

TALKS ON FOR LOGISTICS DEAL WITH RUSSIA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Russia

India and Russia are in the process of concluding a logistics agreement, with both sides targeting to conclude consultations before the annual summit in October between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The proposed agreement follows a series of such agreements India has signed since the first logistics agreement with the U.S.

Draft from Moscow

"A draft logistics agreement has come from Russia. At the end of July, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) had sent it to the Integrated Defence Staff and the three services for their comments," an official source with knowledge of the matter said.

The Army and Navy have since sent back their observations on the draft. Another official said the agreement with Russia will be on the lines of those signed with the U.S. and France.

"The idea is to increase our operational flexibility and we thought we should do one with our long term partner Russia," another official source said.

Short timeline

While the consultation process is on, officials are working against time to have the agreement ready by October.

"Drafts are being readied. It is work in progress. Timelines are tight but we will try and aim for the October summit," the source stated.

India signed the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Understanding (LEMOA), with the U.S. in August 2016 after a decade of negotiations.

Since then it has concluded several such agreements with France, Oman, Philippines, Singapore and for access to the Sabang port in Indonesia.

Australia too has sent a draft agreement.

Logistics agreements are administrative arrangements facilitating access to military facilities for exchange of fuel and provisions on mutual agreement simplifying logistical support and increasing operational turnaround of the military when operating away from India.

Officials underscored the fact that India and Russia have had deep rooted military cooperation for several decades.

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