

This would not be the first time when any US President is going to pay an official visit to India, but for the very first time, any US President would go for a road trip in India. On 24th February, all eyes will be on the beautiful city Ahmedabad, where US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to deliver a speech to the public gathering expected of more than [100,000 people](#) in a newly made Motera stadium, which is the world's largest cricket stadium and has a capacity of 110,000 seating.

Both the leaders have a lot of similarities and their chemistry is not hidden to anyone. From the method of campaigning for the election to the reforms in the foreign and trade policy, their 'Nation First' approach can always be seen. PM Modi has just begun his second term in office by [winning the general elections of 2019](#) and President Trump is again going to fight for a second term in the upcoming US elections which are going to happen in year end of 2020. This visit is going to be very important as this can be a platform for Trump to utilize it as a campaign tool for the elections.

PM Modi was also having a good bonding with former US President Barack Obama as well, US and India have gone through multiple lows and highs in their relationship. PM Modi has successful in diminishing the previous ghost of non aligned behaviour and transformed the 'Strategic Autonomy' into 'Strategic Alignment'. India - US bilateral trade of goods and services has been \$142.6 billion in 2018. Either side's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) also witnessed a recommendable growth.

Defence trade between the two nations has increased from \$1 billion in 2008 to over \$18 billion presently. India is the second largest arms importer of US. India also became just the third Asian country (after formal US treaty allies, Japan and South Korea) to receive clearance on purchasing licence-free space and defence technology under the Strategic Trade Authorisation (STA). Recently US has also [approved](#) the sale of an Integrated Air Defence Weapon System (IADWS) to India for an estimated cost of \$1.9 billion to modernize its armed forces and to expand its existing air defence architecture to counter threats posed by air attacks. However, some of the strategic experts have questioned its high price.

But despite all of the closeness, sometimes misbalancing of sugar in coffee ruins whole of its flavour. Trump's '[America First](#)' policy sometimes overlooks the determinants of check and balance. The US has recently withdrawn the 'developing' status of India. The United States Trade Representative (USTR) eliminated India from the list on account of it being a G-20 member and having a share of 0.5% or more of world trade. The move has cast a shadow on India being able to restore preferential benefits under the Generalised System of Preference

(GSP) as part of its trade talks with the US, as only developing countries are eligible for it.



S-400 Air Defence System

The US has also tried to enter in the arena when India wish to engage with its other defence trade partners. When India signed an agreement with Russia last year to purchase the S-400 missile defence system, the US just expressed its displeasure and threatened to ban India through Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act ([CAATSA](#)). However, India will receive the first shipment of the S-400 missile defence system from Russia in 2021.

US has also [restricted](#) the H1B visa grant for Indians to 15 percent only. The move is likely to affect the IT industry. The restriction seems like an after-effect of new data localisation rules in India. India is one of the biggest countries to contribute to the IT sector in the US and the H-1B visa restriction could affect thousands of Indian IT professionals abroad. With lower allowance for H-1B visa to India, Indian IT professionals could struggle with IT jobs in the USA.

Every time when it comes to the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, the US has always been so much confusion or better say try to play a safe game. It sometimes says that it wants to do

mediation between India and Pakistan and after coming under India's pressure just reverse itself by saying that, Jammu and Kashmir is only a bilateral issue of India and Pakistan. India recently reiterated its stand on Kashmir following the remarks by US President Donald Trump where he offered to 'help' resolve the issue on the sidelines of World Economic Forum held in Davos.

To be sure, there are challenges that remain in maintaining the trajectory of India-US relations. The initiation of 2+2 dialogue between India and the US where principles of foreign and defence cabinets could be central in showing a torchlight for the future of the relationship between both the nations. The US is also focused to counter China due to which it will never wish India to get away. The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue ([Quad](#)) which is an informal strategic dialogue between the United States, India, Japan, and Australia is moreover discussed as a step to counter emerging China. But India needs to be in caution that, it does not compromise to its own benefits and image.

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