

Monthly Defence Current Affairs February 2024

Exercise Jal Prahar 2024

- Indian Navy and Indian Army Biannual Joint Exercise Jal Prahar held in **Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh**.
- Exercise Jal Prahar 2024 is a biannual joint exercise between **Indian Navy & Indian Army** focusing on amphibious operations.
- Aiming to validate and fine-tune its strategy to take over enemy land via sea, the Indian military has just completed a mammoth amphibious exercise "Jal Prahar" that saw participation of Army and Navy.
- The ENC is one of the three command-level formations of the Indian Navy. It is headquartered in **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**. The command is responsible for the all-naval forces in the **Bay of Bengal** and parts of the **Indian Ocean** and the naval establishments on the east coast of India.

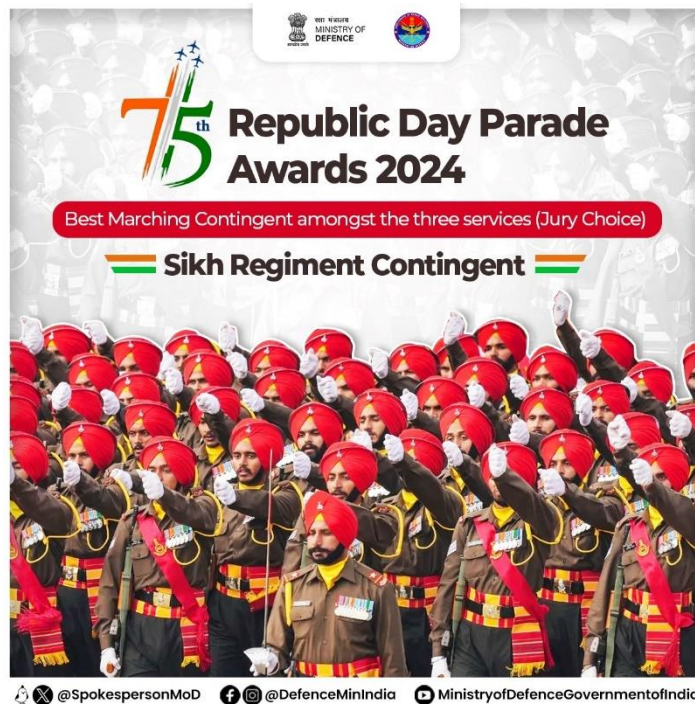


Best Marching Contingents & Tableaux Awards For RD

- Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Ajay Bhatt gave away the best marching contingents and tableaux awards for the Republic Day Parade on January 30, 2024. He announced separate results – one by a panel of judges and other through an online public vote conducted by MyGov and congratulated all the winners.

- Three panels of judges were appointed for assessing the performance of Marching Contingents from three Services, Marching Contingents from Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)/other auxiliary forces and tableaux from various States/Union Territories and Ministries/Departments. On the basis of the assessment of the panels, the results are as under:
- Best Marching Contingent among the three services – Sikh Regiment Contingent
- Best Marching Contingent among CAPF/other auxiliary forces – Delhi Police Women Marching Contingent
- Best three Tableaux (States/UTs)
- First – Odisha (Woman Empowerment in Viksit Bharat)
- Second – Gujrat (Dhordo : A Global Icon Of Gujarat’s Border Tourism)
- Third – Tamil Nadu (Kudavolai System in ancient Tamil Nadu – Mother of Democracy)
- Best Tableau (Ministries/Departments) - Ministry of Culture – (Bharat : Mother of Democracy)
- Special Prize - Central Public Works Department (Central Vista -Viksit Bharat Ka Pratibimb)
- Special memento to ‘Vande Bharatam’ – Dance Group
- In addition to the panel of judges, a web page was created on MyGov platform for online registration of citizens for watching the Republic Day Parade and Beating the Retreat Ceremony 2024 online. An online poll was conducted by MyGov for the citizens to vote for their favourite Tableaux from States/UTs and Ministries/Departments as also amongst the Marching contingents to select the best amongst popular choice category. The online poll for the popular choice was conducted between January 25-27, 2024 on MyGov web page. The results are:
- Best Marching Contingent among the three services – Rajputana Rifles Regimental Marching Contingent
- Best Marching Contingent among CAPF/other auxiliary forces - CRPF Woman Marching Contingent
- Best three Tableaux (States/UTs):

- First - Gujrat (Dhordo : A Global Icon Of Gujarat's Border Tourism)
- Second - Uttar Pradesh (Viksit Bharat Samradh Virasat)
- Third – Andhra Pradesh (Transforming School Education in Andhra Pradesh – Making Students Globally Competitive)
- Best Tableau (Central Ministries/Departments) – Vibrant Villages (Ministry of Home Affairs)



75th Republic Day Parade Awards 2024



Best three Tableaux (States/UTs)
(Jury Choice)

Odisha

(Women Empowerment in Viksit Bharat)

Gujarat

(Dhordo: A Global Icon of Gujarat's Border Tourism)

Tamil Nadu

(Kudavolai System in Ancient Tamil Nadu Mother of Democracy)



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75th Republic Day Parade Awards 2024



Best Tableau (Ministries/Departments), [Jury Choice]

Ministry of Culture
(Theme - Bharat: Mother of Democracy)



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ICG 48th Anniversary

- Indian Coast Guard Day is observed annually on **February 1** to commemorate the crucial role played by the organisation in safeguarding the nation's maritime interests. In 2024, India will mark the 48th anniversary of ICG Day, aiming to raise awareness about the history and significance of the ICG.
- It was formally established on **1 February 1977** by the **Coast Guard Act, 1978** of the Parliament of India. ICG saved 11,561 lives since it was founded in 1977, officials said. Since its inception to Dec 31, 2023, it carried out 3,899 search and rescue operations, 8,012 sorties and 453 medical evacuations at sea.

Indian Coast Guard Regions 2024 Regional Headquarters	
North-West	Gandhinagar
West	Mumbai
East	Chennai
North-East	Kolkata
Andaman & Nicobar	Port Blair

GRSE, Rolls-Royce Sign License Agreement To Manufacture MTU S4000

- Warship building company Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE) and Rolls-Royce signed a Frame and Individual License Agreement to co-operate in the license production and localisation of the MTU IMO Tier II compliant Series **4000 Marine Engines** for governmental ships.
- As part of the agreement, the engines will be manufactured at the Diesel Engine Plant of GRSE in Ranchi.
- The collaboration is a part of the 'Make in India' joint initiative and has significant market potential in coming years for all Fast Patrol Vessels, Interceptor Boats and Fast Attack Craft projects of Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard, the company said in a media release.



