



## Oldest friends: India and Russia

**This article is related to Paper-II (International Relation)**

**8/Oct/2018**

***The Hindu***

***"India needs to stand firm on its deep engagement with Russia in coming months."***

India-Russia summits have traditionally been short on time and ceremony and big on productivity. Russian President Vladimir Putin's 22-hour visit to Delhi last week was no exception.

On Friday, the two countries announced a number of agreements, including a \$5.43 billion S-400 Triumf missile system deal, a space cooperation arrangement to put an Indian in space, and an action plan for a new nuclear plant.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Putin also addressed a business summit, in an attempt to diversify ties and increase bilateral trade, currently below \$10 billion. Much of the fresh momentum in bilateral engagement will come from the energy sector.

Though the two sides didn't announce an agreement between ONGC Videsh and Gazprom as expected, several billions of dollars worth of investment and energy deals are in the pipeline. Significantly, the agreements discussed during Mr. Putin's visit have geopolitical implications.

The signing of the S-400 air defence system deal, for instance, is of far greater consequence than its size. It denotes India's desire to deepen defence cooperation with Russia; also that it is prepared to do this despite U.S. warnings that the deal could attract sanctions.

That this deal comes just a month after India signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) for better interoperability with the U.S. military is a sign that India will not be forced or even persuaded into putting all its eggs in one strategic basket.

New Delhi's assertion of "strategic autonomy" and desire for multipolarity will be seriously tested in the coming months.

For one, it chose to sign the S-400 deal, but resisted concluding other major defence deals with Russia on helicopters, stealth frigates and assault rifles, which Moscow will no doubt push for.

More defence deals with Russia will make it increasingly difficult for the U.S. to give India a waiver from sanctions under CAATSA, its legislation aimed at curtailing defence and energy dealings with Russia, Iran and North Korea.

Washington has already reacted to the S-400 deal, making it clear that any waiver will not be on a "country" basis, but on a "transaction-by-transaction" basis. In any case, accepting a waiver will implicitly commit India to reducing its intake of Russian military hardware.



Both on CAATSA and on the U.S.'s proposed sanctions on Iran that go into force on November 4, India will need to make some tough decisions.

It is one thing to reinforce long-standing and close friendships as Mr. Modi did during his annual summit with the Russian President this month, and with the Iranian President earlier this year, or with the U.S. President last year — the situation can be much more complex when friends expect you to choose between them.

### GS World Team...

#### India Russia Agreement

##### Why in the discussion?

- Recently, India and Russia have signed an agreement to purchase the S-400 missile defense system.
- In addition, an agreement was signed for cooperation between Russia and India in space.
- Under the agreement in space cooperation, India will set up a monitoring center in Novosibirsk, Siberia of Russia.
- Apart from this, Russia has also expressed confidence in the assistance of the Gagan Mission of India.

#### 8 agreements signed between India and Russia

- Memorandum of Understanding for setting up a Consultation Protocol for the period of 2019-2023 between the Ministry of External Affairs and the MEA of Russia
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Russian Federation's Economic Development Ministry and the National Institute of Transforming India
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Russian Space Agency 'Roscosmos' for Human Space program
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian and Russian Ministry of Railways

- Action Plan for priority and implementation of cooperation in nuclear sector
- Memorandum of Understanding between Russian Ministry of Transport and Indian Railways for Development Assistance in Transport Education
- Memorandum of Understanding between India's National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) and Russian Small and Medium Enterprises Corporation (RSMB) for cooperation in the field of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF); Agreement for establishing cooperation in the fertilizer sector between PGSC Fosgro (Fosagero) and Indian Potash Limited (IPL)

#### Importance of S-400 system for India

- India wants to buy a long-range missile system to strengthen its air defense system. This is important for the 4,000-km-long border of India-China.
- China already has the S-400 missile defense system, which has already begun to be supplied to him.
- The agreements signed will encourage cooperation in key areas such as defense, space, trade, energy and tourism.

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**Expected Questions (Pre Examination)**

**1. Consider the following statements regarding India-Russia Agreements-**

1. Missile Defence System would start to be supplied to India in 2019.
2. Pipeline agreement between ONGC and Gazprom concluded.
3. Russia will help India in humunless space travel.
4. Russia will establish a nuclear power plant in India.

Which of the above statements is/ are incorrect?

- (a) Only 4
- (b) 1, 2 and 3
- (c) 1, 2 and 4
- (d) All of the above

**2. Consider the following statements-**

1. India is binded by American Agreement (COMCASA).
2. CAATSA will affect Indian Interests.

Which of the above statements is/ are correct?

- (a) Only 1
- (b) Only 2
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor

3. Which of the following countries will get affected by CAATSA?

1. Russia
2. Iran
3. Pakistan
4. North Korea
5. Iraq

Choose the correct answer using the code given below-

- (a) 1, 2 and 5
- (b) 1, 2, 4 and 5
- (c) 1, 2 and 4
- (d) All of the above

**Note :**

**The answer of the pre-examination (expected questions) on 6 Oct is 1(d), 2(d) and 3(d).**

**Expected Questions (Mains Examination)**

**Q. "India-Russia Agreement is the zenith of Indian political freedom." Describe. (250 Words)**