

# Namaskar PSIR daily current affairs

## Theory + examples 5<sup>th</sup> December 2025

### Topic : The Nuclear Chessboard (ORF article)

Syllabus linkage:

PYQs linkage:

- 1) Discuss the evolution of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the post-cold war period. **15(2016)**
- 2) "The development of advanced missile technology and nuclear threat by North Korea has challenged the American hegemony in South-East Asia". Evaluate the above statement in the context of recent developments in the region. **20(2017)**
- 3) Discuss the implications of the Trump-Kim Singapore Summit on the prospects of denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. **15(2018)**
- 4) Discuss the theory of Nuclear Deterrence. Did Nuclear Deterrence prevent a superpower war? 15 (2015)
- 5) Discuss the utility of Nuclear Deterrence theory in the context of the recent standoff between India and Pakistan. 10(2019)

- 1) Theory application:** Nuclear deterrence, MAD,  
**Nuclear deterrence:** ability to deter one's adversaries from engaging in military provocation or conventional attack.

**Box 25.1** Why do states build nuclear weapons?

- 1 **The security model:** States build nuclear weapons to increase national security against foreign threats, especially nuclear threats.
- 2 **The domestic politics model:** States build nuclear weapons because these weapons advance parochial domestic and bureaucratic interests.
- 3 **The norms model:** States build nuclear weapons because weapons acquisition, or restraint in weapons development, provides an important normative symbol of a state's modernity or identity.
- 4 **The psychology model:** States build nuclear weapons because political leaders hold a conception of their nation's identity that leads them to desire the bomb.
- 5 **The political economy model:** States build nuclear weapons because the nature of their country's political economy—mostly, whether or not it is globally integrated—gives their leaders different incentives for or against having nuclear weapons.
- 6 **The strategic culture model:** States build nuclear weapons because their strategic culture leads them to hold certain ideas about how valuable the acquisition and use of nuclear weapons will be.

- 2) Concepts and keywords:** strategic counterbalance, crossing the nuclear threshold, full spectrum deterrence using strategic and tactical nuclear weapons, mutual destruction, nuclear peace, nuclear age, arms control, denuclearize,

### **3) Important facts:**

- **The USA has observed a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing since 1992.**
- **CTBT has been signed by 187 states and ratified by 178, but has not been entered into force because India, Pakistan and North Korea have not signed the treaty.**
- **China's nuclear arsenal around 600 warheads**
- **The USA and Russia have a total inventory of over 5000 nukes and a deployed inventory of 1700 nukes each.**
- **New START treaty expires in February 2026**

#### 4) Brief analysis and key points from the news or editorial:

**Challenges to the efforts of nuclear non-proliferation :**

**Four** different situations after Trump announcement:

Type of test	Nature	Other remarks
Explosive test	Result in seismic yield	Easily detected by the global network of seismic stations
Super critical test	Self sustaining chain reaction is created (considered nuclear explosion under CTBT)  May not result in seismic yield	The US accused China of conducting "Super critical" Hydro nuclear tests. (Violation of CTBT)
Subcritical test	Conducted routinely to ensure the reliability of nuclear weapons through laser and supercomputers	
Testing of nuclear delivery systems		Russia did recently

## Nuclear proliferation (Arms race) :

- Russia tested Burevestnik missile, and nuclear-weapon-armed Poseidon underwater drone. (Nuclear delivery systems)
- Trump announced to renew testing of nuclear weapons.
- Putin said that if the US resumed testing, Russia, too, would follow suit. (classic example of security dilemma and arms race)
- Since 2020, China has more than doubled its nuclear arsenal to around 600 warheads and is adding roughly 100 warheads each year.
- A Congressional Commission recommended in 2023 that the US expand its nuclear arsenal because of the Chinese buildup. (again security dilemma)
- The 27th constitutional amendment in Pakistan, which has given exclusive control of the Pakistani nuclear arsenal to Field Marshal Asim Munir.
- At Trump's instance, the US is working on the Golden Dome missile defence project that would include space-based sensors and attack satellites. specialists argue that this could actually give a fillip to a new arms race.

## Arms control in crisis:

- Vagueness of talks: (This is what neo liberal fears in absence of institutional mechanism, there is no improvements in state of affairs)
- Trump said that he was “working on a plan to denuclearize” with China, Russia, and the US.(Few details are known)
- Steady demise of treaties signed between the US and Russia

**Status of Arms Control Agreements**

Treaty name	Status 2025	Notes
INF Treaty	Dead	Both the US and Russia withdrew in 2019
CFE Treaty	Dead	Russia withdrew (Nov 2023), North Atlantic Treaty Organization suspended its obligations
Open Skies Treaty	Dead	Both the US and Russia withdrew in 2020-21
ABM Treaty	Dead	The US withdrew in 2002
New START	Suspended (by Russia)	Russia suspended in Feb 2023, not withdrawn. But the treaty expires in February 2026
CTBT	De-ratified (Russia)	Russia did so, citing the US's lack of ratification
Vienna Document	Dead/Not functional	Russia stopped cooperation in March 2023

- **China categorically denied to participate in any denuclearisation efforts.**