



# Defence Professionals News & Analysis

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## Defense Business and Industry

### Dhruv-NG helicopter showcases India's engineering prowess and self-reliance in aviation.



01-Jan-26

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has marked a significant milestone in India's aviation sector with the successful inaugural flight of the Dhruv New Generation (NG) civil helicopter, achieving civil certification for its indigenous Shakti engine. This 5.5-tonne twin-engine helicopter, an upgraded variant of the Advanced Light Helicopter, is designed to perform a variety of roles including VIP transport, medical evacuation, and offshore logistics, showcasing India's growing engineering capabilities and commitment to self-reliance in aerospace manufacturing. HAL Chairman D.K. Sunil emphasized that around 65% of the helicopter's components are sourced domestically, with an aim for over 80% indigenization, thus reducing dependence on foreign imports. The helicopter is equipped with advanced safety features and has already been tested under demanding conditions, demonstrating its operational readiness, particularly in challenging terrains like the Himalayas. As HAL plans for extensive test flights and aims for initial deployments at Bombay High, this development not only strengthens India's civil aviation infrastructure but also aligns with national strategic interests in defense exports and regional security.

### India successfully tests Pralay missiles, enhancing defense capabilities off Odisha coast.



01-Jan-26

India successfully conducted a salvo launch of two Pralay missiles off the Odisha coast, part of user evaluation trials by the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO). The test, which occurred at 10:30 am, confirmed that both missiles met

all flight objectives, showcasing their precision and reliability. The Pralay missile, a surface-to-surface, short-range ballistic missile with a range of 150 to 500 km, can carry multiple warheads and employs advanced guidance systems. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh praised the collaborative efforts of DRDO, Indian Armed Forces, and industry partners in achieving this milestone, indicating the readiness for the missile's induction into service. This development reinforces India's commitment to enhancing its defense capabilities amid evolving geopolitical dynamics.

### DRDO tests Pinaka rockets with 120-km range, boosting Army's firepower.



01-Jan-26

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the maiden flight test of the Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR-120), achieving a maximum range of 120 km and demonstrating precise targeting capabilities. This milestone, which follows the Defence Acquisition Council's approval for the procurement of these advanced rockets, significantly enhances the Indian Army's long-range firepower. The LRGR-120's integration with existing Pinaka systems allows for strategic cost-effectiveness, as it can be deployed from current launchers without the need for new platforms. This development not only expands the operational reach of Indian forces, enabling them to target critical military infrastructure across Pakistan, but also reinforces India's capacity for sustained precision-guided strikes while complicating enemy defense strategies. The LRGR-120 thus represents a pivotal advancement in India's defense framework, enhancing deterrence and operational readiness against potential adversaries.

### Russia to showcase HAL-branded SJ-100 and Il-114-300 aircraft at Wings India 2026 in Hyderabad.



01-Jan-26

Russia is set to showcase its HAL-branded SJ-100 and Il-114-300 regional aircraft at Wings India 2026 in

Hyderabad, highlighting a strategic partnership with India in civil aviation. The United Aircraft Corporation will display a model of the SJ-100, reflecting the localization efforts under India's 'Make in India' initiative. A potential contract with Flamingo Aerospace for the supply of six IL-114-300 turboprop aircraft could enhance India's regional connectivity, especially in underserved areas. This event underscores the growing Indo-Russian cooperation beyond traditional military ties, emphasizing a shift towards civil aviation manufacturing and infrastructure development, coinciding with India's expansion of its airport network.

## **India's S4\* SSBN achieves 80% indigenization, boosting future submarine projects.**



01-Jan-26

India's fourth ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), S4\*, has commenced sea trials and achieved a historic 80% indigenous content, marking a significant milestone in the nation's quest for self-reliance in defense. This advanced platform, an iteration of the Arihant-class, boasts enhancements including a larger weapons payload and improved system integration, reducing dependence on foreign imports. The upcoming S5 SSBNs aim for over 90% indigenization, while Project-77 targets 95% for nuclear-powered attack submarines, underscoring India's strategic pivot towards total sovereignty in underwater warfare technology. These developments not only bolster India's nuclear deterrent capabilities but also position it as a formidable player within the Indo-Pacific geopolitical landscape.

## **L&T delivers second LCA Mk1A wing set in 128 days, enhancing defense self-reliance.**



01-Jan-26

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has successfully dispatched the second wing set for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Mk1A in a record time of 128 days, marking a significant milestone in India's pursuit of self-reliance in defense manufacturing. This achievement enhances the Indian Air Force's fleet modernization efforts and underscores the growing capability of the private sector to meet military production standards. L&T's efficient processes allow for the potential delivery of three wing sets annually, crucial for Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's assembly operations. The partnership between L&T and HAL highlights the importance of collaboration in advancing indigenous aerospace manufacturing, reinforcing India's commitment to self-sufficiency in defense technology.

## **HAL to convert six Boeing 767s into IAF tankers under ₹9,000 crore project.**



01-Jan-26

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) has approved a 9,000 crore project for the Indian Air Force (IAF) to convert six Boeing 767 aircraft into aerial refueling tankers, marking a significant step in modernizing its fleet and addressing gaps left by the ageing IL-78s. This initiative, a collaboration between Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), incorporates extensive technology transfer, enhancing India's domestic defense capabilities. The project will utilize commercially viable airframes, ensuring lower operational costs and improved maintenance through local facilities, with the first modified tanker expected to be operational by 2030-2031. This strategic move not only strengthens India's aerial refueling capabilities but also reinforces its commitment to self-reliance in the defense sector.

