



## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA - RUSSIA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP UNDER THE MODI GOVERNMENT (2014 -2021)

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### **Abstract**

*The article will critically examine the nature and dynamics of the India – Russia Strategic Partnership under the Modi Government in the contemporary global world. India's foreign policy towards Russia has been driven by important defence ties and the contemporary multipolar world dynamics. India – Russia traditional ties have been reaffirmed in the recent visit of Sergei Lavrov, the Foreign Minister of Russia, on April 05, 2021, in New Delhi. Hon'ble Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and his Excellency Russian President Vladimir Putin have made tremendous progress related to the strategic partnership, space cooperation, nuclear sector, energy cooperation, the free trade agreement with Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), defence cooperation with special reference to joint development of weapons. Further, Russia has been supplying "cutting-edge military technology" to India. India and Russia have agreed to invest in International North-South Transport Corridor and the Chennai-Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor. Mr.Lavrov has described Quad as 'Asian NATO.' According to Lavrov, military alliances in Asia will be counterproductive, affecting the India – Russia strategic cooperation. Both India and Russia have strongly advocated an inclusive approach for the democratic process in Afghanistan. India and Russia have been continuing traditional, time-tested, strategic cooperation despite divergent interests in South Asia. India and Russia have to resolve the recent strains due to Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), Lavrov's visit to Pakistan, and Russia's support to Taliban to include in the power-sharing arrangement of Kabul. India – Russia has been playing a vital role in the contemporary multipolar world order. In this context, the article will make a serious attempt to critically elucidate the latest trends of India - Russia's strategic partnership under the Modi Government in the contemporary global world.*

**Key Words:** *Strategic Partnership, Defence Cooperation, Multipolar World Order, Military-Technical Cooperation, BRICS.*

### **Introduction**

India and Russia have been meeting annually ever since the strategic partnership agreement was signed in 2000. India regards Russia as a unique strategic partner, but India has different perspectives on Indo – Pacific region, China, and Pakistan. The two episodes have created minor strains and irritants in the India – Russia strategic partnership: (i) cancellation of an annual summit of 2020 and (ii) Sergei Lavrov's statement against the US designs of Quad in the Indo – Pacific region. Since 2000, India and Russia have never missed the annual meeting. The annual summit is one of the milestones of India - Russia's strategic partnership, which had strengthened its strategic partnership. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated that the USA is pressuring India to join its network (Quad) to create tensions in India - Russia strategic partnership ( Siddiqui, Financial Express,2021). India will never try to undermine Indo-Russian strategic partnership, and also it will never work against the security interests of Russia. India always gives importance to strategic autonomy and national interest while establishing diplomatic relations with global countries. Given the changing geopolitics of South Asia, Chinese expansionism, collaboration has become inevitable in the Indo- Pacific region to contain the aggressive policy of China in South Asia. Recent China aggression in the Ladakh and Galwan valley has pushed India to develop



proximity towards the USA. However, the relations have not deteriorated ties between India and Russia, and also QUAD is not the priority of Russia; instead, its security interests derive from its neighborhood (Kumar 2021, Siddiqui 2021, Financial Express 2021). India's ties with Central Asia have been strengthened due to India's strategic partnership with Russia. North-South Transport Corridor and Chabahar to Afghanistan projects are the best examples of convergent interest of India and Russia (Kumar 2021; Siddiqui 2021)

### Political Relations

**Annual Summits:** Indian Prime Minister has participated in the 20<sup>th</sup> India-Russia Bilateral Summit at Vladivostok from September 4-5, 2019. In this connection, the Russian President has invited Shri Narendra Modi to participate in the 5<sup>th</sup> Eastern Economic Summit. During this summit, 14 key agreements have been signed regarding defence cooperation, investments, trade, oil & gas sector (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2020).

Russian President has visited India during 04-05 October 2018 to participate in the 19<sup>th</sup> India-Russia Annual Bilateral Summit. During this summit, 8 MoUs have been inked about civil nuclear cooperation, space, investment, transport, commerce, and trade. Shri Narendra Modi and Vladimir Putin reviewed the bilateral relations on November 13, 2019, at the BRICS summit in Brasilia order (Embassy of India, New Delhi, 2020). Russian President has invited Narendra Modi to participate in the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory Day in Moscow, Russia, on May 09, 2020. Both the leaders met at the Sochi on May 21, 2018, during the informal summit. The summit has further deepened India – Russia's strategic partnership and extensively discussed various contemporary global issues. The Russian Government has conferred a very prestigious award, i.e., Order of St Andrew the Apostle, to Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on April 12, 2019. It shows the importance of India – Russia strategic relations in the contemporary world order (Embassy of India, New Delhi, 2020).

**Table: 01, “Bilateral visits between India and Russia: 2014 to 2021**

Sl.No	Title	Visit Date
1	"Visit of Russian Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Dmitry Rogozin to India	November 05, 2014
2	Visit of President of Russian Federation, HE Mr. Vladimir Putin to India	10-11 December 2014
3	Visit of Prime Minister to Russia	(December 23- 24, 2015)
4	Visit of External Affairs Minister to Russia	(April 17-19, 2016)
5	Petroleum Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan leads the Indian delegation to St Petersburg International Economic Forum.	June 19, 2016
6	Visit of Indian Warships to Vladivostok, Russia	June 27 - July 01, 2016
7	External Affairs Minister Mrs. Sushma Swaraj to visit Russia	August 30, 2017
8	Commerce and Industry Minister Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman to attend Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok.	August 30, 2017
9	Visit of External Affairs Minister to Russia	September 5-7, 2017
10	Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh to Visit Russia	November 24, 2017
11	Visit of External Affairs Minister of India Mrs. Sushma Swaraj to Russia,	November 30 – December 01, 2017
12	Visit of External Affairs Minister to Moscow	(September 13-14, 2018)
13	Visit of Foreign Secretary to Russia	(April 01-02, 2019)
14	Defense Secretary Mr. Sanjay Mitra spoke about India's	April 25, 2019



