Threats of Weaponisation

What is the issue?

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- There are various multilateral and unilateral treaties on disarmament for global stability.
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- But recent developments illustrate that global instability from proliferation and weaponisation is becoming a reality.
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What are the treaties on global disarmament?

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- **NWS -** After the cold war era, Nuclear weapon states (NWSs) China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA emerged so that there should not be further more countries to possess nukes.
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- **START -** This is the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, by which Russia and the United States have reduced their weapon inventories.
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- **NPT -** Non-Proliferation Treaty is to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.
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- **NWPT** (Nuclear Weapons prohibition treaty) - Recently United Nations adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which bans and makes it illegal to possess, use, produce, transfer, acquire, stockpile or deploy nuclear weapons.
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What are the recent global threats by weaponisation?

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- All the NWSs are either deploying new nuclear weapon delivery systems or have announced programs to do so.
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- Due to this countries outside this club now have felt encouraged to nurture their own big ambitions.
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- India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea alone possess approximately 1000 nuclear weapons.
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- Even after START policy, U.S and Russia still account for more than 93% of all operational nuclear warheads.
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- IAEA member states have evidently been slow to adopt measures to enhance the safety (from terrorist threats) of nuclear material transferred within and across national borders.
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- For instance, an amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material came into force only in 2016.
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What does this imply?

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- The possession of the deadly bomb by four other countries, besides the five nations that founded the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), testifies to the impediments to restrict the use of nuclear energy for civilian purposes.
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- North Korean’s defiance to expand the country’s weaponisation programme is only the latest instance of erosion of the NPT’s authority.
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- Against this backdrop, the prospects are remote that the NWPT 2017 by ICAN to legally ban nuclear weapons could win support from the NWS.
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Way forward

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- It is clear that countries could not outsource the safety and security framework on the deployment of nuclear technology.

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- This should not be taken lightly across the developing world, where a culture of safety and public accountability is lacking.
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- This is especially critical since the share of nuclear power is expected to increase as part of attempts to reduce countries' dependence on fossil fuels.
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Source: The Hindu

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