



India-Russia Relations: Seeking New Convergences in the Multipolar World Order

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Abstract: *India and Russia are one of the closest strategic, economic, military and diplomatic partners in the world. India's proximity to Russia can be linked to the 'Cold War period when the Soviet Union (USSR) supported India unconditionally, although India was a Non-aligned member during this period. However, in the last two decades, both India and Russia have been following independent foreign policies, that have led them to a crossroads with each other. While Russia is wary about the threat from the West especially the US and its allies, India's close ties with the West are at their best state. India's Civil Nuclear Deal of 2008, and membership of the QUAD (Japan, Australia and the US being the other three) security dialogue have raised concerns in the Kremlin.*

Russia's close ties with China and the leadership of both platforms like the UN Security Council and the SCO have led to a permanent trust between them. India on the other end has seen Chinese hostility at its border areas like Galwan and Doklam. The Ukraine issue is a test of time circumstances for both countries.

This paper will seek to understand the various contours of India-Russia relations and how both countries are trying to find more convergence in their relationship, despite the presence of foreign policy obligations and their mutual international interests. The paper will also seek to understand the various global platforms both India and Russia share and how these platforms are crucial in maintaining the multipolarity of the current global world order.

Keywords: India-Russia relations, convergence, QUAD, countermeasure, Multipolarity
Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Ukraine

India-Russia relations: An Overview

Over the last two decades or the beginning of the 21st century, the partnership between India and Russia has found tremendous attention in world media and academic circles. Two powerful nations like Russia and the USA (referred to as the US hereon) with differing foreign policies, conflicting diplomatic history and mutual suspicion over each other have come closer to another emerging power i.e., India, than ever before. The end of the Cold War affected international relations in a significant way; it was no different for India-Russia relations. With the beginning of a new phase, a changed climate emerged and new ways were being modelled to prioritize and rebuild ties between these two countries.

It was evident that India-Russia ties towards the end of the 20th century or the beginning of the 21st century, were gaining more strength, not only because they had shared a history of cordial relations during the Soviet era, but the new affinity also grew between them due to common politico- strategic interests in South Asia, South-West and Central Asia (Harshe, 1998). It can also be noted here that during the Cold War period, both countries experienced some similarities in terms of economic governance. India was failing in growth and equity, mismanagement of the public sector and the development model adopted after independence could not counter problems like socio-economic inequalities, unemployment and poverty (ibid., 1998).



History is witness to the events in international relations of the friendship, trust, alliance and bonds between various regions, kingdoms, and in the last couple of centuries between nation-states. These alliances and friendships are kept for the sole purpose of peace, friendship, progress and also to seek support during conflicts and wars with other enemy states. A majority of friendships and alliances, especially the military alliances in recent history have caused security threats, conflicts and wars. Alliances have had conflicting outcomes when it comes to peace and friendship between nations. Robert A Kann (1976) questions, whether alliances that have iron-clad commitments serve the interest of peace and cooperation better or is it the entente, non-aggression pacts and consultation pacts which are far less rigidly defined in terms of 'rules of the game' or mutual obligations and commitments?

He further observes that in types of alliances or friendships that are filled with rigid obligations and commitments, there is always a tendency of the partner states to show an attitude, which reflects minimizing their own obligations and maximizing those of their partners. He consequently maintains that alliances have this centrifugal tendency towards weakening the ties between partner states, a tool which is most suitable for powerful nations to control the less powerful ones, in strength and influence and more apt for liberal and democratic countries, as partner states fear losing credibility and honour if the obligations of the alliance are not met (Kann, 1976). Thus, considering the above arguments by Kann, India's relations with Russia can neither be termed as an alliance nor an entente, it is somewhat a combination of both or something beyond.

