

Security has economic facets too, say experts

Believe Strategic Policy Group overhaul right step

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The government's recent move to reconstitute the Strategic Policy Group (SPG), the first layer of the three-tier National Security Council (NSC), is a step towards expanding the idea of security from its classical notion by incorporating into it the economic facets by roping in NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar in the panel, experts feel.

Meanwhile, at the same time the government has also moved towards using economics as a tool for furthering diplomatic agenda, as it is working on a policy framework to screen threats emerging from big-ticket investments in strategic sectors by a host of countries, including China.

A senior functionary in the security architecture of the country contended that the government has moved in the right direction by putting SPG directly under National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval and bringing in the NITI Aayog Vice Chairman, as the two steps will ensure

INVESTMENTS TO BE CHECKED

- The Ministry of Home Affairs is currently examining a proposal from the Intelligence Bureau to filter all sensitive investment proposals from foreign entities
- These will be divided into three categories under "entities of concern", "countries of concern" and "sectors of concern" to check any unwanted investments into strategically important sectors like telecommunication, power and infrastructure

seamlessness in decision-making and economy as a tool for ensuring security.

Experts, including a few within the government, have argued for this wider definition of security by arguing that both weapon and economy make for a "comprehensive national power".

"The moves are aimed at ensuring the long-overdue reform that will hopefully put everyone, including senior bureaucrats, on the same page when it comes to deciding on measures required to ensure the country's core interests," said an official.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), it is learnt, is currently examining a proposal from the Intelligence Bureau (IB) to filter all sensitive investment proposals from foreign entities into

three broad categories under "entities of concern", "countries of concern" and "sectors of concern" to check any unwanted investments into strategically important sectors like telecommunication, power and infrastructure.

Sources in the MHA said the IB in its proposal has highlighted with concern the visit of Chinese business delegates to Betul Island in Goa near INS Khadamba to explore business opportunities.

"The other area of concern is the award of contracts to non-Chinese firms, which in turn employ Chinese firms/persons, as was the case in the Dhamra Port Company in Odisha, which is strategically located near APJ Kalam Island (Wheeler Island)," the IB said in the note.