

What does the new U.S administration mean for India?

Why in news?

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- The US President on his swearing in ceremony has announced the Capitals of World countries saying from that day onwards, it's going to be only "America First".

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- Since then several world capitals have heard various interpretations of this announcement, resulting in a more uncertain world.

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What are the common grounds?

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- **Security** - Both the administrations would be interested in the defeat of Radical Islamic Terrorism.

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- **Defence** - India is designated a major defence partner by the Obama administration.

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- Therefore India's requests for high technology are now considered with a 'presumption of approval' as opposed to 'presumption of denial'.

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- The Trump administration is also willing favourably look at India's pending request for Avenger armed drones and carry forward the ongoing cooperation between the two countries in defence.

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What are the areas of contentions?

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- **NGO** - The continuing crackdown on U.S.-based Christian charities

operating in India can create a rift as the evangelical groups have far higher influence in the current White House than in the previous one.

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- **Jobs** - Both the governments have promised job creation. Therefore they could be competing in this area because the last decade witnessed a movement of U.S. jobs to India, and of Indian workers to the U.S.

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- **H-1B Visa** - The business model of Indian IT is to locate a crucial part of their workforce in the U.S. who support the operation of jobs carried out in India.

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- But in recent years, these companies have increasingly hired Americans in their local workforce. So a crackdown on H-1B visas will not affect the business model

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- But the changes in laws that will not allow these companies to relocate the jobs at all will not be welcomed by India.

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What should India do?

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- Though it has been signalled by the new administration that India would be a friend, it is not of top priority right now.

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- Therefore India must do more to catch the attention of the new administration.

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- Not much is needed to be done in areas like cyber security, intelligence sharing, space, disease control, maritime surveillance, agriculture, education and climate change.

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- They should be allowed to continue in the already existing pace.

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- The new administration might want India to openly partner with US in tackling China.

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- Recently US reiterated a long pending demand to sign the COMCASA (Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement) that would enhance joint surveillance of Chinese vessels.

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- India's consistent demand that the U.S. bring more pressure on Pakistan to

take action against terrorist groups could be met with another demand for Indian troops in Afghanistan.

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- They may be less understanding about India's domestic sentiment.

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- Therefore these areas to be treaded cautiously.

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Source: The Hindu

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