## **1,896 Crore Contract Signed with WASS Submarine for 48 Heavy Weight Torpedos**



01-Jan-26

On December 30, 2025, the Indian Ministry of Defence signed a Rs 1,896 crore contract with Italy's WASS Submarine Systems S.R.L. for 48 Heavy Weight Torpedoes, including associated equipment, to bolster the Indian Navy's underwater combat prowess. This deal, part of broader Rs 4,666 crore procurements inked in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh at South Block, New Delhi, targets integration with the six Kalvari-class submarines under Project-75. Deliveries commence from April 2028, completing by early 2030, equipping these vessels with advanced torpedoes featuring superior speed, endurance, and acoustic homing for enhanced deterrence in the Indian Ocean Region amid regional maritime challenges. The move aligns with India's strategic push to modernise its naval forces, addressing critical gaps while advancing self-reliance goals.

## **US Army creates AI/ML officer role to boost military capabilities.**



01-Jan-26

The US Army has established a dedicated career pathway for officers specializing in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), marking the creation of the 49B AI/ML Officer position to enhance its capabilities in an increasingly data-driven military

environment. This initiative, effective from January 2026, aims to develop in-house experts adept at utilizing AI for critical applications such as battlefield decision-making and logistics optimization. From an Indian strategic perspective, this move highlights the escalating global military race in AI technologies, which may prompt India to hasten its own AI integration within its armed forces to ensure national security amidst growing geopolitical tensions in the Indo-Pacific region. The potential widening of technological gaps necessitates that India reinforce its defense strategies to adapt to these advancements.

## Israel's Iron Beam laser enhances air defense, inspiring India's strategies.



01-Jan-26

Israel has marked a pivotal advancement in air defense capabilities with the operational deployment of the Iron Beam high-power laser system, developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. This system, successfully tested against various aerial threats, integrates into Israel's existing multi-layered defense architecture, which includes the Iron Dome and Arrow systems. Its cost-effective model, relying solely on energy supply, is expected to enhance Israel's resilience against aerial assaults from adversaries. For India, the rapid deployment and effectiveness of directed-energy weapons like Iron Beam offer critical insights for advancing its own laser-based defense initiatives, particularly in light of escalating regional threats from Pakistan and China, underscoring the importance of innovative defense strategies in contemporary geopolitics.

## Bharat Forge secures Rs 1,662 cr contract for CQB Carbines with Defence Ministry.



01-Jan-26

Bharat Forge Limited has secured a landmark contract worth Rs 1,661.9 crore from the Ministry of Defence for the supply of 255,128 CQB Carbines to the Indian Army, to be executed over the next five years. This significant order underscores India's commitment to enhancing its indigenous defense capabilities in line with the Atmanirbhar Bharat mission, which aims to reduce reliance on foreign defense imports. The 5.56 x 45 mm carbine reflects advancements in small arms technology and showcases the growing capabilities of Indian defense manufacturers. This development is expected to bolster the operational readiness of the

armed forces while promoting domestic production and economic growth in the defense sector.

## BDL Wins DRDO Contract for Innovative Aquatic-Aerial UAV/UUV Enhancing India's Maritime Surveillance.



01-Jan-26

Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) has secured a significant contract from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for a revolutionary Aquatic-Aerial UAV/UUV, enhancing India's maritime surveillance capabilities. The dual-domain platform, which integrates aerial and underwater operations, is designed for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions, featuring stealth attributes and modular payloads for diverse applications such as anti-submarine warfare. This initiative aligns with the Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign, promoting indigenous defense innovation, and is expected to boost operational flexibility for the Indian Navy in the face of evolving maritime threats. BDL's success in this project underscores its expanding role in unmanned systems and the effectiveness of public-private partnerships in defense R&D.

## Russia delivers TVS-2M nuclear fuel to bolster India's energy security.



01-Jan-26

Russia has completed the delivery of TVS-2M nuclear fuel to the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in Tamil Nadu, reinforcing India's energy security amid ongoing cooperation with Russia. The Kudankulam facility, housing six VVER-1000 reactors with a total capacity of 6,000 megawatts, is pivotal for enhancing southern India's grid stability. The advanced TVS-2M fuel allows for extended fuel cycles from 12 to 18 months, significantly improving reactor reliability and electricity generation. With Units 3 and 4 at 78% completion and targeting commissioning in 2026 and 2027 respectively, this development not only highlights the strengthening Indo-Russian ties but also marks a significant step in India's commitment to diversifying its energy sources and bolstering its nuclear capabilities.

## Russia proposes Krasukha-2 EW system to enhance India's defense capabilities against enemy surveillance.



01-Jan-26

Russia has proposed supplying India with the Krasukha-2 electronic warfare system, designed to neutralize enemy airborne surveillance systems like AWACS, enhancing India's defense capabilities. This

system operates effectively within a 250-kilometre range and employs advanced jamming techniques to disrupt enemy command and control, reducing the effectiveness of guided missiles through deceptive signals. Integrating the Krasukha-2 with India's S-400 missile defense could create an electronic "black hole," safeguarding vital assets and complicating enemy operations. This strategic shift towards layered electronic countermeasures reflects a modern approach to warfare, emphasizing the importance of information denial in achieving battlefield superiority.

### **DRDO accelerates Astra Mk3 missile development for 2029 induction with advanced capabilities.**

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01-Jan-26

India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is fast-tracking the development of the Astra Mk3, a next-generation air-to-air missile, aiming for operational induction by 2029. This Very Long Range Air-to-Air Missile (VLRAAM), featuring an advanced Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) propulsion system, is designed to engage high-value enemy assets from distances up to 350 km, significantly enhancing the Indian Air Force's combat capabilities. The Astra Mk3 boasts a superior "No-Escape Zone," making it challenging for enemy aircraft to evade interception, and is expected to include a sophisticated AESA seeker for enhanced target acquisition. The successful induction of this missile will advance India's position in indigenous aerospace defense technologies and strengthen its strategic deterrence capabilities.

