Germany's stand in the Ukraine war

What is the issue?

Sending arms to Ukraine could mean modification of several decades of Germany's non-interventionist policy.

How did Germany misjudge Russia over invasion of Ukraine?

- Baltic states and Poland, had long warned that Russian invasion of Ukraine would be next step after the annexation of Crimea in 2014.
- However Germans remained indifferent, regarding such warnings as exaggerated alarmism.
- Current as well as former governments in Germany hoped that Russian President Vladimir Putin might be deterred if offered concessions without any penalties.
- Even after the annexation of Crimea in 2014 a major pipeline project, Nord Stream 2, between Russia and Germany, was approved and almost operationalized.
- But Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine has turned out Germans belief to be only a wishful thinking.
- After Hitler, Germans struggled hard to be regarded as democratic, pacifist, cooperative, understanding and helpful.
- As a result, military force, power politics and national interest have become almost taboo subjects.
- Declining to be involved in conflict has become the national mantra.
- As a result Germany started to lack a realistic thinking in foreign affairs.
- They have overestimated their influence on the Kremlin and underestimated Mr. Putin's security obsessions over the past three decades.
- Germans believed that Russia would avoid war in order to reap the peace dividend.
- German-Gandhian dream of a world without any arms has attracted the people who had initiated, and suffered most from, the destruction of Europe in two world wars in the 20th century.

How the peace loving policy changed Germany?

- Despite being one of the richest countries, Germany starved its armed forces financially.
- The Army has a highly diminished number of serviceable helicopters, submarines or artillery.
- Even sending the navy to protect certain shipping routes in oreder to protect the export opportunities which forms the basis of German wealth was condemned as a relapse into military adventurism in large sections of the media.

How this prevents Germany from taking a stand in Ukraine war?

- While Ukraine pleads for weapons to defend itself, Germany has hardly anything to offer except tanks that had been decommissioned a decade ago and for which there is no

ammunition available.

- Mental reservations stand in the way of steering a different course throughout German society.
- This peace loving view followed by the chairman of leading Social Democrats party as well as various dignitaries make the current Chancellor, Olaf Scholz not to rule in favour of arms deliveries to Ukraine due to massive resistance within his own party.
- Even the Green Party is prone to facing a similar dilemma. They do not support the argument that the victims of an invasion require to be supported.
- Germany is an important member of the EU and the NATO
- But it is extremely conflicted on how deeply it should be involved in supporting Ukraine.
- Deciding on such a course of action will mean a further modification of several decades of a mainly non-interventionist policy.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/shining-a-light-on-germanys-stand-in-the-ukraine-war/article65480960.ece