Record Over Rs 6.21 Lakh Crore Allocation To MoD

- In the current geopolitical scenario and with the twin objective of promoting self reliance and exports, the **Defence Budget** has touched **Rs 6,21,540.85 crore** in the Financial Year 2024-25. This comes out to be **13.04%** of total Union Budget, which was presented by **Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman**.
- The MoD continues to receive the highest allocation among the Ministries. The budgetary allocation to Defence for FY 24-25 is higher by approx. **one lakh crore (18.35%)** over the allocation for the FY 2022-23 and **4.72% more than** allocation of FY 23-24.
- Of this, a major share of **27.67%** goes to capital, **14.82%** for revenue **expenditure** on sustenance and operational preparedness, **30.68%** for **Pay and allowances**, **22.72%** for defence pensions and **4.11%** for **civil organisations** under MoD.

Upward trend continues in Defence Capital Expenditure promoting 'Aatmanirbharta'

- Budgetary allocation for capital expenditure in Defence for FY 24-25 is **Rs 1.72 lakh crore** which is **20.33% higher than the actual expenditure of FY 22-23** and **9.40 % more than the Revised Allocation of FY 23-24**.
- As per the **Economic Survey of India report 2023**, in the ship-building sector, the investment multiplier is around **1.82**, which means that an infusion of approx. **Rs 1.5 lakh crore** in naval ship-building projects would accrue a circulation of Rs 2.73 lakh crore in the ship building sector due to the multiplier effect.

Enhanced higher allocation sustained for operational readiness under Revenue Expenditure

- Allocation to the Armed Forces for revenue expenditure (Other than Salary) meant for sustenance and operational commitment for FY 24-25 continues to be high at **Rs 92,088 crore**, which is **48% higher than** the budgetary allocation of **FY 2022-23**.
- During the mid-year review, the allocation on this head was **increased by 82% over the budgetary allocation of FY 22-23** crossing the figure of **Rs one lakh crore for the first time**.

Defence Pension Budget increased to Rs 1.41 lakh crore

- Total Budgetary allocation on account of Defence pensions is **Rs 1,41,205 crore** which is **2.17% higher than** the allocation made during **2023-24**. It will be incurred on monthly pension to approx. **32 lakh pensioners** through **SPARSH** and through other pension disbursing authorities.

Unprecedented Allocation to ECHS ensuring better healthcare facilities to Veterans

- The total allocation to **Ex-Servicemen Welfare Scheme** for FY 2024-25 is **28% higher than** the allocation for **FY 23-24** (From **Rs 5,431.56 crore to Rs 6,968 crore**).
- This is in addition to the unprecedented allocation at revised estimate stage during the current year where the budgetary allocation to ECHS was enhanced by 70% over BE of 2023-24 and was made to **Rs 9,221.50 crore**.

Strengthening the need of improving Border Infrastructure for strategic requirements

- In the light of the continued threat perception faced at the **Indo-China border**, there continues a jump in the Capital Budget allocation to the Border Roads Organisation. The allocation for BE 2024-25 is **Rs 6,500 crore**, which is **30% higher than the allocation for FY 23-24** and **160% higher over** the allocation of **FY 2021-22**.

Strengthening the Multi Mission Service led by Indian Coast Guard

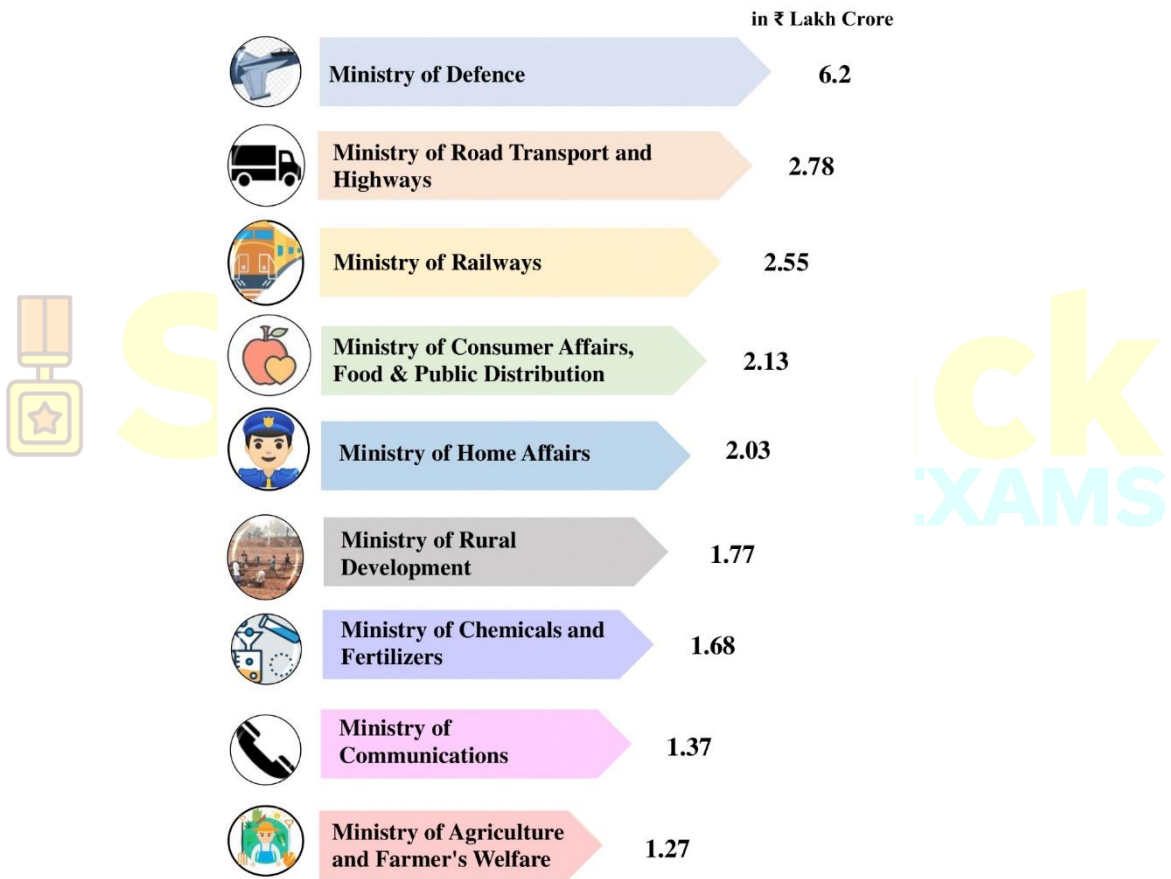
- Allocation to the ICG for this FY 2024-25 is **Rs 7,651.80 crore** which is 6.31% higher over the allocation of FY 2023-24. Of this, **Rs 3,500 crore** is to be incurred

