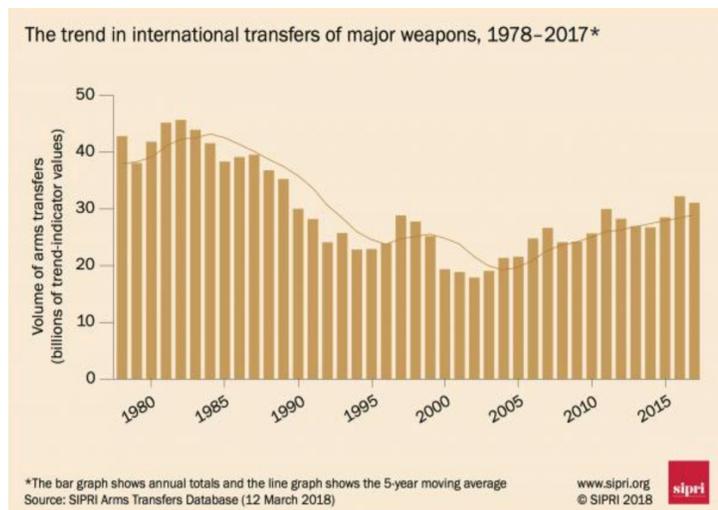


‘Trends in International Arms Transfers-2018’

12th Mar, 2019



What to study?

For Prelims and Mains: Highlights and significance of the report, concerns over increased arms trade and need for their regulation.

Context: The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has released the Trends in International Arms Transfers 2018 Report. The assessment was done for a five-year period (2014-2018).

Highlights of the report:

- **India was the world’s second largest importer** of major arms in 2014-18 and accounted for 9.5% of the global total.
- After eight years of holding the position of the largest importer of weapons, India has been superseded by Saudi Arabia and dropped down to become the second largest importer of weapons in the world. Last year (for the period 2013-17), India accounted for 13% of all imports and was the world’s largest importer.
- **Reasons for gradual lowering of imports by India:** Imports decreased by 24% between 2009-13 and 2014-18 (two five-year blocks), partly due to delays in deliveries of arms produced under licence from foreign suppliers, such as combat aircraft ordered from Russia in 2001 and submarines ordered from France in 2008.
- **The five biggest exporters in five-year block period 2011-2015 were the US, Russia, France, Germany and China.** The US and Russia remain by far the largest exporters, accounting for 36% and 21%, respectively, of the total global trade.
- **China, which is now the fifth largest exporter of weapons,** has been aiding Pakistan and Bangladesh in stepping up their military prowess in the region. The two countries accounted for 53% of Beijing’s exports from 2014-2018. On the other hand, Beijing is also an importer. China is the world’s sixth largest arms importer in 2014-18 and accounted for 4.2% of the global total.
- Pakistan recorded a 39% dip in arms imports in 2014-18 compared to 2009-13, with the US becoming “increasingly reluctant” to provide military aid or sell arms to Pakistan.
- US arms exports to Pakistan fell 81% between 2009-13 and 2014-18. Pakistan has instead turned to other suppliers. For example, in 2018 it ordered four frigates and 30 combat helicopters from Turkey.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute:

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) established in 1966 is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- Based in Stockholm the Institute provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.
- Mains Question: Critically analyse how has India's acute dependence on imported arms and ammunition eroded combat readiness of its armed forces and its stature as net security provider in the region.

To be looked in UPSC Paper 2 Topic:

1. Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.