Russia and India's relationship has considerably been influenced by the Post-Cold War developments as discussed above. Their relations in the 21st century have had similar political, historical and economic precedents, which paved the way for a better partnership at the beginning of the 21st century. Firstly, 1991 was a landmark in the history of both nations as Russia disintegrated from the former Soviet Union and India withdrew from its socialist system of economic governance and adopted reforms that would lead to a capitalist mode of growth. With the adoption of the capitalist mode of economic development, India and Russia found it difficult to experiment with welfare capitalism because of their lineage to the socialist pattern of development before 1991 (Harshe, 1998).

The importance of India-Russia cooperation in a dynamic and changing geopolitical sphere around the Post-Cold War time was at its epitome. Though the first president Boris Yeltsin visited India just once in January 1993, it was the second president Vladimir Putin, who initiated and transformed these cordial ties into strong strategic and bilateral ties, and from 2000 onwards Russia and India's leadership have annual meetings which are alternated between New Delhi and Moscow each year. During this time India and Russia's geopolitical interests converged more and clashed less, hence Russia vigorously wanted India to be a part of Eurasia and India too ensured that the Eurasian region has the presence of friendly nations and sought a level playing field, both countries sought other major players in the region as partners (Bakshi, 2005).

The post-Cold War period was very crucial in shaping and defining the India-Russia partnership. Russia was trying to juggle between its contradictory strands of change and continuity which was being reflected in its search for a new role, identity and image in the international arena. Russia's foreign policy in the initial years after Cold War was directly related to its domestic political orientation and needs of the Post-Soviet Russia (Singh, 1995).

Russia's foreign policy was marked by 'de-ideologization' after the Cold War ended. This meant Russia was looking for a breakthrough in its policies both domestic and international that would pave the way for the establishment of liberalization and democracy. Some leaders believed 'de-ideologization' was the only way through. Russia initiated good relations with



NATO and the US and its then-president Boris Yeltsin had declared that Russia was for de-ideologization 'in all spheres of life. This 'de-ideologization' in Russian policy did not have any impact on India-Russia relations though, in fact, it sent a clear message to the world that Russia was for peace and friendship with all countries. Its Soviet-era friendship with India was to counter the weight of China and the US, however, its Post-Cold War period friendship is bound by common interests, the balance of power and converging political and economic interests (ibid., 1995). The India-Russia friendship is strengthened by two agreements-

- i) Strategic Partnership between Russia and India-2000 and
- ii) Special Strategic Partnership between Russia and India-2010

India-Russia Defence Cooperation: The Benchmark

India-Russia ties can also be defined in their initial stages (Post-Cold War period) with some hiccups and confusion in their relationship. This was caused by, as discussed earlier, Russia's deep engagements with its domestic economy and political considerations and of course it's overriding dependence on the West, especially the US immediately after the Cold War. While present-day India-Russia relations are at one of their best stages, the initial scepticism towards each other for a long-lasting bilateral and strategic partnership is worth mentioning. Firstly, there was a third party involved in Russia and India's relationship and second, the initial confusion and hiccups transformed into understanding and trust, and set forth an unprecedented establishment of partnership and camaraderie between Russia and India. The third party was the US, as it was the US which understood Russia's domestic and international needs better than any other country and hence was able to pull the strings when required. These domestic changes in Russia roused India's concerns too as Russia was a trusted military partner because during the Soviet era 70% of military aid came from Russia (ibid., 1995).

India pointed out the concern in July 1993 into truth when Russia deformed down to American pressure to not sell cryogenic rocket engines to India as Russia was heavily dependent on the West for economic aid. This was a result of the US's concern about missile proliferation and encouraged to work with its partners and allies about controlling the export of missiles; hence, in April 1987 the MTCR (Missile Technical Control Regime) was formed. Though the cryogenic engines were for launching communication satellites, the US's concern and reason to impose sanctions on Russia and any country proliferating missile technology were directed towards the fact that this could be used for military purposes too. There were business and economic considerations cited by both Russia and India for the US's intervention in their deal, however finally Russia succumbed to the American pressure and hence India considered Russia unreliable and this incident increased the skepticism towards building good relations between Russia and India (ibid., 1995).

