India and Central Europe
Perceptions, Perspectives, Prospects

Edited by
Rajendra K. Jain

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Dedicated to
Sunita, Ruchika, Anekant and Jigyasa

Contents

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Abbreviations

AAI	Airports Authority of India
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AJT	Advance Jet Trainer
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BBC	British Broadcast Corporation
BEML	Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. (BEML)
BHEL	Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL)
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
CEECs	Central and East European countries
CEIF	Central Europe India Forum
CFE	Conventional Armed Forces in Europe
CIH	Central Institute of Hindi
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
COP	Conference of Parties
CPI	Communist Party of India (CPI)
CPI-M	Communist Party of India-Marxist
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
DRDO	Defence Research and Development Organization
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FOCs	Foreign Office Consultations

FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSQR	General Staff Qualitative Requirements
HICC	Hungarian Information and Cultural Centre
HZDS	Movement for a Democratic Slovakia
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
ICEBF	India-Central Europe Business Forum
ICSC	International Commissions of Supervision and Control
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICWA	Indian Council of World Affairs
IDEB	International Defence Exhibition Bratislava
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces
INSTC	International North-South Transport Corridor
ISIS	Indian School of International Studies
ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
JDC	Joint Defence Committee
JEC	Joint Economic Committee
JNU	Jawaharlal Nehru University
JWG	Joint Working Group
LSD	*Lok Sabha Debates*
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOA	Memorandum of Association
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
MW	Mega Watt
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRI	Non-Resident Indian
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
OCI	Overseas Citizenship of India
OECD	Organisation of Cooperation and Development
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
PIO	Persons of Indian Origin
PNE	Peaceful Nuclear Explosion
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PSP	Praja Socialist Party
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SS	Second Series
SWJN	*Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*
TCS	Tata Consultancy Services
TOI	*Times of India*
TSI	Three Seas Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference of Trade and Development
V4	Visegrad 4
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	World Trade Organization

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Rajendra K. Jain

From the mid-1950s till the end of the Cold War, India's relations with the Central and East European Countries (CEECs) were an adjunct of Indo-Soviet relations. Having been let down by the West, India turned to the Soviet Union in 1955 as a partner in economic and industrial cooperation. The CEECs followed suit after Moscow offered economic, financial and technical assistance for large public sector projects. There was no serious conflict of interest and almost identical views on most international issues. The CEECs also did not have any colonial hangovers and were indifferent to some of the issues that troubled West European lobbies when dealing with India such as human rights, Kashmir, treatment of minorities and so on (Sibal, 2019: 78).

Central Europe figured in parliamentary debates only on critical issues which received wide publicity. During the relatively well-informed debates on the Hungarian uprising (1956) and the Czechoslovak crisis (1968), the Nehru and Indira Gandhi's government faced substantial criticism. No debates on Central Europe took place subsequently in the Indian Parliament though references to individual countries did resurface periodically. The West usually gave no credit either to the Indian Parliament

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or to Indian leaders for 'speaking plainly, though in guarded language, on Hungary or Czechoslovakia. The restraint was dictated by the need to be helpful', but it was not 'appreciated by either side' (Damodaran, 2000: 114–115).

In the post-Cold War era, India and the CEECs viewed each other from opposite directions: the Visegrad 4 looked towards the European Union and India focused on its key partners in Western Europe. As Central Europeans aligned their foreign policy with those of the EU, India and the CEECs began to have divergent worldviews and differences on how they perceived the world and the challenges that confronted it. There was little that brought them together. Indian foreign policy took time to adjust to the changing realities in Central and Eastern Europe. Mutual indifference led to slim political interaction and meagre people-to-people ties. For nearly a decade-and-a-half (1990–2004), Central European countries concentrated on gaining admission in the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Their preoccupation with a 'return to Europe' and transatlantic relations left them little time or interest in India. New Delhi too showed little economic and strategic interest in the region given the radical transformation of the socio-economic and geopolitical milieu in Central Europe. Mutual neglect for nearly two decades led to a sharp decline in political contacts as well as people-to-people ties. The communist glue had withered away though some observers felt that clichés about post-communist societies in the older generation still persisted in India.

