



SECURITY OF SUPPLY ARRANGEMENT (SOSA) - DEFENCE

News: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reached Washington DC on a four-day official visit.

What's in the news?

About

- India and US signed two key pacts — a **non-binding Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)** and a **Memorandum of Agreement regarding Assignment of Liaison Officers**.

Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)

- The SOSA will **mandate the US and India** to provide **reciprocal priority support** for goods and services that **promote national defence**.
- The arrangement will enable both countries to **acquire the industrial resources** they need from one another to **resolve unanticipated supply chain disruptions** to meet national security needs.
- **India is the 18th SOSA partner of the US** after Australia, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, and the UK.
- The two sides also signed a **memorandum of agreement** regarding the assignment of liaison officers to deepen defence cooperation.
 - This agreement seeks to **enhance cooperation, understanding, interoperability, and sharing of information on matters of mutual interest**.

Overview of India and US Bilateral Relations

- Since India's independence, ties with the United States have weathered the **Cold War-era distrust and estrangement over India's nuclear program**.
 - Relations have **warmed in recent years** and cooperation has strengthened across a range of economic and political areas.
- **Bilateral Trade:** The bilateral trade between the two countries has **risen by 72 percent** between 2017-18 and 2022-23.
 - The US accounted for **18 percent of the gross FDI inflows into India** during 2021-22, ranking second behind Singapore.
- **Defense and Security:** India and the US have signed a **troika of "foundational pacts"** for deep military cooperation, beginning **with the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)** in 2016, followed by the **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)** after the first 2+2 dialogue in 2018, and then the **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** in 2020.



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- In 2016, the United States elevated India to a **major defense partner**, a status no other country holds.

FOUNDATIONAL AGREEMENTS		
Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide logistic support, refuelling & berthing facilities for each other's warships & aircraft on barter/equal-value exchange basis ➤ Will not involve stationing of US troops on Indian soil. Nor will India extend support if US goes to war with "a friendly country" ➤ Good for US forces re-balancing to Asia Pacific. Indian forces rarely operate far away from their shores but access to Djibouti & Diego Garcia could be useful 	Communication Interoperability & Security Memorandum Agreement (CISMOA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Technology enabler to help transfer high-tech avionics, encrypted communication & electronic systems to India ➤ US says CISMOA will boost 'interoperability' as well as ensure secrecy of its C4ISR (command, control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) systems ➤ But fears that US will be able to track & snoop on Indian warships/aircraft equipped with such systems 	
	Basic Exchange & Cooperation Agreement for Geo-Spatial Cooperation (BECA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ US says BECA will help India with advanced satellite & topographical data for long-range navigation & missile-targeting ➤ But India, which has its own satellite imaging capabilities, unwilling for American digital sensors to be positioned on its soil 	

- **Space: Artemis Accords** signed by India established a common vision for the future of space exploration for the benefit of all humankind.
 - The United States and India cooperate through the bilateral Civil Space Joint Working Group.
- **Multilateral Cooperation:** India and the United States cooperate closely in multilateral organizations and fora, including the United Nations, G20, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-related fora, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization.
 - Together with Australia and Japan, the United States and India convene as the Quad, a diplomatic network, to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific.
- **Nuclear Cooperation: Civil Nuclear Deal was signed in 2005**, under the agreement, India agrees to separate its civil and military nuclear facilities and place all its civil resources under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.
 - In exchange, the United States agrees to work toward full civil nuclear cooperation with India.

Challenges

- **India's preference to its strategic autonomy:** While its embrace with the U.S. is getting stronger, deeper and more comprehensive, India is also cognisant of the need to maintain its strategic autonomy.



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- **Conflicting positions:** India's muted criticism of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 expectedly led to some frustration in the West, raising questions over India's credibility as a security partner.
- **Defence Relations with Russia:** The United States has expressed particular concern regarding new streams of arms like the S-400 air defense system, because they fuel Russian power, diminish prospects for interoperability of and secure communications between U.S. and Indian forces, and preclude sharing of existing sensitive weapons technologies.

Conclusion

- The **evolving relationship** between India and the United States holds significant importance in shaping the global order of the 21st century.
- To fully unlock the potential of this partnership, both governments must focus on **reducing bilateral and multilateral bottlenecks** and charting a course for a comprehensive and strategic global alliance.
- The strengthening of the mechanisms of cooperation between the two militaries is of significance in the context of an increasingly aggressive China.

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