Towards the first decade of the 21st century, Russia has been extremely cautious of its image especially amongst the major powers when it came to exercising its foreign policy. It has been observed that Russia did not have a unified view of its future or interests, however, after the ascendancy of Vladimir Putin as president for the second term, a certain degree of consensus was built to clarify its foreign policy goals. One such goal was to solidify its increasing economic success and work towards being perceived as a great power of the modern era. It was not only striving to achieve military or political success but also economic progress, technological advancement and cultural influence across the world. It sought recognition by major global powers like the US, EU, China, Japan and most importantly India. It wanted to shed the old image of a country dependent on the West because of its political and economic weaknesses. So, it had to look out for its old partnership with an emerging power like India which was one of the largest importers of arms and military hardware (Oliker et al., 2009).



Towards the end of the first decade of the 21st century India-Russia bilateral and strategic ties gained some momentum when the then president of Russia Dmitry Medvedev visited India in December 2008. The visit was historical and significant as it was just after November 26, 2008, Mumbai terrorist attacks and also amid the global financial crisis. In total, ten agreements were signed which included defence, Civil-Nuclear Cooperation, space, tourism and combating terrorism and so on. Economic relations between the two countries were also one of the important aspects of bilateral commitment and strategic partnerships (Gidadhubli, 2009).

India-Russia's continued cordial relations have also encouraged them to be part of three international forums or groupings which cooperate and coordinate on issues as diverse as financial stability, economic cooperation, strategic issues and finding a voice in global governance and diplomacy. There have been concerns about the validity and positive perceptions about grouping like BRICS, however, keeping background of apprehensions of India-Russia's history of friendship and cooperation, these perceptions do not hold any ground and BRICS has managed to be one of the most recognized groupings for its coordinated initiatives in many aspects of international relations (Galvao, 2010).

Change and Continuity Path:

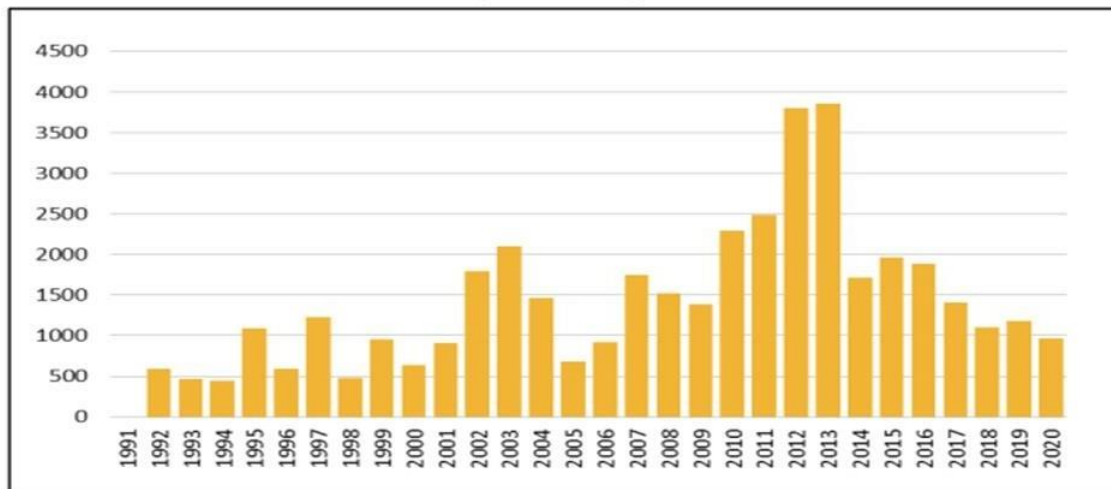
India-Russia relations are on a new high towards the second decade of the 21st century albeit on a few intermittent occasions there were some lows. Russia's continued support to India on its Security Council permanent membership and India's stand on Russia's Ukraine venture in 2014 is an example of mutual support. Similarly, India's nuclear tests in 1998 did not irk Russia as they did to the western countries that side-lined India with sanctions and criticisms, whereas Russia's reluctance to condemn and isolate New Delhi has gone in favour of cementing relations between the two nations. These are examples of continuity of support in India-Russia relations, however, of late there are a few changes that are affecting India-Russia relations. Firstly, India's search and dependence on newer markets for its military hardware especially towards the US and western countries like France, Britain and Israel have alerted Russia. Second, Russia's closeness to China and Pakistan has miffed India to a great extent. Third, in the wake of the Ukrainian crisis of 2013, Russia sought China's opinion more than India's, as China had more weight than India in global politics. India-Russia bilateral relations have also been affected by Russia's proximity and strategic outreach efforts toward China. The natural gas sale to China for 30 years, and the sale of weapons systems like the Su-30 30MKK/MK2 fighter have tremendous implications for India- Russia relations (Rajagopalan, 2018).

