



Defense Business and Industry

Defence Minister commissions India's first indigenous pollution control vessel, ICGS Samudra Pratap, in Goa.

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Defence Minister Rajnath Singh commissioned the Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Samudra Pratap, India's first indigenous pollution control vessel, in Goa. With over 60% indigenous content, this advanced vessel enhances the Coast Guard's operational capabilities in pollution control, firefighting, and maritime safety. Equipped with modern technology, including pollution detection systems and a helicopter hangar, ICGS Samudra Pratap is designed to conduct extended surveillance across India's maritime zones. Singh emphasized its role in protecting the marine environment, linking it to national security and the sustainability of coastal communities amid growing climate challenges, while reinforcing a strong message to adversaries regarding India's maritime readiness.

DRDO Confirms AMCA Prototype Ready by 2028, First Flight in 2029

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The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has confirmed that India's Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme is on track for a prototype rollout by the end of 2028, followed by its maiden flight in early 2029. This announcement was made by DRDO Chairman Dr. Samir V. Kamat during the 25th anniversary seminar of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, where he emphasized the transition to next-generation platforms like the AMCA and LCA Mk2. The LCA Mk2 is expected to make its first flight between June and July 2026, showcasing rapid development progress, with the engagement of private industry partners aimed at minimizing risks and adhering to timelines. The AMCA is set to incorporate cutting-edge fifth-generation technologies, including

stealth capabilities and advanced sensor systems, aligning with India's strategic goal of enhancing self-reliance in defense manufacturing. These developments, highlighted during the 'Aeronautics 2047' seminar, underscore a commitment to indigenous innovation and a robust defense aviation ecosystem, while addressing the operational readiness of the Indian Air Force amid evolving regional security challenges. The successful induction of LCA Tejas into service, along with over 5,600 flight trials, serves as a foundation from which the AMCA and LCA Mk2 can evolve, reinforcing India's position in advanced military aviation and supporting its broader vision of achieving a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

IAF Chief urges timely aircraft deliveries to enhance operational readiness.

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Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh emphasized the critical need for aircraft manufacturers to adhere to delivery timelines for the Indian Air Force (IAF) to maintain operational readiness in a rapidly changing security environment. Speaking at the Aeronautics 2047 seminar, he celebrated the Aeronautical Development Agency's success with the light combat aircraft (LCA) Tejas, which has achieved over 5,600 flight trials. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) chairman, Samir V. Kamat, reiterated the importance of developing indigenous technologies to reduce reliance on imports, aligning with India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047. The seminar focused on advancements in aerospace technologies, including next-generation aircraft manufacturing, AI in design, and precision manufacturing, underscoring India's commitment to advancing its defense capabilities.

Rolls-Royce aims for India's AMCA engine contract, leveraging F-35 expertise against Safran.

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As India prepares to select a partner for the development of the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft

(AMCA) engine, Rolls-Royce has intensified its campaign by underscoring its extensive experience with fifth-generation fighter propulsion, particularly through its role in the F-35 program. The company proposes a model that allows India to hold Intellectual Property (IP) rights for the engine, fostering strategic autonomy and enabling future upgrades and exports without foreign dependencies. Rolls-Royce's strategy includes leveraging its expertise in "marinising" aero engines for naval applications, potentially benefiting both the Indian Air Force and Navy. However, it faces stiff competition from Safran, which is considered a frontrunner due to its comprehensive technology transfer offerings and strong diplomatic ties with India. This competition not only highlights the significance of the AMCA engine contract in boosting India's defense manufacturing capabilities but also represents a pivotal moment for the nation's technological self-reliance in aerospace and naval defense industries, crucial for its long-term strategic goals.

Pakistan's Hangor Submarines' Stealth Questioned Over Engine Performance

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Pakistan's Hangor-class submarines, derived from China's Type 039A/B Yuan design and powered by four CHD620 diesel engines instead of German MTU 396 units, are drawing scrutiny over their acoustic performance as they move toward induction from 2026 under an eight-boat, 2015 deal worth about US\$5 billion. The first PNS Hangor was launched in Wuhan on 26 April 2024, followed by subsequent boats Shushuk and Mangro in 2025, after delays linked partly to engine supply and integration issues. Analysts note that the CHD620, viewed as an unproven MTU 396 copy with inconsistent quality control, could be noisier and less reliable, potentially increasing detectability in the northern Arabian Sea, where India deploys P-8I aircraft, MH-60R helicopters and advanced surface sonars. Pakistan and China assert the engines meet required performance standards, but regional navies are expected to monitor the class closely once the first submarine enters service around 2026.

Indian Navy to Induct Warship Every Six Weeks, Boosting Readiness

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Indian Navy plans to induct a new warship roughly every six weeks throughout 2026, a cadence reflecting accelerated fleet expansion and deepening indigenisation under the Make in India/Aatmanirbhar

Bharat push. Announced in early January 2026, the schedule aims for about 19 new vessels this year, including stealth frigates, anti-submarine ships and support craft, reinforcing blue-water capabilities amid intensifying strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region. This follows 2025's strong year of operations — from Operation Sindo to sustained maritime security patrols — and the commissioning of multiple frontline platforms like INS Surat, Nilgiri-class frigates and shallow-water ASW craft, as well as ending foreign warship purchases with INS Tamal in July 2025. The tempo enhances deterrence against regional competitors, sustains vital sea lanes, and bolsters India's defence industrial base through domestic shipbuilding dates and workforce growth.

