

# Monthly Defence Current Affairs January 2025

## MoD Declares 2025 as 'Year of Reforms'

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh chaired a meeting with all the Secretaries of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) on the eve of the New Year to review the progress on various schemes, projects, reforms and the way ahead.
- In order to give impetus to the ongoing and future reforms, it was unanimously decided to observe 2025 as the 'Year of Reforms' in the MoD.
- This would aim at transforming the Armed Forces into a technologically-advanced combat-ready force capable of multi-domain integrated operations.



## Indian Armed Forces Chiefs to Get aides from Sister Services

- **In Short**
- Move aims to enhance 'theaterisation' of Indian defence forces
- India set to be 1<sup>st</sup> democratic country to achieve jointness of forces through consensus
- General Anil Chauhan leads consensus-based approach for tri-service synergy
- The personal staff officers for service chiefs of all defence forces, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, will be appointed from their sister services from January 1, 2025, marking a significant move towards achieving uniformity in the forces.

- This will be a major move towards the '**theaterisation**' of the defence forces, a process which began with the appointment of the first Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat, in 2020.
- All service chiefs used to get their personal staff officers, known as **Aide-de-Camp (ADCs)**, from not only their own services, but also from a unit with which they felt connected.
- This will be the first time that ADCs will be appointed for service chiefs from other services.



## DRDO's 67<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day : 01 Jan 2025

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency under the Department of Defence Research and Development in Ministry of Defence.
- Formed: 1 January 1958; 67 years ago
- Headquarters: DRDO Bhavan, New Delhi, India
- Motto: "Strength's Origin is in Science"
- Sanskrit: बलस्य मूलं विज्ञानम्



## India Protests Against China's New Counties

- India on Friday said it had lodged a protest with China over its creation of new counties which includes parts of Aksai Chin in northeast Ladakh in India.
- MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, “We have lodged a solemn protest with the Chinese side through diplomatic channels.”
- “India has never accepted the illegal Chinese occupation of Indian territory in this area,” Jaiswal added.
- In a strong reaction, the MEA said creation of new counties would neither have a bearing on India’s long-standing and consistent position regarding its sovereignty over the area nor lend legitimacy to China’s “illegal and forcible” occupation of the same.
- “Last week, China announced creation of two new counties—**Hean and Hekang**—carved out of the restive **Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region**. Parts of jurisdiction of these **so-called counties fall in India’s Union Territory of Ladakh**,” Jaiswal said.
- Aksai Chin is under illegal Chinese control since **1950s**. India claims it as its own. The 1962 war between the two countries included major battles on the western edge of Aksai Chin.
- The more recent flashpoint of **Depsang** is located just 40 km west of Aksai Chin.



## Garuda Aerospace and REIL to Set Up Remote Pilot Training Organisation

- Drone manufacturer Garuda Aerospace has signed an agreement with Rajasthan Electronics and Instruments Ltd (REIL) to establish a **Remote Pilot Training Organisation in Jaipur.**
- The training facility aims to meet the growing demand for skilled drone operators across sectors by offering comprehensive, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)-compliant training programmes.
- The agreement marks a strategic collaboration between Garuda Aerospace's expertise in drone technology and training, and REIL's infrastructure and reach in Rajasthan.
- By combining Garuda Aerospace's capabilities with REIL's established infrastructure and presence, the Regional Pilot Training Organisation will provide a strong platform for effective training delivery.



## UK Lab Develops 'Groundbreaking' Atomic Clock

- A "groundbreaking" atomic clock built at a top-secret UK lab will make military operations more secure through experimental quantum technology over the years, the country's Ministry of Defence (MoD) has claimed.
- Developed at the **Defence Science and Technology Laboratory** (DSTL), the quantum clock has been dubbed a leap forward in improving intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance by decreasing the reliance on GPS technology, which can be disrupted and blocked by adversaries.
- It claims that the clock's precision is so refined that it will lose less than one second over billions of years, allowing scientists to measure time at an unprecedented scale.
- The MoD, via DSTL, claims to have invested more than **GBP 28 million** to shape the UK's research and development to achieve early adopter advantage of such technologies.



