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**GSOMIA to BECA: The Crucial Indo-US Strategic
Partnership**

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United States and India are likely to sign a landmark agreement on 27 October 2020, just a week before American Presidential Elections-2020. Named as 'Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), the agreement will allow New Delhi to use the geospatial maps of Washington for the military purposes. This agreement will boost Indian military capability in many ways. The crucial aspect is; after signing

of BECA, India is expected to have an edge over the regional countries including China.

Indeed, the agreement is continuation of larger Indo-US collaboration. Indian military strategists envisage that, by signing BECA India will neutralise the “Russia-China-Pakistan axis in the maritime domain and for



the stability of the Indo-Pacific region.” Indeed, India and United States (US) are heading towards a Comprehensive Strategic Global Partnership. This partnership aims at attaining Indo-US supremacy in the field of security at global level. As perceived, this partnership will enable US to continue its contemporary status of global hegemon while as a junior partner; India will be able to emerge as regional power in broader Asia-Pacific region.

In order to minimize the Chinese influence over the region, the region has been renamed by United States and India as; Indo-Pacific. Indeed, India and U.S considered China as their common opponent. Thus, the renaming of the region and the extraordinary military cooperation between India and US is all about to counter the rapid rise of China and its growing influence both at regional and global level. In order to attain their strategic objectives and hegemony at global and regional level, India and United States have been cooperating since the decade of 1990. This cooperative mechanism was formalized with the onset of 21st century. In 2003, US declared India as its natural ally at the strategic level. There have been numerous



deals between both states in the field of military cooperation, political exchanges and strategic collaborations.

The first major cooperation between the two states took place in 2005 in the form of Indo-US Nuclear Deal which was finalized in 2008. This deal was a major breakthrough in the bilateral relationship of both countries which obliged Washington to even amend its own Constitutional provisions. Though this deal was related to civilian use of nuclear energy, nevertheless, it enabled India to dedicate fourteen nuclear reactors purely for military purposes. The more India will have nuclear facilities dedicated for the nuclear weapons, the more it will have deterrent effects at regional level. Besides, India maintains a huge conventional military power (world's third largest military).

On the military front there have been more serious developments which largely remained un-noticed so far. If materialized in their essence, these developments (four agreements of military nature would change the entire international security scenario). As mentioned above, India and U.S will sign Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) on October 26-27. This will be very significant development at regional and global level. BECA aims at Geo-Spatial cooperation between both countries. BECA is final stage of three previous agreements between India and US. The other three agreements include; One; General Security Of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA). GSOMIA allows militaries of India and US to share the intelligence gathered by both especially in the field of security and military. It was signed in 2002, once BJP was in power. Two: Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA). Signed in 2016, LEMOA aims at availing the military facilities

of each other for the purpose of refuelling and replenishment of their ships and aircrafts whenever required.

Three; Industrial Security Annex (ISA) was signed in 2019. It is in fact an extension to the GSOMIA. ISA was signed at the 2+2 dialogue in 2019. It provides a framework for exchange and protection of classified military information between the USA



and Indian defence industries. BECA will be an all-inclusive agreement, for the greater and long-term strategic cooperation between India and US. The crucial aspect of the BECA is, “it will allow India to use the geospatial maps of the USA to get pinpoint military accuracy of automated hardware systems and weapons such as cruise and ballistic missiles.” This is the higher dimension of warfare at strategic level. Whereas, through BECA India will acquire the military equipment like; armed unmanned aerial vehicles such as the Predator-B from United States, it will also allow US to use India and its geopolitics for its own strategic objectives.

It is worth mentioning that, Predator-B uses geospatial data for accurate strikes on enemy targets. It is to be noted that, New Delhi will never dare to attack Beijing. Nevertheless, the military cooperation and its provisions will enable Washington to counter the Chinese rise and its military power. Apart from this, there are many agreements likely to be negotiated and signed between New Delhi and Washington in the field of maritime. These maritime developments are aiming to constrain the space for China in Indian Ocean. The maritime dimension would include the Quad



countries too. Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is the informal strategic dialogue between Australia, Japan, India, and United States. It aims at; ensuring “a free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.”

From GSOMIA to BECA, India and United States are heading towards a very crucial strategic partnership. This partnership may have broader and very serious consequences for regional states of Asia-Pacific and South Asia. Indeed, debating the map of future battlefield, India may not be to use the military bases of US, however later may use Indian facilities for the attainment of its strategic objectives. Indeed, through this unholy strategic partnership India is putting at risk the security of entire Asian Continent.