

Issue Brief

October 2024
No : 410

How 'Far' is Russia's Far East?

Danish Yousuf



How 'Far' is Russia's Far East?

Danish Yousuf

Introduction

The Russian Far East (RFE) is a vast and resource-rich region, yet often overlooked in geopolitical discussions. Despite its large size, spanning from Siberia to the Pacific and bordering key global players like China, Mongolia, and North Korea, the RFE remains underdeveloped and sparsely populated. Historically, this region has been critical to Russia's military and economic security. The Far East has been viewed through the lens of political and military interests, with its vast resources—such as oil, gas, fish, and timber—being the primary focus. The people who inhabit the region have often been marginalised in policy decisions, and government strategies have typically prioritised geopolitical goals over economic or social considerations. Today, with the rise of China and the reconfiguration of the Indo-Pacific as a central security space, the RFE is becoming increasingly significant.

This paper examines the strategic importance of the RFE in terms of geography, security, and economic development. It also explores the region's historical significance, challenges in infrastructure development, demographic issues, and the role of external powers in shaping the region's future.

Geographic and Strategic Significance

The RFE is geographically very far from Moscow, spanning 11 time zones and comprising 36% of Russia's total landmass but home to only about 5 per cent of its population (Eastern Economic Forum). The population of the Far East has decreased by 22-23% since the early 2000s, and today, only 6.3 million people live in an area of 8.2 million square kilometres, making it one of the least densely populated regions in the world (Klomegah, 2021). Despite efforts by the Russian government to promote development, there is widespread scepticism among the local population about the central government's commitment to the region. At the same time, the economic orientation of the Far East has shifted toward East Asia, with increasing integration into the economies of China, Japan, and South Korea. Its proximity to key global players, as well as its access to the Arctic, highlights its geopolitical importance. The region is not only Russia's gateway to the Asia-Pacific but also a potential entry point to Arctic maritime routes (Hedlund, 2024).



Physical map of Russian Far East Showing the geographic features of Eastern Russia

In the past, the Far East served primarily as a military outpost and a resource base for European Russia, with little emphasis on its economic development (Trenin, 2013). The region was a buffer zone between Europe and Asia and a destination for pioneers, prisoners, and exiles. This legacy has led to a development model that is focused on military control and central government oversight. Economic activities in the Far East have often been directed toward supporting military objectives, rather than fostering regional growth or improving the livelihoods of its inhabitants (Ferris, E. 2020). As a result, the population of the region has remained low, with significant outmigration contributing to a decline in the number of residents.

Demographics of Russia's Far East

Demographic Factor	Details
Total Population	Approximately 8 million people (as of 2021)
Population Density	Extremely low, fewer than 1 person per sq km in some areas
Urban vs Rural	Majority urban; rural depopulation
Russians	Around 90% of the population
Indigenous Peoples	Ukrainians, Tatars, Koreans, Jews and a large group of indigenous peoples live in the region: Yakuts, Koryaks, Nanai, Ulchi, Udege, Itelmen, Evenk, Ainu, Aleuts, Chukchi, Eskimos, etc.

Source: Eastern Economic Forum

Four of the regions in the Russian Far East border China, making it crucial for military and geopolitical strategy. Gorbachev's tenure saw efforts to improve relations with China, spurred by the need to demarcate the border.



Map Showing Heixiazi Island. Source: GIS Reports

Bolshoy Ussuriysky Island, referred to as Heixiazi Island in China, was historically disputed by China and Russia. This territorial issue was settled in 2004 with both nations agreeing to share control of the island (Zhang, 2024). More recently, they have collaborated on a joint development initiative aimed at environmental conservation, unique crop cultivation, and establishing an international transport corridor.

As part of economic reforms during *Perestroika*, Japan emerged as a key potential partner for Russia, but territorial disputes over the Kuril Islands hindered deeper cooperation (Shagina, 2019). After the Soviet Union collapsed, China became Russia's primary partner in the region, largely due to failed negotiations with Japan and the need to support Moscow's defence industry. Arms sales to China provided crucial foreign currency and helped sustain the defence sector, (SIPRI, 2017) much of which was concentrated in the Far East.

During the 1990s and 2000s, Russia's partnership with China strengthened, revitalizing its defence industry and deepening the region's dependence on natural resources and defence-related sectors. (Fong & Maizland, 2024). Despite efforts to diversify the economy, the region remained focused on raw materials and security.