The CEECs began to rediscover India after they gained membership of the European Union in 2004 and more consciously after the 2008 financial crisis. India also took time to recalibrate its policies. Today, India and Central Europe have a convergence of views on issues like terrorism, reform of the United Nations and non-proliferation. There were however differences over Western interventions in Iraq (2003), Libya (2011), crises in Syria and Ukraine in which India had no geopolitical interest or stake.

Outline of Chapters

India's postwar relationship with Central Europe, argues Pramit Pal Chaudhuri in the second chapter, has undergone three distinct phases. The first phase, during the communist period, was a subset of India's relations with the Soviet Union. The collapse of communism left New

Delhi with almost no points of engagement with the newly democratic Central Europe. This was compounded by the fact both India and Central Europe began a process of reforming their socialist-oriented economies that continued through the 1990s. The early 2000s saw the beginnings of a new economic relationship with a few Indian firms beginning to invest in countries like Poland. Today, Indian firms and their European subsidiaries are both large investors and have a footprint in almost all Central European states. The combination of Brexit, the rise of China and India's expanding geoeconomic interests have led the Narendra Modi government to contemplate relations with Central Europe through a more strategic lens though New Delhi is doing what it can in terms of its capabilities.

Chapter 3 examines Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's interwar and postwar perceptions of Central Europe. It describes how the geographical scope of the Central Europe Division of the Ministry of External Affairs gradually expanded to comprise thirty countries at present. It goes on to examine Indian perceptions of Central Europe in the early 1990s and discusses how Central Europe figured in parliamentary debates. It assesses the changing perspectives of the region by India's two leading corporate chambers. The chapter provides a succinct overview of Indian scholarly literature on economic and political relations as well as the evolution and current state of teaching of contemporary Central Europe at Indian universities. In conclusion, the chapter examines New Delhi's proactive re-engagement with Central Europe with greater vigour and the Indian commentariat's perceptions of Chinese inroads in Central Europe.

Chapter 4 discusses political relations between India and Czechoslovakia from 1947 to 1992. It outlines how the Czech Republic's preoccupation with securing membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union left it with little time or political interest for nearly a decade in cultivating relations with India. It goes on to examine renewed efforts by the Czech Republic to reach out to Asia in order to enhance trade and foreign direct investment and the broad contours of the relationship in the 2000s. It discusses how Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic figured in Lok Sabha) debates/questions from 1947 to 2019 since the agitated debates over the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. After making a detailed examination of defence cooperation, the chapter discusses how Czechoslovakia has been perceived by Indian scholars and the commentariat, Czech

perceptions of India as well as cultural relations between the two countries.

Chapter 5 examines the vicissitudes of political and economic relations between India and Hungary during the Cold War. It critically assesses the changes in the relationship since the early 1990s and the upswing in relations with Hungary's 'Eastern Opening Strategy' (2011). It examines parliamentary (Lok Sabha) debates since Independence and highlights how Hungary figured in parliamentary questions and debates over the years. It discusses Indian perceptions of Hungary in one of the leading English national dailies as well as Indian scholarly literature. It makes a detailed study of defence cooperation as well as cultural relations between India and Hungary. In conclusion, the chapter assesses prospects for the future.

The next chapter examines the initial Indian perceptions of Poland during the 1930s and the 1950s and goes on to discuss the vicissitudes of political relations during the Cold War and the perceptions of Poland in Indian scholarly literature. The chapter assesses the transformation of the relationship in the post-Cold War era. It discusses Polish efforts to reach out to Asia at the turn of the millennium and the motivations and impact of the *Polish Strategy towards Non-European Developing Countries* (2004). It goes on to examine the relationship in the 2000s and how Poland figured in the Modi government's renewed re-engagement with Central and Eastern Europe. The chapter examines Lok Sabha debates from 1947 to 2019 to highlight how Poland figured in parliamentary questions and debates since the Polish uprising of 1956. It critically examines the nature, problems and prospects of defence cooperation between India and Poland. After evaluating Polish and Indian perceptions of each other, the chapter discusses prospects for the future.

Chapter 7 examines Indian perceptions of the Velvet Divorce, which led to the establishment of two separate states of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Politically, Slovakia has remained largely peripheral to Indian foreign policy concerns because of its small size, low volumes of trade with visits being confined to Deputy Ministers. It discusses the slow evolution of the relationship in the 2000s and during the Modi years (2014–2020) and presents a brief overview of economic and trade relations as well as FDI whose high point is a £1 billion investment by the Tata Group's UK subsidiary in the 'Detroit' of the region. It examines Lok Sabha debates

to illustrate now marginally Slovakia figured in the parliamentary deliberations since 1993. It discusses defence cooperation as well as cultural relations between India and Slovakia.

