

Defense News Conclave

Stories of U.S. - India Defense Partnership

QUARTERLY NEWS WRAP

Issue #2, January-March 2022

This quarter witnessed continued high-level engagements between India and the U.S., including on defense issues. Despite the turmoil from the Ukraine crisis, the two sides remain on a positive trajectory in their bilateral relations.

The 19th edition of the India-U.S. Military Cooperation Group meeting was held in early March. In India, there was significant activity on the maritime front, with the Presidential Fleet Review of the Indian Navy and the 11th edition of the *Milan* naval exercise, along with the appointment of India's first National Maritime Security Coordinator. India's annual budget has broken new grounds this year in terms of allocations for defense research and incentivising defense manufacturing. Meanwhile, the release of the new National Defense Strategy of the U.S. is awaited, along with the contours of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework under the U.S.' Indo-Pacific Strategy.

Through the project titled, '[*Defense News Conclave: Stories of U.S.-India Defense Partnership*](#)', CUTS International and USIBC aim to raise awareness among relevant stakeholders and the wider public about the importance of U.S.-India defense relations. It also seeks to counter possible wrong narratives based on misinformation/disinformation that seek to undermine the growing defense partnership.

The second edition of this Quarterly News Wrap covers prominent developments in U.S.-India defense relations in the past quarter.

HIGHLIGHTS

<p>'Incredible momentum' in India-US defence relationship: Pentagon official <i>Press Trust of India, Business Standard</i> March 10, 2022</p>	<p>There is an "incredible momentum" in the U.S.-India defence relationship and the much awaited 2+2 dialogue between the two countries will take place here in early April, a top Pentagon official has said during a Congressional hearing on the Indo-Pacific region.</p>
<p>The Ukraine war could transform India's military preparedness <i>Dhruva Jaishankar, The Interpreter, Lowy Institute</i> March 10, 2022</p>	<p>For India, this has important implications. Militarily, a Russia at war (or on a war footing) will be less capable of providing India with critical defence equipment, whether Kalashnikov rifles or hardware of greater sophistication, even if it so desires (after all, the allure of foreign exchange will be tremendous). Moreover, economic transactions of all kinds with Russia will be more difficult amid wide and severe international sanctions involving virtually all US allies.</p>
<p>Can India's Defense Industry Make It on the Export Market? <i>Harsh V. Pant and Angad Singh, Foreign Policy</i> March 09, 2022</p>	<p>New Delhi seems to have a new willingness to work toward a cohesive defense exports policy; the BrahMos sale points to it, taking new strides in this direction. It has taken major policy reforms to take annual Indian defense exports past the \$1 billion mark; to reach the \$5 billion mark, the Modi government will have to focus on major fiscal and industrial reforms.</p>
<p>Multi-nation Milan naval exercise concludes in Visakhapatnam <i>Rajat Pandit, The Times of India</i> March 05, 2022</p>	<p>During the sea phase of the 11th Milan edition, a series of complex and advanced exercises were undertaken in all three dimensions of naval operations to enhance compatibility, interoperability, mutual understanding and maritime cooperation amongst the partner navies.</p>
<p>India's Naval might in full display at President's Fleet Review <i>Press Trust of India, EastMojo</i> February 21, 2022</p>	<p>The Navy noted that the last decade has witnessed India's dependence on maritime environment expanding substantially as its economic, military and technological strength grew, global interactions widened and the national security imperatives and political interests stretched gradually beyond the Indian Ocean Region.</p>
<p>Budget brings much-needed cheer, new paradigm in defence R&D <i>G Mohan Kumar, The Economic Times</i> February 05, 2022</p>	<p>This year's budget has brought some much-needed cheer to defence research. The finance minister's announcement that 25% of defence research funds would be earmarked for the private sector, startups and the academia is a long-awaited reform. This measure will be a shot in the arm for 'Make in India', raising innovation to unprecedented levels.</p>

OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

Defence Secretary calls for innovative methods to deal with Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous environment

Press Information Bureau, Government of India

March 10, 2022

The four-day [Indo-Pacific Military Health Exchange](#) (IPMHE-2021-22) conference, co-hosted by Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) and US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), concluded on March 10, 2022 with the valedictory address by Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar. He pointed out the vital role played by a uniformed health professional in providing health care in the most trying circumstances.

