

U. S. Affairs

U.S.-India Hold Strategic Talks At 2+2 Intercessional Dialogue

By A STAFF WRITER

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Affairs Dr. Ely Ratner co-chaired the fifth U.S. – India 2+2 Intercessional Dialogue, Sept. 1, 2021, along with Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Ervin Massinga. The co-chairs on the Indian side were Joint Secretary Somnath Ghosh of the Indian Ministry of Defense, and Joint Secretary Vani Rao of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs.

The Dialogue spanned the U.S.-India comprehensive global strategic partnership, including climate, public health, defense, trade, technology and governance, a Sept. 2, 2021, press release from DOD said.

Assistant Secretary Ratner expressed his confidence that the United States and India will continue to take their partnership to new heights as they jointly meet the challenges of this century, the press release said.

During the high-level meeting,



F/A-18 Hornet fighter jets and E-2D Hawkeye plane are seen on the U.S. aircraft carrier John C. Stennis during joint military exercise called Malabar, with the United States, Japan and India participating, off Japan's southernmost island of Okinawa, Japan June 15, 2016.

officials exchanged views on a range of regional issues of shared interest, including in South Asia, East and Southeast Asia, and the Western Indian Ocean. They identified opportunities

for enhanced cooperation on maritime security, regional connectivity, counterterrorism and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, DOD said. In the backdrop of several defense

cooperation agreements in place, officials committed to driving greater interoperability between the U.S. and Indian militaries.

They also discussed bilateral and multilateral joint service engagements, as well as ways to advance cooperation in new domains, such as space, cyber, and emerging technology areas.

Discussions also covered operationalizing existing key bilateral initiatives on information-sharing, logistics, defense industrial cooperation, and joint doctrine engagement through liaison exchanges.

Building on growing bilateral ties, U.S. and Indian officials discussed new opportunities to strengthen multilateral cooperation between the United States, India, and other like-minded partners, DOD said.

"Today's Intercessional laid the groundwork for a fruitful 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in the coming months, as the United States and India work together to sustain a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific region," the press release said.

REUTERS/Nobuhito Kubo/File Photo

U.S. Secretary Of State Blinken Meets India's Foreign Secretary Shringla

By A STAFF WRITER

As the U.S. involvement in Afghanistan winds down, U.S. and Indian officials are meeting on a regular basis at various levels to discuss the repercussions, and advance their strategic partnership.

India's Foreign Secretary Harsh V. Shringla met U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken Sept. 2, 2021, as well as Deputy Secretary Wendy Sherman.

"Excellent interaction this morning with secretary of State @SecBlinken & @DeputySecState Wendy Serman!" tweeted India's Ambassador to the U.S. Taranjit Singh Sandhu.

According to tweets from India's Ministry of External Affairs, discussions touched on bilateral ties and the situation in Afghanistan.

They also reviewed developments in the Indo-Pacific region, Covid-19 pandemic, and discussed cooperation in the United Nations and other regional and multilateral issues of mutual

interest, the MEA tweeted.

Foreign Secretary Shringla's discussion with Deputy Secretary Sherman were "substantive" and dealt with advancing the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership across sectors from healthcare to defense, climate change and people-to-people ties, the MEA said.



From left, Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, Secretary of State Tony Blinken, India's Foreign Secretary Harsh V. Shringla, India's Ambassador to the U.S. Taranjit Singh Sandhu met Sept. 2, 2021.



India's Foreign Secretary Harsh V. Shringla met U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman Sept. 2, 2021.

Photos: Twitter@MEAIndia

Community

Two Men Charged With Alleged Murder Of Indian-American Convenience Store Owner

By A STAFF WRITER

Afederal grand jury charged two men from Cincinnati, Ohio, with a string of armed robberies and the February 2021 murder of Roop C. Gupta, the owner of Madeira Beverage.

Willie James Attaway, 30, of Cincinnati, and Lamond Johnson, 35, most recently of Cincinnati, are charged by a 14-count indictment.

An indictment is merely an allegation, and defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law.

According to the charging document, Attaway and Johnson allegedly conspired to commit five armed robberies on Feb. 8 and 9, 2021.

Vipal J. Patel, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, and Roland Herndon, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF), announced the charges.

According to a Sept. 2, 2021, press release from the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, specifically, the defendants allegedly brandished a

firearm to commit robberies on the following occasions:

February 8 – Shell on Montgomery Road in Deerfield Township,
February 8 – Shell on Dixie Highway in Hamilton, Ohio,
February 9 – Madeira Beverage on Kenwood Road in Madeira, Ohio,
February 9 – Sunoco on Kenwood Road in Blue Ash, Ohio, and
February 9 – Marathon on North Broadway in Lebanon, Ohio.

Attaway and Johnson are both charged with the Feb. 9, 2021 murder of Gupta, the owner of Madeira Beverage. Using a firearm to commit murder during a crime of violence is potentially punishable by the death penalty, the press release noted.

Related local charges pending against Johnson will be superseded by the federal indictment returned yesterday, and the case will proceed federally, the press release added.

Attaway and Johnson appeared in federal court Sept. 2, at 1:30pm and the indictment was unsealed at that time.