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Indian Military Equipment of Russian Origin

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Why in News

According to a paper published by Stimson Center, **86% of the equipment, weapons and platforms** currently in military service in India are of **Russian** origin.

The Stimson Center is a **nonprofit think tank** based in Washington, USA. It aims to **enhance international peace and security** through a combination of analysis and outreach.

Key Points

- **Data Analysis:**
 - **Stimson Center** data shows that more than **55% of Indian defence imports** since 2014 have been from Russia.
 - For the **Navy**, more than **41% equipment is of Russian origin while two-thirds for the Indian Air Force (IAF)**.
 - The figure for the **Army is 90%**, as it assigns around 10,000 pieces of military hardware from Russia.
 - **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute** (SIPRI) data shows that **Russia** continues to occupy **the First position** as India's **defence supplier**, with 9.3 billion USD worth of exports to India.
 - The **USA** is at **second**, with defence supplies worth 2.3 billion USD to India in the same period.

- **Russia's Military Equipment:**
 - The Navy's only active **aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya** and its only **nuclear attack submarine** in service, **Chakra II**, are from Russia.
 - So are the **Army's T-90 and T-72 main battle tanks** and IAF's **Su30 MKI fighter**.
 - The country's only **nuclear-capable supersonic cruise missile, BrahMos**, is produced by a joint venture with Russia.
 - As India has been spreading its supplier base with Israel, USA and France, Russia still remains a major supplier. This is indicated by following latest developments:
 - India has approved proposals to acquire 21 Mig29 and 12 Su30 MKI fighter aircraft from Russia for 2.4 billion USD.
 - India and Russia had agreed to a joint programme to develop a variant of **Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft Programme (FGFA)** in 2007.
As India has not committed to the **Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft Programme (FGFA) programme** with Russia.
 - It is negotiating on the price of AK103 rifles for **Make in India**.
- **USA's Military Equipment: Apache and Chinook helicopters**, M777 howitzer guns for the Army.
Boeing C-17 and C-130J for IAF and **P8I submarine hunter aircraft** for Navy.
- **Reasons:** There are many reasons for **India's dependency on Russia** for the supply of military equipments:
 - **Legacy Issue:** India and Russia have a **longstanding defence relationship** and there is familiarity with each other's processes and systems.
 - **Specialised Equipment:** The kind of specialised equipment that Russia provides to India makes a difference from other countries, e.g. the **S-400 Air Defence Missile Systems**, nuclear submarines and aircraft carrier.
 - **Combat Capability:** Each of the systems supplied by Russia has its advantages and uses as they have been used effectively to develop **maximum combat capability** especially when focusing on India's higher-end strike platforms.

- **Significance:**

- **Border Clash with China:** Notwithstanding India's growing mutual convergence with the USA against China following the **recent tensions on the Ladakh border**, its armed forces remain heavily dependent on equipment, weapons and military platforms of Russian origin which form the bulk of its inventory.
- **USA's CAATSA:** Recently, the **USA has asked all its allies and partners, including India, to stop transactions with Russia**. The USA can risk triggering sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA).

Source: IE