

US Seeks to Finalize Major Defence Sales to India Amid Growing Partnership

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The United States has expressed strong optimism about completing several major pending defence sales to India, as both nations reaffirmed their commitment to closer military cooperation and shared security interests in the Indo-Pacific region.

On Tuesday, United States Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth met with India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar at the Pentagon. The meeting highlighted the steady progress of the United States-India defence partnership, which leaders from both countries have described as one of the most consequential aspects of their broader relationship.

According to a statement from the United States Department of Defence, Hegseth said the United States is pleased with India's successful integration of many American defence systems into its military forces. Building on this momentum, he hopes to complete several significant pending defence sales soon. He also emphasized the goal of expanding joint defence industrial cooperation and coproduction efforts, which are essential to strengthening interoperability between the two militaries.

Hegseth noted that both Washington and New Delhi are "mutually aware" of the security concerns across the Indo-Pacific, an area increasingly seen as critical to global stability. "Our nations boast a rich and growing history of cooperation driven by a shared commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," he said.

He also referenced plans to sign a new 10-year Framework for the United States-India Major Defence Partnership, a move expected to institutionalize further and deepen collaboration in advanced technology, manufacturing, and military training.

During the meeting, Jaishankar described the defence relationship as built not just on shared interests but also on "deepening convergence" of capabilities and responsibilities. He stressed that the partnership has become more significant in a growingly complex world.

"We believe that our defence partnership is, today, truly one of the most consequential pillars of the relationship," Jaishankar said. "What we do in the Indo-Pacific, we believe, is crucial to its strategic stability."

Hegseth and Jaishankar also discussed participation in the next India-United States Defence Acceleration Ecosystem Summit. The summit aims to strengthen defence industrial cooperation and promote innovation in new technologies and manufacturing.

Looking ahead, both officials expressed confidence that the United States and India would continue to build on the strong foundation established in recent years. Hegseth credited President Donald Trump's and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's early efforts to set the stage for a more productive and pragmatic defence partnership.

"We're eager to work alongside you to realize our shared goals," Hegseth concluded. "They're deep and ongoing."

This renewed focus on defence ties reflects the strategic importance both countries place on their partnership and its vital role in maintaining peace and security across the Indo-

Pacific region.