MoD accords in-principle approval to four projects under Make-I (Government Funded) & five under Make-II (industry-funded) categories of Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020

Press Information Bureau, Government of India

March 03, 2022

Ministry of Defence (MoD), in a landmark step, has offered four projects to the Indian Industry for design & development under [Make-I category of Defence Acquisition Procedure \(DAP\) 2020](#). The industry will be provided financial support for prototype development of these projects. This is for the first time since the launch of industry-friendly DAP-2020 that Indian Industry has been involved in development of big-ticket platforms such as Light tank and Communication Equipment with Indian security protocols.

India & US hold 19th Military Cooperation meeting in Agra to strengthen defence cooperation

Press Information Bureau, Government of India

March 02, 2022

The 19th edition of [India-US Military Cooperation Group \(MCG\)](#) meeting was held in Agra, Uttar Pradesh on March 01-02, 2022. The discussions focussed on strengthening the ongoing defence engagements between the two sides and mulled on new initiatives under the ambit of existing cooperation mechanisms.

Western Naval Command Conducts High Level Meeting on Theatre Commands

Press Information Bureau, Government of India

February 25, 2022

Tri-services discussions on the modalities and structural framework for the creation of [Integrated Theatre Commands](#) for the Indian Armed Forces were held under the aegis of Western Naval Command at Mumbai. This is yet another milestone towards building jointness and enhancing organisational synergy among the three Services.

Tri-Service Andaman & Nicobar Command inducts Advanced Light Helicopter MK III

Press Information Bureau, Government of India

January 28, 2022

In a boost to maritime security, the indigenous Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) MK III aircraft was formally inducted at INS Utkrosh by Commander-in-Chief, [Andaman and Nicobar Command](#). The induction marks a continuing increase in the capabilities of the A&N Command in the past two decades of its raising as India's only joint theatre command.

POLICY MATTERS

<p>India's Maritime Security Coordinator has his mission cut out <i>Abhijit Singh, Observer Research Foundation</i> February 21, 2022</p>	<p>The government has appointed the country's first National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC). Former Vice Chief of the navy, Vice Admiral Ashok Kumar, will be the NMSC in the National Security Council Secretariat under the National Security Advisor. Admiral Kumar will ensure cooperation and harmonised functioning between the various agencies and stakeholders tasked to ensure the protection of India's vast coastline and safeguard interests in the exclusive economic zone.</p>
<p>Austin Says Current Operations Give Hints of New National Defense Strategy <i>Jim Garamone, DOD News</i> February 18, 2022</p>	<p>People interested in the new National Defense Strategy can see some of it in play as the United States and its allies face Russian aggression in Eastern Europe, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III said in Warsaw. Austin said he is proud of the work that has been done on the document, but he is not yet ready to release it. He did give some hints about the strategy and the idea of integrated deterrence that is a driving force behind it.</p>
<p>Decrease military pension, salary bill without reinventing wheel. Just look at other armies <i>Lt. Gen H S Panag (Retd.), ThePrint</i> February 17, 2022</p>	<p>It would be prudent for the new Chief of Defence Staff to adopt a holistic approach to reduce the salaries and the pensions expenditure. He must prevail upon the government to carry out a strategic review to formulate a National Security Strategy to fight the short, intense and high technology driven wars of the 21st century. This will dictate the quality and size of the armed forces.</p>
<p>Defence Budget 2022: Gearing up India's domestic military-industrial complex <i>Milind Kulshreshtha, Financial Express</i> February 10, 2022</p>	<p>In recent times, the Defence budget has also been sensitive to the need for establishing a technological framework to advance growth of a vibrant indigenous military manufacturing infrastructure. For this self-reliance initiative, 68% of the capital procurement has been proposed to be earmarked for domestic industry, up from 58% in 2021-22.</p>
<p>MSMEs keenly await Revised Aerospace and Defence Policy 2022 <i>The Hindu</i> February 10, 2022</p>	<p>Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) units in the Tiruchi region are looking forward to the impending release of the Revised Aerospace and Defence Policy 2022, that is expected to smoothen the fructification of the proposed interventions through establishment of Centres of Excellence by GE, Siemens and Dassault Systemes.</p>
<p>More 'bang for the buck' in defence: New thinking vital <i>Sanjaya Baru, Deccan Chronicle</i> February 07, 2022</p>	<p>The "Make in India" programme in defence manufacturing can have positive externalities that also benefit domestic small and medium enterprises which supply components to larger entities. Many such industries have come up around Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Coimbatore.</p>

