

# DEFENCE NEWSLETTER

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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

Centre for Defence Economics and Industry, MP-IDSA

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## KEY EVENTS

### **Raksha Mantri Meets the Princess and Defence Minister of Belgium**

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh held a meeting with Princess Astrid of Belgium and Defence Minister Theo Francken on 3 March 2025. They discussed the possibility of enhanced defence industrial cooperation and defence engagements in the Indo-Pacific.

### **Raksha Mantri Inaugurates MHA-DRDO Conference**

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh inaugurated the MHA-DRDO Conference on 'Advanced Technologies for Internal Security and Disaster Relief Operations' on 4 March 2025. The RM spoke about the importance of leveraging technology for security and for disaster management and humanitarian relief.

### **Raksha Mantri Interacts with Crew Members of Navika Sagar Parikrama**

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh interacted with the crew members of Navika Sagar Parikrama II (NSP II) through video conferencing on 7 March 2025 on the eve of International Women's Day. He lauded the courage, dedication, and resilience of the crew, who embarked on a challenging voyage of circumnavigating the globe.

### **Rajnath Singh Visits Institute of Aerospace Medicine**

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh visited the Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM) of the IAF in Bengaluru, on 9 March 2025. Shri Singh, the first Raksha Mantri to visit the institute, was briefed about the role of

IAM in pilot training, medical evaluation and aeromedical research.

### **Raksha Mantri Meets US Director of National Intelligence**

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh held a meeting with the Director of National Intelligence of the US Tulsi Gabbard in New Delhi on 17 March 2025. Both leaders emphasised the comprehensive global strategic cooperation between the two nations.

### **Raksha Mantri Meets Netherland's Defence Minister**

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh held a meeting with the Defence Minister of the Netherlands Ruben Brekermans in New Delhi on 18 March 2025. They discussed cooperation in areas like defence, security, information exchanges, Indo-Pacific and new & emerging technologies.

### **Raksha Mantri Addresses Major Bob Khathing Memorial Event**

Raksha Mantri addressed the 5<sup>th</sup> Major Bob Khathing Memorial Event organised by the Indian Army, Assam Rifles and USI on 19 March 2025. He termed Major Khathing as a great son of India, who carried out the integration of Tawang into India without firing a single bullet. The RM also highlighted his contribution in the formation of Sashastra Seema Bal and Nagaland Armed Police.

### **New Zealand PM Luxon Visits Naval Dockyard, Mumbai**

The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Christopher Luxon, along with RAdm Garin Golding, Chief of Navy, Royal New

Zealand Navy (CN-RNZN), visited the indigenously built destroyer, INS Surat, at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, on 20 March 2025.

### **CDS Gen Anil Chauhan Visits Australia**

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan concluded a successful visit to Australia from 4-7 March 2025.

### **CDS Inaugurates Techkriti 2025**

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan, inaugurated Techkriti 2025, Asia's largest intercollegiate technical and entrepreneurial festival, at IIT Kanpur. A special segment, 'Rakshakriti', showcased cutting-edge defence technology.

### **Defence Secretary Presents IAF Capability Enhancement Report to RM**

Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh presented the report of the Empowered Committee for Capability Enhancement of the IAF to Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh on 3 March 2025. The Committee made recommendations to achieve the desired capability enhancement goals of the IAF in an optimal manner.

### **DG, Defence Intelligence Agency Visits Australia**

The Director General Defence Intelligence Agency (DG DIA) Lt General DS Rana visited [Australia](#) from 19-21 March 2025.

### **9<sup>th</sup> India-Australia Defence Policy Talks Held in New Delhi**

The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of India-Australia Defence Policy Talks was held in New Delhi on 17 March 2025. The two sides agreed on

priorities and preparations for the next 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue to be held in Australia in 2025.

### **13<sup>th</sup> Edition of India-Italy Military Cooperation Group Meeting Held**

The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the India-Italy Military Cooperation Group (MCG) meeting was conducted from 20-21 March 2025 in Rome, Italy.

### **HQ IDS and DST Ink MoU in Defence R&D**

Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST) inked a MOU on 21 March 2025 at New Delhi to leverage DST's extensive R&D capabilities to address the evolving needs of the Armed Forces.

## **AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT**

### **DAC Clears Capital Acquisition Proposals Worth over Rs 54,000 Crore**

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) on 20 March 2025 accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoNs) to eight capital acquisition proposals amounting to over Rs 54,000 crore. This includes procurement of 1350 HP Engine for the Army, Varunastra Torpedoes (Combat) for the Navy and Airborne Early Warning & Control (AEW&C) Aircraft Systems for the Airforce.

### **MoD Signs Contract for T-72 Tanks for Indian Army**

The MoD signed a contract with Rosoboronexport (RoE), Russian Federation on 7 March 2025 worth \$ 248

million for procurement of 1000 HP Engines for T-72 Tanks in fully formed, completely knocked down and semi knocked down conditions.

### **Contract Signed with BEL for Low-level Transportable Radar for IAF**

The MoD inked a capital acquisition contract with BEL, Ghaziabad on 12 March 2025 for the procurement of Low-level Transportable Radar, LLTR (Ashwini) at a cost of Rs 2,906 crore.

### **MoD Brainstorms with 50 MSMEs and Start-Ups**

Senior officials of Department of Defence Production, under the chairmanship of Secretary (DP) Sanjeev Kumar, held deliberations with over 50 start-ups and MSMEs on understanding the key challenges affecting these ventures in New Delhi on 24-25 March 2025.

