



2+2 to address U.S. issues on Iran, Russia

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Highlights

- Hopes the U.S. will consider the importance of its relationship with India carefully, while considering any moves to sanction defence purchases from Russia under the new CAATSA, or Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, official sources said ahead of the inaugural Indo-U.S. 2+2 dialogue.
- U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Secretary of Defence James Mattis will land here on Sep 5, 2018 and meet External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sep 6, 2018, which officials said would be the "highest-level" dialogue between the two countries this year.
- There have been conflicting statements from Washington on whether U.S. President Donald Trump would give India a waiver from the sanctions mandated by U.S. law.

S-400

- India is finalising a plan to purchase the S-400 long-range air-defence systems from Russia, over which there have been specific objections from several U.S. officials.
- However, officials stressed there was no discussion scheduled specifically on the S-400.

Oil from Iran

- Another sticky issue remains the U.S. demand that India "zero out" its oil imports from Iran by November
- Whether the U.S. will give a waiver to India's development of the Chabahar port, when a separate set of sanctions kick in is another issue.

Engagement with Pakistan

- U S engagement with Pakistan is another issue the "Pivot towards Asia policy" was aimed to rebalance power in Asia and has had adverse impact on US-India relations and is continuing to do so due to alleged terror hubs in Pakistan

Other Issues

- The major announcement from the 2+2 talks could be progress on talks to conclude the foundational Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA).
- U.S. delegation and the two sides are expected to announce a new tri-service amphibious Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise.
- A special hotline between the Defence Ministers is also likely to be discussed for approval.
- Officials pointed out that India had "independent relations" with all the major powers

and sought to dispel any apprehensions that the dialogue would have a negative impact on relations with other countries.

The Indo-Pacific policies of both countries, who are engaged in a “Quad” or quadrilateral arrangement with Australia and Japan, will be on the agenda, the sources said.

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