LAT Aerospace's Lat One v0.1 successfully demonstrates ultra-short takeoff capabilities in India.

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LAT Aerospace, founded by Zomato CEO Deepinder Goyal in early 2025, achieved a breakthrough on January 4, 2026, when its fully electric Lat One v0.1 UAV prototype demonstrated ultra-short takeoff and landing (uSTOL) capabilities in a maiden test flight, lifting off in just 40 meters despite crashing shortly after due to anticipated structural defects confirmed by pre-flight simulations. This milestone validates high-lift designs for 60-minute endurance flights on routes like Mumbai-Pune, with Lat One v0.2 already under development for full missions including safe landings and future hybrid-electric manned aircraft. From an Indian strategic perspective, the homegrown innovation bolsters self-reliance in aerospace amid regulatory easing for drones, enabling defense logistics, disaster response in remote areas, and UDAN-enhanced regional connectivity to counter infrastructure gaps and geopolitical vulnerabilities in border regions.

Indian Air Force set to induct first indigenous C-295 transport aircraft next year.

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India's Make-in-India C-295 tactical transport programme will see the first Made-in-India C-295 roll out from Tata-Airbus's Vadodara final assembly line in September 2026, under a ₹21,935-crore contract signed in September 2021 to buy 56 aircraft for the Indian Air Force (IAF) and replace its ageing Avro fleet, with 40 to be manufactured domestically and delivered by August 2031. The IAF has already received the initial 16 Spain-

built C-295s, boosting tactical airlift along northern and island fronts. Defence planning for 2026 includes induction of several indigenous systems, including locally built transport aircraft, to enhance strategic mobility and logistics. The programme strengthens India's defence industrial base, integrates MSMEs into aerospace supply chains, and advances self-reliance.

India's fourth Arihant-class SSBN to be named INS Arisudan, commissioning in 2027.

06-Jan-26

India's fourth Arihant-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, designated S4* and expected to be named INS Arisudan, advances the nation's sea-based nuclear deterrence amid evolving regional security challenges. Launched by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on October 16, 2025, at the Ship Building Centre in Visakhapatnam, the approximately 7,000-tonne vessel features eight vertical launch system cells, enabling it to carry up to 24 K-15 missiles (750 km range) or eight K-4 missiles (3,500 km range) for extended patrols in the Indo-Pacific. Currently undergoing sea trials that began in late 2025, INS Arisudan boasts over 80% indigenous content and is slated for commissioning around 2027, completing the Arihant-class fleet alongside INS Arihant, INS Arighaat, and INS Aridhaman, thereby bolstering India's credible second-strike capability within its nuclear triad.

Sukhoi SJ-100 Superjet with Indian branding seen before Wings India 2026.

06-Jan-26

A Sukhoi SJ-100-95B Superjet has been spotted at Zhukovsky airfield with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) branding, indicating its preparation for a static display at Wings India 2026 in Hyderabad. This development reflects Russia's renewed engagement with the Indian civil aviation sector, aiming to secure interest for the Superjet amidst shifting global supply chains. However, India's potential local production hinges on critical decisions regarding the aircraft's propulsion system, particularly the legacy PowerJet SaM146 engine, which has lost support due to geopolitical tensions. India is now exploring a partnership with France to develop a more viable engine solution, likely involving technology transfers that would enhance indigenous manufacturing capabilities. This collaboration could address efficiency concerns linked to the new Aviadvigatel PD-8 engine and establish a significant aerospace manufacturing hub in India, with

broader implications for India's strategic self-reliance and competitive positioning in the aviation market.

US Integrates Grok AI Amid North Korea's Nuclear Sub Advancements

06-Jan-26

The U.S. government has moved forward with integrating Elon Musk's Grok artificial intelligence systems into federal operations following multiple agreements in 2025 and early 2026, including a reported \$200 million contract signed by the Pentagon under its "Grok for Government" program that gives federal agencies access to advanced Grok models such as Grok 4 for mission planning and internal use. The Department of War, rebranding aspects of the Defense Department's AI efforts, announced in December 2025 that it would embed xAI's frontier AI capabilities into its GenAI.mil platform, allowing secure AI tools for millions of military and civilian personnel starting in early 2026, and the General Services Administration earlier in September 2025 had facilitated a unique OneGov agreement making Grok models broadly available to federal agencies at low cost to accelerate adoption. The integration follows xAI's broader federal partnerships and positions the Grok family of models across government workstreams alongside other AI providers as part of a strategic push to modernize U.S. AI infrastructure.

Nifty India Defence Index rises 3% on strong gains from MTAR Tech and Solar Industries.

06-Jan-26

Indian defence stocks experienced a notable rally, with the Nifty India Defence Index rising nearly 3% and reaching an intraday high of 7,989.80, driven by significant gains from major players such as MTAR Technologies and Solar Industries. This surge reflects heightened investor optimism fueled by global geopolitical tensions and positive domestic developments, including the Indian Army's contract with NIBE for rocket manufacturing equipment and the Defence Acquisition Council's approval of capital procurement proposals worth approximately ₹79,000 crore. The market's response underscores a robust commitment to enhancing India's defence manufacturing capabilities, amid increasing global defence spending expectations following recent international military operations.

