



India- Russia PASSEX Exercise

For Prelims: India- Russia PASSEX Exercise, INS Kochi, Zayed Talwar, Al-Mohed Al-Hindi', Project 15A

For Mains: Significance of Russia for India

Why in News

Recently, **India's INS Kochi** and Russian ships engaged in the international Passage Exercise (PASSEX).

- A passage exercise is normally undertaken whenever an opportunity arises, in contrast to pre-planned maritime drills.
- Earlier, Indian Naval ships conducted **PASSEX with the US Navy also.**

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Key Points

▪ **Russia's Importance for India:**

◦ **In Indian Ocean Region:**

- Russia's inclusion as a dialogue partner of the [Indian Ocean Rim Association \(IORA\)](#) has opened up a plethora of opportunities for collaboration with India including a possible maritime security architecture to create balance in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and on scientific and research endeavors.
- **In the Arctic Region:** India has scientific, environmental, commercial and strategic interests in the [Arctic region](#), and the Russian Arctic can potentially address India's energy security objectives.
- **Hydrocarbons:** Russia has the largest proven natural gas reserves in the world, enough to last for about 80 years at current production rates.
- **Strategic Minerals:** The Russian Arctic also has **vast deposits of cobalt, copper, diamonds, gold, iron, nickel, platinum, high-value rare earth elements, titanium, vanadium and zirconium.**

- The Arctic accounts for 90% of Russia's nickel and cobalt production, 60% of copper, and over 96% of platinum metals.
- **Indian** rare earth reserves are **richer in lighter fractions and deficient in heavier ones.**
- Most of the rare earth products used in strategic industries viz. Defence, fibre optic communications, space and nuclear energy are also critical to various clean energy technologies, including wind turbines and electric vehicles.
- The **Russian Arctic, therefore, has the potential to mitigate India's critical deficiencies in rare earth and strategic minerals.**
- **Northern Sea Route:** For Indian ports, the [Northern Sea Route or NSR](#) does not offer any benefits and is longer than the current route, for Rotterdam.

- However, there are other avenues for cooperation on the NSR.
- Russia has **announced its intention, inter alia, to ensure year-round, safe, uninterrupted and cost-effective navigation in the waters of the NSR.**
- India has indicated its **willingness to partner with Russia**, stating that "India and Russia will also be partners in opening of the NSR for international trade and commerce". In response, President Putin has stated that Russia welcomes India's interests in the NSR.
- **Russian Far East:** The Russian Far East or RFE is rich in natural resources.
 - About **one-third of all coal reserves and hydro-engineering resources of the country are available here.** Forests of the region comprise about 30% of Russia's total forest area.
 - **India's cooperation in the development of RFE including NSR has been endorsed** by the two countries.
 - Addressing the [Eastern Economic Forum \(EEF\)](#) in 2019, India announced a USD 1 billion line of credit to further contribute to the development of RFE.

▪ **Other Exercises of India and Russia:**

- [Exercise TSENTR 2019](#) (Multilateral Military Exercise).
- [Indra Exercises](#) - Joint Tri-Services (Army, Navy, Air Force) Exercises.
- [ZAPAD 2021](#) (Multilateral Military Exercise).

INS Kochi

- It is an **indigenously designed second ship of the Kolkata-class stealth guided-missile destroyers**, was built under the code name of **Project 15A** for the Indian Navy.
- It was **constructed by Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL)** in Mumbai and was later commissioned to the [Indian Navy](#) services in 2015, after undergoing extensive sea trials.
- Earlier, it **took part in many other naval services** including:

- **'Zayed Talwar':** It is a bilateral naval exercise between the Indian and UAE Navy.
- **'Al-Mohed Al-Hindi':** India and Saudi Arabia started their first-ever Naval joint exercise.
- **India- US PASSEX**

Source: PIB

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