## India's Coastline Expanded By Almost Half In Just Over Five Decades

- India's coastline expanded by almost half in just over five decades - from **7,516km in 1970 to 11,098km** in 2023-24 - with states like Bengal, Gujarat and Goa adding significantly to their shoreline while Puducherry's shrunk by 10.4%, according to an MHA report based on new terms of reference for measuring coastal accretion and erosion.
- Gujarat's recalculated coastline contributed the most to this growth, almost doubling from 1,214km in 1970 to 2,340km in the past 53 years.
- Bengal's was the highest increase in percentage terms during this period - up 357% from 157km to 721km. Nationally, the coastline increase compared to 1970 data stands at 47.6%. This major upward revision of coastline length across nine states and UTs is attributed primarily to using a new methodology to measure India's maritime parameter, as established by the National Maritime Security Coordinator.
- Unlike older methods that relied on straight-line distance measurements, the scientifically updated approach incorporates the measurement of complex coastal formations such as bays, estuaries, inlets, and other geomorphological features.
- According to experts, this refined methodology provides a more precise representation of the true length of the coastline, capturing its dynamic and heterogeneous characteristics. Coastline data from 1970, as reported by the National Hydrographic Office and Survey of India, was based on the measurement techniques and technologies available at the time.
- While Gujarat retains its position as the state with the longest coastline, Tamil Nadu, with a revised length of 1,068km (previously 906km), has overtaken Andhra Pradesh (1,053km), based on the new survey.
- Puducherry's coastline - including Karaikal, Yanam, and Mahe - contracted by 4.9km, marking a departure from the upward revision elsewhere.
- Kerala reported the smallest increase, adding 30km (5%) to its coastline. The data cited in the MHA report are still under review. India's coastline spans the mainland and several islands, bordered by the Bay of Bengal to the east, the Indian Ocean to the south, and the Arabian Sea to the west.

- Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, TN, AP, Odisha, and Bengal, and four UTs - Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep, Puducherry, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands - constitute the country's maritime economy and biodiversity.
- AP has been developing new ports such as Ramayapatnam, Krishnapatnam, and Kakinada Gateway, all of which are expected to boost economic activity, employment, logistics, industrialisation, and urbanisation.

## NEW PARAMETERS

➤ While earlier method relied on straight-line distance, new one **factors in complex coastal formations such as bays, estuaries and inlets**

➤ Tamil Nadu's coast, with a revised length of 1,068km, has overtaken Andhra (1,053km)

➤ **Puducherry's coastline shrinks 4.9km**, a departure from general upward revision

## Indonesia Joins BRICS Bloc as Full Member

- Indonesia has become a full member of the BRICS group, announced Brazil on. It is the largest economy and most populous nation in Southeast Asia and its entry to the BRICS bloc will further deepen the Global South cooperation.
- BRICS is an intergovernmental organisation that was founded as a counterweight to the Group of Seven, comprised of developed nations, that had ceased to serve developing countries.

- Last year, the alliance expanded to embrace **Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates. Turkey, Azerbaijan and Malaysia** have formally applied.
- BRICS term was originally coined by Goldman Sachs economist **Jim O'Neill** in a 2001. The **first BRIC Summit** was held in **Russia's Yekaterinburg** in 2009. The 16th BRICS Summit was being held under **Russia's chairmanship in Kazan in 2024.**



## Amit Shah Launched BHARATPOL Portal

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched **BHARATPOL portal** developed by central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in New Delhi on 07th January 2025 in Bharat Mandapam in Delhi.
- BHARATPOL portal will significantly facilitate Indian LEAs enabling real-time information sharing for faster access to international police assistance.
- The BHARATPOL portal will streamline the processing of all requests for international assistance through INTERPOL, including the issuance of Red Notices and other colour-coded INTERPOL notices.
- INTERPOL, or the **International Criminal Police Organization**, is the world's largest international police organization that facilitates cooperation and crime control:
  - **Headquarters:** Lyon, France
  - **Member states:** 196





## Aero India 2025

- The 15<sup>th</sup> edition of Asia's biggest aero show - Aero India 2025 - will be held at the **Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru, Karnataka** from February 10 to 14, 2025.
- With the broad theme '**The Runway to a Billion Opportunities**', the event will provide a platform for forging partnerships between foreign & Indian firms and the discovery of newer avenues in the global value chain to accelerate the indigenisation process.
- Aero India has already carved a niche for itself globally as a premier aerospace exhibition with 14 successful editions organised since **1996 in Bengaluru**.



## V Narayanan New Chief of ISRO

- V Narayanan succeeded S Somanath as the chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation, the Union government announced. V Narayanan also take charge as the **secretary of the department of space**.
- V Narayanan assumed office on January 14, succeeding the current ISRO chief. V Narayanan will serve in these roles for the next two years or until further notice.



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## Who is V Narayanan, new ISRO chairman?

