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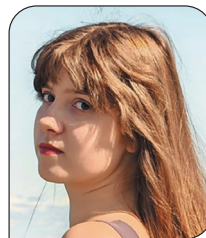
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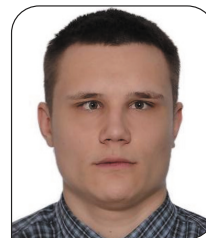
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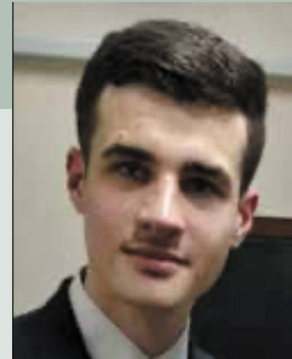


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Dear Readers and Friends,

On behalf of the editorial team of Varta Patrika, we are pleased to welcome you to this new issue, published in celebration of Russia Day.

We hope this edition not only brings together a collection of articles exploring different aspects of Russia-India cooperation, but also reflects the vibrant dialogue between two great civilizations united by shared values, a deep respect for history, and confidence in a common future.

In this issue, we have sought to highlight the depth and diversity of Russia-India relations. We begin with reflections on a date that holds special significance for both our nations — Victory Day. Our article on the importance of May 9 explores how the shared struggle against Nazism forged a lasting bond between our countries and why the memory of those heroic chapters of history remains so important for Russia and India today.

We also look ahead by examining India's priorities during its BRICS presidency. Today, BRICS is emerging as one of the key platforms for building a more balanced and multipolar world, and we are proud to cover the initiatives proposed by India and its partners to strengthen international cooperation.

The cultural bridge between our countries is built through language as well. Our feature on the study of Hindi in Russia illustrates the growing interest in India's rich cultural heritage and shows how

language serves as a gateway to deeper mutual understanding on a human level.

High-tech cooperation continues to be one of the pillars of the Russia-India partnership. With this in mind, we explore both the historical and contemporary achievements of cooperation between Russia and India in the aerospace and defence sectors, which reflect the high level of trust and technological synergy between our two countries.

Finally, we want this magazine to be more than just a source of information. We hope it will also serve as your guide to the life of the Indian diaspora in Russia. In this issue, you will find highlights from recent events as well as a roundup of upcoming activities that will help you stay connected to the vibrant cultural life of the Indian community in Russia.

We wish you an enjoyable and informative read. May this new issue of Varta Patrika become another step toward strengthening friendship and mutual understanding between our peoples.

Sincerely,

DMITRY KURBATOV

Issue Editor, Secretary of ANO
"Near Club – Compatriots of India in Russia"
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Dear Readers,

It is both an honor and a responsibility to write to you for the first time as the new Executive Editor of Varta Patrika.

Whenever someone begins a new role, there is a natural temptation to present themselves as an expert with all the answers. I would prefer to begin with honesty. I am a young journalist, still learning my craft, and I come to this position not with certainty, but with curiosity, humility, and a deep sense of responsibility for the stories entrusted to these pages.

My own background is somewhat unusual. I am half Russian and half Jordanian, and I spent much of my life growing up in Abu Dhabi, one of the world's most multicultural cities. Long before I had the opportunity to work on a publication dedicated to the Indian diaspora in Russia, I was already surrounded by Indian classmates, neighbors, teachers, colleagues, and friends. Like so many others who have lived in the Gulf, I learned early that Indian culture is not something distant or foreign, it is woven into everyday life.

Yet I also recognize how much I still have to learn.

India is not a single story. It is a civilization of extraordinary depth, diversity, languages, traditions,

faiths, and perspectives. The Indian community in Russia reflects that same richness. One of the privileges of this role is the opportunity to meet people whose journeys connect continents, cultures, and generations, and to share those stories with our readers.

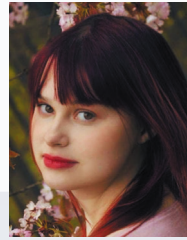
As Varta Patrika moves forward, I hope our pages will continue to celebrate the achievements of the Indian diaspora, highlight the growing ties between Russia and India, and provide a platform for voices that deserve to be heard. I also hope the magazine will remain a place where people can discover something new, not only about each other, but about themselves.

For me personally, this publication is a journey of learning. I look forward to exploring the many stories, experiences, and traditions that make this community so vibrant. I hope you will join me on that journey and, perhaps, help guide it along the way.

With warm regards,

YASMIN ALVAÏD

Executive Editor
Varta Patrika



VICTORIA ISAKOVA

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Russia Day

A Celebration of Unity, History, and Culture

Summer begins with sunshine, streets lined with national flags, music filling the air, and people gathering to enjoy holiday festivities. That is what June 12 looks and feels like across Russia. It is a day when a sense of national unity and pride in the country's history is especially strong. More than any guidebook or history textbook, Russia Day offers a glimpse into the country's identity. For Indian audiences, it can serve as a gateway to a deeper understanding of Russia's culture, traditions, and history.

Russia is the largest country in the world by land area, home to around 190 ethnic groups speaking more than 150 languages. Each of these peoples

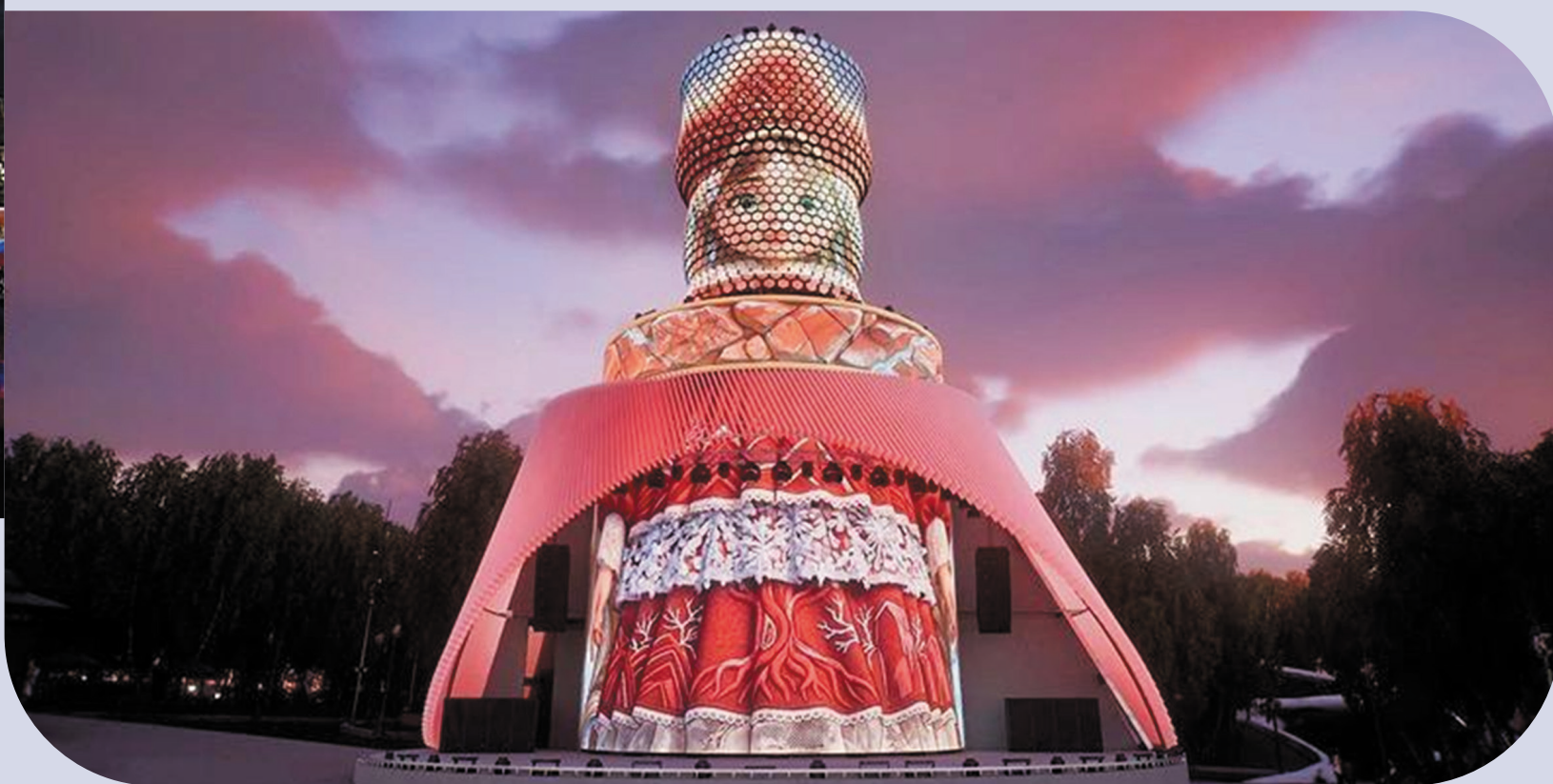
has played an important role in shaping the country's cultural traditions, which is why many Russians see Russia Day above all as a celebration of national unity.