These are some of the issues which need to be tackled by Russia and India. India's neutral stand on the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine has come under criticism from both within and outside India. While the western countries led by the US are expecting India to raise its voice against the attack by Russia on Ukraine, India on the other hand has continued to maintain a relatively restrictive stance towards old friend Russia. There are several reasons attributed to this stance by India. Firstly, Russia is India's time-tested and trusted diplomatic and defense partner. It is India's largest arms supplier, despite the share dropping over the past years from 70% to 49%. Part of the reason is that India has decided to diversify its portfolio and boost domestic manufacturing. Nevertheless, the most recent purchase has been the S-400 missile system, which was bought to gain strategic deterrence against China and Pakistan, considering threats of looming sanctions by the US (Pandey, 2022).

Second, as mentioned earlier India's had decades-old ties with Russia and its predecessor the Soviet Union compelled it to abstain from a UN Security Council vote against Russia. The current leaders of India and Russia, i.e., Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and President Vladimir



Putin share a similar vision of muscular nationalism. India's subtle move by remaining neutral during the ongoing crisis between Ukraine-Russia can be attributed to the presence of a hostile neighbourhood (in the form of China and Pakistan) and India's commitment to Russia's never-ending support at various platforms to India (Mashal, 2022). The following chart explains India's and other countries dependence on Russia for arms and military equipment. The value of the arms imports from Russia shown below is between 1991-2020 (Value in US million \$):



Source: Andrew S. Bowen, "Russian Arms Sales and Defense Industry" Congressional Research Service, October 14, 2021

Analyzing the above table, we can note that from 1991 to 2013, the value of arms imports from Russia was an increasing trend, whereas after 2013 and until 2020, we see a decrease in the value of the arms imports to India from Russia. The primary reason for this declining trend in the value of arms imports from Russia to India can be attributed to India's engagement with other major arms suppliers like Israel, France and the UK. Whereas in 1991, the percentage of defence armaments imports ranged from 70% for the army, 80% Air Force and 85% for the Navy, consisting of Soviet origin, at present, according to the SIPRI report, India's arms imports have fallen by 33% between 2011-15 and 2016-20. Russian imports stood at 49% of India's arms imports, whereas the French and Israeli share was at 18% and 13% respectively. Another reason for India's diversified arms imports dependence has been linked to India's self-reliance initiative under the 'Make in India' initiative led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India has some future procurement lined up in the coming years, however, Russian arms imports have dropped significantly in the past few years (Hindustan Times, 2022).