### **Defence Minister praises DRDO's role in enhancing India's defence readiness and scientific excellence.**

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01-Jan-26

On the 68th Foundation Day of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Defence Minister Rajnath Singh commended the organisation's commitment to scientific excellence and its crucial role in enhancing India's defence preparedness. Established in 1958, DRDO is pivotal for achieving self-reliance in defence technologies, reinforcing India's strategic autonomy and the confidence of its armed forces. Singh emphasized the importance of indigenous, future-ready technologies developed by DRDO, which encompasses 52 laboratories and a dedicated workforce of 30,000 personnel. This focus on technological advancement is vital for advancing the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and ensuring India's

robust defense capabilities in an evolving geopolitical landscape.

## **Politics**

### **Congress urges PM to address China's mediation claims on India-Pakistan.**

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01-Jan-26

The Congress party has expressed grave concerns over China's claims of mediating between India and Pakistan, urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to address these assertions that undermine India's national security. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh highlighted previous statements from Indian military officials asserting that China was aligned with Pakistan during recent conflicts, particularly Operation Sindoor. He criticized the government's perceived weakness in negotiations with China and pointed out the troubling trade deficit with the country, emphasizing the need for clarity regarding China's involvement. The Indian government has consistently rejected third-party mediation in its relations with Pakistan, maintaining that issues were resolved through direct communication between military officials. This controversy underscores the complexities of India's geopolitical position and its ongoing challenges with China.

## **Geopolitics and Security Alliances**

### **India's Indo-Pacific Role Demands Ongoing Investment in Capabilities and Diplomacy**

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01-Jan-26

India is solidifying its position as a pivotal player in the Indo-Pacific, demonstrating its strategic importance through enhanced maritime capabilities and collaborative partnerships. Recent reports emphasize that India's role is no longer peripheral; it is increasingly seen as a fulcrum for regional stability, driven by the need to counterbalance China's assertiveness, foster economic integration, and uphold democratic values. The country is transitioning from a 'net security provider' to a 'preferred security partner', exemplified by humanitarian assistance initiatives, joint naval exercises, and significant support for its neighbors like Sri Lanka and Mozambique. India's involvement in frameworks like SAGAR and the upcoming IKIGAI



Framework for military cooperation signals a comprehensive approach to enhancing regional security and governance. This evolution reflects New Delhi's commitment to a rules-based international order and its ambition to lead through consensus, underscoring its role as a 'Respectful Responder' in addressing non-traditional threats and fostering collective growth among nations in the Global South. The broader significance of these developments lies in India's strategic autonomy, which allows it to engage effectively with international partners while safeguarding its national interests.

## India enhances air defense with successful trials of Akash-NG missile system. SHARE

01-Jan-26

India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully completed user evaluation trials for the next-generation Akash missile system (Akash-NG), enhancing its air defence capabilities significantly against aerial threats from adversaries like Pakistan and China. This upgraded missile features an innovative dual-guidance scheme that combines mid-course command guidance with an active radio frequency seeker, improving resilience against electronic warfare and ensuring high accuracy against low-radar-cross-section threats such as drones and cruise missiles. The Akash-NG, with an extended range of 70-80 km, integrates seamlessly into India's layered air defence architecture, providing a robust counter to enemy airspace incursions and enhancing national security. Notably, its indigenous development ensures supply security, rapid adaptation during conflicts, and a strategic edge over rivals who rely on imported systems, making the Akash-NG a crucial asset in modern deterrence strategies. The broader implications underscore India's commitment to self-reliance in defence technology amidst regional tensions, reinforcing its capability to safeguard its airspace effectively.

## India and China aim to restore ties by 2025 after tensions. SHARE

01-Jan-26

India and China are making strides to rebuild ties in 2025 after four years of strained relations due to the eastern Ladakh boundary conflict. High-level dialogues initiated by NSA Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi have focused on normalizing relations, with Prime Minister Modi and President Xi meeting to reaffirm their status as development partners. However, tensions persist, notably China's military support to

Pakistan and incidents involving Indian nationals. Moreover, China's restrictions on rare-earth metal exports to India continue to challenge bilateral trade, even as Indian exports to China have seen a notable increase. Overall, despite ongoing challenges, both nations are committed to dialogue for a stable and cooperative future.

## EAM Jaishankar visits Dhaka for Khaleda Zia's funeral, delivers Modi's condolences. SHARE

01-Jan-26

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar visited Dhaka to convey condolences from the Indian government on the passing of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who died at the age of 80 after a prolonged illness. Jaishankar met with Tarique Rahman, Zia's son and acting chairman of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), and handed over a personal letter from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, expressing confidence in the future of India-Bangladesh relations. In response to Zia's death, Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus announced a three-day state mourning and a one-day general holiday, urging citizens to maintain order during the funeral proceedings. Zia, a significant figure in Bangladeshi politics and a proponent of democracy, is remembered for her contributions to the nation and its ties with India. Her passing marks a pivotal moment, potentially influencing the political landscape in Bangladesh, especially with the forthcoming elections in 2026, as both nations seek to reaffirm and strengthen their partnership during this transition.

## China's arms support to Pakistan during conflict challenges mediation credibility, says analyst. SHARE

01-Jan-26

Recent tensions between India and Pakistan have escalated following a series of military confrontations and a deadly terrorist attack in April 2025 that claimed 26 civilian lives in Jammu and Kashmir. In response, India launched Operation Sindoor, which involved precision strikes on terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, marking the first large-scale use of drones in the region, and leading to a brief but intense military engagement characterized as the first drone war between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. While a ceasefire was reached on May 10, analysts, including those from the US Council on Foreign Relations, warn that without sustained diplomatic efforts, the potential for renewed armed conflict remains moderate, fueled by ongoing cross-border

terrorism and military posturing. This situation is further complicated by China's involvement as a primary arms supplier to Pakistan and its claims of mediating between the two nations, which India robustly rejects, emphasizing its preference for bilateral resolution of disputes. The growing volatility in South Asia highlights the delicate security dynamics and the significant implications for regional and global stability, particularly given the nuclear dimensions of the conflict.

