



The Political Dimensions Of Russia-India Relations

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Abstract

For the last eighty years, trust, mutual understanding and compatibility, as well as similar interests in the international system, have served as the foundation for ties between India and Russia. It drew them closer together to collaborate in the fields of military, commerce, and technology. Specifically, it brought them closer together. Both New Delhi and Moscow went through a period of low-level relations after the dissolution of the Soviet Union; however, since Putin came to power in Russia, ties between the two capitals have taken a new direction. In addition to working together on strategic matters, the countries collaborated on developing strategies to improve diplomacy, create a multipolar world, fight insurgencies, address climate change, cooperate on technology and military issues, and combat terrorism. In addition to their robust collaboration and shared interests, India and Russia are confronted with a number of obstacles, especially in the aftermath of shifting dynamics in the political landscape of Asia.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the history of the strategic cooperation between India and Russia, with a particular emphasis on Putin's tenure.

Keywords: Soviet Union, Diplomacy, Asia, Political Scene, Foreign Policy.

Introduction

During the first several years after India's independence, the country leaned toward the Communist bloc. Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, was profoundly impacted by the Russian revolution of 1917 and even considered shifting India's economic policies to conform more closely to socialist ideals as a result of this. As the years went by, the two parties-maintained relationships that have stood the test of time and have been consistent for the last seventy years. Both parties have acknowledged the other's significance and agreed that working together would be useful in overcoming certain economic, political, and strategic issues.

In the immediate aftermath of the Indo-China conflict that took place in 1962, both nations signed bilateral agreements that called for the Soviet Union to provide India with aircraft and air-fighters. Between the years 1970 and 1980, it underwent a further consolidation. Russia has been a driving force behind the concept of Asian security and has been working to expand its influence in the Indian Ocean. Both India and Russia may claim to the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation of 1971 as a defining moment in their respective histories. It was an alliance in which it was determined that, in the event that any nation was invaded, both parties would engage in dialogue with one another.

It has not only improved collaboration, but it has also "served as a guarantee of regional peace." [Case in point] Even though the original treaty has been superseded by its updated form, the legacy of the original treaty continues to serve as the foundation for the growing strategic cooperation between India and Russia (Mohanty, 2011). Since the late 1980s, Delhi has been supplied with a more diverse array of cutting-edge and sophisticated armaments.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and its subsequent breakup into 15 independent governments brought in a condition that may be described as chaotic and lawless. The Soviet Union's administrative structure was on the verge of falling apart and almost collapsed. These shifts have a significant impact on the strategic relationship between India and Russia. But with Vladimir Putin's election as president of Russia, there was a significant sea change in the way things were going. It is largely agreed upon that the Putin era was a moment of transition for the ties between Russia and India. Since his time, there has been a shift in the alliance that exists between India and Russia. In addition to working together on strategic matters, the countries collaborated on developing strategies for improved diplomacy and a multipolar world.

terrorism, insurgencies, climate change, technological collaboration, and international defence are some of the issues that need to be addressed. Russia is one among the powers that strongly backed India's bid for a permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council and participation in the nuclear Supplier Group. India has continued to rely on Russia, under the leadership of President Putin, as a dependable provider of frontline military equipment and strategic weaponry at low costs. A case in point is the recently accomplished goal of successfully concluding the S-400 missile defence contract. It is a significant boost to India's military weaponry, and it demonstrates how highly Russia values India as a strategic and security partner. India has been receiving a lot of attention from Russia lately.

To wrap up the introduction, it is important to mention that the core pillars of Indo-Russian relations have remained strategic partnership and military, economic, and political cooperation, and reflects confidence and trust. These core pillars were maintained based on the basis of deep and strong historical ties, as well as the recent major developments that have taken place during the Putin era. As a result of their shared concerns and struggles, it is anticipated that Moscow and Delhi will continue to build upon their longstanding traditions of friendship in the years to come.

