



Defence Policies & strategies in India: a Review

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ABSTRACT

The idea of security is considered the most crucial component of every nation's foreign policy since it serves as the initial assurance of a state's international behaviour. As a result, it takes centre stage among foreign policy goals. In this sense, a country's viewpoint on matters vital to its survival and continuity is depicted more comprehensively and accurately by the word "security policy" than by the term "defence policy." Any nation or organization that wishes to safeguard its citizens, resources, and interests against a variety of dangers and threats must have security and defence policies. These policies, which can be general or particular, address a variety of topics, including disaster response, cyber security, intelligence collection, and military readiness. Governments create and carry out security and defence policies, but a variety of other parties are also involved, such as the military, intelligence services, law enforcement, and civil society. India prioritizes self-reliance (Aatmanirbhar Bharat) in its defence plans and activities by boosting domestic manufacturing and enacting reforms in procurement, R&D, and foreign investment. The present article will focus on reviewing Defence strategies and policies in India. For a nation like India, which is about to become a new powerhouse and has numerous national security concerns, it is critical that our security requirements and national interests be clearly stated. The scope of the issues that our security organizations would face if national interests were to be protected or secured would be made clear by a rational evaluation of those interests. Indian defence strategy will change according to the neighbouring boarder countries policies.

Key words: Security, Foreign Policy, Defence policy, Atmanirbhar bharath, National interest.

Introduction

The idea of security is considered the most crucial component of every nation's foreign policy since it serves as the initial assurance of a state's international behaviour. As a result, it takes centre stage among foreign policy goals. In this sense, a country's viewpoint on matters vital to its survival and continuity is depicted more comprehensively and accurately by the word "security policy" than by the term "defence policy." Any nation or organization that wishes to safeguard its citizens, resources, and interests against a variety of dangers and threats must have security and defence policies. These policies, which can be general or particular, address a variety of topics, including disaster response, cyber security, intelligence collection, and military readiness. Governments create and carry out security and defence policies, but a variety of other parties are also involved, such as the military, intelligence services, law enforcement, and civil society. India prioritizes self-reliance (Aatmanirbhar Bharat) in its defence plans and activities by boosting domestic manufacturing and enacting reforms in procurement, R&D, and foreign investment.

National security and Defence policy is very much crucial for any country but India big democratic country and have particular strategies in International scenario.

The reason for this is that it encompasses internal dangers to the nation's security in addition to potential exterior threats. In addition, it looks at the difficulties the nation faces on a medium- and long-term basis in addition to "threats." But there are drawbacks to the growing scope of national security. Although national defence and national security are no longer interchangeable, national defence is still the concept's most important issue, and any too ambitious attempts to expand it risk losing sight of it. Therefore, the parameters of national defence varies.

Being a large nation, India's defence entails defending the air, sea, land, space, and cyberspace. The Indian mainland shares boundaries with China, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. The fact that the military must be equipped and trained to operate in a variety of environments makes the problem more complicated. Deserts can be found on the western boundaries, mountains and high elevations can be found on the northern borders, and rivers and jungles can be found on the eastern borders.

For a nation like India, which is about to become a new powerhouse and has numerous national security concerns, it is critical that our security requirements and national interests be clearly stated. The scope of the issues that our security organizations would face if national interests were to be protected or secured would be made clear by a rational evaluation of those interests.

India's national interests could be defined as follows:

- The preservation of peace and stability in all areas under Indian control; the territorial integrity of the Indian mainland and its island territories; safeguarding of Indian offshore resources.
- Preserving amicable ties with neighbouring nations.
- Protection from oil spills and poaching in one's own EEZ.
- Safeguard India's assets in space.
- Give Indian companies and the Indian military protection from cyber terrorism and cyber poaching.
- Avoid a nuclear war.

Protecting a collection of islands would require any or all of the aforementioned, as well as the necessary manpower, training, and financial resources to carry out the mission. The argument put forth is that protecting each of the country's interests requires a significant amount of resources, which can only be obtained through specific financial allocations. Therefore, a defence budget should be a collection of expenditures made to protect one's own national interests.

Long-term integrated defence plans, or LTIPPs, are a concept, but they don't receive any concrete funding. The definitive plan for the first five years must at the very least receive a solid financial allocation. However, it is insufficient to restrict it to just such an allocation. Two more measures must be included with it: first, a more lenient Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP); second, the provision for capital budget rollover for a minimum of two years, but ideally three.