	<i>contribution to UN Peacekeeping operations at the 8th Moscow Conference on International Security, MCIS.</i>	
15	<i>Visit of Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa to Russia,</i>	<i>July 8-13, 2019</i>
16	<i>NSA visit to Moscow,</i>	<i>August 21, 2019</i>
17	<i>Visit of External Affairs Minister to Moscow,</i>	<i>August 27-28, 2019</i>
18	<i>Visit of Minister of Petroleum &amp; Natural Gas and Steel,</i>	<i>August 28-30, 2019</i>
19	<i>Visit of Prime Minister to Vladivostok,</i>	<i>September 04-05, 2019</i>
20	<i>Prime Minister's visit to Vladivostok</i>	<i>September 04-05, 2019</i>
21	<i>Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh's visit to Moscow</i>	<i>June 22-25,2020</i>
22	<i>Highlights of Official Visit of FS Harsh Vardhan Shringla to Moscow</i>	<i>(16-18 February 2021)</i>
23	<i>Visit of the Foreign Secretary to Russia</i>	<i>(February 17-18, 2021),</i>
24	<i>Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov's visit to India</i>	<i>April 05, 2021</i>

Source: Web Portal of Embassy of India, Moscow, 2021  
 Website: <https://indianembassy-moscow.gov.in/visits.php> ,Accessed on May 26, 2021.

### **Bilateral Visits from 2014 to 2021(April)**

The above table depicts that the political relations have reached the pinnacle between India and Russia. Hon'ble Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin have met several times during 2014 -2020. Defence Ministers, External Affairs Ministers, and Officials from both sides have met at New Delhi and Moscow several times. They have signed historical and unique agreements related to defence, nuclear energy, space, and trade. Thus, India – Russia's strategic partnership strengthened under the dynamic leadership of Indian Prime Minister – Shri Narendra Modi. India and Russia have played a pivotal role in the contemporary world order( Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2021).

### **Intergovernmental Commissions**

Intergovernmental commissions are regularly taking place between India and Russia. Russia has unique military-technical cooperation with India in the contemporary global world. As part of this procedure, two Inter-Governmental Commissions have been taking place annually on (i) Military-Technical Cooperation, and both Indian and Russian e defence ministers have been chairing military-technical cooperation (ii) Technological, Cultural, Economic, Trade, Scientific Cooperation. External Affairs Minister of India and Russian Deputy Prime Minister have been chairing the Inter-governmental commissions(Indian Embassy, Moscow, 2020).

Shri Rajnath Singh, Indian Defence Minister, has participated in the 19th India- Russia Military-Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M&MTC) from 5-7 November 2019. In this connection, the Russian defence minister and Indian defence minister have extensively discussed various aspects of defence and security. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Yury Borisov and 18 member team participated in the 24<sup>th</sup> India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation on July 22, 2019. They have extensively discussed various issues related to space, industry, agriculture, transport (Indian Embassy, Moscow, 2020).

**India-Russia Strategic Partnership in 2020: Defense Cooperation:** Within the framework of BRICS, RIC, SCO, India, and Russia have developed a strategy to combat terrorism and global issues.



India and Russia have signed an agreement worth \$ 14.5 billion to manufacture the weapons jointly. Russian Ambassador to India Nikolay Rishatovich Kudashev has expressed his opinion about the latest dynamics of India – Russia relations. Indian armed forces are using nearly about 70% of military equipment from Russia. Russia has emerged as the largest arms supplier of India, according to the database of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) (Financial Express, 2019).

### NSG & UNSC

Russia has been strongly advocating the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) membership for India. Further, Russia has also strongly supported reforms and membership for India in the Security Council of the United Nations. These developments have been reiterated in the 19th Annual Bilateral Summit.

### Trade and Economic Relations

Narendra Modi and Vladimir Putin have signed various agreements to improve trade and business. Both have signed a deal worth the US \$ 50 billion. In this connection, both countries have decided that by the end of 2025, trade should be increased to US \$ 30 billion. The following tables depict the volume of India – Russia trade relations (Indian Embassy, Moscow, 2021).

**Table 2: India-Russia Trade Statistics (US\$ thousands)**

Sl.No	Head	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020(June-October)
1	Export from Russia to India	5575201	5230164	6455480	7751334	7241133	4289999.8
2	Export from India to Russia	2257922	2359583	2902853	3225410	3919272	2731724
3	Total	7833123	7589747	9358333	10976744	11160405	7021723.8

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, Embassy of India, Moscow, 2021,  
URL: <https://indianembassy-moscow.gov.in/statistics.php>, Accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2021

The above table depicts that India has imported goods from Russia with a worth of worth US\$4289999.8 during 2015 – 2020. Russia has exported from India goods worth US \$2731724. Finally, India - Russia bilateral trade has contributed to US\$7021723.8 from 2015 to 2020. It shows the dynamics of India – Russia's strategic partnership in the contemporary global world.

