India and the U.K. Crafting a New Legacy

Why in news?

Recently, the U.K. Foreign Secretary had visited India and participated in the inaugural edition of India-U.K. Strategic Futures Forum, a Track 1.5 Dialogue, pushing the bilateral relationship on an upward trajectory.

What are the areas of cooperation between the two countries?

- **2030 Roadmap-** India and the UK adopted the ambitious 'Roadmap 2030' to elevate bilateral ties to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
- **India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative-** The U.K. will join India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative and become a major partner on maritime security issues in Southeast Asia.
- The U.K. is a regional power in the Indo-Pacific as it possesses naval facilities in Oman, Singapore, Bahrain, Kenya, and British Indian Ocean Territory.
- **Defence cooperation-** India is a key strategic partner for the U.K. and was underscored by signing of Defence and International Security Partnership between India and the U.K. in 2015.
- **Joint cyber security programme-** A new joint cyber security programme is set to be announced to protect online infrastructure as both parties attempt to carry out joint exercises to combat threats from cyber criminals and ransomware.
- **Strategic Tech Dialogue-** India and the U.K. plan to hold the first Strategic Tech Dialogue, a ministerial-level summit on emerging technologies.
- **British International Investment funding-** The U.K. has confirmed 70 million euro of British International Investment funding to support the usage of renewable energy in India.
- **India–U.K. Free Trade Agreement**- In January, India and U.K. managed to conclude the first round of talks for an India–U.K. Free Trade Agreement.
- The negotiations reflected shared ambitions to secure a comprehensive deal between the fifth and sixth largest economies in the world as both sides covered over 26 policy areas.

What are the new areas of cooperation?

- The newer areas of cooperation include
  - Fintech
  - Market regulation
  - Sustainable and green finance
  - Cyber security
- The notable success of the collaboration with Oxford-Astra Zeneca and the Serum Institute of India in producing Covishield vaccines in India has been one of the instances of successful cooperation.
- The forthcoming visit of Mr. Johnson to New Delhi signifies the importance of India's role in the dynamically changing global order as New Delhi prepares itself to host the G20 presidency

in 2023.

- As India seeks to carve out a new role for itself in the evolving global order as a ‘leading power’ and the U.K. recalibrates its strategic outlook post-Brexit, this is a unique moment in India-U.K. ties.
- New geopolitical realities demand a new strategic and it is time to seize the moment to lay the foundations of a partnership that can respond adequately to the challenges of the 21st century.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/india-and-the-uk-crafting-a-new-legacy/article65312004.ece

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