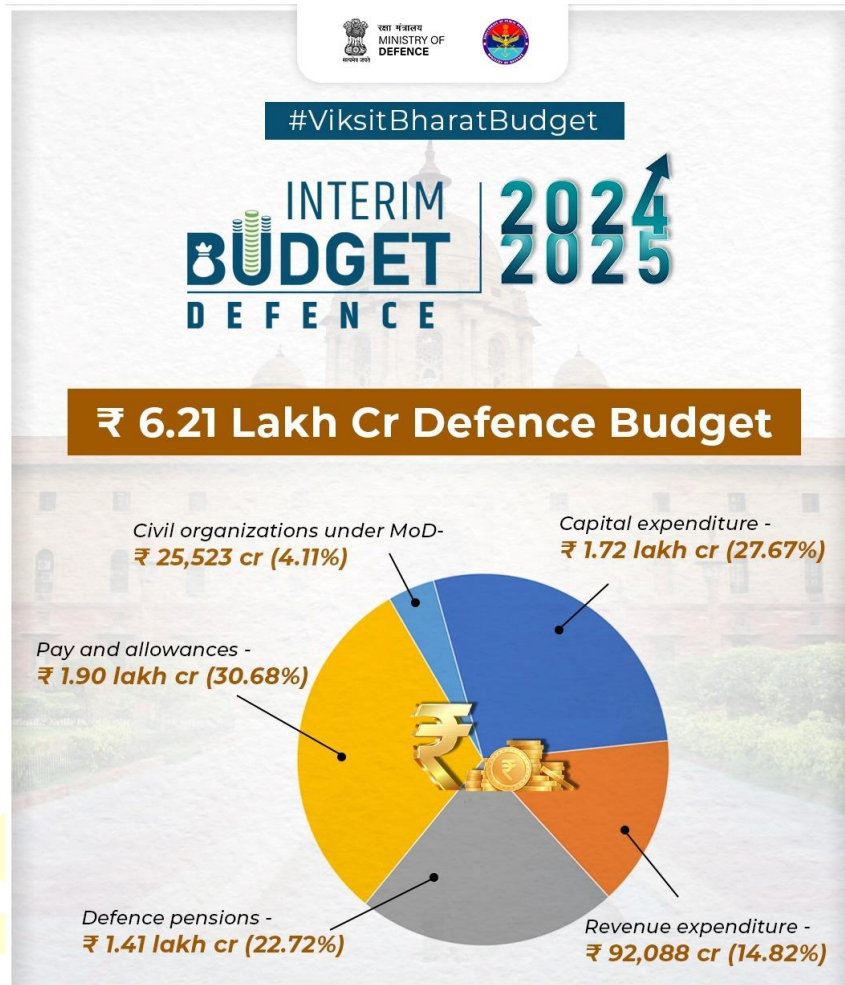
only on capital expenditure, adding teeth to the arsenal of the ICG to address the emerging challenges posed in water and provide humanitarian assistance to other nations.

DRDO

- The budgetary allocation to DRDO has been increased to **Rs 23,855 crore** in FY 2024-25 from **Rs 23,263.89 crore** in FY 2023-24. Of this allocation, a major share of Rs 13,208 crore is allocated for capital expenditure.

Allocation for Specific Ministries





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US Approves Sale Of 31 Predator Drones To India

- The US on Thursday approved the sale of **31 MQ-9B armed drones** to India at an estimated cost of **USD 3.99 billion**, an American defence agency announced here. The proposed mega drone deal was announced during the historic State Visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi here in June 2023.
- Under the deal, India will **get 31 High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) UAVs**, of which the Navy will get **15 Sea Guardian drones**, while the Army and the Indian Air Force will get eight each of the land version – **Sky Guardian**.



Indian Navy Declares 2024

- Indian Navy has declared 2024 as '**Year of Naval Civilians**' to improve administration, efficiency and well-being of Naval Civilians by addressing all facets of Civilian HR Management in a time bound manner.

- Major focus areas towards maximising administrative efficiency, digital initiatives, generic and specific training programmes and welfare activities have been identified for implementation in 2024.
- Naval Civilian Personnel constitute about a third of the Indian Navy's total workforce and contribute significantly to its operational effectiveness across all domains. Civilian personnel impact the overall performance of Naval formations such as Command Headquarters, Dockyards, Material Organisations, Naval Armament Depots, Naval Armament Inspectorates, Training Establishments and several other types of support units.



INS Sandhayak Commissioned

- **INS Sandhayak** (Yard 3025), the **first Survey Vessel Large (SVL) ship**, was commissioned into the Indian Navy in the presence of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh at an impressive ceremony held at the Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam on February 03, 2024.
- The primary role of the ship is to carry out full scale hydrographic surveys of ports, harbours, navigational channels/routes, coastal areas and deep seas, towards enabling safe marine navigation. In its secondary role, the ship will be capable of undertaking a range of naval operations.
- The commissioning ceremony marked the formal induction of the first of the four ships of the SVL Project under construction at **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata**. The project has been steered by the **Warship Design Bureau of the Indian Navy**.

- The keel was laid on March 12, 2019, and the ship was launched on December 05, 2021. It has undergone a comprehensive schedule of trials in harbour and at sea, leading up to commissioning. The ship has a displacement of **3,400 tons** and an overall length of **110 meters** with a beam of **16m**.
- It is equipped with state-of-the-art hydrographic equipment including Deep & Shallow Water Multi-Beam Echo-Sounders, Autonomous Underwater Vehicle, Remotely Operated Vehicle, Side scan sonars, Data Acquisition and Processing System, satellite-based positioning systems and terrestrial survey equipment.
- The ship is propelled by **two Diesel Engines** and is capable of achieving speeds in excess of **18 knots**.



Delivery Of 25t Bollard Pull Tug, Mahabali

- 25T Bollard Pull (BP) Tug, Mahabali has been delivered to Indian Navy on 02 Feb 24 in presence of Rear Admiral Subir Mukherjee, NM, ASY(Kochi). This Tug is a proud flag bearer of “Make in India” initiative of Govt of India.

- Contract for construction and delivery of three 25T BP Tugs was concluded with **M/s Shoft Shipyard Pvt Ltd** (M/s SSPL), an MSME, in consonance with “Aatmanirbhar Bharat” initiative of the Government of India. These Tugs are being built under the classification rules of Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).
- The availability of Tugs will provide impetus to Operational commitments of IN by facilitating assistance to Naval ships and submarines during berthing and unberthing, turning and maneuvering in confined waters.



Indian Navy's 'Operational Turn Around'

- Indian Navy's submarine **INS Karanj** is in Colombo for a two-day visit from February 3-5 for **Operational Turn Around** with the purpose of replenishing soil and provisions, the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka said in a statement.
- “The visit is an Operational Turn Around, wherein the submarine will replenish fuel and provisions. The crew will recuperate and have the opportunity of visiting places of interest in Colombo and Galle. The submarine will depart the island on February 5, 2024,” the Indian High Commission added.
- Notably, INS Karanj is the third of the **Kalveri class submarines** commissioned into the Indian Navy on March 10, 2021.
- This is the **first foreign port call** for INS Karanj since its commissioning. Previously, another Kalveri class submarine, INS Vagir, visited Colombo in relation to the **International Day of Yoga** in June 2023.



DRDO Carries Out Successful Flight Trials of HEAT

- Four flight trials of High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) - ABHYAS were successfully carried out by DRDO from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur in Odisha during January 30 to February 02, 2024.
- The trials were conducted with four different mission objectives in a revised robust configuration using a single booster designed by Advanced Systems Laboratory, Hyderabad to provide reduced launch acceleration.
- The systems tested recently were realised through Production Agencies – Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Defence. With identified production agencies, ABHYAS is ready for production. The system has export potential and can be offered to friendly countries.



Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi appointed as next Vice Chief of Army Staff

- Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi has been appointed as the next Vice Chief of Army Staff. He is presently heading the Northern Army Command and will be taking over on February 15.
- Lieutenant General Dwivedi is an alumnus of Sainik School, Rewa, National Defence Academy, and Indian Military Academy. He has held many important positions in his career. Lt Gen was commissioned into the 18th Battalion of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles in December 1984. Later, he commanded in the Kashmir Valley and the deserts of Rajasthan.
- He commanded his battalion in the Kashmir Valley, Assam Rifles Sector along the Indo-Myanmar Border, Inspectorate General Assam Rifles (IGAR, East). He also had the honour of commanding the prestigious Rising Star Corps.
- Meanwhile, Vice Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar has been appointed as the new Northern Army Commander. He is succeeding Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi who is moving to Army Headquarters as VCOAS.



Fence, Patrol Track Being Built Along Myanmar Border

- Union home minister Amit Shah said the Modi government has decided to fence the entire **1,643-km India-Myanmar border**. The move could virtually put an end to the **Free Movement Regime** prevalent along the porous border.
- Shah said a 10-km stretch of the border at Moreh in Manipur has already been fenced. Furthermore, two pilot projects of fencing through a hybrid surveillance system are under execution. "They will fence a stretch of 1 km each in Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur.
- Additionally, fence works covering approximately 20 km in Manipur have also been approved, and the work will start soon," he said.



IAF To Get Mid-air Refuellers, Signal Intelligence Aircraft

- The air force is likely to get mid-air refuellers that are crucial force multipliers, with the ministry considering a ₹10,000 cr proposal **to acquire six of the aircraft**.
- Plans to acquire three airborne intelligence gathering aircraft under a project that will see the development of indigenous sensor technologies and systems are also likely to move ahead.
- Currently, the IAF operates a fleet of six Russian **Ilyushin-78 tankers** procured in 2003-04, but at any given time only three to four are serviceable. Their maintenance and serviceability issues were also brought out in an August 2017 report of the **Comptroller and Auditor General** that studied their operations

from 2010 to 2016. The tankers were bought in 2003-2004 at Rs 132 crore per aircraft.



Embraer And Mahindra Announce Collaboration On The C-390

- Embraer Defence & Security and Mahindra announced that they have signed a MoU with the objective of jointly fulfilling the acquisition of the C-390 Millennium multi-mission aircraft by the IAF in its upcoming Medium Transport Aircraft procurement project.
- The C-390 Millennium multi-mission tactical transport aircraft offers unmatched mobility, combining high productivity and operating flexibility with low operating costs, which is an unbeatable combination.



8 Indian Ex-Navy Veterans Released By Qatar

- Of the eight former Navy officers, seven have already returned to India, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) informed through an official statement on Monday.
- The Union government released an official statement welcoming the decision to set the veteran officers free, saying, "The Government of India welcomes the release of eight Indian nationals working for the Dahra Global company who were detained in Qatar. Seven out of the eight of them have returned to India. We appreciate the decision by the Amir of the State of Qatar to enable the release and home-coming of these nationals."
- The eight Indian nationals were imprisoned in Qatar since October 2022 and were accused of allegedly spying on a submarine programme. The retired naval personnel were sentenced to death by a Qatar court on charges that have not yet been made public officially.
- Earlier, the Qatari Court commuted the death penalty sentence of eight ex-Indian naval officers it had arrested last year in the Dahra Global case, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a press statement. The sentence has now been reduced to jail terms.
- Describing the judgement, the Ministry of External Affairs had said, "We have noted the verdict today of the Court of Appeal of Qatar in the Dahra Global case, in which the sentences have been reduced."



IAF Inks Contract With Bharat Electronics

- The IAF has signed a contract with Bharat Electronics for the procurement of Light Weight Man Portable modern communication sets. Bharat Electronics is involved in the business of aerospace and defence manufacturing.
- These indigenous software-designed radios (SDR) technology-based sets will not only boost the IAF's communication network but also further the government's push on Atmanirbhar Bharat for defence indigenisation.
- The contract will also give a push to the company's order book which stood at Rs 76,217 crore as of January 1.
- The company also released its Q3 earnings two weeks ago which saw its net profit rise 40 percent on year to Rs 859.6 crore as against last year's Rs 613 crore.



Centre of Excellence In AI & Robotics

- Lt Gen Manjit Kumar, COS of the Southern Command inaugurated the **Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence & Robotics (CEAR)** at the **Army Institute of Technology (AIT)** in Pune.
- According to a post from the Southern Command, the centre is equipped with the latest 3D printing, CAD modeling tools, sensors/drivers, and interfacing tools for real-time embedded hardware designing.
- Additionally, Lt Gen Manjit Kumar presided over the felicitation ceremony of "INNERVE 8," the largest student-driven hackathon conducted by the Open-Source Software Club at AIT. With a prize pool exceeding ₹10 lakh, "INNERVE 8"

provided an excellent platform for all participants, as mentioned in the Southern Command's post.

- The CEAR, nestled within the AIT campus, is a testament to the Indian Army's commitment to harnessing the power of emerging technologies. This hub of innovation aims to foster an environment where students and faculty can collaborate, research, and develop solutions to real-world problems.



India To Develop Engine For New Arjun Tanks

- Turning a challenge into an opportunity, India is going ahead with an indigenous engine for its new set of Arjun Main Battle Tanks, after a German firm selected for the project expressed its inability to deliver the power plants in time.
- The Army has placed an order for **118 Arjun Mk1A tanks** worth **₹7523 cr** and deliveries are impacted as the engines have not been made available in the required quantities. The tank was to be powered by engines manufactured by a German firm but the company has conveyed that a long timeline of almost four years will be needed for delivery, officials said.
- DRDO has now started work on an indigenous option which is likely to be ready for production within three years. The **DATRAN 1500 engine** - being developed for the **Futuristic Main Battle Tank program** - is being modified to be fitted onto the new Arjun Tanks.



Defence Ministry Signs Rs 2,269-crore Deal With BEL

- The Defence Ministry has signed a Rs 2,269-crore deal with state-run Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) for the procurement of **11 Shakti warfare systems**, along with associated equipment, the ministry said in an official statement.
- It signed the contract with BEL on Tuesday for the procurement of 11 Shakti Electronic Warfare Systems along with associated equipment and accessories for the Indian Navy under the Buy (Indian- IDDM) category at a total cost of Rs 2269.54 cr.
- The Shakti EW System is indigenously designed, developed and manufactured. The Shakti EW System is capable of accurately intercepting electronic emissions and implementing countermeasures in dense electromagnetic environment," the ministry said.



