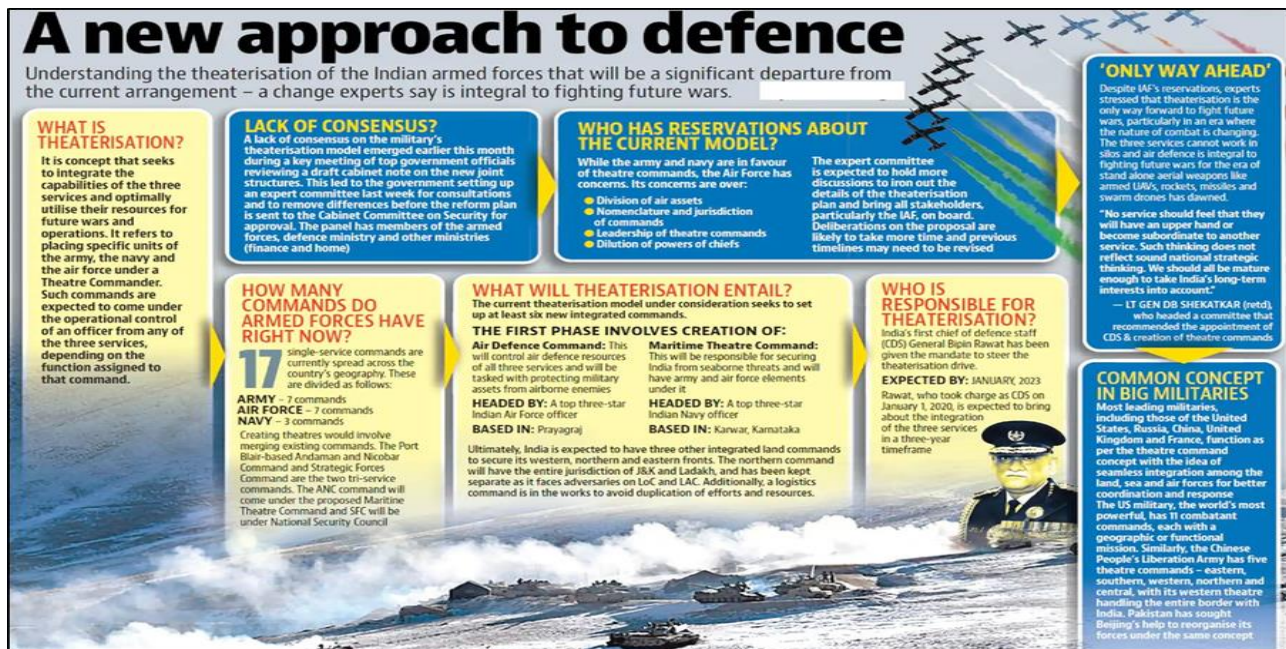


INDIA TO SET UP JOINT THEATRE COMMANDS OF TRI-SERVICES: RAJNATH SINGH

In News:

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, joint theatre commands of tri-services would be set up to enhance coordination among armed forces.
- He was speaking during a programme organised by the Jammu Kashmir People's Forum to pay tributes to the martyrs of the Indian Armed Forces.

Theaterisation of Armed Forces



A new approach to defence
Understanding the theaterisation of the Indian armed forces that will be a significant departure from the current arrangement – a change experts say is integral to fighting future wars.

WHAT IS THEATERISATION?
It is a concept that seeks to integrate the capabilities of the three services and optimally utilise their resources for future wars and operations. It refers to placing specific units of the army, the navy and the air force under a Theatre Commander. Such commands are expected to come under the operational control of an officer from any of the three services, depending on the function assigned to that command.

LACK OF CONSENSUS?
A lack of consensus on the military's theaterisation model emerged earlier this month during a key meeting of top government officials reviewing a draft cabinet note on the new joint structures. This led to the government setting up an expert committee last week for consultations and to remove differences before the reform plan is sent to the Cabinet Committee on Security for approval. The panel has members of the armed forces, defence ministry and other ministries (finance and home).

