

Eurasian Nations Counter U.S. 'Unipolar' Insanity

by Mary Burdman

"India is our strategically privileged partner," Russian President Vladimir Putin said at his joint press conference with Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in New Delhi on Dec. 3, the first day of his three-day state visit to India. Putin began by saying: "I would like to note that this visit to New Delhi is a special visit, and we attach great importance to it." Its great importance recalls Putin's breakthrough "Strategic Triangle" diplomacy of December 2002, when he went to China and then directly to India, and the three nations set out coherent initiatives to deal with the critical security and economic issues all faced. This time, Putin and Singh took the unusual measure of stressing the importance of cooperation among Russia, India, and China in their summit's Joint Declaration.

Since 1998, when financial crises in Asia, Ibero-America, Russia, and the United States nearly crashed the whole system, a "survivors' bloc" has emerged of nations which, as Lyndon LaRouche then described them, are not willing to go down with the wreckage of the U.S. dollar system. Were George W. Bush not in the White House right now, the United States would be leading the "survivors' bloc." Until sanity can be imposed on Washington, the three Eurasian giants, Russia, China, and India, are doing what they can. It was in December 1998, that then-Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov, visiting India, publicly proposed the "Strategic Triangle."

The unhindered collapse of the U.S. dollar, and the neo-conservatives' determination to turn Iraq and other strategic regions of Eurasia into wastelands, are aimed at the vital interests of Russia and China, and put those of India and Europe in grave danger. The "democracy" circus in Kiev is just the latest foray. President Putin is reacting, and his Indian and Chinese counterparts are moving with him, as the core of the survivors' bloc, around which other nations can rally.

Multipolar Cooperation

In New Delhi, Putin greeted the new Indian government by expressing his "pleasure that we have made sure that the policy for developing strategic partnership between Russia and India is not subject to the political situation. Without any exaggeration, I can say that we have a full mutual understanding on the entire agenda discussed." The core of the agenda is multipolar cooperation to deal with the scourges of terrorism and war. The same day, Putin also noted the importance of cooperation among Russia, India, and China, in his speech to the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Foundation, where he also starkly warned of the consequences of trying to impose a "dictatorship in international affairs."

The Joint Declaration emphasizes that Russian-Indian cooperation "strengthens stability in Asia and the world as a whole." It states: "The sides note with satisfaction that trilateral meetings at the Foreign Ministers' level of India, China, and Russia have been taking place regularly. These meetings have been useful in promoting understanding and exploring areas of possible cooperation at a trilateral and at an international level. The trilateral meetings have also reflected a strong concern against terrorism anywhere and in any form. The sides expressed their conviction in favor of progressive increase in trilateral cooperation, which could also result in social and economic development amongst the three countries."

The Indian newspaper *The Pioneer* reports that the Prime Ministers of the three nations will meet in the first half of 2005 at Lake Baikal in Russia. High-level scholars from the three nations have been meeting regularly for several years, and the Foreign Ministers launched their annual meetings in September 2002.

Just before Putin's visit to India, Manmohan Singh had his first meeting as Prime Minister with his Chinese counterpart,



Russian President Putin (left) with Indian Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee, in New Delhi on Dec. 4. In an earlier visit with Indian leaders, Putin quoted Mahatma Gandhi: "If we want to be a success, 'we ought not to re-enact history, but create history anew.' That is what we intend to do, as we make and carry out future-oriented plans."

Wen Jiabao, at the summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Vientiane, Laos on Nov. 30. Wen Jiabao is to visit India in March 2005, and told Singh that this trip is "the most important event on my agenda next year. . . . I hope this will send a positive signal throughout the world. . . . The handshake between you and me will catch the attention of the whole world."

In an interview with the Russian paper *Kommersant* published a few days later, Dr. Singh, asked about the "creation of the 'Great-5' " (Russia, China, India, South Africa, Brazil), responded: "We have a system of continuous dialogues among the heads of the Ministries of External Affairs of India, China, and Russia. There is also a dialogue forum, IBSA, that unites India, Brazil, and South Africa. Today we should pay more attention to development of those mechanisms, as each of them is only at its preliminary stage."

