

DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF INDIA FROM 1947 TO 2000 A.D. (18 BHI 54C)

Unit 4

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1 India and Burma

India-Myanmar joint operation destroyed several militant camps of Arakan Army on the Indo-Myanmar border. The action averted a possible threat to the ambitious Kaladan transit and transport project which is important for improving the connectivity in the Northeast. Myanmar is important for India because of the geographic, historical, cultural and economic linkages/ties that span centuries as well as for the overall development of North-Eastern Indian states. India and Myanmar relationship officially got underway after the Treaty of Friendship was signed in 1951.

Areas of Cooperation

Strategic Significance

- India and Myanmar share a long 1,643 km geographical land border and maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. Myanmar shares borders with 4 Indian states – Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India.
- Myanmar is India's gateway to South-East Asia.
- India - Myanmar border is highly porous, poorly guarded and located along a remote, underdeveloped, insurgency-prone region and proximate to opium producing area.
- The border is also vulnerable to the activities of insurgents and drugs and arms traffickers.
- Myanmar is also important from the security point of view as the influx of sizable numbers of Rohingya from Myanmar's Rakhine state continues.
- India-Myanmar border poses a challenge to India's security.

Trade and Economy

- The success of India's Act East Policy, Neighbourhood first policy largely depend on its relations with Myanmar.
- Bilateral trade has grown from \$12.4 million in 1980-81 to \$2.18 billion in 2016-17.
- Myanmar is also the beneficiary of a duty-free tariff preference scheme for least developed countries (LDCs).
- Some of the Indian companies such as Essar, GAIL, and ONGC Videsh Ltd. have invested in Myanmar's energy sector.

- Cooperation in the banking sector, which is crucial for investment and trade, is moving ahead steadily. United Bank of India and EXIM Bank have representative offices in Myanmar.
- Indian firms engage in manufacturing, services (banking, insurance, dry port), power sector etc.

Connectivity

- India is building the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport, a road-river-port cargo transport project, to link Kolkata to Sittwe in Myanmar and then from Myanmar's Kaladan river to India's north-east.
- India, Myanmar, and Thailand are building the Asian Trilateral Highway, which will connect India to ASEAN. The road is expected to boost trade and commerce in the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area, as well as with the rest of Southeast Asia.

Development Assistance

- India has already extended \$2 billion in soft loans. It has offered to help Myanmar developmental assistance in the areas it wants rather than be prescriptive.
- India is also providing assistance in setting up institutions for higher learning and research, namely Myanmar Institute of Information Technology, Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research and Education, Myanmar-India Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills, India-Myanmar Industrial Training Centres.
- A new Indian proposal suggests the setting up of infrastructure and socio-economic projects jointly with Myanmar in the restive Rakhine state—in the areas of education, health, agriculture, agro-processing, upgradation of roads, small power projects and livelihood activity.

Defence Cooperation

- India-Myanmar Bilateral Army Exercise (IMBAX) is aimed at building and promoting closer relations with armies.
- Myanmar is a key partner in the fight to end insurgency in India's northeast.

Cultural Significance

- India and Myanmar share cultural ties in terms of Buddhist heritage and shared history of colonialism.

- Building on this shared heritage, India is undertaking some key initiatives in the restoration of the Ananda Temple in Bagan and the repair and conservation of a large number of damaged pagodas.

Humanitarian Assistance

India has responded promptly and effectively in rendering assistance following natural calamities in Myanmar like Cyclone Mora (2017), Komen (2015), earthquake in Shan State (2010).

India also offered to provide support in capacity building in disaster risk mitigation as well as in strengthening Myanmar's National Disaster Response Mechanism.

Indian Community

There are varying estimates of 1.5-2 million people of Indian origin living and working in various parts of Myanmar.

Multilateral Partnership

Myanmar is also a key component of India's strategy to bridge South and South-East Asia through BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation).

Myanmar's membership of ASEAN, BIMSTEC and Mekong Ganga Cooperation has introduced a regional/sub-regional dimension to bilateral relations and imparted added significance in the context of our "Act East" policy.

Myanmar has generally been supportive of India's stand in various international organisations. For our part, we have supported Myanmar's association with SAARC as an observer, a status Myanmar formally acquired in 2008.