- V Narayanan is a distinguished scientist with nearly four decades of experience in rocket and spacecraft propulsion.
- He is a Rocket and SpaceCraft Propulsion expert and joined the **ISRO** in 1984 and functioned in various capacities before becoming director of Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC).
- During the initial phase, he worked in the Solid Propulsion area of Sounding Rockets and Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle (ASLV) and Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) at Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).
- V Narayanan further contributed to the process planning, process control and realisation of Ablative nozzle systems, composite motor cases and composite Igniter cases.
- Currently, Narayanan is the director of the LPSC, one of the major centres of the ISRO having its headquarters at Valiamala in Thiruvananthapuram, with a unit in Bengaluru.
- The ISRO has been in the news recently for launching **SpaDex**, an indigenously built **space docking technology** crucial for ambitious missions like Chandrayaan 4 and Gaganyaan. It has put India in an elite list of countries who have that technology. The other countries are the United States, Russia and China. (With inputs from ANI)



## Foreign Secretary's Meeting With The Acting Foreign Minister Of Afghanistan

- Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri had a meeting with the Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, in Dubai. The two sides discussed various issues pertaining to bilateral relations as well as regional developments.
- 2. Foreign Secretary underlined India's historic friendship with the Afghan people and the strong people to people contacts between the two countries. In this context, he conveyed India's readiness to respond to the urgent developmental needs of the Afghan people.
- The two sides evaluated the ongoing Indian humanitarian assistance programmes. The Afghan minister appreciated and thanked the Indian leadership for continuing to engage and support the people of Afghanistan. In view of the current need for development activities, it was decided that India would consider engaging in development projects in the near future, in addition to the ongoing humanitarian assistance programme.
- It may be recalled that in response to the needs of the Afghan people, India decided to extend humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. India has so far dispatched several shipments consisting of 50,000 MTs of wheat, 300 tons of medicines, 27 tons of earthquake relief aid, 40,000 litres of pesticides, 100 million polio doses, 1.5 million doses of COVID Vaccine, 11,000 units of hygiene kits for the drug de-addiction programme, 500 units of winter clothing and 1.2 tons of stationery kits, etc.
- In response to the request from the Afghan side, India will provide further material support in the first instance to the health sector and for the rehabilitation of refugees. The two sides also discussed strengthening of sports (cricket) cooperation, which is highly valued by the young generation of Afghanistan. It was also agreed to promote the use of Chabahar port for supporting trade and commercial activities, including for the purpose of humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan.
- The Afghan side underlined its sensitivities to India's security concerns. The two sides agreed to remain in touch and continue regular contacts at various levels.



## Why is Iran looking to change its capital?

- The country is mulling moving its capital from **Tehran to Makran** in the southern region. Ynet News quoted Iran's government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani as saying that the country is eyeing relocating its capital from Tehran to the country's south.
- Tehran was established as Iran's capital over 200 years ago. This was done by Āghā Moḥammad Khān, the first ruler of the country's Qājār dynasty.

- The Makran region is in the **Sistan and Baluchistan province**, near its southern coast and the **Gulf of Oman**.
- Tehran is battling environmental issues and a high population density.
- Some Tehran residents are facing power shortages, while others are battling a water crisis
- With over 1,000 kilometers of coastline and the Chabahar Free Trade-Industrial Zone being developed since 2003, Iran is looking to make Makran an international trade corridor connecting Central Asia to the Indian Ocean.



## Amit Shah Chairs A Review Meeting at the Bureau of Police Research & Development

- Amit Shah chaired a review meeting at the BPR&D, New Delhi. Union Home Secretary, Director General BPR&D, Senior Officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Bureau's Officers were present in the meeting.
- Home Minister took an overview of the six Divisions of BPR&D as well as outlying units (CAPT Bhopal and CDTIs), their achievements, ongoing tasks, and future roadmap. He also took a special review of the efforts and initiatives by BPR&D towards the implementation of the **New Criminal Laws (NCL)**.
- **Founded:** 28 August 1970
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi, India
- **Agency executives:** Sri Rajeev Kumar Sharma, IPS, Director General; Ravi Joseph Lokku, IPS, Additional Director General
- **Divisions:** show 5: Administration; Modernisation / Development; Training; Research & Correctional; National Policing Mission
- **General nature:** Federal law enforcement

- **Governing body:** Government of India
- **Parent agency:** Ministry of Home Affairs



## Kochi : Maritime Partnership Exercise

- INS Mormugao, along with aircraft from the Indian Air Force, recently participated in a Maritime Partnership Exercise with the French Carrier Strike Group (CSG) off India's Western Seaboard, an official statement reported.
- The exercise involved complex maritime drills, including joint air operations, showcasing the high degree of interoperability and professionalism between the Indian and French naval forces.
- India and France have maintained a robust defence partnership since 1998, marked by numerous joint exercises such as **Shakti (land), Varuna (sea), and Garuda (air)**. This partnership continues to thrive through operational stopovers, with 16 port calls by French Navy vessels since 2022.



