



# Defence Professionals News & Analysis

December 18, 2025 | Day 352

## Top Gainers

Stock	Close	Prev	Change
WALCHANNAG	197.53	174.46	+13.22%
HBLPOWER	818.85	762.8	+7.35%
SWANDEF	1259.2	1199.3	+4.99%
RELINFRA	164.96	157.13	+4.98%
AXISCADES	1251.5	1198.1	+4.46%

## Top Losers

Stock	Close	Prev	Change
NIBE	1108.85	1182.6	-6.24%
DRONACHRYA	41.65	43.84	-5.0%
TECHERA	208.25	214.95	-3.12%
GOODLUCK	1019.8	1051.2	-2.99%
PTC	157.74	161.6	-2.39%

## Defense Business and Industry

### IAF Enhances Jaguar Fleet Sustainability by Acquiring Ex-Omani Aircraft SHARE

18-Dec-25

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to bolster its aging Jaguar fleet through the acquisition of 20 ex-Omani Jaguar fighter aircraft, which will be dismantled in Oman and shipped to India for parts. This initiative responds to the mounting challenges of spare parts availability and the obsolescence of the Jaguar platform, as India seeks to sustain its operational capabilities amid rising tensions with neighboring countries. The procurement echoes past measures, such as similar arrangements with France, and aims to provide critical components to maintain the IAF's sortie rates without incurring the high costs of manufacturing obsolete parts. Despite concerns regarding the Jaguars' age, they continue to serve vital roles in deep-penetration strike and maritime attack missions, and the deal emphasizes India's strategy of leveraging international partnerships while navigating procurement delays for newer aircraft. This development highlights the IAF's ongoing efforts to modernize its fleet while addressing structural vulnerabilities and the urgency for accelerated procurement to enhance technological parity.

### Digantara Secures \$50M to Advance from Space Surveillance to Missile Tracking SHARE

18-Dec-25

Bengaluru-based spacetech startup Digantara secured \$50 million in an all-equity Series B funding on

December 16, 2025, led by 360 ONE Asset, SBI Investments Japan, and Ronnie Screwvala, with Peak XV Partners and Kalaari Capital participating, elevating total capital to \$64.5 million. The infusion accelerates its pivot from space situational awareness—via its January 2025 SCOT satellite launch—to missile detection and tracking using infrared sensors, addressing hypersonic threats amid escalating Indo-Pacific tensions. Key actors include U.S. Space Command contracts and Missile Defense Agency's SHIELD vehicle, alongside Indian defence tenders, with plans for 15 satellites by 2027, including two dedicated missile-warning units on SpaceX rideshare missions. From India's strategic lens, this bolsters AUKUS-aligned deterrence, sovereign ISR resilience against China-Pakistan axis, and integration into global space architectures, signaling New Delhi's ascent in multidomain superiority.

### IAF Expedites Meteor Missile Buy for Tejas and Su-30MKI Upgrades SHARE

18-Dec-25

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is expediting the procurement of MBDA's Meteor air-to-air missiles to enhance its beyond-visual-range (BVR) capabilities across its fleet, including the upgraded Su-30MKI and the Tejas Mk1A and Mk2 fighters. This initiative comes in anticipation of rising operational demands and potential supply chain disruptions, with the IAF planning to secure between 1,000 to 1,200 Meteor units by 2030. The integration of the Meteor with indigenous radar systems marks a significant leap in India's defense capabilities, while MBDA's commitment to increasing production capacity aligns with the IAF's strategic roadmap. This modernization effort underscores India's focus on achieving self-reliance and maintaining aerial superiority in a rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape.

## AFMS launches MadhuNetrAI, India's first AI-based diabetic retinopathy screening program.

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18-Dec-25

The Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) has launched MadhuNetrAI, India's first AI-driven community screening programme for Diabetic Retinopathy, aimed at enhancing early detection of this leading cause of preventable blindness. Unveiled on December 16, 2025, in New Delhi, this initiative combines expertise from AFMS, AIIMS, and the Ministry of Health, facilitating automated screening and real-time analytics across diverse locations including Pune, Mumbai, and Bengaluru. The programme addresses accessibility challenges in vision care, especially in underserved areas, and establishes structured pathways for patient management to ensure effective treatment continuity. This significant advancement not only promotes public health but also exemplifies India's commitment to integrating advanced technology in healthcare delivery.

## Pakistan launches fourth Hangor-class submarine, enhancing naval capabilities.

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18-Dec-25

The Pakistan Navy has launched its fourth Hangor-class submarine, named Ghazi, at the Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Group in China, marking a pivotal advancement in its maritime capabilities. This submarine is part of an agreement for the construction of eight Hangor-class vessels, with four being built in China and the remaining four at Karachi Shipyard under a technology transfer arrangement. Equipped with modern sensors and advanced weapon systems, these submarines are set to enhance Pakistan's naval deterrence and undersea situational awareness. The ongoing development reflects the strengthening of maritime cooperation between Pakistan and China, significantly impacting regional security dynamics.

## DRDO nears completion of India's first bistatic RCS measurement facility for stealth technology.

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18-Dec-25

India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) announced on December 18, 2025, nearing completion of the country's first fully indigenous full-spectrum bistatic Radar Cross Section (RCS) measurement facility at its Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) in Bengaluru. This

advanced setup, covering VHF (30–300 MHz), UHF (300 MHz–1 GHz), and L-band (1–2 GHz) frequencies, enables precise testing of Radar Absorbent Materials (RAM) and stealth coatings under operational conditions, reducing dependence on foreign ranges. Crucial for validating low-observable technologies in projects like the fifth-generation Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), the facility is slated for operational readiness by mid-2026, bolstering India's self-reliant defense capabilities to match global stealth standards.

