(India and the U.S. must urgently take steps to arrest the drift in bilateral ties)

There are enough signs that relations between India and the United States have suffered, with officials in both capitals now freely conceding\(^1\) that their interests are diverging\(^2\).

From the U.S. side, policy decisions by President Donald Trump to walk out\(^3\) of the multilateral\(^4\) nuclear deal with Iran, and the U.S. Congress’s CAATSA law sanctioning Iran and Russia have set up an inevitable\(^5\) conflict.
Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), which was signed into law in August 2017 and went into effect in January this year, mandates the Trump administration to punish entities engaging in significant transaction with the defence or intelligence sectors of Russia.

It aims to counter anti-US aggression displayed by countries like Iran, North Korea and Russia through a series of punitive measures.
Mr. Trump’s insistence on tough sanctions against all those continuing to engage with Iran and Russia limits India’s options on energy security and defence procurement.

During her visit last week, Nikki Haley, the U.S. envoy to the UN, told India to “revise” its relationship with Iran.

Added to this confrontation is the U.S.’s tough policy on trade tariffs, applied to ally and adversary alike, including India.

For its part, the Narendra Modi government has taken a policy turn away from four years of a pro-U.S. tilt.
TURN OUT-PROVE TO BE THE CASE.
TURN DOWN-REFUSAL
TURN ABOUT-MOVE IN AN OPPOSITE DIRECTION.
TURN OFF-leave one road in order to join another.
TURN OVER-(of an engine) start or continue to run properly.
Since January, he has personally reached out to the Chinese and Russian Presidents in informal summits, and invited the Iranian President to Delhi.

At variance with the U.S. position on limiting engagement with these very countries, India promised to raise oil imports from Iran this year, committed to far greater engagement on the Chabahar port project and oilfields in Iran, while negotiating a $5.5 billion deal with Russia for the S-400 Triumf missile systems.

(The S-400 Triumf long-range air defence missile system has the capability to destroy incoming hostile aircraft, missiles and even drones at ranges of up to 400 km. The S-400 missile system can fire three types of missiles and simultaneously engage 36 targets, thereby creating a layered defence.)
Chabahar port project

Chabahar Port -- located in the southeastern province of Sistan-Balochistan in Iran -- aims to connect with Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. It can be easily accessed from India's western coast, bypassing Pakistan. The Chabahar port will be the gateway to a Transit and Transport Corridor between India, Iran and Afghanistan and allow for multi-modal transport of goods and passengers.
Geo-strategic push

The consignment of wheat is the first of six shipments to be sent to Afghanistan over the next few months via Iran.

- The Iranian port of Chabahar will be New Delhi’s primary gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- Chabahar will help ramp up trade between India, Afghanistan and Iran in the wake of Pakistan denying transit facilities.
In contrast to his meetings with the Russian and Chinese leaderships, Mr. Modi has had little contact with Mr. Trump since their meeting in Manila last November, which by all accounts did not go well.

Now, the postponement of the Indian Foreign and Defence Ministers’ “2+2” dialogue with their U.S. counterparts has denied the governments a chance to gather together the fraying bilateral threads.

While the U.S. has traditionally applied pressure on its allies to limit their engagement with countries it considers to be threats to the international order, the manner in which deadlines have been publicly issued by the State Department twice this week will only make its demands more difficult for India to even consider.
India must now decide how best to deal with the ultimatums, with U.S. sanctions kicking in by November. The clock is ticking on the relationship.
Q. Who is the U.S. envoy to the UN?

1. Mike Pompeo
2. John Bolton
3. Gina Haspel
4. Nikki Haley
Q. Explain the differences in the post of Lieutenant Governor and Governor.