WHO HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE CURRENT MODEL?
While the army and navy are in favour of theatre commands, the Air Force has concerns. Its concerns are over:
• Division of air assets
• Nomenclature and jurisdiction of commands
• Leadership of theatre commands
• Dilution of powers of chiefs

The expert committee is expected to hold more discussions to iron out the details of the theaterisation plan and bring all stakeholders, particularly the IAF, on board. Deliberations on the proposal are likely to take more time and previous timelines may need to be revised.

'ONLY WAY AHEAD'
Despite IAF's reservations, experts stressed that theaterisation is the only way forward to fight future wars, particularly in an era where the nature of combat is changing. The three services cannot work in silos and air defence is integral to fighting future wars for the era of stand alone serial weapons like armed UAVs, rockets, missiles and swarm drones has dawned.
"No service should feel that they will have an upper hand or become subordinate to another service. Such thinking does not reflect sound national strategic thinking. We should all be mature enough to take India's long-term interests into account."
— LT GEN DB SHEKHAR (retd), who headed a committee that recommended the appointment of CDS & creation of theatre commands

HOW MANY COMMANDS DO ARMED FORCES HAVE RIGHT NOW?
17 single-service commands are currently spread across the country's geography. These are divided as follows:
ARMY – 7 commands
AIR FORCE – 7 commands
NAVY – 3 commands
Creating theatres would involve merging existing commands. The Port Blair-based Andaman and Nicobar Command and Strategic Forces Command are the two tri-service commands. The ANC command will come under the proposed Maritime Theatre Command and SFC will be under National Security Council.

WHAT WILL THEATERISATION ENTAIL?
The current theaterisation model under consideration seeks to set up at least six new integrated commands.
THE FIRST PHASE INVOLVES CREATION OF:
Air Defence Command: This will control air defence resources of all three services and will be tasked with protecting military assets from airborne enemies
HEADED BY: A top three-star Indian Air Force officer
BASED IN: Prayagraj
Ultimately, India is expected to have three other integrated land commands to secure its western, northern and eastern fronts. The northern command will have the entire jurisdiction of J&K and Ladakh, and has been kept separate as it faces adversaries on LoC and LAC. Additionally, a logistics command is in the works to avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEATERISATION?
India's first chief of defence staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat has been given the mandate to steer the theaterisation drive.
EXPECTED BY: JANUARY 2023
Rawat, who took charge as CDS on January 1, 2020, is expected to bring about the integration of the three services in a three-year timeframe.

COMMON CONCEPT IN BIG MILITARIES
Most leading militaries, including those of the United States, Russia, China, United Kingdom and France, function as per the theatre command concept with the idea of seamless integration among the land, sea and air forces for better coordination and response. The US military, the world's most powerful, has 11 combatant commands, each with a geographic or functional mission. Similarly, the Chinese People's Liberation Army has five theatre commands – eastern, southern, western, northern and central, with its western theatre handling the entire border with India. Pakistan has sought Beijing's help to reorganise its forces under the same concept.

- Theaterisation is a concept which seeks to integrate the capabilities of the three services - army, air force and navy – in order to optimally utilise their resources for wars and operations.
- In other words, a theatre command/unit will be created by integrating elements/assets from all the three services
- All of them will work as a single entity looking after security challenges in a specified geographical territory under an operational commander.

- It will create a military structure in which specific theatre commands/units will be placed under the Theatre Commander.
- The Theatre Commander will be a three-star general, drawn from any of the three services, depending on the function assigned.

Theaterisation model under consideration

- The plan under consideration talks about setting up of six theatre commands. These are:
 - **Air Defence Theatre Command**
 - It will control air defence resources of all three services. It will be tasked with protecting military assets from airborne enemies.
 - It will be headed by a top three-star Indian Air Force officer based in Prayagraj.
 - **Maritime Theatre Command** –
 - This will be responsible for securing India from seaborne threats.
 - Headed by a top three-star Indian Navy officer and will be based in Karwar, Karnataka.
 - **Northern Command** (Comprising Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh)
 - **Western Command**
 - **Eastern Command**
 - **Logistics command** - to avoid duplication of efforts and resources.
- The first phase involves the creation of Air Defence Command and Maritime Theatre Command.

