

LEMOA ALREADY FULLY OPERATIONAL

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - USA

The India-U.S. foundational agreement for mutual logistics support, the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), has been fully operationalised over the past few months, official sources said.

Earlier this week, India concluded the third foundational agreement, Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA), which is meant for secure encrypted communications.

Exchange of SOPs

“We had to inform them [U.S.] our standard operating procedures (SOPs). They had already done it. Now we can say LEMOA is fully operational,” an official said.

The SOP document was shared with the U.S. two months ago.

India had concluded the LEMOA in August 2016 in a culmination of a decade of negotiations between the two countries.

The pact gives both countries access to designated military facilities on either side for the purpose of refuelling and replenishment in primarily four areas — port calls, joint exercises, training and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

The SOPs include designating the points of contact for the U.S. military to work with, and set up, a common account for payments.

“We had to designate the contact points and convey billing modalities and so on. We have done that now,” the official said.

For each service

So far, the three services had individual accounts from which payments were being made during military exercises.

“The SOPs are applicable to all three services. Each service has a designated LEMOA officer,” another official said.

The biggest beneficiary of the LEMOA is the Indian Navy, which interacts and exercises the most with foreign Navies.

The Navy has a fuel exchange agreement with the U.S. for fuel transfer on the high seas, which is set to expire in November.

Now fuel exchange gets subsumed into the LEMOA and does away with the need for a separate agreement, an officer said.

With COMCASA, India has signed three of the four foundational or enabling agreements with the U.S. meant to improve interoperability between the militaries and allow transfer of high-end military platforms.

Information pact

The first one, the General Security Of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), which is for information safety, was signed in 2002.

COMCASA, which was signed at the 2+2 dialogue on Thursday, is an India-specific version of the Communication and Information on Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA).

The last one remaining is the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA).

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