

# INDIA TO SIGN GEO-SPATIAL COOPERATION DEAL WITH U.S.

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - USA

After the talks on Tuesday, U.S. officials will leave for Sri Lanka, Maldives and Indonesia.

As reported by *The Hindu* last month, in the run up to the 2+2, the U.S. was keen on India signing BECA and discussions continued to iron out the differences. One of the major differences was the issue of reciprocity in exchange of geo-spatial data.

A maritime information agreement is also under discussion between India and the US, an official source stated. India already has such agreement with other Quad countries, Australia and Japan. As reported by *The Hindu* last month, in the run up to the 2+2, the U.S. was keen on India signing BECA and discussions continued to iron out the differences. One of the major differences was the issue of reciprocity in exchange of geo-spatial data.

The Defence Ministry said the two Ministers “also discussed requirements of expanding deployments of liaison officers.”

India has posted a liaison officer at the U.S. Navy Central Command in Bahrain recently and is also considering a U.S. request for posting liaison officers at the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) and the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). The U.S. has already posted a liaison officer at the Indian Navy’s Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR).

A U.S. State department official said in Washington on Saturday that the talks will focus on four themes — regional security cooperation, defence information sharing, military-to-military interactions, and defence trade.

“This agreement will allow for expanded geospatial information sharing between our armed forces. We are also seeking to expand secure communication capabilities between our respective militaries as well as between our foreign and defence ministries,” he stated.

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