

## **HISTORY OF RUSSIA-UKRAINE RELATIONS & ITS IMPACT ON THE U.S. & INDIA**

**Samindra Mohan Biswas**

Bidhan Chandra College, Rishra, Hooghly, India

Email: soumen48714@gmail.com

Received : 1 October, 2022, Revision : October 15, 2022 Acceptep : January 25, 2022

### **ABSTRACT**

Ukraine has been dogged by corruption scandals, economic mismanagement, and Russian interference since it's independence in 1991, when amidst the dissolution of Soviet Union, Ukraine voted for independence with 92 per cent Ukrainians voting for independence and elected Leonid Kravchuk as President. In fact, Ukraine had the second largest population and economy of the fifteen Soviet Republics. In January 14, 1994, the Russian, Ukrainian and U.S. Presidents signed a statement reaffirming Ukraine's commitment to transfer all strategic nuclear warheads to Russia and dismantle strategic launchers in it's territory. In February 8, 1994, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization welcomed Ukraine into it's partnership for peace, a collaborative arrangement opened to all non-NATO European countries and post-Soviet states and this was the turning point in the Ukrainian relationship with Russia as Russia felt hurt and loss of prestige to the Western world. Moreover, in order to secure and protect her interests and threatened by western alliance, Russia invaded Ukraine in February, 2014 and seized and annexed Crimea on March 21, 2014, though already in August, 2008, Russia had invaded Georgia and made Abkhazia and South Ossetia independent. The renaming of Ukraine as NATO Enhanced Opportunities' Partner in June, 2020 added fuel to the fire. The finishing of Natural Gas Pipeline Nord 2, under the Baltic Sea to Germany in September, 2021 by Russian firm Gazprom resulted in strong protests from Kyiv and the U.S. fearing a cut off of income because of this project. (1) But Russia feeling insecure finally launched an invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022 thus endangering international peace which had an impact on third world countries like India. This article has tried to focus on the fact that India being a non-aligned country and one of the founder members of NAM and the Third World dating back to the cold war era and having good relations with both the U.S. and Russia especially the latter stands up to the situation. Because Russia has always stood behind India during crisis period along with the fact that India is a buyer of oil from Russia at a cheap price. Again, India's recent closeness with the U.S. has put India's position in a dilemma in the perspective of International relations more so in the face of threat from China which is looming large as time is passing by. It has been seen in the past getting help from the West especially the U.S. is a bit problematic. So, this writing has tried to stress that India will have to very carefully tread it's path diplomatically and politically keeping her interests and also the long-standing friendship with Moscow since the time of erstwhile Soviet Union. The question will India be successful in following this?

Keywords: Ukraine, NATO, Crimea, Georgia, Nord2Pipeline, NAM, crudeoil, neighbours.

### **ABSTRAK**

Ukraina telah dirundung skandal korupsi, salah urus ekonomi, dan campur tangan Rusia sejak kemerdekaannya pada tahun 1991, ketika di tengah pembubaran Uni Soviet, Ukraina memilih kemerdekaan dengan 92 persen warga Ukraina memilih kemerdekaan dan memilih Leonid Kravchuk sebagai Presiden. Faktanya, Ukraina memiliki populasi dan ekonomi terbesar kedua dari lima belas Republik Soviet. Pada 14 Januari 1994, Presiden Rusia, Ukraina, dan AS menandatangani pernyataan yang menegaskan kembali komitmen Ukraina untuk mentransfer semua hulu ledak nuklir strategis ke Rusia dan membongkar peluncur strategis di wilayahnya. Pada tanggal 8 Februari 1994, Organisasi Perjanjian