## GA to Propose Gambit-2 Wingman to IAF with Astra Integration.

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18-Dec-25

General Atomics is pitching its advanced Gambit-2 loyal wingman unmanned combat aircraft to the Indian Air Force (IAF) as of December 17, 2025, building on the recent MQ-9B SeaGuardian contract signed in November 2025 for 31 drones. The stealthy, Mach 0.85-speed platform, designed for high-intensity air-to-air combat, offers integration with India's indigenous Astra Mk2 and Mk3 missiles, enabling it to team with Tejas Mk2, Rafale, and future AMCA fighters for extended missile capacity and contested airspace operations. Featuring 60-70% "Make in India" production via local partners and shared MQ-9B infrastructure, the proposal minimizes risks while advancing IAF's collaborative combat aircraft roadmap against indigenous HAL CATS Warrior efforts. From an Indian strategic lens, this bolsters air superiority over China and Pakistan by 2030, joining elite CCA nations amid rising regional drone threats.

## IAF to expedite 114 Rafale deal for operational readiness and logistics efficiency.

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18-Dec-25

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is poised to expedite a government-to-government procurement of 114 Dassault Rafale fighters, prioritizing immediate delivery to address its critical operational readiness concerns, as it currently operates at only 31 of the sanctioned 42 squadrons. This strategic shift aims to avoid logistical complexities associated with introducing new aircraft types. Recent reports indicate plans for 90 Rafale F4 variants and 24 Rafale F5 fighters, which promise advanced capabilities. Notably, Safran's establishment of a Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul facility in Hyderabad highlights India's emerging role as a regional hub for Rafale sustainment, ensuring reduced

turnaround times and fostering domestic defense capabilities aligned with the Make in India initiative.

## Defense Policy and Budgeting

### Government plans 20-25% defense budget increase for FY27, boosting self-reliance and private sector involvement.

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18-Dec-25

The Indian government is considering a significant increase of 20-25% in the defense budget for FY27, with plans to enhance private sector participation in defense manufacturing and reduce reliance on imports. This proposed budget, which may allocate Rs 35,000-40,000 crore for defense research and development, aims to modernize India's defense capabilities and support indigenous innovation. Additionally, reforms in defense procurement rules are expected to level the playing field for private companies, allowing them to compete more effectively with public sector undertakings. These developments signify a strategic shift towards bolstering India's self-reliance in defense, fostering a more competitive industry landscape, and enhancing national security.

## Politics

### Chavan defiant on Operation Sindoor remarks amid BJP backlash.

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18-Dec-25

Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan has refused to apologize for his remarks regarding Operation Sindoor, claiming that India faced a "complete defeat" on its first day due to the downing of military aircraft by Pakistani forces. His statements have provoked strong backlash from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which accuses the Congress of undermining the armed forces and echoing Pakistan's narrative. BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla and Union Minister Giriraj Singh emphasized that such comments reflect an anti-army mentality within the Congress party. In response to the controversy, some Congress members distanced themselves from Chavan's remarks, reaffirming their support for the Indian military and national security. This incident underscores ongoing political tensions regarding national defense narratives in India.

## Congress Leader Chavan's remarks on Operation Sindoor spark controversy and political backlash.

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18-Dec-25

The controversy surrounding Operation Sindoor intensified following remarks by Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan, who claimed that Indian military aircraft were shot down on the operation's first day, asserting that India faced a humiliating defeat. Chavan's statements have drawn sharp criticism from the ruling BJP, which accused him of undermining the morale of the armed forces and argued that no one should insult their valor. Despite the backlash, Chavan stood firm, calling for transparency regarding the operation and suggesting that the Congress was being misrepresented to divert attention from other political issues. Operation Sindoor, launched in response to a terrorist attack in Pahalgam, led to significant Indian military successes, including the destruction of multiple terrorist bases in Pakistan. The Indian government has categorically denied claims of downed aircraft, emphasizing the effectiveness of its air operations, including the deployment of Rafale jets, which reportedly executed precision strikes that caused extensive damage to enemy infrastructure while sustaining minimal losses. This incident highlights the ongoing political tensions regarding national security narratives as India navigates its defense strategies amid increasing regional threats.

## Geopolitics and Security Alliances

### US approves \$11.1 billion arms sale to Taiwan amid China tensions.

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18-Dec-25

The United States has approved a landmark arms package for Taiwan, valued at approximately \$11.1 billion, marking the largest military sale to the island amidst escalating tensions with China. This package, which includes advanced weaponry such as High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), self-propelled howitzers, and Javelin anti-tank missiles, is designed to enhance Taiwan's asymmetric warfare capabilities and bolster its defense against increasing military pressure from Beijing. The deal is currently undergoing the Congressional notification process, where it is anticipated to receive broad bipartisan support, reflecting a strategic commitment to regional stability. From an Indian perspective, this development reinforces the military balance in the Indo-Pacific,

deterring Chinese expansionism that poses threats to regional security and vital maritime routes, while simultaneously underscoring the shared resolve among QUAD partners to counter aggressive actions in the Taiwan Strait.

## India and UAE Enhance Defense Ties with Second Desert Cyclone Exercise

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18-Dec-25

India and the UAE are enhancing their strategic defense partnership with the launch of the second Desert Cyclone military exercise, taking place in Abu Dhabi from December 18 to 30. An Indian Army contingent of 45 personnel, mainly from the Mechanised Infantry Regiment, will engage alongside a similar-sized UAE Land Forces unit, focusing on interoperability in urban warfare and sub-conventional operations under a UN mandate. This exercise, building on recent high-level military dialogues, aims to solidify defense cooperation, improve tactical coordination, and strengthen the bilateral military relationship, reflecting both nations' commitment to regional stability and security.