DEFENSE TRADE

<p>India to showcase Tejas at Singapore air show, tap export potential <i>Rahul Singh, Hindustan Times</i> February 13, 2022</p>	<p>The Tejas's participation in the Singapore air show comes in the backdrop of India taking steps to transform itself from one of the world's biggest weapons importers into an export powerhouse. The military hardware that holds export potential includes the LCA, Astra beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile, Akash surface-to-air missile system, BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, tanks, sonars and a variety of radars.</p>
<p>Decoding the defence budget <i>Harsha Kakar, The Statesman</i> February 08, 2022</p>	<p>The recent sale of BrahMos to Philippines has come as a boost. Unless exports increase, investments by the private sector would begin to stagnate. In this the government has a major role. Empowering defence attaches to represent the Indian defence industry is not a long-term solution. Marginal increase in the revenue budget would place strains on the armed forces to maintain forces.</p>
<p>BrahMos export opens up strategic arena <i>Gurjit Singh, The Tribune</i> February 08, 2022</p>	<p>Now, as the Quad has visible participation in the Indo-Pacific, ASEAN countries believe that their strategic autonomy allows them to engage beyond China. The only thing they want to avoid is Sino-US rivalry. Therefore, buying defence equipment from India or Japan is considered a safer bet. The Philippines obtained patrol boats from Japan, as did Vietnam; the Philippines' main equipment is of US origin since it was a US treaty partner and it is still ordering more American equipment. India has found the right niche as neither the US nor Japan have missiles which they will provide to ASEAN countries.</p>
<p>BrahMos signs contract with Philippines for export of Shore Based Anti-Ship Missile System <i>Press Information Bureau, Government of India</i> January 28, 2022</p>	<p>BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited (BAPL) signed a contract with the Department of National Defence of the Republic of Philippines on January 28, 2022 for supply of Shore Based Anti-Ship Missile System to Philippines. The BAPL is a joint venture company of the Defence Research and Development Organisation. The contract is an important step forward for Government of India's policy of promoting responsible defence exports.</p>
<p>Defence ministry's PMA policy is protectionism. Indian-made arms need export market <i>Lt. General Prakash Menon, ThePrint</i> January 18, 2022</p>	<p>'Atmanirbharta' in Defence is a laudable policy path. Navigating the path will always be easier said than done. Unleashing India's potential has to be its approach. The promise lies in minimising the government's role in the market economy. That is the reason why 'bans' and restrictions can act as impediments towards the realisation of Atmanirbhar Bharat.</p>

