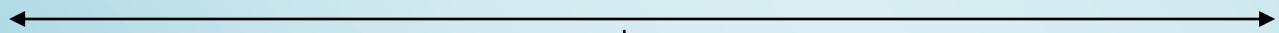


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INDO – RUSSIAN RELATIONS-ALL TIME WEATHER FRIENDS

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INTRODUCTION

Before the opening of Indo-Russian Relations, a well known saying that “old is gold” is best suited for Indian-Russian Relations. Since independence to till now Russian stand towards India seems to run in a smooth track. Both countries understand each other importance. India and Russia (Formerly Soviet Union) have shared a warm and close relationship for a long time India. Russia friendship began in the 1950’s and represented the most successful attempts of the Soviet Union to foster closer relations with third world countries. The study of Indo-Russian Relations can be understood into three broad headings and these are Political, Economic and Defence.

POLITICAL RELATIONS:

The study of Indo-Soviet relations provides a historical background and also help to understand the similarities and the changes that takes place in India. The relations seems to be warm when the first P.M Jawaharlal Nehru visited to Soviet Union and in turn Khrushchev’s return visit to India. The first P.M of India, Jawaharlal Nehru was deeply touched by the planned economic development of the Soviet Union. India was the first among the colonial countries to join the international community as a sovereign state¹. After the end of second war, there emerges the two superblocks one led by western block also called U.S. Blocks and other led by USSR or eastern block². The ties between Indo-Russia Soviet Union did not led to an immediate development in Political, Economic and defuse cooperation etc in the initial years. India demonstrated in the UN and elsewhere that its policy of Non-alignment was truly independent and projected toward the development of peace³. This resulted dynamic shift of soviet policy towards India. Soviet Union regarded non-alignment as integral component of the competitive struggle between East and West rather than a disengaged influence on this struggle. The American – Pakistan axis grew to a new height, in 1948 Pakistan offered base to America in Gilgit area of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (Pok). For the Soviet Union, the American presence in the South Asian region, close to its borders in Gilgit area, was a threat to its security. In 1959, strong strains emerged in India-China relations. The emergence of strong Sino-India difference over the border question led to the deterioration in their relations. Both began to accuse each other of imperialistic designs. A general feeling of apprehension soon arouse in India about the possible Soviet reactions to the dispute between a communist and ally country: China and a non-communist country India, it is not possible for the Soviet Union to remain neutral and it would naturally support China. However to the surprise of many observers, Soviet Union adopted a line of neutrality⁴. Soviet Union adopted neutrality even when it know that any public expression of neutrality can put another element of strain in its already aggravated relation with China. Sino-Soviet relations had started deteriorating from 1956 onwards with this development in its relations with China; the Soviet Union started making greater efforts to strengthen relations with India, one of the important country in Asia. Further Indo-Soviet Union relations during 1980-1989