## General Dwivedi introduces 'IKIGAI' framework for Indo-Pacific land forces cooperation.

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18-Dec-25

Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi on December 18, 2025, virtually addressed the 3rd Land Forces Summit hosted by Japan's Ground Self-Defence Force, unveiling the 'IKIGAI' Framework to strengthen land power cooperation among Indo-Pacific nations including Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, and the United States. The framework, built on six pillars—Interoperability and Information Sharing, Knowledge and Professional Military Education, International Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Generative Technological Partnerships, Assurance for Security Partnerships, and Integrated Logistics and Sustainment—aims to enhance multilateral collaboration, interoperability, and collective preparedness in the region. General Dwivedi emphasized three convergence pillars—Shared Diagnosis, Shared Principles, and Shared Actions—underscoring India's leadership in harnessing collective land forces for regional peace, stability, and prosperity amid evolving security challenges. This initiative bolsters India's strategic partnerships, reinforcing its pivotal role in Indo-Pacific defence dynamics.

## IAF Hosts AviaIndra-2025 to Bolster India-Russia Defence Cooperation

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18-Dec-25

The Indian Air Force (IAF) commenced hosting Exercise AviaIndra-2025 on December 15, 2025, with the Russian Federation Aerospace Force (RFASF), running through December 22 to strengthen bilateral defence ties and operational synergy. This iteration of the AviaIndra series, initiated in 2014, features joint flying on Su-30MKI fighters, indigenous Tejas, IL-78 refuellers, and Mi-17 helicopters, enabling sharing of best practices amid India's self-reliance push. Following Russian President Vladimir Putin's early December visit and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's talks with his counterpart, the drill reinforces enduring Indo-Russian partnership, countering regional challenges from the China-Pakistan axis while paving ways for collaborations in advanced fighters and missiles.

## Indian Coast Guard Ship INS Sarthak makes historic visit to Iran's Chabahar Port.

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18-Dec-25

The Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICG) Sarthak has made a historic visit to Iran's Chabahar Port, marking the first time an Indian military vessel has docked there. This strategic port, operated by India under a long-term agreement, serves as a vital link for transporting supplies to Afghanistan, circumventing traditional routes through Pakistan. During its stay, the Sarthak will engage in joint training activities with the Iranian Navy, focusing on maritime search and rescue, law enforcement, and pollution response, including a demonstration on coordinated responses to oil spills. The visit underscores India's commitment to enhancing maritime cooperation and stability in the region, while also promoting trade connectivity through the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). Additionally, the diplomatic significance of this maneuver is highlighted by India's ability to navigate challenges posed by US sanctions, showcasing its resolve to pursue independent foreign policy objectives. Overall, the port call reinforces India's strategic maritime presence, aligns with its 'Act East' and 'Neighbourhood First' policies, and serves as a counterbalance to regional rivals, particularly Pakistan and China, thereby enhancing India's leverage in Central Asia's trade and energy security.

## Vietnam enhances Spratly defenses as tensions with China rise.

18-Dec-25

Vietnam is nearing the completion of its extensive militarization of all 21 outposts in the contested Spratly Islands, significantly enhancing its defensive capabilities amid rising tensions with China. This development includes fortified structures, munitions depots, and an 8,000-foot runway on Barque Canada Reef, reflecting Vietnam's 'active defense' doctrine aimed at countering Chinese maritime aggression. The transformation is crucial for regional stability, as it challenges China's growing influence, which has included the establishment of military installations across the South China Sea. India's interest in this evolving security dynamic is heightened, as Vietnam's efforts bolster maritime partnerships and contribute to a balanced Indo-Pacific strategy, enhancing collective resilience against coercion in the region.

## Belarus and Zimbabwe enhance military ties through cooperation agreement.

18-Dec-25

Belarus and Zimbabwe have formalized their military cooperation through a newly signed agreement, enhancing defense ties between the two nations. This strategic partnership aims to bolster military capabilities and share defense technologies, reflecting a growing trend of collaboration among countries seeking to strengthen their security frameworks. The significance of this agreement lies in its potential to reshape regional power dynamics, as both nations look to enhance their military preparedness amidst global geopolitical shifts. Such alliances could influence defense strategies in the broader context of international relations, particularly for nations like India that are keenly observing developments in military diplomacy.

## Congressional report reveals China exploits US-funded nuclear research partnerships.

18-Dec-25

A recent congressional report reveals that China is leveraging partnerships with U.S. researchers funded by the Department of Energy to gain access to sensitive nuclear technology, significantly endangering American national security. The report, which identified over 4,300 collaborative academic papers involving Chinese researchers—many linked to China's military—calls for

stricter policies to prevent taxpayer-funded research from benefiting potential adversaries. Investigators noted that prior oversight failures have resulted in federal funding inadvertently aiding China's military advancements. Lawmakers are pushing for more robust measures to safeguard American innovation, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive risk assessment to protect against foreign exploitation in an increasingly competitive global landscape.

## Putin confident Russia will achieve its goals in Ukraine conflict.

18-Dec-25

Russian President Vladimir Putin asserted that Moscow would "certainly" achieve its objectives in Ukraine, including the annexation of territories claimed by Russia, emphasizing the need for military means if diplomatic discussions do not yield results. His comments come amidst ongoing international diplomacy, with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky acknowledging progress in security guarantees from the United States, albeit with unresolved territorial disputes. The Kremlin awaits updates on U.S.-Ukraine talks in Berlin, which initially proposed a plan for Ukraine to withdraw from eastern regions while recognizing Russian claims over Donetsk, Crimea, and Lugansk. This situation underscores the complexities of territorial negotiations and the persistent geopolitical tensions in the region.

