

Sos Political science & Public administration  
M.A.Political science II Sem  
Indian Foreign Policy(203)  
Unit-II

**Topic Name-India's Relation with The Russia**

# INTRODUCTION

- **Indo-Russian relations foreign policy** are the bilateral relations between India and Russia. During the Cold War, India and the Soviet Union(USSR) had a strong strategic, military, economic and diplomatic relationship. After the Dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia inherited its close relationship with India which resulted in a special relationship. Russia and India both term this relationship as a "special and privileged strategic partnership". Owing to the bonhomie shared by the countries' respective leaders, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin, the bilateral relationship has seen further growth and development. An informal meeting between them in 2018 at Sochi helped accelerate the partnership, displaying the role of interaction and cooperation between India and Russia.

# History

- In 1468, Russian traveller Afanasy Nikitin began his journey to India. Between 1468 and 1472, he travelled through Persia, India and the Ottoman Empire. The documentation of his experiences during this journey is compiled in the book *The Journey Beyond Three Seas (Khozheniye za tri morya)*.<sup>[16]</sup> In 18th century the Russian cities Astrakhan, Moscow and St. Petersburg were frequently visited by Indian merchants. Russia was used as a transit trade between Western Europe and India. In 1801, Emperor of All Russia Paul ordered plans made for the invasion of British India by 22,000 Cossacks. It never happened. Preparations were poorly handled. The idea was that Russia would form an alliance with France, and attack the British Empire and its weak point using a French corps of 35,000 men and a Russian corps of 25,000 infantry and 10,000 mounted Cossacks. Some Cossacks had approached Orenburg when the tsar was assassinated. His successor Alexander immediately cancelled the plans.<sup>1</sup>

## Political relations

- The first major political initiative, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, between India and Russia began with the Strategic Partnership signed between the two countries in 2000. President Vladimir Putin stated in an article written by him in the Hindu, "The Declaration on Strategic Partnership between India and Russia signed in October 2000 became a truly historic step".<sup>[25][26]</sup> Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also agreed with his counterpart by stated in speech given during President Putin's 2012 visit to India, "President Putin is a valued friend of India and the original architect of the India-Russia strategic partnership".<sup>[27]</sup> Both countries closely collaborate on matters of shared national interest these include at the UN, BRICS, G20 and SCO. Russia also strongly supports India receiving a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.<sup>[10]</sup> In addition, Russia has vocally backed India joining the NSG<sup>[28]</sup> and APEC.<sup>[29]</sup> Moreover, it has also expressed interest in joining SAARC with observer status in which India is a founding member.<sup>1</sup>
- Russia currently is one of only two countries in the world (the other being Japan) that has a mechanism for annual ministerial-level defence reviews with India.<sup>[1]</sup> The Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC) is one of the largest and most comprehensive governmental mechanisms that India has had with any country internationally. Almost every department from the Government of India attends it

## Science and Technology

- The ongoing collaboration in the field of science & technology, under the Integrated Long-Term Programme of Co-operation (ILTP) is the largest co-operation programme in this sphere for both India and Russia. ILTP is coordinated by the Department of Science and Technology from the Indian side and by the Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Science and Education, and Ministry of Industry and Trade from the Russian side. Development of SARAS Duet aircraft, semiconductor products, super computers, poly-vaccines, laser science and technology, seismology, high-purity materials, software & IT and Ayurveda have been some of the priority areas of co-operation under the ILTP. Under this programme, eight joint Indo-Russian centres have been established to focus on joint research and development work. Two other Joint Centres on Non-ferrous Metals and Accelerators and Lasers are being set up in India. A Joint Technology Centre based in Moscow to bring cutting edge technologies to the market is also under processing. An ILTP Joint Council met in Moscow on 11–12 October 2007 to review co-operation and give it further direction. In August 2007, an MoU was signed between Department of Science and Technology and Russian Foundation of Basic Research, Moscow to pursue scientific co-operatio

## **Cooperation in the cultural sphere**

There are 20 educational institutions across Russia that teach Indian languages. Latest figures suggest that about 11,000 Indian students are studying in Russia, primarily in medical and technical courses. The number of tourists from Russia to India has been on the rise, and in 2017 it was the eighth largest source of foreign arrivals to India. In comparison, the number of Indian tourists to Russia, though having increased, still remains low.

