New Dynamics in India-US Relationship

Why in news?

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Indian Prime Minister is about to encounter with President Donald Trump next week in Washington.

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What are the areas of convergence?

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- It is the prospect of America supporting a larger Indian role in securing the Subcontinent and the Indian Ocean.
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- The shared interest in an Eurasian balance of power and a complementarity between an America shedding its global burdens under domestic pressure and a rising India taking larger responsibilities is not difficult to see.
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What is the assumption behind strategic partnership?

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- The effort to construct an India-US strategic partnership in the last two decades was based on the assumption that the American unipolar moment will endure.
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- America looked at partnering a rising India to sustain US primacy in the Indo-Pacific.
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- Delhi acknowledged American primacy, but was afraid of becoming a “junior” partner.
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- It was concerned that US strategic indulgence towards Pakistan and

China — the two main sources of India's security challenges —may make Washington an unreliable partner.
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- As a result, the hype about India-US security cooperation never really lived upto its potential.
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Is there any new opportunity?

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- As Trump challenges the traditional assumptions about America's global role, there is an opportunity, for Modi to explore a new framework for strategic cooperation with the United States.
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- If Trump believes that an exhausted America must step back from being the first responder to Eurasian crises, Modi has talked up the idea of India as a leading power that must take greater regional and international responsibilities.
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What are the areas of divergence?

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- During his recent visit to Europe, Modi strongly committed India to the 2015 Paris accord on climate mitigation, after Trump walked out, claiming it imposes too many costs on the US economy.
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- In Washington, though, the PM is unlikely to touch on climate change and other global issues.
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Whether India is willing to be a regional security provider?

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- Until now, India has been hesitant to take on a regional security role beyond the Subcontinent.

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- In the aftermath of independence, there was the opportunity of India working with Britain for a regional order under the rubric of the Commonwealth.
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- Although Pandit Nehru accepted the responsibilities of the Raj for the Subcontinent’s security, he was unwilling to back a Commonwealth military framework.
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- Two decades later, when Britain ended its security commitments “east of the Suez”, the post-Nehru India had neither the political will, nor the material resources to consider regional security leadership. Its preference was to indulge in vacuous collective security rhetoric.
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- As the Indian Ocean went through multiple convulsions from the 1970s, India has remained a mere bystander.
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Source: Indian Express

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