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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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## Contents

### **Key Events**

- Vice President Inaugurates International Maritime Seminar
- Raksha Mantri Addresses MILAN Multi-National Exercises
- Rs 6.21 Lakh Crore Allocation to MoD in Interim Union Budget 2024-25
- Raksha Mantri: Rs 300,000 Crore Annual Defence Production by 2028-29
- Netherlands Defence Minister Meets RM
- Raksha Rajya Mantri visits World Defence Show 2024 at Riyadh
- Raksha Rajya Mantri Visits HQ Western Command
- CDS Inaugurates DEFSAT 2024
- Defence Secretary Visits BEL, Chennai and AVNL Avadi
- Defence Secretary Co-Chairs India-Germany High Defence Committee Meeting
- Chief of Army Staff Visits US
- Chief of Army Staff of French Army Visits India
- Chief of Navy Royal New Zealand Navy Visits India
- Chief of Army Staff Visits Maharashtra MSME Defence Expo 2024 at Pune
- Chief of the Naval Staff Visits Andaman and Nicobar Command
- 17th Indian Navy–French Navy Staff Talks Held
- IAF Conducts 'Exercise Vayu Shakti-24' in Rajasthan
- INDUS-X Summit Held in New Delhi
- INSV Tarini Embarks on Historic Expedition by Women Officers

### **Aatmanirbhar Bharat**

- DAC Clears Capital Acquisition Proposals worth Rs 84,560 Crores
- Aeronautical Development Agency Signs MoU with Indian Air Force
- Commissioning of Y-3025 (Sandhayak)
- Y-3025 (Sandhayak) Commissioned
- Green Propulsion System Successfully Demonstrates In-Orbit Functionality
- DRDO Carries Out Successful Flight Trials of 'Abhyas'
- FDI in Defence Sector
- MoD Inks Contract worth Rs. 2269.54 Cr with BEL
- MoD Signs Contract worth Rs.1,752 Cr for Stabilised Remote-Control Guns
- MoD Procurement on Government e-Marketplace (GeM) crosses Rs 1 Lakh Crore
- Digital Flight Control Computer for Tejas Mk1A Flown Successfully
- DRDO Hands Over 23 Licensing Agreements for Transfer of Technology
- Indian Army Inducts 46-Meter Modular Bridge
- DRDO Successfully Flight Tests Very Short-Range Air Defence System

### **Defence Diplomacy**

- India and Rwanda Hold Maiden Joint Defence Cooperation Committee Meeting
- ICGS Varaha Makes Port Call at Maputo Port, Mozambique
- India-Japan Joint Exercise 'Dharma Guardian' Commences in Rajasthan
- IAF Team Participates in the Singapore Air Show 2024

## KEY EVENTS

### Vice President Inaugurates International Maritime Seminar

Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India [inaugurated](#) the International Maritime Seminar, conducted on 22 February 2024, as part of MILAN 2024. The Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar, Naval Chiefs of Friendly Foreign Countries, Senior dignitaries, Delegates participated in the seminar titled 'Partners Across Oceans: Collaboration, Synergy, Growth'.

### Raksha Mantri Addresses MILAN Multi-National Exercises

The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the biennial, multi-nation Exercise MILAN was held in Visakhapatnam from 19–27 February 2024. Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, while addressing the gathering, [called](#) on the international community to collectively aspire for peace and preserve the democratic and rules-based world order. The RM also inaugurated the Maritime Technical Exposition MTEX-24 in association with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

### Rs 6.21 Lakh Crore Allocation to MoD in Interim Union Budget 2024-25

In 2024-2025, the [Defence Budget](#) presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 1 February 2024 touched Rs 621,540.85, which is 13.04 per cent of total Union Budget. The budgetary allocation to defence for FY 24-25 is higher by approximately Rs 100,000 crore over the allocation for the FY 2022-23 and 4.72 per

cent more than allocation of FY 23-24. A special scheme with Rs 100,000 crore corpus will be created for providing interest-free loans for developing Deep Tech. Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh noted that the budget outlines the government's vision for 'Viksit Bharat'.

### Raksha Mantri: Rs 300,000 Crore Annual Defence Production by 2028-29

Raksha Mantri [Rajnath Singh](#) at a Defence Summit in New Delhi on 24 February 2024 stated that the government was targeting defence production of Rs 300,000 crores and Rs 50,000 crore exports by 2028-29. He added that the aim was to manufacture high-end systems like aero-engines and gas turbines in India in the next five years.

