

GS Paper 2

International Relations

India and its relations with other countries

India and Russia

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Recent Context

- **15th-17th March 2024**---Presidential elections were held in Russia from 15 to 17 March 2024. It was the eighth presidential election in the country. The incumbent president Vladimir Putin won with 88% of the vote, the highest percentage in a presidential election in post-Soviet Russia, gaining a fifth term.
- **23 June 2023**---Prigozhin, leader of Wagner group, launched an armed rebellion after accusing the Russian MoD of killing Wagner soldiers. Wagner units withdrew from Ukraine and seized the Russian city of Rostov-on-Don while a Wagner convoy headed towards Moscow. The mutiny was halted the next day when a deal was brokered by Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko.
- **March 2023**---Russia's envoy to India Denis Alipov in his tweet described any speculation that India's relations with Russia would be damaged due to Moscow's close ties with Beijing as "wishful thinking". This was in context to the three day visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Russia.

- **Feb 2023**--30th anniversary of the **Indo-Russian Friendship Treaty of 1993.**
- **8th -9th February 2023**---India's National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval's visit to Russia.
- **June 2022** ---- India and Russia celebrated the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic relations. This has come amid Russia Ukraine war.
- **October 2022** ---- External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar visited New Zealand and Australia where he stated that the Indian inventory of Russian-origin weaponry has grown since the West refused to give India arms for decades. New Delhi and Moscow have a long-standing partnership that has served Indian interests well.

EAM further said, “In International politics, we make judgments which are reflective of our future interests and current situation.

What is the Significance of Russia for India?

- 1) Can help in moderating Chinese aggression in the region.
- 2) Helps in deepening India's footprint in the Russian Far East and in the Arctic .
- 3) Boost to Connectivity projects

4) Boosting new areas of economic partnership apart from conventional areas.

5) Major source of arms/military imports.

6) Common concern on countering terrorism.

7) Support base of India at multilateral forums.

Different Aspects of Indo-Russia Relations

- During Cold War----India and the Soviet Union maintained strong strategic, military, economic and diplomatic relationship.
- 1971---India and the Soviet Union signed the Treaty of Peace and Friendship.
(February 2023--The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed between India and Russia (signed on 28 January 1993) completed 30 years.))
- 1993---- New Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.
- 1994---- A bilateral Military-Technical Cooperation agreement signed.

- **2000----** signing of the **“Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership”**.
- **2010-----**The Strategic Partnership was elevated to the level of a **“Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership.”**
- **Recently (post COVID world)—Russia’s growing closeness with China.**

Recent Developments

What is India's position on the Ukraine issue

- In recent visit to Australia in Oct 2022, Indian foreign minister said, **“this conflict does not serve the interest of anybody- neither the participants nor the international community.”**
- **India prioritises an immediate end to hostilities and a return to diplomacy and engagement.** India has also exposed the hypocrisy of the West when it comes to defending the rules-based order in the rest of the world.
- **“I know that today's era is not an era of war”,** PM Modi remarked on the side lines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) 2022.

Implications of war on Ukraine for India

- It could **embolden** China regarding its territorial ambitions. (danger for India's territorial security)
- Sanctions on Russia will impact India's defence cooperation
- New area of global attention other than Indo-Pacific
- Diplomatic tightrope situation for India
- Rising Russia-China axis and its effect.

Discuss the Global Implications of the China-Russia Alliance in present scenario?

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Effect of rising China-Russia Alliance on India?

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Areas of Cooperation

1) Defence and Security Relations

India has a tradition of multi-sourcing defence equipment. Russia is our biggest defence partner.

- Tri-Services exercise 'INDRA'
- The joint military programmes between India and Russia include:
 - ✓ Brahmos Cruise Missile Programme
 - ✓ KA-226T twin-engine utility helicopters
 - ✓ Sukhoi Su-30MKI programme
 - ✓ 5th generation fighter jet programme
 - ✓ Ilyushin/HAL Tactical Transport Aircraft

- **The military hardware purchased/leased by India from Russia includes:**
 - ✓ S-400 Triumf
 - ✓ INS Vikramaditya aircraft carrier programme
 - ✓ Kamov Ka-226 200
 - ✓ T-90S Bhishma
- **Russia's assistance to India with its submarine programmes:**
 - ✓ Indian Navy's first submarine, 'Fortrot Class' sourced from Russia
 - ✓ Dependence of India on Russia for its nuclear submarine programme
 - ✓ Nine of the fourteen conventional submarines operated by India are Russian.

2) Trade relations

- Enhancing trade and economic cooperation between India and Russia is a key priority for the political leadership of both the countries as is clear by the revised targets of increasing bilateral investment to US \$ 50 billion and bilateral trade to US \$ 30 billion by 2025.
- India is also contemplating an FTA/ CECA with the Eurasian Economic Union.
- **2023----** India and Russia are discussing a free trade agreement (FTA). The announcement came at a time when New Delhi is also engaged in FTA discussions with Britain, the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council.
- India's imports from Russia more than quadrupled to \$46.33 billion over the last fiscal year, mainly through oil.

3)Nuclear Relations:

- Cooperation in the area of peaceful use of nuclear energy.
- Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant is being built in India with Russian cooperation .
- Rooppur Nuclear Power Project in Bangladesh jointly by India and Russia..

4)Space Exploration:

- GLONASS navigation System remote sensing and other societal applications of outer space.
- At 19th Bilateral Summit, 2018---An MoU ISRO and ROSCOSMOS on Joint Activities in the field of Human Spaceflight Programme got signed.

Key Challenges

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Way Forward

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