MoD Signs Contract Worth Rs.1,752 Cr With AWEIL

- Ministry of Defence has signed a contract on February 14, 2024, with Advanced Weapon Equipment India Ltd. (AWEIL), Kanpur for manufacturing & supply of a total of 463 indigenously manufactured 12.7 mm Stabilised Remote-Control Guns for the Indian Navy & ICG at a total cost of Rs. 1752.13 crores, with Indigenous Content of more than 85%.
- The SRCG will enhance the capability of Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard to accurately engage small targets that post a threat to ships in an asymmetric environment, both by day and night.
- This acquisition will provide further boost to the vision of "Aatmanirbharta in Defence". This contract will also open up a large avenue in defence manufacturing for over 125 Indian Vendors and DPSUs for over a period of 5 years.



Havildar Varinder Singh Awarded VSM

- President Droupadi Murmu has awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal to Havildar Varinder Singh of the Sikh Regiment in the Indian Army for his development of a '**Multipurpose Octocopter**', an official said.
- The 'Multipurpose Octocopter' is a versatile drone capable of not only conducting surveillance operations but also performing tasks such as grenade dropping, aerial target engagement with weapons like the AK-47, and logistics operations.

- The VSM was instituted on January 26, 1960, as VSM Class-III to recognise the distinguished service of a high order. It was renamed on January 27, 1967, as VSM, and it holds the provision to be conferred posthumously.



MoD Approves Acquisition of 15 Maritime Aircraft

- The Defence Ministry has approved a proposal to procure **nine** maritime surveillance aircraft for the **Indian Navy** and **six** maritime patrol aircraft for the **Indian Coast Guard**, reported ANI quoting people aware of the development.
- The proposed acquisition involves the construction of 15 maritime patrol planes, which will be based on the domestically manufactured **C-295 transport aircraft**.
- This move aligns with the government's "**Make in India**" initiative, aiming to enhance indigenous defence production capabilities while meeting the country's security needs.
- The estimated value of these projects stands at a whopping **₹29,000 crore**, reported ANI.
- These new additions to the Indian Navy and ICG fleets are expected to enhance **surveillance, reconnaissance, and patrol capabilities**.



DAC Clears Capital Acquisition Proposals Worth Rs 84,560 Crore

- Defence Acquisition Council under the chairmanship of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, accorded approval for Acceptance of Necessity for various capital acquisition proposals amounting to Rs 84,560 crore.
- In the true spirit of 'Aatmanirbharta', the approvals accorded on February 16, 2024, lay special emphasis on procurement of various equipment from Indian vendors.
- AoN has also been accorded for procurement of **Heavy Weight Torpedoes** for enhancing the attacking capabilities of Kalvari Class submarines. The AoN for sustainment support through Follow On Support and Repair Replenishment support through Follow On Supply Support for **24 MH60R aircraft** under Foreign Military Sale route with the US Government has also been accorded.



Navy clears deal for 31 Predator Drones from US

- The Navy has reached a significant milestone in enhancing its capabilities, as Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar announced the clearance of a crucial deal to procure 31 Predator drones from the United States. The decision was made by the Defence Acquisition Council and sets the stage for the signing of the contract in the near future.
- Admiral Kumar expressed optimism about the progress of the deal, stating, "We are the lead servers who are steering it. The letter of request has been cleared by the Defence Acquisition Council and the letter of request has gone to the US government. They have given us a draft letter of availability. Now the final one will come. It has to be placed before the (the US) Congressional committee thereafter it will come."
- The acquisition of these drones is expected to significantly bolster India's surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, particularly in the maritime domain. The contract, valued at around USD 4 billion, includes provisions for weapons and other equipment necessary for operational deployment.



IAF Conducts 'Exercise - Vayu Shakti-24'

- Pokhran range near Jaisalmer reverberated with thunderous explosions and applause, on 17 February 2024, as the IAF showcased its offensive capabilities through an enthralling and formidable display of its firepower. Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.
- In keeping with this year's theme of the Exercise, 'Lightning Strike from the Sky', over 120 aircraft displayed the IAF's offensive capabilities by day as well as by night. Fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force including the Rafale, Su-30 MKI, MiG-29, Mirage-2000, Tejas and Hawk.





India's First Spy Satellite Made By Local Private Player

- India's first military grade spy satellite manufactured by the domestic private sector is ready and has been shipped for launch on a SpaceX rocket. Work is also in progress on a ground station that will control the asset and process sub-metre resolution imagery from it.
- Space Exploration Technologies Corp. commonly referred to as SpaceX, is an American spacecraft manufacturer, launch service provider, defense contractor and satellite communications company headquartered in Hawthorne, California. The company was founded in 2002 by Elon Musk with the goal of reducing space transportation costs and ultimately developing a sustainable colony on Mars.
- India is aiming to launch 50 satellites in the next five years for geo-intelligence gathering which will include the creation of a layer of satellites in different orbits with a capacity to track the movement of troops and image thousands of

kilometers of area, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman S Somanath said.



Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi Assumes Charge

- Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi on Monday assumed charge as the Vice Chief of Army Staff, replacing Lieutenant General MV Suchindra Kumar. Lt Gen Dwivedi was serving as the Northern Army Commander in his previous assessment.
- Lt Gen Kumar has been appointed as General-Officer-Commanding of Udhampur-based Northern Command.
- Lt Gen Dwivedi is the front-runner to become the Army Chief when incumbent General Manoj Pande retires on May 31.
- After his induction into office, Lt. General Upendra Dwivedi paid homage to the Bravehearts at the National War Memorial (NWM) and reviewed the Guard of Honour.
- Lt. General Dwivedi is an alumnus of Sainik School in Rewa, the National Defence Academy, and the Indian Military Academy.



'INDUS-X' Summit

- India and the US will explore ways to bolster their strategic cooperation at a two-day summit beginning Tuesday, which would be specifically focused on advancing bilateral defence innovation and collaboration. The defence ministry said the 'INDUS-X' summit in Delhi marks a "significant milestone" in the collaborative efforts between the two countries.
- The ministry said the summit aims to be a "pivotal" event driving strategic technology partnerships and defence industrial cooperation between India and the US.
- The summit is being organised by India's Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and the Department of Defence of the US in cooperation with the US-India Business Council and Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM).



India Hosts Milan Naval Exercise

- India on Monday kick-started a nine-day mega naval exercise in Visakhapatnam with participation of around 50 navies that came amid the fractious geopolitical environment including growing global concerns over deteriorating security situation in the Red Sea.
- Navies from the US, Japan, Australia, France, Bangladesh, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia, among others, are participating in the **12th edition of**

the 'Milan' exercise that is aiming to bolster maritime cooperation among like-minded nations.

- The harbour phase of the exercise is from February 19 to 23. The sea phase featuring various complex drills and manoeuvres will be from February 24 to 27.
- The formal opening ceremony will take place on Wednesday, Navy officials said.
- The harbour phase includes the opening ceremony, international city parade, international maritime seminar, Milan Tech Expo and table top exercise, among others.
- During the sea phase, the participating navies will conduct advanced air defence, anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare drills, the officials said.