**Table 3, Bilateral trade figures from 2010 to 2019 (Amount in US \$ billions)**

Sl.No	Year	Import from Russia to India	Export From India to Russia	Total Trade	Percentage Increase
1	2010	6.39	2.14	8.53	14.4
2	2011	6.09	2.79	8.89	4.19
3	2012	7.91	3.04	10.95	23.8
4	2013	7.01	3.10	10.11	-7.34
5	2014	6.34	3.17	9.51	-5.6
6	2015	5.58	2.26	7.83	-17.67
7	2016	5.23	2.36	7.59	-3.07
8	2017	6.46	2.90	9.36	23.32
9	2018	7.75	3.23	10.98	17.31
10	2019	7.24	3.92	11.16	1.64

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, Embassy of India, Moscow, 2021,  
URL: <https://indianembassy-moscow.gov.in/statistics.php>, Accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2021



The above table illustrates that India had imported goods from Russia worth US \$ 6.39billion in 2010. India has exported goods to Russia with a worth of US \$2.14 billion. Total bilateral trade has contributed US \$8.53 billion in the year 2010. India – Russia bilateral trade has increased to US \$10.95 billion. India has imported goods from Russia with a worth of US \$ 7.24 billion in the year 2019. India has exported goods US \$ 3.92 billion in the year 2019. India – Russia bilateral trade has contributed to the US \$11.16 billion in 2019(Indian Embassy, Moscow, 2021).

### Trade-in goods

According to the data of Russia, trade was on a downward trajectory from 2013 to 2016. Indo- Russian trade had witnessed a positive increase with 21.6% in 2017. The year 2018 has shown positive indicators in the trade between the two countries. There was an increase of 17.25% in the year 2018. India and Russia have achieved bilateral trade of US\$ 10.969 billion.

Similarly, an increase of 9% in 2019 related to bilateral trade between India and Russia. There were remarkable developments and achievements between India and Russia, and the volume of bilateral trade has increased to US\$ 7.55 billion (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2021). The following table illustrates the exports from Russia to India and imports from India to Russia.

**Table: 04, Export from Russia to India (USD million)**

Sl.No	HS-CODE	2018	2019	% Change
1	27-mineral fuels	1855.1	2197.5	+18.46
2	84-nuclear reactors	1097.5	842.9	-23.20
3	71-natural, cultured pearls; stones, metals, precious, jewelry	1075.6	766.3	-28.76
4	5-electrical machinery and equipment	520.5	366.2	-29.64
5	31-fertilizers	309.9	344.3	+11.10

*Source: Ministry of External Affairs, Embassy of India, Moscow, 2021,  
 URL: <https://indianembassy-moscow.gov.in/statistics.php>, Accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> June,2021*

The above table illustrates that Russia has exported mineral oils, mineral fuels, and mineral waxes worth US\$2197.5 million in the year 2019. Further, Russia has exported nuclear reactors, mechanical appliances, and boilers worth US\$842.9 billion in the year 2019. India has imported electrical goods worth US\$366.2 billion in the year 2019. The data shows a tremendous increase in the India – Russia trade from 2014 to 2019(Indian Embassy, Moscow, 2020).

**Table: 05, Import from India to Russia (USD million)**

Sl.No	HS-CODE	2018	2019	% Change
1	85-Electrical Machinery and Equipments	319.2	671.9	+110.49
2	30-Pharmaceutical Products	513.9	632.7	+23.12
3	4-Nuclear Reactors, Boilers,	304	382.8	+25.92
4	29-Organic Chemicals	214.7	282.3	+31.49
5	87-Vehicles	155.1	136.6	-11.93

*Source: Source: Ministry of External Affairs, Embassy of India, Moscow, 2021,  
 URL: <https://indianembassy-moscow.gov.in/statistics.php>, Accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> June,2021*



The above table depicts that Russia has imported electrical equipment worth US\$671.9 million, pharmaceutical products worth 632.7 million, nuclear reactors worth US\$ 382.8 million; Organic chemicals worth US\$ 282.3 billion, vehicles worth US\$136.6 billion in the year 2019. The data reveals that India is also exporting a significant volume of goods worth US\$136.6 million(Indian Embassy, Moscow, 2021).

### **Nuclear Energy**

India and Russia have been progressing in the nuclear energy sector. Russia has recognized India for having been a non - proliferation country. In Dec 2014, Russia's Rosatom and India's DAE signed the historical strategic vision in December 2015 to strengthen their cooperation in the nuclear sector. Russia has extended its cooperation to establish the Kudankulam nuclear power plant (KKNPP) in Tamilnadu. Units 1 and 2 of KNPPK have been effectively working. During the 18<sup>th</sup> bilateral summit, the protocol for Unit 5&6 was signed by both Russia and India. Further, both countries have signed agreements related to the implementation of cooperation in the nuclear sector. K.N. Vyas, Secretary of DAE from India, and DG Rosatom Mr. Alexey Likhachev have extensively discussed various strategic issues related to nuclear energy during April 12-17 (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2020).

### **Space Cooperation**

Dynamic changes have occurred between India and Russia with special reference to Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS), outer space, societal applications of outer space, remote sensing, and satellite launches. An MoU has been inked between ISRO and ROSCOSMOS in the 19<sup>th</sup> annual summit. Both ISRO and ROSCOSMOS have launched various activities with special reference to the human spaceflight program - Gaganyaan. Dmitry Rogozin, DG ROSCOSMOS, visited India on July 11, 2019, and met the Chairman of ISRO and NSA to discuss extensively aspects related to the production of space systems in India, propellants and propulsion systems, futuristic technologies, Gaganyaan program, spacecraft and launch vehicle, rocket engines, including new space systems(Ministry of External Affairs, Embassy of India, Moscow,2020)

### **Science & Technology**

In science & technology, both India and Russia have launched various innovative steps to advance technology. The Integrated Long Term Programme (ILTP) and Basic Science Cooperation Programme (BSCP) have gained prominence in bilateral science and technology cooperation. Indian and Russian scientists are working in close cooperation and inventing the latest technological methods in science & technology. In this connection, India and Russia have launched new initiatives, i.e., Russia-India Network (RIN) of Universities, India-Russia Bridge to Innovation(IRBI) telemedicine, Traditional Knowledge, Digital Library (TKDL), GIAN (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 2020).

