Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

Why in news?

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United Nations has been annually observing the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26th September.

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What is the significance of Nuclear weapons elimination day?

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- The decision to observe International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons was taken in 2013, by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).
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- It called for the “urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer and use or threat of use, and to provide for their destruction”.
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- This day is observed to make people aware across the globe about the threats posed by nuclear weapons and nuclear proliferation.
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How the idea of nuclear weapons changed in recent times?

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- Since the US dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War, the international order has fundamentally changed.
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- The potency of this weapon encouraged great powers like the erstwhile

USSR to join the nuclear arms race, thereby increasing their nuclear stockpiles manifold.
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- Historically, it has been observed that when a nation state possesses nuclear weapons, it is less likely to go to a full scale war with another state.
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- The reason being that these weapons have the capability to annihilate entire populations and the radioactive residue left behind leads to hazardous health consequences on future generations as well.
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- As a result, no nation state takes the risk of going to a war with a nuclear weapon state.
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- The power of a nuclear weapon state actually lies in not using the weapon, but in having it because once a state uses such weapons, it can risk the wrath of the entire international community.
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- Thus now nuclear weapons aren’t weapons for offence, but for deterrence.
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What is the way forward?

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- The biggest threat today about nuclear weapons is the fear of these going into the hands of non-state actors, like terrorist groups, who can exploit them, inflicting tremendous harm to the humanity at large.
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- Thus the important thing that responsible nation states should keep in mind is that these weapons should not go into irresponsible hands that can put the global security at a great risk.
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Source: Financial Express

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