## DRDO's Multi-layer Clothing System 'HIMKAVACH'

- DRDO has introduced the **HIMKAVACH multi-layer clothing system**, specially designed to provide optimal protection in extreme cold weather conditions.
- The innovative clothing system has passed all user trials under actual operational conditions, proving its effectiveness for military operations in cold weather, particularly in the Himalayan region.
- Taking to its official handle on X, DRDO posted, "DRDO developed HIMKAVACH multi-layer clothing system designed for temperature range of **+20°C to -60°C** has successfully cleared all user trials in actual operation. The clothing system will be very useful in military operations in cold weather conditions along the Himalayan region."

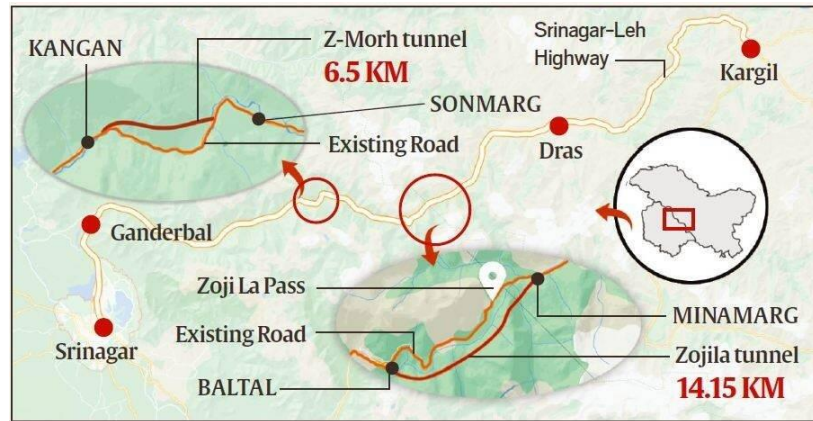


## Sonamarg Tunnel Project

- The Sonamarg Tunnel project, around 12 km long, has been constructed at a cost of over **Rs 2,700 crore**. It comprises of the Sonamarg main tunnel of 6.4 km length, an egress tunnel and approach roads.
- Situated at an altitude of over 8,650 feet above sea level, it will enhance all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and Sonamarg enroute to Leh, bypassing landslide and avalanche routes and ensuring safer and uninterrupted access to the strategically critical Ladakh region.
- Along with the Zojila Tunnel, set for completion by 2028, it will reduce the route length from 49 km to 43 km and boost vehicle speed from 30 km/hr to 70



km/hr, ensuring seamless **NH-1 connectivity** between **Srinagar Valley and Ladakh.**



## Armed Forces Veterans' Day

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan will attend the ninth Armed Forces Veterans' Day event on 14 Jan 2025.
- THE ARMED Forces Veterans' Day is celebrated every year on January 14 across India to pay respects to the armed forces veterans for their selfless duty and sacrifices and to reinforce solidarity towards the next of kin of the bravehearts.
- Notably, the Field Marshal steered the formation of the Directorate of Resettlement later came to be known as Directorate General Resettlement, a key organization under the Department of Ex-servicemen Welfare of the Ministry of Defence. The body looks after the various opportunities, training and policy making on the subject of resettlement of retired soldiers.
- Interestingly, the next day, January 15 is celebrated as Army Day because on this day in 1949, Field Marshal Cariappa took over the command of the Indian Army from General Sir FRR Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief and became the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of Independent India.
- **Traditions in other countries**
- In many Defence forces in the world, there is a long tradition of celebrating the contributions of the veterans and the fallen soldiers. In the US and many other countries in the West, the Veterans Day also marked as the Armistice Day or Remembrance Day is commemorated every year on November 11, as a mark of respect towards the military veterans.
- The day marks the anniversary of the end of World War I. Most of the battles of the first World War had formally come to an end at the 11th hour of the 11th

day of the 11th month of 1918 when the Armistice with Germany went into effect.