### Netherlands Defence Minister Meets RM

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [held](#) a bilateral meeting with the Netherlands Defence Minister Kajsa Ollongren in New Delhi on 23 February 2024. Both Ministers discussed the possibilities for expanding bilateral defence cooperation, in maritime and industrial domains. The RM suggested that Dutch Original Equipment Manufacturers could be encouraged to integrate Indian vendors into their defence industries.

### Raksha Rajya Mantri visits World Defence Show 2024 at Riyadh

Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt [visited](#) Riyadh as head of the Indian delegation for the World Defence Show (WDS) 2024 from 4-8 February 2024. Shri Bhatt met with Defence Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman

bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud where they discussed various aspects of bilateral defence cooperation.

### **Raksha Rajya Mantri Visits HQ Western Command**

Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt [visited](#) the Headquarters Western Command in Chandimandir on 12 February 2024. He was briefed on Operational and Security situation and the administrative aspects by Lt Gen Manoj Kumar Katiyar, GOC-in-C Western Command. The RRM also visited the NCC Group Headquarter and the Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), one of the major DRDO labs in the field of armament studies.

### **CDS Inaugurates DEFSAT 2024**

Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan stressed on the need to build a highly capable Aatmanirbhar defence space ecosystem. [Inaugurating](#) 'DEFSAT', a three-day Space Seminar and Exhibition on 7 February 2024, Gen Chauhan underlined that space can be used as a force multiplier to enhance combat capabilities in traditional domains of land, air, sea and even cyber.

### **Defence Secretary Visits BEL, Chennai and AVNL Avadi**

Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane [visited](#) Bharat Electronics Limited, Chennai on 13 February 2024. He reviewed the performance of the Unit in the presence of Bhanu Prakash Srivastava, CMD, BEL. The Defence Secretary also visited the Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited (AVNL) Corporate office, Heavy Vehicles

Factory (HVF) and Engine Factory Avadi (EFA) for a review of production activities and ongoing R&D projects.

### **Defence Secretary Co-Chairs India-Germany High Defence Committee Meeting**

Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane [co-chaired](#) the India-Germany High Defence Committee (HDC) meeting in Berlin on 27 February 2024 with the State Secretary, German Ministry of Defence Benedikt Zimmer. Both sides discussed a range of bilateral security and defence issues, with a focus on developing the defence cooperation as a key pillar of the Strategic Partnership between India and Germany. He also [interacted](#) with the Federal Association of the German Security and Defence Industry (BDSV) at Berlin on 28 February 2024.

### **Chief of Army Staff Visits US**

General Manoj Pande, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), [embarked](#) on an official tour to the US from 13-16 February 2024. The COAS interacted with General Randy George, US Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) and other senior military leaders. Gen Pande visited the 'Army Geospatial Centre' at Fort Belvoir, the 'National Defence University' at Fort McNair, and interacted with leadership at Headquarters 1 Corps. He also engaged with units at the forefront of military innovation and strategy, including the Stryker Unit, 1st Multi-Domain Task Force, the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Group at Seattle and the Defence Innovation Unit in San Francisco.

### **Chief of Army Staff of French Army Visits India**

General Pierre Schill, Chief of Army Staff of French Army [visited](#) India from 27-29 February 2024. Gen Schill called on General Manoj Pande, Chief of the Army Staff and interacted with defence industry representatives. He witnessed Pinaka firing demonstration in Rajasthan. He also visited Sapta Shakti Command in Jaipur and interacted with senior military commanders, and the officers at the prestigious NDC.

### **Chief of Navy Royal New Zealand Navy Visits India**

RAdm David Proctor, Chief of Navy, Royal New Zealand Navy visited India from 19–27 Feb 2024. RAdm Proctor interacted with Adm R Hari Kumar, the Chief of the Naval Staff, on 20 February 24 and discussed avenues to strengthen bilateral maritime cooperation. The visit marked conclusion of Technical Arrangement on White Shipping Information Exchange.

### **Chief of Army Staff Visits Maharashtra MSME Defence Expo 2024 at Pune**

Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pande, [visited](#) the Maharashtra MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) Defence Expo 2024 at Pune on 26 February 2024. The expo, organised by the Government of Maharashtra, showcases the indigenous capabilities and innovations of the MSMEs, private companies, DRDO laboratories and DPSU setups in Maharashtra.

