

# Will tackle oil prices, Putin tells PM Modi

**SMITA SHARMA**

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Months after the informal summit at Sochi in May, Prime Minister Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday concluded the 19th annual strategic dialogue in Delhi.

The two leaders focused on the “unique” relationship, with PM Modi driving home the message that there is no drift in ties between Moscow and Delhi, even as India and US enhanced their strategic and defence cooperation.

India and Russia inked eight pacts in areas of railways, nuclear energy, fertilisers and cooperation in peaceful uses of outer space as well as India's manned space mission programme scheduled for 2022. “I am confident that President Putin’s commitment will give more energy to these relations. And our trust and friendship will be further strengthened and our special and privileged strategic partnership will scale new heights,” said PM Modi in his statement.

“PM Modi spoke of rising oil prices and its impact on domestic economy. President

## **EIGHT PACTS INKED**

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Putin said that Russia would work with India to see stability in oil prices and try and enhance production of petroleum, if needed,” said a source privy to the discussions.

Unlike the Rafale agreement, that was announced by the top leaders, the inking of the \$5.4 billion S-400 agreement was not mentioned by either PM Modi or President Putin in their remarks to the media but included in a joint statement.

Putin said, “Military-technical cooperation is not limited to Russian arms supplies. Our defence ministries and general staff maintain regular contact and work to enhance combat readiness of our armed forces.” Modi said India and Russia were “unanimous in strengthening multi-polarity

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## Putin tells...

and multilateralism in this rapidly changing world". While Moscow advocated early adoption of CCIT (Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism) that India has been pushing for at the UN since 1996, the two sides did not name any Pakistan-based or other terror group and entity in the joint statement.

The 68-para statement said, "The sides denounced terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated the need to combat international terrorism with decisive and collective response without any double standards. The sides agreed to converge their efforts to eradicate terrorist networks, their sources of financing, arms and fighters supply channels, to counter terrorist ideology, propaganda and recruitment."

Sources said there was no Pakistan-specific discussion, but it figured broadly in context of reconciliation with Taliban. Sources said Putin was keen to learn about implementation of GST reforms from Modi, as he mulls the option for Russia.