The Rohingya Issue

India does not directly engage with the issue of Myanmar's treatment of its Rohingya Muslim minority. But India has condemned the recent terrorist attacks in northern Rakhine State. This can be considered as a measure of support to Myanmar.

Challenges

- Internal Security is a major concern for India; Indo-Myanmar border is porous and lightly policed which is exploited by terrorist outfits and insurgent groups from North Eastern part of India eg. supply of trained cadres, arms trafficking.

- Bilateral trade between India and Myanmar still falls short of expectations.
- Overtime trust deficit has widened between India-Myanmar because of the Indian reputation for delaying implementation of various projects.
- China has asserted itself through its soft power as well as through its trade and economic relations with Myanmar by taking up large infrastructure projects.
- As China's growing influence in the region is a potential threat to India, New Delhi would like to enhance India's presence by developing infrastructure and connectivity projects in the country.
- India has found it difficult to counter Chinese influence in Myanmar.

Way Forward

- Both the countries are affected due to the misuse of open border by internal and external forces, the responsibility of border management and regulation depends on both.
- It is also the only country that can act as a link between India and ASEAN.
- Myanmar is India's gateway to Southeast Asia and could be the required impetus to realize India's Act East Policy.
- Myanmar itself is an emerging consumer market of 60 million people who have demands for products ranging from personal care to beverages to smart phones. India should leverage these export opportunities.
- There are a few sectors where India can extend its presence in Myanmar. These include manufacturing high-end smart phones, exporting cement, furniture, FMCG, energy, telecommunications, healthcare, creating townships, low cost housing development, ports and logistics, rural electrification etc.
- Agriculture is another sector where India can substantially augment its cooperation with Myanmar in rice research activities, post-harvest technology, agriculture financing and articulating policies.
- India's Kaladan Multimodal Transit and Transport project and India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway have seen much delay over the past couple of years. Hence, it can be said that the success of India's Act East Policy will now depend on India's prompt action and pragmatic approach for completion of projects.
- Enhancing economic partnership with Myanmar needs to be a priority in India's Act East Policy which will benefit New Delhi in enhancing ties with Southeast Asia.

2 Indo-Bhutan Relations

Historical Ties

- India and Bhutan have been sharing ties since 1910 when Bhutan became a protectorate of British India, allowing the British to “guide” its foreign affairs and defence.
- When India declared independence in 1947, Bhutan was among the first nations to recognise it. Since then, the relationship between the countries has become stronger, especially because Bhutan also has a historically tense relationship with China.
- Besides sharing a 699 Kilometres border, India and Bhutan also share deep religio-cultural links. Guru Padmasambhava, a Buddhist saint played an influential role in spreading Buddhism and cementing traditional ties between people in both nations.
- India opened an office of a Special Representative in Thimphu in 1968, Bhutan reciprocated in 1971. The two offices of special representatives were upgraded to full-fledged embassies in 1978
- The basis for bilateral relations between India and Bhutan was formed by the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1949. However, Article 2 of the treaty critically gave India a role in guiding Bhutan’s foreign policy. Hence, some changes in the treaty were made in 2007.
- The new treaty says that Bhutan can import arms as long as Indian interests are not harmed and there is no re-export of the weapons, either by the government or individuals.
- Article 6 and 7 in the current treaty encompass the issue of ‘national treatment’ and equal privileges for citizens on each other’s soil.

Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 1949

- The Treaty provides for, among other things, perpetual peace and friendship, free trade and commerce and equal justice to each other’s citizens.
- In 2007 the treaty was re-negotiated, and provisions were included to encourage Bhutan’s sovereignty, abolishing the need to take India’s guidance on foreign policy.
- The updated treaty, besides providing close cooperation on national issues, provides for stronger cooperation in cultural and economic fields.

Bhutan's Significance to India

Geographical Significance:

- Bhutan shares border with four Indian States: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal and Sikkim.
- Nestled in the Himalayas, Bhutan serves as a buffer between India and China.
- Security of Bhutan's present borders especially its western border is very important for India.

Economic Significance:

- Bhutan provides a market for Indian commodities and is a destination for Indian investment.
- Also for India, Bhutan is a rich source of hydropower.

