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India Explores Deepening Defense Co-Production With Russia – Reuters

December 09, 2025



Kremlin.ru

India is considering expanding joint defense ventures with Russia as it reassesses its arms procurement strategy, Reuters reported Tuesday, citing three sources familiar with the matter.

A delegation of Indian defense-industry officials visited Moscow on Oct. 29-30, the first such trip since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Reuters reported.

At least six senior executives from major Indian state and private firms as well as drone and military-AI startups took part in the talks, Reuters' sources said.

Discussions reportedly covered the production of spare parts for MiG-29 fighter jets and Russian air-defense systems. Russia also proposed setting up facilities in India to develop equipment that could later be exported to Moscow.

Following President Vladimir Putin's Dec. 5 visit to New Delhi, both countries said they would

shift their defense partnership "to joint research and development, co-development and co-production of advanced defense technology and systems."

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Executives present included a senior official from Bharat Forge, which supplies components for rockets and artillery.

Adani Defense and Aerospace CEO Ashish Rajvanshi also attended along with a representative of the Society of Indian Defense Manufacturers, Reuters' sources said.

Adani Group denied any involvement. India's Defense Ministry and other companies did not comment.

One Indian executive told Reuters that companies were wary of expanding cooperation with Russia due to the risk of secondary sanctions, which could also hinder existing or planned projects with Western firms.

Russia has long been a key supplier of arms to India, one of the world's largest weapons importers. India has in recent years diversified suppliers and expanded domestic production.

India already co-produces missiles and Kalashnikov rifles with Russia, though delays in Russian deliveries of AK-203 assembly kits earlier forced New Delhi to buy 73,000 rifles from the U.S.

While Russia supplied 76% of India's arms imports in 2009-13, this share fell to to 36% in 2019-23, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

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