

**“Let go of the delusion that you DESERVE better and go EARN it! Today is a new day!”**

**INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL**

**KATHMANDU DECLARATION**

U.S., India may not sign security pact at 2+2 meet

India and U.S to make important announcement on Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)

The COMCASA will facilitate exchange of secure communications between the two militaries and allow the sale of encrypted communication systems to India.

Both the countries said, it is difficult to say if agreement on COMCASA would be signed during 2+2 dialogue.

Initially India had concern that it will allow U.S to access secure communication channels however India accepted it.

U.S has designated India as a Major Defence Partner.

U.S has said, in order to access cutting edge technology India have to first sign foundational agreement with U.S.

Indian military has also raised the concern that COMCASA will allow U.S to penetrate into India most secure strategic communication grid.

According to India, it is working on terms and condition and could take time as it took in 2016 for Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Understanding.

**Other major announcement could be made on:**

- Under U.S Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) an announcement could be made on Defence Innovation Unit Experimental (DIUx) to allow cross posting of officials.
- For this purpose, India already have created Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) to work on joint development projects.

- US sale of MH-60 Romeo maritime helicopters and armed drones.
- A joint tri-service Humanitarian and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise.
- Discussion on issue of India defence cooperation with Russia under Countering America’s Adversaries through Sanctions Act,

India already has cleared the deal with Russia to purchase S-400 long range air defence system.

**UN BEGINS TALKS ON TREATY TO PROTECT IMPERILLED HIGH SEAS**

United Nation is ready to bring regulations on High Seas.

High Seas and international marine zone cover about 46 % of the planet and lack adequate environmental protection.

The main goal is to protect marine biodiversity and pillaging (Marine Violence).

All states enjoy freedom of navigation, scientific research and fishing on High Seas

In 1982, United Nation adopted the Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS) and left High Seas.

The convention took into effect in 1994 without U.S participation.

Since then exploitation of open sea has increased significantly due to Fishing, Expanded Shipping Routes and Mineral Extraction.

The new regulation will focus on creating protected areas on the high seas, more sharing of maritime resources and technology, and research on environmental impacts.

Whale hunting nation such as Japan, Iceland and Norway need to be cautious.

Negotiation on High Seas could prove to be a turning point.

**BIMSTEC SUMMIT 2018**

The road to the fourth summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) in Kathmandu, Nepal was marked by scepticism and hope.

Grouping's past performance has been modest in the previous 19 years and promising in the past two years.

On the positive side, the fact that the summit could be held was a success in itself as it had been delayed.

**Important decisions taken to revive BIMSTEC:**

Work begins now on drafting a charter for BIMSTEC, which has functioned so far on the basis of the Bangkok Declaration of 1997, and outcomes of the past three summits and the Leaders' Retreat in 2016.

A Permanent Working Committee will be set up to provide direction during the period between two summits and also to prepare the Rules of Procedure.

The Secretariat has been promised additional financial and human resources and enhancement of its role to coordinate, monitor and facilitate the grouping's activities.

As the institution has been handicapped due to lack of financial muscle, the leaders took the bold decision to establish the BIMSTEC Development Fund.

A push to increase its visibility and stature in the international fora will also be made by BIMSTEC.

Recognising that 16 areas of cooperation represent too wide a spectrum, the BIMSTEC governments will make a serious endeavour to review, restructure and rationalise various sectors, identifying a few core areas.

Of at least six legal instruments awaiting finalisation, only one, the Memorandum of Understanding on Grid Interconnection, could be inked in Kathmandu.

Fourteen years after signing the framework agreement on the Free Trade Area (FTA), the

leaders could only renew their "commitment to an early conclusion" of FTA negotiations.

The grouping had established its Energy Centre in 2009, but it was still struggling for the "early operationalisation" of the Centre.

There are plans to revitalise the Business Forum and the Economic Forum

Cooperation in the security domain has been widened with a new instrument added to the arsenal: a meeting of home ministers

This will be in addition to annual meetings of national security advisers and the first meeting of army chiefs to be held this year in India

There is a sound plan to establish forums for parliamentarians, universities, cultural organisations and the media community

**Focus on connectivity:**

India emphasised that the biggest opportunity is connectivity — trade connectivity, economic connectivity, transport connectivity, digital connectivity, and people-to-people connectivity

The Kathmandu Declaration has spelt out a number of measures, old and new, to secure this objective

But the Motor Vehicle Agreement and the Coastal Shipping Agreement would still need more time for finalization.

