

Geopolitical Friction between Russia-Ukraine and repercussions on India

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Abstract

The Russian-Ukraine conflict, which began in February 2022 with Russia's massive invasion of Ukraine, has had far-reaching worldwide repercussions. Global supply chains have been interrupted and trade routes were adversely affected by the ongoing conflict. Western countries have collectively denounced the Russian Federation and imposed a number of sanctions and embargoes on the country. Commodity prices have increased as a result of these restrictions, which will harm the recovery of the local and global economies that have been impacted by the difficult epidemic. India is among the nations most severely impacted by the ongoing war. India's economy may be among the most affected in Asia, according to Nomura's analysis, because of its susceptibility to increasing oil costs. India is a net importer of oil, thus it is vulnerable to a trade shock that might harm firms, consumers, and GDP development. Furthermore, the battle may impede the import of fertilizers, edible oils, precious metals, natural gas, and other goods, which might result in spikes in inflation, an expansion of the current account deficit, and a depreciation of the rupee. For India, the crisis presents both difficulties and possibilities on economic, geopolitical, and strategic levels. The main effects of the conflict on India are examined in this article, with particular attention to commerce, energy security, foreign policy, and diplomatic stance.

Keywords: Indian Economy, Global Economy, Russia-Ukraine, India, war, Conflict

Introduction

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine stems from the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Formerly a part of the Soviet Union, Ukraine gained independence in 1991. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine started as an internal Ukrainian issue in November 2013, when the president of Ukraine chose to join the Eurasian Economic Union, which is governed by Russia, instead of accepting a deal for further integration with the European Union. This decision sparked widespread demonstrations throughout the nation. The administration was overthrown by the "Euromaidan" demonstrations (Junes, 2022). Russia annexed Crimea, a significant port region in Ukraine, in an effort to reclaim its lost influence in that country. Later, in order to put an end to the fighting in east Ukraine, Russia and Ukraine signed the Minsk Peace Accord in 2014.

Early in January 2021, the president of Ukraine pleaded with the US to allow Ukraine to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which sparked the present situation. Russia and Ukraine are two neighboring nations in Eastern Europe, and Russia's interests and border security are directly threatened by any NATO expansion eastward (Dr. Vinita Shrivastava, 2024).

Russia then asked that the West provide a legally binding commitment that the NATO would not conduct any military operations in Eastern Europe and would not enable former Soviet states like Ukraine to join. Nonetheless, the United States has decided against altering NATO's "open-door policy," meaning that new members will continue to be admitted. On February 22, 2022, Russia acknowledged the independence of the two rebel areas of Luhansk and Donetsk, despite receiving no assurances from the US. The wider confrontation began on February 24 when Russia initiated what it called a "special military operation," which prompted a slew of international sanctions against Russia. After Russia declared a "special military operation" in Ukraine, all diplomatic efforts to prevent further hostilities between the two nations were unsuccessful. Research on Russian tactics during wartime suggests the use of coercive diplomacy. In addition to a slow ascent the recent takeover of Crimea and the deployment of Russian forces. In an attempt to "demilitarize" and "DE Nazify" Ukraine, Russia invaded the rebel-held areas of Donetsk and Lahaska in eastern Ukraine after recognizing those territories as legitimate. By denying the inviolability of European borders as stated in the Helsinki Agreement of 1975, Moscow is challenging the global order. Conflict may arise between individuals, organizations, communities, and nations. Their needs, interests, or concerns are threatened by disagreement. Individuals face threats on all fronts—political, social, emotional, and physical. Perceptions are shaped by gender, experience, values, culture, and beliefs. Conflicts can provide for innovative teaching moments. To resolve any dispute, the parties need to establish a strategy. There has been damage from the Russia-Ukraine war.

Is India faltering in its support of Ukraine? Maybe. Any posture that India chose would have drawn criticism. India's small presumptions are concerning as a growing power. India is becoming more influential than ever in emergency situations. India supported the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, but Indira Gandhi sought to counter it with a territorial strategy. Indirectly, neither approach altered Soviet policy. India stayed impartial as it was unable to support both sides. Prime Minister Modi urged "discourse," "discontinuance of savagery," and "assurance" of Indian citizens in his talks with Presidents Putin and Zelenskyy on February 24 and 26, as well as in Foreign Secretary Shringla's media appearance on February 25 (Verma, India's quest for security and its neutrality in the Russia–Ukraine war, 2023). India is unique because of New Delhi's interests. India has stated that it is concerned about Russian conduct, although it has refrained from overtly denouncing Russia. India expressed regret that diplomacy was abandoned, called for "respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states," demanded a "immediate cessation of violence and hostilities," urged the concerned states to "return to it," and reaffirmed that "dialogue is the only answer to settling differences and disputes, however daunting that may seem right now." India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said that international law, the UN Charter, and respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty form the foundation of the global order in a subdued criticism of Russian actions.