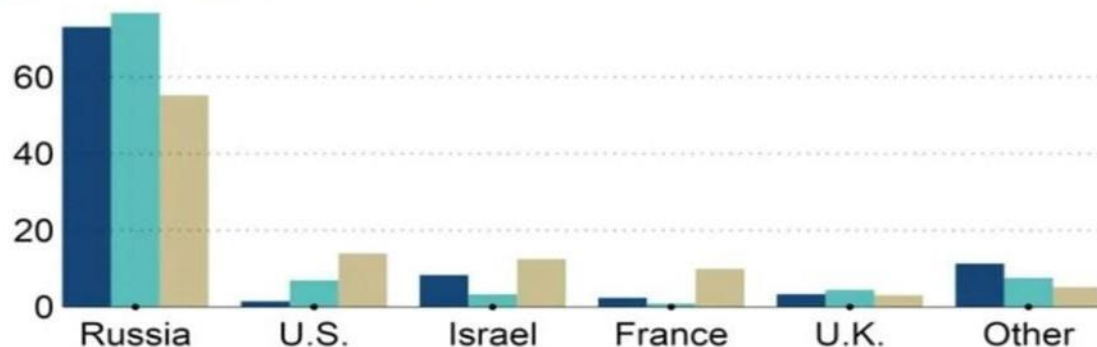
The following figures below reflect the dominance of Russian arms imports to India compared to other major suppliers at various yearly intervals, however, imports from the US, Israel and France show increasing percentages, whereas imports from Russia reflect declining trends, especially when we compare the periods of 2008-13 and 2014-19.



India's arms suppliers

(In percent of total)

■ 2002-07 ■ 2008-13 ■ 2014-19



Source: Kapil Kajal, "India's arms import embargo hits makers in Russia, the US and Israel" *Nikkei Asia* August 14, 2020.

India-Russia relations in a multi-polar world order:

As far as their relations with neighbours are concerned and their economic and foreign policy dealings included, the 21st century has brought in many challenges for India and Russia. However, both have accepted these challenges by dealing with each country in a manner that prioritizes the strategic importance and value of their neighbours, as per their own foreign policy guidelines and changing dynamics of relations between nations. India-Russia has tried its best to cooperate with all nations in fields as diverse as economic, military, cultural, political etc. India-Russia's bilateral relations, their direct or indirect relations with neighbours and major partners have been dealt with diplomatic precision by both nations. However, what is necessary to discuss in this article is how India-Russia utilizes the various world platforms in a multipolar world to enhance their relations and directly or indirectly impact their relations with other nations. The world order has changed from bi-polar to unipolar and now it is multipolar because of the emergence of many countries who can lay claim against the US hegemony in the 21st century. Thus, India-Russia's relationship has been growing in parallel to the emergence of the multipolar world. There are inbuilt processes and individual foreign-policy measures of both India and Russia to deal with their bilateral relations, however, multipolar engagements of both countries in recent years have been mostly followed by being involved in either working in close partnership with the UN or the various multipolar organizations India-Russia are part of viz. BRICS, SCO, RIC and G20.

The US after remaining the sole superpower in the Post-Cold War has been involved in many ways, in ushering in peace, development, and harmony. Though some of its policies may have worked, however, others have backfired. Hence, its leadership and hegemony have been questioned by other emerging and powerful nations. Russia is the first amongst these powers and is considered to be the second most powerful country after the US by some scholars. Russia has inherited the soviet legacy; hence a majority of its policy build-up, governance and institutional set-up in the Post-Cold War era reflects the soviet style of governance. Next is China which despite being a communist state has opened up its market and now relies heavily on the free market competition for its economic growth. China is considered to surpass the US hegemony and become the next superpower. The European Union which is a union of twenty-eight European nations is another entity that enjoys immense clout and influence amongst the



western nations and has opened their markets and territories with free trade agreements and a common currency (barring a few), is another example where it can be noted that nations are forming a union and are coming together for a better cause, however at the same time, there has also been an upsurge of conflicts, violence, pandemics, human rights, terrorism, economic, environmental and military tussles etc. between them.

The international system in the first post-Cold War decade was relatively more peaceful than the Post-World War II or the previous wars in the 17th and 18th centuries, in addition to this the US enjoyed more power and clout in international relations than it did after World War II. The dissolution of the Soviet Union was the key factor in US' dominance; however, this narrative is being challenged by emerging powers like Russia, India and China, who are vying for a multipolar international system against a single nation's dominance. This may not be a strategic alliance between all three or a 'triangular strategic alliance', but a strategic partnership towards a multipolar world (Kuchins, 2001).

BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa:

The emergence of BRICS as a group can be traced to the 2008 global financial crisis, wherein the traditional centers of the world economy faced acute crises and their growth stagnated thereon. However, countries like Brazil, Russia, India and China overcame this crisis smoothly in comparison to the western countries. Thus, the whole discourse since then, vis-à-vis the BRICS nations has been centered on the economic aspects (Sharma, 2012, as cited in Käkönen, 2014). While trying to explain the primary role of the BRICS nations vis-à-vis the present international order, Käkönen (2014), refers to the Indian think-tank report Nonalignment 2.0 which provides the background for one essential goal for the BRICS. The report explicitly doubts the creations of central international institutions like the United Nations (UN) and the Bretton Woods institutions, which are creations of the Post-Second World War political settlements and have limitations of their own. Thus, they were created in an era, that had western dominance, and their significance in the current global geopolitics has declined, as the world has witnessed the end of European empires and the rise of Asia's economic dynamism (Nonalignment 2.0, 2012 as cited in *ibid.*, 2014).

Officially, it was on the sidelines of the G-8 Outreach Summit in July 2006, that the first meeting between Russia, India and China occurred. However, the formalization of the grouping happened with the BRIC foreign ministers meeting on the margins of the UNGA in New York in September 2006. With the first BRIC summit being held in Yekaterinburg, Russia on 16th June 2009, in 2010 September the addition of South Africa was formalized with the BRIC foreign ministers' meeting. Thus, on 14th April 2011, South Africa attended the 3rd BRICS Summit in Sanya, China (MEA 2016).

India and Russia share a common platform in the form of BRICS. The platform provides them with a voice to raise concerns about emerging economies and also their own concerns. Along with this, both India and Russia have been demanding reforms in international institutions and this sets them directly against the dominance of the US and other western nations (Russia FP report, 2008). For India, being a member of the BRICS formations is most beneficial because of the presence of Russia, which is not only a former superpower but also a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

RIC: Russia, India and China:

RIC was conceptualized as a strategic triangle in the late 1990s under the leadership of Yevgeny Primakov. Its primary goal was to counterbalance the western alliance. On the other end, Russia



wanted to come out of the US influence that guided its foreign policy and wanted to renew its relations with two emerging powers in Asia i.e., India and China (Rajgopalan, 2020). The eighteenth meeting of the trilateral cooperation was held in November 2021. RIC has been at the forefront of opposing unilateralism and the RIC nations have raised their voice in support of discussing the global security and stability facing the world.

Russia-India-China's trilateral cooperation is one of the most important political ideas in the Post- Cold War period. This cooperation was advocated by former Russian president Boris Yeltsin in 1993 and later Russia's Prime Minister Primakov in 1996. The cooperation between these three emerging powers in the last two decades has helped in unfolding new trends in international relations. With the continuation of this trend, the process of multipolarity will become a reality, and this will have a significant impact on international relations. It is this multipolarity that RIC nations want to continue with, to get their national interests achieved and be autonomous and free from any kind of foreign influence, especially in foreign policy and strategic decision-making.

