India-Germany Ties

Why in news?

Chancellor Scholz's 2 day visit to India, significantly coincided with the 1st anniversary of Russia's war on Ukraine.

What is the history of India-Germany relations?

- **Political relations –** India is one of the 1st countries to end the state of war with post-war Germany in 1951 and recognize the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG).
- Germany and India cooperate closely on the issue of UN Security Council expansion within the framework of *G-4*.

  The G4 formed in 2005 is a group of 4 countries such as Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan, aspiring to become permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

- **Defence relations –** High Defence Committee (HDC) meetings at the Defence Secretary level take place annually, alternately in New Delhi and Berlin.
- *India-Germany Defence Cooperation Agreement (2006)* provides a framework for bilateral defence cooperation
- **Economic relations –** Germany is India's largest trading partner in Europe and 2nd most important partner in terms of technological collaborations.
- Germany is the 8th largest foreign direct investor in India since 2000.
- **Cultural relations –** The *Indo-German Society* is engaged in promoting inter-cultural activities of both countries by conveying information about modern India to the German public.
- Max Mueller was the first scholar of Indo-European languages to translate and publish the Upanishads and the Rigveda.
- **Strategic relations** - India and Germany have a *"Strategic Partnership"* since 2001.
- India is amongst a select group of countries with which Germany has *Inter-Governmental Consultations* at the level of Head of Governments (German Chancellor and PM).
- **Parliamentary Exchanges** – There is an *Indo-German Parliamentary Friendship Group* where visit by Parliamentarians from both sides take place regularly
- **Institutional Cooperation Arrangements** – Includes *High Defence Committee, Indo-German Energy Forum, Indo-German Environment Forum*, etc.
- *Intergovernmental S&T Cooperation Agreement* was signed for fostering research projects and direct partnerships between Universities of both countries

Recent developments in India-Germany ties.

What is the impact of Russia-Ukraine war and Russia-China nexus on India-Germany ties?

- **Russia-Ukraine war –** The war has been a watershed moment in Germany's security policy, resulting in the abandonment of decades of post-war pacifism towards strategic matters.
- This is evident in Germany's pledge to boost defence spending to 2% of GDP and provide special funding to bolster the country's military.
- **China factor –** China's assertive posturing have brought into question Germany's approach of Wandel durch Handel (change through trade).
- Europe's increasing prioritisation of values-based partnerships with like-minded countries can advance India-German cooperation.
- **Trade routes –** For Germany, the stability of supply chains and trade routes linking Asia to Europe is of critical importance given its status as Europe's economic powerhouse and its reliance on exports.

What are the recent developments between the two countries?

- **Military dependence –** As New Delhi attempts to diversify from its military dependence on Russia, Berlin reassesses its long-standing arms exports policy and could become an important defence partner for India.
- **Military exercise –** The first ever *France-India-Germany* military exercise drill is slated to take place in 2024 towards enhanced security and defence collaboration.
- **Trade & technologies –** Collaboration in clean energy and green technologies has emerged as the central pillar in the partnership.
- This lead to the launch of a *Green and Sustainable Development Partnership*.

> *The green and sustainable development partnership aims to effectively respond to the most pressing global challenges of today, viz. achieving the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and addressing climate change.*

What is the way forward?

- **India's role –** Divergent positions on the war have not undermined India's regular political engagements with Europe.
- **Russia-China –** An intensification of the Russia-China axis could further embolden this alignment.
- **Germany-China –** While Germany emphasises the difficulties in decoupling from China, it is encouraging that Germany is drafting a new official China strategy amidst a wider national security strategy.
- Against the backdrop of volatile geopolitical shifts, emerging multi polar world, and Europe's enhanced courtship of India, India's ties with Germany could be vital in shaping a new global order.

References

1. The Hindu | A ‘Zeitenwende’ in the India-Germany relationship
2. The Hindu | Intense engagement: On India-Germany ties

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