

# National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) of USA

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In news

Recently, the US House of Representatives overrode President Donald Trump's veto of the annual defence authorization bill for the first time during his tenure.

What is a Veto and what is the difference in its usage in India and the USA?

A veto is the power to unilaterally stop an official action, especially the enactment of legislation

Veto in the USA

- In the USA, the power of the President to refuse to approve a bill or joint resolution and thus prevent its enactment into law is the veto.
- The president has ten days (excluding Sundays) to sign a bill passed by Congress.
- A regular veto occurs when the President returns the legislation to the house in which it originated, usually with a message explaining the rationale for the veto.
- This veto can be overridden only by a two-thirds vote in both the Senate and the House.
- If this occurs, the bill becomes law over the President's objections.

Veto in India

- In India, the president has three veto powers, i.e. absolute, suspension and pocket.
- The president can send the bill back to parliament for

changes, which constitutes a limited veto that can be overridden by a simple majority.

- But the Bill reconsidered by the parliament becomes a law with or without the assents of President after 14 days.
- The president can also take no action indefinitely on a bill, sometimes referred to as a pocket veto.
- The president can refuse to assent, which constitutes an absolute veto

### The National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA) and its significance

- The \$740 billion legislation called the National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA) sets forth the policies for the Department of Defense (DoD)'s programs and activities every year.
- A report in the Financial Times said that the legislation is a "must pass" since it pays the salaries of the American armed forces and that no lawmaker would want to be associated with efforts to block military pay and the funding of weapon

### Reasons President Trump's veto on the legislation

- According to defenders of Trump's veto on the legislation, the proposed legislation fails to terminate Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act (CDA) and that it is a "gift" to China and Russia.
  - Section 230 of the CDA provides immunity to online platforms and protects them from being liable for the content billions of people post on their platforms every day.
  - Further, under this section, providers of "interactive computer services" are free from being treated as the publisher or speaker of any information posted by the users, rendering these platforms "unfettered by Federal or State

regulation”.

- Donald Trump states that **it is important to repeal Section 230 or make changes to it since the current provisions undermine national security** and election integrity by allowing the spread of disinformation.
- He has also objected to the bill and has maintained that **it contradicts his foreign policy** measures such as his efforts to reduce US troops in Afghanistan, Germany and South Korea.
- Trump opposed it because of the proposal that certain military bases that were named after Confederate generals be renamed.
  - The demands to rename these bases came amid the Black Lives Matter protests in the country following the death of African-American George Floyd after a white police officer pressed his knee onto his neck for nearly nine minutes on May 25 this year.
  - His death triggered large-scale protests in the US and some other parts of the world reviving the #BlackLivesMatter movement that was started in 2013.