to mounting competition from Western arms manufacturers.

"We propose to increase the share of high-end technologies in our defence exports to India, to move from licenced assembly of Russian-made weapons to joint development and production and to promote factory-to-factory ties," said Mr. Komardin.

Experts said the Russian defence industry, which is wholly state-owned, could invest both cash and technologies in the Indian defence sector. "The Russian defence industry is capable of investing in India \$600 to \$700 million over the next three to four years," said Alexander Vaskin of the Indo-Russian Security Forum. "As for technologies, the Russian contribution could be far more weighty, if, for example, the two countries go for the joint development of a fifth-generation jet fighter or a fourth-generation tank on the basis of the Russian T-95 MBT".

49-9
17

India, Russia call for 'non-interference' in Afghanistan

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, FEB. 16. India and Russia have called for non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and vowed to continue jointly opposing terrorism.

The two countries stressed the need for "non-interference by others" in Afghanistan's internal affairs, said a joint statement issued by the Indo-Russian Joint Working Group on Afghanistan.

Diplomatic sources said the call was specifically addressed to Pakistan, which continued to

stir trouble in Afghanistan.

There is evidence that "certain pro-Pakistani groups with Taliban elements are being formed in Afghanistan," said the Foreign Secretary, Chokilal, who co-chaired the fourth meeting of the JWG in Afghanistan with Russia's First Deputy Foreign Minister, Vyacheslav Trubnikov, on Friday. "The people of Afghanistan should themselves establish a broad-based multi-ethnic system of Government."

In their joint statement India and Russia lent support to the interim administration led by

Hamid Karzai and warned the international security force in Afghanistan to "act strictly in accordance with (the United Nations) mandate" in order to create "conditions for transfer of its functions to competent and enabled Afghan authorities and institutions."

The two sides also reaffirmed their "rejection of the Taliban in any form" in Afghanistan. The Foreign Secretary said both Delhi and Moscow were concerned that thousands of the Taliban had vanished into thin air in Afghanistan.

THE HINDU

1. 131

Terror axis tag worries India

5/1 9/2
State News Service

NEW DELHI, Feb. 8. - Russia and India, though not openly critical, are alarmed at Mr George Bush's categorisation of Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an "axis of terror". This, combined with the US President's threat to assume the unilateral right to act against them to 'combat terrorism', may jeopardise the existence of the global anti-terror alliance.

Talks that Russian Foreign Minister Mr Igor Ivanov and Deputy Prime Minister Mr Ilya Klebanov had held with top Indian leaders here this week were focused on this issue, sources indicated.

It was discussed whether it was politically correct for Mr Bush to have used such language. Partly, all this helped firm up the concept of trilateral cooperation between Russia, China and India. Offi-

Ind. Rumor
cials wondered how one could unilaterally decide which countries are "evil" in matters of foreign policy.

Russia and India share close ties with Iran and Iraq and feel a better approach would be to coopt them in the anti-terror coalition. Iran played a key role in ridding Afghanistan of the Taliban. "Wrong steps" now could set the clock back irretrievably in Afghanistan, where there's "no further cushion for mistakes". It was felt hasty steps, taken unilaterally, might cause the global coalition to collapse, serving the very terrorist organisations' interests the coalition wants to defeat.

Though no formal negotiations on Mr Bush's address have been held, there's more than slight concern on the matter, to be raised informally with the Americans.

India, Russia to work on hi-tech projects, page 6

THE STATESMAN

9 FEB 2002

India, Russia to work on hi-tech projects

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Feb. 8. — After meetings with Russian authorities over the last three days, India has finalised plans to acquire the Tu-22 long-range reconnaissance aircraft for the Navy besides working towards the joint development of high-tech projects like the Fifth Generation fighter and the purchase of the aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov.

Discussions on the Tu-22ME have been going on for nearly two years. The plane can not only be used for reconnaissance, it can also be refitted to carry nuclear weapons. India is initially keen on leasing or buying four planes. In the early Eighties, the West named it the Backfire Bomber and considered it a threatening weapons system. The plane has enormous reach and can hit faraway targets.

Speaking to reporters about the Admiral Gorshkov, the aircraft carrier, being discussed since the mid-Nineties, the Russian deputy prime minister, Mr Ilya Klebanov, said the deal could be signed by mid-year if

the Indian defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, has no reservations. Mr Fernandes said the technical discussions are complete and the price negotiation committee will be formed soon. He said it was very necessary to have carriers and discussions to finalise the acquisition of MiG-29K fighter planes.

The two countries signed four agreements during the day. The defence minister and the Russian deputy prime minister signed the overall inter-governmental protocol. The defence secretary, Mr Yogendra Narain, and Mr AV Denisov, the first deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Committee for military-technical cooperation with foreign states, signed a second protocol. The secretary, defence production, Mr Subir Dutta and Mr VF Mozgadev, deputy minister of economic development and trade signed another agreement on shipbuilding, aviation and land systems. A fourth agreement regarding the purchase of 2,500 rounds of precision-guided ammunition was signed between Mr SI Averian of Krasnopol, a manufacturer, and Mr Arvind Joshi, a joint sec-

retary.

Speaking to reporters today, Mr Fernandes spoke of a number of projects that were discussed during the three days. Both leaders remained silent on the issue of the lease of a nuclear submarine. Mr Fernandes spoke of the Russian agreeing to supply additional T-90 tanks in this financial year, the trials for the Smerch rocket launchers will be held in May while the concept paper for the fifth generation fighter aircraft will be ready soon.

A technical team will be leaving for Russia very shortly. The work on the fighter will be equally divided and it would be to the interest of the armed forces of both countries and foreign markets. There are also plans to upgrade the 877 EKM Kilo class submarines of the Navy in India. Mr Fernandes said he was satisfied with the discussions, which he said were productive and meaningful.

He said the joint efforts to develop an anti-ship cruise missile was progressing satisfactorily, there was no joint collaboration on the development of a ballistic missile.