North Korea claims hypersonic missile tests to boost nuclear deterrent.

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North Korea's recent announcement claims that leader Kim Jong Un has overseen test flights of hypersonic missiles, highlighting an intensified effort to enhance the nation's nuclear deterrent capabilities. This development comes as North Korea prepares for an important ruling party conference and follows reports from South Korea regarding multiple ballistic missile launches. The significance of these tests lies in their potential to escalate tensions in the region, particularly affecting security dynamics for neighboring countries, including South Korea and Japan. This situation underscores the ongoing challenges posed by North Korea's advancing military technologies and the broader implications for regional stability and international security.

DRDO Chief Kamat emphasizes drone technology's pivotal role in India's defense by 2026.

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DRDO Chief Kamat has outlined a strategic pivot towards drone technology, emphasizing the development of high-altitude, long-endurance (HALE) systems and counter-drone capabilities to enhance India's defense posture by 2026. This initiative seeks to integrate cutting-edge innovations through collaboration with industries and academia, ensuring robust solutions for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) needs across diverse terrains, notably the Himalayas. The focus on unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs) aims to advance autonomous strike capabilities, while DRDO's partnerships with private firms like Tata and L&T will accelerate manufacturing. This comprehensive approach marks a significant shift in India's military capabilities, potentially redefining its strategic dynamics in South Asia by ensuring drone superiority alongside strong defenses against adversarial UAV threats.

DRDO's Project Dhvani: Hypersonic Glide Vehicle with Agni Booster

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India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) continues to advance Project Dhvani, a hypersonic glide vehicle launched via an Agni-series ballistic missile booster, capable of exceeding Mach 5 speeds and offering an operational range of 6,000 to 10,000 km for enhanced strategic deterrence.

Featuring a blended wing-body wave-rider design approximately 9 meters long, low radar cross-section for stealth, ultra-high-temperature ceramic composites enduring 2,000-3,000°C re-entry heat, and precision inertial navigation with satellite guidance, the project builds on Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle successes. A full-scale model was unveiled at the Vigyan Vaibhav exhibition in Hyderabad on February 28, 2025, with maiden flight tests scheduled for early 2026 following rigorous ground validations, targeting full induction by 2029-30 amid regional security imperatives. This indigenous breakthrough underscores India's self-reliant defence posture, positioning it competitively against global hypersonic systems.

Xinfiniti Aerospace launches unmanned Cheetah and Chetak choppers to boost Indian military capabilities.

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06-Jan-26

Xinfiniti Aerospace has introduced unmanned versions of the Cheetah and Chetak helicopters, building on decades of service in the Indian armed forces. The Unmanned Army Cheetah Autonomous System aims to enhance operational capabilities through manned-unmanned teaming, allowing for safer missions in high-altitude and contested environments. This initiative aligns with India's strategy to modernize its aging helicopter fleet amid rising maintenance costs and safety concerns. By retrofitting existing airframes and focusing on modular designs, Xinfiniti seeks to expedite deployment while supporting the 'Make in India' vision, ultimately enhancing the operational readiness of the Indian Army, Air Force, and Navy against evolving threats.

GE-HAL to finalize F414 engine ToT deal by March 2026, first unit by 2029.

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India is poised to finalize a crucial defense agreement with the United States regarding the Transfer of Technology (ToT) for General Electric's F414 engines, with a target completion date of March 2026. The deal, valued at approximately USD 1.5 billion, will enable Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to absorb 80 percent of critical manufacturing technologies, enhancing India's indigenous aerospace capabilities and aligning with the Tejas Mk2 program and future fighter aircraft. The first "Made-in-India" F414 engine is anticipated by mid-2029, while HAL plans to manufacture eight Limited Series Production Tejas Mk2 aircraft between 2030 and 2032, allowing the Indian Air Force to train pilots and integrate indigenous systems

ahead of full-scale production. This strategic shift aims to transition India from a defense importer to a co-developer of advanced fighter propulsion systems.

Russia offers S-350 Vityaz to India with full tech transfer to enhance S-400 capabilities.

06-Jan-26

Russia has renewed its proposal to supply India with the S-350 Vityaz air defence system, offering comprehensive Technology Transfer to enhance India's existing S-400 air defence capabilities. Positioned as a "force multiplier," the S-350 is designed to protect the high-value S-400 assets from saturation attacks, featuring advanced radar and increased missile capacity. This offer comes as India invests in indigenous projects like "Project Kusha," which aims to develop a long-range missile comparable to the S-400. By integrating the S-350 into India's "Make in India" initiative, Russia seeks to support India's immediate operational needs while fostering local manufacturing capabilities in the defense sector.

Safran's AMCA engine confirmed scalable to 140 kN for future variants.

06-Jan-26

Safran CEO Olivier Andries has confirmed that the new turbofan engine being co-developed with India's Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) for the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) will feature a scalable thrust range of 120-140 kN, paving the way for a heavier variant of the aircraft. The 140 kN version aims to support increased payload, enhanced firepower, and advanced systems, crucial for achieving supercruise capabilities. While the engine will initially focus on fifth-generation requirements, its modular design allows for future upgrades towards sixth-generation technologies. This development significantly strengthens India's indigenous fighter ecosystem, establishing a sovereign industrial capability that will support advanced combat aircraft over the coming decades.

