

Need for Defence Reforms

What is the issue?

\n\n

The state of India's national security and defence is getting worse than before and are in a dire need of reform.

\n\n

What are the recent measures?

\n\n

\n

- The government set up a Defence Planning Committee (DPC) to assist in the creation of national security strategy, international defence engagement strategy and a roadmap to build -

\n

\n\n

\n

1. Defence manufacturing ecosystem
2. Strategy to boost defence exports
3. Priority capability development plans.

\n

\n\n

\n

- It has also decided to revive the Strategic Policy Group (SPG) within the overall National Security Council (NSC) system.

\n

- It has recently appointed the National Security Adviser (NSA) as the chairman of the Strategic Policy Group (SPG) of the National Security Council (NSC).

\n

\n\n

What are the concerns?

\n\n

\n

- **Centralisation** - There are concerns that appointing NSA to SPG would lead to further centralisation of decision making.

\n

- The post of the NSA is also not a legally-mandated one and he has no parliamentary accountability.

\n

- **LOC** - Overall violence in Jammu and Kashmir and ceasefire violations on the Line of Control reached a 14-year high in 2017, and did not subside in 2018.

\n

- There are far more attacks on security forces and security installations in J&K, and militant recruitments and violence against civilians in the State are rising at an alarming rate.

\n

- **Neighbourhood policy** - Though the government claims that the surgical strikes of 2016 gave a befitting response to Pakistan, it hardly made any significant gains in reality.

\n

- A report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs recently revealed that the Chinese forces are back in the Doklam plateau with more force.

\n

- The report goes on to fault the government for continuing with its conventionally deferential foreign policy towards China.

\n

- India's neighbourhood policy holds a clear absence of vision on how to balance, engage and work with the many great powers in the regional and the broader international scene.

\n

- **Defence preparedness** - India spends close to \$50 billion annually on defence and yet might still be ill-equipped to fight the wars of the modern age, especially in the neighbourhood.

\n

- India also suffers from almost non-functional higher defence organisation and the defence policy doesn't hold any political oversight or vision.

\n

- **Defence management** - There is little conversation between the armed forces and the political class, and even lesser conversation among the various arms of the forces.

\n

- Our doctrines, command structures, force deployments and defence acquisition continue as though each arm is going to fight a future war on its

own.

\n

- **Institutional lacuna** - In India, talk of appointing a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) has died down and the key post of military adviser in the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) remains vacant.

\n

- The NSC almost never meets and the National Security Advisory Board, initially set up to seek 'outside expertise' on strategic matters, has become a space for retired officials.

\n

- **Modernisation** - The state of modernisation and domestic defence industry in the country are in a sorry state.

\n

- Under the present system, where the ratio of revenue to capital expenditure in defence is roughly 65:35%, any serious attempt at modernisation would be impossible.

\n

\n\n

What should be done?

\n\n

\n

- The country should have an overall national security document from which the various agencies and the arms of the armed forces draw their mandate.

\n

- It should also enable them to create their own respective and joint doctrines which would then translate into operational doctrines for tactical engagement.

\n

- In the absence of this, national strategy is broadly a function of ad hocism and personal preferences.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n\n

Quick Facts

\n\n

National Security Council

\n\n

- \n
- The NSC is an executive government agency tasked with advising the Prime Minister's Office on matters of national security and strategic interest.
\n
- It is the apex body of the three-tiered structure of the national security management system in India.
\n
- The other two tiers are the Strategic Policy Group (SPG) and the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB).
\n
- The SPG is the first level of the three tier structure and forms the nucleus of the decision-making apparatus of the NSC.
\n
- The NSAB consists of a group of eminent national security experts outside of the government.
\n
- It provides a long-term prognosis and analysis to the NSC, and recommends solutions and address policy issues referred to it.
\n

\n