### **Cultural Cooperation**

Since the Soviet Union times, India and the USSR have had good cultural relations. Many Indian students are pursuing their studies at Moscow State University, and it offers various courses on Indian languages. Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Centre (JNCC) is maintaining good relations with Russian institutions. 20 Russian Universities and institutes are teaching Hindi to more than 1500 Students in Moscow. Apart from Hindi, many Indian languages have been taught in Russian Institutions. Russian people have much interest in Indian music, Ayurveda, yoga, and dance. JNCC organizes classes in dance, Hindi, music, yoga, dance for Students in Moscow. The Embassy of India frequently organizes various activities related to Indian dance, spiritual traditions, food, music, spiritual traditions. Festivals



have been organized in New Delhi & Moscow from September 2018 – March 2019. Since 2015, regular cultural exchanges have been taking place between India and Russia (Embassy of India, New Delhi, 2020). The Embassy of India has organized events related to yoga in 65 cities of Russia. The Russian Government has also commemorated the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. In this connection, Russia has explained the significance of Mahatma Gandhi – Leo Tolstoy friendship.

Similarly, The Russian Embassy in India has organized the program on Leo Tolstoy. In this connection, the Institute of Oriental Studies organized International Conference on Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy on September 28, 2019, in Yasna Polyana. Prakash Javadekar, Minister of information and broadcasting, Minister of heavy industries and public enterprise, has inaugurated the workshop on 'Tolstoy-Gandhi.' It indicates the importance of India – Russia strategic cooperation. The Government of India provides ITEC scholarship to more than 76 Russian scholars to work extensively on Indo- Russian bilateral relations (Ministry of External Affairs, Embassy of India, Moscow, and December 2019).

### **Defence and Security Cooperation**

Defence cooperation has occupied much significance in the India - Russia strategic partnership. The nature of India-Russia defence cooperation has been shifted from a commercial relationship to the joint development of weapons and technologies. BrahMos cruise missile, 5<sup>th</sup> Generation Aircraft, Missile System, SU-30 aircraft and Multi – transport Aircraft, T-90 tanks, Ka-226T helicopters are the best examples of the joint venture between India – Russia with special reference to strategic defence cooperation. India and Russia signed an agreement on spare parts during the 20th annual bilateral summit at Vladivostok in September 2019. Further, Russia has agreed to send S-400 air defence equipment. Further, India and Russia have agreed to jointly manufacture Ka-226T helicopters (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2020).

As part of the unique Make-in India Programme, Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated Indo-Russian Rifles Pvt. Ltd at Amethi, Uttar Pradesh on March 03, 2019, for producing AK Series Assault Rifles. Both countries have been regularly organizing training and military exercise between the armed forces. Military exercises, i.e., 'INDRA 2017', took place on October 19, 2017, at Vladivostok. India and Russia have organized joint tri-services exercise 'INDRA 2019' during 10<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at Goa and Pune to strengthen maritime security. Mr. Birender Singh Dhanoa, Indian Chief of Air Staff, and Lt. Sergey Dronov, First Deputy Minister of Defence of Russia, have extensively discussed various strategic defence and security issues on July 09, 2019 in Moscow (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2020).

Deputy Defence Minister of Russia and Mr. Sanjay Mitra of Indian Defence Secretary have participated in Moscow's international security conference from April 23-27, 2019. In this connection, OFB and DRDO took part in the global military-technical forum on June 25, 2019, at Kubinka city. India-Russia military conference also took place in Chennai on April 13, 2018. 7 MOUs have been inked between India and Russia to manufacture and produce military equipment (Indian Embassy, Moscow, 2020). Russia has supplied the following defence types of equipment to India during 2004 – 2019.