The location of Far East has long made it a key strategic area for Russia's defence. The establishment of the Eastern Military District in 2010, which includes the Pacific Fleet, demonstrates Moscow's commitment to maintaining a strong military presence in the region (Ferris, E. 2020). This district plays a critical role in securing Russia's borders and ensuring military readiness in the face of potential threats from the Asia-Pacific. The region also serves as a training ground for Russian military forces, especially in challenging terrains like mountains and rivers, which are vital for developing engineering troops capable of building and maintaining military infrastructure in remote areas.

Moscow's military exercises, particularly those like Vostok, hint towards its concerns about defending its vast land borders, especially in the Russian Far East. The exercises reveal the importance of logistics, specifically in overcoming the challenges of mobilising forces over great distances and in rugged terrain. Russia's investment in its Eastern Military District (EMD), with its four armies, reflects its strategic priority to secure the Chinese border and respond to potential threats. Key logistical efforts, including the work of the Railway Troops (ZhV), are critical to supporting military operations by ensuring swift troop and equipment movement (Ferris, E. 2020). Despite past concerns about the military's capacity to mobilise quickly, recent improvements in rail and infrastructure show Russia's focus on bolstering its military readiness. The ZhV's ongoing role in enhancing logistical capabilities, indicates its growing importance in Russia's defence strategy, as it allows for better integration of military and civilian infrastructure to secure this strategically vital region.

In recent years, Russia and China have conducted joint military exercises in the region, signalling closer military ties between the two countries (Yang, 2024). However, while Russia has sought to strengthen its relationship with China, it remains cautious about becoming too dependent on its eastern neighbour.

Economic Importance

The RFE is rich in natural resources, including hydrocarbons, minerals, timber, and fisheries. However, its vast distances and inhospitable climate make it difficult to exploit these resources effectively (Buznik, 2001). Infrastructure development in the region, particularly in transport logistics, has lagged behind other parts of Russia. Moscow has long been wary of Beijing's ambitions in the Far East, fearing that Chinese economic activity and migration could

lead to political influence and territorial claims. As a result, Chinese businesses were largely kept out of key projects in minerals, construction, and infrastructure. In 2012, President Dmitry Medvedev warned that the region risked becoming a raw materials supplier for China, vulnerable to Beijing's "excessive expansion" (Reuters, 2012). Today, however, the Ministry for Development of the Russian Far East, created in 2012, highlights China's crucial role in revitalising the region (Stronski & Ng)

Russian Resource Data

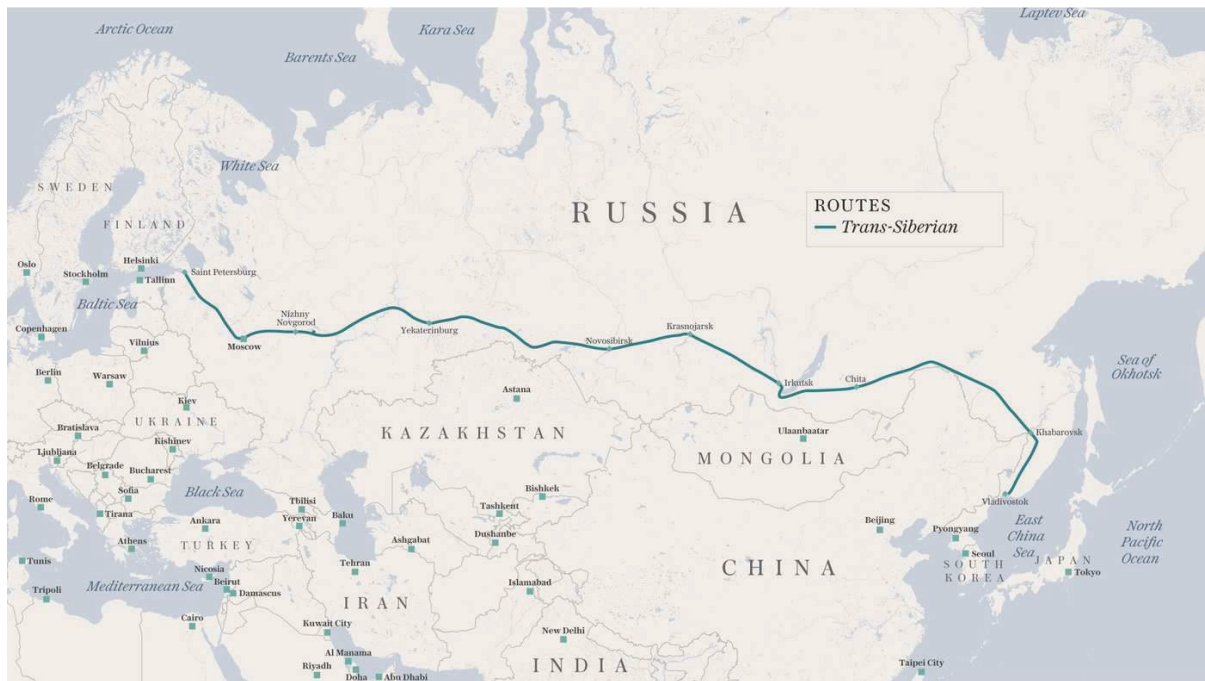
Resource	Percentage of Russia's total resources in Far East (Approx)
Diamonds	98
Stannary	80
Borax Materials	90
Gold	50
Tungsten	14
Fish and Seafood	40
Coal Reserves	33
Hydro-engineering resources	33
Forests	30