Atlantik Utara menyambut Ukraina ke dalam kemitraannya untuk perdamaian, pengaturan kolaboratif dibuka untuk semua negara Eropa non-NATO dan negara pasca-Soviet dan ini adalah titik balik dalam hubungan Ukraina dengan Rusia seperti yang dirasakan Rusia. terluka dan kehilangan prestise ke dunia Barat. Selain itu, untuk mengamankan dan melindungi kepentingannya dan terancam oleh aliansi barat, Rusia menginvasi Ukraina pada Februari 2014 dan merebut dan menganeksasi Krimea pada 21 Maret 2014, meskipun pada Agustus 2008, Rusia telah menginvasi Georgia dan menjadikan Abkhazia dan Selatan Ossetia merdeka. Penggantian nama Ukraina sebagai Mitra Peluang yang Ditingkatkan NATO pada Juni 2020 menambah bahan bakar ke dalam api. Penyelesaian Pipa Gas Alam Nord 2, di bawah Laut Baltik ke Jerman pada September 2021 oleh perusahaan Rusia Gazprom mengakibatkan protes keras dari Kyiv dan AS takut akan pemotongan pendapatan karena proyek ini. (1) Namun Rusia yang merasa tidak aman akhirnya melancarkan invasi ke Ukraina pada tanggal 24 Februari 2022 sehingga membahayakan perdamaian internasional yang berdampak pada negara dunia ketiga seperti India. Artikel ini mencoba untuk fokus pada fakta bahwa India adalah negara nonblok dan salah satu anggota pendiri GNB dan Dunia Ketiga sejak era perang dingin dan memiliki hubungan baik dengan AS dan Rusia terutama yang berdiri terakhir. sampai dengan situasi. Karena Rusia selalu berdiri di belakang India selama periode krisis seiring dengan fakta bahwa India adalah pembeli minyak dari Rusia dengan harga murah. Lagi-lagi, kedekatan India dengan AS akhir-akhir ini telah menempatkan posisi India dalam dilema perspektif hubungan Internasional terlebih lagi menghadapi ancaman dari China yang semakin membayang seiring berjalannya waktu. Terlihat di masa lalu mendapatkan bantuan dari Barat terutama AS agak bermasalah. Jadi, tulisan ini mencoba menekankan bahwa India harus dengan sangat hati-hati menapaki jalannya secara diplomatis dan politis untuk menjaga kepentingannya dan juga persahabatan yang telah terjalin lama dengan Moskow sejak masa Uni Soviet dulu. Pertanyaannya apakah India akan berhasil mengikuti ini?

Kata kunci: Ukraina, NATO, Krimea, Georgia, Nord2Pipeline, NAM, minyak mentah, tetangga.

## INTRODUCTION

Ukraine is a country located in Eastern Europe and is the second largest and second most populous country in the European continent. Earlier Ukraine was a part of the Soviet Union until 1991 until the dissolution of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.). The country shares it's borders with the members of the European Union with the West and Russia in the East and concurrently maintains strong social and cultural ties with Russia. It is home to most of the agricultural production, defence industries and military heads including Black Sea Fleet. Ukraine's geopolitical location is a matter of great strategic importance to the Russian Federation. Geographically, Ukraine is bisected in two parts: the Eastern part has intrinsic cultural relations with Russia as it shares it's eastern boundary with Russia. Besides Ukraine was part of erstwhile Soviet Union. So Russian culture prevailed more in this region known as the Donbas

region. The geopolitical location of Ukraine gives birth to the present conflict that is Russian invasion of Ukraine. In fact, post disintegration of the U.S.S.R. when Russia and Ukraine were born as independent states, Russia lost all its control on territory of Ukraine whereas latter's inclination towards the Western Allies was considered as a major blow to Russia's international prestige. It didn't just hurt Russian pride but also intrigued Russia in taking aggressive and bold moves such as annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the Ukraine's invasion. From Russian perspectives, these gestures acted as a signal to enhance Russian security and guard Russian from the U.S.A. and it's NATO. (Jain S. , 2022).

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This write up has tried to look into the history of Russia-Ukraine relations and how it has influenced the conflict and its relations with others especially the West and India. The sources required for this writing are mainly based on newspapers, audio-visual media and secondary data like books, journals, various reports, websites etc. The research method that has been followed here is mainly based on content analysis of the secondary data like books, journals, reports, websites as well as newspapers and press reports collected from the archives and libraries. As the opinions are varied and tend to avoid solution for the underdeveloped countries which should be indigenous in nature that will help them to grow from within, these contents have been worked on to see whether Russia is really at fault or that the West especially the U.S. have provoked her as well as to look into the fact how India deals with this tricky situation and also the question of self reliance.

