India-Germany Ties

Why in news?

German Foreign Minister's visit to India and talks with Indian External Affairs Minister have set the stage for a more updated bilateral relationship.

What is the recent development?

- The two sides signed an agreement on mobility and migration that boosts travel for students, researchers and investors and businesses.
- The meeting was preceded by Germany's agreement to fund renewable energy projects worth a billion Euros.
- The year 2022 has seen intense high-level engagement, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi made two visits to Germany
    1. The India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations with Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Berlin and
    2. The G-7 outreach summit in Bavaria.
- The leaders also met at the G-20 summit in Bali.
- In 2023, German Foreign Minister is expected to be in Delhi, in spring, and again in September for the G-20 summit in India.

What is the history of India-Germany bilateral relations?

- India was amongst the first countries to establish diplomatic ties with the Federal Republic of Germany after the Second World War.
- Relations grew significantly following the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany.
- Today, Germany is amongst India's most important partners both bilaterally and in the global context.
- India and Germany have a "Strategic Partnership" since 2001, which has been further strengthened with the Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) at the level of Head of Governments (German Chancellor and PM).
- This Inter-Governmental Consultations allow for a comprehensive review of Cooperation and identification of new areas of engagement.
- India is amongst a select group of countries with which Germany has such a high-level Consultations.
- In the 4th IGC (Berlin, 2017), 12 Cooperation documents in various sectors were signed.
- In the 5th IGC (Delhi, 2019), 21 MoUs/ Agreements were signed in diverse areas of engagement including some of the new and emerging areas such as Smart Cities, Urban Green Mobility, AI, Space, etc.

How do both the nations support each other?

- Both India and Germany have been part of the 'G-4' grouping since 2005, and they are pushing for UN Security Council reform since then.
- India-Germany Defence Cooperation Agreement (2006) provides a framework for bilateral defence cooperation.

What is the test?

- The substance of the relationship will be tested in continuing differences over the war in Ukraine.
- India says that its imports of Russian oil, a national interest necessity, remain a fraction of the fossil fuels Europe continues to buy.
- While this may be correct, it is also true that the European Union countries have cut all other links with Moscow.
- Falling fuel imports are likely to drop further once the launch of the "oil price cap" for seaborne imports kicks in.
- On the other hand, India's imports of Russian oil have soared to a whopping 21-fold increase, making Russia India's biggest supplier.
- Germany is looking forward for a geopolitical transition post Russia's war in Ukraine, and it has accused Russian President of "shattering" an international peace architecture.
- For India, which inherits the G-20 presidency in this year, it will be necessary to work more closely with Germany to bring all western partners on board with Mr. Modi's plans to forge "global unity".
- This must be done without letting the deep divisions with Russia derail consensus on important tasks such as fighting climate change, inequality, poverty and the digital divide.

Reference

1. The Hindu | Intense engagement: On India-Germany ties
2. Ministry of External Affairs | India-Germany Relations

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