

Shortly before independence was declared, in April 1947 India established diplomatic relations with the USSR. As the "Izvestia" newspaper reported on April 15, 1947, through exchange of letters between Ambassador of India in China H.E. Mr K.P.S.Menon and Ambassador of the USSR in China H.E. Mr A.A.Petrov it was established that the Government of the USSR and the Government of India would publish simultaneously in Moscow and Delhi the following official statement: "Seeking to preserve and further strengthen friendly relations existing between the USSR and India, the Government of the USSR and the Government of India decided to exchange diplomatic representations at the Embassy level".

However, the issue of opening the Embassy of the USSR in New Delhi was pending for several months even after establishing Soviet-Indian diplomatic relations and the arrival of the Indian mission in Moscow. The MFA archives keep a memorandum by Mr K.A.Mikhailov to Mr Y.A.Malik dated July 8, 1947 named "On the issue of sending our Embassy to India against the background of implementation of the British plan on India's partition into two dominions and on the necessity to expedite the appointment of our Ambassador to India". The memorandum says that the Russian Side will have to send two ambassadors to India. There is also a concrete proposal to request for *Agrément* for the Soviet Ambassador "through the Indian Ambassador in China K.P.S.Menon who was a negotiator during establishing diplomatic relations". But there is a note in pencil made the next day, on July 9 saying "Hold on for a while". Only October 21, 1947 saw publication of the statement on appointment of Mr K.V.Novikov as the first Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the USSR to India.