## Turkiye warns Russia, Ukraine over Black Sea tensions after drone incident.

18-Dec-25

Turkiye has issued a warning to both Russia and Ukraine regarding their activities in the Black Sea following an incident where its air force shot down an unidentified drone that breached its airspace near the Turkish coast. This escalation comes in the context of recent Ukrainian naval drone strikes targeting Russian tankers, heightening tensions in the region. Turkiye has not confirmed the drone's origin, indicating that investigations are underway. This incident underscores the precarious security situation in the Black Sea and the necessity for all parties to exercise caution, reflecting broader geopolitical implications for regional stability amidst ongoing conflict.

## US Recognizes India as Key Partner in AI and Supply Chains

18-Dec-25

The US has recognized India as a "highly strategic partner" in advancing AI and supply chain security,

highlighted by Jacob Helberg's forthcoming participation in the India AI Impact Summit in February. This engagement follows India's absence from the Pax Silica Summit, where the US outlined its new economic policy prioritizing supply chain resilience against China. Helberg emphasized continuous communication between the two nations and expressed eagerness to deepen cooperation, particularly in semiconductor and AI sectors. The strategic partnership aims to enhance India's role in global technology supply chains, aligning with its own initiatives like the India Semiconductor Mission, while addressing existing challenges in regulatory alignment and investment scaling.

## India Reaffirms Commitment to Strengthen Maritime Ties with Maldives for Regional Stability

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18-Dec-25

India has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening maritime cooperation with the Maldives, as articulated by Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, during his recent visit. Engaging with Maldivian officials, including Foreign Affairs Minister Abdulla Khaleel and Chief of Defence Force Major General Ibrahim Hilmy, Sobti emphasized enhancing joint training and information-sharing to address regional maritime security challenges. The closing ceremony of Exercise Ekatha, a joint military exercise focused on diving and asymmetric warfare, further consolidated this partnership. This collaboration underlines India's "Neighbourhood First" policy and its broader strategy to ensure stability and security in the Indian Ocean Region, emphasizing the importance of mutual cooperation against shared threats, including drug trafficking.

## US-Venezuela tensions escalate as Maduro defies Trump's blockade.

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18-Dec-25

The risk of direct confrontation between the US and Venezuela escalates as President Nicolás Maduro defies a blockade imposed by the Trump administration, ordering the Venezuelan navy to escort oil tankers amidst military threats. Trump has labeled Maduro's regime a terrorist organization, seeking Congressional approval for military action, which failed to pass. The international community, including the UN and Mexico's President, calls for de-escalation, urging the respect of international law and peaceful conflict resolution. While tensions rise over Venezuela's vast oil reserves and accusations of drug trafficking, China supports Venezuela's stance against US actions, emphasizing the geopolitical implications of this

standoff for regional stability and international relations.

## Indian Visa Centre in Dhaka closed due to security threats.

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18-Dec-25

India's Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) at Jamuna Future Park in Dhaka closed abruptly on December 17, 2025, at 2 PM amid escalating security threats from extremist elements targeting Indian diplomatic missions, with all appointments rescheduled. The Ministry of External Affairs summoned Bangladesh High Commissioner Muhammad Riaz Hamidullah that day, urging the interim government to fulfill diplomatic obligations and counter anti-India rhetoric, including National Citizen Party leader Hasnat Abdullah's inflammatory speeches on isolating India's Northeast. On December 18, IVACs in Rajshahi and Khulna also shut due to ongoing protests near Indian facilities, while Dhaka's centre partially resumed. From New Delhi's strategic lens, these developments heighten risks of Islamist radicalization spillover, strain border security, and demand robust countermeasures to safeguard bilateral ties amid Dhaka's instability.

## India's December Russian oil imports expected to exceed 1 million barrels daily.

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18-Dec-25

India's crude oil imports from Russia are set to surpass 1 million barrels per day (bpd) in December 2025, reaching a six-month high as of December 17, defying U.S. sanctions on entities like Rosneft and Lukoil. Indian refiners, including Indian Oil Corp and Bharat Petroleum, have ramped up purchases from non-sanctioned suppliers offering deep discounts, with shipments projected at 1.2 million bpd initially and potentially averaging 1.5 million bpd by month-end, per trade sources. Major volumes are arriving at Vadinar port for Nayara Energy's refinery, up from November's 1.77-1.9 million bpd record, bolstered by pre-November 21 deadline stockpiling and resilient India-Russia ties reaffirmed in recent Putin-Modi talks. As the world's top buyer of Russian seaborne crude, India leverages these discounts amid global energy pressures, ensuring supply stability without compromising strategic autonomy.

## India sends medical aid to Afghanistan, reinforcing humanitarian support.

18-Dec-25

India has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Afghanistan by dispatching essential medicines, vaccines, and a sophisticated 128-slice CT scanner, highlighting its dedication to healthcare amidst the region's challenges. This aid follows high-level diplomatic engagements, including visits from Afghan officials aimed at enhancing economic and trade relations with India. The Ministry of External Affairs emphasized that this humanitarian outreach prioritizes the well-being of Afghan citizens, potentially stabilizing the region while counterbalancing external influences. India's proactive approach underscores its role as a dependable partner, demonstrating the importance of humanitarian diplomacy in fostering goodwill and resilience in Afghanistan during a time of crisis.