₹60,000-crore Sukhoi Fighter Upgrade Begins

- A comprehensive upgrade of the mainstay Su 30MKI fighter jet fleet that will see the aircraft get new radars, mission control system, electronic warfare capabilities and integration of new weapon systems will see heavy participation from the private sector.
- The ₹60,000-cr upgrade, approved by the defence ministry last year, will be done by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, with support from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and several major partners.
- In addition to the extensive upgrades planned for its Su-30MKI fleet, the IAF is making significant strides in bolstering its entire defence capabilities through a series of strategic procurements valued at approximately ₹1.7 trillion (\$21 billion).
- The Sukhoi Su-30 is a twin-engine, two-seat supermaneuverable fighter aircraft developed in the Soviet Union by Russia's Sukhoi Aviation Corporation. It is a multirole fighter for all-weather, air-to-air and air interdiction missions.



India Hosts Global Intel Chiefs' Meet

- The two-day meeting which began on Tuesday, is being held to discuss contemporary security challenges which have global ramifications. It provides an opportunity to intelligence chiefs to share insights and strategies and establish cooperation to fight transnational crimes, including cyber threats, terrorism and terrorism financing, said people familiar with the matter.
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- Last year intelligence chiefs of 25 countries participated in the meeting. Significantly, the Canadian intelligence chief is also expected to participate despite strained bilateral ties since September last year when Canadian PM told his country's parliament that security agencies were pursuing "credible allegations of a potential link" b/w agents of the Indian government and the killing of Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia in June 2023.



Hungary Set To Ratify Sweden's NATO Bid

- Hungary's ruling Fidesz party proposed on Tuesday that parliament should vote to ratify Sweden's bid to join NATO on Feb. 26, a move that it would support.
- Sweden applied to join NATO nearly two years ago, in a historic shift in policy prompted by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.
- Sweden applied to join NATO nearly two years ago, in a historic shift in policy prompted by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. After a prolonged delay, Hungary will be the last NATO member to approve the Nordic country's bid to become the bloc's 32nd member.
- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance of 31 member states – 29 European and two North American.
- Founded: 4 April 1949, Washington, D.C., United States
- Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium



Digital Flight Control Computer for Tejas Mk1A Flown successfully

- In a significant development towards Tejas Mk1A programme, the Digital Fly by Wire Flight Control Computer (DFCC) was integrated in prototype LSP7 and successfully flown on 19th Feb 2024.
- DFCC has been indigenously **developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment**, Bengaluru for the Tejas - Mk1A. Digital Fly by Wire Flight Control Computer features Quadraplex Power PC based Processor, high speed autonomous state machine based I/O controller, enhanced computational throughput and complex on-board software complied to DO178C level- A safety requirements.
- The improved version of the aircraft, Tejas MK1A features advanced mission computer, high performance Digital Flight Control Computer (DFCC Mk1A), Smart Multi-Function Displays, Advanced Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) Radar, Advanced Self-protection Jammer, Electronic Warfare Suit etc.



Umbrella Scheme On “Safety of Women”

- The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi approved the proposal of Ministry of Home Affairs of continuation of implementation of Umbrella Scheme on ‘Safety of Women’ at a total cost of **Rs.1179.72 crore** during the period from **2021-22 to 2025-26**.
- Out of the total project outlay of Rs.1179.72 crore, a total of **Rs.885.49 crore** will be provided by MHA from its own budget and **Rs.294.23 crore** will be funded from **Nirbhaya Fund**.



- Safety of Women in a country is an outcome of several factors like stringent deterrence through strict laws, effective delivery of justice, redressal of complaints in a timely manner and easily accessible institutional support structures to the victims.
- The Government of India has proposed to continue the following projects under the Umbrella Scheme for “Safety of Women”:
- 112 Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) 2.0;
- Upgradation of Central Forensic Sciences laboratories, including setting up of National Forensic Data Centre;
- Strengthening of DNA Analysis, Cyber Forensic capacities in State Forensic Science Laboratories;
- Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children;
- Capacity building and training of investigators and prosecutors in handling sexual assault cases against women and children; and
- Women Help Desk & Anti-human Trafficking Units.



Umbrella Scheme on "Safety of Women"

CABINET DECISION
27th FEBRUARY 2024

- ❖ Cabinet approves continuation of the Umbrella scheme at a cost of ₹1179.72 crore during the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26
- ❖ ₹ 885.49 crore to be provided by MHA & ₹ 294.23 crore to be funded from Nirbhaya Fund

CABINET APPROVES

CONTINUATION OF UMBRELLA SCHEME ON 'SAFETY OF WOMEN'

- At cost of **Rs.1179.72 crore** during the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26
- **Rs.885.49 crore** to be provided from MHA budget
- **Rs.294.23 crore** to be funded from Nirbhaya Fund

CONTINUATION OF FOLLOWING PROJECTS

- **112** Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) 2.0
- Cyber Crime Prevention against Women & Children
- Women Help Desk & Anti-human Trafficking Units

*MHA: Ministry of Home Affairs
Source: Govt of India

Aeronautical Development Agency Signs MoU with IAF

- Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) has signed an MoU with the IAF for integration of futuristic Weapons and Sensors for LCA Tejas aircraft. The MoU was signed by Shri Prabhulla Chandran VK, Technology Director (Avionics and Weapon Systems) of ADA and Air Vice Marshal KN Santosh of IAF.
- ADA is a premier organization under the aegis of the Department of Defence R&D with mandate to Design and Develop Tejas-LCA and its Variants.
- In present war scenario, there is a continuous need of upgrading the weapons and sensors suite of the aircraft and towards this, ADA has initiated the know-how transfer for integration of weapons and sensors to SDI. This will facilitate

the IAF to independently carry out sensors, weapon integration and flight testing to enhance the operational capability of Tejas-LCA fighter.

- ADA has successfully developed and type certified Tejas LCA with a credit of more than 10000 sorties of incident free flying. IAF has already formed two squadrons of this fighter aircraft and twin seater aircraft are also being inducted.



Skydio Plans To Bring Commercial Drones To India

- Skydio, a leading American drone manufacturer, has announced plans to introduce its commercial drone products in India, in addition to its current focus on defence-related UAVs.
- The company recently partnered with Indian firm **Aeroarc** to manufacture UAVs for defence customers in the **Indo-Pacific region**. This move follows Skydio's establishment of an R&D center in Bengaluru last year.
- Currently, Skydio focuses on three main market segments: government/defence, public safety, and inspection of critical infrastructure. Carpenter highlighted the versatility of Skydio's drones, which are used for tasks such as perimeter security at power plants, overwatch at construction sites, and inspection in industries like oil and gas and construction.