After a brief historical review of economic relations between India and Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, Karina Jędrzejowska and Anna Wróbel examine the legal framework for current cooperation and assess the salient features of their economic and trade relations over the past decade. The lack of a more coherent Indian strategy, they argue, has enabled China to surpass India in the region. In conclusion, the chapter identifies potential areas for enhanced trade.

Given its population of over 60 million, highly developed human capital with relatively cheap cost of labour, and its strategic location, Central Europe presents itself as an attractive location for Asian investments. In Chapter 9, Karina Jędrzejowska and Anna Wróbel provide an overview of Indian foreign direct investment in the four Central European countries as well as Central European FDI India. It discusses the rationale for Indian economic engagement in the region and identifies the key challenges faced by Indian investors and looks at prospects for the future.

Based on the analysis of the secondary sources as well as new statistical information, big data and qualitative research (including participant observations, in-depth interviews and a survey), Patryk Kugiel and Konrad Pędziwiatr analyse the origins and growth of Indian communities in Central Europe and provide a detailed overview of the key features of the Indian diaspora in each of the Visegrad 4 countries. They explore their role in their new 'homes', assess their impact on India-Central Europe relations and look at future trends and significance in India's relations with the region.

In the concluding chapter, Patryk Kugiel makes a case for greater Visegrad 4-India engagement. As India's global ambitions grow, he argues, it requires more trusted partners in Europe to promote its interests in relation to the European Union, the United States or in multilateral fora like the United Nations Security Council or the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Unlike many developed Western nations, the V4, he adds, have similar views to those of India on a number of international challenges from climate change to terrorism. New Delhi, Patryk argues, should take greater cognizance of the fact that the V4 send 106 MEPs (out of a total of 751) to the European Parliament as well as one non-permanent member to the UN Security Council. With growing

recognition of India's importance by the EU and the V4's desire to develop a more balanced approach towards Asia, he maintains, prospects for improved India-Central Europe relations have improved.

The chapters are followed by a dozen appendices, which have been painstakingly collected from diverse sources. These would be of immense value to scholars, students and policy-makers as a ready reference. The lists of bilateral visits (cultural, economic, political and military) as well as agreements owe their present form to a determined scouring of diverse sources, including periodicals, newspapers, official publications, journals of India and the Central European countries as well as reports and publications of governmental ministries, Departments and agencies concerned. I have sought to ensure the correctness of the details by cross-checking them carefully with those appearing in official sources and have retained only those that I have found reasonably accurate.

Economic Engagement

The low levels of trade and investment present an opportunity for both India and the Visegrad Four to widen and deepen economic ties. The V4 tend to be viewed by many Indian companies as a bridgehead for investments in the much larger West European economies. Indian IT software majors have been ramping up their operations in the region to tap the intellectual calibre and language skill-sets of the engineering talent of the region to tap West European markets. Indian entrepreneurs tend to look to bigger markets in Western Europe and recognize that there are structural limits to what is possible in Central Europe. As the storehouse of niche technologies, Central European technologies are more attuned to Indian conditions. As repositories of frontier technologies and expertise in clean technology, skill development and education, the Visegrad 4 are complementary partners for many flagship programmes of the Modi government. To a certain extent, the challenge is of overcoming lack of information and simply making the connection.

The first India-Central Europe Business Forum (ICEBF) (now India-Europe29) has not led to a structured business dialogue and continues to face the perennial problem of lack of adequate follow-up. While the idea is inherently good, it is too large a body bringing together 30 countries under the geographical scope of the Ministry of External Affairs' Central Europe Division with diverse interests from very different regions and with different expertise.

Civil Society Linkages

Since the early 1990s, historical narratives have ceased to be relevant in India-Central Europe relations because for modern young Indians, the Cold War is largely forgotten. Traditional postwar linkages between India and the Visegrad Four have long withered away; traditional sensitivities of history with India are no longer evident. The problem of direct connectivity between V4 and India has been overcome to a certain extent with the introduction of direct LOT Warsaw-Delhi flights in September 2019. Greater civil society linkages will contribute to removing traditional clichés and stereotypes of post-communist societies of Central Europe and foster positive images of a rapidly growing region.