## Defence Ministry refutes claims of private players at Russia meet.

18-Dec-25

The Indian Ministry of Defence has refuted media claims regarding the presence of private industry representatives at a recent military cooperation meeting in Russia, emphasizing that the delegation was solely composed of government officials and Defence Public Sector Undertakings. The Inter-Governmental Working Group on Military Technical Cooperation and Defence Industry (IRWG-MTC&DI) convened in Moscow from October 25 to 29, 2025, under the leadership of Secretary (Defence Production) Shri Sanjeev Kumar. The ministry criticized the media for what it termed "baseless" reporting and urged for more rigorous fact-checking in future publications. This meeting underscores the ongoing commitment to strengthening India-Russia defense ties and enhancing military collaboration through established frameworks.

## Modi highlights India-Ethiopia ties and defense cooperation in Parliament.

18-Dec-25

During his address to the Ethiopian Parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized the strong ties between India and Ethiopia, reflecting on their historical connections and shared cultural heritage. He underscored the significance of the recently signed defense cooperation agreement, which promotes collaboration in cybersecurity, defense industries, and joint research. Modi highlighted the solidarity shown by Ethiopia following the Pahalgam terrorist attack,

reinforcing mutual security commitments. Additionally, he celebrated the long-standing relationship that dates back to Indian soldiers' support for Ethiopia's liberation in 1941, positioning both nations as key players in shaping the aspirations of the Global South.

## Military Operations

### Rajnath Singh urges IAF to learn from Op Sindoor, enhance readiness.

18-Dec-25

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh emphasized the importance of lessons learned from Operation Sindoor during the Air Force Commanders' Conclave, highlighting India's high-impact operational capabilities demonstrated in the recent conflict. He noted that modern warfare transcends traditional weapons to include technology, adaptability, and cyber capabilities, asserting that air power has become a decisive strategic instrument. Singh advocated for enhanced jointness among military services to effectively address future challenges and praised the Indian Air Force for its operational readiness and humanitarian efforts. He reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening national security and promoting self-reliance in defense, underscoring the significance of indigenous development, particularly in jet engine technology.

### Indian Army enhances logistics with tanks, artillery in Kashmir via special train.

18-Dec-25

On December 16, 2025, the Indian Army successfully inducted tanks and artillery guns into the Kashmir Valley via a special military train, marking a significant logistics milestone that enhances operational preparedness along the Northern Borders. This operation, conducted in close coordination with the Ministry of Railways, underscores the transformative impact of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, enabling rapid logistics build-up and greater strategic mobility in the region. The successful transport of heavy military assets demonstrates the Army's improved logistical capabilities and reinforces India's capacity for swift reinforcement and redeployment during emergencies, particularly amidst ongoing tensions with Pakistan and China. Furthermore, this development highlights the strategic significance of dual-use infrastructure in enhancing both military efficiency and economic integration,

indicating a robust commitment to indigenisation and infrastructure-led defense modernization.

## CRPF and Jharkhand Police strategize to eliminate Maoists by March 2026.

18-Dec-25

The Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Gyanendra Pratap Singh, and Jharkhand Police DGP Tadasha Mishra have devised a comprehensive strategy aimed at eradicating armed Maoist cadres by March 2026. During their recent meeting in Ranchi, they emphasized enhancing operational cooperation against Left Wing Extremism (LWE), with the CRPF deploying around 20 battalions in the region. Singh's leadership prioritizes the welfare of troops and families of martyrs, while also addressing recent incidents of violence, including IED blasts. This united approach aims to reinforce security, accelerate peace efforts, and facilitate development in former Maoist strongholds, aligning with the central government's commitment to eliminate Maoism nationwide within the specified timeline.

## Indian Coast Guard apprehends 35 Bangladeshi fishermen for illegal fishing in EEZ.

18-Dec-25

The Indian Coast Guard apprehended 35 Bangladeshi fishermen and seized two boats for illegal fishing activities within India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), reinforcing its commitment to maritime law enforcement. Detained on December 16, the fishermen lacked valid fishing permits and were found with approximately 500 kg of catch, indicating unauthorized operations. This incident highlights ongoing challenges in managing maritime boundaries, as the Indian Coast Guard has recently detained multiple Bangladeshi fishing vessels, underscoring the importance of safeguarding India's marine resources. The matter also raises broader concerns about illegal fishing practices in the region and their impact on local fishing communities and resources.

## US and Japan conduct joint drill simulating radiation leak on carrier.

18-Dec-25

More than 200 personnel from the U.S. and Japan participated in a joint emergency drill on December 18, 2025, at Yokosuka Naval Base, simulating a low-level radiation leak aboard the USS George Washington. The exercise, now in its 18th year, aimed to enhance coordination and communication in response to

potential nuclear incidents, addressing public concerns surrounding nuclear-powered warships. While the scenario involved minimal radiation exposure, an activist group criticized the drill as inadequate, urging for more realistic training akin to that of nuclear power plants. The U.S. Navy maintains that its nuclear vessels have never encountered reactor accidents, emphasizing robust safeguards to prevent such incidents. This exercise underscores ongoing public unease in Japan regarding nuclear safety following historical events.

## Indian military accelerates Theatre Command formation for enhanced defense readiness against China, Pakistan.

18-Dec-25

The Indian military is expediting the establishment of Joint Theatre Commands under Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan, aiming to finalize their structure before May 2026. This initiative follows Prime Minister Narendra Modi's directive to enhance operational efficiency against adversaries, primarily China and Pakistan. The proposed commands include a Northern Theatre Command for the China border, a Western Theatre Command for Pakistan, and a Maritime Theatre Command, with significant reorganization of army formations underway to optimize force deployment. The restructuring aims to alleviate the current burden on the Northern Command while accommodating the growing challenges from China, marking a pivotal shift in India's defense strategy and operational readiness.