## **Quad nations' envoys meet in Beijing to affirm Indo-Pacific unity.**



01-Jan-26

Ambassadors of the Quad nations—India, the US, Australia, and Japan—held a rare publicised meeting in Beijing, emphasizing their commitment to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The American Ambassador to China, David Perdue, highlighted the stability and strength of relations among the four countries. Despite China's longstanding criticism of the Quad, which it perceives as a form of group politics and bloc confrontation, the meeting illustrates the Quad's resilience and unity in addressing regional security challenges. This gathering signals a robust diplomatic stance by the Quad nations, underscoring their collective resolve against potential regional threats and reinforcing their strategic collaboration.

## **Japan shifts from pacifism to strong defense amid rising Chinese assertiveness.**



01-Jan-26

Japan is rapidly transitioning from a pacifist defense stance to a formidable military posture, marked by a record defense budget exceeding 9 trillion yen (\$58 billion) aimed at enhancing its strike capabilities. This shift, driven by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, responds to increasing Chinese military assertiveness, particularly around disputed territories. Japan's commitment to achieving 2% GDP defense spending earlier than planned emphasizes its dedication to self-reliance and collective security with allies, including the United States and Australia. From an Indian strategic viewpoint, Japan's proactive measures bolster regional stability in the Indo-Pacific, complementing India's security interests amid rising Chinese influence, while also facilitating deeper defense industrial cooperation through relaxed arms export restrictions.

## **Taiwan Enhances Defense with HF-2E Missiles Amid Chinese Drills**



01-Jan-26

Taiwan has strategically relocated its Hsiung Feng IIE (HF-2E) cruise missile system amidst Chinese military drills, enhancing its asymmetric deterrence capabilities against Beijing. The HF-2E, capable of targeting Chinese infrastructure with a range of 300-600 km and up to 1,500 km in extended variants, employs advanced guidance systems to complicate PLA targeting. This development is notable not only for Taiwan's defense posture but also for regional stability in the Indo-Pacific, appealing to shared Indian interests in countering Chinese expansionism. The public display of this military asset underscores Taiwan's commitment to bolstering its defense and reinforces the need for robust responses to authoritarian aggression in contested maritime domains.

## **Finnish authorities seize ship linked to undersea cable damage amid NATO operation.**



01-Jan-26

Finnish authorities seized the cargo vessel Fitburg on December 31, 2025, suspected of damaging an undersea telecommunications cable between Helsinki and Tallinn, marking a significant incident amid NATO's Baltic Sentry operation aimed at protecting critical infrastructure against hybrid threats. The St. Vincent and the Grenadines-flagged ship, operated by a Turkish firm and en route from Russia to Israel, was found dragging its anchor, prompting an investigation into aggravated sabotage and telecommunications disruption. This incident underscores the vulnerability of global undersea communication networks, crucial for Indo-Pacific defense collaborations, highlighting the importance of international safeguards against potential state-sponsored disruptions. Finnish President Alexander Stubb emphasized the nation's readiness to address these emerging security challenges decisively, while NATO acknowledged the deterrence role of Baltic Sentry amidst rising geopolitical tensions.

## **Iran's Mohajer-6 drones stationed at Venezuela's air base escalate military ties.**



01-Jan-26

Recent imagery confirms the deployment of Iran's Mohajer-6 armed drones at Venezuela's El Libertador Air Base, marking a notable escalation in military

cooperation between Tehran and Caracas. The U.S. Treasury Department has sanctioned a Venezuelan firm for its role in the assembly and maintenance of these drones, which enhance Venezuela's asymmetric warfare capabilities amid increasing U.S. sanctions and regional tensions. This development raises concerns over security dynamics in the Western Hemisphere, highlighting the need for vigilance regarding Iranian technology transfers. The proliferation of such military assets could significantly impact border security and coastal defenses, underscoring the broader implications for global stability and national interests in the region.

## **India, Pakistan continue nuclear facility list exchanges for stability.**



01-Jan-26

India and Pakistan have continued their longstanding practice of exchanging lists of nuclear installations on January 1, adhering to a bilateral agreement that prohibits attacks on each other's atomic facilities. This exchange, executed simultaneously through diplomatic channels in New Delhi and Islamabad, marks the 35th consecutive year of such communications, despite the strained relations following military hostilities last May. The agreement, which has been in effect since January 27, 1991, serves as a critical measure for maintaining strategic stability and preventing escalation between the two nations, underscoring the significance of dialogue amidst ongoing tensions.

## **Kim praises 'invincible alliance' with Russia amid Ukraine conflict.**



01-Jan-26

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has lauded the contributions of his troops in supporting Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine, describing their efforts as part of an "invincible alliance" with Moscow. According to state media, Kim's New Year message emphasized the soldiers' "heroic" defense of their nation's honor and hinted at increased overseas military engagements in the coming year. Analysts suggest that this deepening alliance provides economic support to Kim's regime, allowing it to resist external pressures from the U.S. and South Korea. However, reports from South Korean intelligence indicate dire conditions for North Korean forces, including orders to avoid capture at all costs. This development underscores the growing military and economic collaboration between Pyongyang and Moscow amid geopolitical tensions.

## **Putin orders Ukraine buffer zone expansion by 2026 amid escalating tensions.**



01-Jan-26

Russia's Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov announced that President Vladimir Putin has ordered the expansion of a buffer zone in northeastern Ukraine by 2026, particularly in the Sumy and Kharkiv regions near the Russian border. This initiative aims to push Ukrainian forces farther from Russian territory amid ongoing military operations. Gerasimov's comments follow Russia's claims of an attempted attack on Putin's residence, which Ukraine has denied, asserting that such allegations are tactics to undermine peace talks. President Volodymyr Zelenskiy has condemned Moscow's plans as reckless, emphasizing Ukraine's commitment to defending its territories against further incursions. This development underscores the escalating tensions in the region and the complexities surrounding the ongoing conflict.

