

MAD-2020
INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS
Day – 22

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Question:

Indo-Russian cooperation has been limited to energy and defense sector when India has so much to offer. Comment. (250 words)

Answer:

While defense has been the strongest leg of the bilateral cooperation, and cooperation in energy is also substantial, there are several other areas in which the two countries cooperate, spanning culture, trade, transportation, education, science and technology, space and civil nuclear etc.

1. Investment: At the Eastern Economic Forum, India unveiled its Act Far East policy and PM Modi announced \$1 billion line of credit for the development of Russia's resource-rich Far East
 - India is also investing in the field of diamond, coal and gold mining
 - India and Russia met their investment target of \$30 billion by 2025 in 2017 and since then the target has been revised to \$50 billion by 2025
2. Education: Apart from promoting direct contacts between educational institutions, both countries mutually recognize the academic credentials
3. Tourism: There has been a rise in the number of tourists from Russia and in 2017, it was the eighth largest source of foreign arrivals to India
4. Space: India and Russia are working closely for Gaganyaan mission 2022, India's first manned mission to space

Scope for Expansion

1. Artificial Intelligence: There are prospects for cooperation between Russia and India in the area of industrial artificial intelligence
2. Agriculture: Both countries want market access in the agriculture sector especially for grain products including wheat and bovine meat and tropical fruits
 - India currently exports 1.9 million tons of buffalo meat every year
3. Connectivity: Vladivostok-Chennai sea route and INSTC will provide an avenue of rapid connectivity, thus increasing the avenues of cooperation
4. Pharmaceuticals: Indian companies can look at Russia as a production base and Russian companies in turn could take advantage of India's R&D prowess

The volume and scale of cooperation in other fields might not be as large as in the case of defense and energy, but limiting India-Russia cooperation to just these two, is unjust. Post-Cold war Russia was struggling to revive its economy and later on suffered economic sanctions as well. Now is the time, ripe enough, for aggressive collaborations in diversified fields on a much bigger scale.