Govt Clears Rs 31,000 Cr Defence Orders

- The government has cleared weapons acquisitions worth over ₹31,000 crore, including the single largest order ever to the Indian private sector. Approvals have been granted by the **Cabinet Committee on Security** for purchase of Brahmos missiles and launchers for the navy and high-powered radars and close in weapon systems (CIWS) for the IAF.
- The contracts are likely to be signed in the current financial year and will come as a boost to the domestic defence manufacturing ecosystem. Sources said that the order for over **200 extended range Brahmos supersonic cruise missiles** is valued at close to **₹20,000 crore**. These missiles will be fitted onboard leading warships. The Brahmos missile is also being supplied to the Philippines.
- The CIWS system, the urgency for which has increased in recent times given the threat of unmanned aerial systems, is valued to close to **₹6,000 crore** and once signed, will be the largest single order to the Indian private sector. **Larsen and Toubro** has won the **air force order** and the systems will be manufactured indigenously.



First Ever 'Maharashtra MSME Defence Expo' In Pune

- Preparation is underway for the first-ever 'Maharashtra MSME Defence Expo', which will be held at the International Exhibition and Convention Center at Moshi in Pune. The three-day Expo will be inaugurated.
- The Expo will witness the participation of the Armed Forces, defence PSUs and ordnance factories. The event is set to give a boost to 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' campaign as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The Indian Air Force's Made in India Samar-II and Akash surface-to-air weapon systems are being showcased at the Defence Expo being held at Pune from February 24 to 26.
- The Samar-II system has been developed using the R-27 beyond-visual-range air-to-air missiles, which can now intercept targets at longer ranges than its previous version, the Samar-1 air defence missile system.



IAF To Also Get High-tech Radars And Air Defence Guns Worth Rs 13,000 Crore Soon

- In a bid to bolster the Indian Air Force's surveillance capabilities along the borders with China and Pakistan, the Cabinet Committee on Security has approved deals worth approximately Rs 13,000 crore. These deals include the acquisition of new high-power radars and close-in weapon systems from Indian manufacturer Larsen and Toubro (L&T).
- Under a project valued at around Rs 6,000 crore, the IAF will procure new radars to replace and augment the existing chain of radars along both borders. This move aims to strengthen India's radar coverage in strategic areas.
- The Cabinet Committee has also approved the ambitious Made in India Close-in Weapon System project, valued at around **Rs 7,000 crore**. This system, based on a derivative of air defence guns, will provide enhanced protection to vital assets and points against potential attacks by drones and aircraft.



Exercise 'Dharma Guardian' 2024

- The **5th edition** of Joint Military Exercise 'DHARMA GUARDIAN' between the Indian Army and the Japan Ground Self Defence Force commenced today at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in **Rajasthan**. The Exercise is scheduled to be conducted from 25th February to 9th March 2024.
- The contingent of both sides comprises of 40 personnel each. The Japanese contingent is being represented by troops from the **34th Infantry Regiment** and **Indian Army** contingent is being represented by a Battalion from the Rajputana Rifles.



DRDO Hands Over 23 Licensing Agreements For Transfer of Technology

- To enhance cooperation and synergy with the industry, DRDO organised a DRDO-Industry Meet on February 25, 2024 during the Maharashtra MSME Defence Expo 2024 at Pune.
- The meet was intended to apprise and update industries, especially the MSMEs & start-ups about various industry-friendly initiatives and policies of DRDO as well as address the concerns of the industry.
- The DRDO handed over SAMAR (System for Advance Manufacturing Assessment and Rating) assessment certificates to nine Industry Partners. SAMAR is a benchmark to measure the competency of defence manufacturing enterprises. A brief and overview on SAMAR was also provided during the function.



Indian Army Emerges As Winner Of Khelo India Winter Games

- The Indian Army emerged as the overall winner of the fourth edition of the Khelo India Winter Games, held in Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir in two legs.
- Throughout the competition, the Indian Army got a total of 21 medals, including 10 gold, five silver and six bronze medals, as per Olympics.com.
- At the second place is Karnataka, who secured 11 medals, out of which nine were gold and two were silver.
- The third-placed contingent is that of Maharashtra, who won 22 medals, out of which seven are gold, eight are silver and seven are bronze medals.



Adani Unveils South Asia's Largest Ammunition And Missiles Complex

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday inaugurated the Ammunition & Missiles Complex, the first leg of the state's defence corridor in the presence of Chief of Army Staff, Gen Manoj Pande.
- According to Ashish Rajvanshi, CEO, Adani Defence, nearly 4000 jobs will be generated in this complex with five times the multiplier effect on MSMEs and the local ecosystem benefiting from it indirectly and an investment plan of Rs 3000+ crore.
- The Adani ammunition centre is South Asia's largest ammunition manufacturing complex and has been dedicated to the brave warriors of the Balakot strike who carried out '**Operation Bandar**' in response to the Pulwama attack that claimed the lives of 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) soldiers.
- Spread over **500 acres**, the facility in Kanpur is set to become one of the largest integrated ammunition manufacturing complexes. It will produce small, medium and large calibre ammunition for the armed forces, paramilitary forces and police.
- The facility has started rolling out small calibre ammunition, starting with 150 million rounds estimated at 25 percent of India's annual requirement.



Indian Navy Conducts Airborne Insertion Ops Over Arabian Sea

- The Indian Navy undertook airborne insertion of Special Forces by paradropping inflatable crafts and MARCOs from C-130 aircraft in the Arabian Sea for continued anti-piracy operations in the region, Indian Navy said.
- The exercise was undertaken in response to the ongoing maritime security situation in the Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea and to ensure prompt action against any maritime threat.
- Meanwhile, in January, the **Indian Navy warship INS Sumitra** thwarted the piracy attempt on an Iranian-flagged fishing vessel, Al Naeemi sailing off the East Coast of Somalia and successfully rescued 19 Pakistani nationals on Monday, as per the Indian Navy.



BrahMos Missile Now Our Primary Weapon: CONS

- Indian Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar has declared that the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile will become the primary weapon of the Indian Navy, supplanting older missile systems acquired from other countries. In an interview with ANI, Admiral Kumar stated, "**BrahMos will be our primary weapon now as the surface-to-surface missile weapon.**"
- He also indicated that the Indian Air Force and its fighter aircraft might adopt BrahMos as their primary air-to-surface weapon. He praised BrahMos for its evolution in range, capabilities, and lethality, emphasizing that the missile is "a very potent missile."
- The Navy chief's comments follow the Cabinet Committee on Security's clearance of a deal for over **200 BrahMos missiles** under a **Rs 19,000 crore** contract, expected to be signed on March 5.



Balakot Airstrike Anniversary

- On February 26, 2024, India commemorates the **fifth anniversary** of the Balakot airstrike, a historic military operation conducted by the IAF in response to the Pulwama terror attack. The Balakot airstrike, conducted on February 26, 2019, was a meticulously planned and executed operation that demonstrated India's unwavering commitment to national security.
- The codeword "**Bandar Mara Gaya**" was reportedly used to relay the success of the mission, signaling the elimination of a significant threat.
- The message meant that the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorist training camp at Balakot in Pakistan's hinterland had been destroyed by Indian fighter jets in a daring pre-dawn cross-border operation.
- Top officials and functionaries involved in the Balakot strike previously told HT that the code name "Bandar" was deliberately chosen to confuse Pakistani intelligence, which the Indian side hoped would think the reference was to the JeM HQ in Bhawalpur, where the terror group's ailing chief Masood Azhar was safely housed.