However, this day carries many meanings and layers of significance. It was on June 12, 1990, that the Declaration of State Sovereignty was adopted — a political manifesto that established equal rights for all political parties, the republic's autonomy, and the separation of powers. In 1992, June 12 was officially declared a public holiday under the name "Day of the Adoption of the Declaration of State Sovereignty." Among the public, it soon became more commonly known as "Independence Day," although historians

consider the term “independence” to be not entirely accurate or fitting.

Although the holiday officially received its modern name in 2002, celebrations similar to those held today had already begun in 1995. Each year, on the eve of Russia Day, State Prizes of the Russian Federation are awarded to distinguished figures in culture, science, and technology. Over more than 30 years of celebration, June 12 has continued to symbolize the connection between generations, the continuity of Russia’s thousand-year history, and the unity of the Russian people in any circumstances.

One example is Moscow’s largest historical festival, which spans the period from antiquity to the 1980s. As part of the national holiday celebrations, the everyday life of different historical eras is brought to life, while numerous workshops led by blacksmiths, potters, weavers, and leatherworkers give visitors the opportunity to learn traditional Russian crafts. In Zaryadye Park, one of Moscow’s main public spaces, the “Code of Russia” program introduces visitors to the country’s nature, folklore, and scientific achievements.



In 2026, concerts, festivals, exhibitions, and sporting events are taking place across the country in celebration of Russia Day. For Indian visitors, this is an excellent opportunity to take part in special programs organized by museums and cultural centers dedicated to the history and traditions of our country. On the evening of June 12, traditional concerts will be held in many cities across Russia.

Culture holds a special place in Russia, which is why many Russia Day events are designed to introduce foreign visitors to the folk dances, music, and national traditions that have shaped the country.

For many years, Russia and India have been developing multifaceted cooperation in the fields of culture, education, science, and technology. The participation of Indians in Russia Day celebrations demonstrates that interaction between the two countries extends beyond official partnerships and is reflected in everyday life and cultural exchange as well. Today, the June 12 holiday connects Russia’s past, present, and future, reflecting the respect that millions of Russians have for the history and rich cultural heritage of their homeland, as well as their sense of pride in their country.



GEORGY KVASNIKOV

Student at MGIMO University

The Development of the Aerospace Industry in India and Russian-Indian Space Cooperation

(On the 65th Anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's Flight)

On April 12, 1961, Yuri Gagarin opened the path to space for humanity. Seven months later, on November 29, the planet's first cosmonaut landed at the Delhi airport, marking the start of his South Asian tour, which included Lucknow, Bombay, Calcutta,

and Hyderabad. This laid the symbolic foundation for the space dialogue between the two nations, which over the past 65 years has evolved from isolated launches to plans for the technological integration of national orbital programs. Today, according to

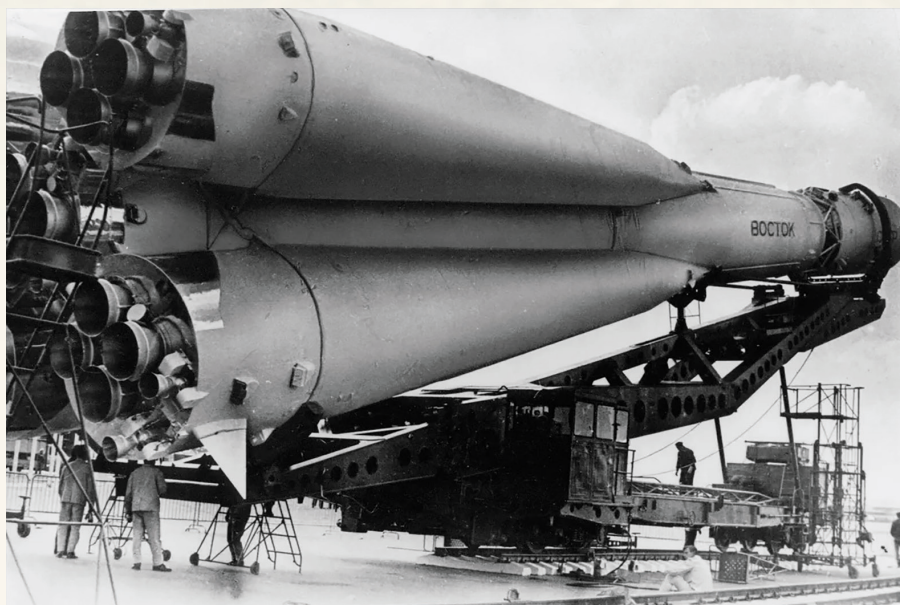
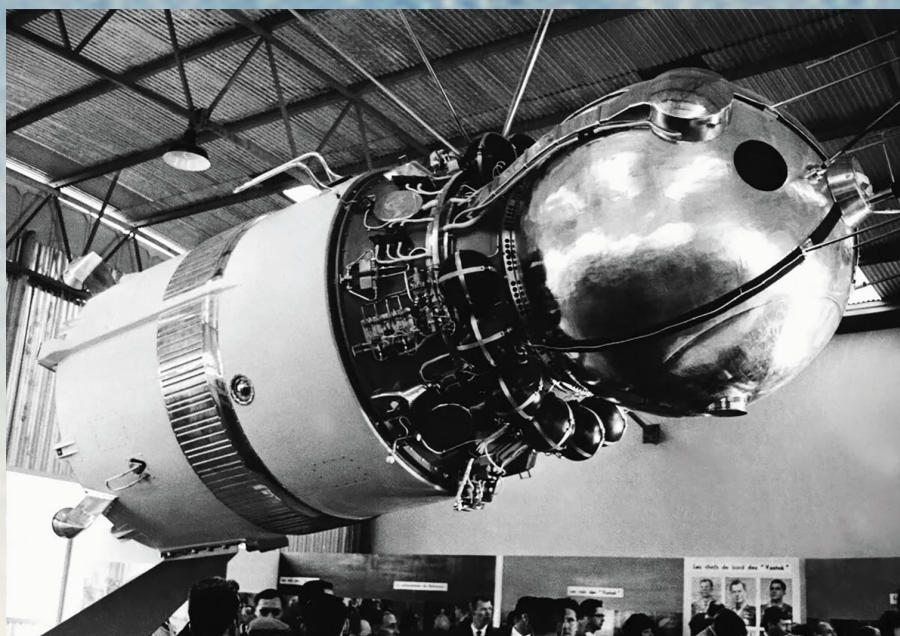


Russia's Ambassador to India Denis Alipov, this partnership is built around three flagship areas: satellite navigation, manned spaceflight programs, and rocket engine manufacturing. The scope of these three topics defines the narrative logic of this article.

