Degrading Indo-Russia ties

Why in news?

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The Joint Indo-Russian declaration was signed at the St Petersburg Economic Forum by India and Russia as they celebrated 70 years of 'Indo-Russian' diplomatic ties and friendship.

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What are the worrying factors?

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- **Joint Statement -** A 'multi-polar global order in international relations'.
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- A 'multi-polar global order' implies international recognition of China's growing economic and military clout, which India does not want.
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- **Russia's closer ties with China and Pakistan -** The two are all-weather friends who claim parts of Indian territory.
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- India sees their ties with Russia through the lens of its bilateral disputes with China and Pakistan.
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- In 2014, Russia broke its arms embargo on Pakistan and downgraded military technical cooperation with India from exclusive to preferred partner.
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- It also conducted its first joint military exercise with Pakistan.
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- **Terrorism -** Russia and India pledge 'to combat international terrorism' and call on the global community to respond 'without double standards and selectivity.'
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- But Moscow fears that fighting in northern Afghanistan could spill over into its Central Asian back garden.
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- Wanting ISIS militants in Af-Pak to be crushed, Moscow sees its security interests ‘objectively’ coinciding with those of the Taliban over their common enemy, ISIS, and best safeguarded through dialogue with the Taliban and their Pakistani mentors.
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- **On INSTC -** India hopes that the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) could promote its connectivity, bilateral and regional cooperation with Central and West Asia.
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- The INSTC could reduce the journey between Mumbai and St Petersburg from 40 days to 20 days.
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- Its initial members were Russia, India and Iran.
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- Significantly, Russia does not view the INSTC as a counter to China’s OBOR.
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- **Investment -** Russia welcomes Indian investment in its Far Eastern region.
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- But China and Russia are already planning to set up a joint regional investment fund with a total amount of 100 billion Yuan to bolster the development of Russia’s Far East and Northeast China.
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Source: Business Standard

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