India-Russia Relations

During the time when the Soviet Union was in power, India and Russia maintained strong ties at the highest levels of government. However, the turmoil that ensued in the years immediately after the fall of the Soviet Union echoed across the Indo-Russian relationship as well, particularly during the time when the newly constituted Russian Federation was working to reconstruct its foreign policy. In the years that immediately followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the government of Boris Yeltsin adopted a pro-Western stance with regard to its approach to foreign policy. In the meanwhile, it was the right moment for India to start liberalising its economy and turning to the West for trade and

investment opportunities. Both nations were consequently preoccupied with matters pertaining to their own internal agendas while simultaneously adapting to a new international order in which the United States of America (US) was the lone superpower. In spite of this, both India and Russia took steps to bring their relationship back to life. A Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was formed between the two countries in 1993, and a year later, they followed it up with an agreement to cooperate on a military and technical level. Following a short time between 1990 and 1993 in which there was a significant drop in the number of arms sales, India would ultimately become a dominant importer of Russian weaponry. This would occur after a brief period in which there was a steep reduction in the volume of arms sales. [1] By the middle of the 1990s, the money generated by Russia's defence sector from exports to India and China accounted for 41% of that industry's overall revenue. This was very necessary for the continuation of Russia's armaments industry, which had suffered greatly as a result of a reduction in orders placed by Russia's own military after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In point of fact, negotiations for a \$650 million weapons deal had been going on between India and Russia as far back as 1992. The transition from "a solely buyer-seller partnership to combined research, design development and manufacture of state-of-the-art military systems" has been a particular highlight in the years since then. The Brahmos missile is a fruitful illustration of this strategy's effectiveness. Both companies are also active in the indigenous development of tanks and fighter planes, in addition to the improvement of already existing equipment.

On the other hand, there has not been a corresponding resurgence in commercial connections. Throughout the 1990s, disagreements surrounding the exchange rate of rupees for rubles and the repayment of amounts due by India persisted. The deterioration of the Russian economy, the increased level of competition from other countries with rapid economic growth, as well as the opaque nature of the legal system in the post-Soviet state, all led to the reduction of India's market share in Russian commerce. By 1996, the value of Russia's commerce with India accounted for just one percent of the country's total commercial activity.

During the time of the Soviet Union, cultural and people-to-people interactions had blossomed, and they had been supported by large money and scholarships for frequent exchange. However, with the fall of the Soviet Union, these relationships declined significantly. The number of educational establishments in India that provide Russian language classes has decreased, along with the number of students that are enrolled in these programmes.

In the year 2000, at the beginning of Vladimir Putin's administration, the yearly summits between India and Russia were established. This event marked the beginning of a fresh attempt to develop the bilateral relationship between the two countries. The two nations issued a joint statement in 2010 to commemorate the ten-year anniversary of their 'Declaration on Strategic Partnership,' in which they acknowledged that their relationship had progressed to "the level of a special and privileged strategic partnership."

The process of re-establishing the multi-dimensional connection has been a lengthy one; in addition, it has been forced to grapple with the geo-political and geo-economic shifts that have occurred at both the regional and global levels. Because of this, it was necessary for the two nations to go beyond the traditional idealism that characterised the Indo-Soviet relationship and instead interact on a more practical basis. There is no longer any doubt about the level of trust and goodwill that exists between the two nations in today's world. However, in recent times, there has been a widening gap between the objectives of the two countries, which has been fueled by factors on both the national and international levels. These differences have the potential to have a significant impact on the future of the relationship between India and Russia. During the first five years that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was in charge of the government, these aspects received a fresh layer of attention.

India's relationship with Russia dates back decades and has stood the test of time. The strengthening of ties between India and Russia has been a central focus of India's foreign policy for many years. Since the signing of the "Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership" in October 2000 (during the visit of President Putin), relations between India and Russia have taken on a qualitatively new character, with increased levels of cooperation in almost all aspects of the bilateral relationship, including politics, security, defence, trade and economy, science and technology, and culture. This is true of both countries. As part of the Strategic Partnership, there are a number of institutionalised conversation mechanisms that are in operation at both the political and official levels. These mechanisms guarantee that there is consistent engagement and that there is follow up on actions related to collaboration. The Strategic Partnership was upgraded to the status of a "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership" during the visit of the Russian President to India in December of 2010.

