

Pandit Jawhar Lal Nehru's Policy towards Soviet Union

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Abstract: Policy is the projection of country's goals she wants to achieve. A policy towards other country is always guided by its own interests, its security, and safeguard of its public, natural resources and environment. Maintaining sufficient degree of security is the basic imperative of the policy making process of any country. Pt. Jawhar Lal Nehru's policy when he took earliest opportunity to establish full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. However, this was the Soviet Union, alone among Great Powers, who from very beginning since the accession of Kashmir to India in 1947, categorically asserted that this State is an integral part of India. The Soviet Union supported India in 1948 and 1952, whenever Kashmir question was raised in the United Nations. Nehru's role at the Bandung Conference of non-aligned nations in April, 1955 was highly appreciated in the Soviet Union.

Keywords: Relationship, Armaments, Political, Economic, Trade.

INTRODUCTION

The historical pattern of erstwhile soviet Union-Indian relationship that pushed India's long or arduous search for its regional and worldwide independent stature; the periodic regularity of Soviet vision on India was based upon India's changing geostrategic and diplomatic significance. By the special factor both the countries long term intimacy became an opportunistic relationship in which Indo-Russian needs remained common and simultaneously matched for India's strength and formers for latter's capability [1]. The China-Pakistan-USA triangle relation made Indo-Soviet relation solid & durable. By a rough estimate 60% of India's army hardware, 70% of naval hardware and 80% of its air force hardware originated from the Soviet Union [2]. The history of Indo- Soviet relations can be describes as a friendship purely based on Indian needs, Soviet opportunism, and western ambivalence. Despite their differing philosophies and political and social systems, the two countries cooperated closely throughout the cold war era [3]. Moreover, the historical concept of India and Soviet Union is concerned that both the countries relationship was cordial and cooperative.

Pt. J.L. Nehru was a follower of socialist ideology. He had visited the USSR in 1927. He was greatly impressed by the planned economic development brought about in Soviet Union in accordance with the socialist ideology. He observed –

“We have grown up in the tradition, carefully nurtured by England of hostility to Russia. For long

years past the bogy of Russia invasion has been held up to us and has made the excuse of vast expenditure on our armaments... The two countries today are too similar to be exploited and there can be no economic motive for Russia to covet India. Ordinary Russia and India should live as the best of neighbours with the fewest points of fiction.” [4]

Objectives:

1. To study the relationship between India and USSR durig Jawhar Lal Nehru;
2. To study how Jawhar Lal Nehru became a bridge between India and Russia relationship;
3. To study when and how Soviet Union stand a strong friend of India during her tough times.

Proposed Methodology during the tenure of the Research work:

The Research is based on analytical and historical bases to study the proposed Research problem. Hence, the data source is both primary as well as secondary.

Pandit Jawhar Lal Nehru and Soviet Union:

Pandit Nehru took the earliest opportunity to establish full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Nearly four months before independence, he decided to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Vijay Laxmi Pandit was appointed the first ambassador of India to the Soviet Union this appointment clearly reflected the importance the Nehru attached to relations with the Soviet Union. On 13th

August, 1947, Mrs. Pandit presented her credentials at Moscow and this opened an era of Indo- Soviet relations [5]. Although the exchange of ambassadors did not immediately lead to a warm relationship between the two states for which two factors could be cited. India's decision in April 1949, to remain within the commonwealth, in contravention to its past declaration of abhorrence towards the western world, and Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's announcement on May 7, 1949, that he had accepted an invitation to visit the United States in October of that year [6]. The Soviet Union showed a greater interest in developing relations with Pakistan, seen as a more significant regional power, than with India. And the visit in 1949 to the USA also served as an irritant for the Soviet leadership. However, the Pakistanis soon exhibited their preference for an alliance with the west when Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan withdrew his offer to visit the Soviet Union in late 1949 and accepted the United States invitation instead. The Soviets then adopted a more pro-Indian rhetoric, offering to send 50,000 tons of wheat to India in 1951 and shifting away from their formerly neutral position on Kashmir (as well as Goa), prompted further by Pakistan joining U.S.-sponsored military pacts in the mid-1950s [7]. The rise of Indian diplomatic strength in early 1950's and the death of Joseph Stalin in March 1953 paved the way for a revision of Soviet policy in South Asia. Additionally, the formation of cracks in the Sino-Soviet relations provided for "two pillars of common interest" between India and Soviet Union. These pillars were need to counter- balance growing Chinese influence and the desire to reduce the western presence in South Asia [8]. Moreover, things took different turn when on February 25, 1954, US president Eisenhower announced his government's decision to provide arms to Pakistan. Some four months later, Pakistan joined the US sponsored military pact, the SEATO, and subsequently the CENTO in 1955. This agreement brought a radical change in south Asia, for these agreements assured Pakistan the supply of sophisticated military hardware and economic aid in larger quantity from the superpower [9].

As for as trade is concerned, the first bilateral trade agreement between the two countries was signed in 1953. After that, trade between the two countries increased exponentially. What lent special significance to the trade relations between them was the purposive manner in which the two countries utilised the instrument of bilateral trade for the economic development of India as well as for the benefit of the USSR. Adaptations and sophistications were introduced in the trade agreements for forging new and dynamic economic relations to serve mutual interests. These agreements made a significant contribution to India's planned development by imparting an element of

stability to flows of exports and imports, including those of strategic products and raw materials like petroleum, petroleum products, fertilisers and metals. They also made it possible for India to expand and set up export-oriented industries, the production of which was geared to meet the requirements of Soviet consumers [10].

The USSR under Stalin was suspicious of the genuineness of India's independence and non-alignment. However, indo- soviet bonhomie started with Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to the USSR in June 1955 and the Nikita Khrushchev/ Nikolai Bulganin visit to India in December 1955. This was also time when the congress party in India was affirming its belief in state planning and a "socialistic pattern of society", and Nehru was playing a leading role in the Bandung conference (1955) of 29 Afro- Asian nations. During the same period the USSR began to use the instruments of aid, trade and diplomacy in developing countries to limit the western influence [11]. In the cold war era the Soviet Union was a major strategic partner to India, providing it diplomatic support at international forums, military equipment and technology. In fact, military cooperation remained the most prominent aspect of their bilateral relations, with the FSU accounting for nearly 75 per cent of the military hardware possessed by India till the disintegration of the former in December 1991.

Moscow was New Delhi's main foreign benefactor for the first four decades of Indian independence. Today, Russia continues to be "a trusted and reliable strategic partner," and New Delhi views its ties with Moscow as a "key pillar of India's foreign policy" [12].

CONCLUSION:

Russia and India have shared close ties since the Cold War; when Moscow was a key ally and the principal arms supplier to New Delhi. Both the countries enjoyed close strategic relations during eminent leader of India Jawahar-lal-Nehru. The relations were all-encompassing, and were the result of the geostrategic and geopolitical alignments that dominated much of the cold war era. While India's arch rival, Pakistan, established closer relations with the US and the west, India fell into the lap of the former Soviet Union (FSU). Throughout the cold war, the former Soviet Union provided India with the crucial political, economic, military, and moral support needed to put the latter on the way to economic prosperity and political and military strength. However, the military cooperation remained the most prominent aspect of their bilateral relations, with the FSU accounting for nearly 75 per cent of the military hardware possessed by

India till the disintegration of the former in December 1991.

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