

India and ICAN

What is the issue?

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- ICAN was awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts on nuclear prohibition.
- India denounced from voting in favour of a resolution brought in by ICAN, in this regard.
- This gains significance in the larger context of India's place in nuclear non-proliferation.

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What is ICAN?

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- The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons was launched in 2007.
- It is a global civil society coalition which constitutes 468 partner organizations from around 100 countries.
- The campaign helped bring about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.
- It works primarily to promote adherence to and full implementation of this treaty.
- It called upon nuclear-armed states to initiate negotiations to gradual elimination of the world's 15,000 nuclear weapons.
- Its uniqueness is that it pays attention to the humanitarian threat posed by nuclear weapons.

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What was its resolution?

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- Earlier this year, ICAN came up with an international treaty that was negotiated and concluded at the United Nations.
- The treaty will come into effect only when 50 nations have ratified it; so far, only a handful have done so.
- When it comes into force, it will be binding only on those who have ratified it.
- Notably, none of the nine nuclear powers, including India and Pakistan, associated themselves with the treaty or the related negotiations at the UN.
- Many of them view the possession of nuclear weapons as deterrents to war.
- Officially, India, holds up its commitment to a nuclear weapons-free world.
- However, it stresses that there must be a “universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament”.
- It stayed away from the treaty citing the Conference of Disarmament as the right forum to negotiate a “step-by-step process” to achieve a nuclear weapons-free world.

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What does India's stance imply?

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- If India had joined the other member states in voting for the resolution, it would have signalled itself as a major force for peace.
- By not doing so, India has alienated itself from a majority of the international community sizeably from the non-aligned nations.
- India has denied the opportunity of being the only Nuclear Weapon Power to continue with the record of championing for peace cause.
- This has rendered meaningless India's adherence over the past to various

nuclear disarmament efforts.

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- Moreover, seeking a resolution through Conference on Disarmament (CD) also seems almost unachievable.

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Quick Fact

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Conference on Disarmament (CD)

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- CD is a forum established in 1979 by the international community to negotiate multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements.
- It is a forum used by its member states (around 65), to negotiate the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention.
- While the conference is not formally a UN organization, it is linked to it through a personal representative of the United Nations Secretary-General.
- Resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly often request the conference to consider specific disarmament matters and in turn, the conference annually reports its activities to the Assembly.
- The CD works by consensus, and nuclear powers, including India and Pakistan, assemble there mainly to block each other.

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Source: Indian Express

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