## **Russia claims thwarted Ukrainian drone attack on Putin's residence.**



01-Jan-26

Russia's defense ministry released footage alleging a Ukrainian drone attack on President Vladimir Putin's residence, claiming 91 drones were launched from Ukraine's Sumy and Chernihiv regions, though Kyiv denied any such assault and deemed the evidence fabricated. Major-General Alexander Romanenkov indicated that the attack was thwarted by Russian air defenses, with no damages or injuries reported. Concurrently, both nations targeted each other's Black Sea ports, resulting in infrastructure damage and injuries in Odesa and Tuapse. This ongoing conflict underscores the escalating tensions and the complexities surrounding potential peace negotiations, raising concerns among Western nations regarding the veracity of Russia's claims and the future of the war in Ukraine.

## **Taiwan remains vigilant after Chinese military drills despite vessel pullback.**



01-Jan-26

Taiwan remains on high alert following extensive Chinese military drills, which included the firing of rockets and the deployment of numerous warships and aircraft around the island. Although Chinese vessels are reportedly moving away, Taiwan's emergency maritime response center continues to operate amid ongoing tensions. The drills, described by China as a demonstration of its capability to contain separatist

forces while denying external interference, coincide with a recent \$11.1 billion U.S. arms package for Taiwan. This escalation is significant as it highlights the precarious nature of cross-strait relations and the potential for increased military confrontations in the region, raising concerns among Western allies regarding stability in East Asia.

## December sees slight decrease in Russian attacks on Ukraine.

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01-Jan-26

Russian drone and missile attacks on Ukraine decreased slightly in December, although significant strikes on energy infrastructure persisted. The reduction in the number of attacks was accompanied by a decline in Ukraine's success rate in intercepting incoming threats, which poses challenges as the country continues to face intense pressure from both aerial bombardments and battlefield losses. This development highlights the ongoing volatility of the conflict, where even a drop in attacks does not equate to diminished risks for Ukraine. The situation underscores the critical need for robust air defense systems and international support to enhance Ukraine's resilience against Russian aggression.

## Pakistan faces its deadliest year in a decade amid rising TTP violence and regional tensions.

 SHARE

01-Jan-26

Pakistan experienced its deadliest year in a decade with over 1,070 violent incidents attributed mainly to the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which has grown increasingly emboldened since the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan. This surge in violence has strained Pakistan's diplomatic relations with Kabul, as accusations of cross-border aggression escalate amidst failed mediation efforts. Economic fallout has intensified due to border closures and disrupted trade, with exports to Afghanistan plummeting sharply. Pakistan's military dominance is rising under Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, sidelining civilian leadership, while India quietly strengthens its ties with Afghanistan, potentially reshaping regional dynamics and trade routes to bypass Pakistan.

## Pakistan exploits EAM's Dhaka handshake, seeks dialogue amid tensions.

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01-Jan-26

Amid escalating tensions following the Pahalgam terror attack, which India attributed to Pakistan-backed groups, Pakistan's diplomatic narrative has focused on

a recent handshake between Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, attempting to frame it as a thaw in relations. However, India's stance remains firm: any dialogue is contingent on verifiable actions against terrorism emanating from Pakistan. India's Operation Sindoor showcased its military readiness and commitment to deter further provocations while reinforcing its position that sustainable peace requires dismantling Pakistan's terror networks. As Pakistan seeks to divert attention from its internal challenges, India's strategic autonomy and defense capabilities continue to strengthen, affirming that engagement with Islamabad will only occur on New Delhi's terms.

## Arunachal Pradesh Governor discusses vital security matters with CDS

Chauhan.

 SHARE

01-Jan-26

Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt. General K.T. Parnaik (Retd.) recently met Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan in New Delhi to discuss pivotal national security issues, particularly focusing on Arunachal Pradesh. Key topics included the Vibrant Border Village Programme, the Agnipath scheme, and Sadbhavana projects aimed at enhancing development in border areas. The Governor emphasized the potential of Arunachal Pradesh's youth in contributing to national defense through armed forces induction, promoting discipline and skill development. He also stressed the importance of theatre commands and the operational capabilities of the Indian armed forces, reflecting a significant commitment to strengthening security and development in the region amidst the broader national vision of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.

## Bangladesh elections and ISI activities pose major security threats to India's northeast.

 SHARE

01-Jan-26

India's security agencies are on high alert as the deteriorating situation in Bangladesh and upcoming elections pose significant challenges, particularly for the northeastern states. The Intelligence Bureau warns that the ISI is likely to exploit the elections, scheduled for February 12, by supporting anti-India rhetoric from political factions like the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Jamaat-e-Islami. With increasing persecution of minorities and a rise in pro-terror sentiments under Prime Minister Muhammad Yunus, the potential for violence and the activation of terror modules, such as the recently uncovered Bangladesh-linked group, raises



concerns about border security and illegal immigration. New Delhi aims to maintain stability in the region until the election process concludes.

## India-UAE Joint Military Exercise Enhances Defense Ties and Stability



01-Jan-26

The India-UAE joint military exercise, Desert Cyclone-II, recently concluded in Abu Dhabi, enhancing defense ties and regional stability amid evolving geopolitical dynamics. The exercise focused on urban combat and sub-conventional operations under UN mandates, allowing troops to engage in practical drills such as building clearance and heliborne insertions. This collaboration not only standardized operational procedures but also fostered strong personal connections among soldiers, deepening mutual trust. By reinforcing commitments to international peacekeeping norms, the exercise highlights the strategic alignment between India and the UAE, showcasing their resolve to collaboratively address shared security challenges in the Gulf region and beyond.