The research question is should India revert back to the Nehruvian era of The Third World or The Age of Non-Alignment? Or India will play into the hands of the West? This question has gained special significance in view of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict, which has again raised another question - will be world see the revival of the Age of Cold War or better sense

will prevail? One thing is almost certain that one has to secure one's domain as no body is friend be it personal or in world politics.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **History of Russian-Ukraine Relations**

On February 24, 2022, Russia had invaded Ukraine. Here, it is important to state the area and total population of the two states - Russia and Ukraine. The area of Russia including Crimea is 17, 125, 191 km. sq. with a total number of population is 146, 171, 015 while the area of Ukraine excluding Crimea is 603, 550 km. sq. with a total population of 41, 319, 838. The question is what has led to this certain turn of events? For this we have to take a look at Ukraine's past policies. In fact, the Russian-Crimean War began in 2014, when Russia had annexed Crimea. After the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991, the successor states' bilateral relations had undergone a period of ties, tension and outright hostility. In the early 1990s, Ukraine's policy was dominated by aspirations to ensure its sovereignty and independence, followed by a foreign policy that balanced cooperation with the European Union, Russia and other powerful polities.

Relations between the two countries have been hostile since the 2014 Revolution of Dignity, which toppled Ukraine's elected President Victor Yanukovich and his supporters because he refused to sign a political association and free trade agreement with the European Union that enjoyed majority support in the Ukrainian Parliament. Ukraine's post-revolutionary government wished to commit the country to a future within the European Union and NATO, rather than to continue playing a delicate diplomatic game of balancing its own economy and security interests with those of Russia, European Union and NATO members. In 2004, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia had joined the European Union, followed by Bulgaria and Romania in 2007. The Russian Government feared that Ukraine's membership of European Union and NATO would complete a western world of allied countries by restricting

Russia's access to the Black Sea. With South Korea and Japan being allied to the U.S., the Russian Government was concerned that Russia was being ring-fenced by potentially hostile powers. In the wake of Revolution of Dignity, Russia backed separatist militia in the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic were involved in a war in Ukraine's economically important Donbas region on its eastern border with Russia. This region had a Russian ethnic majority.

In 2019, amendments were made to the constitution of Ukraine, which enshrined the irreversibility of the country's strategic course towards the European Union and NATO membership. Throughout 2021-22, Russian military build up on the borders of Ukraine has escalated tensions between the two countries and strained bilateral relations, with the United States sending a strong message that invasion of Ukraine would be met with dire consequences for the Russian economy. However, on 24th February, 2022 Russia began invading Ukraine, prompting Ukraine to break diplomatic ties with its eastern neighbour. Similar thing happened in 2014, and from then on the seat of ambassador to Ukraine has remained vacant. (Kievan Rus, 2000)

If we look at the history of Russia-Ukraine relations, it will be seen that both Russia and Ukraine claim their heritage from the Rus, that united several tribes and clans of different ethnicities under the Byzantine church in the 10th century.

According to old Russian chronicles, Kyiv, the capital of modern Ukraine, was proclaimed the mother of Rus cities, as it was the capital of the powerful late Medieval state of Russia. After the Mongol invasion of Kievan Rus, the histories of the Ukrainian and Russian people diverged. The former having successfully united all remnants of Rus's northern provinces, evolved into the Russian state. The latter came under the domination of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, followed by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. (Shambarov, 2007)

Starting in the mid-17th century, Ukraine was gradually absorbed

into the Russian Empire, which was entirely incorporated into Russia by the late 18th century with the partition of Poland.(5) The Russian Empire considered the Ukrainians and Belarusians to be ethnically Russian, referring to them as "Little Russians." (6) Until the end of World War I this view was only opposed by a small group of Ukrainian nationalists. Nevertheless, a perceived threat of "Ukrainian Separatism" had introduced a lot of measures aimed at the Russification of the "Little Russians". (Basdin, 2015)

The February Revolution saw establishment of official relations between the Russian Provincial Government and the Ukrainian Central Rada (Central Council of Ukraine). After the Soviet Military aggression at the beginning of 1918, Ukraine declared its full independence from the Russian Republic on 22nd January, 1918 as the Ukrainian People's Republic, which existed from 1917-1922. The two treaties of Brest-Litovsk that Ukraine and Russia signed separately with the Central Powers calmed the military conflict between them. After the end of World War I, Ukraine became a battle ground in the Ukrainian War of Independence, linked to the Russian Civil War. In 1922, Ukraine and Russia were the two founding members of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and were signatories of the treaty that terminated the Union in December, 1991. (Times L. A., The Treaty, 1991)

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Ukraine gained its independence and inherited the third largest nuclear stockpile in the world along with a significant means of its design and production. (Times L. A., The Treaty, 1991)

