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**News: Chemical Weapons Convention and Biological Weapons Convention**

- Recently, the US said that Russia could be planning a chemical or biological weapon attack in Ukraine.
- Earlier, Russian claimed that the US had chemical and biological weapons labs in Ukraine, which was denied by the US.

**Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)**

- Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is a **multilateral treaty banning chemical weapons and requiring their destruction within the stipulated time.**
- The ban includes **production, stockpiling, and the use of chemical weapons** and their precursors.
- The convention was drafted on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1992 and opened for signature on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1993. It became effective from 29<sup>th</sup> April 1997.
- Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) **headquartered in Hague, Netherlands implements this convention.**
- CPW has 192 state parties and 165 signatories. Israel has signed but is yet to ratify it. Egypt, South Sudan and North Korea are not parties to the treaty.

- India recently became the first country to be declared as “Chemical Weapon free state” by destructing all its stockpile of its chemical weapons.
- Some chemicals, which have been used extensively in warfare, but have numerous large-scale industrial uses, such as phosgene, are highly regulated, however, certain notable exceptions exist.
- Chlorine gas is highly toxic, but being a pure element and extremely widely used for peaceful purposes, is not officially listed as a chemical weapon.

## **Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)**

- The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) is a **legally binding treaty that outlaws biological arms.**
- It was the **1<sup>st</sup> multilateral disarmament treaty to ban the production of Biological Weapons.**
- After being discussed and negotiated in the United Nations' disarmament forum starting in 1969, the **BWC opened for signature on April 10, 1972, and entered into force on March 26, 1975.**
- It currently has **183 states-parties, including Palestine,** and four signatories (Egypt, Haiti, Somalia, Syria, and Tanzania). Ten states have neither signed nor

ratified the BWC (Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Israel, Kiribati, Micronesia, Namibia, South Sudan and Tuvalu).

- **India ratified this treaty in 2015.**
- The convention stipulates that states shall cooperate bilaterally or multilaterally to solve compliance issues.
- States may also submit complaints to the United Nations Security Council should they believe another state is violating the treaty.

The Biological Weapons Convention bans:

- The development, stockpiling, acquisition, retention, and production of biological agents and toxins "of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes; or Weapons, equipment, and delivery vehicles "designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict."
- The transfer of or assistance with acquiring the agents, toxins, weapons, equipment, and delivery vehicles described above.
- The **convention further requires states-parties to destroy or divert to peaceful purposes the "agents, toxins, weapons, equipment, and means of delivery" described above within nine months of the convention's entry into force.**

- But, The **BWC** does not ban the use of biological and toxin weapons but reaffirms the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which prohibits such use.
- It also **does not ban biodefense programs**.