To attain a multipolar world, the Russia-India-China triangle needs to be indispensable. Thus, the RIC formation needs to be present in international politics for a much longer period than expected. Nivedita Das Kundu (2008), talks about the movement between these states towards a better understanding. Some important aspects of this phenomenon leading to a multipolar world started with the flourishing relations between India and Russia during the Cold War period, and this closeness continued in the Post-Cold War period also and both have been time-tested and trusted friends for each other. Similarly, China and India's relations too smoothed in the eighties and with the 1993 accord; further improvements were made in economic relations too. Kundu agrees that there are several converging interests that add substance to Russia, India and China's trilateral cooperation. For example, all three nations back the primacy of the United Nations in solving any international crises and have always back the policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of any sovereign state. While Kundu (2008) provides the indispensable nature of the RIC's trilateral cooperation and how it will enable the possibility of a smooth passage for the emergence of a multipolar world, Himani Pant (2017) has termed the India-Russia and India-China bilateral ties as more consequential. She specifies how Russia's growing proximity to China can be a cause of concern for India and citing this reality, she writes, "India has to factor in its foreign policy calculations". For example, Russia's belief that India can benefit by joining China's 'Belt and Road Initiative, as stated by the Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov provides a dilemmatic junction for Indian foreign policymakers. The ministers targeting India joining the 'Quad' and doubts about the sustainable security architectures being unachievable in the Asia Pacific region with 'closed bloc arrangements' are some other observations of Pant. India and Russia are also working on a 7,200 Km International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) that connects India, Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia with Europe. The Strategic Chabahar Port was also inaugurated in 2017, which has the interests of both India and Russia (ibid., 2017). Irrespective of the reservations and doubts over India-Russia relations vis-à-vis Russia-China bonding, it is quite evident that India-Russia friendship will be long-lasting as there are more convergences than divergences between the two and with this proposition the third nation, that is China will also be important in the larger formation, i.e., RIC, because India-Russia's friendship will certainly have an impact on India-China relations.

SCO: Shanghai Cooperation Organization:

India and Russia have similar foreign policy goals, though both countries are trying to revamp their domestic social and economic sectors by way of cooperation with other nations, especially their immediate neighbours. Both countries have been careful and have taken measures to avoid



any irritants in their otherwise 'deep and long-lasting friendship'. If Russia has shown maturity vis-à-vis India's sensitivities on Kashmir, India is also expected to display a similar approach to Russia's relations with Pakistan, considering the critical circumstances in Afghanistan, especially after the withdrawal of the US-led international forces from there (Upadhyay, 2015). Thus, with India and Russia facing similar challenges from Afghanistan and to some extent Pakistan, there arose a need for India and Russia to be part of a larger security organization.

Both nations want stability in Afghanistan, especially post the ousting of the US-led forces and the arrival of the Taliban. Political stability and economic and social development are the goals of both countries in Afghanistan. India and Russia have been the victims of terrorism in their respective backyards, and the need for cooperation with the current dispensation to stop the expansion of extremism and the rise of forces like ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) is ever more increasing. The extension of this cooperation to the Central Asian region because of its borders with Afghanistan, was also another breakthrough. It is in this context that Russia wholeheartedly supported India's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (ibid., 2015).

It can be noted here that the countries i.e. China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are mainly responsible for the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and having motive to support for security and economic cooperation among the member states in the Eurasian region. India's association with SCO began in 2005, as an observer state. The groupings rules and procedures in relation to the expansion continued to be in doubt and confusion until the SCO finalized the procedures for new members. Thus finally, it was in 2014 that India submitted its formal application to the SCO for full membership.

India's full membership of the SCO fulfilled various geostrategic, security and economic considerations, especially the security situation in Afghanistan, relations with the Central Asian region, and the Eurasian region. It also catered to tackling issues like cooperation with these region's counter-terrorism mechanisms, anti-narcotics and cooperation in the energy sector. SCO has evolved as a platform for both India and other SCO members; especially its founder member Russia and both countries' relations have strengthened under this platform. It has helped India-Russia's geostrategic, security and economic interests in the Eurasian region to improve.

Russia was instrumental in involving India in the SCO, as Russia opines India's capability as a major emerging power and contribution towards world stability and peace making it the right candidate to join the SCO. Russia also helped Pakistan to join the SCO after it improved its relations with Pakistan in the new century as Russia's stakes lie in Central Asia and Afghanistan, which is why SCO has been primarily set up.

India-Russia in the G20: Enabling Global Outreach:

The G20 group is a very significant platform and can be considered an important medium for coordination on an international basis, which has a very influential role in the development of economic and financial issues. Besides economic and financial issues, the group is also responsible for addressing issues related to variations in weather and sustainable development. It's very clear that the present "Group of Seven," or G7 (formerly G8, when Russia was a member), were the founders of this group. It has nineteen other countries in addition to the EU; this forms a significant group of countries with a significant value over emerging economies.

