

70 YEARS OF INDIA-RUSSIA TIES

The Changing Contours of Russia's South Asia Policy

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ABSTRACT Russia's policy towards South Asia has been the subject of much speculation lately. With closer cooperation between Russia and China and the former's warming up to Pakistan, it is becoming increasingly evident that Russia is moving away from its India-centric approach in the region. This brief studies the changes, and continuity, in Moscow's foreign policy towards South Asia as it transitioned from the Soviet Union into the Russian Federation in the 1990s. It then examines the current developments in Russia's policy towards the region, and argues that security interests drive Russia's policy in South Asia, as evident in its changing equations with China and Pakistan. The brief finds weight in the prevailing opinion that India-Russia ties lack the warmth of the past but warns against either complacency or scepticism.

INTRODUCTION

The failure of the Vilnius summit in November 2013¹ propelled a crisis in Ukraine. At the height of the crisis, Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014, which it validated by holding a referendum. The West responded by imposing economic sanctions on Russia, to which the latter responded with countersanctions. What followed was a new low in Russia's relations with the West since the end of Cold War.

The Ukraine-related sanctions, coupled with falling global oil prices, had an adverse

impact on the Russian economy. Reeling under Western isolation, both politically and economically, Russia accelerated its pivot to Asia which had already begun some time earlier. This manifested itself especially in its dealings with China. During his visit to Shanghai in May 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed multiple bilateral agreements with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, including an agreement to sell Russia's S-400 surface-to-air missiles² to China.

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In addition, Russia's Gazprom signed a 30-year gas contract worth \$400 billion with China's National Petroleum Corporation. The deal envisaged construction of the 'Power of Siberia' pipeline, expected to export over 38 billion cubic meters of natural gas to China annually upon completion. Moscow and Beijing have also carried out joint naval exercises in the East China Sea, a disputed area between China and Japan, unsettling Tokyo and causing even greater concern in Washington. In December 2016, Russia also delivered the first batch of four advanced Su-35 fighters to Beijing.³

Meanwhile, around the same time, reports of Russia lifting its arms embargo on Pakistan also began to surface.⁴ In 2015, Moscow concluded a deal with Islamabad for the supply of four Mi-35 helicopters. The same year, the two countries also entered into a cooperation agreement for the construction of the 1,100-km "North-South" gas pipeline connecting LNG terminals in Karachi and Lahore.⁵ Both countries also performed their first ever joint special drills called Druzhba (Friendship)-2016 in Cherat⁶ last year.⁷ This was despite India's concerns following the Uri attack. According to reports, both countries will hold a second round of joint military drills later this year.⁸

Moreover, Russia's earlier position on Afghanistan, which was akin to India's, has undergone a transformation. Russia, India and Iran were instrumental in preventing a complete takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban between 1996 and 2001. With the entry of Islamic State into the Afghanistan conundrum, Indian interests have diverged from those of Russia and Iran, as it does not distinguish between the so-called 'good' and 'bad' Taliban. The divergence over Afghanistan was evident when Russia, China and Pakistan,

in their trilateral meeting in December 2016 to discuss developments in Afghanistan, left out both India and Afghanistan. Their "flexible approach" to lift sanctions against select Taliban leaders especially did not go down well with India. After India and Afghanistan made clear their objection to the December meeting, Russia was careful to include them both in the February round of talks this year.

Indeed, India looks at Russia's close partnership with China and its warming relations with Pakistan with suspicion. Russia, for its part, has a similar scepticism about India's relationship with the US. Ever since India began diversifying its defence imports, the US has emerged as its major supplier. Last year, the two countries concluded the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) that allows both to use each other's land, air and naval bases for repairs and replenishment of supplies. Defence trade between India and the US approximates \$15 billion annually and the former has attained the status of a major defence partner of the US. This upgrade enables India to purchase more high-end and sensitive American technologies.⁹

In light of these developments, there arise several questions with respect to the evolution of Russia's policy in South Asia. While Moscow's policy towards South Asia has historically been India-centric, it would eventually evolve, as will be discussed in the next sections of this brief.