Defend the shift

Indo-Russian ventures in defence is the key to the future

THE Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov has proposed once again what the two countries should have been doing for decades: that his country and India be partners in the development, production and marketing of weapon systems and defence equipment. Ideally, this should constitute a paradigm shift for future defence industry co-operation, even though global trends clearly indicate the retrenchment of military power and a decline in the requirement of weapon systems. Simultaneously, military technology is rapidly moving to ever higher levels of capability, with the inevitable rise in costs of weapon systems. The defence industry, as a consequence, is shrinking and collaboration is the key to the future.

Five issues require attention to support this paradigm shift between New Delhi and Moscow. It would be incorrect to focus only on strategic weapons for collaborative ventures. The joint development of a fifth generation fighter aircraft is welcome, for example, but so should be the joint development of a range of other shorter-than-frontier technology systems. In particular, collaborative production and sales of spares and components of existing weapon systems will be required. Similarly, the importance of high technology is well recognised but the mid-to-low technology arena must not be ignored. A thoroughbred is excellent, but a work-horse is crucial. Thirdly, defence PSUs must remain the locus of future design, development and manufacture of weapon systems. Concurrent steps will have to be taken to ensure greater efficiency, autonomy and accountability of these enterprises. Fourthly, the

private sector will need to be increasingly involved in the changing scenario if we are to ensure a more resilient defence industry in future. Finally, we must ensure that long term planning, funding and political support for collaborative defence industry initiatives is sustained.

Clearly, having continued for three decades with a self-reliance model that did not cater for longer term needs, India must now ensure basic durable changes. The defence self-reliance model that evolved after independence not only relied heavily on diversification, but in practice implemented an integrated programme of indigenous design and development, collaborative design and development, licence production besides imports of weapon systems. But, from the sixties onward, the indigenous/collaborative design, development and production fell by the side. Historical opportunities were missed after the break up of the Soviet Union, when the leadership in Moscow made offers similar to what Klebanov is now making. For example, joint development of an Advanced Jet Trainer more than a decade ago would have led to filling a key gap years ago at costs that would have been affordable. The Group of Ministers report on Management of Defence handed over to the prime minister recently seeks to improve the procurement process. But it is curiously inarticulate on the strategy to be adopted for defence self-reliance through interdependence by joint development, manufacture and sales of future weapon systems. There are signs of change now — but we need to move firmly and make up for lost time and opportunities.

INDIAN EXPRESS

8 FEB 2002

DEAL ON N-SUBMARINES PUT ON HOLD

Russia to speed up supply of T-90 tanks to India

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, FEB. 8. With the military stand-off with Pakistan yet to abate, Russia today agreed to speed up supplies of advanced T-90 tanks to India. It had initially planned to dispatch a limited number of ready-to-use T-90 tanks during the current financial year, but may now supply up to 80 tanks before March-end following India's requests.

India and Russia also redefined their military relationship by agreeing to produce an advanced fifth generation fighter aircraft as also to collaborate in the development of military technology in frontier areas. "Bilateral military ties have matured from a buyer-seller relationship and transfer of technology to that of collaboration and R&D of military systems," said the Defence Minister, George Fernandes.

Russia will send a concept paper on the advanced fighter aircraft and later a technical team from India will visit Moscow for further discussions on the project in which both countries will have equal commitments.

However, an agreement to lease nuclear submarines has been kept in abeyance. Russia remains tight-lipped on the issue. The visiting Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Ilya Klebanov, said, "We are not



The Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Ilya Klebanov, with the Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, in New Delhi on Friday. — AP

holding negotiations at this point." The Indian side, however, issued a categorical denial. "There is no nuclear submarine," declared Mr. Fernandes. The two sides also disclaimed plans to cooperate in the development of ballistic missile systems.

India and Russia moved closer to concluding negotiations on the much-awaited sale of the partially-gutted aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov and TU-22 long-range bombers which can also deliver nuclear weapons. "We should be ready to sign the contracts by summer-time," said Mr. Klebanov at the end of a three-day review of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental

Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation here today.

Mr. Fernandes said technical discussions on Admiral Gorshkov were over and price negotiations would start soon. Asked if he was satisfied with the talks on Gorshkov and the TU-22 bombers, Mr. Fernandes said, "Yes, I am. Given the responsibility we have, it is very necessary to have these platforms." The negotiations on the TU-22s assume importance in the light of India's draft nuclear doctrine which advocates positioning of atomic weapons on land, sea and air.

The Commission also decided on the dates to test the Smerch multiple rocket systems

which India had been looking forward to for a long time. With the Smerch in India's arsenal, the country will have a capability to land saturating fire by rockets at a distance of around 90 km. It was also agreed to discuss cooperation in the satellite global surveillance system and set up facilities in India for medium refit and modernisation of kilo-class submarines. The commission noted that the jointly developed anti-ship Cruise missile Brahmos (an amalgamation of the Brahmaputra and the Moscvu) which had a range of around 300 km had functioned satisfactorily. Mr. Fernandes described the project as a "watershed" in Indo-Russian ties.

Emerging after nearly three hours of Minister-level talks that paved the way for signing of three protocols, Mr. Fernandes termed the meeting as "very productive and meaningful" since it "constructively" addressed issues relating to military-technical cooperation on a "mutually-beneficial basis".

The two countries also signed protocols for cooperation in warship building, aviation and developing land-based systems for the army and in the aviation sector. The protocols, including one on military-to-military cooperation, were signed in the presence of Mr. Fernandes and Mr. Klebanov.

Indo-Russian pact on arms outlets soon

Srinjoy Chowdhury in New Delhi

Feb. 7. — Russia and India are likely to sign an agreement on the setting up of outlets by Russian arms manufacturers in the country very shortly. This would mean that Indian armed forces would be able to directly approach the firms for spare parts instead of going to Russia and through arms export agencies.

About two-thirds of Indian weapons are of Russian origin and since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, there have been serious problems in getting spares whether it is for tanks, guns, warplanes or warships and submarines. Spares shortages can be troubling and can lead to equipment not being serviceable.