The history of cooperation in satellite navigation dates back half a century. On April 19, 1975, a Soviet Kosmos-3M rocket launched from the Kapustin Yar cosmodrome, placing India's first satellite, Aryabhata, into orbit. The satellite was fully designed and built by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), while the USSR provided only the carrier. Following this, two more spacecraft, Bhaskara-I and Bhaskara-II, were launched free of charge. These three launches essentially paved India's way into the space club. Today, the Indian satellite program has not only caught up with world leaders but has also set a record: in 2017, a single PSLV rocket deployed 104 satellites in a single launch.

Moreover, by the early 2020s, India had deployed NavIC, its own regional navigation satellite system, which covers the country's territory and adjacent areas. Russia, for its part, keeps pace with the global GLONASS system, whose signals are accessible anywhere on Earth. Today, the convergence of these two navigation systems is reaching a fundamentally new level. The nations are negotiating the reciprocal placement of ground stations: a Russian GLONASS station will be built in Bengaluru, and an Indian NavIC station will be set up in Novosibirsk..

In order to understand the importance of this step, one need only look at how satellite navigation works. A satellite transmits a radio signal to Earth, and a telephone, by receiving signals from several such satellites, calculates its coordinates. However, to achieve accuracy down to a few meters, someone on the ground must continuously track the position of each satellite and correct its atomic clocks, which requires a network of ground stations. Consequently, the greater the number of such stations, the more precise the navigation becomes. In this regard,



Ambassador Alipov emphasized: "Work is underway on the reciprocal, parity-based deployment of ground measurement collection stations." Behind this technical phrasing lies a high level of trust: the parties are essentially sharing the "eyes and ears" of their navigation systems with one another, and such cooperation strengthens the technological sovereignty of both nations.

While satellite navigation developed largely due to India's own efforts, cooperation between the two nations manifested most visibly in the field of manned spaceflight. For a long time, the flight of Rakesh Sharma remained its primary

Today, Russian-Indian cooperation in manned spaceflight is evolving into a new format. In 2020, four Indian Air Force pilots arrived at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City near Moscow to begin training as “Gaganauts” (the term used in India for their future astronauts).

symbol. On April 3, 1984, he became the first Indian in space, launching aboard the Soyuz T-11 spacecraft under the Interkosmos program. This Soviet initiative in the 1970s and 1980s allowed citizens from over a dozen countries, from Czechoslovakia to Cuba, to work in orbit. After spending nearly eight days aboard the Salyut-7 station, Sharma became a national hero in India and was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union in the USSR. When asked by Indira Gandhi how India looked from space, he declared, “The best in the world.”

However, even back then, the Indian space program was preparing for independent breakthroughs. Thanks to these efforts, the Chandrayaan-1 probe succeeded in discovering water ice on the Moon in 2008. Later, in August 2023, Chandrayaan-3 achieved history’s first soft landing near the lunar South Pole—the very region containing the previously discovered accumulations of water ice, which could provide fuel and oxygen for future deep-space expeditions. Moreover, this means subsequent lunar missions will be able to utilize local resources rather than carrying everything from Earth. Additionally, in 2014, the Mangalyaan spacecraft entered Mars orbit on its very first attempt; prior to this, no country had ever achieved such success in its debut Mars mission. With this track record, India joined the club of great spacefaring nations as an equal partner.

Today, Russian-Indian cooperation in manned spaceflight is evolving into a new format. In 2020, four Indian Air Force pilots arrived at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City near Moscow

to begin training as “Gaganauts” (the term used in India for their future astronauts). Furthermore, Russian specialists are assisting their Indian counterparts with spacecraft systems design, as well as candidate selection and medical screening. In addition, Russia is developing astronaut rescue systems and flight gear. For instance, in 2022, Glavkosmos, a subsidiary of Roscosmos, delivered spacesuits, shock-absorbing seats, and custom-molded couch liners to India.

In parallel, a far more ambitious project is taking shape. In December 2025, during President Vladimir Putin’s visit to New Delhi, Russia announced that it would position the future Russian Orbital Station (ROS) into an orbit with a 51.6-degree inclination. India chose this exact same inclination for its own national space station, the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS). As First Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov explained: “This will open up opportunities for cooperation—joint scientific and technical experiments, as well as joint expeditions.” An inclination of 51.6 degrees is a decades-proven standard for manned spaceflight; all Soviet orbital stations operated on it, and the International Space Station (ISS) utilizes it today. Such an orbit is ideal for launches from both the Russian Baikonur Cosmodrome and the Indian Sriharikota Spaceport. When the ISS is decommissioned after 2030, these two national stations will be able to interact as orbital neighbors, exchanging crews and scientific data.

Deepening cooperation in human spaceflight is paving the way for a third flagship sector: rocket engine manufacturing. Partnership in this field dates back to 2007, when ISRO and Roscosmos signed an agreement to jointly execute the Chandrayaan-2 mission, under which the Russian side was tasked with developing the lander module. Although Russia later withdrew from the project and India went on to build the landing craft independently, the scientific and technical groundwork established during the joint design phase played a significant role in the ultimate success of the mission—an upgraded version of which made a triumphant landing on the Moon in 2023.

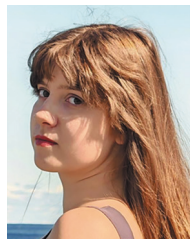
Today, as India designs its national orbital station and Roscosmos prepares to deploy the Russian Orbital Station (ROS), the need for shared expertise in engine manufacturing and related fields continues to grow. India remains highly interested in Russian liquid-propellant rocket engine designs, a sector where Russia has traditionally maintained a leading global position. It was precisely for this reason that in December 2025, the two sides agreed to grant India the rights for the licensed production of the advanced RD-191M rocket engine.

To better understand the significance of this milestone, it is helpful to look at the technology behind this designation. Rocket engines are categorized into various types based on the propellants they use. The most complex are cryogenic engines, which run on liquid hydrogen and require cooling to ultra-low temperatures. The RD-191M represents the next frontier—a semi-cryogenic engine that utilizes a highly refined kerosene and liquid oxygen propellant combination, making it significantly simpler and more

reliable to operate. Integrating this engine into India's most powerful launch vehicle, the LVM3, will nearly double its payload capacity, boosting it from the current 4.2 tons to between 6.5 and 7 tons. Crucially, rather than receiving finished off-the-shelf units, India is securing the rights to independently design, manufacture, and test these engines domestically. This approach aligns perfectly with New Delhi's "Make in India" government initiative, which aims to cultivate and expand national manufacturing capabilities.

Consequently, in the 65 years since Yuri Gagarin promised an enthusiastic crowd on the streets of Delhi that an Indian astronaut would eventually journey into space, the Russian-Indian space partnership has charted an extraordinary course. It has evolved from the launch of India's first satellite aboard a Soviet rocket into the joint production of cutting-edge rocket engines. At every milestone, this cooperation has not merely expanded in volume but has fundamentally transformed in character. Today, it stands as a partnership between two equal powers co-authoring the technologies of tomorrow. The three strategic pillars outlined by Ambassador Alipov — navigation, human spaceflight, and engine manufacturing — form the bedrock of bilateral space cooperation, proving that the space sector remains one of the most resilient and forward-looking drivers of the Russian-Indian relationship.





