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## Niti seeks ₹1.7L crore for military buys by '20

Government think-tank Niti Aayog has sought ₹1,72,000 crore by 2019-20 for India's military to buy weapons and related hardware and equipment.

This is keeping in mind changing global and regional security scenarios as well as the dynamic nature of demands of India's Army, Navy, Air Force and other constituents of the military machine.

A recent Niti Aayog document titled "The Three Year Action Agenda: An Overview" says: "The allocation towards capital expenditure in defence will increase from around ₹95,000 crore in 2015-16 to about ₹1,72,000 crore by 2019-20, thereby increasing its share of total expenditure from 5.3% to 6.2%. This is for greater purchases of equipment for the armed forces, keeping in mind the security considerations for the country."

Capital expenditures are funds set aside for buying weapons, aircraft, warships and other military equipment. India, with the world's third largest armed forces, is already in the middle of a major defence modernisation programme.

The document charts an ambitious, transformational yet achievable action agenda for the government during 2017-18 to 2019-20.

The "agenda" is part of a 15-year "vision" and seven-year "strategy".

With the changeover from the erstwhile Planning Commission to the Niti Aayog, the realm of deliberations has extended beyond the traditional areas to cover aspects of defence and internal security.

It is also felt that increasing allocations by the government on capital expenditures will lead to a "trickle-down" effect and mean more work for the small and medium enterprises which will further help in defence and fleet modernisation, besides boosting the "Make in India" programme.

Interestingly, in June, the Niti Aayog in a meeting chaired by its vice-chairman Dr Arvind Panagariya and attended by India's top economists, underlining the need to rapidly modernise India's military, had considered whether the government is spending on weapons "without strategic purposes" keeping in view the "changed threat perceptions" nowadays. It was one of the first moves to integrate India's defence and internal security plans with the overall 15-year vision document being prepared to replace the five-year plans.

At the moment, the acquisition of weapon systems and equipment for the armed forces flow from the ongoing "Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan" (LTIPP), which spells out

the capability desired. The Niti Aayog is grappling with the issue of trying to weave in the LTIPP into the vision document.

Sensing that the defence ministry is not too keen on the LTIPP, a parliamentary panel recently had sought a cost-benefit analysis of the LTIPP. The report of the standing committee on defence said: "The (defence) ministry feels that there is no necessity for LTIPP. Therefore the committee desire that a cost benefit analysis of LTIPP should be carried out and they be informed of the findings".

The LTIPP was evolved by the headquarters integrated defence staff in consultation with the service headquarters as a 15-year plan to meet the needs of the country's armed forces.

According to the latest report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released on Monday, India is the world's fifth largest spender on military. India's military expenditure grew by 8.5 per cent in 2016 to \$55.9 billion, making it the fifth largest spender. But SIPRI's figures includes expenditure on the paramilitary forces of the Border Security Force, the Central Reserve Police Force, the Assam Rifles, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police and the Sashastra Seema Bal but do not include spending on military nuclear activities.

## Make in India arms too? Jaitley says new defence manufacturing policy soon

By Arup Roychoudhury

*Jaitley, however, did not give additional details on the proposed policy*

The government is in “advanced stages” of formulating a new policy to increase domestic defence manufacturing and reduce dependence on imported high-tech military equipment, Finance and Defence Minister Arun Jaitley said on Friday. “India is the world’s largest arms importer, spending some 1.8 per cent of its GDP (gross domestic product) on defence. It imports about 70 per cent of defence equipment, a proposition which the government wants to change,” Jaitley said at an event organised by the industry body CII. “We are in the advanced stages of formulating a policy where we can ensure that instead of just being buyers, on the strength of technological and other tie-ups, India also becomes a manufacturing economy,” he said. Jaitley, however, did not give additional details on the proposed policy. “The response that we have from domestic and international industry has been quite encouraging,” he added. The government has pledged to spend \$250 billion by 2025 on weapons and military equipment.

He also promised not to spring any surprises in fixing tax rates under the goods and services tax (GST) regime, saying they would not be “significantly different” from the current levels.

He, however, said companies should pass on to consumers the benefit of reduction in taxes under the GST, which will eliminate the current compounding effect of different central and state levies.

On the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB), the minister said the abolition of the 25-year-old agency was in the final lap and this would set the stage for more reforms in the foreign direct investment policy.

He also said some “tough steps” were required so that India increasingly became a tax-compliant society. “I am now in the final stages of doing away with the FIPB because 90 per cent of the investment in India comes under the automatic route. So for the balance 10 per cent, do we need multiple forums to give approval or (do) we need just one forum in one ministry?” Jaitley also sounded a note of caution on protectionism, saying the world should debate whether it would make the global economy more efficient or sluggish. The minister, however, took comfort from the fact that voices of protectionism are not heard in India.

“...You suddenly found a contrarian trend now moving in the developed economies itself. The reasons would be different in each economy and the trend really is can we reverse this whole process. And that’s a little worry which does exist,” Jaitley said, while referring to the growing voices of protectionism, especially in the United States.

