

## Chapter II

**Q. What were the factors that forced Gorbachev to initiate the reforms in the USSR?**

**4 marks**

**Answer:** Mikhail Gorbachev was the General Secretary of Communist Party of Soviet Union in 1985. He was forced to initiate the reforms in the USSR due to following reasons:

1. To keep the USSR abreast of information and technological revolutions at par the West.
2. To normalise the relations with that of the West.
3. To democratise the Soviet System.
4. To loosen the administrative system which exempted ordinary people from the privileges.

**Q. What were the major consequences of the disintegration of the Soviet Union?**

**6 marks**

**Answer:** The major consequences of the disintegration of the Soviet Union for countries like India can be analysed as follows:

1. Disintegration of Soviet Union gave an end to Cold War confrontations and to ideological disputes between two superpowers.
2. Military alliances had been abolished and demand arose for world peace and security.
3. Multipolar system was surpassed to exist where no single power could dominate and a group of countries could play a crucial role in world politics like NAM Countries.
4. The US became the sole superpower and capitalist economy became dominant at international level. World Bank and IMF became powerful advisors due to their economic support to these countries during transitional period.
5. The motion of liberal democracy emerged as a way to organise political life.
6. Due to disintegration of Soviet Union many new countries emerged with the independent aspirations and choices.
7. The Baltic and East European states wanted to join European Union and became the part of NATO. The Central Asian countries took the advantage of their geographical location and continued close ties with Russia, West, China and others.

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### Q. Mention the causes of Soviet disintegration.

6 Marks

**Answer:** The causes of Soviet disintegration can be summed up as follows:

#### 1. *Economic Stagnancy:*

- (a) Economic institutions experienced internal weaknesses to meet the aspirations of people.
- (b) Economic stagnation for many years to severe consumer shortages.

#### 2. *Political and Administrative Causes:*

- (a) The only ruling Communist Party was not accountable despite its rule of 70 years.
- (b) The ordinary people were abstained from taking participation in political riots, hence the system became incapable of correcting its mistakes.
- (c) The ordinary citizens were exempted from gaining the privileges.
- (d) Due to non-participation of people, the government lost popular support from all sides.

#### 3. *Gorbachev's Reform Policies:*

- (a) Gorbachev's reforms aimed at keeping the USSR abreast of information and technological revolutions taking place in the west.
- (b) Gorbachev focused to normalise relations with the west.
- (c) Gorbachev worked to democratise the Soviet System.
- (d) But Society was divided into two sections towards Gorbachev's reforms and both of them had contradictory views towards him.

#### 4. *Rise of Nationalism and Desire for Sovereignty:*

- (a) The rise of nationalism in various republics of Soviet Union proved to be immediate cause of revolutions in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Georgia.
- (b) The nationalist dissatisfaction with the Soviet Union was strongest in European and prosperous part in Russia and the Baltic areas as well as Ukraine and Georgia.
- (c) Ordinary people felt alienated from Central Asia.

\*Note: You can Choose any 6 point for six marks

**Q. Write a note on formation of Commonwealth of Independent States.**

**Answer:** Disintegration of the USSR gave birth to Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) when under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin Russia, Ukraine and Belarus declared themselves as independent and gave a surprise to other republics especially to central Asian Republics. This issue was resolved quickly by making these republics as founding members of the CIS and Russia became the successor state who inherited the Soviet seat in the UN and accepted all the international treaties and commitments.

**Q. What was the immediate cause of disintegration of USSR?**

**Answer:** The rise of nationalism and the desire for sovereignty within various republics including Russia and the Baltic Republic (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), Ukraine, Georgia and others proved to be the most immediate cause for disintegration of the USSR.

**Q. With the disintegration of the second world, India should change its foreign policy and focus more on friendship with the US rather than with traditional friends like Russia”.**

**Answer:** India should not change its foreign policy and focus more on friendship with US, but India is required to maintain healthy relations with Russia because India has experienced a long band of mutual trust, interests and popular perceptions with Russia in the following manner:

1. Russia and India share a vision of multipolar world order i.e. co-existence of several world powers internationally, collective security, greater regionalism, democratisation with the decision-making through bodies like the UN.
2. More than 80 bilateral agreements have been experienced between India and Russia as a part of the Indo- Russia Strategic Agreement of 2001.
3. India has been benefitted from its relationship on the issues like Kashmir, energy supplies, sharing information on international terrorism, access to Central Asia and balancing its relation with China.
4. Russia is also important for India's nuclear energy plan and assisting India's space industry by giving cryogenic rocket to India whenever needed.
5. Co-operation with Russia and its republics like Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan in the form of partnership and investment in oil fields has also benefitted India.
6. Russia is also benefitted from India on ground of the second largest arms market for Russia. Indian military gets most of its hardware from Russia.
7. Russia and India have collaborated on various scientific projects also.