## Guyana invites Indian firms to bid in 2026 oil auction, enhancing bilateral ties.



01-Jan-26

Guyana has invited Indian companies to participate in its 2026 oil blocks auction as it seeks to diversify its investor base following significant offshore oil discoveries. With production projected to rise from 800,000 to 1.7 million barrels per day by 2030, this partnership offers India an opportunity to secure stable, non-sanctioned oil supplies amidst geopolitical tensions. The Guyanese government is keen on involving Indian firms not just as buyers but as active partners in exploration and production, reflecting a strategic partnership that extends beyond hydrocarbons into sectors like infrastructure and renewable energy. This initiative signifies a strengthening of bilateral ties, with potential long-term economic benefits for both nations.

## Ukrainian drone strike damages Tuapse refinery, injures two, highlights vulnerabilities.



01-Jan-26

A Ukrainian drone attack on the Tuapse oil refinery in Russia's Krasnodar region resulted in injuries to two individuals and extensive damage, including broken windows in nearby residential buildings and damage to

refinery equipment and a port berth. The fire, which covered approximately 300 square meters, was swiftly extinguished, but details regarding the impact on refinery operations remain unclear. Tuapse is crucial for Russia's oil exports, processing around 240,000 barrels of crude daily. This incident underscores the ongoing conflict's escalation, with repeated drone strikes highlighting vulnerabilities in Russia's critical infrastructure, potentially influencing the strategic calculations of both sides in the ongoing war.

## Pakistan's deadliest year in a decade linked to worsening Taliban ties.



01-Jan-26

Pakistan is experiencing its deadliest year in a decade, primarily attributed to deteriorating ties with the Taliban. This resurgence of violence underscores the complex security challenges facing Pakistan, as the Taliban's influence in the region has led to increased militant activity. The situation raises significant concerns for regional stability and poses a potential threat to India, as any escalation in Pakistan's internal conflict could spill over its borders. The implications of this turmoil extend beyond national security, affecting diplomatic relations and counter-terrorism efforts in South Asia.

## Military Operations

### Operation Sindoor highlights India's strong resolve against cross-border terrorism and military prowess.



01-Jan-26

Operation Sindoor has emerged as a pivotal military response by India against cross-border terrorism, particularly following the Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 lives. Conducted on May 7, 2025, this operation involved precision strikes on nine terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, successfully eliminating around 100 terrorists and demonstrating India's enhanced multi-domain military capabilities. The initiative not only showcased India's strategic shift from surgical strikes to a doctrine of assured kinetic retaliation but also dismantled Pakistan's longstanding nuclear deterrent strategy by proving that conventional military action is viable despite the nuclear backdrop. The operation's tri-service coordination, including the Indian Air Force's use of advanced weaponry and air defenses, reflects India's commitment to technological self-reliance and strategic autonomy, further solidifying its position as a

military powerhouse in the region. This decisive action, which forced Pakistan to seek a ceasefire after its escalation attempts, underscores the evolving nature of warfare, where the integration of military, diplomatic, and informational strategies is pivotal in countering terrorism and asserting national sovereignty.

## **Shatrujeet Brigade boosts combat readiness with aquatic training drills.**



01-Jan-26

The Shatrujeet Brigade of the Indian Army's Central Command has enhanced its combat readiness through rigorous Watermanship Training, which focuses on aquatic manoeuvres and combat diving skills. This training aims to build endurance and tactical precision, ensuring that troops are mission-ready for water-based operations. Meanwhile, Lt Gen Anindya Sengupta, the GOC-in-C, highlighted the brigade's high operational readiness and dedication during his visit to celebrate the New Year with troops in the Kumaon region. Additionally, a memorial ceremony was held to honor Sep (Late) Manish Kumar Netam, a soldier who made the ultimate sacrifice during Operation Meghdoot, reflecting the Army's commitment to valor and community engagement. These developments underscore the Army's focus on adaptability and resilience in multifaceted operational environments.

## **IAF Conducts Air Exercises Near Pakistan to Enhance Readiness**



01-Jan-26

India's Air Force has announced large-scale air exercises near the Pakistan border, with activities scheduled from January 20 to January 21, resulting in restricted airspace for international commercial flights in the Kutch region of Gujarat. The drills will involve frontline aircraft, including Rafale jets and Sukhoi-30 MKIs, and are expected to feature high-speed sorties and aerial combat maneuvers. While Indian officials maintain that these exercises are routine and aimed at enhancing operational readiness, Pakistani defense analysts view them as provocative, heightening tensions in a sensitive regional security environment. This development underscores the ongoing challenges in maintaining peace and stability along the India-Pakistan border.

## **Army empowers Village Defence Guards in J&K's Doda for enhanced security against terrorism.**



01-Jan-26

The Indian Army is enhancing grassroots security measures in Doda district, Jammu and Kashmir, by training approximately 150 Village Defence Guards (VDGs) amidst ongoing counter-terrorist operations in the Chenab valley. The training includes handling automatic rifles, self-defence tactics, and bunker construction, aimed at empowering local volunteers to act as the first line of defense against potential terrorist threats. Recent upgrades in weaponry, including the provision of self-loading rifles, have bolstered the confidence of VDG members, who express gratitude for this initiative. This multi-layered security strategy not only aims to neutralize terrorist infiltration but also fosters a sense of security and resilience among local communities, crucial for long-term peace in the region.

## **2025 marks a significant military escalation between India and Pakistan, showcasing India's strategic capabilities.**



01-Jan-26

In 2025, a significant military escalation between India and Pakistan unfolded, marked by India's "Operation Sindoor," which targeted terrorist infrastructure following a deadly attack in Pahalgam. The conflict, lasting four days, showcased India's military capabilities, leading to the destruction of several Pakistani aircraft and prompting a strategic alignment with Saudi Arabia under a new defense agreement. Despite Pakistan's military resilience and support from allies like China and Turkey, the episode challenged long-held beliefs about nuclear deterrence and highlighted Pakistan's internal struggles with terrorism and political unrest. As the year concluded, Pakistan faced ongoing economic difficulties and a volatile political landscape, underscoring the complex dynamics in South Asia.