Bollywood is being actively wooed. 'All it needs is one film and that can change the dynamics' as the film 'Kick' did in the case of Poland. Some years ago, one Central European embassy even had 'a three-page rate card' for technical experts, camera hire, etc.[1] A further fillip to tourism can be expected since Bollywood films have now been shot in all V4 countries.

India-V4+ Engagement

Central Europe has not figured prominently in Indian foreign policy priorities for decades even though it has become politically stable and economically prosperous due to mutual indifference and neglect. As a political grouping, the Visegrad countries have lost their earlier distinctiveness and failed to get enough political attention in the capital. All of them except perhaps Poland are political lightweights within the European Union. New Delhi tends to perceive them as having little impact on EU foreign policy and of being of marginal importance in India-EU relations since they tend to get submerged in EU structures. Observers caution that the shared direction of the V4 within the EU is not 'stable or permanent' and that 'separate interests and issues disrupt the coherence of the group and weaken it in terms of unified promotion of these interests in the EU' (Bauerova, 2018: 134).

The Slovak Presidency of the Visegrad Group in 2014 proposed a new V4+1 format for India's engagement with the region. This led to the first-ever engagement at the Joint Secretary level with the V4 in Bratislava

[1] Conversation with a former Joint Secretary (Central Europe), MEA.

on 25 February 2015. This interaction was envisaged as a supplementary feature of bilateral and India-EU interactions. From the outset, it was obvious that the periodicity of such an interaction was not likely to be institutionalized, though there were many areas of mutual benefit (Chhabra, 2015: 7). This format was not in response to the 16+1 (later 17+1) promoted by the Chinese. The two were 'independent processes', with India seeking to do what it could in terms of its capabilities.[2] The initial V4+1 meeting was followed up in 2015 when the Minister of State for External Affairs V.K. Singh met the V4 Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the eleventh GLOBESEC Security Forum in April 2016. No meetings in the V4+ India format have been held thereafter.

A Prime Ministerial Visit

Central Europeans have often referred to the deficit in reciprocal visits from New Delhi. A long-standing, genuine complaint of the CEECs has been that there has not been a prime ministerial visit to the region for 33 years, i.e. ever since Rajiv Gandhi visited Hungary in 1988. Prime ministerial visits abroad are undoubtedly of much consequence for the projection of foreign policy. High-level visits do make a difference and create much momentum in focusing attention on a country and/or region. They also create institutional pressures to line up deliverables for the visit. In the past, a prime ministerial visit to the region was constantly pushed back apparently because of the inherent lack of substantial economic linkages and the absence of any political imperatives. A prime ministerial visit, MEA mandarins generally argued, generally takes place when a relationship has reached 'a particular level; one has to wait for it to mature'. In fact, a prime ministerial visit is 'the culmination of a relationship; a PM does not go there to merely cut the ribbon'.[3]

The Ministry of External Affairs has only recently taken cognizance of Central Europe as 'a strong voice' and the Visegrad Group as 'a robust force' within the European Union (India, MEA 2020a: 25; 2021: 20). There is growing realization in New Delhi that a prime ministerial visit to the region is long overdue. There was considerable expectation that a prime ministerial visit to Central Europe would take place in the

[2] Private conversation with a former Joint Secretary (Central Europe), MEA.

[3] Private conversation with a former Joint Secretary (Central Europe), MEA.

second half of 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed it to late 2021 or even later. Alternately, a prime ministerial meeting with V4 counterparts can also take place on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in the near future though a visit to the region would send across a better message. A V4+ India summit at the prime ministerial level would undoubtedly give the relationship a special focus and highlight the region's importance.

Towards a Strategic Partnership?

India does not presently have a strategic partnership with any Central European country. After the conclusion of a strategic partnership with China (December 2011), Poland had proposed a strategic partnership with India. The MEA however felt that relations 'had not yet reached that level'. After all, a strategic partnership is 'the last mile', which is often 'the most difficult'.[4] There was the problem of justifying a strategic partnership to higher authorities as it usually gave rise to questions of prioritization, human resource constraints, bureaucratic overload and the quantum of trade.