There is a claim that any further simplicity of the DPP will endanger every aspect of executive functioning because of negative political repercussions, especially in a nation like India and the political environment. Even though there might be some validity to this argument, we must find a solution when considering that the capital acquisitions are primarily made to protect national interests.

It is unlikely that the "Make in India" approach will bear fruit very soon because of several factors. Therefore, a stopgap solution is required to keep the security system operationally ready. Political resistance to the procurement procedures may be somewhat overcome by the need to include all political parties and stakeholders in the development of long-term national goals, regardless of who is in power.

Higher Defence Organisations in India

For our national defence policy to be effective, the higher defence organizations must be involved in decision-making. Below, a couple of the hierarchy's nodes are further magnified.

CCS (Cabinet Committee on Security).

In India, this is the highest authority that enacts laws pertaining to national security, national interests, and national security policy, which is the same as the national defence policy. It is led by the prime minister and consists of four additional cabinet-level ministers: external affairs, defence, home, and finance.

NSC (National Security Council)

NSC Headed by the PM, it is an extra constitutional body, created by the legislative. The Prime Minister appoints the National Security Advisor (NSA), who serves as its functional head. The NSC is in charge of providing the CCS with advice on matters pertaining to national security. To offer opinions on issues pertaining to national security, it maintains an advisory board and a strategic policy group. It has been very active recently and is the primary organization addressing daily security issues, such as the terrorist assaults in Pathankot or the Myanmar raid. The CCS and PMO only listen to the NSA since he is the functional head.

MOD (Ministry of Defence)

In the event of external aggression, this ministry, which is led by Defence, is in charge of handling national security. It is headed by the defence secretary, but each of its four departments is headed by an appointee at the secretary level. Even though the Army, Navy, and Air Force headquarters are merged, they merely have an associated relationship. They have little influence over executive decision-making regarding defence or national security issues.

CDS (Chief of Defence Staff).

The Kargil Review committee's conclusions strongly suggested the establishment of a CDS to integrate the services and serve as a single point of contact for military advice to the government. A CDS might

significantly lessen the difficulties the services have when expressing their want for a comprehensive defence strategy and the ensuing capital to build the right defence infrastructure. At the moment, the DG Acquisition and the Defence Secretary carry out this duty. The military and the bureaucracy would be integrated in a way that no other measure could with a top-down approach to CDS setting. When there is no CDS, the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), who is appointed by the senior most service chief and the Chief of Integrated Staff to COSC, fulfils his duties. All suggestions for acquisitions go through the DAC (Defence procurement Council), which is chaired by the Defence minister and mostly under the jurisdiction of the MOD's procurement wing, and the IDS (Integrated Defence Staff) headquarters, which is overseen by the CISC. The DAC has the last say in all acquisition-related issues.

Service HQs.

The CCS makes decisions, which are then communicated through the MOD to the Service HQs and its three services. They carry out all directives pertaining to security on the ground. They have very little influence over the national security decision-making process in the current constitutional framework. The MOD then relays the decisions made by the CCS to the Service HQs and its three services. On the ground, they follow all security-related instructions. The current constitutional structure gives them very little control over the national security decision-making process.

Atmanirbhar bharat (Self-reliance):

The overarching goal is to reduce import dependence and boost domestic production, making India a major defence exporter.

Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020:

With the "Buy (Indian – Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured)" category given precedence under this policy, local projects are given top priority in the procurement process.

Record defence production:

Domestic defence production has seen a significant rise, reaching a record high in FY 2023-24.

Imports control:

Using a "negative list" of goods, the importation of weapons and systems that India can produce or is developing is gradually prohibited.

Structural reform:

The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) was appointed with the intention of enhancing cooperation and coordination between the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

Nuclear doctrine:

India operates under a "no-first-use" policy for its nuclear weapons.

Defence diplomacy:

This include encouraging defence exports while fostering strategic alliances, taking part in cooperative exercises, and exchanging technologies with foreign nations.

Internal security policy

Counter-terrorism:

India has adopted a firm and decisive approach, with "precision military strikes across borders" and dismantling insurgent networks.

Development initiatives:

In areas affected by Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), the government is focusing on Broader strategy.

Multifaceted approach:

Enhancing military capabilities, addressing domestic security issues, growing the economy, and bolstering international institutions and norms are all part of India's approach.

Protecting critical infrastructure:

There is a focus on safeguarding critical assets like energy facilities, transportation networks, and communication systems.

Addressing modern threats:

The policy must also contend with modern threats like asymmetric and hybrid warfare, cyber attacks, and disinformation campaigns.