How will the role of service chiefs change after Theaterisation?

- The operational control of theatre commands will eventually come under the CDS.
- This would leave the Service chiefs with no direct control over their assets operationally.
- The service chiefs will be responsible for raising, training and sustaining their forces.
- Also, as each chief will be a member of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), and an expert of his/her domain, his or her inputs will be necessary for all operational decisions.

Present Model in India

- At present, India has 17 single service commands and only two tri-service commands.
- The 17 single service commands are divided as:
 - Army – 7 commands; Airforce – 7 commands; Navy – 3 commands

- The two tri-service commands are: Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC), and The Strategic Force Command (handles the nuclear weapons).
 - Creating Theatres would involve merging existing commands.
 - After restructuring, the ANC command will come under the proposed Maritime Theatre Command and SFC will be under National Security Council.
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FIBERISATION

India is preparing to auction off about 72 Ghz of airwaves to rollout 5G services in the country. However, the infrastructure needed for such a rollout requires existing radio towers to be connected via optical-fibre cables.



What is fiberisation?

- The process of connecting radio towers with each other via optical fibre cables is called fiberisation.
 - It helps provide full utilisation of network capacity, and carry large amounts of data once 5G services are rolled out. It will also aid in providing additional bandwidth and stronger backhaul support.
 - The backhaul is a component of the larger transport that is responsible for carrying data across the network.
 - It represents the part of the network that connects the core of the network to the edge. As a result, fibre backhaul remains an important part of transport across all telecoms.
 - Fibre-based media, commonly called optical media, provides almost infinite bandwidth and coverage, low latency and high insulation from interference.
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WIND POWER

Last week, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) said it would be doing away with the practice of reverse auctions — when companies bid to offer the lowest price — while awarding contracts for setting up wind-energy projects.



About:

- However, wind industry experts say this alone will not necessarily improve the sector's fortunes.
 - India has committed to installing 60,000 MW of wind power projects by 2022, but has met only two-thirds of the target.
 - While reverse auctions were the norm for all renewable energy projects, including solar and wind projects since 2015, the government's change of stance signals that the rock-bottom prices associated with clean energy projects — per unit solar power costs have fallen to ₹2.40 a unit — do not reflect the true costs of renewable energy.
 - The cost of large tracts of land required to install wind turbines is among the reasons cited for the dwindling health of the sector.
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NEERAJ CHOPRA

Tokyo Olympic gold medallist Neeraj Chopra created history by winning Silver medal in men's javelin throw event at World Athletics Championships.



About:

- In the prestigious competition held at Eugene in Oregon, United States, Neeraj Chopra grabbed second position with his best throw of 88.13 metres. Grenadian javelin thrower Anderson Peters won the gold medal with a throw of 90.54 meters.
 - Neeraj Chopra is the first ever Indian to win a silver medal at World Athletics Championships.
 - He is the second Indian after former long jumper Anju Bobby George, who won a bronze medal in long jump at 2003 in Paris.
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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF UNANI MEDICINE (NIUM), GHAZIABAD

Union Minister of Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal inspected newly constructed campus of National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM) at Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.



About:

- NIUM, Ghaziabad is a satellite Institute of National Institute of Unani Medicine, Bangaluru and will be first of its kind to be established in northern region of India.
- The foundation stone for the National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM) at Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh was laid on 1st March 2019.
- This Institute will produce high quality professionals in various streams of Unani Medicine.
- This Institute will have 14 departments and will provide PG and Doctoral courses in various disciplines of Unani Medicine.
- The Institute will also focus on fundamental aspects, drug development, quality control, safety evaluation and scientific validation of Unani medicine and practices.
- The Institute will establish Bench Mark standards in Education, Health Care and Research.

SEZ REVAMP BILL TO PROVIDE CLARITY ON TAXES, INCENTIVES

In News:

- The revamp of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) through the Development of Enterprise and Service Hubs (DESH) Bill will come with a fiscal package.
- These packages include a possible freeze on direct taxes at 15% for units and hubs until 2032.

