

INDIA AND RUSSIA EXPLORE NORTHERN SEA ROUTE (NSR), EASTERN MARITIME CORRIDOR (EMC) IN AN EFFORT TO WIDEN MARITIME COOPERATION

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Russia

The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal met with the Minister of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic, Mr. A.O. Chekunkov at the Pavilion of Kamchatka Territory, “Far East Street” in Vladivostok, Russia today. During the meeting, both the leaders discussed wide range of items of maritime communication between India and Russia to widen maritime cooperation including possibility of usage of new transport corridors like the Northern Sea Route (NSR) as well as the Eastern Maritime Corridor (EMC) between Vladivostok and Chennai. It was also decided that India and Russia agreed to train of Indian seafarers in Polar and Arctic waters at the Russian Maritime Training Institute, named after GI Admiral Nevelsky, which is equipped with simulator training facilities, in Vladivostok, Russia.



Speaking on the occasion, Shri Sonowal said, “The relationship between Russia and India has deep historical roots and is based on mutual respect and shared interests. We remain committed to maintaining strong ties and fostering strategic cooperation across various sectors. With the support from the Russian government, our team visited the ports of Vladivostok, Vostochny, Nakhodka and Kozmino in May, 2023, which helped us gain insights and collaboration forged during the visits to these ports has contributed to our understanding of requirements for the full-scale operationalisation of the Eastern Maritime Corridor (EMC). Our proposed workshop in Chennai will discuss the operationalisation of the EMC, and we envision to involve pertinent stakeholders involved in the trading and transportation of potential commodities such as coking coal, oil, and liquefied natural gas along this corridor. I am also happy to inform you that we have extended an invitation to Russia to participate at the upcoming Global Maritime India Summit (GMIS), 2023.”



Speaking at the meeting, the Minister of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic, Mr. A.O. Chekunkov, said, “We discussed the development of maritime communications between our countries, as well as the prospects for using the Northern Sea Route. This dynamic of contacts is the foundation for further strengthening our partnership. Cooperation with the Republic of India is one of the priorities of the international activities of our Ministry; we intend to develop relations with Indian partners in the Far East in all areas of mutual interest.”



Highlighting the role of other alternative routes for exploring trade and commerce opportunities between India and Russia, Shri Sonowal said, “India is keen to collaborate a partnership regarding the development of the Northern Sea route, recognising the potential it holds for enhanced connectivity and trade.”



Speaking on the alternative routes for trade, Mr AO Chekunkov said, “We agree with your conclusions that the potential cargo base of the line will be coking coal, oil, LNG and fertilizers. In the Far East, this product range is present in sufficient quantities, and in the east of India, the infrastructure to receive it is being built up. Taking into account the specialization of the Far Eastern ports, the project should be implemented in an expanded geographical scope, including other regions in addition to Primorye, primarily the Khabarovsk Territory. We are ready to visit Chennai this October on a business mission and, with the participation of leading Russian exporters, to develop mutually beneficial solutions with the Indian side for the launch of the above lines. The NSR is a global transport project. Its development can provide economic benefits to both Russia and non-regional states. For India, this is an opportunity to increase sales of shipbuilding products and gain income from participation in the general logistics business in northern latitudes.”

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