**“Table 06: Transfers of significant weapons from Russia to India (2004 to 2019)**

Ordered	No. Designation	Weapon Descriptio	Years Weapoi	Year Delivery	Of Delivered
(25000)	9M113 Konkurs/AT-5	Anti-tank missile	(1988)	1992-2016	(25000)
8	A-215 Grad-M 122mm	Naval MRL	(1992)	1997-2009	8
9	Garpun/Plank Shave	Air search radar	(1998)	2000-2016	9
(400)	PJ-10 BrahMos	Anti-ship MI/SSM	(1998)	2006-2019	185
(426)	PJ-10 BrahMos	SSM	1998	2006-2019	(310)
140	Su-30MK	FGA aircraft	(2001)	2005-2019	(132)
6	RBU-6000	ASW MRL	(2003)	2014-2016	6
8	RBU-6000	ASW MRL	(2003)	2014-2017	6
28	BM-9A52 Smerch	Self-propelled MR	2005	2007-2008	28
123	BMP-2	IFV	2006	2007-2008	(123)
300	T-90S	Tank	2006	2009-2018	(300)
(14)	BM-9A52 Smerch	Self-propelled MRL	2007	2009	14
(63)	MiG-29SMT/Fulcrum-F	FGA aircraft	2008	2012-2019	(26)
(300)	YaMZ-238	Diesel engine	(2009)	2011-2013	(300)
(216)	PJ-10 BrahMos-A	ASM	(2012)		
25000	9M119 Svir/AT-11	Anti-tank missile	2013	2014-2019	(7500)
236	T-90S	Tank	(2013)		
149	BMP-2	IFV	(2017)		
(200)	Ka-226T Sergei	Light helicopter	(2017)		
4	Talwar	Frigate	2018		
4331	9M113 Konkurs/AT-5	Anti-tank missile	2019		
5175	Igla-S/SA-24	Portable SAM	(2019)		
464	T-90S	Tank	2019		
20	AK-630 30mm	Naval gun	(1990)	1998-2005	20
4	Cross Dome	Air search radar	(1992)	1998-2004	4
(400)	Kh-35 Uran/SS-N-25	Anti-ship missile	(1992)	1998-2004	(400)
7	Garpun/Plank Shave	Air search radar	(1993)	1997-2004	7
(500)	Kh-25/AS-10	ARM	(1995)	1995-2004	(500)
125	Kopyo	Combat ac radar	1996	2001-2006	(125)
(4000)	R-73/AA-11	SRAAM	(1996)	1997-2015	(4000)
(200)	Kh-31A1/AS-17	Anti-ship missile/ARM	(1997)	2000-2007	(200)
3	Talwar	Frigate	1997	2003-2004	3
(150)	3M-54 Klub/SS-N-27	Anti-ship MI/SSM	(1998)	2001-2008	(150)
(1000)	KAB-500/1500	Guided Bomb	(1998)	1998-2007	(1000)
10	Su-30MK	FGA aircraft	1998	2004	10
3	Fregat/Top Plate	Air search radar	(1999)	2010-2012	3
12	MR-90/Front Dome	Fire control radar	(1999)	2010-2012	12
6	RBU-6000	ASW MRL	1999	2010-2012	6
(1500)	9A1472 Vikhr/AT-16	Anti-tank missile	(2000)	2002-2004	(1500)
24	D-30	Turbofan	2001	2003-2004	(24)



3	Il-38SD	ASW aircraft	2001	2008	3
5	Ka-31	AEW helicopter	2001	2003-2004	5
(30)	Kh-35 Uran/SS-N-25	Anti-ship missile	(2001)	2008-2009	(30)
310	T-90S	Tank	2001	2001-2006	(310)
250	V-46	Diesel engine	(2002)	2004-2008	(250)
12	AK-630 30mm	Naval gun	(2003)	2014-2016	12
8	AK-630 30mm	Naval gun	(2003)	2014-2017	6
(3000)	Kornet/AT-14	Anti-tank missile	(2003)	2003-2006	(3000)
6	Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2003	2003-2004	6
1	Gorshkov	Aircraft carrier	2004	2013	1
1	Project-971I/Akula	Nuclear submarine	(2004)	2012	1
(12)	PS-90A	Turbofan	2004	2009-2011	(12)
(28)	2S6M Tunguska	Mobile AD system	(2005)	2008-2009	(28)
(300)	9M311/SA-19	SAM	(2005)	2012-2013	(300)
(450)	9M311/SA-19	SAM	(2005)	2008-2009	(450)
2	Il-38	ASW aircraft	2005	2010	2
16	MiG-29SMT/Fulcrum-F	FGA aircraft	2005	2010-2011	(16)
6)	NK-12	Turboprop	2005	2007	(6)
28	3M-54 Klub/SS-N-27	Anti-ship MI/SSM	2006	2008-2009	(28)
(100)	9M317/SA-17 Grizzly	SAM	(2006)	2012-2013	(100)
16	AK-630 30mm	Naval gun	(2006)	2012-2014	(16)
40	RVV-AE/AA-12 Adder	BVRAAM	2006	2012	(40)
3	Talwar	Frigate	2006	2012-2013	3
18	Su-30MK	FGA aircraft	2007	2007-2008	18
40	Su-30MK	FGA aircraft	2007	2009-2012	(40)
347	T-90S	Tank	2007	2008-2012	(347)
(250)	Igla-S/SA-24	Portable SAM	2008	2008-2012	(250)
80	Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	2008	2011-2013	(80)
5	Ka-31	AEW helicopter	(2009)	2013	5
29	MiG-29SMT/Fulcrum-F	FGA aircraft	2010	2012-2016	29
10	AK-630 30mm	Naval gun	(2011)		
(100)	KAB-500/1500	Guided Bomb	(2011)	2013-2014	(100)
(50)	Kh-35 Uran/SS-N-25	Anti-ship missile	(2011)	2012	(50)
(500)	RVV-AE/AA-12 Adder	BVRAAM	(2011)	2012-2013	(500)
10000	9M113 Konkurs/AT-5	Anti-tank missile	2012	2013-2017	(10000)
(740)	AL-31	Turbofan	2012	2013-2019	(480)
42	Su-30MK	FGA aircraft	2012	2013-2017	(42)
16	AK-630 30mm	Naval gun	(2013)		
68	Mi-8MT/Mi-17	Transport helicopter	(2013)	2014-2016	(68)
(250)	YaMZ-238	Diesel engine	2016	2017-2019	(172)



(650)	48N6/SA-10	SAM	(2017)		
(20)	S-400/SA-21	SAM system	2018	(20)	S-400/SA-21
(500)	9M114 Shturm/AT-6	Anti-tank missile	2019	2019	(500)
(2)	A-50EhI	AEW&C aircraft	(2019)		
(6)	Ka-31	AEW helicopter	(2019)		
1	Project-971I/Akula	Nuclear submarine	2019		
(300)	R-27/AA-10	BVRAAM	2019	(300)	R-27/AA-10
(300)	R-73/AA-11	SRAAM	2019		
(400)	RVV-AE/AA-12 Adder	BVRAAM	2019		

Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, Information generated on February 26, 2021.