Russia-Ukraine crisis: India

India would be forced to choose between the West and Russia if Russia attacked. Strong ties with Russia serve India's interests. India cannot participate in any Western scheme to isolate Russia; instead, it must sustain a robust strategic relationship with Russia. Indian sanctions under the U.S. CAATSA might result from S-400. A agreement between the US and Russia might harm ties with China. This may facilitate India's reconciliation with Russia. Globalization on both an economic and geopolitical level is Ukraine's issue. Improvements between China and Russia impact India. The large Indian Diaspora in the area poses a threat to thousands of Indian students. Russia backed India's "independent" stance even as it swung toward Ukraine, while the US acknowledged India's "development." India's relationship with Russia has been described by the US as "unique" and "acceptable." The US State Department has recalled a cable that instructed US ambassadors to censure India and the UAE for being in "Russia's camp" due to their "neutral" attitude on Ukraine (Thakkar, 2024). In spite of strong opinions, the media backed India. While Foreign Policy commended India for its "tough diplomatic stance," the New York Times stated that India must assess "geostrategic considerations, especially with China." India is "diversifying its defense procurements," according to AP.

1. Geopolitics

Russia worries that NATO's "enlargement" to the east endangers its interests and has asked for official security assurances. NATO intends to build missile defense systems in Eastern Europe

under American leadership in order to deter Russian ICBMs (Patil, 2023). India has a long-standing foreign policy strategy that prioritizes strategic autonomy and non-alignment, which is based on its goal of preserving friendly ties with the world's leading nations. India's capacity to strike a balance in its ties with Russia, the US, and Europe has been put to the test by the Russian-Ukrainian War. Relations with Russia: India and Russia have a long history of collaboration, particularly in the area of defense. With almost 49% of India's armaments imports coming from Russia between 2017 and 2021, the country is still its top arms supplier. India has opted not to denounce Russia's activities in Ukraine overtly and instead has abstained from important UN votes. India's security and strategic interests are protected by its neutral posture, which also takes into account its historical links to Moscow, which has historically backed New Delhi at pivotal moments like the 1971 Indo-Pak conflict. Relationships with the West: The United States and Europe have been trying to organize a united front against Moscow, and they have taken notice of India's hesitancy to condemn Russia. However, in order to offset China's expanding influence in the Indo-Pacific, India has strengthened its connections with the United States and Europe in recent years. India must preserve its autonomous foreign policy while enjoying the advantages of increasing economic and technical collaboration with Western nations by striking a difficult but necessary balance between the West and Russia.

2. Energy Security

The war's immediate impacts include the disruption of the world's energy markets. Russia is one of the world's largest suppliers of natural gas and oil, and the conflict has made prices very volatile. India and Russia have long-standing military and commercial connections.

Nonetheless, the United States stands as India's most significant commercial and investment partner. Russia and US relations are at their lowest point since the Cold War. India would be in a challenging position if the US banned trade with Russia. India is dependent on Russia for military hardware. The operational availability of Russian items is impacted by the war. The export of defense items produced in partnership with Russia may be hindered by prohibitions and penalties. Western nations' sanctions and bans on Russia's export of defense equipment make it difficult for that country to import. India is a significant importer of gas and oil. 50% of natural gas and 85% of crude oil are imported. The Energy Resource Industries industry would be adversely impacted by rising global gas and oil prices. Due to the crisis, state-owned enterprises such as ONGC, which has three investment projects in Russia, are not seeking to grow. Inflation and economic development will be impacted by rising crude oil and natural gas costs. As a result of Western-imposed sanctions, Russia has been selling its oil at a lower price. Prior to 2021, just 2% of India's annual crude oil imports came from Russia; by 2023, however, about 21% of India's imports came from Russia (Anindita Bhattacharjee, 2024).

Cheap Russian Oil: India, a significant oil importer, has profited from the cheap Russian oil that is now available. India's imports of Russian crude oil have increased since the conflict began,

enabling it to satisfy its energy demands at a lower cost amid a period of worldwide price increases. As a result, domestic inflationary pressures have not been as severe.

Diversifying Energy Sources: The conflict has made India realize how important it is to diversify its energy sources, even though Russia has temporarily become a major provider. In addition to looking into closer collaboration with oil producers in the Middle East and Africa, India is stepping up its attempts to obtain alternate energy sources, including renewable energy.

3. Trade and Economic Impacts

Global supply chains have been impacted by the war between Russia and Ukraine, especially for goods like fertilizers, wheat, and sunflower oil, which are exported in significant amounts by both countries. India has had differing economic effects from the conflict.

With GDP growth forecasts of 8.5–9% in the first half of 2022, India came out of the COVID-19 epidemic with high expectations for an economic recovery. These projections were upset, though, when the Russia-Ukraine war broke out, which resulted in a 2-3 percentage point decline in growth and an inflationary crisis. Prior to the 2024 elections, Prime Minister Modi's administration started to take serious notice of this inflation, particularly in the costs of food and petrol. India, a significant importer of oil, was especially exposed to the spike in energy prices brought on by the sanctions on Russia. The price of food, oil, and wheat all increased, causing inflation to reach 7.8% by April. With crude oil prices rising from \$84.7 per barrel in January to \$116 by June, India's foreign exchange reserves lost \$110 billion and the rupee suffered a decline. As a result, India started purchasing cheap oil from Russia, which by June accounted for almost 20% of all oil imports into the country. To further alleviate the financial load, India looked for cheaper urea and investigated rupee-ruble trading.