VICTORIA IGNATIEVA

Student at MGIMO University
under the Russian Foreign Ministry



How Did the Indian Diaspora Welcome 2026 in Russia?

The year 2026 is confidently emerging as one of the most action-packed years for Russian-Indian cultural ties in the last decade. Indian diaspora organisations in Moscow, St Petersburg, and Russia's regions have held dozens of events, ranging from diplomatic receptions to street festivals of colours. This article provides a chronicle of the main events from January to early May 2026.

The year 2026 has been declared the Year of Unity of Peoples in Russia, and the Indian community

has actively engaged with this agenda.

The event-filled year opened with the "My India" festival, which took place in Moscow from 2 to 14 January. The main stage of the Hanoi-Moscow Shopping Centre hosted performances featuring Indian dance troupes from Moscow, the Moscow Region, Murmansk, Sergiyev Posad, Shchyolkovo, and other cities across the Russian Federation.

Near the end of January, Moscow celebrated India's main national holiday – the 77th anniversary

of the Republic Day of India. The celebrations took place on January 26, gathering many distinguished guests; among those invited were Sadhupriya Das, Vice-President of the Centre of Societies for Krishna Consciousness in Russia (CSKCR), and Andrey Rudenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. In Vladivostok, the Consulate General of India organised a reception attended by Oleg Kozhemyako, Governor of the Primorsky Krai, and Andrey Brik, Chairman of the Vladivostok City Duma. This gesture highlighted the significance of the Indian diaspora in the Far East, where many Indian students and specialists work in IT and logistics. The programme featured excursions, lectures, and masterclasses. Several Russian museums participated in the project, including the Hermitage, the State Museum of Oriental Art, and the Andrey Rublev Museum.

One of the standout events was the exhibition “India: The Fabric of Time”, held in Moscow from 23 December 2025 to 12 April 2026. It featured over 300 exhibits from the National Crafts Museum in Delhi, including sarees, hand embroidery, wedding veils from Punjab, and other traditional attire.

In February, Nizhny Novgorod hosted the landmark “Indian Night” festival, bringing together more than 300 participants from both nations. During the event, Russian and Indian students showcased their own original choreography, immersing the audience in traditional Eastern culture.

From 27 to 28 March, Yekaterinburg hosted its inaugural Indian Film Festival, organised by

the Consulate General of India in the capital of the Urals. The Yeltsin Centre screened films by Oscar winner Satyajit Ray: Joi Baba Felunath, Mahanagar, Nayak, and Charulata. The festival also featured a photography exhibition by renowned Indian photographer Nemai Ghosh, famous for his long-standing collaboration with the great director.

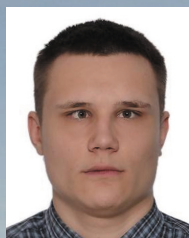
In April, Moscow hosted the 18th annual “Sita Holi Mela” festival, organised by the Sita Indian Cultural Centre. The event became an absolute highlight of the first half of the year. Throughout the day, dance troupes competed across three categories: classical Indian dance, folk dance, and Bollywood-style performances, with all participants later taking the stage for a gala concert. The event also featured an Indian bazaar and a food zone serving authentic Indian cuisine. The festival concluded with the traditional Holi festival of colours. Among the honoured guests at the event were Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of India in Moscow Nikhilesh Giri; President of the Indian Cultural-National Centre “Sita” and President of the Indian Business Alliance Sammy Kotwani; and President of the Association of Workers of Children’s Creativity and organiser of the International Children’s Creative Games of the BRICS countries Mikhail Sokolov, among others.

In the first half of May, Kalmykia hosted the Days of Indian Culture. The three-day programme included performances by Indian dancers, yoga sessions led by masters from India, cultural masterclasses, a concert programme, a cricket tournament, as well as an Indian Film Festival. During the latter, the films Humans in the Loop, Bara Badhu (Bride and Groom), and Taare Zameen Par (Like Stars on Earth) were screened.

The past six months have shown that the Indian diaspora in Russia has moved towards a more systematic and organised approach, as reflected both in the status of the invited guests and the scale of the audiences, as well as in the geographical reach of the events. This once again demonstrates that Indians in Russia are not merely guests, but an integral part of our multinational society.

The next five months of 2026 promise to be no less eventful. The main piece of advice for Russian readers is to keep an eye on the programmes of the Embassy and cultural centres — attending Holi celebrations or a sitar concert even once is far more rewarding than reading about them ten times in the news.

One of the standout events was the exhibition “India: The Fabric of Time”, held in Moscow from 23 December 2025 to 12 April 2026. It featured over 300 exhibits from the National Crafts Museum in Delhi, including sarees, hand embroidery, wedding veils from Punjab, and other traditional attire.



SEMYON VOROBYOV

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From Missile Boats to Nuclear Submarines

A Half-Century of Cooperation Between the Indian and Soviet Navies



On December 4, 1971, at 22:45, a missile struck the starboard side of the Pakistani destroyer PNS Khaibar as it patrolled the approaches to Karachi. Five minutes later, a second missile strike detonated the ship's ammunition magazine. Over the next hour and a half, the Indian Navy flotilla destroyed another destroyer, a minesweeper, and a troop transport, while severely damaging Karachi's oil storage facility. It was only by morning that the Pakistani command realized the primary strike force of the Indian Navy that night had been

cutting-edge Project 205 missile boats armed with P-15 missiles.

In this article, we will briefly examine the objectives driving naval cooperation between India and the USSR, trace its origins, and attempt to determine whether the modern framework of Russian-Indian cooperation in this sphere remains relevant today.

The 1960s were an era of tectonic shifts in global politics. Great power rivalry sparked several major military incidents and wars across



the globe. India found itself drawn into a series of armed conflicts, including the annexation of Goa (1961), the Sino-Indian War (1962), and the Second Indo-Pakistani War (1965). Meanwhile, the Soviet Union's relations with both the People's Republic of China and the Western Bloc grew increasingly strained. Facing shared geopolitical adversaries, the two nations gradually deepened their cooperation across multiple fronts, including military ties.

The 1965 Indo-Pakistani War highlighted three critical problems for the Indian Navy. First, the backbone of the fleet consisted of ship classes

designed and built either during or immediately after World War II. Second, all these vessels were of British construction. The United Kingdom had been India's sole warship exporter, but due to the outbreak of the war, the British government refused to continue selling ships to India on concessional terms. Third, the Indian fleet lacked a single submarine, as the former colonial power deemed it too risky to sell them.

The inability to attack enemy vessels from underwater severely hindered the effectiveness of the Indian Navy, especially since just a few submarines could have blockaded shipping in Karachi and Chittagong — Pakistan's two primary ports. Consequently, in 1965, the decision was made to purchase Project 641 diesel-electric submarines. Four submarines of this class would enter service before the next war with Pakistan. Mastering these new vessels became a major milestone in the evolution of the Indian Navy: Soviet sailors shared their operational expertise, while mechanics from Shipyard No. 196 helped establish maintenance and repair workflows for the submarines in Visakhapatnam.

Despite all measures taken to master the machinery, during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, the Indian Navy command feared that unrefined operational coordination between headquarters and the submarines could lead to the sinking of neutral vessels. Consequently, they enforced strict rules of engagement, effectively turning the submarines into reconnaissance tools. The international climate forced these measures, as any incident could have been used to justify aggression against India, but this step prevented the submarines from being utilized to their full potential. With no major naval confrontations occurring after the war, the Project 641 submarines and their crews went down in Indian Navy history as pioneers who paved the way for the development of the Indian submarine fleet. The bulk of the work fell on the shoulders of the surface forces.