Securities and Defence Policies

The activities, assets, and capabilities for protecting the nation or organization against internal or external threats like terrorism, war, or sabotage are outlined in defence policies, which are operational plans. Additionally, they outline the alliances, doctrines, and methods employed to accomplish defence goals and preserve organizational or national security. Defence policies promote and collaborate with allies and partners while also serving to prevent and counter prospective threats.

Security policies are strategic plans that specify the objectives, tenets, and guidelines for defending systems, data, and information from unauthorized access and cyber attacks. Security policies include a wide range of topics, including human security, cyber security, information security, and physical security. They might be general or specific.

Important security and defence policies:

India's Defence Procurement Policy is the first; it seeks to decrease dependency on foreign defence equipment and encourage domestic defence manufacture. Setting goals to increase the proportion of domestic content in defence equipment, the policy promotes private sector involvement in defence production.

Another is India's Cyber Security Policy, which attempts to defend the nation's cyberspace and vital infrastructure against online attacks. This strategy aims to improve the nation's cyber security capabilities, create a safe and resilient cyber environment, and raise awareness of cyber security among enterprises and citizens. Additionally, the strategy seeks to foster international collaboration in the area of cyber security and to provide a legislative and regulatory framework for cyber security.

Another significant policy is India's nuclear doctrine, which is founded on the "no-first-use" principle, which states that India will not employ nuclear weapons unless it is attacked first. The nation's commitment to nuclear disarmament and upholding a minimal credible deterrence are also emphasized by this strategy.

Policies pertaining to security and defence also cover safeguarding vital assets and infrastructure. Financial institutions, transportation networks, energy facilities, and communication systems are a few examples. The continuous operation of the economy and the general welfare of the populace depend on the protection of these resources.

India's defence diplomacy policy is another, with the dual goals of advancing India's strategic objectives and strengthening defence cooperation with other nations. The policy's main objectives are to share knowledge and technology with partner nations, engage in cooperative military drills and training programs, and forge defence ties with friendly nations. The program also seeks to support India's defence exports and defence industries. This stance has led to India signing a number of defence collaborations and agreements with nations like the US, Russia, France, Israel, and Japan.

For people and organizations to be secure and healthy in a complicated and unpredictable world, security and defence policies are crucial. They offer leadership, guidance, and coordination to address a range of dangers and difficulties and to accomplish security and defence objectives. In addition to reflecting the expectations and responsibilities of the international community, they also represent the values, interests, and priorities of the nation or organization that adopts them.

National Security Strategy

The National Security Strategy (NSS) is a detailed document that describes a nation's security goals, risks, and countermeasures. In terms of defence, diplomacy, economic stability, and internal security, it acts as a road map for a country's security strategy.

The national security strategies of many developed countries have been published and described. But even though India is a major actors in the world, it does not have a National Security Strategy (NSS), which is a document that is essential for establishing security goals and plans.

National Security Strategy Overview

National Security Strategy document outlines a country's security goals and the strategies to achieve them. It establishes a country's security objectives, defines its internal and external challenges, and offers guidance on achieving its national goals.

It is updated regularly and defines threats and opportunities while introducing accountability of agencies tasked with carrying out such responsibilities.

A national security strategy directs the military and critical defence and security reforms with strategic implications, providing a comprehensive view of overall national security, threats, and the path forward to address them.

India is one of the few significant countries with no publicly available National Security Strategy.

National Security Strategy in India

India's national security plan represents a diversified approach to confronting new internal and external threats, preserving territorial sovereignty, and strengthening defence. The Kargil Review Committee Report (2000) and the Naresh Chandra Task Force on Security (2012) were two of India's many attempts to create a

National Security Strategy (NSS). Both reports included thorough suggestions but failed to produce an official NSS.

Long-Standing Need: The concept of a National Security Strategy for India has long been debated in military and strategic circles, but despite three previous attempts, it has yet to be implemented.

Enhanced Relevance: India is one of the top five economies and military powers in the world and a leader of the Global South. Most developed countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, have a published National Security Strategy.

Urgency: Increased geopolitical tensions and a volatile global environment have made it more urgent for India to develop a comprehensive strategy, especially since both rival neighbours, Pakistan and China, have national security strategies.

Clarity of Purpose: A National Security Strategy would provide clarity and direction to the government's security decision-making process. It would help to ensure that all agencies involved in national security are working towards common goals and objectives.

Enhanced Deterrence: A National Security Strategy would send a clear message to potential adversaries about India's resolve to defend itself. It would also help build trust and confidence among India's allies and partners.

Countering Emerging Threats: A national security strategy would help counter emerging threats such as cyber security-related attacks and new forms of terrorism.

