

TARKASH exercise

February 13, 2023

In news– Sixth edition of the TARKASH exercise by the National Security Guard (NSG) and US Special Operations Forces (SOF) is currently underway in Chennai.

About the Exercise-

- With chemical and biological warfare being recognised as a looming threat to the world, an ongoing **Indo-US joint exercise has for the first time included “Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) terror response” in its drill.**
- The objective of the joint exercise by NSG and US (SOF) teams was to rapidly neutralise the terrorists, rescue the hostages safely and deactivate the chemical weapons being carried by the terrorists.
- The exercise involved small team insertion by IAF helicopters to the target area, successful intervention in a large auditorium, rescue of hostages and neutralisation of the chemical agent weapon.

CBRN weapons-

- CBRN weapons, which are also classified as weapons of mass destruction, have been used by States and terror elements in the past. The most recent use of CBRN in the form of a sarin gas attack was witnessed in Syria in 2017 when more than 100 people died.
- In general, a weapon of mass destruction is a nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological, or other device that is intended to harm a large number of people.
- The expression “weapon of mass destruction” (WMD) is usually considered to have been used first by the leader of the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1937 to refer to the aerial bombing of civilians in the Basque town of Guernica by German and Italian

fascists in support of General Franco during the Spanish Civil War.

International treaties related to WMD-

The use of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons is regulated by a number of international treaties and agreements. Among them are:

- The Geneva Protocol, 1925, that banned the use of chemical and biological weapons.
- The Biological Weapons Convention, 1972.
- Chemical Weapons Convention, 1992, which put comprehensive bans on the biological and chemical weapons respectively.
- India has signed and ratified both the 1972 and 1992 treaties.
- The use and proliferation of nuclear weapons is regulated by treaties such as Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).