Source: Eastern Economic Forum

The Trans-Siberian Railway and the Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM) are the two main arteries of transport in the RFE, connecting the region to European Russia and China (Port Economics, 2023). However, both railways are running at full capacity, limiting the potential for increased trade. Russia's government has announced numerous plans to upgrade infrastructure in the region, including the Eastern Economic Forum and the development of ports like Nakhodka and Vladivostok (President of Russia, 2024).

In 2012, Russia announced a "Pivot to the East" aimed at fostering economic development in the Russian Far East and integrating it more fully into the dynamic Asia-Pacific

economy (Liu, F. 2023). The global financial crisis of 2008 highlighted the need for Russia to engage with this region. However, the region continues to face significant challenges, particularly a declining population. The population has dropped from around 8 million in 1990 to roughly 6 million today, in contrast to China's much larger population across the border. The influx of Chinese workers, once a concern, has significantly decreased, with Central Asian labourers now making up much of the workforce.



The route of the Trans-Siberian railway from Moscow to Vladivostok. Source: The Telegraph

The 2012 pivot had socio-economic development of the Russian Far East as a core focus, with an emphasis on economic integration with the Asia-Pacific. However, the region's development has struggled to keep pace with its goals. The Far East remains heavily reliant on China, especially in trade. For over a decade, almost all exports from the Amur region have gone to China, and in 2019, approximately 83% of the region's trade turnover was with China (Ferris, E. 2020). By the end of 2023, Chinese involvement in the Russian Far East included 49 investment projects, totalling nearly \$9 billion (Zhang, 2024). This represents only a small portion of the announced target, making 2024 a critical year for China to advance its investment plans.

Russia's growing dependence on China has raised concerns about becoming a supplier of raw materials to its neighbour. Most of Russia's exports to China, particularly from the Far

East, are hydrocarbons and other raw materials. Despite warnings of this reliance, little has been done to shift the economic model of the region.

The Challenge of Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure development in the Far East remains a critical issue. The region's remote location, harsh climate, and challenging terrain make infrastructure projects expensive and difficult. Population density is extremely low, complicating efforts to improve transport networks. While the Russian government has laid out several plans to upgrade roads, railways, and ports, (Eastern Economic Forum, 2023) implementation has been uneven due to funding issues and mismanagement. Remote areas rich in resources often receive little investment, hampering their economic potential.

Disagreements within the government over funding allocations further stifle development. Large infrastructure projects are often touted in the media but fail to deliver results, as they are hampered by inefficiencies and misallocation of resources (Ferris, E. 2020). The Far East risks remaining a drain on Russia's economy without foreign investment, particularly in infrastructure.

However, foreign investors have been hesitant to commit to projects in the region, largely due to concerns over doubts about profitability. Russia hosts annual forums like the Eastern Economic Forum to attract investment from the Asia-Pacific region, but many deals fall through due to financial and logistical challenges.

Logistics and transport infrastructure are often overlooked as major vulnerabilities, hindering Russia's goals in the Far East and Asia-Pacific regions.

Transport infrastructure, including roads, railways, and ports, is essential not only for local connectivity but also for facilitating the movement of goods and people across vast distances. This is critical, given Russia's reliance on raw material exports like coal. Furthermore, this infrastructure links the RFE with both western Russia and key trade partners like China and Japan, serving as a military function in defending the region and training engineering troops who operate in difficult terrains.