Soviet-Indian surface naval cooperation actually began taking shape four months earlier. August 9, 1971, became a landmark date for relations between the two countries; it was on this very day

that the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation between the USSR and India was signed. It laid the foundation for a strategic partnership, particularly through naval cooperation. India signed a contract for the delivery of Project 159 patrol ships and Project 205 missile boats. These missile boats carried advanced P-15 Termit anti-ship missiles, which offered greater reliability and range than their counterparts. The vessels arrived just in time, providing the Indian Navy with a weapon capable of turning the tide of the war at sea.

Forming the backbone of the fleet's striking power, the missile boats conducted two raids on Karachi: Operation Trident and Operation Python, on December 4-5 and December 8-9, respectively. The first raid, Operation Trident, crippled the Pakistani fleet, with the Indian side suffering zero casualties. During the second raid, Operation Python, several vessels were sunk, though the primary damage was inflicted on Karachi's port infrastructure. More than half of the fuel and ammunition reserves stored at the port were destroyed, along with billions of dollars worth of equipment. The success of these two operations decisively accelerated India's victory on land as well. Since then, December 4 has been marked as Indian Navy Day.

The success of the Indian Navy raised deep concerns for Pakistan's ally, the United States. The

White House dispatched Task Force 74 to the Indian Ocean to exert pressure on India. However, the aircraft carrier task force triggered a sharp response from the Soviet Navy. To prevent a wider escalation, both superpowers ultimately refrained from direct intervention.

Following the war, bilateral cooperation deepened significantly. The affordability and combat-proven track record of Soviet weaponry, coupled with warm diplomatic ties, triggered a surge of new defense contracts. Beyond acquiring additional missile boats and patrol ships, India diversified its fleet with Soviet corvettes, guided-missile ships, anti-submarine warfare vessels, and modern Kilo-class diesel-electric submarines (Paltus). Ultimately, New Delhi acquired more than 20 vessels, the majority of which were assembled locally in Indian shipyards.

The next phase of cooperation centered on the development of India's nuclear-powered submarine fleet. During a Soviet delegation's visit in 1981, Moscow offered New Delhi assistance in designing both submarines and their nuclear propulsion units. To facilitate crew training and establish shore-based maintenance workflows during the construction phase, the USSR proposed leasing an existing Project 670 nuclear submarine (K-43). The subsequent Indian training program spanned six years, concluding in 1987. Following a comprehensive refit in Vladivostok, the vessel was prepared for transfer. However, the political climate shifted: as relations thawed between the US and the USSR, Washington pressured Moscow to cancel the lease, but the Soviet Union ultimately



resisted the pressure and proceeded with transferring the submarine to India in early 1988.

Cooperation, which had been at its peak, began to fade. Russia lacked the funds to build new ships, and many enterprises were now scattered across the territories of the newly formed post-Soviet states. India, for its part, was wary of ordering new vessels from an economically unstable ally. Cooperation only resumed in the 2000s. The first major milestone in reviving the partnership was the order to purchase and modernize the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya.

By the end of the century, the Indian Navy operated two aircraft carriers: INS Vikrant and INS Viraat, both built in the 1940s and 1950s. Vikrant was the older of the pair and had even served under the British flag during World War II. Following its sale to India in 1957, it served as India's sole aircraft carrier for nearly 30 years, seeing active deployment in both peacetime and wartime. With the ship nearing the end of its service life, this distinguished veteran needed a replacement.

The Indian government shortlisted three options for its new aircraft carrier: the French Clemenceau, the American Kitty Hawk, and the Soviet-Russian Admiral Gorshkov. The advantage of the first two lay in their immediate availability, as both were conventional aircraft carriers that required no radical rebuilding. In contrast, the Admiral Gorshkov was a highly specialized aviation cruiser that demanded a massive overhaul. Yet, the Russian candidate won out. The Western ships were badly worn down by decades of active service, while the Russian vessel had completed only a few deployments before being laid up in 1992.

On March 9, 2004, the Admiral Gorshkov was officially transferred to India, and modernization began at the Sevmash shipyard. The massive reconstruction dragged on for eight years. The final result was an aircraft carrier with capabilities comparable to the Admiral Kuznetsov, though stripped of its anti-ship missiles and outfitted with several Indian-made systems.

The air wing of the new Vikramaditya was composed of MiG-29K fighter jets, alongside Ka-28 and Ka-31 helicopters. On November 16, 2013, the Indian Navy flag was raised over the ship, marking the start of the Indian crew's efforts to master this new hardware.

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Parallel to the aircraft carrier negotiations, work was underway on the joint development of the BrahMos multi-purpose cruise missile. Just six years passed between the 1998 agreement and the start of mass production, which now runs at an estimated 80 to 100 missiles per year. A variant of the Russian P-800 Oniks anti-ship missile, the BrahMos has become the primary weapon of its class in the Indian Navy. The surface, submarine, air, and land variants are standardized. This lowers the price of the missile through economies of scale, shared logistics, and a single operational system. The BrahMos Aerospace joint venture continues to upgrade the missile by extending its range and improving its guidance systems. Currently, export negotiations are underway with Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

The defense cooperation crisis of the 1990s has clearly passed, but the partnership looks very different today. The Soviet Union used to simply sell weapons to India in large volumes. Today, the two nations share a true partnership built on joint funding, technology sharing, and pooled expertise. India's growing industrial sector now builds entire classes of weapons, with more production moving inside its borders. This shift supports the Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) policy, which aims to secure India's strategic autonomy. At the same time, Russia's push for a multipolar world strengthens these ties. Together, this partnership reinforces the strategic security of both nations.



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Hindi in Russia

Prospects and Challenges

हिंदी भारतीय संस्कृति की आत्मा है।

“Hindi is the soul of Indian culture.”

— Kamalapati Tripathi, writer and Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh (1969–1970)

The interest of Russians in the Hindi language, spoken today by more than half a billion people worldwide, has a long history. Hindi began to be taught at the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies as early as 1947, and today students study it at leading Russian universities such as MGIMO University, the Russian State University for the Humanities (RSUH), the Institute of Asian and African Studies of Moscow State University, Moscow State Linguistic University,

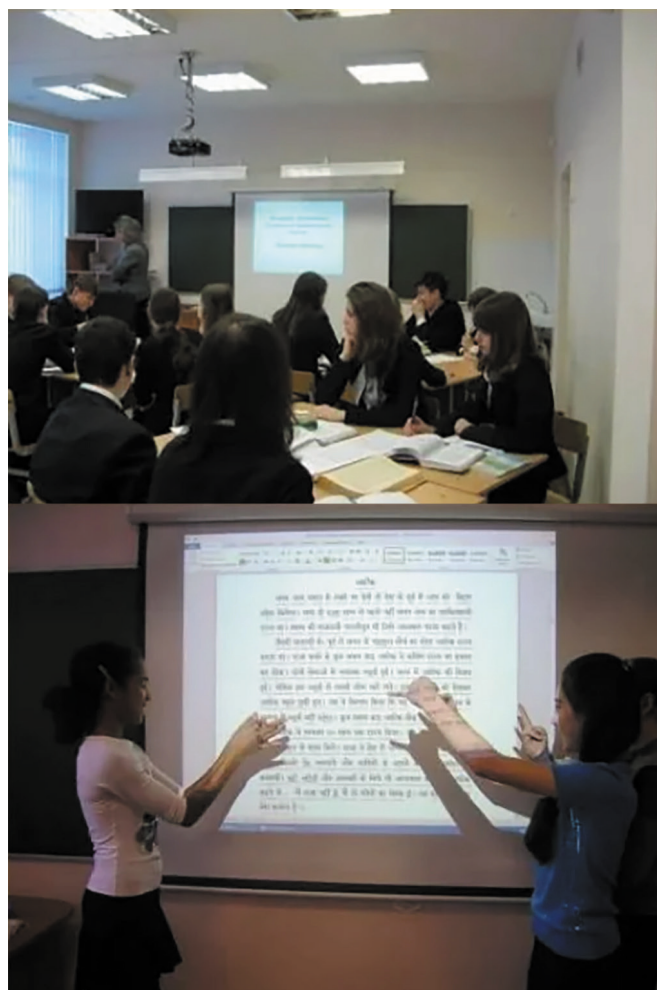
Saint Petersburg State University, and Kazan Federal University.