Politics

Congress critiques government's ineffective handling of U.S.-India relations amid Trump's tariff threats.

06-Jan-26

The Congress party criticized the Indian government's approach to U.S.-India relations following President Donald Trump's remarks about potential tariff increases on Indian imports due to India's continued purchase of Russian oil. Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh highlighted that despite high-profile events like "Namaste Trump" and "Howdy Modi," these gestures have not yielded significant benefits, as Trump indicated he was not pleased with India's actions. Trump's statement, made during a flight back to Washington, underlined the U.S. administration's tough stance on India, especially as bipartisan pressure mounts in Congress to impose sanctions related to Russian oil imports, potentially impacting India's economy and trade relations. This situation raises concerns about the future of U.S.-India ties amid geopolitical tensions.

Left parties condemn US attack on Venezuela as UN Charter violation.

06-Jan-26

The Left parties in India have condemned the recent US military operation that removed Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, labeling it a violation of international law and the UN Charter. They assert that the US's actions, including President Trump's statements about seizing Venezuela's oil reserves, reveal imperialistic intentions aimed at establishing hegemony in Latin America. Protests against US aggression and in solidarity with Venezuela are being called for across India, with leaders urging the Indian government to stand against such interventions. The broader implications of this situation highlight growing geopolitical tensions and the need for countries to resist unilateral military actions that undermine sovereignty.

Geopolitics and Security Alliances

India and UAE strengthen defense ties through military dialogues and training initiatives.

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Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi embarked on a significant four-day visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Sri Lanka, aimed at enhancing bilateral military cooperation. In the UAE, he engaged in high-level discussions with Major General Yousef Maayouf Saeed Al Hallami, focusing on advancing joint military engagements, training convergence, and defense industrial cooperation. This visit underscores India's commitment to strengthening ties with Gulf partners amidst evolving regional dynamics, particularly in light of the UAE's pivotal role in global trade and security. General Dwivedi's agenda includes visits to key military establishments, such as the UAE National Defence College, where he will foster knowledge exchange on modern warfare and counter-terrorism tactics. The discussions also highlight India's strategic approach to maintaining energy security and counterbalancing regional threats, as well as the potential for co-development projects in defense manufacturing under the 'Make in India' initiative. Following his engagements in the UAE, General Dwivedi will travel to Sri Lanka for discussions on mutual interests, including training cooperation and regional security, reinforcing India's proactive diplomatic stance in South Asia and the Indo-Pacific, while promoting stability through enhanced military partnerships.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz to strengthen India-Germany ties on January 12-13.

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German Chancellor Friedrich Merz is set to visit India on January 12-13, marking a significant moment in the evolving India-Germany Strategic Partnership. The discussions will focus on enhancing cooperation in trade, technology, education, and notably, defense, with potential joint ventures in military technology aligned with India's Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The visit also aims to bolster business ties, particularly in sectors like automotive and digital infrastructure, and will address broader geopolitical challenges, including Indo-Pacific stability and climate action. This engagement not only strengthens bilateral ties but also positions India as a

crucial partner for Germany in diversifying its strategic relations in the Asia-Pacific region.

Trump warns Latin American nations after U.S. strikes on Venezuela.

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06-Jan-26

U.S. forces executed a high-profile operation on January 3, 2026, extracting Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife from Caracas to face narcotics-related charges in New York, leading President Trump to invoke a revived 'Donroe Doctrine' the following day. This doctrine emphasizes American dominance in the Western Hemisphere, citing the threat posed by Maduro's regime through foreign adversaries and drug trafficking, while asserting control over Venezuela's oil reserves for global energy security. Trump's rhetoric extended to threats against Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Greenland, and Iran, framing U.S. military capability as unparalleled and hinting at potential further actions in the region. From an Indian strategic viewpoint, this assertive U.S. posture serves to counter influences from adversarial powers like China and Russia in Latin America, reflecting India's own vigilance in the Indo-Pacific. The overall significance underscores a shift towards interventionist policies reminiscent of Roosevelt's era, aimed at protecting national resources and maintaining regional stability amid rising geopolitical rivalries.

India advises citizens against non-essential travel to Iran amid protests.

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India's Ministry of External Affairs on 4-5 January 2026 issued a formal advisory urging Indian citizens to avoid non-essential travel to Iran, citing "recent developments" and widening protests over spiralling inflation and the collapse of the Iranian rial, which has lost more than half its value in six months. The unrest, triggered in late December 2025 by shopkeepers' strikes in Tehran, has since spread to over 20 provinces, with reports of at least ten deaths in clashes with security forces. While Tehran insists the situation is under control, New Delhi has asked Indians and PIOs already in Iran to register with the embassy in Tehran, avoid protest sites and monitor official channels for updates. For India, the instability threatens energy security, shipping through the Persian Gulf, and projects like Chabahar, even as U.S. sanctions and regional rivalries further constrain room for manoeuvre.

India launches e-B-4 Visa to ease travel for Chinese businessmen.

