

EVA STALIN IAS ACADEMY – BEST IAS COACHING IN CHENNAI

12/24, Muthurangan Muthali St, West Tambaram, Chennai - 600045

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EDITORIAL ANALYSIS → 02 JULY 2022 → THE INDIAN EXPRESS:

INDIA RUSSIA RELATIONS:

- **Historical Context:**

- Russia and India have had a long-standing relationship. India-Russia relations have taken on a qualitatively new character since the "Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership" was signed in October 2000, with increased levels of cooperation in almost every aspect of the two countries' relationship, including politics, security, defence, trade and economy, science and technology, and culture.
- India and the Soviet Union had a close strategic, military, economic, and diplomatic ties throughout the Cold War. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia continued to have close ties with India, leading to the two countries' sharing of a Special Strategic Relation.
- However, in recent years, particularly in the post-Covid era, the relationships have suffered greatly. One of the main reasons for this is Russia's tight ties to China and Pakistan, which have brought India a lot of geopolitical problems in recent years.

- **Political connections:**

- The highest level of institutionalised conversation in the strategic partnership between India and Russia takes place at the annual summit meeting between the Prime Minister of India and the President of the Russian Federation.
- 2018 saw the first informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin at the Russian Federation's Sochi.
- The order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Russia's highest state decoration, was presented to PM Narendra Modi by President Putin in 2019. Two Inter-Governmental Commissions - one on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC) and another on Military-Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC) - meet annually. The order was given to the prime minister for his outstanding contribution to the development of a privileged strategic partnership between Russia and India and friendly ties between the Russian and Indian peoples.

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• **Commerce Relations:**

- By 2025, the two nations want to raise bilateral commerce to \$30 billion and bilateral investment to \$50 billion each.
- The value of bilateral trade in FY 2020 was USD 8.1 billion.
- The share of trade that took place between the two nations fell dramatically between 2013 and 2016. But starting in 2017, it started to rise, and in 2018 and 2019, it continued to rise.
- **Defense and Security Relations:** From a framework of buyers and sellers to one including cooperative research, development, and production of cutting-edge defence technologies and systems, India-Russia military-technical cooperation has expanded.
- Both nations regularly participate in the Tri-Services exercise known as "INDRA."

• **The collaborative military initiatives between Russia and India consist of:**

- 5th generation fighter jet programme, BrahMos cruise missile programme
- Su-30MKI Sukhoi programme
- Utility helicopters with twin engines
- The Ilyushin/HAL Tactical Transport Aircraft
- KA-226T
- Program for the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya

• **Additionally, Russia has a significant impact in helping the Indian Navy with its submarine programmes:**

- Russia supplied the first submarine of the "Foxtrot Class" to the Indian Navy.
- India's nuclear submarine programme is reliant on Russia.
- The only aircraft carrier used by India, INS Vikramaditya, is similarly Russian in origin.
- Russian submarines make up nine of India's fourteen operating conventional submarines.
- What are some other crucial spheres of India-Russian relations?
- Russia is a significant ally of India in the domain of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It acknowledges India as a nation with cutting-edge nuclear technology and a spotless non-proliferation record.
- In India, the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) is being constructed.
- In Bangladesh, the Rooppur Nuclear Power Project is being carried out by both India and Russia.

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- **Space exploration:** Both parties work together to develop peaceful uses for space, such as satellite launches, the GLONASS satellite navigation system, remote sensing, and other social functions.
- During the 19th Bilateral Summit, an MoU was signed between ISRO and ROSCOSMOS on Joint Activities in the Field of Human Spaceflight Programme.
- **Technology and science:**
 - The three main institutional mechanisms for bilateral Science and Technology cooperation are the Working Group on Science and Technology operating under IRIGC-TEC, the Integrated Long-Term Programme (ILTP), and the Basic Science Cooperation Programme, while the Science Academies of the two countries encourage inter-academy exchanges.
 - The Russia-India Bridge to Innovation, telemedicine collaboration, the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), and the Russia India Network (RIN) of universities are a few recent projects in this field.
- **Cultural interactions:**
 - Roughly 1500 Russian students are regularly taught Hindi in about 20 Russian institutions, including renowned universities and schools.
 - In addition to teaching Hindi, Russian institutions also teach Tamil, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Urdu, Sanskrit, and Pali.
 - Ayurveda, yoga, and Indian dance are just a few of the other interests Russians have.
- **What is Russia's Importance to India?**
 - **China's balance:** A turning point in India-China ties was caused by Chinese aggression in eastern Ladakh's border regions, but it also showed how Russia may help ease tensions with China.
 - Following violent confrontations in the Galwan Valley in the disputed region of Ladakh, Russia convened a trilateral conference of the foreign ministers of China, India, and Russia.
 - **Emerging New Sectors of Economic Engagement:** In addition to the traditional areas of cooperation like arms, oil, nuclear energy, and diamonds, new economic engagement sectors like mining, agro-industrialization, and high technology, such as robotics, nanotechnology, and biotechnology, are also likely to emerge.
 - India's influence in the Arctic and the Far East of Russia is expected to grow. Projects involving connectivity could also benefit.

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- India and Russia are urging the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to be completed as soon as possible and are striving to close the gap on Afghanistan in the fight against terrorism.
- Support at Multilateral Fora: Russia also backs India's bid for permanent membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group and a revamped United Nations Security Council.
- Military exports from Russia: Russia has been one of the main suppliers of weapons to India. Despite the fact that Russia's proportion in India's weaponry imports decreased by more than 50% over the previous five years (2011-2015),
- According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, which keeps tabs on international arms trade, India imported arms and weapons from Russia for USD 35 billion over the past 20 years.
- Russia Will Continue To Support Timely Maintenance: A significant problem from India has been the timely supply of replacement parts and support to the substantial stock of Russian equipment used by the Indian military.
- Following the signing of an Inter-Governmental Agreement in 2019, Russia changed its laws to allow Russian businesses to establish joint ventures in India.
- This agreement must be carried out in a timely manner.
- Russia will continue to be an important defence partner for India for many years to come.
- On the other side, there is a sort of partnership going on between China and Russia right now. Russia has made it clear time and time again that it does not consider itself anyone's junior partner. Russia wants India to serve as a balancer because of this.
- Joint Military Production: The two nations have been talking about how they may work together to use India as a production base for exporting goods and services of Russian provenance to other nations.
- **Mains Questions:**
- **Enhancing ties with Russia is in the larger interest of India in multiple spheres of geo-politics. Critically analyse.**