Political Significance:

- A politically stable Bhutan is important to India. An unstable and restive Bhutan can provide a safe haven to anti-India activities and anti-India militant groups.

Areas of Cooperation

Trade:

- The trade between the two countries is governed by the India Bhutan Trade and Transit Agreement 1972 which was last renewed in November 2016.
- The agreement establishes a free-trade regime between the two countries and also provides for duty-free transit of Bhutanese exports to third countries.
- India is Bhutan's largest trading partner. In the period from January- June, 2018, trade between two countries stood at Rs. 4318.59 crore.
- Major exports from India to Bhutan are mineral products, machinery and mechanical appliances, electrical equipments etc. whereas major items of import from Bhutan are electricity, ferrosilicon, Portland cement etc.

Economic Assistance:

- India is Bhutan's leading development partner. Since the launch of First Five Year Plan of Bhutan in 1961, India has been extending financial support to Bhutan's FYPs. India has allotted Rs 4500 crore to Bhutan's 12th FYP.

Water Resources:

- India is playing an important role in development of hydro-power projects. This not only provides Bhutanese with electricity for domestic use but also revenue from surplus electricity exported to India.
- So far, Government of India has constructed three Hydroelectric Projects (HEPs) in Bhutan. Currently, India is helping Bhutan in the development of power plant on Mangdechhu River.
- This hydropower cooperation comes under 2006 Agreement on Cooperation in Hydropower. Under a protocol to this agreement, India has agreed to assist Bhutan in the development of minimum of 10,000 MW of hydropower and import of surplus electricity from same by year 2020.
- Also, there is a Joint Group of Experts (JGE) on flood management between India and Bhutan.

Border Management:

- There is a Secretary-level mechanism on border management and security related matters between the two countries.
- There is also a Border District Coordination Meeting (BDCM) Mechanism between the bordering States and the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) to facilitate coordination on border management and other related matters.

Educational and Cultural Cooperation:

- A large number of college going Bhutanese students study in India. Government of India provides number of scholarships to Bhutanese students.
- Regular cultural exchanges take place between the two countries. One of the basic objectives of India Bhutan Foundation established in 2003 is to enhance people to people exchange in cultural field.

Indian Community:

- About 60,000 Indian nationals live in Bhutan, employed mostly in the hydro-electric power construction and road industry.
- In addition, around 8000-10,000 daily workers enter and exit Bhutan everyday in border towns.

Multilateral Partnership:

- Both India and Bhutan are founding members of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) that deals with economic, social and cultural development of South Asian Region.
- Both of them also share other multilateral forums such as BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) etc.

Challenges

- There have been instances when India has meddled in Bhutan's internal affairs. This has led to negative perception of India in the minds of Bhutanese.
- There is a growing feeling in Bhutan that India's development of Bhutan's hydropower production is driven by self-interest as it is getting Bhutan's surplus power at relatively cheap rates.
- Bhutan's concern regarding profitability of its Hydropower projects in the wake of India's shift to renewable sources of energy like wind, solar etc.
- From internal security perspective, illicit establishment of camps by militant outfits in the dense jungles of south-east Bhutan is a cause of concern for both the nations.
- China's continuous claims to important border areas such as Chumbi valley and Doklam and its continuous efforts for establishing strong diplomatic and economic relations with Bhutan have been continuous source of concern for India.

Way Forward

- India needs to step up efforts to publicise the benefits that accrue to Bhutan from Indian projects.
- India continuously needs to explore new areas of cooperation with Bhutan. Decision of setting up of ISRO's ground station in Bhutan is a welcome step. The station will help Bhutan in providing weather related messages to its far flung areas.
- India should try as much as possible to remain out of Bhutan's internal matters, though it can act as a mentor.
- Safety of Border from China is a concern for both nations. Therefore, both sides need to work together on this issue. Also, it needs to be ensured that border areas remain militants free.

- Being neighbours, it is necessary that both nations continuously recognise value of each other. For this, regular high level visits from both the sides are necessary.

3 Indo-Russian Relations

For the first 6 years after India's independence (1947–53), Indo-Soviet relations were anything but congenial and cordial. Joseph Stalin, who described India's freedom struggle as 'bourgeoisie national movement' considered independent India as an 'appendage of Britain' and a 'lackey of British imperialism'! Stalin did not meet the Indian Ambassador to Soviet Union, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, and reluctantly received her successor, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. Stalin years were marked by a lack of clarity, warped ideology, and jaded relations.

