

# Who is real Ally of India: America and Russia?

Dr. R V R Murthy

Associate Professor in Political Science

*Abstract: Indian Foreign policy under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi is more assertive and moving towards independence discourse in the arena of international relations. Indeed, Modi government has committed to put forward country's interest first that would be paramount to present government in India. The more we assert, affirm and exercise independent Foreign Policy, better it will be for our crippled self-esteem and will enable more friends we make. Although India is not a part of any major military alliance, but it has close relationship with most of its fellow major powers. With each passing year the bond between India with major powers has grown stronger and even more committed and dedicated relationship.*

*As we enter Amrit Kal of 75 years of independence, we need to relook having renewal relations with once super powers, now encounter with internal problems. To begin with present policy was mainly designed as the principles governing India relations with the super powers in the context of cold war politics popularly known as 'Non-aligned'. Now we enter into new phase of foreign relations replacing dogmas and old taboos associated with India. Indeed it is a multi-polar world and India has able to demonstrate its share in world politics by optimistic and constructive role.*

*With in this context of changing dynamics, we also need to reorient our relations with America and Russia in view of shifting state of affairs. India has bright future therefore; we need to evolve a mechanism to overcome external interference from America particularly. The US intervention in several internal issues of India has caused more damage than to improve the scenario despite strong economic stakes. Today the India and US bilateral cooperation is broad based and multi-sectoral, covering trade and investment, defence and security, education science and technology, cyber security, civil nuclear energy, space technology and applications, clean energy, environment, agriculture and health. Besides Russia is the largest supplier of military equipments to India followed by Israel and France. Other than US and Russia, India has strong ties with UAE, Iran, Afghanistan, Bhutan and Bangladesh in Asian continent. Moreover, India occupy strategic position in global politics, therefore major powers are determined to visit India as a counter balance against China. Moreover, India has friendly relations with several countries in the developing world.*

*Though India is not a part of any major military alliance, it has a close strategic and military cooperation with most of its fellow major powers. India has been able to build*

*warm diplomatic relations with most of the countries over the last few decades and has earned the title of being trustworthy and stable country in the world politics. India and Russia have reaffirmed their commitment to the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership. They underscored that as major powers with common responsibilities, this important relationship continues to be an anchor of global partnership for peace and progress and prosperity. This paper demands a comprehensive and objective analysis to elicit the crucial roles played by both super powers during peacetime as well as crisis.*

*Key words: Partnership, Prosperity, Cold War, Bloc Politics, Strategic , Stable World Oder*

## INTRODUCTION

India has several countries that it considers 'Allies'. The term 'Ally' typically refers to a country that shares common interest and values with another country and with whom there is a mutual commitment to support and defend each other in times of crisis. This commitment is often formalized through treaties, MoUs and other collaborations on various issues such as defence, trade, technology and cultural exchange to strengthen mutual interest and security. There are no permanent friends, no permanent enemies, only permanent interest, which is driving force between India and other countries. In other words India don't play the geopolitical game, but multiple times over and over with each other, which creates value in being reliable and trustworthy, especially with Superpowers with whom we have some convergence interests. Over the years India had maintained 'counterbalancing, but this doesn't mean we are inclined towards USA. In the long run nothing can be permanent as that's the nature of Neo-realism. But in more practical terms, it could be argue that we had collaborations and alliances that have been standing the test of time.

India ever since her independence has been engaged with both super powers along with other countries for one or other reasons. America and Russia are most developed and an economically well-off states has immense potential to provide both economic aid and

technological know-how to India in the initial years of independence. During the cold war the relations with super powers have been unprecedented and in its endeavor to establish friendly and co-operative relations with both to gain some useful trade and economic links, but the political relations have continued to experience frequent ups and down especially with Americans. This unique situation has enabled India to play a logical role which created ruckus with America and rift had been emerged due to ideological commitments paved way for misunderstands between India and America. However, similarities in respect of values and common cultural links and shared love for certain values and ideas have been the source of friendship with super powers particularly Democracy and Human Rights. For a clear understanding of the external nature of India with America and Russia, it is therefore imperative to identify and analyze those positive and negative factors briefly.