## India NOTAM re-issued for sea-launched missile test in Bay of Bengal, enhancing deterrence capabilities.

18-Dec-25

India has re-issued a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) on December 18, 2025, for a likely sea-launched missile test in the Bay of Bengal, establishing a no-fly zone spanning approximately 3,240 kilometers from December 22 to 24. This follows earlier notifications for tests in December, including expanded zones up to 3,550 km for December 17-20, amid vigilance against Chinese surveillance vessels probing Indian waters. The trial, potentially involving the K-4 submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) from Arihant-class submarines off Visakhapatnam or Odisha's Chandipur, validates India's robust second-strike nuclear triad capabilities. Conducted by DRDO and the Indian Navy, it reinforces national deterrence in the Indo-Pacific, ensuring survivability against regional threats while prioritizing aviation and maritime safety.

## US Analyst Calls China's HQ-9B Ineffective Against India's S-400, BrahMos

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18-Dec-25

A recent assessment by U.S. analyst Brandon J. Weichert has severely criticized Pakistan's use of China's HQ-9B air defense system, describing it as a "Frankenstein's Monster" that failed during Operation Sindoar against India's S-400 and BrahMos missiles. The HQ-9B struggled with operational effectiveness, particularly against supersonic threats, and was rendered ineffective due to vulnerabilities in electronic warfare. This failure has prompted concerns within Pakistan's defense establishment about the reliability of Chinese military technology, leading them to explore alternatives, including Turkey's defense systems. The incident underscores India's strategic advantage in air defense and reinforces the efficacy of its investments in advanced military systems, enhancing its regional deterrence posture.

## Terrorism and Counterterrorism

### Pakistan's ISI Aiding ULFA Leader's Return to Dhaka Amid Instability

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18-Dec-25

Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is actively working to relocate ULFA (Independent) leader Paresh Baruah from China's Yunnan province—specifically Xishuangbanna Dai near Myanmar—to Dhaka, exploiting Bangladesh's post-Sheikh Hasina instability since August 2024. Reports from December 17, 2025, indicate ISI's outreach to Bangladeshi military and political circles, aiming to revive the BNP-Jamaat era's insurgent safe havens, echoing Baruah's alleged role in the 2004 Chittagong arms smuggling plot. From India's strategic lens, this risks reigniting ULFA attacks in Assam, bolstering groups like NSCN, and challenging Act East Policy amid China-Pakistan axis meddling. New Delhi has ramped up 4,096-km border surveillance and diplomatic pressure on interim Dhaka leadership, wary of cross-border terror resurgence threatening northeastern security.

### Three Naxalites killed in Sukma, highlighting security forces' ongoing success against insurgency.

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18-Dec-25

On December 18, 2025, security forces from the District Reserve Guard (DRG) killed three Naxalites, including a woman cadre, in a fierce gunfight in Sukma district's

Golapalli forest area, Chhattisgarh, following intelligence inputs on Maoist presence. Sukma SP Kiran Chavan confirmed recovery of three bodies, weapons, and explosives, with operations ongoing in this Bastar stronghold. This marks the latest success in a year where 284 Naxalites have been eliminated statewide—255 in Bastar—eroding Maoist networks and enabling development in insurgency-hit zones. From India's strategic lens, these operations fortify internal security, counter urban Naxal threats, and align with the March 2026 deadline to eradicate Left-wing extremism, paving the way for infrastructure and governance in tribal heartlands.

## Six militants arrested in Manipur; arms seized in security operations.

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18-Dec-25

Security forces in Manipur arrested six hardcore militants from four banned outfits—People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP), National Revolutionary Front of Manipur (NRFM), and People's Liberation Army (PLA)/Revolutionary People's Front (RPF)—across Kakching, Bishnupur, and Imphal West districts on December 16-17, 2025. Operations yielded an AK series rifle, US-made MA-3 MK-II rifle, INSAS rifle, .315 rifle, ammunition, and mobiles, targeting extortion from contractors, traders, and officials. This marks 11 militants nabbed in 48 hours, alongside drug peddler arrests, exposing militancy-narcotics links near Myanmar borders. From India's strategic lens, these seizures disrupt foreign-sourced arms flows, bolstering valley security amid ethnic tensions and thwarting insurgent destabilization in the Northeast.

## Cybersecurity and Information Warfare

### Russian-linked hackers incentivize DDoS attacks with Bitcoin rewards.

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18-Dec-25

NoName05716, a hacker group linked to Russia, has intensified its cyber operations against NATO member states and European organizations through Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks, recruiting volunteers with the incentive of cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin. Established in 2022, NoName05716 is reportedly affiliated with the Russian government, specifically the Centre for the Study and Network Monitoring of the Youth Environment (CISM), and is executing the DDoSIA Project to undermine Western political structures. The group's tactics highlight the evolving nature of cyber

warfare, where financial and political disruptions are aimed at destabilizing alliances, underscoring the urgent need for enhanced cybersecurity measures among targeted nations.

## Miscellaneous

### IIMV launches MBA program to boost leadership in India's defense sector.

18-Dec-25

The Strategic Defence Leadership Summit 2025, part of a modular MBA program for the defence sector by IIM Visakhapatnam, commenced in New Delhi, focusing on enhancing leadership capabilities within India's defence production ecosystem. Inaugurated by Sanjeev Kumar, Secretary of the Department of Defence Production, the summit aims to foster innovation and collaboration among government officials, industry leaders, and academics, aligning with the Government of India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. Prof. M. Chandrasekhar of IIMV and Prof. B. Srirangacharyulu underscored the necessity of strategic thinking and execution excellence in adapting to India's rapidly evolving defence landscape. This initiative is significant as it seeks to strengthen India's self-reliance and competitiveness in the global defence sector.