### **Chief of the Naval Staff Visits Andaman and Nicobar Command**

Adm R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff [visited](#) Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) from 6-9 February 2024. The CNS inaugurated the Precision Approach Radar (PAR) at INS Utkrosh which will enable highly accurate horizontal and vertical guidance to land an aircraft safely in low visibility conditions. The CNS also inaugurated the IUHDSS (Integrated Underwater Harbour Defence and Surveillance System) at Naval Jetty, Port Blair thereby enhancing security of Port Blair harbour. During the visit to the ANC units in the Northern and Southern Group of Islands, Adm Kumar inaugurated the Naval Communication Network (NCN) Centres at INS Kohassa, INS Baaz and INS Kardip which will augment the communication and operational capability of the ANC.

### **17<sup>th</sup> Indian Navy–French Navy Staff Talks Held**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Indian Navy (IN)–French Navy (FN) Staff Talks were [held](#) from 6-7 February 2024 co-chaired by RAdm Nirbhay Bapna, ACNS (FCI) and RAdm Jean Marc Durandau, Director International Engagements, FN. RAdm also called on VAdm Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff on 7 February 2024 and also visited IFC - IOR on 6 February 2024.

### **IAF Conducts 'Exercise Vayu Shakti-24' in Rajasthan**

The IAF [conducted](#) Exercise Vayu Shakti-24 on 17 February 2024 at the Pokhran Air

to Ground Range, near Jaisalmer. Ex Vayu Shakti was a riveting demonstration of the offensive and defensive capabilities of the IAF, spanning across day and night. The exercise also showcased joint operations with the Indian Army.

### **INDUS-X Summit Held in New Delhi**

A two-day INDUS-X Summit was [held](#) from 20–21 February 2024 in New Delhi. The summit featured a dynamic line-up of activities designed to foster collaboration, innovation, and knowledge exchange. Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane [stressed](#) that India and the US are key stakeholders navigating the complex dynamics of the Indo-Pacific region.

### **INSV Tarini Embarks on Historic Expedition by Women Officers**

Indian Naval Sailing Vessel Tarini [embarked](#) on an expedition from the INS Mandovi, Goa to Port Louis, Mauritius on 28 February 2024. The expedition is the first-ever transoceanic sortie undertaken by Indian women in a double-handed mode. The expedition was flagged off by Commander Abhilash Tomy (Retd), KC, NM who has circumnavigated the globe non-stop on sailing boats twice.

## **AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT**

### **DAC Clears Capital Acquisition Proposals worth Rs 84,560 Crores**

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), under the chairmanship of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, accorded [approval](#) for Acceptance of Necessity (AoNs) for various capital acquisition proposals amounting to Rs 84,560 crore on 16

February 2024. These relate to the procurement of new generation anti-tank mines, Air Defence Tactical Control Radar, Medium Range Maritime Reconnaissance and Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft of the Indian Navy and the ICG. AoN under Buy (Indian) category has been accorded for procurement of Active Towed Array Sonar, Heavy Weight Torpedoes, Flight Refueller Aircraft for enhancing the operational capabilities and reach of the IAF and for Software Defined Radios for the ICG.

### **Aeronautical Development Agency Signs MoU with Indian Air Force**

Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) [signed](#) a MoU on 21 February 2024 with the IAF for integration of futuristic Weapons and Sensors for LCA Tejas aircraft.

### **Y-3025 (Sandhayak) Commissioned**

The Indian Navy [commissioned](#) its latest Survey Vessel Sandhayak, at Naval Dockyard, Vizag on 3 February 2024 in the presence of the Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, FOC-in-C Eastern Naval Command.

### **Green Propulsion System Successfully Demonstrates In-Orbit Functionality**

A Green Propulsion System developed under the Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme of DRDO by a Bengaluru-based start-up Bellatrix Aerospace Pvt Ltd, successfully [demonstrated](#) in-orbit functionality on a payload launched by PSLV C-58 mission.



### **DRDO Carries Out Successful Flight Trials of 'Abhyas'**

Four flight trials of High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas were successfully [carried](#) out by DRDO during 30 January-2 February 2024. The trials were conducted with four different mission objectives in a revised robust configuration using a single booster designed by Advanced Systems Laboratory, Hyderabad to provide reduced launch acceleration.