Now, with the Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, allowing arms manufacturers to set up shop abroad, it will be easy for the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Ilya Klebanov, and the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, to sign an agreement on the issue. Buying from these manufacturers would be easier and cheaper for the Indian defence sector.

“Non-financial” agreements will probably be easier to hammer out as both sides were bargaining about the big-ticket items like the aircraft-carrier, Admiral Gorshkov. For example, while the Russians have asked for \$747 million, the Centre believes it can be brought down to \$650 million or so, by refusing some equipment offered and bargaining. Defence ministry sources said some very hard bargaining is currently going on but some letters of intent will be signed tomorrow. After the LoIs are signed, the price negotiation committees are formed and the work towards the deals begin.

It will be easier to sign other technical agreements like the development of the fifth generation fighter. That will require Russian firms and the Defence Research and Development Organisation pooling resources to produce the plane.

It will probably take 20 years before it is ready. Joint marketing and production are other areas of possible agreement. Russia has long been pushing India to produce equipment here and possibly sell to third countries.

THE STATESMAN

India, Russia sign economic protocol

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI, 7 FEBRUARY

India and Russia today signed a wide-ranging trade and economic protocol providing for the joint development of a 100-seater multi-purpose transport aircraft and boosting cooperation in oil exploration. The two countries also unveiled new measures to reverse the declining trade.

The aircraft to be produced and marketed jointly, is likely to be based on the Russian IL-214 design and will be developed in its various versions— military transport, passenger and cargo.

Announcing this decision, Russian deputy prime minister Ilya Klebanov told reporters that feasibility studies had already been carried out and Moscow and New Delhi had earmarked the development of the main and subsidiary systems like air frame, engines and other components between them.

During the extensive meeting, the two sides came to an agreement to sort out the vexed issue of debt repayment, to utilise the large rupee holdings by Moscow for restructuring the ailing Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO) at Burnpur in West Bengal and the 2000 mw Koodankulam nuclear plant in Tamil Nadu being set up with Russian assistance.

Expressing alarm over the fall in the bilateral trade this year, finance minister Yashwant Sinha and Klebanov, who are co-chairmen of the commission, said, while giving strength to the traditional areas of trade, the two sides had agreed to diversify into new areas like the import of rough diamonds from Russia and the export of computers from India.

Sinha said Russia had agreed to give a one-time clearance to Indian pharmaceutical imports, which form the bulk of the trade



Russian deputy prime minister Ilya Klebanov with finance minister Yashwant Sinha in New Delhi on Thursday. Photo: Jagan Negi

between the two countries. It will replace the old system of batch by batch inspection.

While continuing with the rupee trade as part of the debt repayment to Russia, the two countries would encourage Indian trade to Moscow in free currency.

On the IISCO restructuring, Sinha said a feasibility report would be submitted to both the governments soon, besides examining the possibility of rupee funding of Indian projects on a case-by-case basis.

In the face of a "successful" Indo-Russian joint hydrocarbon venture at Shakalin-I in Siberia, the two countries have now agreed to jointly explore the hydrocarbon at Block 27 in the Bay of Bengal.

India also agreed to address Moscow's concern on the increasing anti-dumping measures by New Delhi. "We have agreed to work together to avoid such a situation," Sinha said.

In the financial sector, the two

countries have agreed to strengthen the banking arrangement between them to handle substantial debt repayment and to boost the bilateral trade.

A working group will be set up soon to resolve the debt repayment tangle before the proposed Indo-Russian summit in November.

Klebanov said Russia had also decided to provide concessional schemes to promote the traditional Indian exports of tea and tobacco.

Klebanov said the two countries had also agreed to cooperate in the establishment of the north-south road corridor to promote east-west trade.

Though he did not give details of the project, the proposal is to establish an international land corridor connecting Singapore with Europe via Myanmar, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Iran and Russia.

Klebanov said that prospects for a large-scale breakthrough in the trade and economic relations has emerged.

The Economic Times

8 FEB 2002

India and Russia will jointly develop transport aircraft

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: India and Russia, faced with the recent decline in two-way trade, agreed on Thursday to vigorously pursue new areas of economic cooperation. This includes joint development of a 100-seater multi-purpose transport aircraft that could be exported to other countries and cooperation in oil exploration.

A protocol signed by Union finance minister Yashwant Sinha and Russian deputy prime minister Ilya Klebanov at the end of the eighth session of the inter-governmental commission for trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation here, also envisaged "special concessions" from Russia to facilitate the import of tea and tobacco from India. The two sides also agreed to set up a working group to examine the viability of the ailing public sector steel company, IISCO, and take follow-up action on an earlier protocol for co-operation in the rough diamond trade and processing. Russia has also agreed to facilitate import of computers and pharmaceuticals from India.

At a joint news conference, Mr Sinha said that there was concern on both sides over the recent decline in bilateral trade and as a strategy, it has been decided to push cooperation in new areas

Moscow offers unconditional support to India

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Russia on Thursday made it clear that it was offering unconditional support to India in the current scenario.

"It is time Pakistan showed the world that it is serious about dealing with terror," Russian deputy prime minister Ilya Klebanov told a news conference he jointly addressed with finance minister Yashwant Sinha here, at the end of the Indo-Russian economic joint commission meeting.

while pursuing the traditional areas of economic exchange.

Both Mr Klebanov and Mr Sinha described the joint commission's meeting as productive and expressed the hope that the effects of the measures agreed upon on Thursday would be seen on the two-way trade soon.

Mr Klebanov detailed the proposal for joint development, production and marketing of what he called, the "multi-role" transport aircraft, which can be used both in civil and military aviation.

The aircraft, to be produced and marketed jointly, is likely to be based on the Russian IL-214 design. It will be developed in its various versions, military transport, passenger and cargo. Mr Klebanov said that feasibility studies have already been carried out and Moscow and New Delhi had earmarked development of main and subsidiary systems like air frame, engines and other components between them.