Special Economic Zone (SEZ):

- A special economic zone (SEZ) is an area in a country that is subject to different economic regulations than other regions within the same country.
- The SEZ economic regulations tend to be conducive to—and attract—foreign direct investment (FDI).

- FDI refers to any investment made by a firm or individual in one country into business interests located in another country.
- **Objective:** To facilitate rapid economic growth by leveraging tax incentives to attract foreign investment and spark technological advancement.
- The first SEZs appeared in the late 1950s in industrialized countries.
- They were designed to attract foreign investment from multinational corporations.

Special Economic Zones in India:

- India was among the first countries in Asia to recognise the effectiveness of the SEZ model in promoting export.
- The first EPZ (Export Processing Zone) was established in Kandla, Gujarat in 1965.
- Currently, 262 SEZs are operational in India, employing as many as 2.36 million people.
- To tackle the challenges of absence of world-class infrastructure and to attract larger foreign investments, the Special Economic Zone Policy was announced in April 2000.
- The **SEZ Act 2005** and SEZ Rules came into effect from February 2006.

Major Objectives of SEZ Act, 2005:

- Generation of additional economic activity,
- Promotion of exports of goods and services,
- Promotion of investment from domestic and foreign sources,
- Creation of employment opportunities,
- Development of infrastructure facilities.

Who sets up SEZs?

- In India, most of the SEZs are set up through a collaboration between the state and central governments.
- However, any private, public or joint sector agency can also set up SEZs.
- State governments have a very important role to play in the establishment of these economic zones.
- The proposals have to be approved by the local authorities initially.

- These local authorities should give their consent for providing basic infrastructure facilities to the delineated area, such as water, electricity, transportation, etc.
- Also, the statutory functions of maintaining these SEZs rests with the government.
- A unit approval committee is formed to monitor the performance of SEZs.
- The committee consists of a development commissioner, customs officer and a state government representative.

Need for amending the SEZ Act, 2005:

- India's target of becoming a USD 5 trillion economy by FY 2026, with a contribution of USD 3 trillion and over USD 1 trillion from the services and manufacturing sector respectively, requires accelerated investments.
- While India's service sector continues to show appreciable growth, the manufacturing sector has been lagging, necessitating urgent interventions.
- The 2005 SEZ Act was brought in with the hope of making India a manufacturing powerhouse of the world. However, it had very limited positive effect.
- The 262 operational SEZs set up over this period currently have only 5,576 operational units and account for less than 20 per cent of the country's exports.
- Therefore, the Central Government constituted the **Baba Kalyani Committee** to suggest changes to India's SEZ policy based on inputs from various stakeholders.
- Based on the recommendations of this committee, the Central Government is bringing out a new legislation to replace the existing SEZ Act, 2005.
- The new regulation is known as the Development of Enterprises and Service Hubs (DESH) Bill.

Key Provisions of DESH Bill:

- **Tax Benefits –**
 - The new bill is expected to ensure tax rebates/refunds/financial subsidies to developers/companies in the hub, in a manner similar to the existing SEZs, but with no export compulsion NFE (Net Foreign Exchange) obligation.

- **Development Hubs –**

- Existing ports, airports, inland container depots, land stations, etc., are proposed to be transformed into Development Hubs with a clear demarcation of processing and non-processing areas.

- **Shifting the focus from exports to domestic investments –**

- The bill is expected to bring about a paradigm shift by moving the focus from exports to domestic investments, eliminating compliance and procedural challenges.
- The bill proposes to integrate multiple models of economic zones such as SEZs, coastal economic zones, and food and textile parks.
- In transforming the existing SEZs into enterprises and service hubs, the focus will be on boosting economic activity and the domestic market, integrating the various models, facilitating ease of doing business and generating employment.

- **States to play a larger role**

- DESH Bill is also expected to enable states to play a greater role in the integration of all existing industrial parks within states with existing SEZs across the country.
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