Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty

Why in news?

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The ‘Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons” was adopted recently in the United Nations.

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What is the treaty about?

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- Nuclear weapons – unlike chemical weapons, biological weapons, landmines and cluster munitions – are not prohibited in a comprehensive and universal manner.
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- Even the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968 and nuclear-weapon-free zone contains only partial prohibitions.
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- This treaty is the first multilateral legally-binding instrument for nuclear disarmament.
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- It prohibits a full range of nuclear-weapon related activities, such as undertaking to develop, test, produce, manufacture, acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.
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- It also prohibits the use or threat of use of these weapons as well.
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- It will serve as an "unambiguous political commitment" to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world and act as a moral pressure.
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- It was hoped that the new treaty will promote inclusive dialogue and renewed international cooperation aimed at achieving the long overdue objective of nuclear disarmament.
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Who were the participants?

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- 122 of the 124 nations that participated in the negotiations had voted in favour of the treaty.
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- The treaty will enter into force 90 days after it has been ratified by at least 50 countries.
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- The eight nuclear weapon states i.e US, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan and North Korea along with Israel had not participated in the negotiations.
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- Even Japan, the only country to have suffered nuclear attacks boycotted the conference.
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What are stands of the boycotters?

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- India maintained that it recognises the ‘Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament’-(CD) as the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum & it is not convinced of the potential of the current treaty to address the disarmament issue.
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- The Permanent Representatives of the US, UK and France are of the view that the treaty does not recognize the importance of nuclear deterrence.
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- In the backdrop of the grave threat posed by North Korea’s nuclear programme, they feel that the treaty could ruin peace and stability.
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Source: The Hindu

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