



'Fewer but Newer' Nuclear Arms: SIPRI

The **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** has reported that the world is witnessing less nuclear arms but with modernising and increasing size.

- **At the start of 2019**, the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea had a total of some **13,865 nuclear weapons** with a **decrease of 600** from previous year.
- The drop in recent years can mainly be attributed to the **US and Russia**, whose combined arsenals still make up more than **90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons**.
 - It is partly a result of the **New START treaty** – that was signed between the United States and the Russian Federation in 2010 which puts a cap on the number of deployed warheads as well as getting rid of obsolete warheads from the Cold War era.
 - There is a concern on the future of treaty as it will expire in 2021 and there is no serious discussion on its extension.
- **The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)** has also played a vital role in controlling proliferation of nuclear arms.
 - Because of the NPT, the number of nuclear arms has been drastically reduced since a peak **in the mid-1980s when there were some 70,000 nuclear warheads** in the world.
- This decrease in number of nuclear arms is observed with **modernisation of nuclear arms coupled with increasing size of arms** especially by China, India, and Pakistan.
- The report has shown worry over the **build-up of nuclear arms** on both sides of the border **between India and Pakistan**, and the danger of a conventional conflict escalating to a nuclear one.
- Global disarmament efforts also suffered a blow when the United States announced in February, 2019 that it would withdraw from the **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty**, prompting Russia to say it would also suspend its participation.
 - **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty** was signed by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1987 to eliminate and permanently forgo all of their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of **500 to 5,500 kilometers**.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

- The SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- Established in 1966 at Stockholm, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

- The NPT is a landmark international treaty whose objective is:
 - to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology,
 - to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy,
 - and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament.

- The Treaty represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.
- Opened for signature in 1968, the Treaty entered into force in 1970.
- A total of 191 States have joined the Treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon States.

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