Technological interventions in Military affairs

What is the issue?

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Growing influence of technology in defence increases the possibility of prompting an inadvertent conflict.

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What is the background?

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- The current focus in military thinking across the world is increasingly moving away from traditional heavy-duty military hardware to high-tech innovations.
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- These innovations include artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, satellite jammers, hypersonic strike technology, advanced cyber capabilities and spectrum denial and high-energy lasers.
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- There is also an increased focus on developing suitable command and control to accommodate these technologies.
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Why is there an inherent fear against technology?

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- The arrival of technology might deeply frustrate strategic stability.
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- Strategic stability in the contemporary international system, especially among the nuclear weapon states, depends on the survivability of a state's nuclear arsenal and its ability to carry out a second strike after a first attack.
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- High technology-enabled military systems also bring a paradox.
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- On the one hand, it states feel compelled to redesign their systems in the

light of these new technologies to be competitive.
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- On the other, this makes the cyber- and digital-enabled systems vulnerable to cyberattacks.
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- Such cyberattacks might lead to uncontrolled escalation with little time for assessment and judgement.
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- The biggest fear about these technologies is their potential to increase the risks accidental nuclear use.
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- Therefore, the possibility of emerging military technologies prompting inadvertent escalation and conflict cannot be ruled out.
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What are the challenges in addressing cyber and space challenges in India?

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- China has emerged as a key actor in the field of emerging military technologies, like quantum computing, 3D printing, hypersonic missiles and AI.
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- This might make India to consider developing some of these technologies indigenously.
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- The **Naresh Chandra Task Force** had suggested the formation of three separate joint commands to deal with new challenges to India's national security in the cyber, space and special operations domains.
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- Accordingly, the government recently decided to set up three new agencies - the Defence Cyber Agency, the Defence Space Agency and the Special Operations Division - to address the new age challenges to national security.
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- However, reports indicate that the Space Command will be headed by the Air Force, the Army will head the Special Operations Command, and the Navy will be given the responsibility of the Cyber Command.
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- If that happens, their effectiveness in terms of tri-service synergy will be

much less than anticipated.
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- Also, given that the higher defence decision-making in the country is still civil services-dominated, the effectiveness of these agencies will remain weak.
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Source: The Hindu

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