Website: <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>

The above table illustrates that India has been exporting significant 9M113 Konkurs/AT - anti-tank missile, PJ-10 BrahMos - anti-ship missile, Su-30MK FGA Aircrafts, MiG-29SMT/Fulcrum-F FGA Aircrafts Mi-8MT/Mi-17 transport helicopters, T-90S tanks, nuclear submarines, S-400/SA-21 - SAM systems and Gorshkov aircraft carrier.

India and Russia have signed an agreement to supply advanced military equipment worth US\$ 5.43 billion. In this connection, Russia will be supplying S-400 Triumf, surface-to-air missile systems, and SA-21 Growler'. As per this MoU, India will be getting Fulcrum-E' fighter aircraft for various programs, five Triumf regimental kits. In this regard, both India and Russia have agreed to venture into the production of Kamov Ka-226T 'Hoodlum' helicopters, which will produce 140 rotorcraft. Indian armed forces will be using these light utility helicopters (Financial Express, December 26, 2019). Goa Shipyard Limited of India and Yantar Shipyard of Russia will be jointly manufacturing four 11356 Grigorovich-class frigates.

As a part of the joint development of weapons & technologies, BrahMos Aerospace has developed sea and ground launch cruise missiles of BrahMos. Both the Indian navy and army using T-90S Bhisma Main Battle Tanks. Further, India is also planning to procure anti-tank capabilities for the Indian army from Russia. Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) of India is also developing anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs). India and Russia jointly manufacture AK-203 7.62 mm rifles at Korwa Plant in Uttar Pradesh (Financial Express, December 26, 2019).

**Table 7: Arms Exports to India from various countries from 2004 to 2019**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Australia			8	17	17	17	17	17									91
Brazil														10		10	21
Canada										18	15	92					125
<b>France</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>2117</b>	
Germany	10	8	17	21	21	30	48	33	9	19	23	53	38	38	5	64	436
<b>Israel</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>3513</b>
Italy	18	1	4	5	3		12	306	12	6	11	6	3	3			401
Kyrgyzstan			18	18								4	5	5			50
Netherlands	37	2				10	20	1	1		10	10	10				122
Poland	36		218	101						11							367



<b>Russia</b>	<b>1476</b>	<b>61928</b>	<b>1750</b>	<b>1520</b>	<b>1389</b>	<b>2295</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>3804</b>	<b>3853</b>	<b>1720</b>	<b>1962</b>	<b>1888</b>	<b>1411</b>	<b>1102</b>	<b>1172</b>	<b>29444</b>
South Africa							4	31	31				11	11	16	104
South Korea														26	190	216
Switzerland									30	25	20					75
Ukraine	74						17	48	106	48	48	34	14	14		403
<b>UK</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>1148</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1798</b>
<b>United States</b>		<b>84</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>1123</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>3907</b>
Uzbekistan	126				209	209	209									753
<b>Total</b>	<b>2225</b>	<b>11488</b>	<b>2277</b>	<b>1853</b>	<b>1863</b>	<b>2909</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>4395</b>	<b>5378</b>	<b>3341</b>	<b>3045</b>	<b>2985</b>	<b>2931</b>	<b>1488</b>	<b>2964</b>	<b>43942</b>

**Source:** Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, Information generated on February 26, 2021. Website: <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>. Figures of SIPRI Trend Indicator Values (TIVs) has been expressed in millions.

The above table illustrates that France has exported weapons worth TIV 2117 million during 2004 - 2019. Similarly, Israel has exported weapons worth TIV 3513 million; the UK has exported weapons worth TIV 1798 million. United States has exported defence equipment worth TIV 3907 Million. Russia has exported defence equipment worth TIV 29444 Million from 2004 to 2019. The above table depicts that Russia exports the highest military equipment and weapons to India out of all global countries. It shows the strength of India - Russia's defence cooperation in the contemporary global world.

**Table: 08, Arms Exports from Russia to Global Countries from 2004 -2019**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total	2019	Total
<b>China</b>	2887	3156	2465	1316	1514	1094	731	783	653	739	630	840	736	1090	1404	2019	20724	688	20724
<b>India</b>	1476	693	928	1750	1520	1389	2295	2484	3804	3853	1720	1962	1888	1411	1102	688	29444	1172	29444
<b>Pakistan</b>	81			7	20	7	31	31	32	31	23	44	49	44	70	1172	513	44	513
UAE					1	149	324	126	126	126					40	44	972	80	972
United Kingdom		1	1													80	2		2
United States									16								16		16

**Source:** Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, Information generated on February 26, 2021. Website: <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>. Figures of SIPRI Trend Indicator Values (TIVs) has been expressed in millions.

The above table depicts that Russia exports defence equipment worth TIV 20724 million to China, whereas Pakistan receives TIV 513 million. Russia exports defence equipment worth TIV 29444 million during 2004 -2019 to India. It clearly shows that Russia gives a high level of strategic importance to India in South Asia, particularly in the global world.



