

BUDGETING FOR INDIA'S DEFENCE

Relevant for: Science & Technology | Topic: Defence related developments

[Budget 2021-22](#) could see an increased allocation for defence, given the need to factor in the threat from China. The agreements which India thought were enough to stabilize the border with China while it focused on growing the economy have not worked.

The year 2020-21 saw India scouring global markets for high-altitude clothing and light tanks that could be deployed in mountainous terrain against the backdrop of the Ladakh standoff. Did India underestimate the threat from China? India's [defence](#) budget as a percentage of central government expenditure had been decreasing in the past decade.

Also Read | [A year on, China is shaking up the world](#)

With the Indian economy currently in recession, the question is, how do we plan and budget for the China challenge—from the borders to cyberspace?

That's the question our panel will be debating tonight at 7pm in the fourth of Mint's Road to Recovery live online discussions (see box for details).

Over the past three weeks, Mint's Road to Recovery series of online debates have examined issues such as the challenge of funding and distributing the covid-19 vaccine, whether the government's Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme is any different from import substitution and whether the past 10 months of living through a pandemic has worsened inequality and what specific budget interventions can address this.

Curated by Mint's editors and backed by a strong line-up of reports, editorials, commentaries and podcasts, the Road to Recovery series will run till February, not only providing insights for the proficient but also clarity for novices wanting to better understand the intersection of policy, politics and economics.

This week's topic is: "Countering the China challenge: from the borders to cyberspace."

Leading the conversation are P.S. Raghavan, a former ambassador to Russia who was till a few days ago the chairman of India's National Security Advisory Board, a body on security and strategic issues that provides inputs to the government; Laxman Kumar Behera, associate professor at the Special Centre for National Security Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University; G. Mohan Kumar, a former defence secretary (2015-17); Rajeshwari Rajagopalan, a distinguished fellow and head of Nuclear and Space Policy Initiative at Observer Research Foundation think tank; and Lt. General S.L. Narasimhan, a former Indian military attaché in Beijing and currently director-general, Centre for Contemporary China Studies, a government think tank. Mitali Mukherjee of Observer Research Foundation will moderate the session.

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