The G20's members are playing a vital role in these issues. Surprisingly, the group of 20 countries accounts for roughly 90% of global GDP and a large proportion of the world's population (MEA, 2012). Founded on 26 September 1999, in the framework of the financial crisis, in 1999, it certainly had an effect on East Asia and Southeast Asia; its major goals have been to achieve financial stability and economic development by involving the middle-income and emerging economies. In 2022, the report concluded that, the G20 countries playing a major



role in world's population (60%), global GDP (80%) and global trade (75%) (Indian Express, 2022).

India has been a member of the G20 for the primary reason that, it (India) is a major developing economy and its contributions to the international economic and financial systems are vital. As the G20 process is divided into two types of tracks viz. the Sherpa track (meeting organized in the areas such as employment, health, economy, trade, environment, industry etc.) and the Finance Track (financial architecture, tax finance, financial inclusion, sustainable finance etc.), India has been actively involved in both the tracks. The ministry of external affairs, India sums up the role and significance of G20 for India in the following words:

"India's agenda at the G20 Summits are driven by the need to bring in greater inclusivity in the financial system, to avoid protectionist tendencies and above all for ensuring that growth prospects of developing countries do not suffer. India has strived to ensure that the focus of the global community remains on the need to ensure an adequate flow of finances to emerging economies to meet their developmental needs. India has welcomed the inclusion of development as an agenda item of the G20 process at the Seoul Summit and supported the Seoul Development Consensus and the associated Multi-Year Action plans. Prime Minister called for the recycling of surplus savings into investments in developing countries to not only address immediate demand imbalances but also developmental imbalances" (MEA, 2012).

Russian foreign policy too has given priority to G20 membership, and its priority has been to have strong multilateral policies and international institutions. It also aims to create a multipolar world order by enhancing the economic potential of emerging global players. Russia's desire to consistently utilize multilateral forums like BRICS, G20, G8 and SCO is clearly visible in its current president Vladimir Putin's efforts and participation in these forums.

Russia's voicing of concerns vis-à-vis globalization, the world economy, and insecurities and problems tied to weaker economies that affect the complementary opportunities for both social and economic development have been well documented. Thus, there is an urgent need to understand Russia's contribution to global governance which includes G20 governance (Kirton and Sadykova, 2013).

India and Russia have been responding together on various platforms to fight for the cause of international financial security, economic development, climate change and environmental protection from the platforms like G20. Despite a few hiccups in recent years in their relations, which mainly stemmed from India's closeness to the West and Russia's comfort zone with China and Pakistan, India-Russia relations and their common platforms like G20, BRICS, and RIC have ensured the relationship is strong and mutually respectful. For example, in April 2022, during the Fund-IMF spring annual meet in Washington, when the US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen staged a walkout along with other western allies, the European Union (referred to EU hereon) and Britain, India's finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman did not join the boycott. The boycott was against Russia's aggression in Ukraine and the Russian foreign minister's participation at the meeting was disrupted by this boycott (The Tribune, 2022).

Summary

The study concluded that separation is a demand of new-age and have very important explanation; it is the idea that supremacy is not related to one country in the world but being shared amongst many nations. It's very clear that China is a big counter of U.S. supremacy; however, the multipolar system demands more than one player. Russia, India, Brazil and Germany are a few countries that can counter the excesses of either China or the US.

India and Russia have ambitions in the multipolar world order and have their own version of multi-polarity. Both nations disagree with the idea of establishing systems that lead to checks



and balances between nations, especially developing ones. Both nations want to create a world that is safe, free and based on the principles of international law. India and Russia face many issues that have to be fought together and these common obstacles have ensured their close relationship. Both have encountered terrorism and climate change problems and have been working on to have more sophisticated ways to tackle them in future. The major area of India-Russia cooperation has been defence and their relationship has been transformed from the previous buyer-seller relationship to working together on areas like joint research and development of defence technologies and equipment. Thus, convergences of India-Russia interests and continued partnership between the two may be an important prerequisite for new multipolar world order.

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