National Security Strategy Challenges

National Security Strategy (NSS) remains elusive in India despite growing strategic consensus. Political hesitance, ideological divides, stakeholder differences, and resource constraints continue to delay the formulation of a cohesive and actionable strategy.

Political Hesitance: Despite the professional backing of the National Security Advisor, National Security Council, and other agencies and three attempts, the goal of a National Security Strategy has yet to be successful, primarily due to hesitation from the political echelons, who fear constraints on decision-making.

Various Stakeholders: A national security strategy requires reconciling the interests of various stakeholders involved in national security, including the military, intelligence agencies and diplomatic corps.

Difference Between Ideologies: Due to political shifts in central government and the presence of coalition party governments, it is difficult to reach a unanimous consensus on the national security strategy.

Differing Views within the Government: The NSS is a complex document that needs to be prepared quickly because it brings together various ministries and government departments.

Various departments, including the Defence Ministry, the Intelligence Bureau, and the Home Ministry, have opposing viewpoints, so the procedure is taking time.

Limited Resource Allocation: While India's defence budget is growing, it still faces resource constraints. These constraints make it challenging to devote sufficient manpower and expertise to the development and implementation of an NSS.

For example, the allocation for defence expenditure increased by 10-12% over the current financial year's budget estimates (BE), but it is below the armed forces' expectations.

National Security Strategy Significance

Maintaining territorial integrity, protecting national interests, and addressing new threats all depend on a national security strategy. In India, the adoption of a national security strategy may result in improved readiness, modernization, public awareness, and clarity of vision.

Clarity in Vision: A national security strategy would offer a clear roadmap for national security, outlining priorities, threats, and responses. It will provide a comprehensive framework for decision-making.

Diplomatic Significance: It could enhance India's image as a responsible and predictable power on the global stage, leading to stronger diplomatic relations and greater international cooperation on security issues.

Enhanced Preparedness: The national security strategy improves India's preparedness against diverse security challenges, including cyber threats, terrorism, and naxalism, by anticipating and addressing future threats.

Modernisation: It can accelerate the pace of military modernisation and reforms by providing a structured guideline and streamlining the armed forces to meet evolving threats.

Public Awareness: Having a national security strategy increases public awareness about security threats and fosters a sense of brotherhood and collective responsibility among citizens.

National Security Strategy Way Forward

National Security Strategy Way Forward emphasises a holistic approach integrating defence preparedness, technological advancement, intelligence reforms, cyber security, border management, and cooperative federalism to address evolving internal and external security challenges proactively. Involvement of All Stakeholders:

The success of the National Security Strategy (NSS) will depend on its transparency, public consultation, and its ability to strike a balance between military preparedness and other essential aspects of national security.

Implementation of Previous Committees: While formulating the national security strategy, the government shall consider the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee report, the Naresh Chandra Task Force on Security and the Hooda Committee.

Citizen-centric: The national security strategy should be citizen-centric, representing people's values and beliefs while also attempting to raise public awareness and influence the public's view of national security issues.

Hooda Committee Recommendations

The Hooda Committee, established in 2019 under Retd. Lieutenant General D.S. Hooda suggested enhancing India's National Security Strategy framework through global engagement, improved neighbourhood relations, and the resolution of internal conflicts, among others.

Global Engagement: Based on its national interests, India should confidently engage with major powers like the US, Russia, and China.

Neighbourhood Relations: Strengthen ties with neighbouring countries through soft power, improved connectivity, and regional trade.

Internal Conflicts: Address issues in Jammu and Kashmir, the North East, and areas of Left-Wing Extremism through development, integration, and countering radicalisation.

Citizen Protection: Prioritise protecting citizens from global and domestic risks, such as climate change, cyber threats, and internal changes.

Conclusion:

In the twenty-first century, India can better navigate the shifting terrain of international security and safeguard its interests and values by implementing a vigilant and flexible national security strategy. India prioritizes self-reliance. This phenomena is not exclusive to India. In light of this, India's foreign policymakers must consider three major security issues at the international, regional, and domestic levels. (Aatmanirbhar Bharat) in its defence plans and activities by boosting domestic manufacturing and enacting reforms in procurement, R&D, and foreign investment.

India's modern military strategy is based on a strategic change toward self-reliance and multi-alignment. Its main objectives are to modernize its armed forces, boost domestic manufacturing, and protect its interests in a world that is becoming more and more multipolar. The nation's strategy is influenced by emerging technological difficulties in space and cyber warfare, as well as regional concerns from China and Pakistan.

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