period remained warm and cordial. They were characterized by frequent exchange of visits by leaders and officials of the two countries. Glasnot (a policy of political openness) and Perestroika (a policy of restructuring of the economy) were the two policies launched in Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev⁵. End of the Soviet Union however, altered the international scenario completely. There also occurred a fundamental transformation in the international position of Russia. Russia founded itself suddenly reduced to a regional power. Economic chaos and political uncertainty at the international level further compounded its predicament. The search for new friends in international arena led to Russia to make a good deal of shift of emphasis in her foreign policy⁶. The changing perception in the Russian foreign policy towards South Asia was evident in November 1991 when Soviet Union caused shock and consternation in India by supporting a joint Pakistan-Bangladesh resolution in the Disarmament Committee of the United Nations General Assembly favoring declaration of South Asia as a nuclear-weapons-free zone. The Soviet Union opposed on such a resolution in the past. Further Alexander Rutskoi, Russian Vice President during his visit to Pakistan in December 1991, announced a very significant change in his country's stand on Kashmir by saying that Kashmir issue should be decided under United Nations auspices and in accordance with its resolution. This was a clear negation of Russia's earlier stand on the Kashmir issue when it used to emphasize on the resolution of the Kashmir issue bilaterally without any third party mediation. Despite this, the pro-western drift in Russia's foreign policy could not allowed to go out of hand by India, as Russia still remained a significant factor in India's foreign and economic relations as well as its defence preparedness. President Boris Yeltsin supported India on three issues without mincing words. First, he supported India on the issue of Kashmir holding it to be an integral part of India and pledged to stand by it in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and other international organizations. Second, he assured India of Russia's space cooperation and supply of cryogenic engines despite the western pressure. Third, on the issue of nuclear proliferation he understood the Indian position⁷. He did not raise this issue during the course of his talks with the Indian leaders. Yevgeny Primakov supported India's claim to be a permanent member in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Yevgeny Primakov subscribed to a joint declaration which stated, "Russia considers India, an influential member of the international community, to be a strong and appropriate candidate for permanent membership of an expanded United Nations Security Council (UNSC)." Russia was thus the first among the major powers to openly support India's candidacy for a permanent seat. Vladimir Putin after coming into power in May 2000 put forward the policy of former Minister Yevgeny Primakov. The foreign policy concept reasserted Russia's position as a great power and one of the most influential centres of the modern world. The foreign policy concept rejected the unipolar world order and expressed Russian's desire to achieve a multipolar system of international relations and also to strengthen international institutions like the United Nations⁸. The west remained important for Russia's foreign policy matters. According to the new foreign policy concept, "Asia is acquiring great and ever increasing significance in foreign policy of the Russian Federation." In the second presidential term of V. Putin, Russia abandoned its goal of joining the west and returned to its options of behaving as an independent great power. V. Putin restarted the political and economic authority of the Russian state as well as self respect after the disarray of the Boris Yeltsin Years. The result of V. Putin's efforts was that Russia became with China, India and Brazil, one of the fastest growing economic of the world⁹. Vladimir Putin visited India in October 2000. His very first visit to India gave a new thrust and purpose to India – Russia relations. Vladimir Putin described himself as the closest, dearest and best friend of India. In order to revitalize political contacts, India and Russia decided to convene annual summit level meetings and regular

bilateral consultations on issues of mutual concern. Russia who had also been facing the menace of terrorism offered its support to United States in its fighting against international terrorism. Vladimir Putin termed the terrorists menace “plague of the 21st century”¹⁰. Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s visit to Russia came in the background of this new anti – terrorist struggle. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s November 2001 visit to Russia, resulted in further deepening of close relations between India and Russia. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on the eve of Vladimir Putin’s second visit to India , described Vladimir Putin as a trusted friend and noted that “ our personal relations help deepen mutual relations between our two countries “. Vladimir Putin said that India and Russia share common views on the key issues in global politics Then, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Russia in December 2005 for annual summit meeting with President Vladimir Putin. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told the reporters that “India – Russia relations is such that although this visit is a landmark , it is only one landmark in a long journey that the two countries will make together and which shall be of value and benefit to both. Dmitry Medvedev became the President of Russia in May 2008. Dmitry Medvedev appointed Vladimir Putin as Prime – Minister of Russia. Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin worked in tandem and Russia’s domestic and foreign policy pursued during Dmitry Medvedev period contained both leader’s views. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev came on his first official visit to India in December 2008. Dmitry Medvedev was the first foreign head of the state to visit India after the November 26 terror strikes in Mumbai in India. Hours after Russian President Dmitry Medvedev ended his three day visit to India , Russia’s ambassador to India Vyacheslav Trubnikov told the reporters that Russia and India would hold a meeting of their Joint Working Group on countering terrorism in New Delhi President Pratibha Patil visited Russia in September 2009 to discuss India – Russia bilateral relationship with President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. President Pratibha Patil said that India’s relationship with Russia was built on solid foundations encompassing many areas of cooperation for mutual benefit.

BRICS SUMMIT – 2014:

6TH Bricks summit was held Fortaleza Brasil. The Argentine President Cristina Kirchner was a special guest of the Summit. From the Indian sides P.M. Narendra Damodardas Modi 15th and current Prime Minister of India who led BJP in 2014 general election and got great victory with full majority (last time that majority was in 1984) was present. The group signed UD \$ 100 billion New development Bank and a reserve currency pool worth an additional US \$ 100 billion. Russian President said “The summit that it sought to reduce dependency on the U.S Dollar and strengthen the rule of international law. Also mentioning that Chinese President said to have told Narendra Modi that China was willing to consider expending the Shanghai cooperation organization to include India as a full member at the 2014 SCO Summit.