**Table: 09,Arms exports to the top 10 largest importers from 2004 -2019**

Rank 2010-2019	Rank 2009-18	Supplier	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2010-2019
1	1	United States	8033	8988	9074	7508	9608	9963	9855	12050	10414	10752	96244
2	2	Russia	6275	8730	8261	7986	5527	5990	6841	6015	6506	4718	66848
3	4	France	866	1731	1010	1468	1627	1995	2041	2367	1773	3368	18245
4	3	Germany	2664	1317	747	779	1788	1766	2514	1982	1071	1185	15814
5	5	China	1478	1277	1540	2080	1226	1799	2372	1346	1140	1423	15683
6	6	United Kingdom	1157	1055	929	1608	1651	1179	1376	1225	699	972	11850
7	7	Spain	263	1429	546	728	1050	1163	471	820	1025	1061	8555
8	9	Italy	539	947	747	862	671	676	618	793	555	491	6900
9	8	Israel	637	538	455	420	393	720	1392	1195	655	369	6774
10	10	Netherlands	371	546	858	374	631	461	471	1048	438	285	5484
		Others	3487	3548	4001	3319	2851	2894	3315	2703	2889	2571	31579
		<b>Total</b>	<b>25771</b>	<b>30106</b>	<b>28169</b>	<b>27132</b>	<b>27023</b>	<b>28605</b>	<b>31267</b>	<b>31544</b>	<b>27165</b>	<b>27194</b>	<b>283976</b>

**Source:** *Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, Information generated on Generated on May 25, 2020. 2021. Website: <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>. Figures of SIPRI Trend Indicator Values (TIVs) has been expressed in millions.*

**Note:** Figures of SIPRI Trend Indicator Values (TIVs) have been expressed in millions.

The above table shows that the USA supplies paramount military equipment worth TIV 96244 million to the global countries during 2009 -2019. Similarly, Russia supplies major military equipment worth TIV66848 million to the global countries during 2009 -2019. Further, France supplies major military equipment worth TIV 18245 million to the global countries during 2009 -2019. The data reveals that the USA and Russia export the majority of the defence equipment to the global countries.

**Table 10: Arms imports to the top 10 largest importers**

Rank 2010-2019	Rank 2009-2018	Recipient	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2010-2019
1	1	India	2909	3596	4395	5378	3341	3045	2985	2931	1488	2964	33032
2	2	Saudi	1083	1222	1033	1614	2741	3380	2947	3934	3760	3673	25386
3	3	China	1020	1088	1604	1323	1063	1267	1142	1371	1633	887	12398
4	4	Austra	1511	1559	868	236	919	1464	1025	1671	1575	1399	12226
5	5	UAE	643	1236	1155	2311	767	1222	955	965	1197	644	11094
6	8	Egypt	686	630	281	675	420	1438	1684	2406	1674	1193	11087
7	6	Pakista	2199	1133	1018	1100	834	786	840	851	792	561	10114
8	9	South I	1284	1576	1078	185	723	272	1059	1056	1106	1510	9849
9	7	Algeria	834	1126	663	362	616	896	2899	962	1253	140	9752
10	11	Turkey	484	779	1500	796	1526	441	331	425	591	833	7707
		Others	13117	16162	14573	13152	14074	14395	15400	14972	12097	13389	141332
		<b>Total</b>	<b>25771</b>	<b>30106</b>	<b>28169</b>	<b>27132</b>	<b>27023</b>	<b>28605</b>	<b>31267</b>	<b>31544</b>	<b>27165</b>	<b>27194</b>	<b>283976</b>



**Source: SIPRI ARMS TRANSFER DATABASE, 2020.**  
**<http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/page/toplist.php>**

Source: SIPRI ARMS TRANSFER DATABASE, 2020, Generated on May 25, 2020. Figures of SIPRI Trend Indicator Values (TIVs) have been expressed in millions.

The above table depicts India imports major military equipment worth TIV **33032** million from the global countries during 2009 -2019. Similarly, Saudi Arabia imports significant military equipment worth TIV 25386 million from the global countries during 2009 -2019. China imports paramount military equipment worth TIV 12398 million from the global countries during 2009 -2019. Australia imports significant military equipment worth TIV 12226 million from the global countries during 2009 -2019. UAE imports major military equipment worth TIV 11094 million from the global countries during 2009 -2019. Pakistan imports major military equipment worth TIV 10114 million from the global countries during 2009 -2019. Finally, the data clearly explains that out of all global countries, India stood in the first place while importing weapons from the global countries. Indian policymakers must design more effective policies to develop our defence equipment as part of the Make in India program ( SIPRI 2021).

### **Major irritants between India – Russia bilateral relations**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov's visit has strengthened India - Russia strategic partnership. There are ups and downs in the bilateral relations due to India's proximity towards the USA regarding defence and security cooperation and Russia's proximity towards China. Russia wants India to remain to be neutral. India would like to maintain the strategic balance between Russia and the USA. It is a fact that India's proximity towards the USA and Russia's relations with China is not aimed against each other. Cold war politics of the USA has forced Russia to develop proximity towards China. The growing presence of China on the Himalayan border is also pushing India to develop bilateral relations with the USA. On the other hand, the USA considers the presence of Russia in Eurasia, the Middle East, and Europe as a threat to the strategic interest of the USA (Kumar 2021, Financial Express, 2021).

