



# India-US 10-Year Defence Framework Agreement (2025–2035): A New Chapter, Challenges and the Economic–Strategic Perspective

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## Why in News?



## Key pointes:-

- On **31 October 2025**, during the **ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus)** held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Indian Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** and US Secretary of Defense **Pete Hegseth** signed a **10-year Defence Framework Agreement (2025–2035)**.
- Rajnath Singh described it as a *“new chapter in India–US defence cooperation.”*

## Objectives and Key Features of the Agreement

The framework provides a **long-term roadmap** for **strategic, operational, industrial and technological cooperation** between India and the United States for the decade **2025–2035**.

## Major Dimensions:

1. **Expanded Security Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific** — including naval exercises, maritime domain awareness (MDA) and coordinated patrols.
2. **Defence Industrial Partnership** — emphasis on **co-production, co-development** and **technology transfer**.
3. **Intelligence and Geo-Spatial Cooperation** — enhanced use of geospatial data under the **BECA** framework.
4. **Logistics and Supply-Chain Strengthening** — reciprocal access to military bases under **LEMOA**.
5. **Joint Training and Exercises** — expansion of *Malabar*, *Yudh Abhyas* and *Tiger Triumph* exercises.
6. **Implementation of the Defence Industrial Roadmap 2023** — boosting joint production under the **Make in India** initiative.

## Key Foundational Defence Agreements Between India and the US

Year	Agreement	Objective / Significance
2002	<b>GSOMIA</b> (General Security of Military Information Agreement)	Legal framework for safeguarding classified military information
2016	<b>LEMOA</b> (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement)	Reciprocal use of military facilities for refueling and supplies
2018	<b>COMCASA</b> (Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement)	Secure communication and interoperability through encrypted data links
2020	<b>BECA</b> (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement)	Sharing of geospatial and navigational intelligence data
2024	<b>SOSA</b> (Security of Supply Arrangement)	Prioritized supply-chain cooperation between defence industries
2025	<b>10-Year Defence Framework</b>	Decadal roadmap for long-term strategic-industrial partnership

### Strategic Significance

#### For India:-

- Boost to **defence modernization** and access to **advanced technologies**.
- Strengthening of India's **strategic presence in the Indo-Pacific** and its global defence stature.

#### For the United States:

- Reinforces India's role as a **central partner in the Indo-Pacific strategy**.
- Acts as a **counterbalance to China's growing influence** in the region.

## Economic Context — The Ongoing Tariff Dispute

Despite the growing defence partnership, **trade tensions** between India and the US have resurfaced.

### Current Dispute:

- In **2025**, the US imposed **up to 50% tariffs** on several Indian products — including **steel, aluminum, textiles, auto parts and gems & jewelry**.
- The US cited **India's discounted oil imports from Russia** and **trade imbalance** as reasons.
- India retaliated by imposing **25–40% counter-tariffs** and filing a case at the **WTO**.

### Economic Implications:

- Exports worth **\$7 billion** from India to the US were directly affected.
- Potential job losses in India's **MSME sector**.
- Increased uncertainty for **US investors** in India's defence manufacturing sector.

### Impact on Defence Cooperation:

- Prolonged tariff tensions could **slow down co-production and supply-chain projects**.
- US defence companies like **Lockheed Martin, Boeing and GE Aerospace** seek **policy clarity** for investment in India.
- India must **balance strategic cooperation** without letting **trade disputes** erode mutual trust.

## Indo-Pacific and Geopolitical Implications

- The agreement reinforces the **security architecture of the Indo-Pacific**.
- Strengthens **QUAD (India, US, Japan, Australia)** goals — promoting a **free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific**.
- Sends a clear message against **China's expansionist policies** in the region.

## Key Challenges

1. **Strategic Autonomy:** India must preserve its **independent foreign policy** while deepening defence cooperation.
2. **Technology Transfer Barriers:** **US export-control laws** may limit India's **Make in India** aspirations.
3. **Trade Tensions:** Tariff disputes could **undermine strategic trust**.
4. **China's Reaction:** Beijing may view this as an **encirclement strategy** and respond assertively in the region.

## The Way Forward

- **Resolve Tariff Disputes:** Engage through **WTO frameworks** and bilateral negotiations.
- **Leverage SOSA & Industrial Corridors:** Build **joint defence production clusters** to boost trade and industry.
- **Digital Defence Integration:** Collaborate in **cybersecurity, AI-based surveillance** and **digital defence technologies**.
- **Policy Synchronization:** Develop a **joint trade–security framework** ensuring both economic and strategic interests align.

## Conclusion

- The **India–US 10-Year Defence Framework (2025–2035)** marks a **milestone in strategic and industrial cooperation** within the Indo-Pacific.
- However, its long-term success will depend on **how effectively both nations manage trade disputes, tariff frictions and strategic autonomy**.
- The agreement is not just a **defence pact**, but a **symbol of India–US strategic convergence** shaping the **future global order**.