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National Defense Authorisation Act

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The U.S. Senate has passed the National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA) for the fiscal year 2020 that brings **India at par with America's NATO allies** and countries like Israel and South Korea for increasing defence cooperation.

- The amendment provides for increased U.S.-India defence cooperation in the Indian Ocean in the areas of humanitarian assistance, counterterrorism, counter-piracy and maritime security.
- The bill would be signed into law after both the chambers of the U.S. Congress, i.e. the House of Representatives and the Senate passes it.
- The “upgrade” will also smoothen the passage of sales to India of high-end US military hardware to India.
- The US has already given India **Strategic Trade Authorization-1(STA Tier-1) status**, a move that facilitates the exchange of high technology and strengthens defence collaboration, and also designates India as a “Major Defence Partner”, in 2016.
- While the major non-Nato ally status or its equivalent, does not automatically enjoys a mutual defence pact with the United States (as it does with Nato allies), it still confers a variety of military and financial advantages that otherwise are not obtainable by non-NATO countries.