Review Questions

1. ICG Celebrating ___ Anniversary On 1 Feb 2024.

- A. 46th
- B. 47th
- C. 48th
- D. 49th

ANSWER: C

2. Ex 'Jal Prahar' Conducted In

- A. Pune
- B. Vishakhapatnam
- C. Mumbai
- D. Kakinada

ANSWER: D

3. Who Was Awarded The Title Of The Best Marching Contingent Among The Three Services?

- A. Delhi Policewomen Marching Contingent
- B. Sikh Regiment Contingent
- C. Central Public Works Department
- D. Ministry of Culture

ANSWER: B

4. Which State's Tableau Won The First Prize In The Category of Best Tableaux (States/UTs)?

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Odisha
- C. Gujrat
- D. Delhi

ANSWER: B

5. Which Organization Received A Special Prize For Their Contribution Related To 'Viksit Bharat Ka Pratibimb'?

- A. Delhi Policewomen Marching Contingent
- B. Sikh Regiment Contingent
- C. Central Public Works Department
- D. Ministry of Culture

ANSWER: C

6. What Theme Was Presented By The Tableau That Won The 2nd Prize In The Category Of Best Tableaux?

- A. Woman Empowerment in Viksit Bharat
- B. Dhordo: A Global Icon of Gujarat's Border Tourism
- C. Kudavolai System in ancient Tamil Nadu – Mother of Democracy
- D. Central Vista - Viksit Bharat Ka Pratibimb

ANSWER: B

7. What is the % of the Defence Budget in the Financial Year 2024-25 compared to the total Union Budget?

- A. 18.35%
- B. 4.72%
- C. 13.04%
- D. 30.68%

ANSWER: C

8. How much higher is the budgetary allocation for Defence in FY 24-25 compared to FY 2022-23?

- A. Rs 1,341 crore
- B. 30.68%
- C. One lakh crore (18.35%)

D. 4.11%

ANSWER: C

9. What is the major focus area for the 'Year of Naval Civilians' in 2024?

- A. Digital Initiatives
- B. Defence Pensions
- C. CRPF Spending
- D. Civil HR Management

ANSWER: D

10. Which ministry has been allocated ₹2.03 lakh crore in the interim budget, with a majority for CAPF?

- A. Ministry of Defence
- B. Union Home Ministry
- C. Ministry of Finance
- D. None

ANSWER: B

11. What percentage of the Defence budget goes to capital expenditure?

- A. 27.67%
- B. 14.82%
- C. 30.68%
- D. 22.72%

ANSWER: A

12. Which naval vessel is set to be commissioned in Vizag to boost the Indian Navy's surveillance apparatus?

- A. Sandhayak
- E. Delhi
- F. Imphal
- G. None of the above

ANSWER: A

13. 83rd Army Dental Corps Day Celebrated On

- A. 1 Feb
- B. 2 Feb
- C. 3 Feb
- D. 4 Feb

ANSWER: A

14. Which Company Delivered The 25T Bollard Pull Tug, Mahabali, To The Indian Navy?

- A. GRSE
- B. GSL
- C. HSL
- D. Shoft Shipyard Pvt Ltd (SSPL)

ANSWER: D

15. Four Flight Trials of HEAT - ABHYAS Were Successfully Carried Out By

- A. ISRO
- B. HAL
- C. DRDO
- D. NASA

ANSWER: C

16. What is the aim of the collaboration between IIT Madras and Munitions India Limited?

- A. To enhance agricultural productivity
- B. To develop smart vehicles for urban transportation
- C. To create the nation's first domestically designed 155 Smart Ammunition
- D. To establish renewable energy infrastructure

ANSWER: C

17. What is the significance of Modi government regarding the India-Myanmar border?

- A. To open up trade routes with neighboring countries
- B. To encourage cultural exchange programs
- C. To implement a Free Movement Regime
- D. To fence the entire 1,643-km India-Myanmar border

ANSWER: D

18. Where is the World Defence Show 2024 Ongoing?

- A. Riyadh
- B. New Delhi
- C. Dubai

D. Geneva

ANSWER: A

19. What is the objective of the MoU signed between Embraer Defence & Security, Mahindra, and the IAF?

- A. Establishing a joint venture for space exploration missions
- B. Collaborating on renewable energy projects in rural India
- C. Fulfilling the acquisition of the C-390 Millennium multi-mission aircraft
- D. Promoting cultural exchanges between Brazil and India

ANSWER: C

20. Which air exercise conducted by India, France, and the UAE over the Arabian Sea?

- A. Eagle Strike
- B. Aero Falcon
- C. Blue Thunder
- D. Desert Knight

ANSWER: D

21. What Is The Value Of The Deal Signed By The Mod With BEL For 11 Shakti Warfare Systems?

- A. Rs 1,500 crore
- B. Rs 2,269 crore
- C. Rs 3,000 crore
- D. Rs 2,500 crore

ANSWER: B

22. What was the reason behind Havildar Varinder Singh being awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal?

- A. For his bravery in combat
- B. For his development of a Multipurpose Octocopter
- C. For his leadership skills in the Sikh Regiment
- D. For his contributions to humanitarian efforts

ANSWER: B

23. What is the cost of the contract signed by the MoD for manufacturing Stabilised Remote-Control Guns ?

- A. Rs. 463 crores
- B. Rs. 175.213 crores

- C. Rs. 1752.13 crores
- D. Rs. 4630 crores

ANSWER: C

24. AFMS & __join hands to foster research in improving combat medical support.

- A. IIT Roorkee
- B. IIT Delhi
- C. IIT Mumbai
- D. None

ANSWER: A

25. C295 aircraft is manufactured by which aerospace company?

- A. Airbus
- B. Boeing
- C. Lockheed Martin
- D. Embraer

ANSWER: A

26. Who Assumes Charge As Vice Chief of Army Staff?

- A. Lt Gen V K Malik
- B. Lt Gen Anil Parashar
- C. Lt Gen M V Suchindra
- D. Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi

ANSWER: D

27. 'INDUS-X' Summit Held Between Bharat &

- A. Qatar
- B. Oman
- C. UAE
- D. USA

ANSWER: D

28. What is the primary focus of the third edition of the annual gathering of global intelligence chiefs?

- A. Climate change mitigation
- B. Economic cooperation
- C. Counterterrorism efforts
- D. Cybersecurity measures

ANSWER: C

29. What was successfully integrated into prototype LSP7 of the Tejas Mk1A programme?

- A. Radar system
- B. Digital Fly by Wire Flight Control Computer
- C. Missile launcher
- D. Communication system

ANSWER: B

30. Which Country Is Going To Become 32nd Member In NATO?

- A. Qatar
- E. Oman
- F. Hungary
- G. Sweden

ANSWER: D

