

India-Russia ties among steadiest in world: EAM

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India-Russia energy ties featured prominently during the talks between India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Moscow on Thursday. New Delhi conveyed to Moscow that India will keep buying Russian oil if its pricing remained competitive.

At a joint press briefing that he addressed along with Jaishankar, Lavrov said India and Russia are looking at implementing joint ventures (JVs) for the extraction of energy resources, including in the Russian Federation, in the Far East, and on the Arctic shelf.

Jaishankar said: "We believe that India-Russia ties have been among the steadiest of the major relationships in the world after the Second World War... Geopolitical convergence, leadership contacts, and popular sentiment remain its key drivers." The EAM said sustaining energy cooperation through trade and investments is also important.

Lavrov and Jaishankar's comments are significant in the context of White House's unrelenting pressure on New Delhi, and its sanctions on Indian goods for its purchase of Russian crude oil. Jaishankar called on Russian President Vladimir Putin later in the day.

During his meeting with Lavrov, Jaishankar flagged that the balance of the bilateral trade was in Russia's favour, and the two foreign ministers agreed to expand India-Russia bilateral trade in a "balanced and sustainable manner, including by increasing India's exports to Russia". "Enhancing Indian exports to Russia in sectors like pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and textiles will certainly help to correct the current imbalance," the EAM said. Jaishankar, who had landed in Moscow on Wednesday, urged Russia to "swiftly" address non-tariff barriers and regulatory impediments to facilitate more exports

Jaishankar meets Putin in Moscow



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Russian President Vladimir Putin, and is understood to have discussed ways to further expand India-Russia ties. The meeting came hours after Jaishankar held talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov

PHOTO: PTI

from India. Russia is India's fourth-largest trading partner while India is Russia's second-largest. Lavrov and Jaishankar also discussed Putin's visit to India for the Annual Summit between the two countries, which is to take place towards the end of the year. Both said their talks were focused on delivering maximum outcomes for the Summit.

On bilateral trade, Jaishankar said steps to ensure long-term supply of fertilisers were taken. Indian skilled workers, especially in information technology (IT), construction, and engineering, can address the labour needs in Russia and deepen collaboration, he said. The two reviewed the status of connectivity projects such as the International

North-South Transport Corridor, the Chennai-Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor etc. "These corridors promise to deepen economic linkages, reduce transit times, and expand trade access across Eurasia and beyond," Jaishankar said.

The EAM noted that defence and military-technical cooperation also remains robust. At the joint press conference, Lavrov said: "We have good results in cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector, in the supply of Russian oil to the Indian market, and we have a mutual interest in implementing joint projects to extract energy resources... the economic base of our privileged strategic partnership is strengthening steadily."