

Concerns in Bilateral Relations:

- **Trade implications for India-** India and Australia are “too far apart” to conclude the bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in the near term.
- **Perception of Indo pacific-** There is no coherent Indo pacific strategy as countries do not have one definitive vision for the region. It is largely seen as global construct to arrest China’s rise.
- **Australia’s Foreign Policy Issues:** While Australia is dependent on USA for defence and security, its economy is largely dependent on China. In such a scenario, Australia cannot left China as India cannot address Australia’s all requirements.
- **Challenges for India’s economy:** Australia’s investment in India is not improving due to compromises, an interfering bureaucracy, corruption etc.
- **India opted out from Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).** Among other things, **India and Australia could not agree** regarding market access over agriculture and dairy products.

Way Forward

- In coming years, the overall relationship between India and Australia **will continue to grow and has the potential to assume greater prominence.**
- The prospects for bilateral relationship are **recognised in both countries as strategically useful, economically productive and aligned with each other’s new agenda.**
- The several commonalities and closely aligned values in principles of **democracy, liberty, the rule of law, human rights, freedom of speech, free press and multiculturalism** serve as a foundation for a closer co-operation, multifaceted interaction and enhancement of bilateral relationship.

Virtual Bilateral Summit 2020:


First ever virtual bilateral summit was held between India and Australia.

Outcome:

Elevated the bilateral Strategic Partnership to **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.**

Elevated the “2+2” engagement to the level of Foreign and Defence Ministers (from secretary level), where **strategic discussions** will be taking place **every two years.** India already has such mechanism with USA and Japan. **Mutual Logistics Support Agreement** was signed.

Joint declaration on shared vision for **Maritime Cooperation** in the **Indo- Pacific region.**


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