THE SOVIET PERIOD (1947-1991)

The Soviet Union's attention towards the South Asian region became apparent during the Khrushchev years. In November 1955, Nikita Khrushchev, then Communist Party

First Secretary and Nikolai Bulganin, then the Soviet Union's Premier, visited India, marking the beginning of the Soviet Union's foreign aid programme as well as its special relationship with India.¹⁰ According to a report in the *Los Angeles Times*, "the visit was a watershed for the Soviet Union's relations with India and, in fact, with the rest of the developing world". The report further termed Indo-Soviet relations as "one of the strongest, *if oddest partnerships between nations* (emphasis added).¹¹

What followed was an unprecedented journey for a bilateral relationship that continues to be recognised for its singular reliability. This trust dimension is evident from the public pronouncements made by leaders of both sides during different periods. During the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to the Soviet Union in 1976, Leonid Brezhnev, who succeeded Khrushchev, remarked, "The Soviet Union has been and remains a reliable friend of India and the Indian people."¹² Brezhnev reiterated the same sentiment four years later during an official visit to New Delhi: "It may be said without fear of exaggeration that the Soviet people and their leaders are friends India can rely upon – friends in good times and in hard times, in clear weather and in bad weather."¹³

What was more interesting perhaps was the similarity in response from the Indian side irrespective of the government in power. For instance, during the interim period in the late 1970s (1977-79) when the Janata Party took over from the Congress, the ruling party did not abandon the priority bestowed on the Soviet Union during Congress' rule. This is evident in a statement by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, then Foreign Minister of the Janata Party. He observed, "Our country always found the only reliable friend in the Soviet Union alone."¹⁴

Several important developments help explain Soviet attention to South Asia with India as epicentre since the 1950s. The Soviet Union recognised the need for securing a firm foothold in South Asia to neutralise the power thrust of both the US and China. This inevitably led to a situation where Moscow began searching for alternative centres of power. As it looked towards India, it also tried to reach out to Pakistan. The latter, however, viewed relations with the Soviet Union through the prism of its relations with India and did not respond to Soviet overtures enthusiastically. It instead looked to the US ostensibly for financial support, but also as a counterweight to the growing India-Soviet Union partnership.

An interesting incident that stands out in this regard occurred in 1949 when the Soviet Union extended an invitation to then Pakistan Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. After initially accepting the invitation, the Pakistan PM decided to visit the US instead.¹⁵ This marked the beginning of cold relations between the Soviet Union and Pakistan but not complete disengagement, especially in the commercial sphere.¹⁶

The US extended military assistance to Pakistan in 1954, followed by Pakistan's subsequent accession both to the South-East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO)¹⁷ and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO).¹⁸ As a member of CENTO and SEATO, Pakistan became a part of multilateral arrangements aimed at curtailing Soviet influence. Pakistan's involvement in the pro-Western military alliances along Soviet frontiers in the south caused substantial drift in its relations with the Soviet Union. The latter began to perceive it as a link in the US containment strategy. Pakistan's good relations with China, the

Soviet Union's ideological rival, were another obstacle in the way of closer relations.

Owing to its disputes with both China and Pakistan, India turned out to be a natural and inevitable centre for the Soviet Union in this quest. By the time Brezhnev succeeded Khrushchev, "Russia had evolved its South Asian policy with India as an epicentre".¹⁹ Its mediating role in enabling India and Pakistan to sign the Tashkent Declaration in 1966 remains one of the best examples of its South Asian diplomacy.

Indian participation soon became crucial in maintaining the balance of power. Thus, Moscow encouraged New Delhi to take diplomatic and commercial decisions on international issues *as close as possible* (emphasis added) to those taken by itself. India refrained from open criticism of Soviet policy as was evident on a number of occasions. Its response to Soviet intervention in Hungary²⁰ was weak and it even supported the Union against a UN General Assembly resolution calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country.²¹ In spite of widespread popular sympathy for the Czechs in India, the Indian government merely expressed "regret" and abstained from voting over the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia at the UN Security Council in 1968. When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in the late 1970s, India had its share of reservations but was prudent enough not to oppose it publicly. India abstained from voting on the UN General Assembly resolution calling for the immediate termination of armed intervention in Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union played a crucial role in India's development by granting generous assistance in the form of low priced economic credits that were repayable in rupees. It also

supplied military equipment and other crucial products to India, like oil, fertiliser, metals, among others. It assisted India in establishing basic and crucial industrial infrastructure. Some of India's well-known public sector companies like Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), as well as the steel industry in India, were also set up with Soviet cooperation.

