

## Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. **ties** (noun) – association, relationship, bond, connection.
2. **strain** (verb) – damage, impair, overburden.
3. **reaffirm** (verb) – assert, state, assure again strongly.
4. **summit** (noun) – meeting, conference, conclave (international meeting/conference of heads of state/government).
5. **due to** (phrase) – because of, owing to, on account of, as a result of.
6. **coronavirus** (CoV) (noun) – a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death. (Courtesy: **WHO**)
7. **pandemic** (noun) – the worldwide spread of a new disease; The illness spreads around the world and typically affects a large number of people across a wide area.
8. **bilateral** (adjective) – involving two groups or countries.
9. **front** (noun) – a specific/particular situation or condition.
10. **make progress** (phrase) – move forward, make strides; proceed, advance, improve.
11. **strategic** (adjective) – relating to achieving long-term or overall goals.
12. **free trade** (noun) – a policy to eliminate barriers/limits/regulations against imports and exports.
13. **free trade agreement (FTA)** (noun) – a treaty/pact between two or more countries to facilitate trade and eliminate trade barriers.
14. **Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)** (noun) – The Eurasian Economic Union is an international organization for regional economic integration. It has international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union. The EAEU provides for free movement of goods, services, capital and labour, pursues coordinated, harmonized and single policy in the sectors determined by the Treaty and international agreements within the Union. The Member-States of the Eurasian Economic Union are the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Russian Federation. It came into force on 1 January 2015.
15. **highlight** (verb) – underline, underscore, emphasize, call attention to.
16. **cutting-edge** (adjective) – state-of-the-art, innovational, pioneering, revolutionary.
17. **S-400 (Triumf) missile defence system** (noun) – Developed by Russia, the S-400 (Triumph/Triumf) air defence system integrates a multifunction radar, autonomous detection and targeting systems, anti-aircraft missile systems, launchers, and command and control centre. It is capable of firing three types of missiles to create a layered defence. The S-400 is capable of destroying incoming hostile aircraft, missiles and even drones within a range of up to 400 km. It has a tracking capability of nearly 600 km.
18. **as well as** (phrase) – and also, and in addition.
19. **avenue** (noun) – way, method, direction, approach.

20. International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) (noun) – a multi modal transportation established in 2000 for the purpose of promoting transportation cooperation among the Member States. It is a 7,200-km-long multi-mode network of ship, rail, and road route for moving freight between India, Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia and Europe. The route primarily involves moving freight from India, Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia via ship, rail and road.
21. Chennai-Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor (noun) – a proposed full-fledged sea route of approximately 5,600 nautical miles between Russia’s eastern port city, Vladivostok and Chennai on the eastern Indian seaboard.
22. maritime (adjective) – of or related to the sea.
23. corridor (noun) – a strip/swathe of land linking two areas (particularly by a road). (Maritime corridor means sea route connecting two places).
24. divergence (noun) – difference, dissimilarity, variance; deviation, digression.
25. worldview (noun) – beliefs, notions, principles, attitude, viewpoint.
26. preface (verb) – start, begin, introduce (an event by doing something).
27. The Indo-Pacific (region) (noun) – the Indo-Pacific region refers to the confluence (convergence) of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, which interconnect in Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and more).
28. strategy (noun) – plan of action (in order to achieve a more expansive set of political, economic, and security interests).
29. continental (adjective) – belonging to a continent (mainland).
30. derisive (adjective) – mocking, ridiculing, teasing.
31. Quad/Quadrilateral (noun) – The ‘Quadrilateral’ is described as four democracies (the United States, Japan, Australia and India) with a shared objective to ensure and support a “free, open and prosperous” Indo-Pacific region.
32. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (noun) – NATO was created in 1949 by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the Soviet Union.
33. alliance (noun) – association, union, partnership.
34. inadvisable (adjective) – ill-advised, unwise, misguided, misconceived.
35. counterproductive (adjective) – harmful, damaging, dangerous/destructive.
36. push (noun) – effort, initiative, drive.
37. come up against (phrasal verb) – encounter, come across, be faced with, confront.
38. consistent (adjective) – steady, stable, constant, regular.
39. optics (noun) – (typically in a political situation) the way in which an event is recognized by the public.
40. fuel (verb) – intensify, exacerbate, vitalize.
41. impression (noun) – feeling, notion, idea, thought, opinion.
42. on the same page (phrase) – in agreement.
43. absence (noun) – omission, exclusion.
44. in focus (phrase) – distinct, clear-cut, clear, well defined, well focused.
45. envoy (noun) – diplomat, consul, ambassador; representative, delegate, mediator.
46. deepen (verb) – grow, increase, intensify.

