



THERMOBARIC WEAPONS - DEFENCE

News: Russia's use of ODAB-1500 thermobaric weapons in Ukraine has drawn significant attention due to their devastating effects.

What's in the news?

What Are Thermobaric Weapons?

- Thermobaric weapons, also known as “**vacuum bombs**” or “**enhanced blast weapons,**” rely on the atmosphere's oxygen to fuel their explosive power.
- Unlike conventional explosives that contain both fuel and oxidizer, thermobaric bombs **release a fuel cloud**, which, when ignited, causes a high-temperature explosion.
- This explosion **generates a blast wave of immense pressure, followed by a rapid vacuum** effect as the oxygen in the vicinity is consumed.
- In 2001, the United States deployed these weapons to target **al-Qaeda forces** hiding in the caves of the **Tora Bora mountains**.



Impact

- The **combination of overpressure and vacuum** makes these weapons destructive in enclosed spaces such as bunkers, buildings, and tunnels.
- The **shockwave** produced by thermobaric bombs can destroy structures, while the blast's pressure differential causes catastrophic damage to the human body, including rupturing organs and lungs.



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- There are **no international laws** specifically banning their use, but if a country uses them to target civilian populations in built-up areas, schools or hospitals, then it could be convicted of a war crime under the **Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907**.

Source: <https://www.financialexpress.com/business/defence-explainer-the-growing-use-of-thermobaric-weapons-3623496/>



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