Gazprom Siberian Pipeline Network



Source: Financial Times

Challenges to developing transport infrastructure can be grouped into two main areas: geography and demography. Geographically, the region's climate and terrain make construction expensive and difficult, with mountainous areas, permafrost, and marshlands posing significant challenges. Demographically, the RFE is sparsely populated, with around six to seven million people, making it difficult to justify large-scale investments in transport infrastructure. In contrast, western Russia has a much larger population and more developed infrastructure. There is also an internal demographic imbalance within the RFE itself. For instance, the Primorsky region, which borders China, has a relatively larger population compared to other parts of the RFE, such as the Jewish Autonomous Region (Tirnoveanu, 2016).

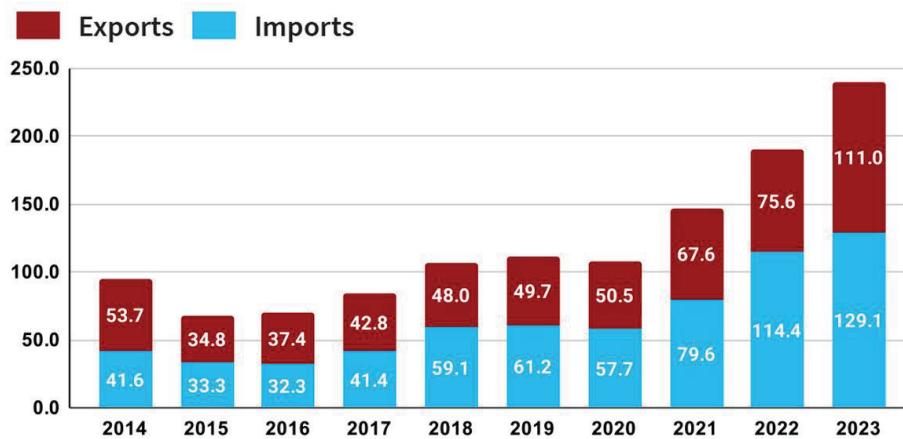
Russia's approach to improving infrastructure often involves increasing capacity on existing routes, such as the Trans-Siberian Railway and the Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM) (Railway Gazette, 2024). However, both railways are already running at full capacity, limiting opportunities for growth in trade and coal production. Promised increases in capacity may not be feasible due to these constraints.

The military aspect of infrastructure is also critical to Russia's strategic planning in the RFE. Infrastructure plays an essential role in military logistics, and the region serves as an important training ground for Russia's armed forces, particularly engineering troops who are trained to construct bridges and maintain supply routes in challenging terrains. Although the risk of conflict in the RFE is currently low, the region's history of territorial disputes with neighbouring countries like China means that military readiness remains a priority. Railway engineering troops are crucial for moving resources and maintaining communication lines, and they have played key roles in past conflicts, such as in Georgia and Crimea.

Russia's Relations with China

China has emerged as Russia's most significant economic partner in the Asia-Pacific, with trade between the two countries reaching over \$240 billion in 2023 (Reuters, 2024). Much of the RFE's trade is with China, especially in regions like Amur, where over 83% of exports go to China. The energy sector, particularly oil and gas, dominates these exports, raising concerns about Russia's dependency on China and its potential role as a mere supplier of raw materials.

China's trade with Russia (in \$ billion)



Source: The Hindu

Historically, the Sino-Russian relationship has been fraught with tension, particularly during the Sino-Soviet split of the 1960s. However, the relationship began to improve in the late 1980s and has strengthened significantly since. China's growing economic power and Russia's desire to diversify its markets away from Europe have driven closer ties between the

two nations. While Chinese public opinion has become increasingly favourable toward Russia, the Chinese government remains cautious about any formal alliance. China is wary of being seen as aligning too closely with Russia, particularly as it seeks to maintain strong economic ties with the West.

Economically, China views Russia's pivot eastward as complementary to its own Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (MacBride et al, 2023). There is significant interest in aligning the development of the Russian Far East with China's Silk Road ambitions.