The Soviet support for India's position on specific issues such as Kashmir and Goa also bolstered India diplomatically.²² Soviet support outside the UN, and its threat to use or actual use of its veto power inside the Security Council, shielded India from Western pressure in favour of Pakistan. Defence ties took concrete shape in 1962 with India purchasing MiG-21 fighter jets from the Soviet Union at a time when the West was reluctant to sell weapons to India. This led to a nearly 90-percent dependency of the Indian armed forces on Russian military hardware. By the late 1960s, the Soviet Union had emerged as India's primary supplier of defence equipment and India's second largest trading partner. Moreover, Moscow was the only arms supplier sympathetic to India's philosophy of a self-sufficient military establishment.²³

India, too, had its own ambitions and the Soviet Union encouraged them. This was all too visible when India conducted a nuclear test in 1974. Not only did the Soviet Union not oppose the test, it stepped in to fill the void after the US and Canada halted their shipments of heavy water for India's nuclear reactors, by readily agreeing to provide the heavy water required.

India's chief strategic objective in cultivating ties with the Soviet Union was to ensure

support against external military threats. In addition, “Soviet military support also helped India to emerge as a military power of some consequence.”²⁴ With respect to Pakistan, India wanted to retain its military superiority while at the same time, discouraging external support for the country. By consolidating its security and diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union, this interest was served. The need for Soviet military assistance also led to the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1971. Though treaty negotiations had been on since 1969, it was the need for Soviet support in the event of war with Pakistan that accelerated the formalisation of the treaty.

The trajectory of Indo-Soviet relations continued to remain positive but not without some divergence. Differences over issues like the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in the 1970s, India's refusal to Soviet endorsed proposal for a collective security system in Asia as well as the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) – which India refused to sign – are some of the various divergences that did exist, but were rarely mentioned in the public domain.²⁵ As Robert Donaldson puts it, both sides were aware that their objectives were best served “if regional and global rivals are led to conclude that Delhi and Moscow can count on each other's support, without fear of abandonment or betrayal.”²⁶

POST-SOVIET PERIOD

After Russia emerged as the principal heir to the Soviet Union, it had to adjust to its reduced capabilities, while framing its national security strategy and redefining its national interests. As it grappled with a serious decline in global influence, it also faced grave challenges arising from increased “secessionist movements in

areas such as Chechnya, terrorism and growth of fundamentalism; serious economic crisis and the decline of both military power and military industrial capabilities.”²⁷ Deputy Director of the Moscow-based Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), Vladimir Baranovsky, refers to this phase as a “painful process”²⁸ where the Russian leadership struggled to articulate a security concept capable of dealing with the existing and emerging threats and challenges.²⁹

Russia at that time looked westwards for its growth and development. Meanwhile, India too was trying to adapt to the new post-Soviet reality. In mid-1991, the P.V. Narasimha Rao government accelerated the process of liberalising the economy by removing controls. It sought International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank loans, accepted some of the IMF–World Bank conditionalities and opened up the economy to foreign investment. Divergences of interests notwithstanding, India and the US also made conciliatory gestures towards each other and sought new areas of cooperation.

As a symbolic gesture, the word “peace” was omitted from the 1971 Treaty as India and Russia signed a new 20-year Friendship and Cooperation Treaty during President Boris Yeltsin's visit to India in January 1992. Moreover, the two sides revised the security clause of Article 9 of the original treaty and “merely agreed on refraining from taking any action that might affect the security interests of the other”.³⁰ (In the 1971 Treaty, both had agreed to “abstain from providing any assistance to any third party that engages in armed conflict with the other party”.) The ‘Foreign Policy Concept’ presented by Andrei Kozyrev – Russia's Foreign Minister under

Yeltsin – in January 1993 formalised the shift in Russia's national security priorities between 1987 and 1993. The concept prioritised developing cooperative relations with the West, particularly the US. It placed South Asia (without any separate mention of India) in seventh position in the order of priorities.³¹

The Indo-Russian 'cryogenic deal' controversy also occurred at around the same time. In 1993, Russia was to supply India with technology for the production of cryogenic booster engines for the Indian geo-stationary space launch vehicle (GSLV). Given US objections – as the US regarded this as a violation of the Missile Technology Control Regime – the deal was eventually scrapped.

