National Security Strategy

Why in news?

India is working on its first-ever national security strategy document after years of deliberations in the military and strategic community.

Security Architecture in India
• After India became a nuclear-weapon state in 1998, the national security architecture underwent a significant change. • At the apex, a **National Security Council (NSC)** was set up with the Prime Minister (PM) as the Chairman. • Its permanent members included ministers of home, defence, external affairs and finance. • A new post of **National Security Advisor** was created to serve as the Secretary of the NSC. • In addition, a **Strategic Planning Group (SPG)** was established under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary. • A **National Security Advisory Board (NSAB)** was also set up. • It comprised of a number of retired civil and military officials, and it had direct access to the PM. • After the Kargil war in 1999, a **Defence Intelligence Agency** was set up to coordinate military-related intelligence. • Also, a **Nuclear Command Authority (NCA)** was set up to manage India's nuclear weapon arsenal.

What is National Security Strategy?

- **NSS** - A National Security Strategy (NSS) document outlines the *country's security objectives, and the ways to achieve these.*
- It defines traditional, non-traditional threats and opportunities while introducing accountability of agencies tasked with the implementation of such responsibilities.
- **History -** The NSS of India has *not been defined* since its Independence in 1947.
- Earlier 3 attempts has been made (2007, 2019 and 2021) to come out with the national security strategy, but there was hesitation at the political level.
- **Significance of NSS -** The strategy will cover the entire range of traditional and non-traditional threats facing India, such as financial, energy, information, and environmental security.
- It will guide the *military and security reforms* and provide a holistic view of the national security.
- NSS will reflect India's response to the *rising geopolitical tensions* and uncertainties in the world.
- The document will be made public and updated regularly based on emerging situation and newer threat assessments.

Global Regulatory Landscape
• **US-** The main pillars of NSS 2022 is strengthening democracy, revitalizing alliances, building inclusive global economy, and defending America and deterring aggression. • **UK-** It covers a range of diverse but interdependent threats, such as terrorism, cyber-attacks, natural disasters, and international military crises. • **Russia-** NSS 2021 reflects the country's willingness and ability to defend its national interests and values in the face of the complex and dynamic challenges of the 21st century. • **China**- *Comprehensive National Security strategy* is closely tied to its governance structure. • **Pakistan-** *National Security Policy 2022-2026*, underlines national security objectives and priority areas.

Why India needs a National Security Strategy?

- **Resource utilisation**- The strategy will help in optimal utilisation of India's comprehensive national power and resources.
- **Address vulnerabilities**- India's border is linked with large scale smuggling and contraband trade that permits channels through which terrorists and criminals find easy access.
- **Technology driven world**- NSS would enable the identification of critical infrastructure that may be vulnerable to cyber-attacks, and the development of human resources capable of identifying attacks and protecting and restoring critical systems.
- **Nuclear security-** The country's nuclear deterrent must deal with the challenge of two nuclear-armed neighbours namely China and Pakistan.
- **Dynamic nature**- The only political direction to the Armed Forces in existence is *Raksha Mantri's operational Directive of 2009* which is outdated and needs to be revised.
- **Jointness-** There has to be a national defence doctrine to achieve synergy, coordination and jointness among the three services and to enhance their combat effectiveness and operational readiness.

What components must the NSS encompass?

- **Climate change-** NSS should anticipate the consequences of ecological degradation such as melting of glaciers, sea level rise, large scale migration of population and formulate coping measures.
- **Internal security**- The strategy must address the internal security threats such as inequality, erosion of institutions, lawlessness and centre-state relations.
- **External security management**- The doctrine should emphasise the need to restore deterrence against India's adversaries, especially China, and to pursue the goal of transforming India into a modern, prosperous and secure country.
- **Strategic communication**- NSS must be integrated with strategic communication, particularly in a democracy, to shape public perceptions through constant and consistent public outreach and to provide a channel for public opinion or feedback.

What lies ahead?

- NSS must be executed within the parameters laid down by the Constitution of India and the country's democratic political dispensation.

- NSS should be citizen-centric, constitutionally guided, and democratically accountable.

References

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