

Modi-Biden meet

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What's in today's article?

- **Why in news?**
- **Key outcome of Modi-Biden meet**

Why in news?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the US President Joe Biden held a bilateral meeting on the eve of the G20 meeting.
- The two leaders conversed on a range of issues, including:
 - India's G20 Presidency and their commitment to G20 as a forum,
 - Chandrayaan-3's historic landing at the south polar region of the Moon,
 - importance of the Quad group of nations to ensure a free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific.
- The US president also reaffirmed his support for a reformed UN Security Council with India as a permanent member during the talks.

Key outcome of Modi-Biden meet

- **Joint statement released**

- The joint statement hailed ties spanning seas to stars. Their 29-paragraph joint statement focused exclusively on the bilateral agenda.
- It made no mention of regional and global issues, counter-terrorism or situation in the neighbourhood including Afghanistan, Pakistan and Myanmar.

- **Critical defence pacts and the procurement**

- Both sides discussed:
 - the recent pact between GE Aerospace and Hindustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL) to manufacture GE F-414 jet engines in India and
 - the procurement of **31 General Atomics MQ-9B remotely piloted aircraft**.
- The F414 engines will power the IAF's Light Combat Aircraft Mk2 jets.
 - Only a handful of countries such as the US, Russia, the UK, and France have been able to master these specialised technologies needed to manufacture an engine that can power a combat aircraft.
- The procurements of remotely piloted aircraft will enhance the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities of India's armed forces.
- These critical defence pacts and the procurement was announced during PM Modi's State visit to the US in June this year. However, the meeting will likely expedite their progress.
- Both the leaders applauded the conclusion of a second **Master Ship Repair Agreement**.
 - The most recent agreement was signed by the U.S. Navy and Mazgaon Dock Shipbuilders, Ltd., in August 2023.
 - This will advance India's emergence as a hub for the maintenance and repair of forward-deployed U.S. Navy assets.

- **Commitment to deepen and diversify the India-U.S. Major Defence Partnership**

- Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to deepen and diversify the India-U.S. Major Defence Partnership through expanded cooperation in new and emerging domains such as space and AI, and accelerated defence industrial collaboration.

- **India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X)**

- Both the leaders commended the INDUS-X team for establishing a robust collaboration agenda to harness the innovative work of the U.S. and Indian defence sectors to address shared security challenges.
 - The initiative aims to explore possibilities for co-producing jet engines, long-range artillery, and infantry vehicles.
- INDUS-X had convened the inaugural Academia Start-up Partnership at IIT Kanpur.
- It initiated the **Joint Accelerator Program** for Indian Startups in August 2023 at Hyderabad.

- **On Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)**

- iCET is a framework for India and the United States to collaborate on critical and emerging technologies.

- The initiative was launched in January 2023 to strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries.
- Both sides decided on a midterm review of iCET in September 2023 and to work towards an annual review, co-led by the National Security Advisors of both countries, in early 2024.

- **Space cooperation**

- Space cooperation had formed a very important part of the joint statement during PM Modi's state visit to the US in June this year.
- At that time, the two countries had announced that:
 - India would join the **US-led Artemis Accords** for planetary exploration, and
 - that the space agencies of the two countries, ISRO and NASA, would mount a **joint mission to the International Space Station in 2024**.
- This time, the leaders welcomed efforts towards **establishment of a Working Group for commercial space collaboration** under the existing India-US Civil Space Joint Working Group.
- The two countries also announced their intention to **work together on planetary defence** to protect planet Earth and space assets from the impact of asteroids and near-Earth objects.
- This also includes US support for India's participation in asteroid detection and tracking via the Minor Planet Center.

- **India-US Cancer Dialogue**

- India-US Cancer Dialogue will be launched in November 2023 and the US-India health dialogue in October 2023 in Washington DC.

- **On the nuclear side**

- Both sides welcomed intensified consultations to expand opportunities for facilitating India-US collaboration in nuclear energy, including in development of next generation small modular reactor technologies.
- The US also reaffirmed its support for India's membership in Nuclear Suppliers Group, and said it would continue to talk to others to achieve this goal.

- **Multi-billion-dollar investment platform**

- In June, both sides had envisaged a multi-billion-dollar investment platform to provide catalytic capital for greenfield renewable energy projects.
- This time, they put their money on it as each side agreed to provide up to \$500 million towards an investment fund.

- **On Innovation Handshake**

- The Innovation Handshake is a new initiative between India and US. It was announced in June 2023 during PM Modi's visit to US.
- It is aimed at addressing regulatory hurdles that stand in the way of cooperation between the two countries and promoting job growth in emerging technologies.
- This time, the two leaders decided to include two anchor events (one in India and one in the United States).
- Under this, the two sides will collaborate to bring together start-ups, private equity and venture capital firms to build linkages between the two countries' innovation ecosystems.

- **On trade disputes**

- Both leaders lauded the settlement of the seventh and last outstanding India-US World Trade Organisation (WTO) dispute.
- This was beyond the settlement of six outstanding bilateral trade disputes in the WTO in June 2023.

- **Setting up of a Global Challenges Institute**

- Both leaders welcomed the increasing academic partnerships between Indian and American higher education institution.
- This includes setting up of a Global Challenges Institute to strengthen research on sustainable energy, agriculture, health and pandemic preparedness.

- **On building resilient global semiconductor supply chains**

- Both the leaders reiterated their stance on building resilient global semiconductor supply chains.
- And in a signal that highlights the two countries' growing distance from China, India also supported the US's '**Rip and Replace**' pilot project.
- This project mandates that American companies tear out telecom equipment made by the Chinese companies (Huawei and ZTE).
 - This move has already been implemented by New Delhi as part of its 5G launch.
- Modi and Biden expressed satisfaction over the current status of the investment announcements that were made by American chip companies.
- Both leaders also acknowledged the setting-up of two Joint Task Forces focused on collaboration in the field of Open RAN (radio access network) and research and development in 5G/6G technologies.
 - Open RAN is an ongoing shift in mobile network architectures that enables service providers the use of non-proprietary subcomponents from a variety of vendors.
- Both sides also welcomed the signing of an agreement between the Bharat 6G Alliance and Next G Alliance, as a first step towards deepening public-private cooperation between vendors and operators.
 - The **Bharat 6G alliance**, a public-private sector initiative, was formed after the PM said India would launch the next-generation high speed network by 2030.
 - The alliance aims to establish India as a supplier of IP, products and solutions of affordable 5G and 6G and other future telecom solutions.
 - It has all the three telcos – Jio, Airtel and Vi – as members along with companies like Tech Mahindra.

Q1) What is Open RAN?

Open Radio Access Network (Open RAN) is a new approach to building mobile networks. It's a non-proprietary version of the Radio Access Network (RAN) system that allows interoperability between cellular network equipment from different vendors.

Q2) What are small modular nuclear reactors?

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are a type of nuclear reactor design that is characterized by their smaller size and modular construction. These reactors are designed to generate electricity and, in some cases, heat for various applications. Unlike traditional large-scale nuclear power plants, which can have capacities of hundreds or even thousands of megawatts, SMRs are typically designed to produce between 1 and 300 megawatts of electricity.

Source: [Modi, Biden agree to deepen defence cooperation, jet engine pact and MQ-9B feature again in talks](#) | [The White House](#) | [PIB](#) | [MEA](#) | [Indian Express](#) | [Indian Express](#) | [The Hindu](#)

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