SCO SUMMIT 2014- SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION:

The SCO 2014 summit was held at Dushanbe city in Tajikistan and it is the 13th annual Summit. During this summit, the security was among the top issues and reached a consensus on fighting against separatism, extremism, terrorism and also safeguard regional peace and security. The attending delegates includes President of Tajikistan Emomulii Rahmon, China President Xi Jinping, President of Kazakistan Nursultan B.Nazarbayev, President of Krygzstan Almazbek Atambayev, Vladimir Putin President of Russia, President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov and Foreign Minister of India Sushma Swaraj. Since India, Iran, Pakistan and Mongolia were due to

become a full member at the 11-12 Sept. 2014, thereby upgrading their observe member status. The decision was made at the foreign minister meeting earlier this year. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was told of China acceptance of expansion at the 6th Brics summit.

ECONOMIC AND DEFENCE RELATIONS:

Economic ties are one of important strand in the Indo-Russian strategic partnership. Indo-Russian economic cooperation has not been commensurate with their mutual potentials. After independence India inherited a backward agrarian economy. The main problem of India after independence was to over colonial backwardness, India founded that there was serious shortage of productive capital, industrial machinery, sphere parts etc. India moved towards western for aid but expectations for western economic aid were matched with only partial success¹¹. So India turned towards Soviet Union for economic aid. Soviet Union helped India in establishing basic and heavy industries. Soviet Union Supplied machines, equipments, technical knowledge and certain raw materials for setting up new plants or running the existing ones¹². The Soviet Union Signed trade parts with India in 1949 and 1951 agreeing to supply wheat in exchange for tea, tobacco, jute and other products. But the volume of trades between the two countries remained insignificant. Soviet union economic assistance to India was available in the form of credits at a nominal rate of interest. The most important characteristics of Soviet Union's economic assistance was that these credits were not repayable in hard currency but in Indian rupees. India was the largest trade partner of the Soviet Union among the developing countries. It position was seventh among the trade partners of the Soviet Union outside the council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) fraternity. The demise of Soviet Union marked serious problems in Economic sphere. The Enterprises in India face great problem and also feel the uncertainty and hardship¹³. After disintegration, there includes controversy over Rupee – Rouble exchange rate and repayment of India's debt to former Soviet Union. India had only \$ 12 billion debt but Russia claimed \$ 16 billion debt. Indian government requested Russia for a realistic rupee-rouble exchange rate. The central issue was the fixing of the new exchange rate between rupee and rouble. Both these issues had to be resolved in the context of the rapid decline in the value of the rouble in relation to both the United States dollar and the Indian rupee. Russia wanted India to adhere to the old rate of foreign exchange conversion to which India did not agreed on monetary, economic and political grounds¹⁴. The two sides agreed that 63 percent of the debt would be repaid over the next twelve years at an interest rate of 2.4 percent using the exchange rate of 1 rouble to 19.9 rupees which existed on 1 January 1990. This was expected to reduce India's debt by 30 percent. The remaining 37 percent of the debt was to be repaid over 45 years with no interest at the January 1992 exchange rate of 1 rouble to 31.57 rupees. Repayment of this debt was to be in Indian goods. During the 1997 visit of Indian Foreign Minister I.K. Gujral to Russia, the two sides arrived at a broad agreement about how to use the rupee fund. India-Russia economic and trade relations witnessed improvement from 1993 onwards; still the level of India-Russia economic and trade ties remained far below the possibilities and the size of the markets and economies of the two countries. The whole decade was very difficult period for Russia's economy. It was not only that Russia was transforming its economic system from centrally planned economy to a market economy but this transformation was also taking place under a period of permanent crisis. As a result, the Russian economy was already reduced to half of what it was in 1990, when another financial and economic crisis hit the economy in August 1998. The Russian Gross Domestic product (GDP) declined by 40-50 % between 1989 and 1997. Another equally important reason for the weak India-Russia economic relations was the changed market conditions in