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

<p>DOD Establishes 5G and Future Generation Wireless Cross-Functional Team <i>DOD News</i> March 09, 2022</p>	<p>The Department of Defense announced the establishment of a 5G and FutureG cross-functional team that will accelerate the adoption of transformative 5G and future generation wireless networking technologies to ensure its forces can operate effectively anywhere, including in contested networks.</p>
<p>Few Months After China, DRDO's 'Big Breakthrough' In Quantum Tech Powers India Into The Elite Club <i>The Eurasian Times</i> March 02, 2022</p>	<p>On February 23, a team of scientists from DRDO and IIT Delhi successfully demonstrated the Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) link between Prayagraj and Vindhyachal in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, a distance of more than 100 kilometers.</p>
<p>Tamil Nadu's defence innovation hub CDIIC gets first order worth Rs 143 crore with MoUs <i>The New Indian Express</i> February 07, 2022</p>	<p>Indigenisation of Defence procurement got a shot in the arm with Codissia Defence Innovation and Atal Incubation Centre (CDIIC) of Coimbatore signing Rs 143 crore worth of MoUs with various defence public sector undertakings (DPSU) to produce 124 products. It is the first Defence Innovation Hub to be set up in India, following the announcement of Defence Innovation Organisation set up under iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence).</p>
<p>New DOD Chief Digital Artificial Intelligence Office Launches <i>Terri Moon Cronk, DOD News</i> February 04, 2022</p>	<p>The Defense Department must become a digital and artificial intelligence-enabled enterprise capable of operating at the speed and scale necessary to preserve its military advantage, according to a memorandum issued by Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen H. Hicks. The memorandum outlines how the chief digital and artificial intelligence officer, or CDAO, is charged with making sure DOD supports such an enterprise.</p>
<p>Defence innovation will cost money, private control. Else be happy with drone light shows <i>Lt. General Prakash Menon, ThePrint</i> February 01, 2022</p>	<p>Political intervention will be required to reconfigure the iDEX scheme, increase its financial allocation and place it in the hands of technologists, scientists, military leaders and other experts within entities that do not have to conform to bureaucratic norms that cannot possibly serve the innovative spirit.</p>
<p>2022 is a promising year for India's defence capabilities <i>Prakash Chandra, Moneycontrol</i> January 04, 2022</p>	<p>The Bengaluru-based Tonbo Imaging makes advanced imaging and sensor systems for the military that finds application in reconnaissance, infrastructure security, and transportation safety. Combat Robotics India in Pune is developing amphibious ground vehicles for all terrain operations, while the Tamil Nadu-based Vinveli builds customised drones for the army and paramilitary forces.</p>

INDO-PACIFIC DEVELOPMENTS

<p>Colombo Security Conclave adopts road map for cooperation in maritime security, counterterrorism <i>Rezaul H Laskar, Hindustan Times</i> March 11, 2022</p>	<p>The Colombo Security Conclave, a grouping of India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Mauritius, adopted a road map for cooperation and collaboration in areas such as maritime security, counterterrorism and drug trafficking.</p>
<p>India's Place in the New US Indo-Pacific Strategy <i>Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, The Diplomat</i> February 22, 2022</p>	<p>In sum, the new Indo-Pacific strategy appears to be taking regional concerns more seriously, while also re-emphasizing both the importance of American interests in the region and Washington's recognition of the need for partners in pursuing these interests.</p>
<p>India, Philippines vow to expand defence ties & Indo-Pacific partnership on Jaishankar's visit <i>Nayanima Basu, ThePrint</i> February 15, 2022</p>	<p>India and the Philippines vowed to expand security and defence cooperation during External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's maiden visit to the archipelago, also deciding to have a closer partnership under the Indo-Pacific strategic construct, with an eye on China. Jaishankar's visit comes less than a month after New Delhi got its first export deal for BrahMos missiles in January, when Manila signed a \$374-million deal with the BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited.</p>
<p>India, EU discuss cooperation in joint naval activities in Indo-Pacific <i>Rezaul H Laskar, Hindustan Times</i> February 02, 2022</p>	<p>India currently has one of the largest facilities for maritime domain awareness in the form of the Gurugram-based Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region of the Indian Navy. Among the partner countries that have posted international liaison officers at the centre are Australia, France, Japan, the Maldives, Mauritius, Myanmar, Seychelles, Singapore, the UK and the US.</p>
<p>Maritime Partnership Exercise between Ships of Indian Navy and JMSDF <i>Press Information Bureau, Government of India</i> January 13, 2022</p>	<p>Indian Naval Ships Shivalik and Kadmatt undertook Maritime Partnership Exercise with Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) Ships Uraga and Hirado in the Bay of Bengal on 13 Jan 22. The exercise was aimed at strengthening bilateral relations, promoting defence cooperation, enhancing mutual understanding and inter-operability between the two navies and sharing best practices.</p>
<p>The Indo-Pacific region, maritime focus, and ocean governance <i>Girish Luthra, Observer Research Foundation</i> January 08, 2022</p>	<p>2021 has been a watershed year for the Indo-Pacific region, with major policy, framework, and posture adaptations made by many countries and regional groupings, both within and outside the region.</p>