The country had 130 UR-100N intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) with six warheads each, 46 RT-23 Molodets ICBMs with ten warheads a piece, 33 heavy bombers totaling approximately 1700 warheads remained on Ukrainian territory. (Norris, 1992) While Ukraine had physical control over the weapons, it did not have operational control, as they were dependent on Russian controlled electronic Permissive Action Link and the

Russian command, control systems. In 1992, Ukraine agreed to voluntarily remove over 3000 tactical nuclear weapons. (Vasylenko, 2009) By 1996, Ukraine transferred all Soviet-era strategic warheads to Russia. (Zaborsky, 1995)

The second major dispute of early years was over the fate of the Black Sea Fleet as well as its operating bases, mainly Sevastopol on the Crimean Peninsula. Ukrainian proclamation was that the entire fleet was under Russia's jurisdiction and intended to pursue NATO Membership Action Plan. On the other hand, the Russian politicians claiming parts of Crimea declared in the Russian Parliament that the 1954 gifting of Crimea to Ukraine was illegitimate. (Hopkins, 2021)

After several years of intense negotiations the whole issue was resolved in 1997. The Partition Treaty divided the fleet and allowed Russia to lease some of the naval bases at Sevastopol to the Russian navy till 2017. and Treaty of Friendship fixed the principle of strategic partnership, the recognition of the unviability of existing borders, respect for territorial integrity and mutual commitment not to use its territory to harm the security of each other. (Specter, 2007)

Another major dispute was related to the energy supplies, as several Soviet-Western oil and gas pipelines ran through Ukraine. Later, after new treaties came into effect, Ukraine's gas debt arrears to Russia were paid off by transferring some of nuclear capable weapons that Ukraine inherited from the USSR to Russia such as the Tu-160 Tupolov strategic bombers. (Archive) Russia remained Ukraine's primary market for ferrous metals, steel plate and pipes, electric machinery, machine tools and equipment, food and products of chemical industry. It has been a market of hope for Ukraine's high value-added goods, more than nine-tenths of which were historically tied to the Russian consumer. (Molchanov, 2002)

With old buyers gone by 1997, Ukraine had experienced a 97-99 percent drop in production of Industrial machines with digital control systems. In spite of the post-communist showdown at the same time, Russia

emerged as the fourth largest investor in Ukraine after the U.S., Netherlands and Germany having contributed \$150.6 million out of \$2.047 billion in foreign direct investment that Ukraine had received from all sources by 1998. (18) In 2003, Russia tried to integrate Ukraine into a new Russia-led Single Economic Space with Russia. However, with the Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko in power, several problems resurfaced including the Russia-Ukraine Gas disputes due to Ukraine's growing cooperation with the European Union and bid to join NATO.

The overall perception of relations with Russia in Ukraine depends largely on regional factors. Many Russophone eastern and southern regions which are also home to the majority of the Russian diaspora in Ukraine welcome close relations with Russia. (Charles, 2004) However, further central and particularly western regions, who were never a part of Imperial Russia in Ukraine show a less friendly attitude to the idea of a historic link to Russia and the Soviet Union in particular. (Newsru.com, 2007)

### **Russian-Ukraine Antagonism**

However, Ukraine's recent attempts to join the European Union and NATO were seen as a change of course to only a pro-Western, anti-Russian orientation of Ukraine and thus a sign of hostility and this resulted in a drop of Ukraine's perception of Russia. (Agency U. I., Ukrain's Perception about Russia, 2008) (although the then President of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko reassured Russia that joining NATO was not meant to be anti-Russian Act (News, Russia-Ukraine Relations, 2008) and the Russian President Putin said that Russia would welcome Ukraine's membership in the European Union. (Conference, 2004) This was further fueled by the public discussion in Ukraine of whether the Russian language be made the second state language. (News, Russia-Ukraine Relations, 2005) During the 2009 has conflict, the Russian media almost uniformly portrayed Ukraine as an aggressive and a greedy state that wanted to ally with Russia's enemies and exploit cheap Russian gas (Motyl, 2009)) Further worsening of relations was provoked by belligerent statements made in 2007-2008 by both



Russian and Ukrainian politicians. The status of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol remained a matter of disagreement and tension. (Aron, 2008)