### Indian Army enhances youth creativity through photography course in Banihal.

18-Dec-25

The Indian Army has initiated an 8-day photography cadre at Government Degree College, Banihal, Ramban, aimed at enhancing the creative skills of local youth. Organized by the Rashtriya Rifles, the course covers essential photography and videography techniques, including camera operations, composition, and lighting, preparing participants for potential careers in this field. The initiative reflects the Army's commitment to fostering financial independence among the youth, with positive feedback from students expressing gratitude for this opportunity. By empowering young adults with relevant skills, the program not only promotes self-sufficiency but also strengthens the relationship between the Army and the community in the region.

### Indian all-women tri-services vessel reaches Lyttelton, showcasing empowerment and defense diplomacy.

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18-Dec-25

The Indian Armed Forces' first all-women tri-services sailing expedition, aboard the Indian Army Sailing Vessel Triveni, has arrived in Lyttelton, New Zealand, as part of its round-the-world journey. This historic voyage emphasizes women's leadership and inter-service unity, featuring a crew of six women officers from the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Skipper Lieutenant Colonel Anuja Varudkar highlighted the expedition's challenges, including facing unpredictable weather and managing the crew's well-being. The mission underscores India's commitment to women's empowerment and self-reliance through indigenous naval capabilities, while also serving as a platform for defense diplomacy during their international stops.

### Pakistani woman crosses LoC into Poonch after family dispute.

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On December 16, 2025, Indian Army troops in Poonch's Balakote sector apprehended 35-year-old Shehnaz Akhtar from Gimma village, Kotli district in PoK, after she crossed the LoC fleeing a family dispute with her father. Initial probes confirmed her spontaneous flight, though intelligence agencies are scrutinizing potential ties to Jaish-e-Mohammed's women's wing, Jamaat-ul-Mominaat, amid reports of her proximity to a Pakistan Army post and receipt of Rs 1,000 from one Zehan beforehand. Updated inquiries as of December 18 highlight surveillance interception in Mendhar subdivision. From India's strategic lens, this rare civilian breach underscores Pakistan's porous LoC security, risks of terror exploitation via human covers, and the imperative for heightened vigilance to counter infiltration tactics amid escalating J&K tensions.

### Govt revives pre-independence airstrips into operational airports, enhancing connectivity.

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The Indian government has revived numerous pre-independence airstrips into operational airports under the UDAN scheme, as confirmed by Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu in Lok Sabha on December 17-18, 2025. Operational airports have surged from 74 in 2014 to over 160, enabling major airlines and smaller Northeast operators to enhance

regional connectivity, with the scheme extended for 10 more years to democratize air travel. Key dates include UDAN's 2016 launch and recent Budget 2025 modifications targeting 120 new destinations. From an Indian strategic perspective, this bolsters security by improving rapid troop mobility and surveillance in border areas like the Northeast, fostering economic integration amid tensions with China, while supporting underserved regions for balanced national development.

## Chinese GPS tracker found on seagull near Karwar prompts security probe.

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18-Dec-25

On December 17, 2025, locals spotted a migratory seagull fitted with a Chinese-made GPS device near Thimmakka Garden beach in Karwar, Uttara Kannada, mere kilometers from the strategic INS Kadamba naval base—India's key western fleet hub hosting submarines and warships. Forest department's marine wing captured the exhausted bird, confirming the tracker linked to Beijing's Research Centre for Eco-Environmental Sciences under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, ostensibly for studying migration routes spanning over 10,000 km across Arctic regions. Karwar police and naval authorities launched a multi-agency inquiry, analyzing transmission capabilities amid espionage fears, echoing a November 2024 "war eagle" incident nearby. From an Indian security lens, this underscores Beijing's potential to mask surveillance as ecological research near vital assets, demanding rigorous device forensics and diplomatic verification to safeguard coastal defenses.

## India achieves self-reliance in space transportation, enhancing national security and global position.

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18-Dec-25

India has achieved self-reliance in space transportation systems, enabling launches of satellites up to 10 tonnes to Low Earth Orbit and 4.2 tonnes to Geo-

Synchronous Transfer Orbit, as stated by Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh in a Lok Sabha reply on December 17, 2025. The operational success of ISRO's PSLV, GSLV, and LVM3 has ensured independent access for earth observation, communication, navigation, and exploration missions, while the approved Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) will boost payload capacity to 30 tonnes in LEO. Reusable technologies, including a partially reusable NGLV variant with 14-tonne LEO capability and a winged upper stage for runway landing, alongside advanced propulsion like semi-cryogenic and methane-based engines, align with 'Make in India' to cut costs and enhance sustainability. The Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme remains on track for its first crewed mission in 2027-28, with extensive human-rating tests completed and uncrewed missions nearing launch. These strides from December 2020-2025, including 22 satellite launches, bolster India's national security and global space stature.

## India to Deploy Five Indigenous Small Modular Nuclear Reactors to Boost Energy Capacity

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18-Dec-25

India plans to deploy at least five indigenously designed Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) by 2033, advancing its Nuclear Energy Mission to achieve 100 GW capacity by 2047, as confirmed by Union Minister Jitendra Singh in a Lok Sabha reply on December 16-17, 2025. Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) leads designs for the 200 MWe Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR-200) and 55 MWe SMR-55, targeting captive power for energy-intensive sectors like steel and aluminum, remote areas, and hydrogen production via a 5 MWth high-temperature gas-cooled reactor. Backed by ₹20,000 crore from the 2025-26 Budget (announced February 1, 2025), this bolsters India's energy security, technological self-reliance amid China border tensions, and net-zero goals by 2070, positioning New Delhi as a nuclear exporter while enhancing strategic deterrence through clean, scalable power.