He said that there are already two "confirmed orders" from the defence establishments of the two countries and they are now engaged in working out a joint marketing strategy for selling the aircraft to third countries.

During the extensive meeting, the two sides came to an agreement to sort out the vexed issue of debt repayment, utilise large rupee holdings by Moscow for joint investment projects on a select basis, possibly in ventures such as rehabilitation of IISCO and the construction of the 2000-MW Koodankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu.

Mr Sinha said Russia has agreed to have one time clearance for Indian pharmaceuticals, which form the bulk of the trade between the two countries. It will replace the existing system of batch by batch inspection.

'SITUATION ON BORDER SERIOUS'

Pak. must act on India's request, says Russia

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By Our Special Correspondent
NEW DELHI, FEB. 7. Russia today strongly seconded India's stand on cross-border terrorism and urged Islamabad to demonstrate its "intentions on the ground" by taking tangible action against terrorists operating from its soil.

"Russia totally agrees when India asks Pakistan to do something on the ground to show its sincerity. We want the terrorists to be disarmed and punished. Where cases are made out, they should be handed over to India," said the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Ilya Klebanov, after signing a protocol on furthering commercial ties with the Finance Minister, Yashwant Sinha. Russia's endorsement of

the Indian position on cross-border terrorism was the second in less than a week, coming soon after the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, had asked Pakistan to actively collaborate with India in checking infiltration of terrorists into Jammu and Kashmir.

In response to a question, Mr. Klebanov agreed with the CIA Director, George Tenet's statement that the situation on the Indo-Pak. border was serious. "I will not dispute the CIA chief's observations because CIA is a professional body and is fully capable of making an evaluation." But Mr. Kelbanov maintained that Russia totally concurred with India's stand on Kashmir and appreciated the

restraint shown by New Delhi. However, he counselled against any military action to solve the dispute.

Although Mr. Klebanov's observations on the current flash point occupied centre-stage, the Indo-Russian panel on trade and economic cooperation broke new ground and also signalled a recognition of each other's perception of irritants in bilateral trade.

The protocol signed after the commission meeting envisaged joint development of a 100-seater multi-purpose transport aircraft, more investments in the energy sector and opening up of a "north-south corridor", an alternate supply route for Indian goods into Europe via Russia

and Iran which will "go a long way in facilitating Indo-Russian trade". Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sinha was confident that the impact of the deliberations would be felt in bilateral trade exchanges over the next few months.

The multi-purpose aircraft would be produced and marketed jointly in several versions, including a military version. Mr. Klebanov said the two sides would now work out ways to jointly assemble the aircraft as well as sell it in foreign markets. Various aspects of establishing the north-south corridor such as warehousing, infrastructure etc. would be further discussed at a meeting planned in St. Petersburg in March.

The two sides noticed with "satisfaction" the progress achieved in other fields of interest, especially energy. Russia made a major concession to pharmaceutical exports from India by agreeing to waive the cumbersome batch-by-batch inspection and replace it with one-time clearance. Both sides also decided to use the rupee arrangement fully and encourage more trade exchanges in free currency.

It was decided to set up a joint working group to examine the viability of the ailing public sector iron and steel manufacturer, IISCO, and a report on its restructuring will be submitted to both Governments. A working group on joint projects is being planned to channelise surplus rupee credit into new projects. Metallurgy and energy will be the focus areas.

In an attempt to provide a fillip to trade, it was resolved to strengthen the banking arrangement.

Mr. Klebanov is scheduled to sign an equally significant protocol on military issues with the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, tomorrow.

N-war threat exists: CIA chief

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 7. Although India and Pakistan are publicly downplaying the risks of a nuclear conflict, the United States believes that once a conventional war begins, it could escalate into a nuclear confrontation, according to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, George Tenet.

Appearing before an open session of the Senate Intelligence Committee for the first time since the September 11 terrorist attacks against the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, Mr. Tenet argued that "if India were to conduct large-scale offensive operations into Pakistani Kashmir, Pakistan might retaliate with strikes of its own in the belief that its nuclear deterrent would limit the scope of an Indian nuclear counter-attack".

Mr. Tenet then went on to say that American diplomacy and engagement had made an "enormous" difference. "Both India and Pakistan are publicly downplaying the risks of nuclear conflict in the current crisis. We are deeply concerned, however, that a conventional war, once begun, could escalate into a nuclear confrontation, and here is a place where diplomacy and American engagement has made an enormous difference."

He maintained that Islamabad's response to terrorism was the most "profound" event for

that country since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the American response to it.

"The Musharraf Government's alignment with the United States and its abandonment of nearly a decade of support for the Taliban represent a fundamental shift with inherent political risks because of the militant Islamic and anti-American sentiments that exist within Pakistan," he said.

Turning to the January 12 speech of the Pakistani leader, Pervez Musharraf, Mr. Tenet stressed that while the intention of Gen. Musharraf was to establish a moderate and tolerant Islamic state, "we still have to confront major vested interests."

The speech "also addressed the jihad issue by citing the distinction Prophet Mohammad made between the smaller jihad involving violence and the greater jihad that focuses on eliminating poverty and helping the needy."

No comments: India

PTI reports from New Delhi:

India today declined to comment on the CIA director, George Tenet's remarks on the chance of a war with Pakistan, observing that the comments were made at an internal hearing in the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee.

THE HINDU

8 FEB 2002

Moscow offers tie-up on futuristic weapons

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, February 6

RUSSIA'S VISITING Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov has offered India a stake in its programme for development of futuristic weapons.

"Russia is willing to go beyond the sale and lease of hi-tech weapons," Klebanov said after an hour-long talk with Defence Minister George Fernandes on Wednesday. The Russian Deputy Prime Minister said he had come to New Delhi with "new proposals," which he would outline at the meetings to be held over the next three days.

He said Russia had already made an offer to India for a stake in the development of its new generation of fighters, which are expected to roll out simultaneously with the US joint strike fighter.

Klebanov said defence cooperation between the two countries was "long standing" and "not subject to political conjectures."