For the first time, India recently concluded the fifth strategic partnership in Europe with Denmark. Called a 'Green Strategic Partnership', it has been described as 'a mutually beneficial arrangement to advance political cooperation, expand economic relations and green growth, create jobs and strengthen cooperation on addressing global challenges and opportunities' (India, MEA 2020b). This functional strategic partnership, with an Action Plan yet to be worked out, envisages cooperation through relevant Ministries, institutions and stakeholders is illustrative of New Delhi's efforts to make strategic partnerships more result-oriented.

India has also begun recently to explore new geographical spaces and configurations. The MEA and the Confederation of Indian Industry recently organized the first India-Nordic-Baltic Conclave (5 November 2020) with ministerial participation from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland and Latvia on renewable energy and clean technologies and the factories of the future, on Artificial Intelligence and blockchain-led transformation, on supply chain and logistics, on fintech (Jaishankar, 2020). This innovative engagement tends to improve prospects of a strategic

[4] Private conversation with a former Joint Secretary (Central Europe), MEA.

partnership currently under discussion with the Czech Republic and possibly Poland provided the right synergies and mutual benefits can be identified with Warsaw.

Modi's Re-engagement

India's re-engagement of Central Europe by the Narendra Modi government in recent years reflects how the region is slowly being gradually recognized as a region of promise and potential. In view of a proactive Chinese overdrive around the world, New Delhi has sought to show its flag in a kind of competitive diplomatic engagement in consonance with its resources and capabilities to reach out to various countries where few ministers or senior officials had travelled for decades. Between 2014 and 2020, there nearly a dozen visits by senior Indian dignitaries, including the President and the Vice-President, to Central and Eastern Europe took place. These were not merely goodwill/ceremonial visits. They required a certain degree of preparation and led to tangible results. The robust engagement with the region could also have possibly been the result of the fact that for the first time since Independence, S. Jaishankar is the first Foreign Secretary/Foreign Minister to have spent two cycles in Central and Eastern Europe—in Budapest (1990–1993) and as Ambassador to Prague (2001–2004).

Central Europe is an important constituency for the reform of the United Nations Security Council and support of the Indian candidature. With the Visegrad 4 being members of all four export control regimes, their support has been crucial to secure membership since decisions in them are by consensus and a single negative vote can stop any move in favour of India. While the V4 do not often form a unified bloc or vote in unision in the EU or other global forums, they can be of interest in raising India's profile (Kugiel & Upadhyay, 2018: 138).

In the future, the primary focus will continue to be on economy and trade. Different Visegrad Group countries will develop their relationships with India at different speeds, with varying levels of engagement and commitment, and with different trajectories and results.

Further Research

For decades, India-Central Europe relations has been an under-researched and neglected area of research. There are many gaps in existing scholarly research. There is a glaring lack of archival research on India-Central Europe relations. The National Archives of India contain recently declassified MEA documents, which primarily comprise monthly reports from Indian Embassies, diplomatic cables, transcript of conversations involving foreign leaders or interlocuters as well as policy memoranda by officials based in Delhi and overseas embassies. No research has yet been done on the archives of the Ministry of External Affairs, which have been recently digitized, but access continues to be problematic. Similarly, archives of the Central European countries have yet to be fully explored to provide insights into V4 perceptions and approaches towards India.

Secondly, there is hardly any research on the making of India's foreign policy towards Central Europe and vice versa, including the role of various ministries as well as the dynamics and constraints of inter-ministerial interaction and coordination.

Thirdly, apart from a few studies of Indian perceptions of Poland (Kugiel, 2019), there are no meaningful studies of how mainstream Indian newspapers, electronic media and elites perceive Central Europe and vice versa.

Fourthly, scholars continue to be seriously hampered by the lack of primary source material on the subject. A comprehensive documentary study on India-Central Europe relations would undeniably encourage further research.

The editor and the contributors hope that this pioneering volume would foster greater scholarly research of India's relations with Central Europe, which has been an orphaned subject for far too long.

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CHAPTER 2

India and Central Europe: From the Margins to the Centre in Three Stages

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri

Independent India's relationship with Central Europe has undergone three distinct phases. The first phase, during the communist period, was a subset of India's relations with the Soviet Union. The second phase was a political and economic vacuum. It followed the collapse of the Soviet bloc. New Delhi had almost no engagement with the newly democratic Central European states. Both India and Central Europe began a process of reforming their socialist-oriented economies at this point that continued through the 1990s but gave them minimal ability to engage with each other. The early 2000s saw the beginnings of a third phase centred around a new economic relationship with a few Indian firms investing in countries like Poland. Today, Indian firms and their European subsidiaries are both large investors and have a footprint in almost all the major Central European states. The combination of Brexit, the

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rise of China and India's expanding geo-economic interests in Europe are leading the Narendra Modi government to contemplate relations with Central Europe through a more strategic lens. If these fructify, it could mark a fourth phase in India-Central European relations.