In February, 2008, Russia unilaterally withdrew from the Ukrainian-Russian intergovernmental agreement on the Main Centre For Missile Attack Warning signed in 1997. (Agency I. N., 2009) During the Russo-Georgian War, relations between Ukraine and Russia soured due to Ukraine's support and selling of arms to Georgia as well as the new Ukrainian regulations for the Russian Black Sea Fleet, which sends marines and vessels to the war such as the demand that Russia obtain prior permission when crossing the Ukrainian border, which Russia refused to comply with. (Agency U. I., Russia-Ukraine Relations, 2008) Moreover, the Russian military presence in Crimea created further controversy. Again, the Ukrainians have not forgotten the Holdomor of 1932-33 (meaning extermination by hunger or killing by starvation) which was a man made famine in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and which extended upto Russia and Khazakhstan that killed upto 7.5 million Ukrainians. Scholars argued in the absence of documentary proof of intent that the Holdomor was caused by the economic problems associated with the radical changes implemented during the period of liquidation of private property and Soviet industrialization, combined with the widespread draught of the early 1930s, though the Ukrainians found the Soviet leaders guilty of genocide against Ukrainians during the period of Holdomor famine. (Europe, 2010)

### **Inclination of Ukraine Towards NATO**

On the other hand, the U.S. supported Ukraine's bid to join NATO launched in January, 2008 as an effort to obtain NATO Membership Action Plan. (Times T. H., 2022) Russia strongly opposed any prospect of Ukraine and Georgia becoming NATO members. (Wikileaks, Ukraine-Russia Relations, 2008) According to the alleged transcript of the Russian President Putin's speech at the 2008 NATO-Russia Council Summit at Bucharest, capital of Romania, Putin spoke of Russia's responsibilities for the ethnic Russian residents in Ukraine and urged his NATO partners to

listen to his advice, according to some media reports he then also privately hinted to his U.S. Counterpart at the possibility of Ukraine losing its integrity in the event of its NATO accession, which he again reiterated on 5th March, 2022 saying that Ukraine might lose its existence as a State. According to a document in the United States diplomatic cable leak Putin implicitly challenged the territorial integrity of Ukraine, suggesting that Ukraine was an artificial creation sewn together from territory of Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania and especially Russia in the aftermath of the second world war. (Wikileaks T. , 2008)

After a master plan to modernise the natural gas infrastructure of Ukraine between the European Union and Ukraine was announced on 23rd March, 2009 the then Russian Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko told an investment conference, where the plan was unveiled that it appeared to draw Ukraine legally closer to the European Union and might harm Moscow's interest.(Harrison, 2009)

In a leaked diplomatic cable (as revealed by Wikileaks) regarding the January 9, Russia-Ukraine Gas crisis, Ambassador of Ukraine to Russia, Kostyantyn Hryshchenko expressed his opinion that Kremlin leaders wanted to see a totally subservient person in charge of Kyiv and that Putin hated the then Ukrainian President Yushchenko. In the meantime Ukraine had created a list of artists and programs that are prohibited from going to Russia or banned from performing in Ukraine. (Wikileaks, 2013)

On 14th May, 2013 a call was given by an unknown veteran, Sergei Razumovsky to form a Russian-Ukrainian international volunteer brigades of All Ukrainian Association of Homeless Officers under the flag of Ukraine in support of the Bashadr-Al-Asad overnment in Syria to fight the rebels. (Report, 2013)

### **Indications of Russian Invasion of Ukraine**

On 17th July, 2013 near the Russian coast of the Sea of Azov, which is considered internal water of both Russia and Ukraine, the Russian Coast Guard Petrol collided (deliberately according to the Ukrainians) with a

Ukrainian fishing vessel killing four of them and one captured by the Russians. (Post, 2013)

In 2013, Ukraine both pursued an observer status in the Russian-led Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia, as well as persisted with moving along with Association Agreement with the European Union, scheduled to be signed in November, 2013. (Economics, 2021) On 14th August, 2013, the Russian Customs Service stopped all goods coming from Ukraine. (Kyiv Post, 2013) Some politicians saw that as a start of a trade war against Ukraine to prevent Ukraine from signing a trade agreement with the European Union. (Economist, 2013)

In September, 2013, Russia warned Ukraine that if it went ahead with a planned agreement on free Trade with the European Union, it would face financial catastrophe and possibly collapse of the state. It is interesting that Russia have been reiterating this threat of extinction of Ukraine time and again. (Guardian T. , 2013)

On 21st November, 2013, the then Ukrainian President Yanukovich suspended agreement for signing agreement to seek closer ties regarding economic relations with Russia and on December 17, 2013 Russia and Ukraine signed a treaty in this aspect amidst massive protests in Ukraine against this agreement and for closer ties with the European Union. (News, 2013)

In the meanwhile, the Crimean Crisis was unfolding in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in the aftermath of the February 2014 Ukrainian Revolution in which the government of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was ousted. Protests were staged mainly by the ethnic Russians who opposed the events in Kyiv and wanted close ties or integration with Russia, in addition to expanded authority or possible independence for Crimea. On 27th February, 2014, unmarked military men wearing masks seized a number of important buildings in Crimea including the Parliament building and the two airports. Under drive, the Supreme Council of Crimea dismissed the autonomous republic's government.