Meanwhile, Russia's ties with Pakistan also began to improve in the early 1990s. Fresh Russian overtures to Pakistan coincided with the latter's need to diversify its military imports, as the US had ceased to supply arms in 1990. In 1992, Russia came very close to signing a deal with Pakistan for the supply of Su-27 fighter jets, but the deal had to be shelved owing to Indian concerns.³²

Two different schools of thought existed in Russia at this time regarding its policy orientation towards India. The first school, consisting of academicians and parliamentarians, favoured retaining the traditional relationship, while the other deemed it fit to terminate special relations with India. The latter school comprised officials of the Foreign Ministry (which was headed by Kozyrev at the time). This group believed that an India-centric approach to the region affected Russia's relations with other South Asian countries, most noticeably Pakistan. In addition, as Russia leaned westwards, any relationship with India was also reminiscent of the Soviet-era policy outlook.³³

As Russia's romance with the West began to lose its sheen, however, a changing approach towards India began to take shape in the late 1990s. Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov visited India in December 1998, six months after India had conducted Pokhran II. Primakov's visit was important since Russia was a permanent member of the UN Security Council and he was visiting despite Russia's reservations about the tests. It was clear that Russia was keen to restore defence ties with the large Indian market.

A definitive shift, however, occurred as Vladimir Putin took charge. He refocused attention on India. It was under his leadership that Russia established a strategic partnership with India in 2000, later upgraded to a 'special and privileged partnership' in 2010. Since then, the strategic partnership has moved in the direction of greater cooperation in all spheres of engagement.

The situation after 2014 has, however, brought newer challenges to the fore. The partnership remains under the shadow of the emerging Indo-US strategic partnership and the Sino-Russian and Russia-Pakistan ties.

CURRENT SCENARIO

Russia's foreign policy has become the subject of renewed international interest after its occupation of Crimea in early 2014. Since then the country has sought to reassert itself as a global player, as manifested in its intervention in Syria to counter Islamic State and its efforts towards stabilising Afghanistan. Russia's current policy in South Asia can thus be summarised as a multi-vectored policy to meet the realities of a changing geopolitical situation. These realities include the post-2014 security situation in

Afghanistan; the need for Russia to diversify its defence exports; and its desire to assert its leadership in the neighbourhood and beyond.³⁴

While Russia's overall engagement with Pakistan is less than that with India, it is apparent that Russia has shifted away from defining its relations with Pakistan based upon its relations with India. In this context, it must be noted that Russia continues to follow India's lead in other South Asian countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan. The viability and continuity of such an arrangement also comes under scrutiny in the changing geopolitical scenario.

Russia's focus on Afghanistan has also increased following the beginning of US withdrawal from that country in 2014. Its current approach to Afghanistan centres on the threat from ISIS, which it regards as a greater threat than the Taliban, which is regionally confined.³⁵ It has come to regard the Taliban as instrumental in countering ISIS in Afghanistan, and thus sees Pakistan as a real player in Afghanistan. This is best summarised in the following statement of a Russian scholar: "Sometimes a player, who is not a part of the solution but a part of the problem, needs to be engaged, as his role might backfire and become dangerous for the security of Russia as well as the region."³⁶

To understand Russia's stakes in Afghanistan, it is important to note its interest in the Tajik-Afghan border, which it regards as its strategic cross. Former military officer and Russia's Secretary of the Security Council, Alexander Lebed, refers to the Tajik-Afghan border as first in a series of dominoes whose instability could lead to the collapse of other Central Asian states. This would ultimately lead to Russia as its borders "would be pushed back

to Astrakhan or even the middle reaches of the Volga" in the process.³⁷ The Russian government has held several consultations with Tajikistan on expanding security cooperation on the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border and is considering the possibility of increasing the scope of its Central Asian military bloc, the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).

For Russia, confronting problems like drug trafficking, the source of which is Afghanistan,³⁸ brings to the fore the problem of porous borders that can easily be trespassed. In the process, Russia not only becomes a transit route for drug dealing but also a victim to drug abuse. According to media reports, the country itself has emerged as a major consumer of drugs leading to frequent deaths. This does not bode well for a country that is already grappling with an acute demographic decline.

These diverging factors have led to a growing scepticism and uncertainty over the future trajectory of India-Russia relations. While the scepticism is legitimate, it would be erroneous to overestimate it. As pointed out in this brief, divergences between India and Russia have existed in parallel with the convergences throughout the history of Indo-Soviet/Russian relations. Both countries were able to overcome them during the Soviet phase as well as after the drift in the early 1990s, when both had to grapple with their respective transitions. Resilience has, in fact, been the defining factor of this partnership, rightly labelled as "time tested".