- Anzac Day on April 25 is observed in Australia and New Zealand as a show of respect to the all Australian and New Zealand soldiers who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations of the two Armies. April 25 has been chosen to mark the day in 1915 when the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed for the Gallipoli campaign for their first engagement in World War I.
- **What programmes are held on Veterans' Day**
- The day is marked by programmes held across major military stations across the country and major cities. These programmes include ceremonial parades, gatherings of veterans, Veer Naris and their families. These programmes give opportunities to military formations to interact with the veterans and their families at their respective stations.



## Successful Field Evaluation Trials of 'Nag Mk 2'

- Field Evaluation Trials of indigenously developed Nag Mk 2, the third-generation Anti-Tank Fire-and-Forget Guided Missile, were successfully conducted recently at Pokhran Field Range in the presence of senior officers of the Indian Army.
- The Nag Missile Carrier version-2 was also field evaluated. With this, the entire weapon system is now ready for induction into the Indian Army. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has congratulated DRDO, Indian Army and industry for the successful field evaluation trials of the entire weapon system of Nag Mk 2.
- **5 things to know about Nag Mark 2 - India's anti-tank guided missile**

- Nag Mark 2 is an indigenously developed third-generation fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile. Its trials took place on Monday at Rajasthan's Pokhran field range marking a major step forward in India's defence capabilities.
- During the three field trials, the missile systems destroyed precisely all the targets - maximum and minimum range, thus validating its firing range, the official statement said.
- The missile uses advanced fire-and-forget technology, allowing operators to lock onto targets before launch and strike with pinpoint accuracy, even in complex battlefield environments.
- According to reports, the Nag Mark 2 missile uses advanced fire-and-forget technology, which allows operators to lock onto targets before launch and strike with pinpoint accuracy.
- Designed to neutralise modern armoured threats, including those with explosive reactive armour (ERA), the Nag Mark 2 is a versatile weapon system for the Indian Army.



## Launch of 'Utkarsh'

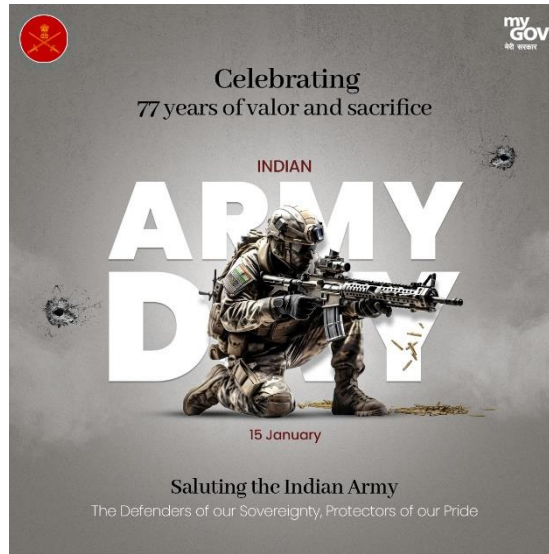
- The second of the two Multi Purpose Vessels, being built by **M/s L&T Shipyard** for the Indian Navy, was launched in the presence of Rajesh Kumar Singh, Defence Secretary on 13 Jan 25 at L&T, Kattupalli, Chennai.
- The ship has been named '**Utkarsh**' which means '**Superior in Conduct**' and is synonymous to the multi-dimensional role envisaged for the platform.
- These Multi Purpose Vessels will be capable of towing ships, launch and recover various targets, operate unmanned autonomous vehicles and act as a trial platform for various indigenous weapons and sensors under development.

- The 106 m vessels are designed to achieve a maximum speed of 15 knots.



## 77<sup>th</sup> Army Day

- Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan has extended his greetings and best wishes to all ranks of the Indian Army on the occasion of the 77th Army Day on Jan 15, 2025.
- Highlighting the changing dynamics of warfare and the growing use of technology, CDS said that Modern warfare is evolving rapidly, driven by advancements in technology, and shifting geo-political dynamics.
- Every year, January 15 is commemorated as Army Day to mark the occasion when General (later Field Marshal) K M Cariappa took over the command of the Indian Army from General Sir F R R Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief, in 1949 and became the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of Independent India. The theme for the 77th Army Day 2025 is 'Samarth Bharat, Saksham Sena' (Capable India, Empowered Army), reflecting the Indian Army's commitment to national strength and defence capabilities.
- . Pune is hosting the Army Day parade for the first time, marking a historical event. This will be the third occasion on which a city other than New Delhi will host the Army Day Parade, keeping in line with the Union government's decision to hold events of national importance outside the national capital.