Relations on the Political Scene

Annual Summit: The Annual Summit is the highest level of institutionalised discussion mechanism in the strategic relationship between India and Russia. It is held between the Prime Minister of India and the President of the Russian Federation. Twenty meetings of the Annual Summit have been held thus far, with India and Russia taking turns hosting each one. The 20th India-Russia Bilateral Summit and the 5th Eastern Economic Summit were both held in Vladivostok during September 4 and 5, 2019, and the Prime Minister of India attended both events as the Guest of Honor. During the visit of the Prime Minister, 14 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed. These MoUs were in the domains of Trade and Investments, Defense Cooperation, Road Transport, and Cooperation in Oil and Gas Sectors. In addition to that, he took the opportunity to meet with the Prime Minister of Malaysia, the President of Mongolia, and the Prime Minister of Japan before delivering a speech at the Eastern Economic Forum. The 19th India-Russia Annual Bilateral Summit took place in New Delhi from October 4 to October 5, 2018, and was attended by President Putin. He met with both the President and the Prime Minister of India and participated in formal discussions with each of them. During the visit, a total of eight Memoranda of Understanding were signed covering a variety of topics including

business and investment, civil nuclear cooperation, space, transportation, and more. Both of the nation's presidents spoke at the India-Russia Business Summit together and had a conversation with some of the most gifted youngsters from India and Russia.

1. On the margins of the BRICS meeting, which was held in Brasilia on November 13, 2019, the PM met with President Putin. They discussed the current state of bilateral cooperation, and President Putin extended his invitation to Prime Minister May to attend the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Victory Day in Moscow on May 9, 2020.
2. On the 21st of May, 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin met for the first time in an informal summit in the city of Sochi, which is located in the Russian Federation. The Summit gave an opportunity for both leaders to expand their relationship and to share views on world and regional concerns. This was in line with the history of high-level political interactions that have taken place between India and Russia in recent years.
3. On April 12, 2019, President Putin issued the Executive Order On Awarding PM Russia's Highest State Decoration, which is the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle. The order was bestowed upon the Prime Minister of India in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the formation of a privileged strategic relationship between Russia and India as well as friendly connections between the peoples of the Russian Federation and India.
4. Intergovernmental Commissions: There is consistent communication at a high level between the two nations via these organisations. Two Intergovernmental Commissions, one on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological, and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC), which is co-chaired by the EAM and the Russian DPM, and another on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC- MTC), which is co-chaired by the Russian and Indian Defense Ministers, meet annually. Both of these commissions are co-chaired by the respective Russian and Indian defence ministers. During the week of November 5-9, 2019, the Minister of Defense of India, Shri Rajnath Singh, travelled to Russia to co-chair the 19th India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military and Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M&MTC) meeting in Moscow alongside the Russian Minister of Defense, General Sergey Shoigu. On the 22nd of July, 2019, the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Yury Borisov, led an 18-member composite team that travelled to New Delhi, where they met with EAM to co-chair the 24th IRIGC-TEC. They got together for the first time between sessions to have their first meeting since EAM took office. In order to be ready for the Prime Minister's upcoming trip to Vladivostok, the co-chairs have been having in-depth conversations on bilateral cooperation in the following areas: trade and investment; transportation; energy; agriculture; industry; and space.
5. Bilateral Interaction and Visits: Shri Kiren Rijiju, the Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, led a youth delegation to Saint Petersburg and Moscow for the India-Russia Youth Forum from the 18th of July to the 2nd of August. The mission consisted of 32 young people. The Raksha Rajya Mantri, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, travelled to