Donald Trump has maintained good relations with Russia. However, Joe Biden will be adopting different foreign policies towards Russia. The western forces are executing a policy of sanction and supporting democratic forces in Eurasia but are unlikely to succeed in their endeavor. Accordingly, Russia is getting ready to encounter the presence of western actors/forces in the neighborhood (Kumar 2021). These all factors have forced Russia to develop close relations with China and Iran. During Lavrov's visit to the Guilin city of China, had extensively discussed coming out of the dollar payment system. Russia and China would like to establish a military alliance, which will be having repercussions for contemporary global politics. The Director of the Russian International Affairs Council- Ivan Timofeev, has stated that the Russia – China bilateral relations are not aiming at the alliance, but it is beyond partnership (Kumar, Financial Express, 2021). If the pressure is coming from the west, Russia and China may establish a military alliance. It will enable China to modernize its military technology. It will be having severe implications for bipolarity and multipolarity. India and Russia have strongly supported the concept of multipolarity. It will have an impact on the USA's presence in Eurasia, Indo-Pacific and West Asia (Kumar 2021).

Since India is importing more defence equipment from the USA and playing a vital role in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), these developments have created doubts in Russia. Russia predicts that the USA would like to develop its close relations with India, which is the strategic partner



of Russia. Russia wants India to maintain its strategic autonomy and strategic balance and not become part of the security designs of the USA in Indo- Pacific region. The Russian International Affairs Council's Sergey Lavrov has given the following statement in December 2020 that India was "*currently an object of the Western countries' persistent, aggressive and devious policy against China through their Indo-Pacific strategies, called the 'Quad'*" (The Hindu 2020, Kumar 2021, Financial Express 2021). It has created much tension among foreign policymakers. Accordingly, India's Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, Shri Anurag Srivastava, has stated that "*India has always pursued an independent foreign policy based on its national interest. India's relationship with each country is independent of its relations with third countries. We hope that this is well understood and appreciated by all our partners*" (The Hindu 2020, Kumar 2021, Financial Express, 2021).

According to the sources of Moscow, Washington would like to undermine India- Russia strategic defence cooperation. CAATSA (Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act) of the USA has aimed to impose sanctions on a country, importing sophisticated weapons from Russia. India imports 75 to 80% of its defence equipment from Russia. Recently, India has signed an agreement to procure S- 400 missiles. Contrary to that, India has signed numerous agreements with the USA: BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement); COMCASA (Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement); LEMOVA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement). These developments may affect Indo- Russian defence cooperation (Kumar 2021, Financial Express 2021). Since Joe Biden is further strengthening Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, it will be having enormous implications for India – Russia security and defence cooperation (Kumar 2021, Financial Express 2021).

India - Russia has maintained good relations during post - cold war era also. The successive governments in India have continued towards a bilateral strategic partnership with Russia. Some strains have emerged in recent times between India – Russia strategic partnership. Indian foreign policy elite has to address these issues very seriously. The annual summit in December 2020 has not occurred in the Covid -19 pandemic, but some scholars have analyzed that Russia is very unhappy with the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue in the Indo-Pacific region (Kumar 2021, Financial Express 2021). Indian media is also accused Russia of not including India in the dialogue process with Afghanistan.

On the other hand, the USA has offered India to be part of the negotiations with Afghanistan. Lavrov has brought Russia's special envoy to Afghanistan - Zamir Kabulov, to India. It shows Moscow's sensitivity towards India's concerns in Afghanistan (Kumar 2021, Financial Express 2021). India would like to maintain its strategic autonomy, but China's aggressive and assertive policy in the Indo-Pacific region and the Himalayan border forces India to develop proximity to the USA. Russia has to be very sensitive towards India's security interests in South Asia. India has to assure Russia that Quad is not a military alliance and is not directed against Russia (Kumar 2021, Financial Express 2021). India is also strongly resisting that Quad should not become a military alliance in the future. The virtual summit of Quad has discussed various issues related to technology transfer, democratic cooperation, and vaccine collaboration. QUAD would like to play a democratic forum, assuring free navigation in the Indo-Pacific region and protecting the rule-based democracies. Similarly, India would like to work with Russia in the Indo- Pacific region (Kumar, Financial Express, 2021).

## **Conclusion**

The economic and political changes in Russia or global developments have never affected the strategic partnership between India and Russia. Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin have actively participated in the various contemporary multilateral platforms. India - Russia strategic partnership has been driven by military-technical cooperation, nuclear energy, global



peace, harmony, and sustainable development. Further, India imports 1/3 of the oil and gas from Russia for the development of energy resources. Russia has been extending its cooperation in the nuclear sector and developing a nuclear submarine project. Kudankulam nuclear power plant/reactor is the testimony for cooperation in the field of the nuclear sector. Russia strongly advocates India's entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). India has remarkable and significant military-technical cooperation with Russia. Russia has supplied AEW & C aircraft, which Russia and Israel jointly manufactured. India has procured a Gorchakov aircraft carrier from Russia named it Vikramaditya. Both India and Russia have developed BrahMos as part of the joint venture. Russia extends the highest cooperation in the sector of GLONASS, Russia's global navigation satellite system. India Imports 70% of defence equipment from Russia. India alleviated the transition position of Russia by ordering more defence orders. India forced Russia to modernize its defence industry and equipment to survive in the global arms market.

India – Russia strategic partnership has great political significance in the contemporary global world. Both India and Russia are federal states. Since India stood fourth place in military forces and technology, it has attained prominence globally. India - Russia strategic partnership has acquired a new qualitative partnership. India and Russia have common perspectives on various contemporary global issues. The strategic partnership between India - Russia has gained significance in the contemporary multipolar world order. Both India and Russia firmly believe in the new world order, based on mutual respect for the nations' interests, advantages and benefits in the economic system, mutual enrichment of the civilization and culture. The unique privileged India – Russia strategic partnership has contributed to the new world order in the contemporary global world.

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