"We will give top priority in discussions to collaboration in high technology armament systems. We will also discuss joint production, development and marketing of weapons systems," Klebanov said.

After the three-days talks, sources said Moscow and New Delhi would sign a defence protocol, likely to spell out the leasing of two major naval armament systems as well pave the way for final agreement on handing over of 44,000 tonne Kiev class aircraft



AP PHOTO

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov gets a hug from Defence Minister George Fernandes in New Delhi on Wednesday.

carrier Admiral Gorshkov and joint development and production of a transport plane based on the Il-214 design.

Klebanov will call on President K R Naraynan, Prime Minister A B Vajpayee and also hold talks with External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha and National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra.

Saras Duet: India and Russia are close to developing a civilian aircraft for production in India. The cargo plane, tentatively named "Saras Duet" can also be converted into a 70-seater passenger aircraft. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited will be the Indian partner for the project. Klebanov's visit is also expected to lead to the firming of other economic collaborations.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

7 FEB 2002

BID TO CLOSE DEALS ON N-SUBMARINES

Russia for long-term tie-ups in weapons development

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, FEB. 6. India and Russia today opened high-level talks aimed at defining a new military relationship that could even include co-development of futuristic weapon systems.

"Russia is willing to go beyond the sale and lease of hi-tech weapons," said the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Ilya Klebanov, after an hour-long interface with the Defence Minister, George Fernandes. Mr. Klebanov said he had come to the country with "new proposals" for long-term strategic partnerships in joint development and production of fifth generation weapons.

"We will give top priority in discussions to collaboration in high technology armament systems. We will also discuss joint production, development and marketing of weapons systems," said the Russian Minister, who is here to co-chair the three-day mid-term review meeting of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission for Military Technical Cooperation.

Besides seeking to involve India in joint production and marketing of weapons, the discussions will cover traditional areas of interest for India such as the sporadic supply of spares for Russian-made equipment and leasing of advanced military hardware including submarines.

India has sought expeditious implementation of the Putin decree which permits direct sourcing of spares from original equipment makers (OEMs) in Russia instead of routing re-



The Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Ilya Klebanov, with the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, at the latter's office in New Delhi on Wednesday. — Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

quests through often-undependable organisations.

The Inter-Governmental Commission is seized of the issue and is understood to be scrutinising a list submitted by Russia of OEMs which may be directly allowed to trade with the Indian military establishment. Failure of Russian equipment makers to adhere to delivery schedules has been an irritant in an otherwise excel-

lent buyer-seller military relationship.

In addition to sorting out the problem of spares and probing the possibility of partnership in production of weapon systems, the Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation will also try to close negotiations on advanced military hardware sought by India. These include leasing of two nuclear submarines and four long-range TU-22m3 maritime reconnais-

sance aircraft. Defence Ministry officials declined to reveal India's wish-list of military equipment and systems but maintained that a large number of issues including production of T-90 tanks and acquisition of aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov could also be discussed.

India is also looking for a suitable air-frame, preferably of a familiar Russian make, for the Israeli Phalcon radars, MI-17 helicopters and Smerch multi-barrel rocket launchers.

The half-a-dozen sub-groups formed today under the Commission for Military-Technical Cooperation will continue their discussions tomorrow.

These sub-groups are also likely to touch upon the development and production of a 100-seater multi-role transport aircraft and development of fifth generation fighters. However, the progress made in designing MiG-AT, an advanced jet trainer might not be broached because of the heavy agenda. "They may not get the time to discuss a large number of new things," said officials.

A protocol of the mid-term review is scheduled to be signed on Friday. Besides Mr. Fernandes, the Indian side comprises the Defence Secretary, Yogendra Narain, and the Defence Production Secretary, Subir Dutta, while the Russian side includes senior officers from the Russian Army General Staff, commanders of navy and air force and officials from a major canalising agency, Rosoborone Weapons Trading Company.

Russia to press for all defence deals through trading house

Raju Santhanam in New Delhi

Feb. 4. — The Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Ilya Klebanov, who is now in the Capital, is likely to press for routing of all Russian defence deals through its trading house, Rosoboronexport, a move earlier resisted by the three Services and the defence ministry.

Following several complaints from users — in this case the Army, Navy and the Air Force — the defence ministry had conveyed to the Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, that Indo-Russian defence deals would be negotiated directly and without the help of the Russian trading house which had been involved in the past. But now following pressure from several quarters the Russians are expected to raise the issue of involving the trading house in all future dealings in defence items.

The following were the objections raised by the Services:

■The Russian trading house usually doesn't know much about the product leading to considerable delay. The delay is usually all the more because the users would have already done months of technical/commercial negotiations with manufacturers directly ensuring that the item is customised to suit the Indian environment.

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■According to those involved in the negotiations, the ultimate buying price shoots up by 15 to 25 per cent when the trading company gets involved. In contracts worth several hundreds of crores the amount is considered fairly significant.

■Avoiding the trading house results in faster negotiations, better price, surety of spares and better product support and training.

The pressure for routing deals through the Russian trading house is for Tungyska missiles, Karaz heavy vehicles, Smerch batteries and Concourse.

The former Soviet Union had imposed stringent conditions on foreign companies that they would deal only with the Russian trading house. There were allegations in Russian newspapers that the agency was used to funnel kickbacks.

With liberalisation, Russia has given licences to private parties some of whom were keen to talk to foreign governments directly but routing all deals only through a trading house would not help in making quick, cheaper and faster purchases, it is felt.

In India, the ban on defence agents continues, but the Vigilance Commission has recommended lifting the ban with certain conditions. It has also suggested action against some agents who have cornered 60 to 80 per cent of the defence purchases during the past couple of years.

THE STATESMAN

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TACKLING TERRORISM, FINDING NEW ENERGY ROUTES

India, Russia to mull over joining hands with China

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 4. India and Russia today agreed to explore the possibilities of advancing trilateral cooperation with China to combat terrorism and develop alternate energy routes. Welcoming the idea of developing trilateral cooperation "slowly and steadily", India, however, said it was unwilling to rush into a formal axis.