At the secondary education level, the best-known project for teaching India’s national language was the historic School No. 19 named after V.G. Belinsky, founded in the 19th century and offering Hindi courses for schoolchildren since 1961 (unfortunately, it ceased to exist several years ago). In Saint Petersburg, School No. 653 with advanced studies in Hindi and English still operates; many of its graduates continue careers in Indology by enrolling in Oriental Studies faculties across the country. The school also hosts a classical Indian Kuchipudi dance studio led by Hindi teacher Yulia

Vladimirovna Beshchuk.

Students studying Hindi have opportunities to undertake internships in India, as Russian and Indian universities have signed cooperation memorandums. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi and the Central Hindi Institute (Kendriya Hindi Sansthan) in Agra actively cooperate with Russian institutions. The latter also offers Hindi courses for anyone interested, which have already been completed by dozens of Russians of various ages and professions. For those simply interested in Indian culture and wishing to communicate with Indian colleagues, partners, and friends in their native language, numerous language courses are available. Hindi is also taught at the Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Centre attached to the Embassy of India.

What, then, can be said about the real situation of Hindi in Russia and the prospects for its development? On September 6 of last year, Deputy Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation Konstantin Mogilevsky noted growing interest in studying Hindi among Russian students. "In Moscow alone there are MGIMO, RSUH, the Institute of Asian and African Studies of Moscow State University, and Moscow State Linguistic University. Enrollment in Hindi programs is increasing; groups are becoming two or three times larger," he stated (<https://tass.ru/obschestvo/24981717>). At the



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same time, there are no statistics on the total number of Russians who speak Hindi or wish to learn it. Nor have sociological studies been conducted to determine the demand for Hindi-speaking specialists in the labor market. At present, we can rely primarily on personal experience in education and subjective assessments within business and translation circles. Specifically, regarding enrollment in university Hindi programs — both as a primary specialization (linguistics, intercultural communication, translation studies, philology, etc., leading to qualifications as translators or teachers) and as a key secondary specialization (regional studies, international journalism, etc.) — there is indeed demand among applicants. However, it cannot be compared to the number wishing to study the most widespread European languages such as English, French, or Spanish. It also lags behind interest in Chinese and Arabic. During university open-house events, typically no more than 5–10% of applicants express interest



in joining Hindi groups, especially given the existence of ten or more other foreign language options. On the other hand, the range of courses offered by universities is rather limited: from one or two small language groups (averaging 10 students each) per year to the same one or two groups, with intake taking place only once every few years (until the previous cohort of students has completed their studies). In our view, this is connected with several factors.

First, while the formula “demand creates supply” is true, in education the reverse is equally valid: “supply stimulates demand.” The average consumer becomes accustomed to a certain set of offerings and searches specifically for them, paying little attention to alternatives. To change this mindset, it is not enough merely to place a new product on the shelf; one must actively draw attention to it through campaigns and promotion. If generations within a family studied English or French, parents themselves will encourage applicants to choose one of those languages, and their attention may never turn to Hindi, mistakenly perceived as an exotic hobby. Increasing the number of Hindi learners and their visibility in the educational sphere is what can truly stimulate broader interest among future applicants.

Secondly, the prospects for the demand for Hindi in the labour market remain unclear. During the Soviet era, Hindi-speaking specialists could be broadly divided into four (often overlapping) groups: (1) classical philologists and Indologists from other disciplines, for

whom the study of Indian languages was necessary for conducting research and translating classical and modern literature; (2) diplomats (a relatively small pool of specialists for whom Hindi was not a priority due to constant transfers and relocations from country to country); (3) journalists; and (4) translators themselves in various fields, predominantly in the military-technical sector. The vast majority of them were educated under the state-sponsored system and were immediately assigned to work in their relevant specialism upon graduation. In the 1990s, demand for Hindi-speaking specialists declined, partly because Indian businesses operating internationally primarily used English as the language of communication. Broadly speaking, this situation continues today, although in recent years the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken significant steps toward restoring Hindi to its rightful place in India’s political and economic life. The use of Hindi is increasingly becoming a symbol of prestige and commitment to the ideals of Indian civilization.

Since 2014, the role of the national language in government organizations has expanded, and both National Hindi Day (September 14) and World Hindi Day (January 10) receive official support. Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh has noted that “Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’s efforts to promote Hindi worldwide have inspired everyone and increased Hindi’s popularity on the global stage.”



corporations, often prefer their native language to English. In this context, knowledge of Hindi can be useful not only to translators but also to Russian businesspeople themselves as they establish contacts with partners in India. Finally, over the past two years, a new socio-economic factor has emerged that creates opportunities for the use of Indian languages: the influx of Indian migrant workers to Russia to work in heavy and light industry, agriculture and the service sector. Cooperation in this area opens up new prospects for Hindi translators and teachers, as well as for teachers of Russian as

Nevertheless, India still has considerable work ahead in introducing Hindi more actively into the international business environment, which remains predominantly English-speaking.

A positive development is the growth of Russian-Indian ties at the level of small and medium-sized enterprises, whose representatives, unlike civil servants and employees of large international

a foreign language. In our view, educational institutions offering language courses should pay greater attention to explaining to prospective students the realities of cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India at various levels, as described above, so that the choice of Hindi is an informed one and linked to a clear vision of their future as specialists in Indian studies.

Third, according to our observations, beginning students often approach Hindi with the illusion that it is easy, only to become disappointed when confronted with authentic usage or difficult grammatical structures. Future students must understand from the outset what awaits them in the process of mastering Hindi and possess strong motivation to persevere. Hindi's rich phonetic system — containing a wider range of sounds than Russian or English — the complex writing system of aksharas (letters), matras (vowel signs), and ligatures in the Devanagari script, the unfamiliar logic of phrase and sentence construction, and extensive synonymy drawing from Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Turkic, and other lexical sources can all overwhelm learners. Even for the concept of "love," Hindi offers at least a dozen words, including prem, pyaar, muhabbat, sneh, anuraag, and ishq. Persistence, gradual progress, and consistent daily work without interruption — these are the principles students must follow throughout their years of study. Without genuine love and deep interest in the language,

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Thirdly, according to our observations, beginning to learn Hindi is often accompanied by the illusion that it is simple, followed by disappointment upon encountering the language in real-life use or complex grammatical structures. Prospective students must be aware from the outset of what lies ahead in the process of mastering Hindi, and possess strong motivation to see the task through to the end. The rich phonetic structure, with a range of sounds exceeding that of Russian or English, the complex system of writing aksharas (letters), matras (vowel signs) and ligatures of the Devanagari

Hindustani Samaj holds an annual translation competition for students, involving translations from Hindi into Russian and from Russian into Hindi, dedicated to the memory of the distinguished translator and specialist in Russian studies, Padmashri Madanlal Madhu (1925-2014).



alphabet, the unfamiliar logic of sentence and phrase construction, and a rich synonymy involving a multitude of lexical units of various origins (Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Turkic and others) – all this can discourage the language learner. Even for the concept of 'love' in Hindi, we can find no fewer than a dozen words, including prem, pyaar, muhabbat, sneh, anuraag, and ishq! Perseverance, a step-by-step approach, and daily practice without skipping a day – these are the principles one must follow throughout the years of study. Without genuine love and deep interest in the language, it is difficult to see the journey through to the end, and one must be fully aware of this right from the very start.