A closer look at official initiatives also makes clear the Russian desire to continue cooperating with India. For instance, the latest updated version of Russia's Foreign Policy Concept, 2016 (the last foreign policy document before this

was released in 2013) observes, “Russia is committed to further strengthening its special privileged partnership with the Republic of India based on the convergence of foreign policy priorities, historical friendship and deep mutual trust, as well as enhancing mutually beneficial bilateral ties in all areas, primarily in trade and economy, with a focus on implementing long-term cooperation programmes approved by the two countries”.³⁹

Similarly, when Vladimir Putin met with Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the St Petersburg International Economic Forum in early June this year, he reassured that Russia's relations with other countries would ‘not dilute’ ties with India.⁴⁰ The visit ended with the conclusion of a series of agreements. Apart from signing a joint declaration against terrorism, both countries finally concluded the general framework agreement and credit protocol for two additional nuclear reactors at Kudankulam. Both sides also outlined roadmaps to set up joint ventures for manufacturing aircraft and automobiles.

Moreover, despite diversification in both Russia's exports and India's defence imports, both continue to be major defence and strategic partners. Around 70 percent of India's defence dealings still take place with Russia. A few positive developments include the deal to lease a second Russian Akula-2 class nuclear-powered attack submarine for the Indian Navy, signed on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Goa last year.⁴¹ Again, India and Bangladesh signed a civilian nuclear deal during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India in April 2017. The civil nuclear deal with Bangladesh will lead to trilateral cooperation with Russia, which is building a nuclear power plant at Rooppur in Bangladesh. It is important to note that it is the first instance of India's cooperation with

another country to develop a nuclear power project in a third country.

More importantly, Russia is the only country with which India has an institutionalised mechanism for transfer of high technology and joint production. This implies that Russia is the only country willing to share critical technology and co-produce with India, something the West has remained unwilling to offer so far. India now locally produces several Russian defence products including the BrahMos supersonic missile, the T-90 tank, and Sukhoi fighter aircrafts. Russia is also among the first countries to have responded to the ‘Make in India’ initiative in the defence sector.

CONCLUSION

Russia's changing policy towards South Asia needs to be assessed within the context of new shifts taking place in the regional and international system. With the US in relative decline and China growing more assertive, the rules of the game are undergoing a transformation. Strong economic ties have the potential to fill the lacuna that characterises India-Russia relations at present. In this respect, the multi-nation International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC) carries a lot of potential.

More importantly, India's national interests dictate a strong relationship with Russia. It needs to play a more proactive role in reaching out to the Russians and voice its concerns rather than give in to scepticism. A strong Russia-Pakistan-China alliance places India in an unfavourable position and it must take the lead in preserving its ties with its time-tested and reliable partner.

India's basic strategic synergy with Russia lies in its support for a multipolar order, within which it can continue to grow. A strong and friendly Russia remains vital for maintaining a desired international equilibrium. With China

taking an increasingly assertive posture, this assumes all the more relevance in maintaining the Asian balance of power. A strong Indo-Russian partnership is thus mutually favourable. [ORF](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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ENDNOTES

1. Then Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovich refused to sign an EU association agreement- the cornerstone of the Union's Eastern Partnership initiative, just before the Vilnius summit. He expressed Ukraine's inability to sacrifice trade with Russia (which was opposed to the EU deal) as the reason behind the withdrawal.
2. Russia resumed the sale of advanced arms technology sale to China after almost a decade of an informal ban on exports of high technology military equipment following China's alleged replication of Russian weapons designs.
3. <http://www.defensenews.com/articles/china-receives-first-advanced-su-35-flankers-from-russia>
4. Confirming the same, the head of Russian state technology corporation Rostec, Sergei Chemezov noted that, "the decision was taken, and we are negotiating the delivery of helicopters" For further details see <http://tass.com/world/734309>.
5. Pakistan, Russia sign agreement for construction of North-South gas pipeline, The Dawn, October 16, 2015, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1213460>.
6. It is located in the north-western province of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa
7. Russian Army to hold first mountain drills with Pakistan in 2016, TASS, January, 2016. <http://tass.com/defense/851484>
8. https://in.rbth.com/blogs/south_asian_outlook/2017/01/16/where-does-pakistan-fit-in-russias-south-asia-strategy_681726
9. Himani Pant, "India-Russia in Testy waters?", South Asian Voices, <http://www.orfonline.org/research/india-russia-testy-waters/>
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11. http://articles.latimes.com/1986-11-23/news/mn-12608_1_soviet-union
12. Ibid., p.235.
13. Ibid.
14. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Daily Report: Soviet Union, April 12, 1978, p.11, quoted in Robert Donaldson's *The Soviet Union in South Asia: A Friend to Rely on?*, Journal of International Affairs, 1980, 34:2, p. 235.
15. For further details see Hafeez-ur-Rahman Khan, "Pakistan's Relations with the USSR", *Pakistan Horizon*, 14:1, 1961, p.34.
16. As early as February 1956, the Soviet Union had offered Pakistan technical knowledge on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. This was followed by an offer to construct a steel mill in Pakistan, similar to the one the Soviet Union built in India (Bhilai Steel Plant, 1955). Later, President Ayub Khan accepted the Soviet offer to assist in the exploration of mineral resources in 1959. In spite of the U-2 incident that followed in 1960, both sides saw it in their interests to continue with economic cooperation and concluded the Oil Pact in 1961. In fact, Pakistan set up its largest exploration and production (E&P firm), the Oil and Gas Development Company Ltd (OGDCL) with the Soviet financial and technical assistance. A Civil Aviation Pact was also reached in 1963, which facilitated cooperation between the Pakistani and Soviet airlines to cooperate over each other's territories. Another major deal took place in 1966 under which the Soviet Union agreed to provide technical assistance in the construction of various projects, including the Guddo

