

## Indo-Russia Sochi Bilateral

## What is the issue?

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• Recently, the Indian PM and the Russian President met for an extended bilateral in Sochi in Russia.

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 $\bullet$  This is seen as an appropriate recalibration to arrest the degradation of diplomatic ties in recent years.  $\mbox{\sc h}$ 

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## What issues are likely to have been discussed at Sochi?

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- The Sochi visit was aimed at resetting and rebalancing bilateral ties that have weakened over the past few years.
- The special understanding between India and Russia has frayed, with India drifting closer to the U.S. and Russia to China.
- **Defence** India currently has orders of over \$12 billion for Russian military hardware, which is pending delivery.
- A new US law (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) seeks to curtail trade with countries engaging its adversaries.
- Hence, Modi's visit was significant to assure Mr. Putin that India is committed to the purchases and won't be deterred by US pressure.
- **Regional** Russia's recent military exercises and arms sales to Pakistan has got India cautious on Russia's changing outlook towards South Asia.
- Also, the increasing engagement of Russians with the Afghani Taliban is another point of concern form the Indian perspective.
- An outreach like Sochi would hence be beneficial to know each other's

political foresight and extract concession in some areas to address stress points.

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- **Global** The global instability caused due to the US president Trump is another issue that necessitated increased Indo-Russia engagements.  $\$
- An outreach to Russia in the backdrop of such inconsistencies emanating from the US would also help in correcting the westward tilt in India's diplomacy.

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## What are the outcomes?

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- The Sochi meet with Russia and the previously held Wuhan meet with China were both said to be informal in nature.
- These might have helped in dispelling apprehensions between countries, the post meet conferences have largely been devoid of significance.
- While such meets are needed to break the ice, a noticeable shift in foreign policy can't happen without sufficient transparency.
- Importantly, Indian and Russia have planned for greater cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, a region where India is already involved with US.
- Notably, Quad (India, US, Japan, and Australia) is also envisioned as a security grouping for the Indo-Pacific region.

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**Source: The Hindu** 

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