The Soviet Era, 1947–1989

India's Central European policy under its first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was strongly coloured by his perspective of the Soviet Union. For a number years, Nehru also looked to the Yugoslav ruler, Josip Broz Tito, for insights on the region (Dixit, 1998: 324). In his first decade in office, Nehru had a relatively benign view of communism and a suspicion of the United States which skewed his understanding of the nature of Soviet control over the Central European states. All of these contributed to his weak response to the Hungarian uprising of 1956. His daughter and later prime minister, Indira Gandhi, responded equally ambivalently to the crushing of the Prague Spring of 1968 but by then the geopolitical bond between New Delhi and Moscow had become much stronger and overrode any other consideration. Overall, however, Central Europe barely figured in India's foreign policy calculations while the communist governments of the region expressed much rhetorical support for India as an echo of what was being said by their superiors in the Kremlin.

Nehru's *Autobiography, Glimpses of World History* and letters all indicate that he saw the Russian Revolution of 1917 that led to communist rule as a point in a spectrum that went back to the French Revolution. In one letter, he wrote that the popular demand for freedom in the French and Russian Revolutions were an inspiration for India's own slogan of '*Inqilab zindabad!*' (Long live the revolution!) against British colonial rule. In the late 1940s and the early 1950s, he often expressed his admiration for communist ideology and theory of history, though over time he began to separate this from the practice of Soviet communism per se. Nehru was to become increasingly concerned about the fault lines that kept erupting within the international communist system and their impact on the Indian communist movement and the political stability of India as a whole. But his theoretical admiration for communism meant he was initially unconcerned about the Soviet occupation of Central Europe and did not see it as an example of the colonialism that he had spent his life opposing. After all, he argued, other countries recognized the Central

European communist regimes and small countries being dominated by a larger power was common in other parts of the world (Nayudu, 2018).

Hungarian Uprising of 1956

Nehru's uncertainty about the nature of Soviet rule in Central Europe was reflected in his response to the popular revolt in Hungary against Soviet occupation. This was the high watermark of nonalignment and Nehru, if anything, still seeing much of the world in terms of the colonial era and hence wary of Western views and actions. When the uprising began, Nehru declined to support any initiative taken by the United States making India the only democratic government not to criticize the Soviet Union's brutal suppression of the uprising. US President Dwight D. Eisenhower privately said Nehru was 'falling for the Moscow line—buying their entire bill of good' (Nayudu, 2015).

The Indian prime minister was hampered by the illness of Ambassador K. P. S. Menon, who was based in Moscow and concurrently accredited to Budapest, and delays in the arrival of Embassy reports about what was taking place. Nehru expressed concerns that the uprising represented 'fascistic elements', worried that Moscow was being internationally isolated, and corresponded mostly with Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin and Yugoslavia's President Tito. Bulganin obviously gave the Soviet line on what was happening. The United States fretted that Nehru was so much under the premier's influence that they referred to the Indian prime minister's 'Bulganinisation'. Having kept his country out of the Warsaw Pact and free of Soviet control, Tito initially expressed support for the Hungarians but later worried the unrest would spread and undermine his own one-party system (Nayudu, 2017).

As Nehru became more familiar with what was happening in Hungary, his position shifted. New Delhi became more critical of the Soviet Union but declined to align directly with the statements and actions of the United States. Thanks in part to telegrams from the Indian embassy sent by the *Charge d'Affaires* M. M. Rahman, Nehru came to accept that the Hungarian protestors were 'nationalists' rather than reactionaries. Indian diplomats were allowed to join the international chorus demanding that the United Nations be allowed to send observer teams to Hungary, along with humanitarian supplies. But Nehru decided that nonalignment meant he should avoid condemnation of the Soviet Union. India would be best served by 'leaving the door open' to Moscow even while taking a principled stand. It could be said that India's response to the 1956 uprising was to provide a template for Indian foreign policy reactions to other