

Chapter II

TIMELINE

- March 1985:** **Mikhail Gorbachev** elected as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; appoints Boris Yeltsin as the head of the Communist Party in Moscow; initiates a series of reforms in the Soviet Union.
- 1988:** Independence movement begins in Lithuania; later spreads to Estonia and Latvia.
- October 1989:** Soviet Union declares that the Warsaw Pact members are free to decide their own future; Berlin Wall falls in November.
- February 1990:** **Gorbachev** strips the Soviet Communist Party of its 72-year long monopoly on power by calling on the Soviet Parliament (**Duma**) to permit multiparty politics.
- March 1990:** **Lithuania** becomes the first of the 15 Soviet republics to declare its independence.
- June 1990:** Russian parliament declares its dependence from the Soviet Union.
- June 1991:** **Yeltsin**, no longer in the Communist Party, becomes the President of Russia.
- August 1991:** The Communist Party hardliners stage an abortive coup against Gorbachev.
- September 1991:** Three Baltic republics of **Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania** becomes UN members (Later join NATO in March 2004).
- December 1991:** **Russia, Belarus and Ukraine** decided to annul the 1992 Treaty on the creation of the USSR and establish the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)**; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan joined the CIS (Georgia joined later in 1993); Russia took ones the USSR seat in the United Nations.
- 25 December 1991:** Gorbachev resigns as the President of the Soviet Union; the end of the Soviet Union.

WORDS THAT MATTER

- **Soviet System:** Soviet system was introduced after Russian Revolution in 1917 based on the principles of egalitarian society i.e. ensure a minimum standard of living for all its people as opposed to capitalism and a planned economy as well as productive assets were owned and controlled by the state.
- **Socialist Bloc:** The east European countries were known as Socialist Bloc because these countries were liberated from the fascist forces and their political and economic systems were based on this bloc only.
- **Capitalist Economy:** In this economy, land and productive assets are owned and controlled by the Capitalists.
- **Uni-polar System:** Affairs at international level are dominated by only one superpower.
- **Multi-polar System:** Affairs at international level can not be dominated by one superpower only, instead group of countries play an important role.
- **Egalitarian Society:** It believes that all people are equally important and should have the same rights and opportunities in life.
- **Largest Garage Sale:** It was resulted due to Shock Therapy to undervalue the valuable industries of USSR to sell them at throwaway prices.
- **Shock Therapy:** The model of transition from authoritarian socialist system to a democratic capitalist system in Russia, Central Asia and East Europe under the influence of the World Bank and IMF to be know as Shock Therapy.