The issue of trilateral cooperation as well as the need to continue the partnership with Iran and the Central Asian Republics over Afghanistan were discussed during an hour-long interaction between the visiting Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes.

"Both agreed that the three countries can explore means of strengthening cooperation slowly and steadily. It is a movement towards discussing issues



The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, with the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, before a meeting in New Delhi, on Monday. — AFP

of common concerns. It is a noteworthy factor which we must keep in sight," said an External Affairs Ministry spokesperson.

Russia concurred with the Indian standpoint on terrorism and conceded that there should be "no double-standards" on the issue. Mr. Fernandes in-

formed Mr. Ivanov that there was no meaningful decline in infiltration from Pakistan and pointed out that Islamabad must take concrete action on ending cross-border terrorism before any possibility of a dialogue was explored. "The December 13 attack on Parliament was a cut-off date for us," he told Mr. Ivanov, adding that India appreciated the solidarity extended by Russia. "This is a special relationship," he said.

The two Ministers also discussed India's request for emergency supply of defence spares and arms. However, the visit of the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Ilya Klebanov, which begins tomorrow will be of great significance from the point of bilateral military-to-military ties. A Russian team is already here to prepare for a new defence protocol which might include a joint programme for developing futuristic weapons systems.

Mr. Klebanov is scheduled to meet Mr. Fernandes on Wednesday and on Friday, the two will co-chair a meeting of the Indo-Russian inter-governmental committee on military-technical cooperation. Apart from the leasing of nuclear submarines from Russia, discussions will also centre around military hardware suited for India. In between, Mr. Klebanov and the Union Finance Minister, Yashwant Sinha, will co-chair the panel on financial and scientific cooperation and sign a protocol.

PTI reports from Moscow:

Russia is willing to go far beyond the sale and lease of hi-tech weapons like nuclear-powered submarines and long-range bombers to India and offer New Delhi a stake in its programmes for developing new generation weapons.

INDU

5 FEB 2002

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2002

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A NEW THRUST TO OLD TIES *India Russia*

INDIA AND RUSSIA seem to have rediscovered their strategic value to each other in the latest context of the so-called Bush doctrine of American supremacy. It was less than two years ago that Moscow and New Delhi agreed upon a strategic partnership that was expected to harmonise the foreign policy compulsions of post-Soviet Russia with the aspirations of India as an emerging global player. The accord was reaffirmed during the visit to Moscow by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, last November following the launch of America's dramatic "campaign" against globalised terrorism in Afghanistan. With the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, making common cause with the Vajpayee administration during his latest visit to New Delhi, it has become obvious that Moscow is eager to update its India-centric strategic partnership to meet the diplomatic challenges of the Bush doctrine. Relevant to this situation is the fact that the U.S. President, George W. Bush, is also inclined, in his own words, to co-opt both India and Russia, besides China, in a larger campaign to create peace and prosperity in a global order beyond his ongoing "war on terror". It is of course plain that Mr. Bush wants the cooperation of these three countries in addition to that of his traditional allies in Europe. However, India and Russia besides China are key political players in the extended neighbourhood of the presumptive "axis of evil" that Mr. Bush is now eager to target. The alleged "axis" consists of Iran, Iraq and North Korea. Not surprisingly in this context, the notion of an informal strategic triangle involving India and China as also Russia has gained some renewed currency during Mr. Ivanov's talks in New Delhi at this time.

Surely, there is no great objective congruence of interests that could push New Delhi to work in close concert with Moscow and Beijing as avowed allies to try and reshape the global polit-

ical order. Moreover, Russia as a Eurasian power and China no less than India, as two Asian states, seem capable of sustaining autonomous foreign and defence policies in the unfolding context of America's increasingly assertive unilateralism in determining the course of the global "campaign" against terror. Yet, from the separate but compatible perspectives of India and Russia, Mr. Bush is now scaling up his anti-terror manifesto by injecting into it his long-term foreign policy objectives. Not only that. His original decision to choose Pakistan and some Central Asian countries as the "frontline states" for the first phase of the anti-terror "campaign", which still remains unfinished in Afghanistan, had clearly caused concern to both official India and Russia. The Chinese are also wary of America's snowballing strategic presence in their geopolitical environment. Given the inevitable speculation that Russia and China besides India might seek new benchmarks of trilateral cooperation, Moscow and New Delhi have done well to indicate that no strategic axis is on the anvil now.

Counter-terrorism and energy security have been cited as the common denominators of cooperation involving Russia, India and China at this stage. This makes sense on two counts. First, doubts persist about the whereabouts of those elements of the Taliban-Osama terror mafia who escaped even as the U.S. "liberated" Afghanistan at this time. Second, the new American move to target Iran and Iraq will raise international concerns about energy security insofar as it pertains to the wider West Asia as the source of supplies and as a region likely to be caught in the vortex of any U.S. military action. As for Russo-Indian bilateral ties, new avenues of defence-related and technological linkages are coming into view. To underline a sense of fraternity, Russia has, in addition, sought to empathise with the Vajpayee administration on the critical issues in Pakistan-India ties.

5 FEB 2002

Closing of Indian consulate in Bonn evokes protests

By V.J. Thomas

Times News Network

BONN: While the world moves to Bonn, the "second capital of Germany", India is getting out of this biggest industrial city of Europe. India is closing its Bonn Consulate, the only profit-making office in the whole of Europe and moving to Munich, a city of extreme cold, amid severe protests from the Indian community in Germany.

Of Germany's 15 federal ministries, six including defence, economic cooperation and development, health, agriculture, environment and education, science and technology are still based in Bonn.

Similarly, many U.N. offices like the Weather Office and the Volunteers

Office are located in Bonn.

Of the 152 countries, which have diplomatic ties with Germany, 34 have their embassies still in Bonn. Though India calls them as "countries with financial constraints", some rich nations like UAE, Qatar, Oman are also included in the list.