**Way Forward:** The summit articulated a vision for the Bay of Bengal Region heading towards a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future

The region is now widely viewed as a common space for security, connectivity and development

BIMSTEC can become a dynamic, effective and result-oriented organisation if it focuses on not just to deliberate, but also to deliver

**INDIA TO TAKE PART IN TSUNAMI MOCK DRILL**

India along with 23 other nations would be participating in a major Indian ocean-wide tsunami mock exercise (drill) which would involve evacuation of thousands of people from coastal areas in over half a dozen states.

The exercise IOWave18 is being organized by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.

The purpose of exercise is to increase tsunami preparedness, evaluate response capabilities in each state and improve coordination throughout the region.

The exercise would involve the evacuation of more than 1,25,000 people from the coastal communities of Odisha, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Gujarat and Goa.

The exercise will simulate Indian Ocean countries being put in a tsunami warning situation and require the National Tsunami Warning Centre (NTWC), i.e., INCOIS in case of India, and the National and Local Disaster Management Offices to implement their strategies.

The IOC coordinated the setting up of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWMS) in the aftermath of December 26, 2004 tsunami.

The Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC), based out of the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad, is an autonomous institution under the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences.

The centre has all necessary infrastructure for the reception of real-time data from seismic and sea-level networks, tsunami modeling, as well as generation and dissemination of tsunami bulletins for the entire IOR.

#### **DRAFT CHARTER OF PATIENTS' RIGHTS RELEASED**

The Health Ministry plans to implement the Charter of Patients' Rights through State governments for provision of proper health care by clinical establishments.

There was a need for a consolidated comprehensive document on patient's rights in India.

Some States have adopted the national Clinical Establishments Act 2010 and certain

others have enacted their own State-level legislations to regulate hospitals.

However there was no consolidated document on patients' rights that can be followed by all States uniformly.

The draft charter includes 17 rights with description which includes all relevant provisions and is inspired by international charters.

This charter expects that Patients' Rights are given adequate protection and operational mechanisms are set up to make these rights functional and enforceable by law.

#### **Need for Right to Non-Discrimination**

Every patient has the right to receive treatment without any discrimination based on his or her illnesses or conditions, including HIV status or other health condition, religion, caste, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

The hospital management has a duty to ensure that no form of discriminatory behaviour or treatment takes place with any person under the hospital's care.

#### **HEALTH MINISTRY COMES OUT WITH DRAFT RULES ON SALE OF DRUGS BY E-PHARMACY**

The Union Health Ministry has come out with "Draft Rules on "Sale of Drugs by e-pharmacy"" with an aim to regulate online sale of medicines across India.

This seeks to provide patients accessibility to genuine drugs from authentic online portals.

These pharmacies will be purchasing directly from the drug manufacturer so they will also be able to give 20-30 per cent discounts, thus benefiting the patients.

The draft states that no person will distribute or sell, stock, exhibit or offer for sale of drugs through e-pharmacy portal unless registered.

Any person who intends to conduct business of e-pharmacy shall apply for the grant of registration to the Central Licensing Authority in Form 18AA through the online portal of the Central Government.

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), the country's apex

drug regulator and central licensing authority is the nodal agency.

The application will have to be accompanied by a sum of Rs 50,000 while asserting that an e-pharmacy registration holder will have to comply with provisions of Information Technology Act, 2000 (21 of 2000).

The supply of any drug shall be made against cash or credit memo generated through the e-pharmacy portal and such memos shall be maintained by the e-pharmacy registration holder as record.

The registration will remain valid for a period a three years from the date of its issuance and a renewal of registration will have to be done.

**The details of patient shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed to any person other than the central government or the state government concerned,** as the case may be.

Sale of tranquillisers, psychotropic drugs, narcotics and habit forming drugs has been prohibited through these portals.

The premises from where the e-pharmacy business is conducted shall be inspected, every two years, by a team of officers authorized by the Central Licensing Authority.

It would binding on the e-pharmacies to deliver the drugs in the specific time that will be told to the patient during the time of purchase.

The e-portals are mandatorily required to have 24/7 call centres.

No e-pharmacy shall advertise any drug on radio or television or internet or print or any other media for any purpose if it contravenes any provision of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

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