# Terrorism

- India and Russia share common views on terrorism. Both nations have worked together to combat terrorism.



## Economic relations

- Bilateral trade between both countries is concentrated in key value chain sectors. These sectors include highly diversified segments such as machinery, electronics, aerospace, automobile, commercial shipping, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, fertilisers, apparels, precious stones, industrial metals, petroleum products, coal, high-end tea and coffee products.<sup>[39]</sup> Bilateral trade in 2002 stood at \$1.5 billion<sup>[40]</sup> and increased by over 7 times to \$11 billion in 2012<sup>[41]</sup> and with both governments setting a bilateral trade target of \$30 billion by 2025.<sup>[3][42][39]</sup> Bilateral bodies that conduct economic relations between the two countries include IRIGC, the Indo-Russian Forum on Trade and Investment, the India-Russia Business Council, the India-Russia Trade, Investment and Technology Promotion Council, the India-Russia CEOs' Council and the India-Russia Chamber of Commerce



## Economic relations

- Both countries have also agreed to work together in the aerospace sector to co-development and co-produce aircraft, examples include the Sukhoi Superjet 100, MS-21, FGFA, MTA and Kamov Ka-226.<sup>[47]</sup> Some of the co-developed aircraft will be jointly commercially exported to third countries and foreign markets e.g. FGFA and Kamov Ka-226. President of Russia's UAC Mikhail Pogosyan stated in an interview, "We are planning to sell in India about 100 passenger aircraft by 2030, which will account for 10 percent of the Indian market of airliners in the segment" and further stated, "The unprecedented scope of Russian-Indian cooperation in military aviation has created a scientific and engineering basis for undertaking joint projects in civil aviation"
- Both the countries set the investment target of \$30 billion by 2025. Since they met the target by 2018, India and Russia expect to enhance the figure to \$50 billion. India also proposed to set up a special economic zone for Russian companies.<sup>[58]</sup>
- On 5 September 2019, India pledged a USD 1 billion line of credit (concessional loans) for the development of Russia's far east.<sup>[59]</sup>
- Russian imports from India amounted to \$3.1 billion or 1% of its overall imports, and 0.7% of India's overall exports in 2014. The 10 major commodities exported from India to Russia were

## Military relationship

- Now, the co-operation is not limited to a buyer-seller relationship but includes joint research and development, training, service to service contacts, including joint exercises. The last joint naval exercises took place in April 2007 in the Sea of Japan and joint airborne exercises were held in September 2007 in Russia. An Inter-Governmental commission on military-technical co-operation is co-chaired by the defence ministers of the two countries. The seventh session of this Inter-Governmental Commission was held in October 2007 in Moscow. During the visit, an agreement on joint development and production of prospective multi-role fighters was signed between the two countries.

## Military relationship

- In 2012, both countries signed a defence deal worth \$2.9 billion during President Putin's visit to India for the 42 new Sukhois to be produced under licence by defence PSU Hindustan Aeronautics, which will add to the 230 Sukhois earlier contracted from Russia. Overall, the price tag for the 272 Sukhois - three of the over 170 inducted till now have crashed - stands at over \$12 billion. The medium-lift Mi-17 V5 helicopters (59 for IAF and 12 for home ministry/BSF) will add to the 80 such choppers already being inducted under a \$1.34 billion deal inked in 2008. The value of India's defence projects with Russia will further zoom north after the imminent inking of the final design contract for the joint development of a futuristic stealth fifth-generation fighter. This R&D contract is itself pegged at US\$11 billion, to be shared equally by the two countries. So if India inducts over 200 of these 5th Gen fighters, as it hopes to do from 2022 onwards, the overall cost of this gigantic project for India will come to around US\$35 billion since each of the jets will come for upwards of US\$100 million at least.<sup>[26]</sup>
- In October 2018, India inked the historic agreement worth US\$5.43 billion with Russia to procure five S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile defence system, the most powerful missile defence system in the world ignoring America's CAATSA act. The United States threatened India with sanctions over India's decision to buy the S-400 missile defense system from Russia