The Northern Sea Route (NSR) has the potential to become a third trade corridor for China, alongside its existing land-based Silk Road and maritime routes (Martins, 2023). As climate change opens up the Arctic, the NSR, which passes along Russia's northern coast, has become a potential shortcut for shipping between Asia and Europe. Although the route is currently only viable during the summer months, China has demonstrated interest in its long-term potential. In 2013, a Chinese cargo vessel successfully traversed the NSR, cutting the journey time between Dalian and Rotterdam by two weeks (gCaptain, 2013). However, significant challenges remain, including the high costs of icebreaker escorts, insurance, and the need for specialised ships. Russia has also been expanding its military presence in the Arctic, reopening bases and increasing naval patrols to protect its interests in the region.

While the NSR offers economic potential, it also highlights differing views between Russia and China on Arctic governance. Russia, which views the Arctic as part of its "privileged sphere of interest," has taken numerous steps to assert its dominance in the region. These include military build-ups, such as refurbishing Soviet-era installations and deploying missile systems, and economic endeavours like the development of the Northern Sea Route (NSR) for Arctic shipping. Russia's strategic interests in the Arctic are also closely tied to the vast reserves of untapped natural resources, including oil and gas, which are crucial for its economy. However, despite Russia's ambitions, challenges such as harsh environmental conditions, high costs, and limited external investment have hampered development efforts. Meanwhile, China, along with other non-Arctic nations, has increased its presence in the region, seeking to exploit its economic potential, including the NSR and energy projects like the Yamal LNG venture. This growing international involvement poses both opportunities and competition for Russia as it navigates its future in the Arctic.

Japan's Role

Japan and South Korea have also played a role in the development of the RFE, although their involvement has been limited compared to China. Japan, in particular, has been a key player in negotiations over the Kuril Islands, which remain a stumbling block in Russo-Japanese relations. Despite these tensions, Japan has shown interest in investing in the RFE's energy sector, particularly in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects.

Historically, the relationship between Japan and Russia has been complicated by unresolved disputes, such as the conflict over the Northern Territories and an unsigned peace treaty from World War II. However, these challenges have not prevented energy cooperation between the two nations. The Fukushima disaster, which resulted in the shutdown of Japan's 54 nuclear reactors, forced Japan to reconsider its energy needs. This opened a door for Russia, which stepped in to supply liquefied natural gas (LNG), fostering deeper energy ties. Projects like Sakhalin-1 and Sakhalin-2 became central to this relationship, with Japan emerging as the largest recipient of LNG from these projects (Obayashi, 2022).

The second pivotal period in their energy relationship occurred after the 2014 Ukraine crisis when Japan joined the Western sanctions against Russia (Lindgren, 2018). Despite this, Russian energy supplies to Japan continued uninterrupted. While some projects, such as the proposed LNG pipeline between Sakhalin and Hokkaido, were put on hold, crude oil exports from Russia to Japan reached record highs (Obayashi & Golubkova, 2024). The sanctions did not hinder the energy trade, highlighting Russia's importance in Japan's energy strategy. Japan, which seeks energy security, views Russian energy supplies as attractive due to their geographic proximity, avoiding hostile waters and reducing delivery times compared to imports from the Middle East.

South Korea has similarly expressed interest in the region, particularly in infrastructure projects. However, like Japan, it has been cautious about committing to large-scale investments due to the region's instability and Russia's difficult business environment.

Migration and Labour Shortages

Russia has attempted to address this demographic challenge through initiatives like the Far Eastern Hectare scheme, which offers land to Russian citizens willing to move to the region (Tharoor, I. 2016). However, the uptake has been minimal, with most participants already

residing in the RFE. The government has also looked to foreign labour, particularly from Central Asia and North Korea, to fill labour shortages in industries like logging and construction. However, sanctions have limited the availability of North Korean workers, and the harsh working conditions and low wages in the RFE make it difficult to attract labour from other regions.

In the 1990s, there were widespread fears in Russia about a potential influx of Chinese migrants into the RFE. These fears were largely unfounded, as the number of Chinese workers in the region has decreased significantly in recent years. However, concerns about Chinese economic dominance in the region persist, particularly as Chinese companies play an increasingly important role in the RFE's resource extraction industries.

Conclusion

The perception of the Far East as distant and remote continues to shape how it is regarded, both within Russia and internationally. From the perspective of Moscow, London, and other major capitals, the region is seen as far-flung, which has contributed to its marginalisation. However, it is increasingly recognized that this view needs to be updated. Instead of being seen as a distant periphery, the Far East should be understood as Pacific Russia, a region with direct ties to the dynamic economies of East Asia.