47. **counterterrorism** (noun) – anti-terrorism; actions taken to combat or prevent terrorism.
48. **raise eyebrows** (phrase) – show surprise.
49. **address** (verb) – tackle, deal with, attend to, try to sort out.
50. **time-tested** (adjective) – established (over a period of time).
51. **decade** (noun) – a period of ten years.
52. **take for granted** (phrase) – understand, assume, presume (something is true without cross-questioning it); For example, if people take something for granted, they do not place much value on it. Or you believe it to be true, real or expected.
53. **dispel** (verb) – eliminate, remove, dismiss.
54. **notion** (noun) – idea, belief, opinion, view.
55. **strain** (noun) – tension, stress, pressure, demands, burdens.

## Time tests ties: On India-Russia relations

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### **India and Russia must ensure their relationship is not strained by changed reality**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov's visit to Delhi this week, saw both he and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar reaffirming traditional India-Russia ties, but there were signs that those ties are being tested. Mr. Lavrov's trip was to make preparations for the upcoming visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin for the annual summit — it was postponed last year due to the coronavirus pandemic. On the bilateral front, both sides appeared to make progress on strategic cooperation, cooperation in energy, nuclear and space sectors, and on talks on a free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). Also discussed were more agreements on military-technical cooperation for the joint production of India-made Russian weapons, with Mr. Lavrov highlighting Russia being the only partner supplying India "cutting-edge military technology". While neither side referred to the upcoming delivery of the \$5 billion S-400 missile defence system directly, they reaffirmed their commitment to their defence partnership, as well as avenues for more investment in connectivity including the International North-South Transport Corridor and the Chennai-Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor.

The areas of divergence over their worldview seemed to emerge during their public remarks, which were prefaced by Mr. Jaishankar's reference to the "rebalanced nature" of international relations. Mr. Lavrov's praise of Russia-China ties was clearly not shared by Mr. Jaishankar. While he referred repeatedly to India's "Indo-Pacific" strategy, Mr. Lavrov preferred the more continental reference to the "Asia-Pacific" region. Mr. Lavrov's derisive indirect reference to the Quad as an "Asian NATO" was significant, although he said both sides agreed that military alliances in Asia were inadvisable and counterproductive. On Afghanistan as well, the Russian push for bringing the Taliban into a power-sharing arrangement in Kabul seemed to come up against India's consistent push for a "democratic Afghanistan".

Beyond those divergences, it was the optics of Mr. Lavrov's brief visit that fuelled the impression that New Delhi and Moscow are not as much on the same page as they have traditionally been; it did not include a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, unlike earlier. The absence of a meeting at the highest level seemed more in focus, as Mr. Modi met with U.S. Special Envoy John Kerry just a day later, and at his next stop, in Islamabad, Mr. Lavrov was received by Prime Minister Imran Khan and Pakistan Army Chief General Bajwa. This was Mr. Lavrov's first visit to Pakistan in nine years, and was a clear message of deepening ties. Unlike in 2012, Mr. Lavrov this time said that Russia was ready to strengthen Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts with the supply of "relevant equipment", which will raise eyebrows in Delhi. While India and Russia have successfully addressed divergences between them, even deep, traditional and "time-tested relations" of the kind they have shared for decades cannot be taken for granted, and the two sides should move quickly, if they desire to dispel the notion that those ties are under any strain.