## IRIGC

- The Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC) is the main body that conducts affairs at the governmental level between both countries.<sup>[8]</sup> Some have described it as the steering committee of Indo-Russia relations.<sup>[8]</sup> It is divided into two parts, the first covering Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Co-operation. This is normally co-chaired by the Russian Deputy Prime Minister and the Indian External Affairs Minister. The second part of the commission covers Military Technical Co-operation this is co-chaired by the two countries respective Defence Ministers. Both parts of IRIGC meet annually.<sup>[8]</sup>
- In addition, to the IRIGC there are other bodies that conduct economic relations between the two countries. These include, the Indo-Russian Forum on Trade and Investment, the India-Russia Business Council, the India-Russia Trade, Investment and Technology Promotion Council and the India-Russia Chamber of Commerce.<sup>[31]</sup>
- An article penned by Vladimir Putin was published in *The Times of India* on 30 May 2017, a day before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Russia, to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of relations between India and the Russia on 13 April 1947.<sup>1</sup>

# Nuclear Deals

- On 7 November 2009, India signed a new nuclear deal with Russia apart from the deals that were agreed upon by the two countries earlier.<sup>[101]</sup> India and Russia are in discussion for construction of two more nuclear power units at Kudankulam. Two units of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant are already operational. During Russian president Vladimir Putin's visit to India for the 13th annual summit, a co-operative civilian nuclear energy road map was agreed to. Running until 2030, sixteen to eighteen new reactors will be constructed, with installed capacity of 1,000 MW each. A 1,000 MW reactor costs around \$2.5 billion so the deal may touch \$45 billion in worth

## **Russia–India Relations: Successes and Prospects**

- In the seven-plus decades of their diplomatic relations, Moscow and New Delhi have successfully built stable strategic, military, economic and diplomatic ties. Regardless of their outward differences, Russia and India face many similar tasks both domestically and internationally. Domestically, both need to ensure inter-ethnic and social harmony within poly-ethnic and poly-denominational states with millions of inhabitants. The examples of Kashmir and Chechnya helped the two countries gain an insight into the evils of aggressive nationalism, religious extremism, terrorism and separatism sooner and more clearly than others.

# Russia–India Relations: Successes and Prospects

- Opposition to the attempts to establish unipolar leadership in global affairs also deserves mention. Russia and India are democratic states that adhere to the principles of democracy in their domestic affairs, which in turn determines their general commitment to democratic conduct in international affairs. Russia and India are also united by the fact that Muslims form the second-largest denominational community in both states. And we are not talking recent migrants, as in Western Europe today, but rather people who have for centuries lived side-by-side with Orthodox Christians in Russia, and with followers of Hinduism and other Indian religions in India.
- Russia–India relations hold independent value for both countries. India is sympathetic to Russia's international actions. During the Soviet era, New Delhi did not condemn the deployment of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Nor has it joined the chorus of those condemning Crimea's incorporation into Russia today. New Delhi also supports Russia's stance on Syria, declaring that it would never use sanctions against Moscow.

## Conclusion

- India and Russia continue to share a common strategic rationale for their relationship: apart from bilateral synergies, the two are members of various multilateral organisations including BRICS, RIC, G20, East Asia Summit and SCO—where avenues for cooperation on issues of mutual importance exist. There is also a need for cooperation in areas like counterterrorism, cyber security, the Afghanistan conflict, outer space, and climate change. The fact that Russia holds a permanent seat at the UN Security Council and has been a supporter of India on various issues including Kashmir at the international forum is of critical importance for New Delhi. India would do well to take steps to shore up its relations with Russia to prevent it from becoming more dependent than it already is on China. At the same time, Russia would also benefit from diversifying its relations across the region, including India, so as to prevent its pivot to *Asia* becoming a pivot to *China*. Russia has made it clear that it is not in an alliance relationship with China and wants to have a multi-vector foreign policy. It remains to be seen how Moscow plans to translate its policy pronouncement to reality. In its post-Cold War avatar, it has been in a particularly weak position in Asia and does itself no favours by becoming over-dependent on China – raising fears of becoming a junior partner in the relationship.





**THANK YOU**