Russia from the 16th to the 18th of August 2019 in order to participate in the Closing Ceremony of the International Army Games 2019 on the 17th of August. NSA On August 21, Shri Ajit Doval travelled to Moscow, where he had a meeting with Nikolai Patrushev, the Secretary of the Russian National Security Council. They spoke about problems pertaining to the area and the world as a whole, as well as the preparations that are being made for the future visit of the Prime Minister of India to Vladivostok. In addition to that, he had a discussion with Dmitry Rogozin, the Director of Roscosmos, on the ongoing cooperation in the space area and the Gaganyaan Program. During the 24th and 25th of August, Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, travelled to Russia to participate in the World Skills event that was held in Kazan. On August 27 and 28, Dr. S. Jaishankar, the EAM, travelled to Moscow and met with FM Lavrov. They discussed the current situation of the India-Russia Special Privileged and Strategic Partnership as well as its future possibilities during their conversation. EAM also had a meeting with the Co-chair of the IRIGC, DPM Borisov, and spoke at a session on India's Perspectives on the Indo-Pacific at the Valdai Discussion Club on August 27. Both of these events took place on August 27. The visit to Moscow on August 29 and 30 was made by Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, who is the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel. During his trip, he met with the Deputy Prime Minister, Yury Trutnev, and they spoke about measures to improve collaboration in the energy and metal industries. He also had a meeting with Alexander Novak, the Minister of Energy of Russia, during which they discussed the possibility of energy cooperation between India and Russia. From the 22nd to the 25th of October, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan travelled to Vladivostok and Sakhalin to investigate business potential in the oil, gas, and steel industries in the Russian Far East. Mr. Prakash Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, travelled to Moscow from September 26-29 in order to participate in the inaugural meeting of the Heads of Environment Ministers from the SCO member nations. This gathering took place in Moscow. During his trip to Moscow for the 19th India-Russia IRIGC-MTC, Raksha Mantri had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Denis Manturov, who serves as the Minister of Industry and Trade for the Russian Federation. Together, they gave a speech at the India-Russia Defense Industry Cooperation Conference, which took place in Moscow. He contacted the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Mr. Yuri Borisov, in Moscow to inquire about the status of the India-Russia High-Level Committee on Science and Technology. Yuri Borisov agreed to attend the meeting. In Saint Petersburg, he went to the Piskarevsky Memorial Cemetery to pay his respects to the Russian soldiers and civilians who lost their lives during the Second World War. He also went to the Klimov Plant, which is the largest developer and manufacturer of engines for Military and Civil Air Fleet in Russia.

6. During the week of August 11-13, 2019, Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Mr. Piyush Goyal led a high-powered group to Vladivostok that included the Chief Ministers of the states of Haryana, Gujrat, Uttar Pradesh, and Goa, as well as around 140 Indian firms. This visit was a fulfilment of the assurance given by the Prime Minister of India to the President of Russia during their meeting in Bishkek earlier

this year on the sidelines of the SCO Summit, to explore opportunities for enhancing trade and investment from India to the Far East region of Russia. This meeting took place on the sidelines of the SCO Summit. On the Russian side, there were around 200 businesses, investment agencies, and funds that took part in the event. The companies spoke one-on-one with their selected business partners in an extended business-to-business setting and created connections for further discussions. The enterprises came from a diverse range of key industries, such as minerals and rare earths, energy, forestry and lumber, healthcare, agriculture and food processing, ceramics, tourism, and infrastructure, to name a few. During the 22nd and 23rd of November 2019, the Secretary of the DPIIT, Shri Guruprasad Mohapatra, travelled to Moscow for the IRIGC-working group on Modernization.