both the countries due to the adoption of the policy of economic liberalization by India and Russia in early 1990s. Following efforts were made during this period (1996-1999) to boost India-Russia economic relations. On 9 August 1996, in Russia a special India - Russia business council was formed. The Russian Minister for Foreign Economic Relations, Oleg Davydov was reported to have chalked out a plan in January 1996 for boosting Russian exports to India. In February 1996, 20 Indian and Russian banks agreed to evolve a mechanism to facilitate import and export mechanism between the two countries. During the visit of Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov to India in December 1998, new bilateral agreements to step up trade and technical relations were signed. The supply of Russian arms to India was reduced drastically and became fitful and erratic creating serious bottlenecks and problems for India's armed forces. In the early years of the successor Russian Federation, this was a matter of serious concern to the Indian government and its military brass. On September 1991, Minister of State for Defence, Krishna Kumar told the Lok Sabha that the Indian government had received signals from the Soviet Union that the entire gamut of the India's relations with the Soviet Union including trade and defence supplies would remain intact. In the new circumstances, political and ideological consideration had receded giving place to economic and business aspects. In March 1992 Russia offered India nuclear powered submarines, MIG-31 aircraft and SU-28 fighter bombers. The Russian Secretary of the State Gennady Burbulis visited India in May 1992. The question of spares parts became especially acute for India's fleet of MIG-29s in early 1992¹⁵. MIGs accounted for about three quarters of the Indian Air Force (IAF). In view of uncertainty on the part of Russia, India tried to find alternative weapon sources and develop defence cooperation with other countries. India approached other arms sellers including the United States, France, Britain and Israel. India had conducted an agreement with the Soviet Union at the beginning of 1991 to gain cryogenic rocket engines and their technology for its space programme. Russian leaders assured India that Russia would execute the agreement signed by the former Soviet Union leadership. The United States exerted pressure on Russia for the India -Russia rocket deal to be cancelled. Russia was equally insistent the sale of equipment and technology for the cryogenic rockets was consistent with the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and that it was prepared to have neutral experts to verify this. Later Russia succumbed to the United States pressure and none other than President Boris Yeltsin himself declared Russia's inability 'to fulfill the contractual obligations due to unforeseen developments'. The receipts from the defence contracts were in hard currency, in Russia's difficult economic situation this was a highly attractive market. Hence, up-gradation of defence relations was high on Boris Yeltsin's agenda¹⁶. A military and technological agreement was signed by India and Russia. During the visit of Indian Prime Minister Deve Gowda to Russia in March 1997, Russia offered India a new air defence system and a \$ 10 billion military deal. In the immediate aftermath of India's nuclear tests, despite the United States pressure, Yevgeny Adamov, Russian Minister of Atomic Energy signed a deal in New Delhi on 21 June 1998 to build two light water 1000 megawatt nuclear reactors at Kundankulam in Tamil Nadu. Significant agreements were reached between India and Russia during the visit of Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov to India in December 1998. During his visit, cross century Indo - Russian defence relations were finalized. Described as 'Cooperation 2010 Document', it envisaged partnership in research, development and joint production of sophisticated equipment besides incorporating other defence areas¹⁷. Under the integrated Long-Term Programme of Scientific and Technical Cooperation (ILTP) signed during President Putin's visit to India in Oct. 2000, both countries undertook more than 150 joint Scientific projects, which could provide relatively cheap technologies in various field from biomedicine, to semi-conductors' computer chips, new materials and energy source¹⁸. In February 2001, India