06-Jan-26

India has introduced a new e-Production Investment Business (e-B-4) visa for Chinese nationals, effective from 1 January 2026, allowing online applications and stays of up to six months for tightly defined production and technology-related work. The scheme, notified through an advisory by the Indian Embassy in Beijing, covers activities such as installation and commissioning of equipment, quality checks, essential maintenance, IT/ERP ramp-up, training, supply-chain development and plant set-up, with issuance typically in 45–50 days. This move follows New Delhi's late-2025 push to cut red tape on business visas for Chinese professionals and fully restore business and tourist visa services, signalling a calibrated reopening after the post-2020 freeze. Strategically, India is seeking to unlock stalled manufacturing projects and FDI while maintaining political firmness on the boundary dispute and technology security.

Indian envoy urges US to lift tariffs on oil imports amid geopolitical shifts.

06-Jan-26

On 4 January 2026, US Senator Lindsey Graham claimed aboard Air Force One that Indian Ambassador to the US Vinay Mohan Kwatra had told him during a meeting "about a month ago" that New Delhi was buying less Russian oil and wanted President Donald Trump to "relieve the 25% tariff" imposed on India over such purchases. The remarks follow Trump's earlier move to double overall tariffs on Indian goods to 50% in 2025 and his fresh warning on 5 January of even higher duties if Russian crude imports do not fall further. While Indian refiners have begun sharply cutting Russian liftings under pressure of US sanctions and potential trade concessions, New Delhi continues to stress energy security and strategic autonomy, seeking tariff relief without formally aligning with Washington's coercive approach toward Moscow.

Thailand's shift to China threatens US influence and India's security.

06-Jan-26

Thailand's strategic alignment with China has increasingly undermined its long-standing military ties with the United States, as reported on January 5, 2026. The country has reportedly procured over \$400 million in Chinese military equipment since 2016, surpassing US supplies, further diminishing American influence in Southeast Asia. This shift poses risks to regional

stability, particularly for India, as it could enhance China's military presence in the Indo-Pacific, threaten critical maritime routes, and reduce US deterrence capabilities. Consequently, India's maritime security interests may be jeopardized amid ongoing tensions in the South China Sea, emphasizing the need for New Delhi to adapt its defense strategies in response to the evolving geopolitical landscape.

Russian missile strikes hit Kharkiv, damaging energy infrastructure amid winter conditions.

06-Jan-26

Russia executed five missile strikes on Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, inflicting significant damage on its energy infrastructure, according to Mayor Ihor Terekhov. He emphasized that the attacks target essential services such as heating and water, aiming to instill fear among the populace as temperatures drop below freezing. This latest assault is part of a broader pattern of intensified Russian attacks on Ukraine's energy systems, contributing to widespread power outages and disrupting daily life for millions. The ongoing conflict highlights the strategic efforts by Russia to undermine Ukrainian resilience amid the winter season, raising concerns about humanitarian conditions as the war continues.

Danish PM warns US takeover of Greenland could end NATO alliance.

06-Jan-26

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has warned that a potential American takeover of Greenland would signal the end of NATO, following comments from US President Donald Trump advocating for US control over the strategically important Arctic island. Frederiksen emphasized that any military action against a NATO member state would jeopardize the alliance and its long-standing security guarantees. Her remarks were made in light of a US military operation in Venezuela that has heightened tensions in Denmark and Greenland, which is a semi-autonomous territory. Amid rising concerns, both Frederiksen and Greenlandic leader Jens Frederik Nielsen reaffirmed their commitment to cooperation, rejecting any notion of a sudden US takeover. The situation highlights the fragility of international alliances and the evolving geopolitical landscape in the Arctic.

Trump asserts Ukraine didn't target Putin's residence in drone strike, contradicting Kremlin's claims.

06-Jan-26

President Donald Trump stated that U.S. national security officials have determined Ukraine did not target Russian President Vladimir Putin's residence during a recent drone strike, contradicting claims made by the Kremlin. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov had accused Ukraine of launching drones at Putin's state residence while negotiations for peace were ongoing. Although initially concerned about the allegations, Trump later posted an editorial questioning the Russian claims, emphasizing the need to focus on peace efforts. This development underscores the complexities of U.S.-Russia relations and highlights the difficulties in mediating the ongoing conflict, as Putin remains reluctant to conclude hostilities without achieving his territorial objectives in Ukraine.

China and Pakistan strengthen ties in trade, finance, and security.

06-Jan-26

China and Pakistan have strengthened their bilateral ties, committing to enhance cooperation across various sectors including trade, finance, agriculture, and cybersecurity, as reported by Chinese state media. The joint statement emphasized a mutual support framework in regional and international financial platforms, aiming for more tangible actions against terrorist organizations in Afghanistan. This development signals a deepening strategic partnership between the two nations, potentially impacting regional security dynamics. For India, the growing collaboration between its neighbors may necessitate a reassessment of its defense strategies and diplomatic engagements in South Asia to safeguard its national interests and ensure stability in the region.

Zelensky dismisses SBU chief amid security reforms and corruption scandal.

06-Jan-26

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has dismissed the head of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), Vasyl Maliuk, amidst ongoing security reforms nearly four years into the Russian invasion. Maliuk, recognized for his leadership during significant operations against Russian forces, will remain within the SBU to conduct asymmetric operations aimed at inflicting damage on the enemy. This change follows a recent corruption scandal that led to the resignation of Zelensky's chief of staff and comes as the president also seeks a new

defense minister. The reshuffle underscores Ukraine's ongoing struggle to address internal challenges while maintaining its military efficacy against Russian aggression.