Thermal Power station. For details see, Zubeida Hasan "Pakistan's Relations with the U.S.S.R. in the 1960s." *The World Today* 25:1, 1969, p.34.

17. SEATO was founded in 1954 and originally consisted of Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the UK and the USA. It is currently inactive.
18. Formerly known as the Baghdad Pact, CENTO was founded in 1955 and originally consisted of Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and the UK. It is currently inactive.
19. Pramod K. Mishra, "the Soviet Union in South Asia", *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs*, 3:1/2, June December 1990, p.2.
20. For details on Hungry episode, please see <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/lw/107186.htm>.
21. Harsh V. Pant, "India-Russia Ties and India's Strategic Culture: Dominance of a Realist Worldview." *India Review* 12:1, 2013, p.3
22. V.P. Dutt, *India's Foreign Policy* Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1984, p. 131–32
23. S. Nihal Singh, *the Yogi and the Bear*, Mansell Publishing Ltd.
24. Ibid.
25. Nandan Unnikrishnan, "The Enduring Relevance of India-Russia Relations", *ORF Issue Brief* 179, May, 2017, p.2.
26. Robert Donaldson, *The Soviet Union in South Asia: A Friend to Rely on?*, *Journal of International Affairs*, 1980, 34:2,237.
27. Baidya Bikash Basu, "Russian National Security Thinking", <https://www.idsa-india.org/an-oct-00-6.html>
28. <https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/files/books/SIPRI99Chu/SIPRI99Chu.pdf>, 25-26
29. <https://www.idsa-india.org/an-oct-00-6.html>
30. Vinay Shukla, "Russia in South Asia: A View from India", SIPRI, 254, <http://books.sipri.org/files/books/SIPRI99Chu/SIPRI99Chu16.pdf>.
31. Russia's priorities order: (1) the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); (2) arms control and international security; (3) economic reform; (4) the United States; (5) Europe; (6) the Asia–Pacific region; (7) West and South Asia; (8) the Near East; (9) Africa; and (10) Latin America.
32. Vinay Shukla, "Russia in South Asia: A View from India", <http://books.sipri.org/files/books/SIPRI99Chu/SIPRI99Chu16.pdf>.
33. Vinay Shukla, "Russia in South Asia: A View from India", SIPRI <http://books.sipri.org/files/books/SIPRI99Chu/SIPRI99Chu16.pdf>.
34. http://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/30471/Johnson_Mason_Understanding_the_Taliban.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
35. Manoj Joshi, *Understanding Russian Engagement in South Asia*, *South Asian Voices*, 2014, Available at, <https://southasianvoices.org/understanding-russian-engagement-south-asia/>
36. An unnamed Russian scholar cited in Indrani Talukdar's "India - Russia: Perceptions need to be Corrected and Relationship Strengthened." *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal* 11:4, 2016, 316-321.
37. Dmitri Trenin, "The End of Eurasia", 2002, p.192.
38. During the mid-1990s, Russia emerged as a major corridor for drug trafficking, majority of narcotics arriving from Afghanistan. In South Asia via Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and are exported to Western Europe by way of the Baltic countries and east central Europe.

39. "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016. http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2542248
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