No Dictatorship

President Putin went to India prepared to address the issue of the unipolar onslaught from Washington and London. Just before his visit, he told Amit Baru of *The Hindu* in an exclusive written interview, that "there can be no 'double standards' in the fight against terrorism; otherwise, this struggle would become ineffective or meaningless. . . . Russia and India both have a common understanding of this fundamental principle. However, not all of our partners demonstrate understanding of such seemingly apparent facts." In what he himself called a "stiff comment," Putin denounced the ability of A. Zakaev, a leader of the Chechen terrorists, "to travel freely across European countries. The U.S. authorities gave safe haven to another envoy of terrorists—I. Akhmadov. . . . Such steps undermine the unity and mutual trust of the participants

of the anti-terrorist front. . . . However, somebody influenced by stereotypes or—which is particularly dangerous—hoping to get questionable political dividends, prefers to turn a blind eye to apparent facts."

While warmly praising George Bush, Putin warned that the developments in "Iraq have once again proved that unilateral actions are counterproductive. I will be frank: In my talks with many foreign leaders I used to hear the following question: 'If global affairs are to be dealt with according to the "Iraqi model," how can we guarantee our countries' security and sovereignty?' We have repeatedly called our American partners' attention to this reality."

At the Nehru Foundation, Putin was even more forceful. It seems, he said, "extremely dangerous to attempt to reshape God-created, multi-faceted, diverse modern civilization according to the barracks principles of a unipolar world. The more insistent the authors and advocates of this idea are, the more mankind will confront dangerous imbalances in economic and social development." In a direct counter to the neo-cons, he said: "Dictatorship, especially dictatorship in international affairs, does not solve and has never solved such problems, even if that dictatorship is packaged in the pretty wrapping of pseudo-democratic phraseology; even then, it will be unable to solve systemic problems. On the contrary, it will only aggravate them."

Putin's charges were sharp enough to draw a response from Washington. Bush's spokesman retorted on Dec. 5 that the American President "believes the world must work together in a spirit of cooperation, not creating poles."

Putin then gave some important proposals, including Russia's "proactive role" in fostering Eurasian cooperation in the Community of Independent States (CIS), Eurasec, and the

Eurasia: Main Routes and Selected Secondary Routes of the Eurasian Land-Bridge



The Eurasian Land-Bridge—corridors of development from the Atlantic to the Pacific, as conceptually outlined by Lyndon LaRouche—provides the strategic framework for the success of the growing cooperation among the “survivors’ bloc” of nations led by Russia, India, and China, to counter terrorism, promote regional stability, and boost cooperation in space, defense, energy, and trade.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and with the European Union and ASEAN. “We also believe that non-bloc interaction among Russia, India, and China can make a crucial contribution to global stability and progress,” he said. “Our business cooperation is capable of becoming an important factor in the socio-economic development of each of our countries.” He described the potential of Eurasian infrastructure projects, particularly the fact that “Russia, India, and Iran are implementing the genuinely strategic North-South international transport corridor project. It will have a significant impact on transportation between Europe, South Asia, and the Persian Gulf. This route may become a landmark in the economic and integration architecture of the vast Eurasian region.”

Of real importance to India was Putin’s strong support for India’s role at the United Nations. “If we are talking of the expansion of the UN Security Council according to regional principle, then of course, in our opinion, India is undoubtedly candidate number one,” he said. Statements he made on not weakening the power of the Security Council members’ veto, were misinterpreted by the press as opposition to India’s getting full status, which Putin took care to clarify later, saying,

“We are fully supportive of India’s claim and it should get all the rights of a permanent member, including the power to veto.” India supported Russia’s entry into the World Trade Organization.

Strategic Defense

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov was in New Delhi three days before Putin’s arrival, to offer India a strategic defense partnership. “We are prepared to transfer high-tech frontier technology to India in a strategic tie-up based on a new pattern of defense cooperation,” Ivanov said Dec. 1, after an hour-long one-to-one meeting with his Indian counterpart, Pranab Mukherjee. The time has come, said Ivanov, to change the pattern of defense cooperation, to transcend the current buyer-seller relationship and take it to levels of frontier technology. (Russia is already the primary source of advanced Indian military equipment.) Before he left Moscow Nov. 30, Ivanov said that the two sides “are going to embark on cooperation in advanced technologies for use in space in the next few years.” These are for “any purposes, they may be peaceful or not so peaceful. . . . I

would rather say the civilian and military cooperation involving space would become a thrust area of bilateral interaction." The Indian Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal S. Krishnaswamy, had said last year that India had begun developing space-based weapon platforms.