#### Indo-US relations

The special relationship between India and USA existing since 1939 and it encompasses many different areas, including areas where interest has not necessarily been natural. However Indo-USA relations derive strength from number of positive and helping factors and because of these it has always been present a strong desire among the India-Americans who play lobby to work for the development of warm friendship and highly cooperative political, economic and cultural relations between India and America. Apart from certain favorable geo-political and strategic reasons, both the countries share commonalties like shared love for peace, liberal democracy have been instrumental and which have always been encouraged towards the improvements of Indo-US relations in 21<sup>st</sup> century too.

Both are world's largest democracies in terms of its commitment to constitutional values and governance but they lack mutual faith on each other's having strengths and weaknesses. USA heads western hemisphere and India heads Afro-Asian countries. In spite of many good things between both the countries, Americans in general had misconception about India Miss Mayo's book "Mother India" (1917) which has created thoroughly wrong impressions about India. It is known fact that India was under British imperialism and our sources have been diverted to foreign land for long time, which had

resulted into massive poverty, under-development and socio-economic crisis followed by several issues. Hence after independence, India needs revamp all kinds of efforts in the process of reconstruction. Indeed this was the real reasons to seek economic aid from America under Truman's signed the India Emergency Food Assistance Act in 1951. To seek further cooperation India and USA entered PL-480, but it was unsuccessful agreement between both and America had stopped supply food grains at the crucial fight between India-Pakistan war 1965, further deteriorated the relations with USA. Similarly USA and England openly engaged in Military Aid to Pakistan to counter India. There are several incidents where America openly favoured Pakistan on Kashmir issue. Even now the relationship between India and USA is only stage show to draw attention of the media otherwise the relations between these two are not been growing smoothly and impressive. Aftermath of disintegration of USSR, USA emerged as lone global power, subsequently created a vacuum in international arena led to multi-polar world. But that remains for short period and it is more speculated in the context of diversity of power concentration. In post 1990 era India enters into economic reforms known as first generation reforms particularly in the context of LPG. Moreover, India and USA enjoyed close relations initially and further deepened collaboration on issues such as counter terrorism and countering Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

Recently Prime Minister of India has stated that despite occasional issues, India and America have been on a positive trajectory in relations. No doubt that India and USA enjoy a comprehensive global strategic partnership covering all areas of human endeavor driven by shared democratic values, convergence of interests on a range of issues and vibrant people-to-people contact. The partnership between the two countries is critical for ensuring a free, open and rules bounds in every aspect of international relations. Since 2014, the strategic cooperation between two nations has deepened and India was declared a 'Major Defence Partner' of the United States.

The unparallel demographic dividend provides enormous opportunities for the US and Indian firms for technology transfer, manufacturing trade and investment. At the same time USA realizes that India's emergence as potential player in world economy and a leading player in an international

system that is undergoing an unprecedented transformation, which is the cause of concern to America. The US has emerged as India's biggest trading partner in 2022-2023 on account of increasing economic ties between the two countries.

In spite of all good things happening between two countries, there are certain instances of interference by the US and due to vested interest behave indifferently causing friction into ties between India and USA is very much evident. US indeed a Hippocratic country and they have proved time and again. Moreover US believe in freedom and democracy but they do want to impose their will on India. So they criticize quite often India on issues like human rights and freedoms. On the contrary US have *no locus standi* on Human rights violation in US and elsewhere. US always claim that they are the champions of freedoms across the globe and act as saviors of democracy and freedom throughout world. Ironically Washington is still unable to find for India a position in its global strategy, which would satisfy India's national self-esteem and ambitions. On several accounts the US intervention in the internal matters of whether it political, social and economic, has caused more damage than improve the scenario. Therefore it is the right time for US to support and acknowledge that the India's emergence as a leading global power and a vital partner in promoting a peaceful, stable and prosperous world.

#### India and Russia Relations

India's oldest and most reliable partner is Russia and both consider their mutual affinity to be a 'special and privileged strategic partnership'. Indeed Russia has been a longstanding and time tested partner of India and has been key mainstay for India. Since 1947 India and Russia have fostered good relations wherein Russia helped India in attaining its fiscal and economic self-sufficiency. Unconditionally Russia always supported India in all most all areas of bilateral relationship including political, security, trade and economy, defence, science and technology and culture. Over the decades both countries have mutually contributed and sustained strategic partnership, several institutionalized dialogue mechanisms operative at both political and official levels to ensure regular interaction and follow up on cooperation activities. Over the years both India and Russia have evolved a special relationship based on military, economic and political agreements and partnerships.

