

# India, US okay defence tech transfer road map

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India and the US on Monday concluded an ambitious road map for defence industrial cooperation to fast-track technology tie-ups and co-production of military platforms such as air combat and land systems, a move that comes in the wake of China's increasingly aggressive behaviour in the Indo-Pacific region.

The new framework for cooperation was finalised during talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his visiting American counterpart Lloyd Austin, two weeks



**Defence Minister Rajnath Singh (right) with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin in New Delhi on Monday**

PHOTO: PTI

ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington.

Singh and Austin also decided to initiate negotiations on a framework for the

security of supply arrangement and a reciprocal defence procurement agreement, which will promote long-term supply chain stability.

The US defence secretary said the US-India cooperation matters "because we all face a rapidly changing world. We see bullying and coercion from the People's Republic of China and Russian aggression against Ukraine that seeks to redraw borders and threatens national sovereignty."

The Pentagon said the initiative aims to change the "paradigm" for cooperation between the US and Indian defence sectors, including the

implementation of a set of specific proposals that could provide India access to cutting-edge technologies and support its defence modernisation plans.

It is learnt that Singh and Austin also touched upon General Electric's proposal to share technology with India for fighter jet engines and New Delhi's plan to procure 30 MQ-9B armed drones for over USD 3 billion from US defence major General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc.

The jet engine deal is likely to be announced during Prime Minister Modi's visit to the US.