## **Punjab Police enhances border security with 2,367 CCTV cameras installation.**



01-Jan-26

Punjab Police is enhancing security along the India-Pakistan border by installing 2,367 CCTV cameras at 585 locations, backed by an estimated investment of Rs 49.58 crore. This initiative is part of a broader Vision 2026 aimed at modernizing the police force, which

includes expanding the Anti-Drone System from three to nine units and improving emergency response systems to cut response times significantly. The state government has invested over Rs 800 crore in police modernization over three years, with plans for a mega infrastructure project worth Rs 426 crore to bolster policing capabilities, including new facilities and upgraded technology to combat narcotics and enhance overall efficiency. This comprehensive strategy underscores Punjab's commitment to security and law enforcement in a region facing significant challenges.

## Terrorism and Counterterrorism

### Two arrested in Tonk with 150 kg ammonium nitrate and explosives.



01-Jan-26

The District Special Team (DST) of Tonk police arrested two individuals, Surendra Patwa and Surendra Mochi, after seizing 150 kg of ammonium nitrate concealed in sacks of urea fertiliser during a vehicle interception. This operation followed a tip-off and also led to the recovery of 200 cartridges and six bundles of safety fuse wire, totaling approximately 1,100 metres. Authorities are investigating the intended use of the explosive material, which may be linked to illegal activities such as mining. This incident underscores ongoing concerns about the trafficking of dangerous materials and its implications for regional security and public safety.

### Assam man arrested in Kerala for promoting extremist social media content.



01-Jan-26

A 25-year-old man from Assam, Roshidul Islam, has been arrested in Kerala for allegedly disseminating extremist content on social media, promoting religious hatred and terrorism. Living in the area for nearly two years, he is reported to have connections with individuals abroad, including in Bangladesh, and was allegedly attempting to procure AK-47 rifles from Pakistan. This arrest underscores the ongoing challenges of countering radicalization and terrorism in India, highlighting the need for vigilant monitoring of social media and international communication networks to safeguard national security. The investigation continues as authorities seek to uncover the extent of his activities and connections.

### 11 arrested in Assam, Tripura for links to Bangladesh's radical group IMK.



01-Jan-26

In a significant counter-terrorism operation, Indian security forces arrested 11 individuals across Assam and Tripura for their connections to the Bangladesh-based radical group Imam Mahmuder Kafila (IMK), which aims to destabilise India's northeast region. The operation, conducted by the Special Task Force (STF) on 29 December 2025, followed intelligence inputs from central agencies and targeted districts including Barpeta, Chirang, Baksa, and Darrang in Assam, as well as West Tripura. The IMK, an offshoot of the banned Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), has been revitalised following political changes in Bangladesh in August 2024, receiving directives from senior leaders of JMB, Ansarullah Bangla Team, and Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent to enhance its operations in India. The arrested individuals, who displayed a structured approach to radicalisation, reportedly engaged in financial and operational coordination with their Bangladeshi handlers, raising concerns about cross-border extremism and the vulnerabilities of India's northeastern borders. This operation underscores the intensified vigilance of Indian security agencies against growing jihadist threats, particularly in light of the region's porous borders and complex ethnic dynamics.

### Increased security operations in J-K's Chenab Valley due to terror threats.



01-Jan-26

In response to heightened terrorist threats in Jammu and Kashmir's Chenab Valley, the Indian Army and the Special Operations Group (SOG) of Jammu and Kashmir Police have launched intensified counter-terrorism operations, particularly in the high-altitude regions of Doda, Kishtwar, and Ramban districts. Intelligence assessments indicate that approximately 30 to 35 Pakistani terrorists are currently active in the area, prompting security forces to maintain vigilance amidst challenging winter conditions. Local leaders and residents have commended the unwavering commitment of the forces, emphasizing their role in ensuring safety and stability, especially as New Year celebrations approach. This proactive stance underscores India's ongoing efforts to counter terrorism and protect its citizens, reinforcing public confidence in the security apparatus.

## LeT leader admits India's Operation Sindoor thwarted terror camps, makes hollow threats.



01-Jan-26

In a recent gathering in Lahore, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) leader Kasuri confessed that India's Operation Sindoor, conducted in response to the Pahalgam attack, successfully destroyed terror camps, a move he described as a "big mistake" by India. The operation, which targeted nine terrorist camps and disrupted infiltration routes, showcased India's precision and deterrence capabilities without escalating tensions. Despite Kasuri's belligerent rhetoric, the destruction of infrastructure has impaired LeT's operational capacity, signaling a shift in India's counter-terrorism strategy. This operation highlights India's commitment to ensuring security along its borders while exposing Pakistan's complicity in supporting terrorism, ultimately reinforcing its stance against cross-border threats.

## NIA achieves over 92% conviction rate, strengthening national security in 2025.



01-Jan-26

In 2025, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) achieved an extraordinary conviction rate exceeding 92%, marking significant strides against terrorism and organized crime. Notable successes included the extradition of Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a key conspirator in the 2008 Mumbai attacks, and the deportation of gangster Anmol Bishnoi from the U.S. The NIA took decisive actions against various terror networks, securing multiple arrests and convictions across jihadi, Left-Wing Extremism, and Khalistani categories while advancing investigations into recent high-profile terrorist incidents. These accomplishments highlight the NIA's vital role in enhancing national security through effective inter-agency collaboration and a focus on evolving threats.

