

India Signs 10-Year Defence Framework with the U.S.

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Defence Framework Latest News

- India and the United States have entered a new phase in their strategic and defence partnership with the signing of a **10-year “Framework for the India-U.S. Major Defence Partnership”**.
- The agreement was formalised on the sidelines of the **12th ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus)** in Kuala Lumpur.

Background of India-U.S. Defence Cooperation

- Defence cooperation between India and the U.S. has been one of the strongest pillars of their bilateral relationship, evolving steadily over the past two decades.
- The partnership began taking concrete shape with the **2005 Defence Framework Agreement**, renewed in **2015**, which emphasised joint military exercises, maritime security, and defence trade.
- Since then, both countries have established foundational agreements to enhance interoperability and information sharing:
 - **LEMOA (2016)**: Enabled reciprocal access to military facilities for logistics support.

- **COMCASA (2018):** Facilitated secure communications between the two militaries.
- **BECA (2020):** Enabled the exchange of geospatial intelligence and mapping data.
- **SOSA (2024):** Ensured the security of supply chains in critical defence materials.
- The signing of the **2025 Framework** extends this cooperation into the next decade, institutionalising long-term collaboration in defence manufacturing, joint technology development, and strategic coordination in the Indo-Pacific.

Highlights of the 10-Year Defence Framework

- The newly signed framework outlines an ambitious roadmap for **comprehensive defence collaboration** between India and the United States. Key highlights include:
 - **Unified Policy Direction:** The framework provides a structured policy roadmap to enhance collaboration across military, industrial, and technological domains.
 - **Technology and Industrial Cooperation:** Both sides have agreed to expand cooperation in **co-production and co-development of advanced defence systems**, with an emphasis on indigenous manufacturing in India under the “**Make in India, Make for the World**” initiative.
 - **Information and Intelligence Sharing:** Strengthening intelligence exchange and coordination mechanisms to counter emerging security threats, including cyber and maritime challenges.
 - **Joint Military Exercises:** Continuation and expansion of regular bilateral and multilateral exercises such as **Yudh Abhyas, Malabar, and Tiger Triumph**.
 - **Regional Security Commitment:** Reinforcing a joint vision for a **free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific**, with deterrence against coercive activities in the region.

Significance of the Defence Partnership

- The new defence framework comes at a crucial juncture in global geopolitics.
- The Indo-Pacific has become the epicentre of strategic competition, with China’s assertive posturing and growing influence prompting deeper security cooperation among like-minded nations. The framework thus serves multiple strategic purposes:
 - **Enhancing Regional Stability:** Reinforces India’s position as a net security provider in the Indo-Pacific.
 - **Boosting Defence Technology Transfer:** Encourages U.S. firms to invest and collaborate in India’s defence production ecosystem, particularly under the **Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)**.
 - **Mitigating Supply Chain Risks:** Reduces dependence on singular sources of defence imports by diversifying technology and production partnerships.
 - **Countering Trade Tensions:** Despite Washington’s imposition of **50% tariffs on Indian goods**, both countries have demonstrated that strategic and defence cooperation remain insulated from trade-related friction.

The Indo-Pacific and Strategic Convergence

- The 10-year defence roadmap aligns closely with the shared vision of maintaining peace, freedom of navigation, and sovereignty in the **Indo-Pacific region**.
- Both nations, along with partners in the **Quad (India, U.S., Japan, and Australia)**, aim to ensure that the region remains free from coercive dominance.
- By integrating India more deeply into global defence supply chains and security dialogues, the framework enhances New Delhi's strategic leverage while contributing to the U.S. vision of **integrated deterrence** in Asia.

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