However, several critical issues continue to hinder the region's development. The first is the need for substantial financial investment, which is beyond the capacity of Russia alone. Developing the Far East requires international cooperation and significant external funding. The second issue is management. Effective governance and public policy expertise are lacking, particularly in dealing with the complexities of regional development. The third challenge is the persistent Eurocentric mindset among Russia's political and economic elites, which hampers efforts to fully embrace the region's integration into Asia.

The evolving Sino-Russian partnership in the Russian Far East is reshaping the geopolitical landscape, with significant implications for the West. China's deepening involvement in the region through investments and infrastructure development highlights its dual goals: securing resources for its own industries while enhancing Russia's war capabilities. This partnership not only strengthens Russia's military-industrial complex but also allows China to access strategic territories and resources, particularly in key areas like the Amur-Ussuri region and near Vladivostok.

However, the relationship remains complex, as both nations have different long-term objectives. For Russia, Chinese investments are essential for sustaining its economy and war efforts, but there are concerns about becoming overly reliant on its eastern neighbour.

References

Eastern Economic Forum. (2024). About the Far East. *Eastern Economic Forum*. Retrieved on 10 October 2024 from <https://forumvostok.ru/en/about/>

Ferris, E (12 October 2022). Problems of geography: Military and economic transport logistics in Russia's Far East. *Royal United Services Institute*. Retrieved on 10 October 2024 from <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/occasional-papers/problems-geography-military-and-economic-transport-logistics-russias-far-east>

Trenin, D. (2013). Russia and the Rise of Asia. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. Retrieved on 10 October 2024 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep13005>

Zhang, J. (26 July 2024). Russia's Far East: A region of rising strategic importance. *GIS Reports*. Retrieved on 12 October 2024 from <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/russia-far-east/>

Hedlund, S. (21 August 2024). Northern Sea Route: A vital artery between Russia and Asia despite sanctions. *GIS Reports*. Retrieved from <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/northern-sea-route-russia-asia-sanction/>

Balzer, H. (07 August 2024). A Russia without Russians: Putin's disastrous demographics. *Atlantic Council*. Retrieved on 12 October 2024 from <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/russia-tomorrow/a-russia-without-russians-putins-disastrous-demographics/>

Horvath, C.B. (25 April 2022). Was China betting on Russian defeat all along? *Geopolitical Monitor*. Retrieved from <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/was-china-betting-on-russian-defeat-all-along/>

Klomegah, K.K. (08 September 2022). Russia's Far East: How to deal with demography, investment, and development questions – OpEd. *Eurasia Review*. Retrieved on 12 October 2024 from <https://www.eurasiareview.com/08092021-russias-far-east-how-to-deal-with-demography-investment-and-development-questions-oped/>

Wezeman, S. T. (05 July 2017). China, Russia and the shifting landscape of arms sales. *SIPRI*. Retrieved on 13 October 2024 from <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-background/2017/china-russia-and-shifting-landscape-arms-sales>

Fong & Maizland. (20 March 2024). China and Russia: Exploring Ties Between Two Authoritarian Powers. *Council on Foreign Relations*. Retrieved on 14 October 2024 from <https://www.cfr.org/background/china-russia-relationship-xi-putin-taiwan-ukraine>

Buznik, V.M. (2001). Russian Far East Environmental Problems. *Khabarovsk Research Center*. Retrieved on 15 October 2024 from <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/10240/chapter/17>

Shagina, M. (June 2019). Sanctions in Japan-Russia economic relations: Impact and adaptation. *Institute for Security & Development Policy*. Retrieved on 15 October 2024 from <https://www.isdp.eu/publication/sanctions-in-japan-russia-economic-relations-impact-and-adaption/>

Grove, T. (09 August 2012). Russia's Medvedev Hints of Chinese Threat to Far East. *Reuters*. Retrieved on 15 October 2024 from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-china-territory/russias-medvedev-hints-of-chinese-threat-to-far-east-idUSBRE8780Y320120809>.