It is worth noting that the Indian Embassy in Moscow and the Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Centre (JNCC) attached to the Embassy are doing a great deal to promote Hindi in Russia. At the annual celebration of International Hindi Day, organised by the JNCC, students of Indian studies take part in language competitions and quizzes, perform skits in Hindi, and have the opportunity to experience Indian musical and dance traditions, as well as sample dishes from the Indian national





cuisine. Such events leave warm memories and inspire further efforts and successes in mastering this beautiful and rich language. Also worthy of note are events dedicated to Indian literature and its translations into Russian – in particular, the Moscow International Book Fair, held from September 3 to 6, 2025, in Moscow with the participation of the National Book Trust of India, featured an Indian pavilion as its main attraction. Four days of meetings with writers and translators, panel discussions and cultural programmes attracted thousands of visitors, some of whom, undoubtedly



became interested in the possibility of learning Indian languages so that they could read the literature in the original. Earlier still, on March 14 of last year, the Indian Embassy in Moscow organized the international conference “The Ramayana and the Mahabharata: Indian Epic Poems and Their Global Significance” at Moscow State Linguistic University, featuring leading Indologists from India, Russia, and Uzbekistan. Indian literature, both ancient and modern, remains one of the main sources of inspiration for those wishing to study Hindi. Organisations bringing together members of the Indian diaspora in Russia also play an important role. For example, Hindustani Samaj holds an annual translation competition for students, involving translations from Hindi into Russian and from Russian into Hindi, dedicated to the memory of the distinguished translator and specialist in Russian studies, Padmashri Madanlal Madhu (1925-2014).

In concluding this brief overview of the status of Hindi in Russia, one may hope that, with the development of Russian-Indian relations on the one hand and the internationalization of Hindi on the other, both students and established specialists in Indian studies will gain new motivations and broader horizons for applying their knowledge, skills, and talents. India is undoubtedly one of the leaders of the modern world, a country with an extraordinarily rich past, yet one firmly oriented toward the future. Its languages are destined to become one of the symbols of its international presence and influence. Jai Hindi! Jai Bharat!



MARIA SAVCHENKOVA
Master's student at MGIMO University

Vladimir Putin and Narendra Modi during a meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS summit.

Priorities of the Indian BRICS Chairmanship and New Horizons for Russian-Indian Cooperation

As India takes the helm of BRICS, the bloc enters a new political phase that allows New Delhi to cement its status as a leading voice for the Global South while advancing its own international agenda. India assumes this role during a period of profound geopolitical friction, characterized by shifting

supply chains, fierce tech and resource rivalries, and a sharp pivot toward regional alliances.

Against this backdrop, Indian diplomacy maintains its trademark pragmatism. Steering clear of rigid, Western-style bloc politics, New Delhi favors flexible, interest-based partnerships instead. This approach explains why the core of India's current BRICS agenda prioritizes economic resilience, technological development, and tangible, practical cooperation among member states.

India is particularly focused on digital technologies and artificial intelligence. Having long established itself as a premier global IT hub, the country now leverages this sector as a primary tool to project international influence. Consequently, New Delhi aggressively champions digital sovereignty, the expansion of national platforms, talent cultivation, and technological self-reliance. Within the BRICS framework, India is eager to establish more robust frameworks for collaborative development and tech sharing.

This agenda presents Russia with a wealth of new opportunities. Russian-Indian relations are currently experiencing a powerful surge, evolving far beyond the traditional pillars of energy and military-technical cooperation. In recent years, the scope of sectors where Moscow and New Delhi find common ground has grown exponentially.

The energy sector continues to hold paramount strategic value. India remains a major destination for Russian energy resources, with bilateral trade volumes steadily expanding. More telling, however, is that both nations are increasingly shifting focus toward joint ventures in high technology, pharmaceuticals, logistics, transport infrastructure, and industrial cooperation.

The IT sector warrants particular attention, as the Russian market increasingly draws Indian specialists, most notably software developers and engineers. India boasts a massive talent pool in the digital industry; consequently, amidst a global

shortage of IT professionals, Russian companies are actively forging ties with Indian partners. In parallel, cooperation is steadily expanding across artificial intelligence, software engineering, and digital services.

Crucially, Russian-Indian interaction cannot be reduced solely to economic metrics, as humanitarian ties remain a vital cornerstone of the relationship. Russian universities host thousands of Indian students, with a



Russian-Indian Business Forum, December 4–5, 2025.

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Russian-Indian Education Summit in New Delhi, April 2024.

primary focus on medical disciplines — a field where Russian education has sustained its high prestige since the Soviet era. To a large extent, it is precisely through this educational ecosystem that the profound level of trust distinguishing the Russian-Indian partnership from other international alliances is forged.

In 2026, the development of the International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC) is poised to

receive additional momentum. For Russia and India, this route is steadily acquiring strategic importance, moving beyond mere logistics toward shaping a new trade geography in Eurasia.

Crucially, India views BRICS primarily as a mechanism for expanding its own matrix of opportunities. New Delhi is deeply invested in strengthening economic ties, gaining access to advanced technologies, tapping into expanding markets, and developing transportation networks. Consequently, the Indian chairmanship is highly likely to remain intensely focused on actionable results and concrete joint ventures.

For Russia, this approach largely aligns with its own vision for the future of BRICS. Moscow and New Delhi maintain a shared understanding of multipolarity, advocate for a greater role for the Global South in global politics, and consistently support the realization of a more equitable international order.

This underscores the defining characteristic of the contemporary Russian-Indian partnership: it thrives completely free from ideological constraints, anchoring itself instead on long-term national interests, deep political trust, and a steadfast sense of mutual necessity.

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Upcoming events

Between June and August 2026, Moscow will host a series of exciting and interesting events that will appeal to both sports enthusiasts and those who appreciate India's rich and diverse culture.

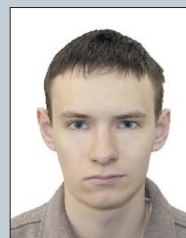
Yoga in the Parks

In June, the Indian Cultural and National Centre 'SITA' is organising a series of yoga masterclasses in Moscow's parks. Anyone is welcome to join, as the sessions are open to people of all levels and are led by experienced instructors who will help you find harmony between mind and body.

How can we find our footing in today's fast-changing world? Striking a balance between ambition and tranquillity, the hustle and bustle of city life and the need for rest and recuperation, technology and a sense of presence is the central theme of the 12th International Yoga Day in Russia, which will take place on 21 June at the Tsaritsyno Museum-Reserve. Organised by the Organic People team, the event will feature more than 70 venues, performances by artists, an activity zone for families with children, a fair offering themed products and, of course, plenty of yoga!

India Day

The annual 'India Day' festival, which will traditionally take place at Dream Island Park from 13 to 16 August, is sure to impress with its scale.



TIMOFEY SHIROKOV
Student at MGIMO



More than 20 themed zones will welcome visitors with Indian dances, screenings of famous Bollywood films, and seminars on yoga and Ayurveda. The festival will showcase the wide variety of flavours in Indian cuisine and create the atmosphere of an authentic Indian celebration.

