



SIGNIFICANCE OF INDO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS FOR SECURITY PURPOSE

Meenakshi

Research scholar RIMT University, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab

Dr. MEGHA DHIMAN

Department of Political Science, RIMT University, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab

ABSTRACT

India-Russia relationship has evolved into an equal partnership. The deep roots of this relationship go back to the early 20th century when India was under British rule and the Czars ruled Russia. The Russian Revolution of 1905 inspired Indian freedom fighters. Mahatma Gandhi was also struck by the similarity in the prevailing conditions in Russia and India. He developed a close connection with Russia and carried on lengthy correspondence with Leo Tolstoy. Russia's communist leader V.I. Lenin followed with interest and sympathy the nascent Indian freedom struggle.

KEYWORDS: *Relationship, Indo-Russian, Military*

INTRODUCTION

Today, both India and Russia have acquired a new self-confidence arising out of their rapid economic growth, at the time when many developed countries are suffering from economic recession. As rising economic powers, both India and Russia are playing an increasingly larger role on the world stage.

The two countries share the goal of creating a multipolar world. India values the political and diplomatic support it continues to get from Russia on vital issues. India is also happy to note that Russia is recovering economically and militarily and is reasserting itself on the international sphere. In today's complicated and fast changing geopolitical situation, both countries have wisely diversified their foreign policy options, yet have been careful not to abandon a mutually beneficial partnership of trust built up over decades.

India-Russia cooperation is going on smoothly and steadily in various sectors. Cooperation in the defense sector is still the strongest link. Even today around 50% of the defense

equipment used by the Indian defense forces is of Russian origin. India is cooperating with Russia on major defense projects such as on indigenously developed nuclear submarine Arihant, the Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA). Off late, Russia also participated in the formation of the first group of Indian satellites for distant probing of the earth.

The first launch of IRS series satellites was conducted by "Vostok" rocket. Russia has also advanced a proposal for selling the advanced MiG-35 fighter jet to the IAF. A \$3.77 billion deal for the supply of 40 SU-30MKI Russian fighter aircraft to India was also signed.

The agreements included proposal for procuring around 10,000 'Invar' missiles, T-90 tanks and over 200 air-launched versions of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles. Russia still remains India's largest supplier of military equipment despite the entry of US and Israel, which has apparently, also become major suppliers of military hardware to India.



In the nuclear-power sector Russia has already constructed two nuclear power plants at Kudankulam in south of India under Indo-Russian Nuclear Cooperation program. Negotiations for two additional units on the same site are also going on. In the space sector too, India-Russia cooperation on Glonass is going on well. India is also trying to get Russian Technology in tracking satellites and to have a collaborative Chandrayaan II, project involving space probes to the moon.

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India is energy deficient country and Russia is energy surplus and therefore, a mutual interest lies in this sector. Indian side feels that there is a clear compatibility between India's needs and Russia's resources. Indian side is adopting a policy to implement the experience of Sakhalin-1 to other oilfields in Russia.

India's policy is to promote the idea of India's willingness to offer Russian companies to participate in Indian oil and gas projects, both upstream and downstream, as well as to undertake joint exploration in other countries too. India has geared-up its energy diplomacy and is moving quickly to penetrate in the Russian energy market.

The cooperation in this sector depends much on the manner in which both the Nations conduct their bilateral diplomacy. The two sides welcomed progress in identifying the sites in India for additional nuclear reactor units to be set up in cooperation with Russia. Both the sides agreed to actively work towards localisation of manufacturing in India under the "Make in India", mission and in continuation with the series of construction of nuclear power plants. It appears that potential sites have been offered in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. It is learnt that

President Putin has plans to sell as many as 25 nuclear reactors to India through Russia's state-owned energy giant, Rosatom.

The pace of both the countries cooperation in nuclear energy is increasing. At present, both the countries are progressing on fulfilling the plans for 12 Russian nuclear reactors at two sites. The recent agreement will increase Indian manufacturing content in these reactors.

Unit-II of the Kudankulam plant in Tamil Nadu, will be commissioned soon and the negotiations are at an advanced stage for units III and IV. Both the sides welcomed the action for localization between RosAtom of Russia and the Department of Atomic Energy of India.

Overall India Russia-Nuclear cooperation agreement includes:

- a) Transfer of nuclear power reactors;
- b) Fuel supply agreement for both supplied reactors and other reactors operating in India, including both natural uranium and enriched uranium;
- c) Right to process spent fuel;
- d) Fuel supply assurance under all circumstances;
- e) In principle, agreement to transfer reprocessing technology and enriched technology.

DISCUSSION

Both India and Russia reaffirmed their intention to expand the scope of such collaboration and avail the opportunities for expanding mutual capabilities.

However, there are still certain issues related to inadequate banking and financial services, lack of brand promotion, removal of discrimination in insurance coverage and



quality control concerns are coming-up as a stumbling block in Indo-Russian economic cooperation.

The Russian side appreciated that the simplified visa regime for Russian citizens being implemented by the Indian side and this move had contributed to a 24% increase in Russian tourists travelling to India in the year 2011-12 as compared to the earlier years.

India and Russia are also trying to collaborate on new areas which need to be explored further, like in the area of democratisation process, social policy diffusion, in religious dialogues, in promoting secularism, tolerance, multi-ethnicity, for developments of internal economic management and planning etc. which are all significant areas for both India and Russia and could be addressed together.

Russia's preference for multipolarity and encouragement for the promotion of groupings like RIC (Russia-India-China), BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa), as well as SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) is intended to create a forum outside the Western block where India and Russia along with other countries can discuss issues without western pressure.

Amidst all these positive developments as well as certain concerns, there is a hope that India-Russia friendship and the strategic partnership will scale new heights and it will grow, thrive and blossom in the coming years. Nonetheless, there is a need to create wider public interest and understanding for developing the relationship, particularly among the increasingly influential younger generations. Without strong public support, it will be difficult to provide greater depth, a sound foundation and long-term stability to this mutually beneficial strategic partnership.

There is no substitute for spontaneous and natural people-to people exchanges. India and Russia will need to build direct contacts with the entire spectrum of stakeholders and interest groups in the political, economic, military and other spheres. Today, India-Russia relationship has many positive dimensions and can move on steadily.

India's connections with other former Soviet States specially with the two distinct parts of Central Eurasia i.e. five states of Central Asia and three States of South Caucasus is also significant and the relationship is developing significantly over the past two decades since these countries got their independence.

CONCLUSION

India-Russia Civil Nuclear Cooperation Reaffirmed that cooperation on peaceful use of nuclear energy and cooperation in nuclear sector is significant for Russia-India strategic partnership. India-Russia civil nuclear cooperation while long-standing has not been without its ups and downs, however, both the Nations decided to accelerate bilateral civil nuclear energy cooperation.

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