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**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

## Beijing to hold live-fire drills, build new weapons to pierce US shield

By Saibal Dasgupta

A US-China confrontation loomed on the horizon as the Chinese defence ministry announced it would hold live-fire drills and test new weapons to counter an anti-missile system deployed next door in South Korea by the United States. What started as a means to protect South Korea and counter North Korea's military aggression has transformed into a serious confrontation between the US and China.

The US says it was deploying the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) radar and anti-missile system to protect South Korea against North Korea's aggressive military actions.

However, China believes that THAAD's powerful radar system will keep a close vigil on military formations in China, and endanger its security. "The upcoming 'combat test' is meant to safeguard China's security and regional stability," Yang Yujun, spokesman for the Chinese defence ministry, told reporters on Friday. The test will involve the People's Liberation Army's Air Force and the Rocket Force, which will simulate two different war-like scenarios as part of an exercise to enhance the military's preparedness to counter the US built anti-missiles system.

Chinese forces will work on ways to move stealthily without being detected by the THAAD radar. They will also practice and fine-tune the methodology to launch a pre-emptive strike to remove the threat of THAAD in a war scenario, Song Zhongping, a military expert who used to serve in the PLA Rocket Force, was quoted by Beijing-based Global Times as saying. Chinese officials have said Russia might join China to build a system to counter US-built THAAD.

This came even as US President Donald Trump said he wants South Korea to pay for the \$1billion THAAD missile defence system.

### **'Seoul won't be paying for THAAD'**

US President Donald Trump's suggestion that Seoul pay for the THAAD missile defence system would be an "impossible option", a top foreign policy adviser to South Korean presidential frontrunner Moon Jae-in said on Friday. "Even if we purchase THAAD, its main operation would be in the hands of the US," said Kim Ki-jung, a foreign policy adviser to Moon. Reuters



*Sat, 29 Apr, 2017*

## **US threat to N Korea meets with China, Russia caution**

### ***At UN, Tillerson Seeks Isolation Of Pyongyang***

US secretary of state Rex Tillerson warned on Friday that failure to curb North Korea's nuclear and missile abilities could lead to "catastrophic consequences", while China and Russia cautioned Washington against threatening military force to solve the problem.

While Washington has pressed Beijing to rein in its ally Pyongyang, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi told the UN Security Council that "the key to solving the nuclear issue on the peninsula does not lie in the hands of the Chinese side".

Tillerson urged the 15member body to act before North Korea does and called on states to sever diplomatic and financial ties with Pyongyang. He said that because China accounted for 90% of North Korean trade, its role was particularly important.

"Failing to act now on the most pressing security issue in the world may bring catastrophic consequences," Tillerson said in his first remarks to the council as secretary of state. "The threat of a nuclear attack on Seoul, or Tokyo, is real, and it's only a matter of time before North Korea develops the capability to strike the US mainland," Tillerson said. He, however, said that Washington was ready for direct talks with Pyongyang.

While Tillerson repeated the Trump administration's position that all options are on the table if Pyongyang persists with its nuclear and missile development, Wang said military threats would not help. "The use of force does not solve differences and will only lead to bigger disasters," Wang told the council.

Russian deputy foreign minister Gennady Gatilov said the use of force would be "completely unacceptable". "The combative rhetoric coupled with reckless muscleflexing has led to a situation where the whole world seriously is now wondering whether there's going to be a war or not," he told the council. "One ill thought out or misinterpreted step could lead to the most frightening and lamentable consequences.

# 'China warns N Korea of sanctions over nuke test'

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
WASHINGTON, 28 APRIL

China has warned North Korea of sanctions if the reclusive nation went ahead with another nuclear test, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has said.

"They (Chinese) confirmed to us that they had requested that the regime conduct no further nuclear test. In fact, we were told by the Chinese that they informed the (North Korean) regime that if they did conduct further nuclear tests, China would be taking sanctions action on their own," Tillerson told Fox News in an interview aired last night.

The US Secretary of State appeared to be praising China

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We're asking a lot of the Chinese. I think in the past, the assumption has been the Chinese would only take limited action. We're going to test that assumption

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of its role in North Korea.

"We're asking a lot of the Chinese. I think in the past, the assumption has been the Chinese would only take limited action. We're going to test that assumption," he said in response to a question.

Tillerson, however, said he does not seek a regime change in North Korea.

"We do not seek regime

change in North Korea. We're not seeking a collapse of the regime," said the top American diplomat.

Meanwhile, a top American admiral told lawmakers that the goal of the North Korea's leader is to have nuclear weapons.

"There is no doubt in my mind," Admiral Harry Harris, Commander of the US Pacific Command, said when Senator John McCain Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee said it is clear that his goal is a nuclear weapon and the means to deliver it to the US. Harris said China has the capability to influence in effect North Korean behavior for a number of reasons.