



USA President's Visit to India

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Why in News

The President of the USA, Donald Trump, visited India from 24th - 25th February, 2020.

- India and the USA intended to upgrade their bilateral relationship to a **Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership (CGSP)**.
- The CGSP will include issues such as defence, security cooperation and revitalisation of the Indo-Pacific with quadrilateral dialogue.

Economic Relations

- **Free Trade Agreement (FTA):**
 - The USA has proposed the **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** between the two countries.
 - FTA will include the restoration of benefits of low or zero duty to certain Indian exports under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) and market access for each other's agricultural products.
 - The **Trade Policy Forum** will be set up as a joint study group to facilitate smooth framing of FTA.
- **Proposed Totalisation Agreement:**

The signing of this agreement will allow **Indian professionals** working in the USA **to get a refund of social security contribution that they make while working in the USA.**
- **Intellectual Property Rights:**
 - India and the USA have decided to come up with a **comprehensive agreement on intellectual property rights (IPR)**.
 - A comprehensive deal on the IPR front would be a major development as **India has slipped to the 40th position** on the **US Chamber's International IP Index, 2020.**

- **Energy Trade:**
 - Both countries intend to come with an **energy deal** in the future.
 - India imports a significant portion of its energy needs from the US, which has only increased in the past few years. The USA is the **sixth-largest** oil supplier to India.
- **Bilateral Trade:**
 - The **United States** has become **India's top trading partner surpassing China**.
 - The bilateral trade between the US and India stood at nearly 88 billion dollars in 2018-19 compared to China which was at 87.1 billion dollars.

Security and Terrorism

- **Cross border Terrorism:**
 - Both the countries condemned cross-border terrorism in all its forms.
 - They also called on Pakistan to ensure that no territory under its control is used to launch terrorist attacks and to expeditiously bring to justice the perpetrators of such attacks.
- **Kashmir Issue:**
 - The USA president reiterated its offer to mediate on the Kashmir issue during the visit.
 - However, India stated that it is a bilateral matter between India and Pakistan and there is no scope for any third-party mediation.
- **Cyber Security:**

India and the United States recognised the need for an innovative digital ecosystem that is secure and reliable and facilitates the flow of information and data.

Defence Relations

USA and India have concluded the agreement for the purchase of **24 MH-60R Seahawk, and six AH-64E attack helicopters**.

Deal done

India and the U.S. concluded agreements for the purchase of 24 MH-60R Seahawk and six AH-64E attack helicopters

The six Apaches and associated equipment will cost about **\$800 million**

MH-60R SEAHAWK HELICOPTERS

- The procurement is through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) route of the U.S. government and is worth **\$2.12 bn**
- MH-60R is the mainstay of the U.S. Navy's Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) capability

- These helicopters are being procured as replacement for 15 Sea King Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) helicopters de-inducted in 1991 and one Sea King 42B MRH lost in an accident. The current MRHs in service, Sea King 42Bs, were inducted in the 1980s and are in need of replacement
- They are capable of carrying out anti-ship, anti-submarine, electronic warfare, net-centric over-the-horizon offensive and defensive roles

APACHE

- These will be operated by the Army and deployed with its strike Corps in the western sector
- In September 2015, India contracted 22 AH-64E attack helicopters at a cost of **₹13,951.57 crore** for the IAF and the entire fleet will be in service in 2020
- In August 2017, the government approved the procurement of six Apaches under the optional clause for the Army



- On June 12, 2018, the Defence Security Cooperation Agency notified the U.S. Congress of the possible sale to India

- Apache is a heavy attack helicopter and the most advanced craft currently in service globally
- India is the 16th nation to select the Apache and the AH-64E is its most advanced variant, Boeing said

- The Apache is the most advanced multi-role heavy attack helicopter in the world

International Issues

- **Quad Dialogue:** U.S. and India stressed to revitalise the quadrilateral initiative consisting of Japan, the U.S., India and Australia.
- **Indo-Pacific Region:** Both the countries discussed to **develop and evolve the Indo-Pacific region collaboratively.**
- **South China Sea Region.**
 - Both sides took note of the efforts of the **ASEAN region to create a code of conduct in the South China Sea region.**
 - A code of conduct in the South China Sea region will be a set of rules outlining the norms and rules and responsibilities of, or proper practices for, an individual, party or organisation in the region.

Source: TH