



Recent Reforms in Defence Sector

Why in News

Recently, the Defence Minister released an E-booklet titled '**20 Reforms in 2020**' highlighting the **major reforms undertaken by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in 2020**.

Key Points

▪ Chief of Defence Staff & Department of Military Affairs:

- The **appointment of India's first [Chief of Defence Staff \(CDS\)](#)** and creation of the **[Department of Military Affairs](#)** (DMA) were among the major decisions taken by the Government.
 - **General Bipin Rawat** was appointed as the **first CDS** who also fulfilled the responsibilities of Secretary, DMA.
- The post of CDS was created to **increase efficiency & coordination among the Armed Forces and reduce duplication**, while DMA was established to ensure improved civil-military integration.

▪ Self-Reliance in Defence:

- To promote '[Make in India](#)' in the defence sector, a list of **101 defence items for which there would be an embargo on the import was notified in August 2020**, while [Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020](#) was unveiled in September 2020.
- There was a **10% budget increase in 2020-21** over the previous year.

▪ Increased Defence Exports:

- The increased partnership with the private sector has led to a substantial rise in defence exports.
- The value of total defence **exports rose from Rs 1,941 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 9,116 crore in 2019-20**. Also, **for the first time, India figured in the list of [defence equipment exporting nations](#)**, as the exports expanded to more than 84 countries.

▪ Defence Acquisitions:

- First five [Rafale fighter aircraft](#) arrived in India in July 2020 and several more since then, adding firepower to the arsenal of the Indian Air Force.

▪ Reforming Defence R&D:

- To promote innovation by young minds, five Young Scientists Laboratories of [Defence Research and Development Organisation \(DRDO\)](#) were launched in 2020.
- DRDO has joined hands with the private sector in design & development and identified 108 Systems & Subsystems for the industry to design, develop and manufacture.

▪ Digital Transformation:

- [Directorate General Quality Assurance \(DGQA\)](#) started online Pre-Delivery inspection in May 2020 to address security threats.
- The [Armed Forces Tribunal](#) began digital hearing for the first time in August 2020.

▪ **Strengthening Border Infrastructure:**

- Reforms of processes and workflows within [Border Roads Organisation \(BRO\)](#) enabled it to achieve targets ahead of schedule, in some instances.
- World's longest [Atal tunnel](#) above 10,000 feet, at Rohtang on the Leh-Manali Highway was inaugurated.

▪ **Participation of Women in Armed Forces:**

- Ten streams of Indian Army were opened for giving [Permanent Commission to Short Service Commission \(SSC\) Women officers](#).
- All **Sainik Schools** were thrown open for girl students from academic session 2020-21.

▪ **Reforms in National Cadet Corps :**

- Expanding the reach of the [National Cadet Corps \(NCC\)](#) to remote locations was a major announcement.
- It was decided to give preference to NCC cadets in employment in [Central Armed Police Forces](#) from May 2020.

▪ **Aid to Civil Administration during Covid-19:**

- The Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces have mobilised resources to aid the civil administration in the fight against [Covid-19](#).
- **DRDO** has set up several hospitals to treat Covid patients across the states, passed on technology expertise to the private sector for mass production of covid related medicines and equipment.

▪ **Help beyond Boundaries:**

- The Armed Forces extended a helping hand to the countries in distress. Indian Navy mounted eight relief missions during 2020-21.
- Besides **evacuating stranded Indians from Iran, Sri Lanka and Maldives** under [Vande Bharat Mission](#), Indian Naval ships provided **Covid-19 medical relief** to five countries.
- [INS Airavat](#) provided 270 MT food aid to Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea struck by natural calamities.
- The [Indian Coast Guard](#) led the rescue operation to save the Sri Lanka coast from its biggest oil spill.

[Source:PIB](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/recent-reforms-in-defence-sector>