(Reuters, 2014)

Ukraine accused Russia of intervening in Ukraine's internal affairs while the Russian side officially denied such claims. In response to the crisis, the Ukrainian Parliament requested to adhere to the Budapest Memorandum to settle disputes but on 1st March, 2014, without declaration of war, the Russian Parliament granted the Russian President Vladimir Putin the authority to use military force in Ukraine. (The Telegraph, 2014) In mid-March, 2014, after a disputed local referendum, Russia recognised Crimea as a sovereign state and proceeded to formally annex the peninsula. (BBC News, 2014) This was followed by a series of claims and counterclaims over the Crimean question. On 15th April, 2014, the Verkhovna Rada declared the autonomous region of Crimea and Sevastopol to be under provisional occupation by the Russian military. (Service, 2019)

Military clashes between pro-Russian rebels backed by Russian military and the armed forces of Ukraine began in the Donbass region in April, 2014. On 5th September, 2014 the Ukrainian Government and representatives of the self proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic signed a tentative truce. But fighting erupted in January, 2015. In February, 2015 another new ceasefire agreement operated around mid-February, 2015 but it failed to stop the fighting.

Russia has been accused by NATO and Ukraine of engaging in direct military operations to support the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic. Russia initially denied this. (BBC News, 2014) but in December, 2015, Russia finally admitted it's involvement. (Guardian, 2013)

In February, 2015, Ukraine ended a 1997 agreement that Russians could enter Ukraine with internal ID instead of travel passport. (Times T. M., 2015) In May, 2015, Ukraine suspended military cooperation with Russia that was in place since 1993. (Today, 2015) In November, 2015, Ukraine closed its airspace to all Russian military and civilian aircraft. (News, 2015) Russia imposes tariff on Ukrainian goods from January, 2016 as Ukraine joins the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with the

European Union. (Journal, 2015) In February, 2017, the Ukrainian Government banned commercial imports of all types of books from Russia. (BBC News, 2015)

In March 2018, the Ukrainian border guards detained in the Sea of Azov, the Russian flagged Crimean registered fishing boat Nord accusing the crew of trespassing the border, which was under temporary occupation. (Agency U. I., 2018) As a counter to this, in November 2018, Russia fired upon and seized three Ukrainian navy vessels and imprisoned it's 24 sailors in Moscow. (Times F. , 2019) 11th July, 2019, the newly elected Ukrainian President Valodymyr Zelensky held a telephonic conversation with the Russian President Vladimir Putin following the former's appeal to the Russian leader to take part in talks with the Ukraine, the United States, Germany, France, and United Kingdom in Minsk.

### **Russia Invaded Ukraine**

As part of the ongoing war in the Donbas, fighting escalated in the first quarter of 2020-2021. In late March, 2021, it was reported that large movements of military equipment were occurring in various areas within Russia, with the equipment headed towards Crimea, the Rostov and Voronez oblasts. Despite reassurances from a Russian government official that the troops pose no threat, a Russian government official stated that Russian forces would act to defend the Russian citizens in Ukraine and any escalation would lead to the beginning of the end of Ukraine. (News, 2021) From 7th to 9th December, 2022 there were verbal spat between the U.S. and Russia. (Reuters, 2021) On 21st February, 2022, Russia officially recognised the Luhansk People's Republic and Donbask People's Republic. Although Russia had repeatedly denied of any plans to invade Ukraine, on 24th February, 2022, Russia finally attacked Ukraine. (Times N. Y., 2022)