Besides, 35 countries including U.S., Russia, China, Saudi Arabia, Japan and South Korea have consulates in Bonn. Germany has 16 states of which the North Rhine Westphalen (NRW) is the biggest with a population of 18 million. The state has four important cities, Dortmund, Bonn, Cologne and Dusseldorf.

The Bavaria state of which

Munich is the capital, is the second biggest state in Germany with a population of 12 million.

Of Germany's 36,000 Indians, 15,000 stay in NRW, while only 5,000 stays in Bavaria.

The NRW state has about 70 per cent of Germany's industries. It has over four lakh middle-level industries. Over 350 German firms in NRW have tie-up with Indian industries.

Export from the NRW to India is 70 per cent more than the export to India from Bavaria, a study by

the Indo-German Commerce and Trade says.

Similarly, import from India is more in the NRW than Bavaria.

Of the consular service statistics of Germany, the Bonn office topped in

2,000 in revenue beating even Berlin and Frankfurt.

The Bonn office issued 33,322 visas and 825 passports creating a revenue of DM 28.91 lakh (Rs 6.68 crore).

The Berlin office managed to issue 10,519 visas and 449 passports making a revenue of DM 9.6 lakhs (Rs 2.11 crore approximately). The Frankfurt office issued 22,478 visas and 749 passports creating a revenue of DM 21.5 lakhs (Rs 4.73 crore).

"There is no justification, political, economic or cultural, to close down the Bonn Consulate of India," said Mathew Jacob, president of the World Malayalee Council (German Province).

'There is no justification, political, economic or cultural, to close down the Bonn Consulate of India'

THE TIMES OF INDIA
THE STATESMAN
THE TIMES OF INDIA

4 FEB 2007

Russia for axis with India, China

Saurabh Shukla
New Delhi, February 3

INDIA AND Russia seemed to move forward today on the issue of a 'trilateral strategic partnership' with China, in a meeting where the foreign ministers of the two countries also asked Pakistan to stop sponsoring terrorism and to prove its good intentions with concrete steps on the ground.

After meeting his Russian

counterpart Igor Ivanov, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh said a trilateral partnership was discussed and but that it was "part of a continuing exercise of deliberations on important issues between three important countries". He was cautious about the nature of the partnership and said, "It is not a formal axis." The two countries have decided that President Vladimir Putin will visit India at the end of this year.

Russia supported India's position on cross-border terrorism from Pakistan. The ministers agreed there is a link between terrorist organisations active in Chechnya, the Central Asian republics and Kashmir.

A joint statement issued after the meeting said Musharraf's commitment to end terror "can only be judged by the concrete action he takes on the ground". The two ministers also agreed that the situation in Afghanistan

was important for long term peace and stability in the region.

China-India direct flight: China will start its first direct flights to India from March 31, adds PTI.

According to an agreement reached between the Civil Aviation authorities of the two countries, China Eastern Airlines will fly twice a week from Shanghai to New Delhi, with a stopover in Beijing, the airline president said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 FEB 2002

India, Russia ask Pak. to crush terrorism

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, FEB. 3. In a clear expression of support for India, Russia today said that cross-border terrorism from Pakistan must cease, and that the Indo-Pak. dialogue could resume only after Islamabad took "irreversible" steps to stop infiltration.

In a joint statement issued after talks between the visiting Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, and his Indian counterpart, Jaswant Singh, Russia strongly condemned "the continued acts of cross-border terrorism against India". It wanted "these activities from Pakistan and the territory controlled by it cease completely".

Commenting on the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's televised address of January 12, the statement pointed out that his assertions "can only be judged by the concrete action Pakistan takes on the ground".

Both sides agreed that Pakistan should "cooperate" in stopping infiltration of terrorists "into India, across the International Boundary and the Line of Control". It sought an end to "the continued terrorist violence in Jammu and Kashmir, as also in other parts of India".

Besides, New Delhi and Moscow noted the need for "sustained and irreversible steps" in order to "create a conducive environment for the resumption of dialogue between India and

Pakistan". The two countries needed to talk directly to each other in accordance with the Shimla Agreement, the statement said and advocated resumption of an eight-point composite dialogue anchored in the Lahore Declaration.

At a press conference that preceded the release of the statement, the Ministers emphasised the existence of a "strategic partnership" between India and Russia. Mr. Ivanov, however, said the leasing of two nuclear submarines was not discussed.

The two sides discussed the possibility of trilateral cooperation, involving China, as well. Mr. Singh clarified that such cooperation could not be con-

strued as an "axis". On the contrary, the three sides could work together on some specific issues.

Government sources said Russia and China were keen on collaborating with India, specifically in counter-terrorism. Energy security was another area of interest. China and Russia are keen on investing funds and participating as guarantors of the proposed Iran-India gas pipeline via the Pakistan overland route. India, however, may find it difficult to back this proposal due to its troubled relations with Pakistan.

Both sides also discussed the next phase of cooperation revolving around the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

THE HINDU

4 FEB 2002

Ivanov's visit will focus on sensitive issues

By K. K. Katyal

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NEW DELHI, FEB. 2. The Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov's quick visit here on Sunday would be an occasion for close interaction with the Indian side on some of the current sensitive issues — the situation in South Asia, the new phase of the Afghanistan problem and the international situation. Mr. Ivanov will be coming from Japan and would leave for Kabul next day before returning home. The meeting with his counterpart, Jaswant Singh, will be the highlight of his discussions — their fourth interaction in nine months. Two days later, the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Ilya Klebanov, will be here for a three-day stay.

According to indications from Moscow, Mr. Ivanov's discussions will specially focus on the situation in South Asia and the search for ways to ease tensions in India-Pakistan relations and to resume dialogue between them to enable the two largest countries of the region to join efforts in the struggle against terrorism. The Russian side has strongly condemned all forms of terrorism and demanded that the sponsors of the December 13 attack of Parliament House, which provoked the current aggravation in Indo-Pakistan relations, be severely dealt with.

