



India-USA 2+2 Dialogue 2020

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Why in News

Recently, India and the USA have concluded the **3rd India-USA 2+2 dialogue** in New Delhi.

- The **USA reiterated its support to India in defending its territorial sovereignty** in the background of the ongoing **standoff between India-China**.
- It also referred to the greater **threats posed by China in the Indo-Pacific region** and by the **Covid-19 pandemic** in general.
- The **first two rounds** of these dialogues between both the countries were held in **2018 and 2019**.

Key Points

- India has signed the **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement** (BECA) with the USA.
 - BECA will enable the **exchange of geospatial data and information** between the two countries and will **improve the accuracy of India's missiles** in precision strikes.
 - The geospatial maps and charts to be shared, will be **acquired from multiple sources** like satellites, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), reconnaissance aircraft, aerostats among others.
 - As part of measures to enhance military to military cooperation, Liaison Officers at each other's establishments could be leveraged to enhance information sharing.
 - BECA is one of the **four foundational military communication agreements between the two countries**. The **other three** are:
 - General Security Of Military Information Agreement.
 - Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement.
 - Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement.

- Both countries released a **Joint Statement on shared Indo-USA goals in the Asia-Pacific region** and emphasised that the **Code of Conduct in the South China Sea** should not prejudice the legitimate rights and interests of any nation in accordance with international law.
 - They also decided to **expand joint capacity building activities** with partner countries in the **Indo-Pacific region**.
- **Other Steps Taken:**
 - **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Technical Cooperation in Earth Observations and Earth Sciences.**
 - Agreement to **extend the duration** of the **MoU on the Global Center for Nuclear Energy Partnership.**
 - **Agreement on the electronic exchange of customs data.**
 - **Letter of intent regarding cooperation in traditional Indian medicines.**
 - **Discussions on the status of Afghanistan** and support for its peace process.

‘2+2’ Dialogue

- 2+2 Ministerial is the **highest-level institutional mechanism** between the two countries.
- It is a **format of dialogue** where the defence/foreign ministers or secretaries meet with their counterparts from another country.
- India holds such talks with **Australia, Japan and the USA.**

Way Forward

- The signing of BECA is a significant achievement for India as it is a sign of the USA accepting the Indian request for cooperation in the advanced field of maritime domain awareness.
- India-USA’s national security convergences have grown closer in a more multipolar world and the meetings as well as the agreements not only advance their individual interests but also ensure that the bilateral cooperation between them makes a positive contribution in the world arena.

Source: TH