The war in Ukraine has prompted the greatest rethinking of America's foreign policy since Sept. 11, 2001. The Russian Invasion has bonded America to Europe more closely at any time since the cold war and deepened ties with Asian allies and it has re-energized Washington's

leadership role in a democratic World. But the new focus on Russia will come with hard choices and internal contradictions similar to ones that defined the U.S. policy during the cold war. The attack by Russia on its neighbour has become a prism through which nearly all American foreign policy decisions will be cast for the foreseeable future. In the near term Russia's aggression is sure to invigorate the U.S. President Mr. Joe Biden's global fight for democracy against autocracies like Moscow, making vivid the threats to fledgling democracies like Ukraine. Yet three increasingly authoritarian NATO nations Poland, Hungary & Turkey will play key roles in the coalition aiding Kyiv.(Ibid)

The war lends urgency to Mr. Biden's climate change agenda, reinforcing the need for more reliance on renewable clean energy over the fossil fuels that fill Russian coffers. It also creates a powerful new incentive for the United States to find ways of prying President Ji Jinping of China away from Mr. Putin, the Russian President, who is likely counting on diplomatic and economic lifelines from Mr. Jinping amid crushing western sanctions. But some administrative officials see China as a lost cause and prefer to treat China and Russia as committed partners, hoping that might galvanize policies among Asian and European allies to contain them both. 64. While some experts warn that a renewed focus on Europe will inevitably divert attention from Asia, several top White House officials say that the United States can capitalise on how the war has convinced some Asian governments that they need to work more closely with the West to build up a global ideological front to defend democracy.(Ibid) Mr. Biden sought to rebuild American alliances but did so largely in the name of confronting China. The Russian invasion has expanded his mission dramatically and urgently, setting the stage for a seismic geopolitical shift that would pit the United States and its allies against China and Russia once if they form an entrenched anti-western bloc.

Recently, the leaders of Poland, Czech Republic and Slovenia headed to Kyiv to express European Union's unequivocal support and offer financial

help to Ukraine. The visit was kept secret until the last moment as fighting rages around the Ukrainian capital. Israel, the closest ally of the U.S. in the Middle-East, has also staked out a neutral position on the Ukraine war, largely because of Russia's presence in the region. In Europe, Russia's invasion has supercharged the Biden administration's effort to restore the morale of a NATO alliance that Mr. Trump undermined. (Ibid)

### **Role of India**

However, India, the most populous U.S. partner in the so-called quad coalition of democracies in Asia has so far refrained from condemning Russia's invasion because of decades-old security ties with Moscow. That stance undermines Biden's insistence that democratic nations band together against autocracies. But it is the other Asian giant China, that presents the biggest diplomatic challenge for the United States. China is Russia's most powerful partner and their bond has strengthened in recent years. Even if Russia decimates Ukraine, China has signaled that it stands by Moscow by issuing anti-U.S. declarations and amplifying Kremlin's propaganda and conspiracy theories. (Ibid)

Turning to India, she has been in a peculiar position as far as her foreign policy is concerned. It is well known that India under Jawaharlal Nehru was a pioneer in forming the Non-aligned Movement or NAAM, subsequently giving rise to Third World in the era of Cold War which made its presence felt till the 1990s. It is to be noted that after 1990s, especially after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there was a shift in perception about socialism and as a result, India in order to open up her economy turned to the West, which resulted in India's closeness towards the U.S. This was all the more because after the break up off the Soviet Union, Russia wanted exchanges to be done in dollars and wanted to sell goods at market rates. This tilt towards the West was all the more prominent since 2013 onwards. But recent developments in Ukraine may force India to revert to its stance of Non-Alignment. The advantage that has India reaped during the cold war era was due to the presence of the Third World of which India

was the leader. In the Ukraine crisis, India's neutral position has gained praise from all over the world.

Moreover, India needs crude oil which she imports from other countries. Already Russia offering crude oil at a discount rate to India. (Statesman, 2022) But due to the sanctions imposed by the West on Russia India is treading a careful path. Again, most of the spare parts of the Indian military come from Russia be it aircraft or tank. If India do not get them India's defence preparedness will be in jeopardy. The war has proved another point - you must be prepared or do everything by yourself - not to depend on others. Further, India have two belligerent neighbours in China and Pakistan who are breathing down the neck. In this context, India will have to carefully put her steps. So, it is to be seen whether India maintains Non-Alignment or not for her own interest. Not only this she needs her voice to be heard, to have an impact on the world just like the old days of a bygone era.

