



India and Sino-Russian Alliance

This editorial is based on "[A new Sino-Russian alliance: What are its implications for India?](#)" which was published in Indian Express on 01/02/2023. It discusses the challenges with the rising cooperation between China and Russia and its implication on India.

For Prelims: Location on Maps, NATO, Indo-Pacific region, Ukraine Crisis, North Atlantic Treaty Organization

For Mains: India and its Neighbourhood, Bilateral Groupings & Agreements, Groupings & Agreements Involving India and/or Affecting India's Interests, Effect of Policies & Politics of Countries on India's Interests, India-Russia- China Relations and way forward for India.

Russia and China have had a **strong strategic partnership for many years, dating back to the days of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China**. This partnership has been based on mutual interests, including economic and political cooperation, as well as a shared view on international issues. Despite some ups and downs, the **relationship between Russia and China has remained solid, with both countries working together on a variety of projects and initiatives**.

However, in February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin took steps to further strengthen this partnership, solidifying Russia and China's role as major global players and signaling a new era of cooperation between the two nations.

The triangular dynamic between the US, Russia and China has long been the principal factor shaping independent India's geopolitics. The unveiling of a new Sino-Russian alliance last year, the **Russian aggression towards Ukraine, and the deepening confrontation between the West and Russia and China** are compelling India to recalibrate its international relations.

What are the Global Implications of the China-Russia Alliance?

- **Western Unity under US leadership:**
 - Instead of ending the US dominance in the world, Russia and China alliance have caused the US and Western countries to become more united and led by the US.
 - The **invasion of Ukraine also allowed the US to pressure both Russia and China**.
 - In Europe, Russian invasion of Ukraine has **helped the US galvanise and expand [North Atlantic Treaty Organization \(NATO\)](#)**.
 - The **Russian invasion has also triggered the fear of Chinese territorial expansionism in Asia**. This has led to the strengthening of US bilateral alliances with Australia and Japan.
- **Rise of Reluctant and Pacifist Powers:**
 - The China-Russian alliance and the Ukraine war have **seen two reluctant and pacifist**

powers (Germany and Japan) join the battle against Russia and China.

- Japan and Germany happen to be the **world's third and fourth largest economies and their mobilisation significantly alters the so-called "correlation of forces"** between the West and the Russia-China axis.
- Both Germany and Japan are now committed to raising their defence spending to cope with the security challenges from Russia and China.

▪ **US Alliances in Europe and Asia:**

- The desire of Russia and China to dominate Eurasia through an alliance has failed, as the United States is doing something similar to strengthen its alliances and partnerships in Europe and Asia.
 - During the NATO summit in June 2022, **America's Asian allies participated for the first time, and NATO has pledged to take an active role in shaping Indo-Pacific power balances.**

In what ways does the China-Russia Alliance affect India?

▪ **Geopolitical:**

- The alliance between China and Russia can **shift the balance of power in the region**, potentially limiting India's influence and heightening competition for regional dominance.
 - **For Example:** The China-Russia alliance may result in both countries backing a particular position in the [United Nations Security Council](#), making it harder for India to get its own position passed.

▪ **Economic:**

- India could face **increased economic competition from China and Russia**, particularly in areas such as energy, natural resources, and trade.
 - **For Example:** The alliance between China and Russia could result in increased economic cooperation, including joint ventures and trade deals that could make it more difficult for Indian businesses to compete in certain markets.

▪ **Military:**

- The alliance could result in **increased military cooperation between China and Russia**, potentially leading to a strengthening of their military capabilities and a threat to Indian security.
 - The strengthening of ties between China and Russia can lead to increased cooperation in military and technological spheres, potentially creating challenges for India's military capabilities.

▪ **Diplomatic:**

- **India may have to navigate a more complex diplomatic landscape** as a result of the alliance, particularly in international forums such as the United Nations, where China and Russia wield significant influence.
 - **For Example:** The China-Russia alliance may result in both countries working together to block certain initiatives supported by India in international forums such as the United Nations.

What should be the Way Forward?

▪ **Pursuing a Multi-Aligned Foreign Policy:**

- India should **engage in dialogue with both China and Russia to address areas of mutual concern** and manage any potential conflicts.
- India should strengthen its partnerships with other countries, particularly in the [Indo-Pacific region](#), to counterbalance the growing influence of China and Russia.
 - India has also been seeking to deepen its economic ties with countries in the region and beyond, to promote its economic growth and development.
- Through these efforts, India can safeguard its national interests and maintain a stable regional and global order.
- India can also seek to strengthen its own military capabilities and alliances with other countries, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

▪ **Leveraging its Position as Growing Economy:**

- India's growing economy and large market size **can be leveraged as a strategic asset to promote its interests in regional and global forums**, particularly in the context of

the rising China-Russia alliance.

- India's status as a rapidly growing economy and a large market can **provide it with significant bargaining power in trade negotiations and other economic forums.**
- India can use this bargaining power to promote its economic interests and to secure access to resources and markets.
- By leveraging its economic growth, India can also increase its political influence in regional and global forums, thereby helping to counterbalance the rising China-Russia alliance.
- **Leveraging its position as Soft Power:**
 - India can use its **soft power, such as cultural heritage, democracy, and reputation as a peace-loving nation**, to attract international support and build alliances.
 - This can help **India enhance its standing and influence on the global stage, particularly** in the context of the China-Russia alliance.
 - By leveraging its soft power, **India can project a positive image and create a favorable perception among other nations**, making it easier to forge partnerships and alliances.

Drishti Mains Question

What impact does the strengthening alliance between Russia and China have on India's foreign policy and its strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific region?

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

- Q1.** At the international level, bilateral relations between most nations are governed on the policy of promoting one's own national interest without any regard for the interest of other nations. This leads to conflicts and tension between nations. How can ethical consideration help resolve such tensions? Discuss with specific examples. **(2015)**
- Q2.** In respect of India-Sri Lanka relations, discuss how domestic factors influence foreign policy. **(2013)**
- Q3.** 'The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order.' Elaborate. **(2019)**