### **MoD Inks Contracts for ATAGS**

The MoD signed contracts with Bharat Forge Limited and Tata Advanced System Limited on 26 March 2025 for the procurement of 155mm/52 Calibre Advanced Towed Artillery Gun Systems (ATAGS) and High Mobility Vehicle 6x6 Gun Towing Vehicles respectively at a total cost of about Rs 6,900 crore.

### **MoD Inks Rs 2,500 Crore Contracts for NAMIS**

The MoD signed a contract on 27 March 2025 with Armoured Vehicle Nigam Limited for the procurement of Nag Missile System (NAMIS) Tracked version of anti-tank weapon platform and Force

Motors Ltd & Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd for around 5,000 Light Vehicles for the Armed Forces at a total cost of around Rs 2,500 crore.

### **MoD Inks Contracts for Supply of 156 LCH, Prachand**

The MoD on 28 March 2025 signed two contracts with HAL for supply of 156 Light Combat Helicopters (LCH), Prachand, along with training and other associated equipment worth Rs. 62,700 crore, excluding taxes. The first contract is for supply of 66 LCHs to the Indian Air Force (IAF) and second is for supply of 90 LCHs to the Indian Army.

### **DRDO and Indian Navy Successfully Flight-Test Indigenous VL-SR-SAM**

The DRDO and the Indian Navy conducted the successful flight-test of indigenously-developed Vertically-Launched Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM) off the coast of Odisha on 26 March 2025.

### **DRDO Conducts LCA Tejas Integrated Life Support System**

The Defence Bio-Engineering & Electro Medical Laboratory (DEBEL), a Bengaluru-based lab under the DRDO, successfully conducted high-altitude trials of the Indigenous On-Board Oxygen Generating System (OBOGS)-based Integrated Life Support System (ILSS) for the LCA Tejas aircraft, on 4 March 2025.

### **First Rear Fuselage for LCA Mk1A Handed Over to HAL**

The first rear fuselage for Light Combat Aircraft Mk1A, produced by Indian

private industry, Alpha Tocol Engineering Services Private Ltd, was handed over to HAL in the presence of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh in Bengaluru, on 9 March 2025.

### **Tejas LCA AF MK1 Test-Fires Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile**

The Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) successfully conducted test-launch of home grown ASTRA, Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM) from LCA AF MK1 prototype fighter aircraft on 12 March 2025.

### **Eighth Missile cum Ammunition (MCA) Barge Delivered**

The induction ceremony of the eighth Missile Cum Ammunition Barge (MCA) Barge, LSAM 11(Yard 79) was held on 7 March 2025 at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai. With delivery of LSAM 11, the shipyard completed contractual delivery of all eight Barges to Indian Navy.

### **Yard 133 (LSAM 23) Delivered**

The induction ceremony of ninth Ammunition Cum Torpedo Cum Missile (ACTCM) Barge, LSAM 23 (Yard 133) was held on 12 March 2025 at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.

### **Goa Shipyard Launches Second P1135.6 Frigate**

Goa Shipyard Limited successfully launched 'Tavasya', the second frigate of Project 1135.6 (Yard 1259) on 22 March 2025.

## **DEFENCE DIPLOMACY**

### **Indian Military Launches Operation Brahma to Assist Myanmar**

In a swift response to the devastating earthquake that struck Myanmar on 28 March 2025, the Indian Army, under 'Operation Brahma', deployed a specialised medical task force to provide urgent humanitarian assistance. Indian Navy ships *Satpura* and *Savitri*, from the Eastern Naval Command, sailed for Yangon on 29 March 2025.

### **India- Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR-XII Held**

The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR-XII took place in Kyrgyzstan from 10-23 March 2025.

### **BONGOSAGAR 25 and Indian Navy-Bangladesh Navy CORPAT Held**

The India-Bangladesh Naval Exercise Bongosagar 2025 and Coordinated Patrol was conducted in Bay of Bengal in the second week of March.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> Edition of VARUNA 2025 Held**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the naval exercise with France *VARUNA*, took place from 19 to 22 March 2025. Aircraft carriers Vikrant and Charles de Gaulle, alongside their fighter aircraft, destroyers, frigates, and an Indian Scorpene-class submarine participated in the exercises.

### **Indian Navy's First Training Squadron Visits Thailand**

As part of the ongoing training deployment of the First Training Squadron (1TS) to

South East Asia, INS Shardul, INS Sujata and ICGS Veera arrived at Phuket Deep Sea Port, Thailand on 1 March 2025.

### **Indian Naval Ship Kuthar Visits Colombo**

INS Kuthar, Eastern Fleet Ship under the aegis of Eastern Naval Command was on mission deployment in Indian Ocean Region and visited Colombo, Sri Lanka on 4 March 2025.

### **INS IMPHAL Participates in Mauritius National Day Celebrations**

Indian Naval Ship Imphal made her maiden port call at Port Louis, the capital

city of Mauritius, on 10 March 2025. The ship participated in the 57<sup>th</sup> Mauritius National Day celebrations on 12 March 2025.

### **ICGS Saksham Makes Port Call at Port Victoria, Seychelles**

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Offshore Patrol Vessel Saksham made a port call at Port Victoria, Seychelles, on 12 March 2025 and at Antsiranana, Madagascar on 18 March 2025 as part of its overseas deployment to friendly countries in the Indian Ocean Region.

'The Defence Newsletter is a compilation of media reports and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Manohar Parrikar IDSA or the Ministry of Defence, Government of India'.