

Russia-India-China (RIC) Trilateral Meeting

Why in news?

Russian Foreign Minister is hosting the Russia-India-China (RIC) trilateral foreign ministers' meeting.

What are the events planned?

- RIC trilateral meeting will be the first opportunity for Indian External Affairs & Chinese Foreign Minister for face-time with each other over video conference.
- Moscow is also hosting defence ministers of both the countries to attend the Victory Day parade.
- Earlier too, the Russian officials discussed with Indians about regional security, including developments on the Line of Actual Control.
- While India and China have not been talking to each other, the outreach to Moscow is noteworthy.

How has the Sino-Russian relationship fared?

- Russia and China have had a rocky start to their relationship, after Mao Zedong founded the People's Republic of China.
- When Mao made his first official visit to Moscow in 1949, he was made to wait for weeks for a meeting with the Soviet leader.
- There was Sino-Soviet split in 1961, due to ideological differences resulting in competition for control of the worldwide Communist movement.
- During the Cold War, China and the USSR were rivals after the.
- There was a serious possibility of a major war in the early 1960s.
- There was even a brief border war took place in 1969.
- This enmity began to reduce following Mao's death in 1976.
- But relations were not very good until the Soviet Union's fall in 1991.

How did the Sino-Russian bonding begin?

- In the post-Cold War era, China was Russia's biggest trading partner and the largest Asian investor in Russia.
- China saw Russia as a powerhouse of raw material and a growing market for its consumer goods.
- The harsh sanctions in 2014 towards Russia after the annexation of Crimea

brought Moscow much closer to China.

- A Sino-Russian quasi-alliance has formed due to the anti-Chinese rhetoric from US, collapse of oil prices and growing dependence of Russia on Chinese consumption.
- Western analysts see this as a “friendship of convenience” between two countries.
- India believes that the approach of Western countries, especially that of the US towards Russia and China, has brought them even closer.

How cordial is the actual relationship?

- Beijing and Moscow do not always see eye to eye with each other on several issue.
- China does not recognise Crimea as part of Russia.
- Russia takes a neutral stance on China’s claims in the South China Sea.

How is the Indo-Russia relationship?

- India has a historical relationship with Russia, which has grown in some areas and atrophied in some others.
- 60 to 70 % of India’s defence supplies are from Russia.
- India also needs a regular and reliable supply of spare parts from the Russian defence industry.
- Russia’s position during the 1962 war was not particularly supportive of India.
- However, India takes comfort in Russia’s support during the 1971 war.
- Even on the recent events in Galwan, Moscow responded in a very calibrated manner last week.

What is the scope of the meet?

- Russian Foreign Minister had said that the agenda does not involve discussing issues that relate to bilateral relations of the countries.
- However, India decided to reach out to Russia since it believes Moscow has leverage and influence to shape and change Beijing’s hard stance on border issue.

Source: The Indian Express



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