

# Narendra Modi's US Visit

The US is seeking strong ties with India for containing China's rise. In this context US gave a red carpet welcome to the Indian Prime Minister. Modi's visit lasted for four days from June 21<sup>st</sup> to June 24<sup>th</sup>. In the name of threat from China the U.S. Senate's India Caucus Co-Chairs Mark Warner introduced legislation to give India 'NATO plus five' defence status. India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, however, had rejected the framework for India. The arrangement currently exists between the U.S, its NATO partners and five countries: Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan and Israel. The Warner announcement follows a recommendation from a US House of Representatives committee on China that India be included in the club. "A lot of Americans still have that NATO treaty construct in their heads," Mr. Jaishankar has said, suggesting that it was the only template with which Americans looked at the world. At the same time Washington has also been frustrated by India's close ties with Russia amid Moscow's war in Ukraine.

Modi's visit was not without controversy. The speech to Congress, normally a bipartisan affirmation of a visiting leader from an allied nation, was boycotted by some liberal lawmakers, who cited the Modi government's treatment of India's Muslim minority. Former US President Barack Obama during a media interview made statements on protection of the rights of ethnic minorities in India. He added that if rights of minorities in India are not protected, there is a strong possibility of the country "at some point starts pulling apart".

An American reporter pressed Modi on human rights concerns. Modi defended India by saying "democracy runs in our veins" and insisting that there is "absolutely no space for discrimination." Modi also tends to keep reporters at a distance during overseas trips, such as last year in Germany, when the two countries announced a clean energy deal.

After Biden and Modi spoke privately for more than two hours, a joint statement included a warning of rising tensions and destabilizing actions in the East and South China Sea and stressed the importance of international law and freedom of navigation.

## **New US-India Deals:**

The two countries announced agreements on semi-conductors, critical minerals, technology, space cooperation and defence cooperation and sales.

Some are aimed at diversifying supply chains to reduce dependence on China. Others are aimed at cornering the market in advanced technologies that may feature on the

battlefields of the future. They also ended disputes at the World Trade Organization, and India removed some tariffs on 26 U.S. goods.

The United States is India's largest trading partner but the U.S. has much larger trading relationships with China, the EU and North American neighbours.

Biden and Modi signed off on a deal to allow General Electric (GE) to produce jet engines in India to power Indian military aircraft, through an agreement with Hindustan Aeronautics. (HIAE.NS)

US Navy ships in the region will be able to stop in Indian shipyards for repairs under a maritime agreement, and India will procure US-made armed MQ-9B Sea Guardian drones by an estimated cost of \$3.072 billion.

U.S. chipmaker Micron Technology's (MUO) plans a \$2.7 billion semiconductor testing and packaging unit, to be built in Modi's home state of Gujarat.

India also agreed to join the U.S.-led Artemis Accords on space exploration and to work with NASA on a joint mission to the International Space Station in 2024.