

Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement

By concluding Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in recent 2 plus 2 meet, India and USA have signed all four foundational agreements.

BECA along with COMCASA, GSOMIA and LEMOA are agreement making India and USA more integrated and engaged with each other militarily.

while COMCASA is for sharing intelligence in encrypted form on field between security forces of India & USA, LEMOA is about sharing military base between each other.

BECA is one step further in these agreement by enabling intelligence

and information sharing related to military equipment. It along with others will boost India's ability to enhance its security arrangement.

Through BECA, India will gain high resolution on and in minimum latency the images of border, sea and other areas.

BECA will complement the hardware India purchase from USA which is of about 10 to 15 bn US dollars and rising. Upcoming draws like Q3E will utilise the BECA agreement.

The timing of the agreement is an indirect message to china which is threatening India's sovereignty at Eastern borders. BECA will provide on time information of any troop displacement near Indian borders.

Further, it will assist India-US military exercise such as Malabar,

Voddh. Ashyas and Tiger Triumph.

Concerns over the agreement.

- (i) dependency - Through these acts and agreement India is becoming more and more dependent upon US hardware and intelligence.
- (ii) security - concerns as US also sells equipments to Pakistan for example R-16 which goes against Indian interest.

Way forward

- (i) National interest - As joint statement does not mention china, India having land border with china, should maintain its national priority without getting trapped into USA policy about china.

(ii) Atmanirbharata - with these agreement India should utilise the opportunity to strengthen its domestic security capacity.

→ promote and expand R&D

→ increase budget for defence capital

India and USA need to convert the environment against china into asset to strengthen ties, while India should keep its eyes open during dynamic times.