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# Defence Sector Stocks

Stock	Open	High	Low	Close	Volume	Change	RSI14	SMA20	SMA200
WALCHANNAG	175.6	203.34	174.4	197.53	39483014	13.22	66.24	164.2	190.0
HBLPOWER	767.55	828.85	762.0	818.85	10043498	7.35	43.16	835.82	690.65
SWANDEF	1259.2	1259.2	1259.2	1259.2	3129	4.99	100.0	824.03	130.03
RELINFRA	164.98	164.98	158.0	164.96	3297467	4.98	51.33	153.52	267.47
AXISCADES	1160.1	1258.0	1141.8	1251.5	114957	4.46	36.49	1349.14	1242.55
URAVIDEF	162.0	175.85	162.0	171.27	7377	2.25	35.47	176.11	383.75
DATAPATTNS	2467.7	2518.1	2435.5	2512.6	325611	1.82	34.07	2764.5	2548.79
TEMBO	716.0	745.0	714.0	735.65	56953	1.54	53.37	733.14	561.23
APOLLO	223.55	229.5	220.65	226.65	2350265	1.39	33.67	252.45	209.13
BDL	1325.0	1347.4	1305.7	1342.5	1086825	1.37	33.4	1451.8	1562.75
CFF	531.6	554.65	528.0	544.0	22600	1.12	27.94	592.99	586.62
HAL	4228.4	4268.4	4192.6	4259.5	557768	0.74	34.03	4400.94	4548.92
DCXINDIA	155.85	157.94	153.6	156.76	297841	0.29	23.54	171.47	253.67
COCHINSHIP	1502.8	1517.6	1477.1	1506.1	732285	0.22	21.26	1624.28	1731.58
DYNAMATECH	9009.0	9086.0	8710.0	9029.5	22668	0.22	51.0	9076.72	7203.49
MACPOWER	983.35	997.7	938.0	965.5	17068	0.15	52.08	975.23	881.78
MIDHANI	291.55	293.9	286.9	291.9	209905	0.12	27.11	312.72	363.82
MAZDOCK	2351.0	2379.8	2325.1	2358.0	770150	0.06	23.7	2561.72	2846.59
LMW	15070.0	15074.0	14833.0	14995.0	1160	0.0	44.95	15131.1	15641.8
SUNITATOOL	740.0	740.0	715.05	730.0	5250	-0.03	34.2	817.43	775.74
AVANTEL	147.15	150.25	145.67	146.5	982167	-0.12	38.94	150.63	148.08
ADANIENT	2236.4	2245.0	2211.1	2229.3	508238	-0.14	39.74	2270.05	2418.9
RTNINDIA	40.04	42.09	39.67	40.11	2079124	-0.17	26.36	41.79	50.3
PREMEXPLN	475.0	479.9	464.15	473.4	137425	-0.27	26.45	517.45	512.01
SOLARINDS	11827.0	11847.0	11646.0	11772.0	119304	-0.36	22.96	12778.5	13834.45
BHARATFORG	1419.8	1419.8	1384.0	1407.5	431008	-0.41	54.65	1410.95	1227.56
IDEAFORGE	416.5	417.0	407.1	413.15	128365	-0.42	30.53	444.29	473.06
AZAD	1580.1	1585.0	1550.5	1573.4	64230	-0.45	42.15	1625.96	1584.01
BEL	384.05	386.8	380.45	383.45	7510229	-0.56	33.72	400.34	373.2
GRSE	2225.6	2248.0	2168.6	2222.2	1775059	-0.57	26.62	2527.32	2433.19
MTARTECH	2318.4	2333.9	2238.2	2306.0	389312	-0.58	41.83	2434.02	1742.63
LT	4067.0	4071.8	4023.4	4031.1	1004303	-0.77	53.13	4033.72	3623.28
KRISHNADEF	675.1	682.0	665.0	673.2	39500	-0.87	31.6	748.09	789.34
HIGHENE	536.0	541.8	530.0	533.0	4967	-0.99	34.17	565.71	607.89
BEML	1680.5	1682.3	1650.1	1666.9	117852	-1.06	31.01	1757.2	1913.99
TANEJAERO	299.95	299.95	291.1	291.6	6035	-1.14	31.52	310.85	363.38
MARINE	203.0	203.01	198.5	200.49	162147	-1.21	33.93	215.1	200.78
ROSELLIND	51.98	51.98	50.0	50.26	22835	-1.37	23.24	55.27	65.63
ASTRAMICRO	892.0	894.0	876.95	879.5	139104	-1.38	34.87	914.55	959.26
ZENTEC	1355.1	1355.3	1332.1	1344.2	187006	-1.42	40.74	1381.2	1549.97
SIKA	904.9	905.25	883.2	891.0	5714	-1.54	36.29	936.51	1020.11
PARAS	628.0	636.0	616.1	617.95	501460	-1.7	27.49	684.68	684.79
CENTUM	2230.8	2230.8	2148.1	2169.0	13530	-1.99	36.21	2308.48	2226.83
JYOTICNC	928.1	929.7	908.3	916.5	265864	-2.06	40.23	973.28	1016.51
LOKESHMACH	164.0	169.14	160.14	161.51	34770	-2.14	47.52	157.48	181.37
PTC	161.6	161.91	157.5	157.74	734349	-2.39	45.61	157.68	172.21
GOODLUCK	1051.2	1054.8	1015.1	1019.8	82353	-2.99	28.43	1118.13	1017.55
TECHERA	207.25	214.0	207.05	208.25	25600	-3.12	36.34	224.33	198.29
DRONACHRYA	42.81	44.75	41.65	41.65	252000	-5.0	37.71	48.26	70.07
NIBE	1182.6	1182.6	1102.25	1108.85	2424	-6.24	49.64	1074.4	1343.48