Relationship after Stalin

The post-Stalin period was a watershed in Indo-Soviet relations. Nehru visited the USSR in 1955 and was received with warmth and friendship. The Joint Communiqué, issued at the end of his visit, affirmed faith in Panchsheel expressed their desire for promoting bilateral development and work in unison to promote world peace. Similarly, Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev visited India the same year and firmed up the relationship. As a result, India received a large measure of Soviet help and diplomatic support.

The Decade of Co-operation

From 1954 to 1964, economic, trade, and defence cooperation between India and Soviet Union registered new heights. Soviet aided Public Sector complexes at Bhilai, Barauni, Bokara, Ranchi, and Rishikesh punctuated India. In September 1964, Russia came forward to supply MIG fighter planes, missiles, tanks, submarines, and infantry weapons. USSR consistently supported India on the Kashmir issue in the UNO. Pakistan proximity to the US and China was effectively checkmated. 'Contentful relations' between the two countries continued unabated. In short, Nehru's foreign policy "laid the foundations of the Indo-Soviet equation which served the vital interests of both countries"

Mrs. Indira Gandhi

When Indira Gandhi succeeded Shastri as Prime Minister of India, she was regarded by the Soviet Union not only merely as Nehru's daughter but also as progressive leader in her own right. In September 1966, she visited Moscow with a view to strengthen India's 'special relations' with Russia. But India was dismayed when the Soviet Union decided to supply arms to Pakistan. When Russia was disenchanted with Pak's pro-US and pro-China stance, she

started improving Indo-Soviet relations, which led to the conclusion signing a historic treaty of peace with the country.

Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Co-operation, 1971

On 9 August 1971, India and the Soviet Union signed the treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Co-operation. The treaty had an immense impact on Indo-Soviet relations. The Treaty helped to

- 1) deter Pakistan threat to India's security,
- 2) check the possible Sino-Pak collusion against India,
- 3) neutralize the growing Washington-Pindi-Beijing entente,
- 4) indirectly help to make a decisive contribution towards the formation Bangladesh,
- 5) assure Soviet support during the Bangladesh War, and
- 6) prevent the adoption of the USChina sponsored anti-India moves in the U.N. Security Council. During 1966–77, the Indo-Soviet relations continued to develop on positive and productive lines despite initial setbacks.

Janata Government

Desai was openly critical of the communist ideology and the authoritarian system of the Soviet Union. On 2 March 1977, Morarji Desai said that his government would follow a policy of 'proper nonalignment' and remarked that India need not honor the one-sided Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971. Similarly, Brezhnev was skeptical and suspicious of Desai's anti-Soviet Union and prowestern views. But when the Soviet Foreign Minister A.A. Gromyko visited India on 25 April, 1977, both countries concluded new agreements and reaffirmed faith in the spirit of the 1971 Treaty. Desai visited Russia and signed agreements of economic cooperation. But his Moscow visit was 'nonevent'. Once in power, Morarji Desai realized the imperative importance of maintaining healthy relations with the Soviet Union.

Second coming Mrs. Indira Gandhi

Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev visited India in December 1980 and signed important bilateral trade agreements for the period 1980–85. Indira Gandhi's visit in September 1982 to the Soviet Union provided an opportunity to her to express her views on 'nuclear warheads which were shown like dragon's teeth over vast stretches', South Africa's apartheid arrogance, Palastinians' sufferings, Israel's continued aggression, etc., unmindful of American reactions. During this period, Indo-Soviet relations were marked by cordiality, mutuality, and compatibility.

Rajiv Gandhi

Rajiv Gandhi's six-day visit to the Soviet Union in May 1985 resulted in signing two important bilateral agreements on economic cooperation. Reciprocating Rajiv's visit to Moscow, Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Soviet Union paid a four-day visit to India on 25–28 November, 1986. During his visit, the two leaders signed several important agreements, issued a joint statement, and more important a 10-point declaration known as New Delhi Declaration.