Stronski & Ng. (28 February 2018). Cooperation and Competition: Russia and China in Central Asia, the Russian Far East, and the Arctic. *Carnegie*. Retrieved on 16 October 2024 from <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2018/02/cooperation-and-competition-russia-and-china-in-central-asia-the-russian-far-east-and-the-arctic?lang=en>

PortEconomics. (n.d.). The Eurasian Landbridge. *PortEconomics Management and Policy*. Retrieved on 16 October 2024 from <https://porteconomicsmanagement.org/pemp/contents/part2/port-hinterlands-regionalization/eurasian-landbridge/>

President of Russia. (05 September 2024). Plenary session of the 9th Eastern Economic Forum. *President of Russia*. Retrieved on 16 October 2024 from <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/75029>

Liu, F. (2023). Russia's "Turn to the East" Policy: Evolution and Assessment. *Chinese Journal of Slavic Studies*, 3(2), 247-262. Retrieved on 17 October 2024 from <https://doi.org/10.1515/cjss-2023-0020>

Haines, G. (5 October 2016). The Greatest Train Journey on Earth. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved on 17 October 2024 from <https://s.telegraph.co.uk/graphics/projects/trans-siberian-100/index.html>

Stognie et al. (25 May 2023). Power of Siberia: China keeps Putin waiting on the gas pipeline. *Financial Times*. Retrieved on 18 October 2024 from <https://www.ft.com/content/541f8bcb-118a-419e-869f-3273fcc9ce92>

Tirnoveanu, D. (20 January 2016). Russia, China and the Far East Question. *The Diplomat*. Retrieved on 18 October 2024 from <https://thediplomat.com/2016/01/russia-china-and-the-far-east-question/>

Railway Gazette International. (16 May 2024). Capacity to be increased on Siberian main lines. *Railway Gazette International*. Retrieved on 18 October 2024 from <https://www.railwaygazette.com/infrastructure/capacity-to-be-increased-on-siberian-main-lines/66520.article>

Reuters. (30 August 2024). Exclusive: Russia payment hurdles with China partners intensified in August. *Reuters*. Retrieved on 19 October 2024 from <https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/russia-payment-hurdles-with-china-partners-intensified-august-sources-say-2024-08-30/>

Kumar, A. (18 September 2024). Power asymmetry between China and Russia. *The Hindu*. Retrieved on 19 October 2024 from <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/power-asymmetry-between-china-and-russia/article68653066.ece>

MacBride et al. (02 February 2023) China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative. *Council on Foreign Relations*. Retrieved on 19 October 2024 from <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative>

Martins, T.T. (24 November 2023). Arctic ambitions: China's engagement with the Northern Sea Route. *The Diplomat*. Retrieved on 19 October 2024 from <https://thediplomat.com/2023/11/arctic-ambitions-chinas-engagement-with-the-northern-sea-route/>

gCaptain. (2023). The Port of Rotterdam sees the arrival of the first ship via the Northern Sea Route. *gCaptain*. Retrieved on 20 October 2024 from <https://gcaptain.com/port-of-rotterdam-sees-arrival-of-first-ship-via-northern-sea-route/>

Obayashi, Y. (26 August 2022). Japan's JERA signs a new LNG deal with Sakhalin-2. *Reuters*. Retrieved on 20 October 2024 from <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/jera-signs-deal-with-new-operator-russias-sakhalin-2-keep-lng-contract-2022-08-26/>

Liu & Kronbak. (May 2010). The potential economic viability of using the Northern Sea Route (NSR) as an alternative route between Asia and Europe. *Journal of Transport Geography*. Retrieved on 20 October 2024 from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0966692309001252>

Lindgren, WY. (July 2018) New dynamics in Japan–Russia energy relations 2011–2017. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Volume 9, Issue 2. Retrieved on 20 October 2024 from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euras.2018.06.002>.

Obayashi & Golubkova. (06 February 2024). Mitsubishi sees Russia's Sakhalin LNG as a key energy source for Japan. Reuters. Retrieved on 20 October 2024 from <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/mitsubishi-sees-russias-sakhalin-lng-key-energy-source-japan-2024-02-06/>

Tharoor, I. (04 May 2016). Russia offers free land to all citizens willing to move to the Far East. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved on 21 October 2024 from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/05/04/russia-offers-free-land-to-all-citizens-willing-to-move-to-the-far-east/>

About the Author

Danish Yousuf is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS). He holds a Master's degree in Social Science from the University of Delhi and a Post Graduate Diploma in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding from Lady Shri Ram College for Women. His research focuses on Russia and its neighbourhood.



All Rights Reserved 2024 Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS)

No part of this publication may be reproduced, copied, archived, retained or transmitted through print, speech or electronic media without prior written approval from CLAWS. The views expressed and suggestions made in the article are solely of the author in his personal capacity and do not have any official endorsement. Attributability of the contents lies purely with author.