RELEVANT EVENTS AND VISITS

S. No.	Events/Visits	Major Outcomes
1.	<u>Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla meets U.S. Deputy National Security Advisor for International Economics & G20 Sherpa Daleep Singh</u> (March 31, 2022)	Discussed economic cooperation and the larger strategic partnership; renewed commitment to working together on global issues of mutual interest, including at the G20.
2.	<u>Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and the U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland co-chaired India-U.S. Foreign Office Consultations</u> (March 21, 2022)	Reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations under the India-U.S. Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.
3.	<u>External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar meets Atul Keshap, President of U.S.-India Business Council in New Delhi</u> (March 09, 2022)	Discussed various avenues for bilateral cooperation between India and the U.S.
4.	<u>23rd Executive Steering Group (ESG) Meeting between the Indian Navy and U.S. Navy in New Delhi</u> (March 07-09, 2022)	Dialogue towards bolstering defense relations between India and the U.S. in the maritime domain.
5.	<u>Virtual summit of Quad leaders</u> (March 03, 2022)	Leaders reviewed the progress on Quad initiatives since the September 2021 Quad Summit.
6.	<u>Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla welcomes Admiral Paparo, Commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet in India</u> (February 25, 2022)	Discussed bilateral maritime security and defense ties.
7.	<u>Indian External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar meets H.E. James Mattis, former U.S. Secretary of Defense</u> (February 19, 2022)	Dialogue on U.S.-India relations.
8.	<u>External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar meets H.E. Ng Eng Hen, Defense Minister of Singapore</u> (February 19, 2022)	Discussed bilateral and ASEAN related defense cooperation.
9.	<u>Visit of Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces, Lieutenant General Fahd Bin Abdullah Mohammed Al-Mutair to India</u> (February 15, 2022)	Discussed bilateral security and defense ties.
10.	<u>External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar meets H.E. Mr. Delfin Lorenzana, Defense Minister of Philippines</u> (February 14, 2022)	Discussed national security challenges and expanding defense cooperation along with proposals for joint R&D.

11.	Visit of Rear Admiral Saif Bin Nasser Bin Mohsin Al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (CRNO) to India (February 14, 2022)	Visited Indian Navy's Western Naval Command at Mumbai and interacted with the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command and visited ships at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.
12.	Indian External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar meets U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Melbourne (February 11, 2022)	Reviewed the progress made over the past year in broadening and deepening the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership and discussed efforts to strengthen Indo-Pacific cooperation through the Quad.
13.	Australian Prime Minister H.E. Scott Morrison meets the Quad Foreign Ministers collectively in Melbourne (February 11, 2022)	Leaders reiterated their commitment and shared vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.
14.	Indian External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar attends the 4th Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Melbourne (February 11, 2022)	Reviewed the progress on Quad initiatives since the September 2021 Quad Leaders' Summit.
15.	Secretary East delivers the keynote at the Gateway House Round Table on 'India: Pursuing prosperity & security in the Indo-Pacific' (February 01, 2022)	Outlined India's vision for a free and inclusive Indo-Pacific, and the initiatives undertaken to further cooperation among nations in the region.
16.	Second India-EU Maritime Security Dialogue (February 01, 2022)	Discussed developments in the maritime security environment, policy developments, capacity-building and joint naval activities in the Indo-Pacific.
17.	11th India-Oman Joint Military Cooperation Committee Meeting (JMCC) (January 31, 2022)	Discussed bilateral defense cooperation and reviewed the progress made in military-to-military engagements, including joint exercises, industry cooperation and various ongoing infrastructure projects.
18.	U.S. Chargé d' Affaires, Patricia Lacina calls on Indian Foreign Secretary, Harsh Vardhan Shringla in New Delhi (January 14, 2022)	Dialogue on U.S.-India relations.
19.	Exercise Sea Dragon at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam (January 05, 2022)	An annual, multi-national high-end anti-submarine warfare (ASW) training exercise. Participating nations include the U.S., Australia, Canada, India, Japan and South Korea.



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