P.V. Narasimha Rao

India was on the cross-roads when the Soviet Union disintegrated and the Russian Federation came into existence, under Boris Yeltsin. Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao, preferred a policy of continuity with change to cope up with the new Soviet dispensation. The 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty was renewed in 1991 affirming Soviet commitment to respect India's sovereignty and territorial integrity and security. Russian President Boris Yeltsin's visit to India in 1993 dispelled the doubts about Indo-Soviet relations. Yeltsin reiterated his country's commitment to India's Kashmir policy. The two leaders signed a military and Technical Cooperation Agreement. The Russian President also pledged to provide technological assistance to India for the much needed manufacture of Cryogenic engines for the use of India's peaceful outer space research programme. Thus, Russia was moving closer to India. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visited Russia in June–July 1994, which helped in removing the bottlenecks in the bilateral relations. The visit resulted in a couple of significant declarations on fighting forces of religious fanaticism and improving bilateral relations, and nine agreements. During Soviet Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to India in December 1994, the two countries signed more agreements aiming to strengthen and improve cooperation in fields like technology, space research, and strategy. At the end of the Cold War, the long-term strategic interest of both the countries coincided. In short, Indo-Soviet relations during Rao's Regime were consolidated to further promote the enlightened Indian national interests.

United Front Government

The post-Cold War Soviet Union deliberately created distance between itself and India and moved closer to Western Europe. Since that approach had not been successful, the Yeltsin Government reexamined Russian priorities and came closer to India again. Gujral made the most of the pro-India orientation of Russian foreign policy. Prime Minister Deve Gowda visited Moscow, held extensive discussions with President Boris Yeltsin and Prime Minister Victor

Chernomyrdin, and signed several agreements. Some of the notable agreements are the avoidance of double taxation, mutual assistance in customs, plant protection, quarantine, extradition, mutual assistance in criminal matters, a consular convention, and physical culture and sports. The Russians in turn agreed to assist India in expanding its nuclear capacities for peaceful purposes. Russia also agreed to an integrated defence supplies programme with India. Significantly, President Yeltsin assured Deve Gowda that his country supported India's claim to the permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council, expressed keenness to assist India in hydroelectric energy, and declared that Russia had imposed a ban on the sale of armaments to Pakistan. As a result of Indo-Russia Summit of March 1997, Russia moved closer to India.

Vajpayee

After the disintegration of USSR, the Indo-Russia relations were on the 'downswing'. The downward trend was reversed during the late 1990s. The friendship between India and Russia was traditional, cordial, and cooperative. Russia had refused to apply sanctions against India after Pokhran II nuclear tests. From the very inception of the Kargil conflict, Russia consistently supported India and urged Pakistan to withdraw Pakistan infiltrators and regulars from the Indian side of Line of Control (LOC). Similarly, Russia opposed internationalization of the Simla Agreement and Lahore Declaration as the firm bases of resolving all outstanding issues between India and Pakistan. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin succeeded Boris Yeltsin in 1999. Since then Indo-Russia relations were strengthened. When he visited India in October 2000, Prime Minister Vajpayee and Putin signed a declaration on strategic partnership. It committed India and Russia to nonparticipation in any military, political, or other alliances. Above all, Putin effectively breached the long standing international nuclear blockade against India by committing Russia to expand atomic energy cooperation with India.

Prime Minister Vajpayee paid a state visit to Russia in November 2001. India and Russia issued a joint statement on strategic issues and laid the foundation of a world order based on multipolarity. The Delhi Declaration was issued when Putin visited India in December 2002, which aimed to enhance the strategic cooperation and setting up a joint working group on combating terrorism. Besides, the two countries committed themselves to strengthening economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation. In March 2003, Russia and India deplored US Military action against Iraq, without authorization by the U.N. Security Council. Russia has been promoting the idea of greater understanding, friendship, and cooperation between India, China, and Russia.

4 Indo American Relations

After the Second World War both USA and Soviet Union divided the world into two poles: the ideological antagonism and political alienation between Truman and Joseph Stalin of the USSR divided the world into two diametrically opposite spheres of influence. India was the first among the emerging developing countries, which comprehended the sinister implications of joining either of the two power blocs. Nehru was apprehensive of India becoming subjected to extraneous influences, and India was not to take sides in this ideological confrontation. He wanted to cooperate with all countries, without malaise toward none, so that he could focus on the enlightened national interests of India. By opposing Cold War compulsions, Nehru not only defended India's capacity to exercise option independently but also safeguarded India's capacity to exercise her options freely. Nehru's independent foreign policy and his role in shaping the Cold War world were resented by the big powers, particularly the US.

