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Atmanirbhar Bharat in Defence Production

Why in news?

The US-India military deal is not enough to cut the partnership that India has with Russia.

What is the status of India's defence production?

The US remained the top arms exporter during 2018-22.

- **Arms import** - India is the ***world's biggest arms importer*** but the major weapons purchases include provisions for joint manufacture or technology transfer.
- Of India's total volume of procurement in 2016-20, **84%** was of foreign origin.
- As per Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), India bought weapons worth over \$60 billion in the last 20 years, of which **65% were from Russia**.
- **Military spending** - India is the ***third largest military spender*** after the United States and China.
- **Indigenisation** - According to SIPRI, **64% of capital outlays** in the military budget of 2021 were earmarked for acquisitions of ***domestically produced arms***.

India's Arms Imports

Main suppliers and their share in total imports



Source: The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

What is the history of India-Russia defence relations?

- USSR was *India's strategic partner* during the Cold War and also its primary military equipment supplier.
- Moscow started supplying naval equipment to India from 1964 and by 1987, these supplies made 70% of the Indian Navy's inventory.
- Moscow loaned *the first nuclear submarine to India in 1988*, which was commissioned in the Indian navy as **INS Chakra**.
- **Joint exercises**- It is held between the three Armed Forces under the title "**INDRA**". Indian contingent participated in International Army Games, Ex Vostok in Russia.
- **Agreement for 2021-2031**- To develop and strengthen the military and military technical cooperation in the sphere of research and development, production and after sales support of armament systems and various military equipment.

What is the history of India-US defence relations?

- Defence relationship has emerged as a major pillar of India-U.S. strategic partnership with the signing of '**New Framework for India-U.S. Defense Relations**' in 2005.
- *India-US 2+2 Ministerial dialogue* further enhanced the defence ties.
- **Bilateral Exercises**- Tiger Triumph, Vajra Prahar, Malabar exercises etc., which results in strategic defence partnership.
- In 2016, *US recognised India as "Major Defence Partner"* which commits the U.S. to facilitate technology sharing with India.
- Both have signed 4 agreements that cover areas of military information, logistics exchange, compatibility, and security.

Agreement	About	Signed in
GSOMIA	General Security Of Military Information Agreement	2002

LEMOA	Logistics Exchange Agreement	2016
COMCASA	Communications Security Agreement	2018
BECA	Basics Exchange Cooperation Agreement	2020

- **QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue)** - It is a strategic security dialogue between Australia, India, Japan and the United States.
- **Other agreements-** '*Security of Supply*' (SoS) arrangement and a '*Reciprocal Defence Procurement*' (RDP) agreement aims to promote long-term supply chain stability and enhance security and defense cooperation.
- India's first indigenous fighter jet **LCA Tejas** is powered by [GE's F404 engines](#) exported from US, talks to buy MQ-9 UAV (also known as Sea Guardian) is also under the table.

What are the issues with India's defence import?

Issues in Import from Russia	Issues in Import from USA
Russia-Ukraine War- It disrupted military supplies to India and will also delay remaining two of the five Russian S-400 air defence systems bought by India in 2018.	US relation with Pakistan- Due to the strategic threat to India from Pakistan, this may weaken India's defence ties with USA.
Payments - Due to sanctions against Russia over war, payment to the defence procurement by India is still a challenging issue.	Technology transfer- US is not open to India with the technology transfer related to defence which is a major hurdle.
Russia -China ties- Russia's inclusion in the China's One Belt One Road initiative and its closer proximity to China affects the strategic autonomy of India.	India-Russia Defence ties- India's purchase of S-400 from Russia weakens the defence partnership with USA.

Why India should move towards indigenization?

- **Self-reliance in the defence industry** - It will enhance India's strategic independence and promote development in the country's domestic defence and aerospace industry.
- **Make in India movement** in the defence sector will be a key towards Aatmanirbharta in Defence.
- **Benefits Private sector-** Private sector participation in defence will encourage foreign producers to form strategic partnerships with various Indian businesses.
- **Reduce military expenditure-** India will be able to reduce its reliance on imports by increasing domestic production.
- **Boost exports-** India will be able to boost exports and achieve its 2025 export target of Rs. 36,500 crore (US\$ 4.8 billion).

What measures were announced by India to attain Atmanirbhar in defence sector?

- The government would approve at least five projects under *Make-in India* during 2022-23 for boosting industry-backed R&D efforts.
- **iDEX-Prime** - It aims to encourage projects that may necessitate support beyond Rs. 1.5 crore and up to Rs. 10 crore, to help developing start-ups in the defence sector.
- Around *68% of the capital procurement budget* would be earmarked for the domestic

industry.

- The industrial licensing process would be streamlined with longer authentication period.
- An indigenisation portal called ***SRIJAN*** would be launched to support indigenisation by Indian entities, including MSMEs.
- Two *industrial defence corridors* would be launched, one each in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

References

1. [Indian Express | Global US military deals](#)
2. [Indian Express | Atmanirbhar in defence](#)
3. [PIB | Self-reliance in defence](#)



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