Russia, it is clear, will approvingly note the restraint shown by the Indian leadership in the present complex situation. Because of this factor, along with the position taken by the world community and leading countries of the anti-terrorist coalition, Russia will be making a case for Islamabad to complete practical implementation of the steps, announced by the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to stop the activities of the terrorist organisations in the areas under its control. Mr. Ivanov will be appraising the Indian side of the views of important countries, gathered by him during his discussions on various occasions.

Afghanistan will be another major subject of

the discussions. In the past, both India and Russia extended support and help to the Northern Alliance in its struggle against Taliban but now face the challenging task of coordinating their efforts for the re-construction of Afghanistan. The like-mindedness shown by India and Russia in the earlier difficult phase should ensure a smooth joint working in the future, it is felt here.

As regards the global issues, the situation in West Asia and the fall-out in Central Asia of the anti-terrorist operations by the international coalition — like the U.S. presence in Central Asia — are certain to engage their attention. Last week, the U.S. dealt with question of its troops in Central Asia on more than one occasion. To cite one case, Gen. Tommy R. Franks, C-in-C, U.S. Central Command, during his visit to Kyrgyzstan, had this to say in reply to a query by a Russian correspondent (whether Pentagon is going to have a permanent military base in Kyrgyzstan) "Not a permanent base. The coalition of nations working on this global war on terrorism also includes Russia. We work together to have forces that come and go from a variety of areas. We do not intend to have permanent bases in the region at all. Where it makes sense for us to have military basing of coalition assets — not just the assets of the U.S. but perhaps the assets of great many countries — then we will make the arrangements and we will be in certain places for certain periods of time".

The entire gamut of bilateral relationship, cooperation in trade and economy, military, technological and other fields, will figure in Mr. Ivanov's discussions. The two sides will have a look at the implementation of the agreements concluded during the Indo-Russian summit in November last year and consider ways to improve mechanisms for multi-faceted cooperation in anticipation of the Russian President, Putin's visit here towards the end of the year.

US presence in Central Asia

Russia looks to India, China

NILOVA ROY CHAUDHURY
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 2. — The increased presence of US military in Central Asia has spurred Russia to propose more strategic cooperation among the regional giants — Russia, China and India. The proposal is not exactly of an axis or a bloc, but it is significant in the context of greater US and western military presence in the region ever since the Afghan war.

The issue will come up at talks between the Russian foreign minister, Mr Igor Ivanov, who comes here tomorrow evening, and Mr Jaswant Singh.

Apart from combating terrorism, the proposal envisages political, strategic and economic cooperation. Given the vast untapped oil and gas reserves in Central

Asia, such cooperation can greatly help the three countries.

Mr Ivanov's visit, coming at the end of a flurry of visits by western and Chinese leaders after the attack on Parliament, will also stress Russia's defence and strategic commitment to this country.

The Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Ilya Klebanov, is scheduled to visit the country from 5 February to 8 February. Various defence-rela-

ted protocols, including equipment procurement, will be taken up during Mr Klebanov's talks with Indian leaders.

Officials said the Ivanov-Singh talk would focus on three key issues:

- The role India and Russia can play in Afghanistan's reconstruction
- Indo-Pak tensions
- US presence in Central Asia.

Defence ties

India is negotiating with Russia for the following weapons systems:

- Aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov* and 46 MiG-29K aircraft, including six trainers.
- N-submarines on lease.
- Four TU-22ME Backfire bombers.
- Il-78 plane
- Unmanned aerial vehicles may be on the agenda.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, a regional outfit promoting anti-terrorism cooperation, too will be raised when Mr Ivanov meets Mr Singh and Mr George Fernandes.

The SCO, of which Russia and China are members, is scheduled to hold a summit at St Petersburg in June, during which a new charter will be formalised that could allow taking in new members.

Unlike Pakistan, India hadn't applied for membership, officials said. It plans to wait for the new guidelines and a consensus among member states.

A joint statement is likely to be issued before Mr Ivanov leaves on Monday. This indicates the importance both countries attach to the visit, though Mr Ivanov won't be able to meet the Prime Minister.

THE STATESMAN

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India to lease Russian nuclear submarines

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, JAN. 27. Two Russian-built nuclear submarines will join the Indian Navy in 2004, a Russian daily has reported.

The *Novye Izvestia* daily said that India would lease two Project-971 nuclear-powered multi-role submarines (codenamed Bars in Russia and Shchuka-B in NATO classification), whose construction has been frozen for several years because of funding problems.

Under a contract being negotiated by the Russian state arms exporter, Rosoboronexport, India will acquire the subs for five years after financing their construction. The plan is still to be approved by the Indian Government, the paper said.

Russia has built 14 Project-971 submarines, with the last one commissioned in December. It is

Russia's most silent multi-role submarine and is armed with eight torpedo tubes and 28 Granit nuclear-capable cruise missiles with a firing range of 3,000 km. Under the Missile Technology Control Regime, Russia cannot export submarines with long-range cruise missiles and will replace them with Klub-S missiles, which have a range of 300 km.

The submarines will help India balance China's growing presence in the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal till such time its Navy inducts the indigenous nuclear-powered submarine — the Advance Technology Vessel (ATV).

The Indian Navy has some experience of operating a nuclear-powered submarine: in 1988, it leased for three years an earlier-generation Russian submarine in the Skat class, which was chris-

tened Chakra. The U.S. is likely to frown at the new deal, even though it does not violate any nuclear or missile control regimes, the paper said. It recalled that Washington had pressurised Moscow into refusing to sell India the INS Chakra after the lease expired in 1991.

The Bars subs to be leased to India will be the last in the Project 971 series. The deal will help Russia fund the construction of a fourth-generation nuclear submarine in the Severodvinsk class (Project 885), which is already under way at the Sevmash shipyard.

Media reports said India's ATV project is a close copy of the Severodvinsk-class submarine, which will be armed with new vertical-fired anti-ship missiles, Oniks, and modernised Granit cruise missiles with an increased range of 5,500 km.

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