Ivanov was adamant, however, that the two sides must come to an Intellectual Property Rights agreement to control transfer of highly advanced military technologies to third countries. "We will find it difficult to move forward in high-end defense technologies without an agreement on the protection of intellectual property," he said. "This is becoming something of a problem." India has had the draft Russian defense secrecy agreement for two years. "We will not hand over technologies for nothing," Ivanov said. "Russia is not the Soviet Union."

There are indications that these issues are being resolved. Putin announced in New Delhi Dec. 4 after his talks with Defense Minister Mukherjee, that the two sides' "substantial two-day talks have virtually removed all problems in our military-technical cooperation; no problems which might hinder our movement forward, exist at this stage." Prime Minister Singh told the press that "the common principles on this issue have already been determined, and all intellectual property rights will be protected in all future agreements." Putin responded that "we can and must solve this problem in three to four months."

Ivanov then said that the military agreements went far beyond equipment, to "joint efforts in the military sphere, including settlement in the seats of tension such as Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Iraq. . . . We have big plans for the future and have discussed all of them during the visits."

The two nations signed the planned agreements for cooperation in space, and for India to participate in joint development and use of the Russian global navigation satellite system (GLONASS) for peaceful purposes, although military use is not excluded. GLONASS is the only rival to the American GPS (Global Positioning System), until the European Galileo program is launched.

'Unique Cooperation'

"The cooperation between India and Russia in joint research and production of advanced military technologies is unique," one of Russia's highest-level India scholars told *EIR* Dec. 7. "I have heard reports that even the Russian Army itself does not have some of the advanced equipment to be jointly produced with India. This cooperation will help Russia's own technological and economic development." Among other things, the effort to outfit and provide new military equipment for the aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov*, will give work to 23,000 Russians. The existing level of trade between the two nations is "not enough"; the military-technical cooperation "is a step forward" in joint relations.

India's military cooperation with France, the United

States, and Israel, is "no competition" to its cooperation with Russia, the scholar said. Israel is producing some "spare parts" for Russian aircraft, but this is not a joint project; it is "not very special," although some Western analysts play this up, she said.

Energy

The other strategic front is energy. Putin had told *The Hindu* that he is "looking forward to new, major progress in Russian-Indian cooperation," which includes energy, oil, and gas projects. Since India has to import 73% of its oil, "Russia, being a long-term and traditional partner of India, is prepared to contribute to enhancing energy stability of the developing Indian economy, to the development of its fuel and energy sector."

Before the Singh-Putin meeting Dec. 3, Indian Oil Minister M.S. Ayar said that "after India declared its independence, the U.S.S.R. was a guarantor of India's territorial integrity. Now Russia can provide energy security for our country." In Bangalore, India's "high-tech city," on Dec. 4, Putin told Indian business leaders that "Russia is prepared to make a contribution to ensuring the energy stability of the growing Indian economy, which is in need of energy." These include gas and oil projects in the Bay of Bengal, Assam, Sakhalin, and elsewhere. India has already invested \$1.7 billion in the Sakhalin-1 project, and was offered participation in Sakhalin-3 and in Siberian and Caspian oil projects. The two sides are now constructing the \$2.6 billion Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu. Russia will also provide India with large amounts of liquefied natural gas, in tankers, at "very favorable rates." The Gas Authority of India (GAIL) signed agreements with Gazprom and Stroitanngaz.

Putin noted that the two nations' volume of trade turnover, only \$2 billion so far this year, is far too small, and dominated by raw materials. Trade infrastructure, including essential credit and financial agreements, will be improved, he said. These will include investing part of India's rupee-ruble debt, left over from the Soviet era, in joint enterprises in Russia and India. This, he admitted, had been blocked over the past two years by the Russian Finance Ministry. With the improvement of the Russian budget, there is now "the most convenient opportunity to begin joint work," Putin said. He called for these funds to be invested "in the most attractive areas of the Indian economy," which include high-tech and nuclear power projects.

In New Delhi in December 2002, Putin and his wife Lyudmila paid their respects to Mahatma Gandhi at his stone memorial on the Yamuna River. At the state banquet afterwards, Putin quoted Gandhi: "If we want to be a success, 'we ought not to re-enact history, but create history anew.' That is what we intend to do, as we make and carry out future-oriented plans." This potential for the survivors' bloc nations exists today. The main task, is to get the United States on board.