## Bangladesh terror groups HuJI, JMB exploit proxies to target India.



01-Jan-26

Intelligence agencies have reported that Bangladesh-based terror groups Harkat-ul-Jihad Islami (HuJI) and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, Bangladesh (JMB) are increasingly utilizing proxy strategies to conduct operations in India, mirroring tactics employed by groups like Lashkar-e-Tayiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad. These organizations are reportedly establishing home-grown factions within India, primarily targeting

northeastern states and West Bengal, especially ahead of upcoming elections. Recent intelligence operations have exposed modules such as Imam Mahamude Kafil, linked to JMB, indicating a strategic push to recruit illegal migrants for terror activities. This evolving threat underscores a significant urgency among these groups to escalate operations against India, posing challenges for security agencies grappling with the complexities of tracking these decentralized networks.

## Cybersecurity and Information Warfare

### CIK takes legal action against Kashmir's anti-national digital propaganda ring.



01-Jan-26

The Counter-Intelligence Wing Kashmir (CIK) has taken decisive legal action against a digital propaganda ring accused of disseminating anti-national content in the region. Following a declaration from a Special NIA Court that the accused are absconding, the CIK emphasized that these individuals, posing as journalists and freelancers, utilized social media platforms to circulate misleading narratives aimed at inciting violence and promoting secessionist agendas. The ongoing investigation, sparked by credible intelligence, uncovered serious offences under the IPC and UAPA, highlighting the persistent threat posed by digital subversion to India's sovereignty. The CIK's firm stance against such activities underscores the Indian government's commitment to maintaining public order and national integrity in Jammu and Kashmir.

## Miscellaneous

### Indian Army to feature innovative animal force at Republic Day parade



01-Jan-26

The Indian Army will showcase its unique animal force at the upcoming Republic Day parade, blending tradition with innovation. For the first time, double-humped Bactrian camels and Zanskari ponies will participate, highlighting their capabilities in extreme terrains, particularly in eastern Ladakh near the Line of Actual Control. The Remount Veterinary Corps contingent, led by a woman officer, will demonstrate these animals' roles in logistics and long-range patrols. Additionally, trained eagles will feature as part of an anti-drone strategy, reinforcing the Army's commitment to



integrating modern methods with traditional practices. This parade symbolizes the evolving dynamics of military operations in challenging environments, showcasing India's adaptability and resilience.

## **ISRO successfully tests improved third stage of SSLV, enhancing payload capacity and efficiency.**



01-Jan-26

ISRO successfully conducted a static test of the improved third stage (SS3) of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) on December 30, 2025, at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. This new version of the SS3 solid motor, featuring a lightweight carbon-epoxy motor case, enhances payload capacity by 90 kg and incorporates advanced design improvements for the igniter and nozzle system, thus increasing efficiency and robustness. The test recorded 233 parameters, confirming operational predictability, and aligns with India's strategic goal of bolstering indigenous space capabilities and production capacity. The commissioning of new solid motor production facilities further underscores India's commitment to advancing its aerospace sector and fostering self-reliance in defense and space technology.

## **President launches #SkilltheNation AI Challenge and new Skill Centre in Odisha for workforce empowerment.**



01-Jan-26

The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, launched the #SkilltheNation AI Challenge during a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre and inaugurated the IGNOU Regional Centre and Skill Centre in Rairangpur, Odisha. Emphasizing the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for India's economy and society, the President highlighted its role in shaping future job markets and enhancing productivity. She urged the youth to harness technology to empower marginalized communities and bridge socioeconomic divides, underscoring the government's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment. The initiative, driven by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, seeks to prepare India's workforce for an AI-driven future, ultimately aiming to elevate the nation as a knowledge superpower in alignment with the National Education Policy. This development reflects India's strategic approach to embracing technology for holistic growth and societal advancement.

## **CAT criticizes DRDO for arbitrary BrahMos Director General selection.**



01-Jan-26

The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) has annulled the appointment of Jaiteerth R. Joshi as Director General of BrahMos Aerospace, citing an arbitrary selection process that disregarded the seniority and qualifications of Sivasubramanyam Nambi Naidu, a DRDO Distinguished Scientist. The tribunal emphasized the importance of seniority and merit in government appointments and directed the Ministry of Defence and DRDO to reassess Naidu's candidacy within four weeks. This ruling raises significant concerns regarding the transparency and fairness of the selection processes within the DRDO, which plays a crucial role in India's defense capabilities and collaborations in the evolving geopolitical landscape.

## **ISRO Readies for Testing Advanced Semi-Cryogenic Engine SE-2000**



01-Jan-26

ISRO is advancing its space capabilities with the development of the semi-cryogenic engine SE-2000, which will be integral to the SC120 propulsion stage of the LVM-3 rocket, significantly increasing thrust from 1,600 kN to 2,000 kN. This initiative, driven by a focus on indigenous propulsion technologies, aims to enhance payload capacities for Geostationary Transfer Orbit and Low Earth Orbit, supporting heavier satellite launches and enabling future lunar missions. With successful hot-fire trials of the engine's power head already completed, ISRO is preparing for the first fully integrated engine test, targeting operational readiness around 2027. This advancement not only strengthens India's position in the global space market but also underscores its commitment to self-reliance in critical technologies amidst past challenges.

## **India's military actions reflect Lord Ram's ideals, says Rajnath Singh.**



01-Jan-26

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, at the second anniversary of the consecration of Ram Lalla's idol in Ayodhya, emphasized that India's military response during Operation Sindoor was guided by the ideals of Lord Ram, symbolizing restraint and purpose in addressing terrorism. He described the Ram temple movement as a significant historical struggle that reflects India's civilizational pride and future aspirations. Singh highlighted the transformation of Ayodhya into a global religious tourism hub, attributing this to the sustained efforts of the government. The

event underscored a spiritual reawakening in the nation, with a vision that aims to shape India's destiny for showcasing the alignment of contemporary actions centuries to come.

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