Nehru's Neutral Stand

Nehru wanted to maintain cordial relations with the USA without compromising his convictions. He visited Washington D.C. in 1949 but refused to support the West in its efforts to change the post–Second World War order. Truman and Dean Acheson, his secretary of State, were amazed that India could refuse to fall in line with US policies despite the need for America's support for India's development. However, Nehru and Dwight D. Eisenhower, Truman's successor, outgrew their differences over Cold War and agreed to promote bilateral relations. Particularly, they converged on the importance of supporting 'Atoms for Peace' programme. Indo-US trade and technical cooperation between the two countries made substantive progress during this period (1954–1962).

Stumbling Blocks

Indo-US relations received positive impetus when John Kennedy succeeded Eisenhower. Kennedy greatly supported India in many respects. The 'operational support' he extended towards the end of the Sino-Indian War of 1962 was strategically significant. John Galbraith, America's Ambassador in India, helped cement the relations between the two democratic countries. However, India's anti-cold war stance, its socialist orientation, opposition to military alliances, and recognition of Fidel Castro's regime in Cuba among other India's views and stands stood in the way of cordial relations between the two countries. In short, Indo-

US relations during the Nehru Era were "characterized by disappointment on the part of India and suspicions on the part of Washington".

Indira Gandhi

After the death of Nehru, his successor and the second Prime Minister Lal Bagadur Shastri ruled in India for less than 2 years. His tenure is so short that no meaningful conclusion could be made of his foreign policy with special reference to USA. After his death, Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister in 1966. She visited USA on the invitation of US President Lindon B Johnson, the same year. During her visit, Indira Gandhi impressed on the US President the need for American aid in terms of food and foreign exchange. America had suspended aid to India in 1965 at the time of the Indo-Pak war and now stipulated conditions before aid would be restored. However, Johnson premised three million tons of food and nine million in aid. 'The Indo-US relations touched the nadir when India signed the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Co-operation with Russia in 1971. America demonstrated her displeasure against India during the Indo-Pak war in the same year. The US vehemently criticized India for interfering with the internal affairs of Pakistan and President Nixon deployed the US 7th fleet to the Bay of Bengal. America ordered complete stoppage of economic assistance and supply defence equipment to India. The Pokhran Test had driven a wedge in the Indo-US relations. The US was not willing to buy back the spent fuel rods, nor it was willing to allow India to use this material for further nuclear purposes, peace, or otherwise. This issue caused a stalemate in the relations between the two countries. Indira Gandhi's imposition of Emergency in 1975 created tensions in the Indo-US relations. President Ford expressed his displeasure over the derailment democracy in India.' The US moved closer to Pakistan. In short, the Indo-US relations received jolts and jerks than warmth and friendship during the first phase of Indira Gandhi's reign.

Janata Foreign Policy

The US President Jimmy Carter visited India in January 1978 and Prime Minister Morarji Desai reciprocated the visit to the US in June the same year. Though cordiality continued, India's consistent resistance to sign NPT and US supply of nuclear fuel to Tarapur became increasingly controversial and stood in the way of close and cordial relations between the two countries. During his four-day visit to the US, Foreign Minister A.B. Vajpayee discussed with the US authorities the issues relating to the supply of uranium, the problem of Pakistan's attempt to develop nuclear bomb, and the need to declare Indian Ocean a zone of

peace. Both Desai and Vajpayee failed to break ice with the US. "During Desai's term in office, the two governments did not move beyond structuring positive political atmospherics".

Second Coming Mrs. Indira Gandhi

Indira Gandhi's second tenure as Prime Minister coincided with the rule of President Ronald Reagan in the USA. She visited the USA in July 1982 and tried to mend the fences of friendship, which was broken by the Emergency. Her meeting with President Reagan was warm and friendly; she, however, refused to equate the Soviet presence in Afghanistan with the presence in Vietnam. Apart from this, the issue of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, the recognition Cambodia, and India's nuclear policy stood in the way of healthy Indo-US relations.