### **FDI in Defence Sector**

Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt in a reply in the Lok Sabha on 9 February 2024 noted that Rs 5,077 crore worth of [FDI](#) has been reported by companies operating in the defence sector.

### **MoD Inks Contract worth Rs. 2269.54 Cr with BEL**

The MoD [signed](#) a contract with BEL, Hyderabad on 13 February 2024 for procurement of 11 Shakti Electronic Warfare Systems along with associated equipment / accessories for Indian Navy under Buy (Indian- IDDM) category at a total cost of Rs.2269.54 Cr. The Shakti EW System will be installed on-board capital warships of Indian Navy.

### **MoD Signs Contract worth Rs.1,752 Cr for Stabilised Remote-Control Guns**

The MoD [signed](#) a contract on 14 February 2024 with Advanced Weapon Equipment India Ltd. (AWEIL), Kanpur for supply of 463 indigenously manufactured 12.7 mm Stabilised Remote Control Guns (SRCG) for the Indian Navy and ICG at a cost of Rs. 1752.13 crores, with Indigenous Content

(IC) of more than 85 per cent. The SRCG will enhance the IN and ICG capability to accurately engage small targets in an asymmetric environment.

### **MoD Procurement on Government e-Marketplace (GeM) crosses Rs 1 Lakh Crore**

The MoD [achieved](#) a significant milestone by crossing the figure of Rs 1 lakh crore Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of procurement through Government e-Marketplace (GeM).

### **Digital Flight Control Computer for Tejas Mk1A Flown Successfully**

The Digital Fly by Wire Flight Control Computer (DFCC) was [integrated](#) in Tejas prototype LSP7 and successfully flown on 19 February 2024. DFCC has been indigenously developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), Bengaluru for the Tejas-Mk1A.

### **DRDO Hands Over 23 Licensing Agreements for Transfer of Technology**

The DRDO [organised](#) a DRDO-Industry Meet on 25 February 2024 during the Maharashtra MSME Defence Expo 2024 at Pune. The DRDO handed over 23 Licensing Agreements for Transfer of Technology (LATOT) covering the domains of electronics, laser technology, armaments, life sciences, materials science, combat vehicles, naval systems and aeronautics.

### **Indian Army Inducts 46-Meter Modular Bridge**

On 27 February 2024, the Indian Army [bolstered](#) its bridging capability with the

induction of the 46-meter Modular Bridge designed and developed by DRDO and produced by L&T. The event was graced by General Manoj Pande, Chief of the Army Staff. The modular bridges will replace the manually launched Medium Girder Bridges (MGB).

### **DRDO Successfully Flight Tests Very Short-Range Air Defence System**

DRDO [conducted](#) two successful flight tests of Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) missile on 28-29 February 2024 from a ground-based portable launcher off the coast of Odisha. These tests were carried out against high speed unmanned aerial targets under different interception scenarios.

## **DEFENCE DIPLOMACY**

### **India and Rwanda Hold Maiden Joint Defence Cooperation Committee Meeting**

India and Rwanda [held](#) the first edition of Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) meeting in Kigali, Rwanda on 8 February 2024 to discuss opportunities to enhance defence cooperation in areas like training, joint military exercises and defence industrial cooperation.

### **ICGS Varaha Makes Port Call at Maputo Port, Mozambique**

ICG Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) ICGS Varaha [made](#) a port call at Maputo Port, Mozambique on 14 February 2024 as a part of ongoing strategic overseas deployment to East Africa.

### **India-Japan Joint Exercise 'Dharma Guardian' Commences in Rajasthan**

The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of joint military exercise 'Dharma Guardian' between the Indian Army and the Japan Ground Self Defence Force [commenced](#) from 25 February to 9 March 2024 at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan.

### **IAF Team Participates in the Singapore Air Show 2024**

A team of 71 personnel of IAF Sarang Helicopter Display Team participated in the Singapore Air Show 2024 held at the Paya Lebar Air Base of Singapore. The Sarang Helicopter Display Team [showcased](#) its spectacular aerobatics manoeuvres at this event with five Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) also known as 'Dhruv'. The biennial Singapore Air Show was held from 20–24 February 2024.

'The 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'.