and Russia signed an agreement under which Indian company ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) was to invest heavily in Russia's Sakhalin oil and gas areas. It was the biggest Indian investment abroad. India got a share of 20% in the region. During the visit of Vladimir Putin to India in December 2002, India and Russia signed the joint declaration on strengthening and enhancing economic, scientific and technological cooperation. India and Russia also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on economic, scientific and technological cooperation, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on telecommunications and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on intellectual property rights. The visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Russia in November 2003, India and Russia agreed that the joint declaration on strengthening and enhancing economic, scientific and technological signed during the last summit in December 2002, provides a broad framework as well as roadmap towards revitalization of trade and investment ties. The first India – Russian Inter – Ministerial Consultations on economic issues and World Trade Organization (WTO) were held in India in March 2003, India and Russia agreed to continue with such consultations in Geneva and in each other's capital. Then, visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Russia in December 2005, India and Russia decided to set up a India – Russian Joint Study Group to suggest ways to enhance India – Russia bilateral trade volume to \$ 10 billion by 2010. The first shipment of oil from Sakhalin – 1 (in which Indian company ONGC had invested in 2001) arrived in December 2006. On January 25, 2007, India's company ONGC and Russia's oil company Rosneft signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on setting up of two Joint Working Groups – one each for upstream and downstream activities. The North – South transport corridor: The North – South transport corridor represents the shortest route to Russia from India. The corridor was to shorten the trade route distance between India and Russia and was to pass through Iran. India – Russia defence relationship during Vladimir Putin's period evolved from buyer – seller framework to one involving joint research and development, joint production and marketing of advanced defence technologies. Another hallmark in the relationship is the Indian production of the Su – 30 MKI jet fighters under Russian license for sale to Malaysia. During Vladimir Putin's period, India was the only country with which Russia was engaged in the joint development and production of high – tech and complex weapons systems¹⁹. The joint military exercises are known by the name 'Indra'. India signed its biggest ever defence deal worth \$1.5 billion with Russia for the purchase of the air-craft carrier Admiral Gorshkov in January 2004. The Russian aircraft carrier would replace India's only air – craft carrier, the INS Virat. Defence Ministers of both countries, George Fernandes of India and Sergei Ivanov of Russia, called the deal a "historic landmark" in bilateral relations. The delivery of Admiral Gorshkov air – craft carrier was set for 2008. President Vladimir Putin visited the Bhaba Atomic Research Center (BARC), India's nuclear nerve center. One of the most satisfying and mutual beneficial outcome of the Russian President visit to India was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two countries on intensifying bilateral cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. During the visit of Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Russia in November 2001, India and Russia signed an important civil nuclear agreement under which Russia would help India in building Kudankulam nuclear plant consisting of two units of 1,000 Megawatt each²⁰.



LOOKING AHEAD:

Moreover, with the emergence of New Govt. in New Delhi under the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the foreign policy of India seems to blossom in excellent phase. Modi's policy were appreciated throughout the world. International leader quoted Modi as "Man of action". Modi's slogan "Sab Ka Sath, Sab Ka Vikas" is appreciated by Developed countries like America etc.

HIGHLIGHT OF PUTIN VISIT IN INDIA 11 DEC. 2014.

- Russia will build at least 12 Nuclear reactors in India by 2035 and agreed to manufacture advanced helicopters as both countries signed 20 pacts in Oil, gas, defence, investment and other key sectors.
- Putin wants Indo-Russian trade touch 100 billion dollars a year from present 10 billion dollar.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin vowed to take to a new level as both sides outlined a new vision for nuclear energy cooperation.
- Putin claimed that today Nuclear Power Plant Kudankulam was the World's only nuclear power plant which meets post Fukushima safety requirement.
- Agreement also signed between Russian State Nuclear Company Rosatom and the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) calls for the construction of 10 more reactors for nuclear power plant in India.
- Russian Company, Zaruberhneft signed MOU with Oil India and also Russia Gas gient Gazprom discussed with India GAIL for deliveries of Russian Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and involve ONGC in Oil and Gas hunt in the Arctic.

P.M. Narendra Modi called Russia a “Pillar of Strength” in joint media interaction with Putin. P.M. Modi also mentioned that Russia will remain New Delhi’s “Most Important Defence Partner”.

CONCLUSION:

Indo Russian relations can well be described as “partnership unparalleled in the world”. The relations between India – Soviet Union during year 1947- 1952 marked with indifference. Since India adopted the nonalignment policy, Soviet Union during initial year thought the realization for cooperation with India to counter against the USA and China. Later on, India and China moved against each other and resulted the war in 1962, which in turn created an atmosphere for India to secure support from Soviet Union. The disintegration of the Soviet Union, which brought an end to Cold War, witnessed drastic changes in international politics. Bipolarism was receding to the vanishing point, the spirit of democracy was in upswing and the forces of market economy were in full drive around the world. This change was clearly evident in the speech of the first Russian President, Boris Yeltsin at a special summit meeting of the United Nation Security Council: “We rule out any subordination of foreign policy to ideological doctrines or a self-sufficient policy. Our principles are simple and understandable: the supremacy of democracy, human rights and liberties, legality, and morality. It was during mid of year 1980, India and Soviet created a path of friendly relation. Soviet Union played a crucial role in the industrialization of India. Almost seventy per cent of India’s military imports came from Soviet Union. Russia Federation succeeded the Soviet Union as the main successor state. The industrialized west was the main source of economic assistance that Russia so desperately needed in its difficult transition to market economy. Russia deviated from policy of special relations with India towards developing equal relations with both India and Pakistan. The India-Russia political dialogue at the summit level was interrupted. The volume of India-Russia trade was drastically reduced and the trade between India and Russia virtually collapsed in 1991-1992 because of dispute over the unsettled rupee-rouble exchange rate. The initial years after the Soviet Union disintegration were therefore a period of disappointment and frustration for India. President Boris Yeltsin’s visit to India in January 1993 marked the beginning of a new phase in India-Russia relations. The old India-Soviet Union Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation of 1971 was replaced by a new Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation of 1993. Since the year 2000, both launched a new phase of strategic partnership. The progress in relationship in the fields of trade, nuclear sector, hydrocarbon and energy and defence is the testimony to growing partnership. The Russian resurgence in the present decade also facilitated this partnership. At present, both share a common view point on many regional and international issues such as; Terrorism, reforms of the UN and other International financial institutions, stabilizations of situation and evolving architecture of regional cooperation in Asia Pacific region. Both share common platform in BRIC, RIC (Russia, India and China) , East Asia Summit and G-20. Russia will continue to remain a significant factor for India defence needs in the coming decades. India – Russia space cooperation has grown with India and Russia signing agreements on India’s access to the navigational signals of the Russian global navigational satellite system, Glonass. The two countries are also cooperating in the joint satellite project ‘YouthSat’ and Russian help will be available for India’s moon mission ‘Chandrayan’. India – Russia civil nuclear cooperation has registered progress with the signing of agreements on construction by Russia of many nuclear reactors in Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu. Yet, India has to play a balancing role in relationship between Russia on the one hand and her relationship with the USA on the other.

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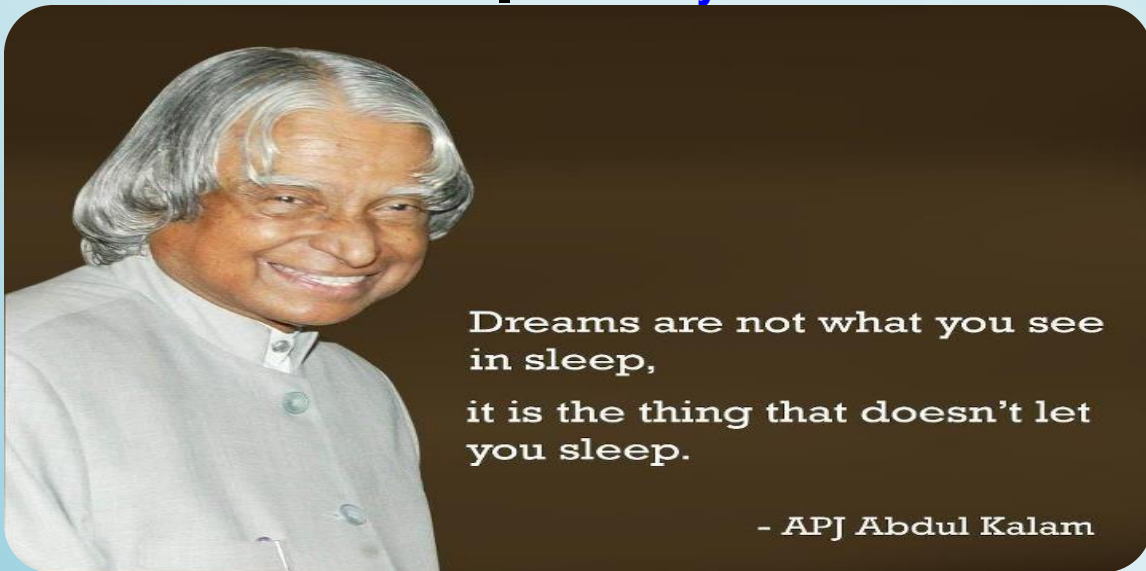
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Dreams are not what you see
in sleep,
it is the thing that doesn't let
you sleep.

- APJ Abdul Kalam