Rajiv Gandhi

Rajiv Gandhi's visited the US twice on June 1985 and on October 1987. On both the visits, Rajiv Gandhi and Ronald Reagan discussed matters of mutual interest, particularly about the continued supply of sophisticated military hardware to Pakistan. (C) During the period of Rajiv Gandhi's term in office, Indo-US relations remained apparently cordial and friendly but without warmth.

P.V. Narasimha Rao

The US Administration responded positively to the economic liberalization reforms initiated by Rao's Government. Rao's official visited Washington in May 1994 and the Joint statement was issued by PM Rao and President Clinton underlining the importance of new partnership, liberalization, and human rights. The two leaders welcomed the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round and pledged support for WTO. Rao's visit resulted in the U.S memorandum of understanding relating to trade, commerce, and technology defence. (C) Also both the countries agreed to give qualitative content to IndoUS defence cooperation, which had developing since 1991. However, the post-Cold War relations between India and the United States revealed three constraints to the Indo-US relations:

- (1) nuclear nonproliferation;
- (2) missile control; and
- (3) patents for pharmaceuticals and chemicals.

Besides comprehensive test-ban arrangements, transfer of sophisticated technologies and the structuring of new agreements for the management of international trade and

environment remained bones of contention between the two countries. Despite disagreements and differences in principles and perceptions, India and the US decided to desist from divergences and devote on convergent factors, which gave strength to bilateral relations.

United Front Government

For long, India had depended on the Soviet Union for its defence requirements. The USA viewed this relationship against the backdrop of the Cold War. In the post-Cold War world, the problem of nuclear nonproliferation remained contentious in the Indo-US relations. The USA continued to exert pressure on India to sign Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) as well as the proposed Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). India succeeded in blocking the CTBT in the conference on disarmament in 1996. It also voted against it in the UN General Assembly.

Prime Minister I.K. Gujral met US President Bill Clinton during the UN General Assembly session in September 1997. As requested by Gujral, President Clinton did not raise the Kashmir issue in the UN. More significantly, the US President for the first time told Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in September 1977 that the Kashmir issue should be resolved bilaterally between India and Pakistan and that the USA would not mediate between the two neighbors. During his meeting with Bill Clinton, Prime Minister Gujral agreed to reopen official and technical level discussions on disarmament issues with the US. This positive improvement in Indo-US relations was mainly due to Gujral Government's nonconfrontations of negativism.

Vajpayee

The Indo-US relations received a serious setback when the Government conducted nuclear tests in May 1998 and declared India a nuclear-weapon state. The US refused to accept India as a nuclear state. Instead it insisted that India must sign the CTBT. However, the relations between the two countries improved significantly during and after the Kargil conflict. American President, Bill Clinton, played a vital role in diffusing tension between India and Pakistan. The US also turned down the Pakistan request to send a special envoy to Kashmir and nor was it willing to mediate between the two neighbors. The changed altitude of US towards India was clear by early 2000. President Bill Clinton's visit to India in March 2000 helped to re-establish friendly relationship between US and India in the 21st century. At the end of summit level talks between President Clinton and Prime Minister Vajpayee, they released the historic document "Vision for the 21st Century". The vision statement, among

other things, pledged to deepen the Indo-American partnership in tangible ways by always seeking to reconcile differences through dialogue and engagement. After the terrorist attack in New York and Washington D.C. on 11 September, 2001, the US President George W. Bush sought the support of countries to his 'war on terror'. India being a victim of cross-border terrorism extended enthusiastic support to Bush's struggle against terrorism. The transformation of Indo-US relations was based on the conviction that US interests required a strong and sustained relationship with India. Though India and US held different views on the question of military action against Iraq in 2003, the two countries were negotiating an agreement for 'the Trinity' to ensure cooperation in the high-technology trade, space launch, and civilian nuclear industry. Similarly, India was supportive of Bush's proposal for Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The idea mooted by Bush in May 2003 was to entitle the participant countries to search planes and ships, trains and trucks carrying suspect cargo of weapons of mass destruction. Eleven nations participated in the PSI. There was regime change when the BJP Government was examining the possibility of joining the PSI.