7. Acting Deputy Director of the National Security Agency In order to take part in the 10th Meeting of High-Level Officials responsible for Security Matters, Mr. Rajinder Khanna travelled to Ufa from June 17-20, 2019, and stayed there for that duration. On the margins of the event, he spoke with his colleagues from other nations and paid a courtesy visit for Mr. Nikolai Patrushev, the Secretary of the Russian Security Council. He also spoke with Mr. Oleg Khramov, the Deputy Secretary, and Mr. Zamir Kabulov, the Presidential Envoy on Afghanistan. Dy. NSA During the 17-18th of October 2018, Mr. Pankaj Saran travelled to Sochi to attend the annual meeting of the Valdai Club. Dy. NSA In order to take part in the 8th International Meeting of the Arctic Council Member-States, Observer-States, and Representatives of the foreign Scientific Community, which was organised by the Russian Security Council, Mr. Pankaj Saran travelled to Russia from the 30th of September to the 2nd of October 2019. Aside from that, he contacted Mr. Nikolai Patrushev, the Secretary of the Russian Security Council, and arranged for him to meet with the Arctic Envoys of five other nations. From the 14th to the 18th of May 2019, Justice L. Nageswara Rao was present at the St. Petersburg International Legal Forum.
8. Yuri Trutnev, Deputy Prime Minister of Russia and Presidential Envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia, travelled to India from June 17-20, 2019, in order to prepare the ground for Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's visit to Vladivostok in early September for the Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) and to explore bilateral cooperation in the Far East in priority areas such as diamond-processing, petroleum and natural gas, coal and mining, agro-processing, and tourism. He had meetings with the NSA, EAM, the Minister of PNG, the Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog, and the Head of Coal India Limited. Additionally, he participated in a round-table discussion with representatives of leading Indian Universities to foster a closer partnership between Indian and Russian Far Eastern Universities in the fields of education and science. In addition to this, he went to Mumbai, where he met with senior figures of the Indian business community and had discussions with representatives of Indian enterprises that have commercial interests in the Russian Far East. On February 20, 2019, Denis Manturov travelled to India to take part in the 12th Aero India Show. While he was there, he also met with the Prime Minister, as well as the Ministers of Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation. Alexey Volin, Deputy Minister of Digital Development,

Communications and Mass Media, travelled to India on April 4, 2019, where he met with the Secretary of the Indian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Ms. Zarina Doguzova, the Head of the Russian Federal Agency for Tourist, travelled to India on July 9, 2019, where she met with Mr. Prahlad Patel, the Minister of State for Culture and Tourism, to examine potential areas of collaboration in the tourism and cultural sectors. Between February 19 and 20, 2019, Mr. Alexander Venediktov, Assistant to the Secretary of the Russian Security Council, travelled to India to meet with the NSA and Deputy National Security Advisor Mr. Pankaj Saran. Mr. Nikolai Patrushev, Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, was in India on the 6th and 7th of December. While there, he participated in bilateral discussions with the NSA and paid a visit to the PM. During his trip to India, which took place from the 9th to the 11th of December, the Speaker of the State Duma met with the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The fifth sitting of the Russian-Indian inter-parliamentary committee was attended by both of the speakers. During the course of his tour, he also met with the Prime Minister and the Vice President. In addition to that, Putin had an interview with Doordarshan and went to the exhibition hall of the Russian-Indian joint venture known as BrahMos Aerospace Limited.

9. Consultations: At the conclusion of the 19th Annual Summit, the parties came to an agreement on a Protocol for Consultations between the two countries' respective ministries of foreign affairs for the period of 2019-2023. On April 1 and 2, 2019, FS travelled to Moscow for a meeting with DFM Morgulov to discuss bilateral problems. While in Moscow, FS also met with DPM Yury Trutnev to talk about collaboration in the Russian Far East. During his trip to India on January 17-18, 2019, Deputy Foreign Minister Morgulov had talks with the country's Foreign Secretary and met with both the Secretary (ER) and the Secretary (East). DFM Ryabkov visited India on January 9 to take part in the Raisina Dialogue and also met with FS when he was there. A number of FoCs covering a variety of concerns relating to the protocol have been completed up to this point.

Conclusion

In spite of certain periodic divergences in their respective objectives, India's relationship with Russia will continue to be the cornerstone of its foreign policy. This has always been the case. It should come as no surprise that India's recent pivot toward the west is motivated by a desire to replace Pakistan as the primary strategic ally of the United States in the South Asian area. On the other hand, Russia is working to undermine the United States' influence in Afghanistan and the Central Asian states. India and Russia, in spite of all of the evident contrasts between them, are both working to strike a balance between their national interests and the maintenance and development of their bilateral relations. If this trend continues, India's and Russia's ties will continue to improve and grow even closer in the years to come.

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