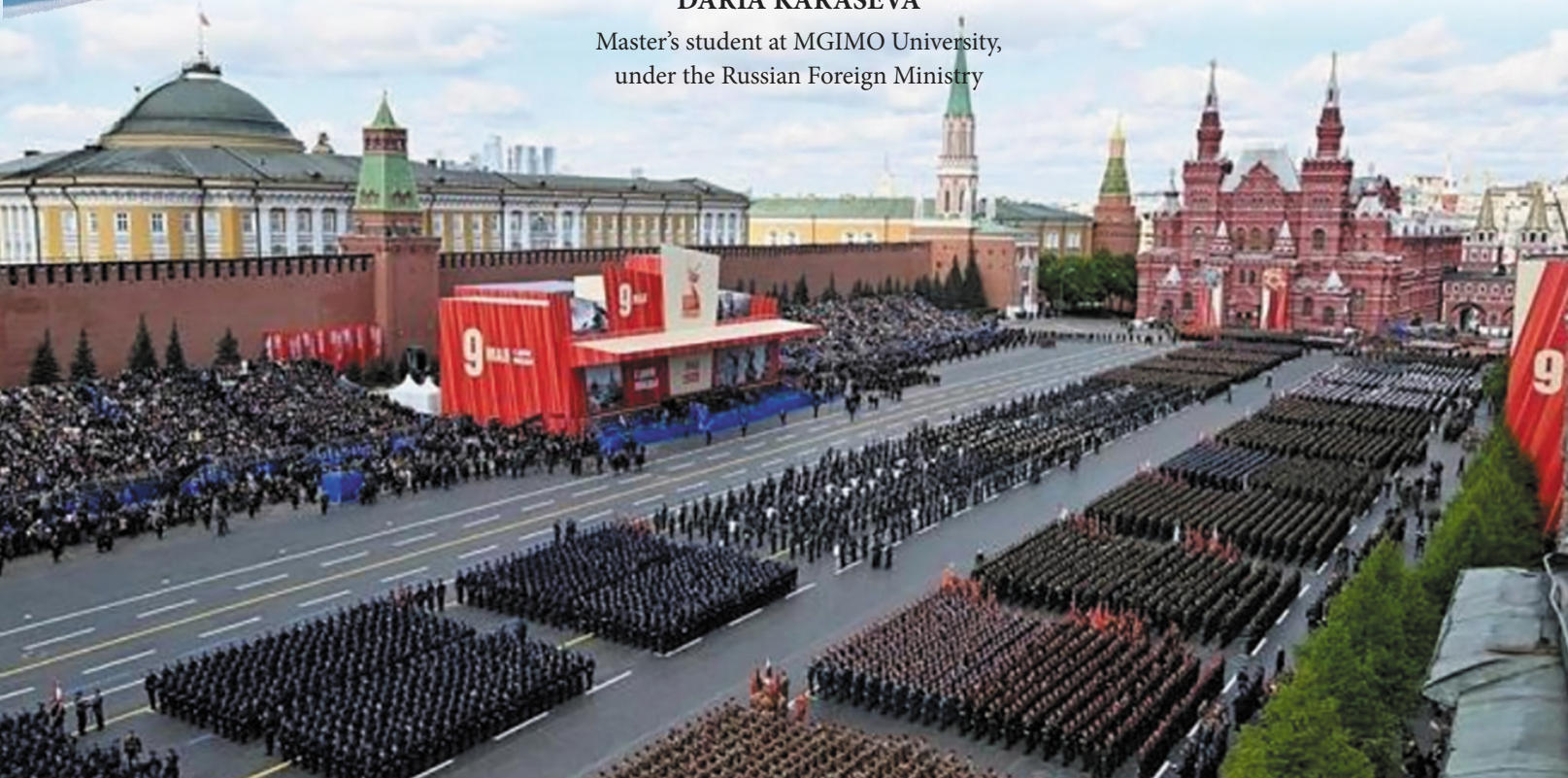
Ganesh Utsav

India's traditional culture will also be impossible to overlook – in late August, the 'SITA' Cultural and National Centre announced the Ganesh Utsav festival, dedicated to Ganesha, the god of wisdom. The festival offers an excellent opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Indian culture and traditions.



DARIA KARASEVA

Master's student at MGIMO University,
under the Russian Foreign Ministry



Memory That Brings Us Together

Why Victory Day Matters to India and Indians in Russia

In Russia, May 9 cannot be viewed as just another date on the calendar. On this day, the country grows quiet, turning its attention to its own history. St. George ribbons appear on the streets, fresh flowers carpet memorials, and families carry portraits of relatives who lived through the war. For Russians, Victory Day is deeply

personal, bound up in family histories and a profound awareness of the immense price paid for peace.

For Indians in Russia, this holiday is vital to understanding the country. Gaining a deeper feel for Russia takes more than visiting Red Square, the metro, museums, or university lecture halls. You have to

understand why May 9 is about more than history. It is about dignity, resilience, and honoring a generation that survived the harshest of trials.

India also knows the weight of a difficult history. During World War II, over 2.5 million Indians served in the British Indian Army. It was one of the largest volunteer armies of the time. Indian soldiers fought across North Africa, Italy, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. They braved desert heat, mountain passes, heavy combat, and long months away from home. Millions never made it back to their families.

India's role in the Allied victory has long been overshadowed by the major European stories of World War II. Yet, this history deserves more attention. Behind the raw data are real human lives, letters home, and anxious families waiting for their return. The war remains a complex part of India's history. The country was not yet independent. Even so, millions of Indians stepped up to help defeat a massive threat to world peace.

This is where India and Russia find common ground. Russian wartime memory centers on honoring a national sacrifice that endured colossal losses. Similarly, India's memory of the war preserves stories of courage, duty, and sacrifice. While these two histories stem from different experiences, they are deeply aligned in their shared human spirit.



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For Indian students, doctors, entrepreneurs, and professionals living in Russia, joining these memorial events brings them closer to the local community. Victory Day highlights the shared human values that define Russia.

For Indians in Russia, Victory Day offers a powerful moment of recognition. Indian culture places immense value on family, honoring elders, respecting ancestors, and remembering those who protected their homes. Russia's May 9 tradition shares those exact values. When people march with photos of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers, it resonates as a deeply personal family gesture filled with grief, gratitude, and quiet pride.

The Victory Day parade on Red Square, the wreath-laying ceremonies, commemorative concerts,

and events in schools and universities create a profound atmosphere. To a foreign visitor, it may seem as though the entire country speaks with a single voice on this day. Yet, that voice is built from millions of private histories. Every family holds its own memory: the front lines, the home front, the blockades, the hospitals, evacuations, the wait for letters, and the eventual return home.

For Indian students, doctors, entrepreneurs, and professionals living in Russia, joining these memorial events brings them closer to the local community. Victory Day highlights the shared human values that define Russia.

There is a broader meaning here as well. Russia and India have long spoken to one another in the language of trust and friendship. Military-technical cooperation, education, science, energy, medicine, and culture form a solid foundation for their relationship. Yet, true closeness between nations grows from the ability to understand each other's history. Victory Day builds that exact bridge of understanding.

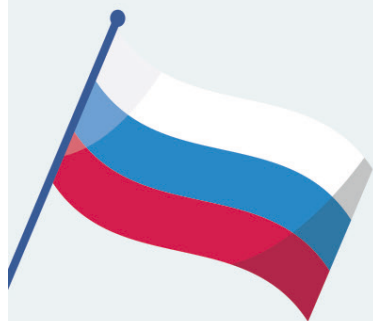
For India, May 9 is a meaningful time to reflect on its own role in the global fight against fascism and militarism. For the Indian community in Russia, the day offers a sense of belonging to a shared global history that honors the diverse nations and individual lives involved. The victory was a collective achievement because the war left no corner of the world untouched.

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ИМЕЮТСЯ ПРОТИВОПОКАЗАНИЯ. ПЕРЕД ПРИМЕНЕНИЕМ
НЕОБХОДИМО ПРОКОНСУЛЬТИРОВАТЬСЯ СО СПЕЦИАЛИСТОМ