The Reserve Bank of India's objective for inflation was still exceeded by October, when it had steadied at 6-7%. Despite securing consistent supply of coal and oil, India's growth rate was downgraded to 6–6.5%. India's criticism of Russia grew stronger as a result of the war's effects, as the nation dealt with a rising current account deficit and a depreciating rupee (Chaudhuri, 2023).

Agriculture and Food Security: Wheat and sunflower oil, which are vital to India's food security, are major exports from Ukraine. India is facing inflationary pressures as a result of disruptions in the supply and price increases of certain goods. India, a significant producer of agricultural products, has looked at ways to close some of the gaps in the world market, such as increasing wheat shipments to nations that are experiencing shortages.

Fertilizer Supply: Potash, a vital component of fertilizers, is a major export for Belarus, an ally of Russia. Since fertilizers are largely imported, supply delays have resulted in shortages and

higher costs for India's agricultural industry. India has worked to increase local manufacturing capacity and diversify its import sources in an effort to lessen this (Dole, 2022).

India's stance in the Russia-Ukraine Crisis

India's complex foreign policy issues are reflected in its neutrality in Russia's conflict with Ukraine. In an effort to preserve its strategic autonomy, India has resisted calling out Russia's invasion at the UN, despite its connections to Western alliances such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). India's decision to remain neutral is rational given its historical and geopolitical ties to Russia as well as its reliance on Russian energy and military hardware. Although this stance enables India to maintain a balance in its relations with the West and Russia, it also highlights worries about regional security, especially in light of China's increasing ties to Russia.

India's "strategic ambivalence" is a result of its necessity to preserve relations with Russia in light of China's and Pakistan's tight connections to Moscow. India worries that if it continues to distance itself from Russia, it would be forced to form closer ties with China and Pakistan, endangering its security interests. The cautious approach taken by New Delhi is an attempt to avert the possibility of a strong Sino-Russian alliance undermining its regional power dynamics (Shairgojri, 2022).

Economically, India benefits from cheaper Russian oil, which improves its energy security. Furthermore, the foundation of India's foreign policy is non-alignment, which enables it to operate in a multipolar world without entirely aligning with any one bloc. India needs to be flexible because it must strike a careful balance in its dealings with the US, Russia, and its neighbors.

India respects the liberal international system despite remaining neutral, but with certain qualms because of its colonial past and changing geopolitical environment. India continues to put its own interests before of rigorous adherence to the rules of the international order, even as it supports the West on matters such as freedom of navigation, particularly in the face of China's aggressiveness.

India aims to preserve its strategic autonomy, uphold regional stability, and strike a balance in its interactions with key international powers, which is why it is remaining neutral in the Russia-Ukraine war. Despite its difficulties, this stance enables India to advance its long-term national goals while navigating complicated international dynamics (Satpute, 2023).

Conclusion

India's geopolitics and economy would be impacted by the current situation between Russia and Ukraine. India takes a balanced stance when it comes to national security. It requires a realistic

strategy and a balance between the US and Russia. China and India's territorial conflicts need to be settled promptly. India should extend its "Atmanibhar Bharat Abhiyan" and "Make in India" initiatives to encourage the indigenization of defense equipment through public-private partnerships. Boost relations with neighbors and diversify the imports of weapons. India's ties with its neighbors are among its interests. Modi has changed the perception of India abroad. Every country pays attention when India talks. India's stance on the situation between Russia and Ukraine is widely praised. India's critics praised the nation's mindset. India has made the decision to end all hostilities and pursue peace. India is still diplomatically demanding an early end to hostilities and bloodshed. We are in favor of communication between Russia and Ukraine, especially between their leaders. They have both been contacted by the prime minister. This was communicated to Sergey Lavrov in Delhi. India is committed to providing humanitarian help to Ukraine, and we will do so if we can. A problem is never solved by war; it is only made worse. Find a diplomatic solution instead of waging war, as this just makes people's lives more harder. We should have learned from experience that using force or invasion to settle international disputes is never appropriate. Speaking with others and having discussions may help solve a lot of issues. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine highlights how important justice and peace are. It is never acceptable to sacrifice lives for the sake of progress; peace and justice are always superior than other possibilities. Wars have historically caused death, damage, and other problems. When we can solve conflicts with words, why do we resort to using guns? If the necessary actions to end the Ukraine issue are not implemented, things can grow worse. There will very likely be unparalleled carnage and destruction in the event of a major escalation. The President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, claims that the neighbors of the EU are worried that Russia's battle in Ukraine may spread to them. Wide-ranging effects of the Russia-Ukraine war have been felt in India. India's ability to balance diplomacy has been put to the test, and the dispute has also affected economic flows, energy security, and the dynamics of global governance. India has benefited economically from the conflict, but it has also highlighted the value of energy diversity, strategic autonomy, and a strong foreign policy. India will need to manage its complicated ties with Russia, the West, and its neighbors while the conflict rages in order to maintain its position as a major force in forming the new global order.

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