India identified Russia as one of the top five friends and oldest ally since the days of cold war. Also India is biggest arms buyer from Russia for decades. In spite of India has close relations with Russia, India's had always inclination towards western countries specially USA. India being the second largest and most populous country and the most culturally diverse country is one the fast growing economy in the world. India being a growing economic gaint is a politically independent nation which has its own identity in international platforms. At present, India and Russia need sustained economic growth to establish themselves as important players in the world order. The target for bilateral trade figures set with the goal of \$30 billion by 2025.

Both Russia and India consider mutual affinity to be a special and based on privileged strategic partnership. Indeed both the governments believe in multi-polar world order, in which both countries are playing a vital role in shaping world order. The India-Russia interaction in global politics is supplemented by mutual understating and strong bonds since independence of India. Also, Moscow saw its alliance with India as essential for offsetting USA and Chinese dominance in Asia. May be this is the reason India always enjoyed the leverage that support from Russia. The India-Russia relationship stood the test of time. No doubt India and Russia enjoy special relationship, which aims to protect its national interest without fully aligning with any particular bloc. In spite of strong criticism from western world, particularly regarding sanctions on Russia on the back drop of Ukraine-Russia conflict, India positions itself as a voice for developing nations that may feel marginalized by the western centric policies. Our focus is to maintain balanced relations with all major powers but it gives own diplomatic prioritized and regional security concerns. With ups and downs India consistently following owes between India and Russia are driven by complex interplay of historical ties, strategic interests and a desire for a multi-polar world.

#### CONCLUSION

Over the years, the relationship between India and USA is love-hate existed and USA often interferes in India's domestic issues, which is unwarranted and uncalled. No doubt that both are being world's largest democracies and being proud of celebrated history of popular democracy. In spite of commonalities USA

always backstabbed and suspects India particularly due to India's close proximity to Russia. Therefore it can be summed up by stating that US-India relations were often hostile. US-India bilateral trade is the key cornerstone of this friendship, but there is an amount of trust deficit and inconsistency relations due to external factors. In the last four decades, United States of America primarily armed our extended neighbour Pakistan and granted MFN status knowingly Pakistan involved in state sponsored terrorism. Indeed India never expected that United States should treat like an alley; rather India prioritized foreign policy independence as a central feature of our approach to normalize of Indo-US ties for the betterment of both countries.

Russia has been a longstanding and time-tested partner for India and was instrumental in helping India in many ways to develop its scientific potential and to defend its territorial integrity. Over the decades India-Russia had evolve a dynamic relationship of trust between two countries undeniably it was unprecedented in international affairs. India and Russia have very cordial and deep relations even before independence and friendship are built on key pillars like i.e., politics, defence, civil nuclear energy, anti-terrorism and space cooperation. Historically Russia has helped India on numerous occasions. In 1965, the Russia served successfully as a peace broker between India and Pakistan. Russia also supported India during 1971 war liberation of East Pakistan. India has robust defence cooperation with Russia and also helped India in developing its space program including providing cryogenic engine for launch of satellites. Since the signing of the "Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership" in October 2000 (during the visit of President Putin), India-Russia ties have acquired a qualitatively new character with enhanced levels of cooperation in almost all areas, including political, security, defence, trade and economy, science & technology, culture, and people-to-people ties. During the visit of the Russian President to India in December 2010, the Strategic Partnership was elevated to the level of "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership." Russia today turns more towards Asia particularly India in regard to characterized by mutual trust, respect for each other's core national interests and similarity of positions on various international and regional issues. On the contrary currently is a multi-polar world and India's growing needs can be fulfilled by having a partner like Russia. Today most analysts

believes that the partnership between two has developed to a greater scale that it can be characterized as time tested. Over the decades Indo-Russian relations had been marked by a high degree of political and strategic trust. In light of above it can be logically drawn that Russia has remained a true ally of India.

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