China's infrastructure build-up near Pangong Tso raises concerns for India.

06-Jan-26

Recent satellite imagery reveals China's aggressive infrastructure build-up near the Pangong Tso buffer zone, reinforcing territorial claims following the 2020 Galwan Valley clash. This activity, while on China's side of the buffer, raises concerns about the fragility of disengagement agreements and signals a need for India to expedite its own infrastructure developments to match Beijing's rapid pace. India's Operation Sindo indicates a tactical shift, with troop redeployments enhancing readiness, while ongoing diplomatic talks seek to manage tensions. As China employs its "salami-slicing" strategy, India's focus on indigenous capabilities and international partnerships, particularly with allies like the US, is crucial for maintaining stability along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and ensuring that recent calm does not devolve into renewed conflict.

US Strikes in Venezuela Prompt India to Reassess Strategy Against Pakistan

06-Jan-26

The recent unilateral US military operation in Venezuela has reignited discussions regarding India's strategic posture towards Pakistan, especially in light of India's successful Operation Sindo in May 2025. Observers question whether India should adopt a bolder approach against Pakistan, given its longstanding support for terrorism and hostility towards India. The US's justification for its actions, citing narco-terrorism, parallels India's claims against Pakistan, raising critical questions about international norms and unilateral interventions. As tensions rise in the region, particularly with Islamic radicalism in Bangladesh and ongoing threats from Pakistan, India's responses may significantly shape its national security strategy and geopolitical standing. This scenario underscores the urgent need for a reevaluation of global conduct amid increasing unilateralism.

India urges peaceful dialogue following US military action in Venezuela.

06-Jan-26

India has expressed grave concern over the recent US military operation in Venezuela that led to the capture of President Nicolas Maduro and his wife, urging for peaceful dialogue to resolve the escalating tensions. The Ministry of External Affairs reiterated India's commitment to the welfare of Venezuela's people, while advising Indian nationals in the country to exercise caution and limit travel. As the situation unfolds, India emphasizes the importance of upholding international law, alongside criticisms from other nations including Brazil, China, and Russia. This incident may impact India's robust energy ties with Venezuela, particularly through investments by ONGC Videsh Limited in joint ventures, highlighting the geopolitical complexities in the region.

Hindu factory owner killed in Bangladesh, raising minority safety concerns.

06-Jan-26

A Hindu factory owner, Tushar Bairagi, was shot dead in broad daylight by assailants in Bangladesh, highlighting ongoing violence against minorities in the country. This incident follows a series of attacks on Hindus, raising alarms from India's Ministry of External Affairs, which cited over 2,900 incidents of violence since the interim government took power. The targeted nature of Bairagi's killing, given his roles as a businessman and journalist, suggests potential motives linked to religious extremism or local rivalries. As the investigation unfolds, concerns about minority safety and the efficacy of the Yunus administration's protection measures intensify, with implications for regional security and communal harmony amid rising political and economic instability in Bangladesh.

Venezuela's collapse reveals limits of China's Latin American influence.

06-Jan-26

The recent collapse of Venezuela's partnership with China illustrates the fragility of Beijing's influence in Latin America, which was initially bolstered by significant investments and an "all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership." However, Venezuela's economic mismanagement, compounded by U.S. sanctions and military actions, has led to a dramatic decline in oil production and increasing defaults on debts owed to China. The situation escalated when U.S. forces executed Operation Absolute Resolve, capturing key Venezuelan leaders,

further weakening China's position in the region. This crisis highlights the limits of China's non-interventionist strategy and raises concerns about its capacity to maintain economic footholds amid escalating geopolitical tensions, ultimately marking a setback for its ambitions in Latin America.

Hegseth censures retired Navy captain for urging troops to defy unlawful orders.

06-Jan-26

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth has issued a formal letter of censure against retired Navy Captain and Democratic Senator Mark Kelly for a November video urging troops to refuse unlawful orders from the Trump administration. Hegseth criticized the video as seditious and a violation of military conduct standards, which may lead to a reduction in Kelly's rank and retirement pay. Kelly defended his stance by citing his extensive military service and accused Hegseth of political retaliation against freedom of speech. This controversy highlights the tension between military discipline and political expression, raising concerns about accountability and the implications for military personnel's rights to voice dissent.

BNP surges in Bangladesh polls amid violence risk; India stays alert.

06-Jan-26

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is poised for a significant electoral victory as opinion polls indicate 70% support, largely fueled by the sympathy surrounding the late Khaleda Zia and the return of her son, Tarique Rahman. In contrast, the Jamaat-e-Islami's popularity has dwindled to 19%, reflecting a public rejection of its violent tactics and alleged ties to the ISI. As political tensions rise, particularly with escalating violence against minorities, India remains vigilant, hoping for a stable BNP-led government that could foster better bilateral relations. Intelligence officials caution that the Jamaat-ISI nexus may incite chaos to delay the elections, underscoring the precarious political landscape in Bangladesh.

Cuba reports 32 officers killed in US operation targeting Maduro.

06-Jan-26

The Cuban government reported the deaths of 32 military and police officers during a US military operation in Venezuela that led to the arrest of President Nicolás Maduro on narco-terrorism charges. The officers were acting under a mission requested by

Venezuela, facing fierce resistance during combat and bombings. This development highlights the increasing assertiveness of US military power in Latin America, potentially altering regional alliances and prompting India to assess the implications for energy security and the multipolar balance against Western influences. The situation could signal shifts in global South dynamics that merit close observation by Indian defense analysts.

