



Decline in India's Arms Imports: SIPRI

Why in News

According to a recent report by [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute \(SIPRI\)](#) India's arms imports came down by a third (about 33%) between 2011-2015 and 2016-2020.

Key Point

▪ India Specific Findings:

◦ Second Highest Importer:

- India remains the **second highest importer, only behind Saudi Arabia.**

◦ Arms Suppliers to India:

- **Russia is the largest arms supplier** to India in both periods (2011-2015 and 2016-2020). However, **Russia's** share of Indian arms imports fell from 70% to 49%.
- **France and Israel** were the **second and third largest** arms suppliers in 2016-20. India's arms imports from **France increased by 709%** while those from Israel rose by 82%.
- The **USA** became the **fourth largest supplier** for the period 2016-20. It **was the second largest arms supplier to India in 2011-15.**

◦ Indian Export:

- India accounted for **0.2% of the share of global arms exports** during 2016-20, making the country the world's 24th largest exporter of major arms.
- This represents an **increase of more than 200%** over **India's export share (0.1%)** during the previous five-year period of 2011-15.
- **Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Mauritius were the top recipients** of Indian military hardware.

◦ Future Trends:

- Owing to increasing threats from Pakistan-China, and a significant delay in domestic defence manufacturing, India's **arms imports are expected to increase** over the coming few years.

▪ Reasons for the Fall in Imports:

- **India's Push for Self-Reliance:** The report said that the fall is not attributed to the government's push to make **India self-reliant in defence manufacturing.**
 - Also, over **60% of the capital expenditure** for the armed forces has been allocated for **domestically produced weapons and platforms.**
 - Earlier, the government had announced a [negative imports list of 101 defence equipment](#) and platforms will provide an opportunity to manufacture the items in the negative list.
- **Complex Procurement Process:** The drop in Indian arms imports have been mainly due to its **complex procurement processes**, combined with an attempt to **reduce its**

dependence on Russian arms.

▪ International Transfers:

- The **top five global arms exporters** were the US, Russia, France, Germany and China in 2016-2020.
- International transfers of major arms **stayed at the same level between 2011-15 and 2016-20**
 - There were **substantial increases** in transfers by **the USA, France and Germany** and it was largely offset by **declining Russian and Chinese** arms exports.
 - The **bulk of Russian export fall** was due to India reducing its imports.
 - Even if Russia substantially increased its **arms transfers to China, Algeria and Egypt** between 2011-15 and 2016-20, this did not offset the large drop in its arms exports to India.
- **Middle eastern arms imports grew** during this period and was majorly driven by Saudi Arabia.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

- It is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- It was established in **1966 at Stockholm (Sweden)**.
- It **provides data, analysis and recommendations**, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

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