

India- Philippines Brahmos Pact

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India has taken a major step towards becoming an arms exporter. India has signed a key pact with the Philippines for the sale of “defence material and equipment”, which are likely to include BrahMos cruise missiles.

In news: BrahMos missiles’ supply: India signs key pact with Philippines for sale of ‘defence equipment’

Placing it in syllabus: Foreign Affairs

Dimensions

- Provisions of the Agreement
- Reasons for Such and Agreement
- Impact
- India’s Look East Policy

Content:

Provisions of the Agreement:

- India and the Philippines have signed a key agreement to facilitate government-to-government deals on military hardware.
- India and the Philippines signed the **“Implementing Arrangement” for “procurement of defense material and equipment procurement”**.
- The agreement will be the legal framework for procurement of Indian defense equipment by the Philippines, being the guide on policies and procedures in defense procurement.
- It dictates the terms and sets the foundation for government to government contracts.
- This agreement lays the groundwork for sales of defence

systems such as the highly anticipated export of the BrahMos cruise missile, through the government-to-government route.

- Philippine Department of National Defense publicly acknowledged, the archipelagic country's intention of purchasing the missile, and a potential export deal for India, moves one step closer to reality.
- India has been offering its **Brahmos Coastal Defence System** to the Philippines, which is the land-based variant of the **Indian-Russian PJ-10 Brahmos supersonic anti-ship missile system** developed by Brahmos Aerospace.

Reasons for such an Agreement:

This is a significant development for two reasons:

- The Philippines could be India's first client for its missile system
- Indian arms could protect the Philippines against Beijing in the South China Sea.

Impact

India as a Arms Exporter:

- India gains a footing as a major arms exporter. The agreement in the Philippines is a step towards establishing India's credentials as a competitive exporter in the global defence market.
- Exporting the system has been on the agenda for more than a decade.
- Doing so would boost the credibility of India as a defence exporter, help it meet the target of \$5 billion in defence exports by 2025, and elevate its stature as a regional superpower.
- Countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates, Argentina, Brazil, and South Africa have so far shown an interest in acquiring the systems.

Impetus to achieving Defense Export Targets:

- The Ministry of Defence has formulated a draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP 2020).
- The DPEPP 2020 is envisaged as an overarching guiding document to provide a focused, structured and significant thrust to defence production capabilities of the country for self-reliance and exports.
- The agreement with Philippines is the first step towards realising the goals envisaged in DPEPP 2020

Geo-political Impact:

- Philippines becoming the first country to import the BrahMos would be wide-ranging and consequential in the Indo-Pacific
- It would caution China, with whom the Philippines has been engaged in a territorial conflict in the South China Sea, and act as a deterrent to Beijing's aggressive posturing.
- Further, other nations threatened by Chinese belligerence may come forward to induct the BrahMos into their arsenal, thereby boosting India's economic, soft, and hard power profile in the region

About the BrahMos Missile:

- BrahMos missiles are designed, developed and produced by **BrahMos Aerospace, a joint venture company** set up by DRDO and Mashinostroyeniya of Russia.
- It is a **two-stage missile** with a solid propellant booster as the first stage and liquid ramjet as the second stage.
- The cruise missiles like BrahMos are a type of systems known as the '**standoff range weapons**' which are fired from a range sufficient to allow the attacker to evade defensive fire from the adversary.

- Brahmos is a **multiplatform missile** that can be launched from **land, air, and sea**. It's also a multi capability missile with pinpoint accuracy that works in both day and night irrespective of the weather conditions.
- It operates on the **"Fire and Forget" principle**. It does not require further guidance after launch.
- Brahmos is one of the **fastest cruise missiles** currently operationally deployed with a speed of **Mach 2.8**, which is 3 times more than the speed of sound.
- The versions of the BrahMos that are being tested have an extended range of around 400 km, as compared to its initial range of 290 km, with more versions of higher ranges currently under development.