Military Operations

Operation Sindoor showcases India's determination and armed forces' effectiveness, Vice President highlights youth's role.

06-Jan-26

Vice President C P Radhakrishnan praised the Indian Armed Forces for their successful execution of Operation Sindoor, which eliminated over 100 terrorists in response to the tragic Pahalgam attack that claimed 26 civilian lives. Speaking at the National Cadet Corps' Republic Day Camp, he emphasized the significant role played by 72,000 NCC cadets in civil defense efforts during the operation, highlighting their contributions to emergency drills and blood donation camps. Radhakrishnan underscored the importance of fostering a self-reliant and resilient youth, reinforcing national unity and discipline as crucial in the face of evolving global challenges. The event symbolizes India's commitment to youth development and a robust future under the vision of a developed nation by 2047.

Thai army reports Cambodian border strike injures soldier, breaches truce.

06-Jan-26

Thailand's army accused Cambodian forces of violating a recent truce by bombarding its Ubon Ratchathani province, resulting in injuries to a soldier. The decades-old territorial dispute, characterized by previous military clashes, revolves around colonial-era border demarcations and claims over temple ruins. Despite a truce agreement reached in December, which aimed to cease hostilities and facilitate cooperation on demining efforts, tensions remain high, with Thailand rejecting claims of seizing Cambodian territory. Cambodia has proposed a meeting to address the border issue, but Bangkok suggests that any discussions may need to wait until after upcoming elections. This ongoing conflict underscores the fragility of peace in the region

and the complexities of territorial disputes in Southeast Asia.

Terrorism and Counterterrorism

Two injured in Bishnupur blasts amid ongoing ethnic violence.

06-Jan-26

Two individuals were injured in separate explosions in Bishnupur district, Manipur, on Monday morning. The first blast, attributed to an improvised explosive device, occurred at an abandoned house linked to ongoing ethnic violence, while the second explosion happened as locals gathered at the site of the initial blast. The injured, identified as Sanatomba Singh and Indubala Devi, were treated at a government hospital and are reportedly out of danger. Local residents expressed frustration towards security forces, accusing them of lapses despite their presence in the area, further complicating the already tense situation in Manipur, which has been marred by ethnic strife since May 2023.

Intel warns of increased infiltration via Nepal amidst Bangladesh elections.

06-Jan-26

Intelligence Bureau reports highlight a sharp rise in Bangladeshi nationals attempting illegal entry into India through the porous Indo-Nepal border, shifting from the tightly secured Indo-Bangladesh frontier following Sheikh Hasina's ouster on August 5, 2024. Key arrests include three Bangladeshis on January 1, 2026, at Raxaul, Bihar, and others in early January, with touts exploiting routes near Bahraich, Gonda, and Balrampur. The Sashastra Seema Bal has deployed 1,700 personnel for intensified combing operations amid fears of ISI-backed terror modules targeting Bihar, West Bengal, and Northeast ahead of Bangladesh's February 12, 2026, polls and West Bengal's March-April 2026 elections. From India's strategic lens, this infiltration threatens demographic shifts and internal security, demanding robust surveillance to counter Pakistan-influenced destabilization from post-Hasina Bangladesh unrest.

Man arrested for espionage, sharing sensitive info with Pakistan.

06-Jan-26

The Ambala police have apprehended Sunil alias Sunny, a contractor allegedly spying for Pakistan and providing

sensitive information about the local Air Force station. His arrest follows an investigation where police seized his mobile phone, revealing contact with a woman who requested information, which he forwarded to an enemy nation. In a related incident, Kaithal police arrested Devendra for allegedly sharing details with Pakistan's ISI regarding military operations during the recent India-Pakistan conflict. These arrests underscore ongoing concerns over espionage and the vulnerabilities in India's defense infrastructure, highlighting the critical need for enhanced security protocols and vigilance in safeguarding sensitive military information.

Cybersecurity and Information Warfare

Srinagar DM suspends VPN services for two months over security concerns.

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06-Jan-26

The District Magistrate of Srinagar has suspended all Virtual Private Network (VPN) services in the district for two months, citing public order and cyber security concerns. This decision, enacted under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, aims to prevent misuse of VPNs for unlawful activities that could disrupt peace and safety. Authorities believe VPNs could facilitate the incitement of unrest and hinder law enforcement's ability to monitor and investigate effectively. The suspension reflects the administration's proactive approach to maintaining stability and security in a region with heightened concerns, underscoring the critical balance between technology use and public safety in contemporary governance.

Mil Personnel & Veterans

Lt Gen Sharma Reviews Training and Modernization at Ahilyanagar School

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06-Jan-26

Lt Gen Devendra Sharma, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Army Training Command, visited the Mechanised Infantry Centre and School in Ahilyanagar to assess training standards and modern infrastructure. He emphasized the importance of adaptive training regimens and integration of new technologies in preparing troops for mechanised and combined-arms operations. During his engagement with cadets and foreign trainees, he recognized India's growing role in international military education and underscored the

necessity for agility and coordination across different combat capabilities. This visit reaffirms ARTRAC's commitment to modernizing the Indian Army's Mechanised Infantry, ensuring readiness for future conflicts in an evolving warfare landscape.

