

# CSB IAS ACADEMY

**TOPIC OF THE DAY (DATE: 02.01.2024)**

## INDIA - RUSSIA RELATIONS

### **WHY IN NEWS?**

Recently, Minister of External Affairs of India Jai Shankar completed his five days visit to Russia.

### **INDIA-RUSSIA RELATIONS**

#### ***Historical Background:***

- India's close ties with the then-Soviet Union originated in the mid-1950s during the Cold War, with the relationship intensifying due to conflicts with Pakistan.
- The Soviet Union played a pivotal role in mediating a cease-fire between India and Pakistan during the 1965 war over Kashmir. In the 1971 Indo-Pak war, the Soviet Union wielded its veto power at the UN in support of India. The Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation signed in 1971 solidified the Indo-Soviet bond.

#### ***Post-Soviet Era and Strategic Partnership:***

- After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Treaty of Indo-Russian Friendship and Cooperation replaced the earlier alliance in 1993. The "Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership" in 2000 further strengthened bilateral relations.
- India and Russia continue to cooperate closely in the United Nations Security Council, with regular consultations at the NSA level and engagement during multilateral events.

#### ***Trade and Economic Cooperation:***

- The India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission and the India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue serve as key mechanisms for enhancing trade and economic ties. Bilateral trade reached a record high of \$18.23 billion in April-August 2022, with India's imports dominating, particularly in Russian crude oil.

#### ***Defence Collaboration:***

- India and Russia share a longstanding and extensive defence cooperation, evolving from a buyer-seller dynamic to joint research, development, and production of advanced defence technologies. Notable acquisitions include the INS Vikramaditya aircraft carrier.

#### ***Nuclear Energy and Space Cooperation:***

- Russia remains a vital partner in India's peaceful use of nuclear energy, exemplified by the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant. Collaboration in space extends to India's Gaganyaan human spaceflight program.

### **KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BILATERAL MEETING**

#### ***Economic Collaboration:***

- India and Russia have signed a Protocol on Consultations for the period of next four years from 2024 to 28 to make progress in economic cooperation, energy trade, connectivity, military-technical cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges.
- Emphasis on strategic collaboration in defense, space exploration, nuclear energy, and technology sharing, showcasing the strength of the longstanding partnership.
- Exploration of avenues for deeper cooperation in various sectors.
- Agreement on the expansion of exports of Russian hydrocarbons to the Indian market.

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- Cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

## **EaEU-India FTA Negotiations:**

- Decision to hold an early meeting for negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the Eurasian Economic Union (EaEU) and India.

## **Agreement on Nuclear Power Plants:**

- Signing of agreements to progress with future units of the Kudankulam nuclear power project in Tamil Nadu.
- India already operates two Russian-built nuclear plants, and four more are under construction in Kudankulam. The Kudankulam nuclear power plant, India's largest, is expected to reach full capacity in 2027.

## **Diplomatic Initiatives:**

- Discussion on multilateral forums and international organizations where India and Russia collaborate or share common interests. Forums include BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization), and UN affairs.

## **Contemporary Issues**

- India and Russia discussed a wide range of issues, including the Indo-Pacific region, Ukraine, and the Israel-Gaza conflict.

## **Importance of Russia for India**

1. **Balancing China:** Given the geopolitical challenges in the region, Russia plays a crucial role in helping India balance its relations with China. The trilateral meetings among the foreign ministers of Russia, India, and China demonstrate Russia's potential role in defusing tensions and facilitating diplomatic solutions between India and China.
2. **Economic Engagement:** Beyond traditional areas of cooperation, there is a growing focus on emerging sectors of economic engagement. Russia and India are exploring collaboration in sectors such as mining, agro-industrial activities, and high technology, including robotics, nanotech, and biotech. India's expanding footprint in the Russian Far East and the Arctic reflects the potential for increased economic cooperation.
3. **Combating Terrorism:** Both countries are working together to address security concerns, especially in regions like Afghanistan. The call for the finalization of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism indicates joint efforts to combat terrorism at the international level.
4. **Support at Multilateral Forums:** Russia supports India's aspirations for a permanent seat on a reformed United Nations Security Council and membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group. This diplomatic support enhances India's standing on the global stage and reinforces its strategic partnerships.
5. **Military Exports:** While Russia has been a historic and significant supplier of arms to India, the declining share of arms imports from Russia indicates a diversification of India's defense procurement sources. However, the historical ties in military cooperation still form a critical aspect of the bilateral relationship.