Export Attractiveness of BrahMos:

- BrahMos is the only supersonic cruise missile in the world that flies at three times the speed of sound (2.8 Mach).
- It is much sought-after because it can be used for both coastal defence and ground attack.
- While India is working to extend the range of the BrahMos missile, the version that will be exported will come with a "normal range" of 290 km.

India's Look East Policy:

India's Look East policy is an effort to cultivate extensive economic and strategic relations with the nations of Southeast Asia to:

- bolster its standing as a regional power and
- counterweight to the strategic influence of the People's Republic of China.

Initiated in 1991, it marked a strategic shift in India's perspective of the world.

Look East Policy – Phase 1:

- The first phase of the Look East policy launched by the Narasimha Rao Government in the early 1990s focussed on renewing contact with a region that India had drifted away from during the Cold War.
- India's inward-looking orientation disconnected it from the neighbourhood to the East, kept it apart from the economic dynamism of East Asia and key regional groupings such as the Association of SouthEast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- As India launched itself on the course of globalisation in 1991, East and South East Asia began to loom large in its national economic strategy.
- The first years of the Look East policy saw a steady expansion of trade and investment links with the region.
- The pace of integration with the East slowed somewhat after the economic crisis that affected the region in the late 1990s.
- India's search for a new economic relationship with South East Asia was driven by considerations of globalisation in this phase.
- Along with economic liberalisation and moving away from Cold War-era policies and activities, India's strategy has focused on forging close economic and commercial ties, increasing strategic and security cooperation and the emphasis of historic cultural and ideological links
- The first phase of the Look East policy saw India establish institutional linkages with the regional organisations.
- Although New Delhi could not become a member of the larger Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and the ASEM – the Asia Europe consultative mechanism – it joined the ASEAN as a full dialogue partner and a member of its political and security wing, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

Look East Policy – Phase 2:

- The second phase of the policy which began in 2003 extends the coverage of the Look East policy from Australia to East Asia, with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as its core
- It also began strategic and military cooperation with nations concerned by the expansion of China's economic and strategic influence
- This phase was driven by the domestic imperative of developing the Northeast by increasing its connectivity to the outside world.
- The main objective of the Look East policy is economic integration with East and Southeast Asia.
- India realised that its East Asian neighbours achieved rapid economic growth and that it was lagging behind.

India adopted a three-pronged approach in its attempt to forge regional cooperation through the Look East Policy. They are:

- To renew political contacts with the ASEAN member nations;
- To increase economic interaction with Southeast Asia (trade, investments, science and technology and tourism); and
- To forge defence links with several countries of this region as a means to strengthen political understanding

Act East Policy:

- India's 'Act East' policy is a diplomatic initiative to promote economic, strategic and cultural relations with the vast Asia-Pacific region at different levels.
- It was launched in 2014, with this launch India's Look East policy(1991) has morphed into a proactive Act East policy, which envisages accelerated across-the-board engagement between the two growth poles of a vibrant Asia.
- It revolves around four C's- Culture, Commerce, Connectivity and Capacity building

- India's Act East Policy focuses on the extended neighbourhood in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The policy which was originally conceived as an economic initiative, has gained political, strategic and cultural dimensions including establishment of institutional mechanisms for dialogue and cooperation.
- Act East Policy has placed emphasis on India-ASEAN cooperation in our domestic agenda on infrastructure, manufacturing, trade, skills, urban renewal, smart cities, Make in India and other initiatives.

Mould your thought: The sale of the BrahMos would signal India's potential emergence as a net provider of regional security in the Indo-Pacific. Comment.

Approach to the answer:

- Introduction
- Discuss the recent India-Philippines Agreement
- Discuss the importance of the agreement w.r.t. South China Sea Dispute / Look East Policy
- Discuss the attractiveness of BrahMos to East Asian Countries
- Mention the impacts of the Sale
- Conclusion