Miscellaneous

Jaipur's first Army Day parade on January 15 showcases valor and community support.

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06-Jan-26

Jaipur will host its inaugural Army Day parade on January 15, marking a significant shift from the traditional venue in Delhi. This event allows the public to witness the courage and valor of the Indian Army up close, demonstrating the government's initiative to decentralize such commemorations, as seen in previous parades held in cities like Bengaluru and Pune. The South Western Command Army Commander, Lt Gen Manjinder Singh, emphasized the importance of supporting ex-servicemen and their families, highlighting a medical camp organized for them. The parade will also celebrate the achievements of Operation Sindoora, reinforcing the Indian Army's commitment to national security and community engagement.

US considers reopening Caracas embassy amid ongoing Venezuela risks.

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06-Jan-26

U.S. national security circles are actively preparing plans to potentially reopen the U.S. Embassy in Caracas later in 2026 if President Donald Trump formally orders it, marking a significant shift since its closure in March 2019 amid worsening U.S.-Venezuela ties. The embassy remains closed and Venezuela is under a highest-level U.S. travel advisory due to violence, crime and wrongful detention risks, with consular services handled from Bogota, Colombia. These preparations follow the Jan. 3 U.S. military operation in which Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro was captured and flown to New York to face narco-terrorism charges, and Delcy Rodríguez was sworn in as interim president in Caracas. From an Indian strategic lens, Washington's renewed diplomatic footprint signals intensifying great-power competition for Venezuela's vast energy resources and influence in Latin America, with implications for regional stability and China-Russia ties.

3,000 R-Day Parade and Beating Retreat tickets sold out online quickly.

06-Jan-26

Sale of Republic Day Parade (26 Jan 2026), Full Dress Rehearsal of Beating Retreat (28 Jan) and Beating Retreat (29 Jan) tickets began on 5 January 2026 via the official Aamantran portal and mobile app, with offline counters open at six Delhi locations. On the first day, nearly 3,000 tickets – the daily online quota of 2,225 for the parade and 692 for rehearsal/Beating Retreat – were sold out within hours, with prices ranging from Rs 20 to Rs 100. The Defence Ministry's move to limit daily quotas and promote early booking reflects strong public enthusiasm for India's 77th Republic Day festivities, fostering civic engagement and showcasing military heritage. Valid photo ID is mandatory for purchase and entry, while high demand signals robust national pride as security forces tighten arrangements ahead of the major national celebration.

PM Modi praises new Residue Upgradation Facility at Visakh Refinery for energy security advancement.

06-Jan-26

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi praised the recent commissioning of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited's Residue Upgradation Facility (RUF) at the Visakh Refinery in Andhra Pradesh, calling it a significant advancement in India's pursuit of energy security and self-reliance. The Prime Minister highlighted that this cutting-edge facility represents a crucial step toward bolstering the nation's energy independence, aligning with the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. He emphasized the facility's role in enhancing energy security, which is vital for India's strategic autonomy and economic stability. The development is expected to not only support domestic energy needs but also reduce reliance on imports, thereby strengthening India's position in the global energy landscape. This initiative reflects the government's commitment to fostering an indigenous energy sector and promoting sustainable growth while addressing the challenges posed by global energy fluctuations.

PM Modi Advocates Gentle Speech for Unity and Civility in Society

06-Jan-26

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi emphasized the importance of gentle speech in public life, sharing a Sanskrit verse to illustrate his points during a recent address. He highlighted that effective communication

is pivotal in fostering understanding and unity within society. The Prime Minister's remarks are seen as an essential reminder of the need for civility and respect in political discourse, particularly in the current polarized environment. This focus on the power of words reflects a broader commitment to enhancing public dialogue, which could strengthen democratic values and promote harmony among diverse communities in India. Such an approach is significant as it encourages leaders and citizens alike to engage in constructive conversations, contributing to a more cohesive national narrative.

Gen Manoj Katiyar visits The Tribune to discuss media's role in defense.

06-Jan-26

On New Year's Day, Lt Gen Manoj Kr Katiyar, the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Command, visited The Tribune's offices in Chandigarh. During his visit, he engaged with key editorial personnel, including Editor-in-Chief Jyoti Malhotra and editors from Dainik Tribune and Punjabi Tribune, to gain insight into the newspaper's daily operations. This interaction underscores the importance of media's role in disseminating information and contributing to national discourse, particularly in the context of defense matters. Such engagements reflect the Indian Army's commitment to transparency and fostering strong relationships with civil society, which is crucial for maintaining public trust and understanding of military operations.

India's Gaganyaan uncrewed mission scheduled for March 2026 launch.

06-Jan-26

India's Gaganyaan human spaceflight program is set to launch its first uncrewed mission by March 2026, following significant delays attributed to supply chain challenges and manufacturing hurdles exacerbated by the pandemic. Initially announced in 2018, the program has expanded from two uncrewed and one crewed flights to eight missions, reflecting a robust push towards self-reliance in space exploration. Key systems, including the crew escape mechanism and thermal protection, have been rigorously tested, enhancing confidence in mission safety. The success of the upcoming mission could catalyze further developments, including the inaugural crewed flight and the establishment of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station, marking a pivotal step in India's strategic ambitions in space exploration.

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