## **CONCLUSION**

At the end, it could be said that self reliance and internal stability should be the key factors dealing with future crisis in the international arena. It is true that there is no word such as neutrality in the dictionary of modern age international relations still if we can take up the example of NAM of the cold war era and the way India benefitted from it, a chance should be given to the neutral world. India although lately have been passing through a dilemma of which side to take up especially in the face of a looming threat from China and Pakistan but the role she played lately in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is praiseworthy. Moreover, self reliance is another factor which will play a key factor in determining future relationship both economically and politically and India is striving towards it. It is to be noted that Ukraine is among the largest global exporters of wheat, sunflower, barley, rapeseed & maize. After the outbreak of the crisis, India is in a golden position to export these items along with wheat and cotton and thus revamp its economy. India could provide the west with a



new vision of diplomacy and non-violence but that depends on how strong her economy is. So self reliance and strong economy play a big role in an estranged world. But how far will she be able to sustain it is another question as many other factors including technology and cost are involved in it. Also, how the West and the U.S. stand up to the occasion will be another interesting question. But it is only for the time to tell.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Agency, I. N. (2009). *Ukraine*. Interfax.
- Agency, U. I. (2018). Indian info. Ukrainian Independent Information Agency.
- Agency, U. I. (2008). *Russia-Ukraine Relations*. unian.net.
- Agency, U. I. (2008, May 8). *Ukrain's Perception about Russia*. Retrieved January 27, 2023, from Ukrainian Independent News Agency.
- Archive, R. G. *Nuclear Legacy*. Russian Government Archive.
- Aron, L. (2008). Russia's Next Rarget Could Be Ukraine. *The Wall Street Journal* .
- Basdin, M. (2015). *Between Europe And Asia*. Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press.
- Charles, J. (2004). *Angry Mood In Eastern Ukraine*. BBC News.
- Conference, P. (2004). Talks with Spanish Prime Minister and Russian Presidential Administrator. *Talks* .
- Economics, P. I. (2021).
- Economist, T. (2013).
- Edition, T. C. (2000). *Kievan Rus*. Moscow: The Encyclopedia.
- Europe, R. F. (2010). *Holdomor Famine*. Radio Liberty.
- Guardian. (2013).
- Guardian, T. (2013).
- Harrison, P. (2009). *Russia Suspicious of EU-Ukraine Gas Supply*. Reuters.
- Hopkins, J. (2021). *Russian Invasion of the Crimean Peninsula*. John Hopkins University.
- Jain, S. (2022, May 18). *Russia's Invasion of Ukraine*. Retrieved January 26, 2023, from The Kootneeti: <https://thekootneeti.in/2022/05/18/russias-invasion-of-ukraine-a-historical-prespectives-and-its-impacts-on-india/>

- Journal, T. W. (2015).
- Molchanov, M. A. (2002). *Political Culture and National Identity In Russian-Ukraine Relations*. Press: Texas A & M University Press.
- Motyl, J. A. (2009). *The Key to Kyiv*. Foreign Affairs.
- News, B. (2013).
- News, B. (2015).
- News, B. (2021).
- News, B. (2005). *Russia-Ukraine Relations*. BBC News.
- News, B. (2008). *Russia-Ukraine Relations*. BBC News.
- Newsru.com. (2007, May 11). *Ukraine-Russian Relations*. Retrieved January 27, 2023
- Norris, R. S. (1992, January 16). The Soviet Nuclear . *Arms Control Today* .
- Post, K. (2013). *Invasion*.
- Report, S. (2013). *Rebels*.
- Reuters. (2014).
- Reuters. (2021).
- Service, I.-A. N. (2019). news.bihaprabha.com India-Asia News Service.
- Shambarov, V. (2007). *The Cossacks: The History of the Free Rus*. Moscow: Algorithm Expo.
- Specter, M. (2007, June 1). Setting Past Aside. *The New York Times* .
- Statesman. (2022).
- TheTelegraph. (2014). Telegraph.co.uk.
- Times, F. (2019).
- Times, L. A. (1991). *The Treaty*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times.
- Times, N. Y. (2022). New York Times.
- Times, T. H. (2022). *Ukraine-Nato Alliance*.
- Times, T. M. (2015).
- Today, U. (2015).
- Vasylenko, V. (2009, December 15). On Assurances Without Guarantees In a Shelved Document. *The Day* .
- Wikileaks. (2013).
- Wikileaks. (2008). *Ukraine-Russia Relations*.
- Wikileaks, T. (2008).
- Zaborsky, V. (1995). *Crimea And The Black Sea Fleet*. Moscow.