



Recommendations of Vijay Raghavan Panel

For Prelims: [Defence Research and Development Organisation](#), [Parliamentary Standing Committee](#), [CAG Reports](#), [India's investment in R&D](#), [Drone development](#), [Light Combat Aircraft Tejas](#).

For Mains: Major Issues Related to DRDO, Major Recommendations of Vijay Raghavan Committee.

Source: IE

Why in News?

The **nine-member Vijay Raghavan panel**, established by the government, has recently submitted a comprehensive report addressing concerns about the **functioning of the [Defence Research and Development Organisation \(DRDO\)](#)**.

What are the Major Recommendations of the Vijay Raghavan Committee?

▪ Background:

- A recent [Parliamentary Standing Committee \(PSC\) on Defence's Report](#) expressed concerns about **23 out of 55 mission mode projects** of DRDO facing significant delays.
- [CAG Report](#) (December 2022) indicated that **67% (119 out of 178) of the projects examined failed to adhere to proposed timelines**.
 - Multiple extensions were cited, primarily due to design alterations, user trial delays, and supply order issues.

▪ Major Recommendations of Vijay Raghavan Committee:

- **Refocusing on [Research and Development \(R&D\)](#):** Suggested that DRDO should **return to its original goal of focusing on research and development** for defense.
 - **Advised against involving itself in productization**, production cycles, and product management, tasks deemed more suitable for the private sector.
- **Narrowing Focus and Expertise:** Emphasized that DRDO should identify specific areas of expertise rather than engaging in diverse technologies.
 - Questioned the **necessity for DRDO's involvement in [drone development](#)**, proposing a **need to recognize expertise both domestically and internationally**.
- **Role of Defence Technology Council (DTC):** Advocated a pivotal role of the **Defence Technology Council**, chaired by the Prime Minister, in identifying suitable players for specific defense technologies.
 - DTC should be instrumental in steering the direction of defense technology development.
- **Creation of a Dedicated Department:** Proposed the establishment of the **Department of Defence Science, Technology, and Innovation** under the Ministry of Defence.
 - Recommended that the proposed department should act as the secretariat for the Defence Technology Council.

Note

DRDO is the R&D wing of the **Ministry of Defence, Govt of India**, with a vision to empower India with **cutting-edge defense technologies and a mission to achieve self-reliance in critical defense technologies**. It was established in **1958** by amalgamating existing establishments from the [Indian Army](#) and **Directorate of Technical Development & Production**.

What are the Major Issues Related to DRDO?

- **Project Timelines and Cost Overruns:** DRDO projects are notorious for exceeding estimated timelines and budgets by significant margins.
 - This leads to delays in crucial defense capabilities and raises concerns about efficiency and resource allocation.
 - Examples include the [Light Combat Aircraft Tejas](#), which took **over 30 years to develop**.
- **Lack of Synergy with Armed Forces:** DRDO's internal decision-making processes hinder innovation and adaptation.
 - Additionally, reported **lack of smooth collaboration with the Armed Forces in terms of defining requirements** and incorporating feedback, results in technologies not fully meeting operational needs.
- **Technology Transfer and Private Sector Integration:** Efficient transfer of developed technologies from DRDO to private industries for mass production still remains a challenge.
 - This **hinders faster deployment and commercialization of indigenous defence technology**, leading to dependence on foreign imports.
- **Transparency and Public Perception:** **Limited public awareness** and transparency regarding DRDO's activities and achievements lead to negative perception and criticism.

Way Forward

- **Stronger Project Management:** DRDO should implement stricter project management methodologies, including **clear milestones, resource allocation, and accountability measures**.
- **Enhanced Collaboration with Armed Forces:** Establish **dedicated channels for communication and feedback exchange**, involving Armed Forces personnel in development stages.
- **Streamlined Technology Transfer:** Develop **clear protocols and incentives for technology transfer to private companies**, fostering closer [public-private-partnerships](#).
- **Foster a culture of Experimentation and Open Innovation:** DRDO should collaborate with universities, startups, and international partners **to leverage diverse expertise and access cutting-edge technologies**.
- **Increase Public Awareness:** DRDO must actively engage with the media, organize public outreach events, and **share success stories to raise awareness about DRDO's contributions to [national security](#)**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Years Questions (PYQs)

Q. What is "Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD)", sometimes seen in the news? (2018)

- (a) An Israeli radar system
- (b) India's indigenous anti-missile programme
- (c) An American anti-missile system
- (d) A defence collaboration between Japan and South Korea

Ans: c

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