## INS Surat, INS Nilgiri & INS Vaghsheer

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation three frontline naval combatants - **INS Surat, INS Nilgiri and INS Vaghsheer** - on their commissioning at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai, Maharashtra on January 15, 2025.
- On 2025 being declared the '**Year of Reforms**' in the Ministry of Defence, Shri Rajnath Singh voiced the resolve to work on the reforms necessary for the Ministry and the three Services.
- The vessels that have entered the Navy are the destroyer INS Surat, the last of the four Visakhapatnam-class stealth guided-missile destroyers; the frigate INS Nilgiri, the lead ship of a new class of seven stealth guided-missile frigates being built under **Project 17 Alpha**; and, the submarine **INS Vagsheer**, the sixth and the last of the first batch of the Kalvari-class diesel-electric attack submarines.
- Nilgiri is dedicated to the maritime power of the **Chola dynasty**. The Surat warship reminds us of the period when India was connected to West Asia through the ports of Gujarat. Along with these two ships, the Vagsheer submarine is also being commissioned today. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to participate in the commissioning of Kalvari, the first submarine of the **P75 class**.



## MoD inks Rs 2,960 crore Contract with BDL

- Ministry of Defence has signed a contract with **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)** for the supply of **Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missiles (MRSAM)** for the Indian Navy at a cost of approximately **Rs 2,960 crore**.
- The MRSAM system is a standard fit, onboard multiple Indian Naval Ships and is planned to be fitted on the majority of the future platforms planned for acquisition.
- Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) is one of India's manufacturers of ammunitions and missile systems. It was founded in **1970 in Hyderabad, India**.



## 8th Pay Commission Approved by GOI

- The Union Cabinet approved to set up 8th Pay Commission to revise salaries of central government employees and allowances of pensioners. The decision to set up the 8th Pay Commission was taken at a meeting of the Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. The minister also informed that the chairman and two members of the Commission will be appointed soon.
- A pay commission is constituted by the central government once every decade to revise the salary structure of its employees. In addition to revising the salary structure, each pay commission has a term of reference, which broadly defines its focus. Pay commissions also decide pension payments. The 7th Pay Commission was set up in 2016, and its term will end in 2026.
- According to the 7th Pay Commission, central government employees are all persons in the civil services of the central government and those who are paid salaries out of the consolidated fund of India, which is the account in which government collects its revenues. Employees of public sector undertakings (PSU) and autonomous bodies, and gramin dak sevaks are not under the remit of the 7th Pay Commission. This would mean someone working in Coal India will not be covered.
- PSU employees have separate pay scales depending on the undertaking they are working for.
- **What were the changes in the 7th Pay Commission?**

- Employee unions demanded a 3.68 fitment factor when it came to salary revision for the 7th Pay Commission, but the government decided on a fitment factor of 2.57. The fitment factor is a multiplier used for calculating salaries and pensions. This led the minimum basic pay to become ₹18,000 per month, compared to the ₹7,000 in the 6th Pay Commission. The minimum pension also rose from ₹3,500 to ₹9,000. The maximum salary became ₹2,50,000 and the maximum pension became ₹1,25,000.

### **CABINET MEET OUTCOME**

- **8th Central Pay Commission Gets Cabinet Nod**
- **There Will Be Consultations Within Centre, States & PSUs For 8th Pay Commission**

### **La Perouse Naval Exercise**

- The Indian Navy, with destroyer INS Mumbai, along with eight other Indo-Pacific nations, has been deployed in the Malacca, Sunda and Lombok straits between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean on Thursday as part of the fifth edition of the multinational naval exercise La Perouse 25.
- The exercise, which began on January 16, will continue till January 24. The exercise will be conducted by the French Carrier Strike Group (CSG), led by Charles De Gaulle aircraft carriers, as part of Mission Clemenceau 25.
- All navies would use IORIS, a system for communication and coordination during maritime crises, to synchronise their efforts.
- "During this exercise, all navies will train in the use of IORIS, a communication and coordination system dedicated to the exchange of information and documents in order to effectively and collectively face a maritime crisis in a synchronised manner," the release further read.





## Russia & Iran Presidents Sign Partnership Treaty In Moscow

- Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian arrived in Russia on Friday for the signing of a broad cooperation treaty as his country grapples with growing economic problems and other challenges.
- After laying a wreath at the Unknown Soldier's Tomb at the Kremlin Wall, Pezeshkian was to hold talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin. It's their third meeting since Pezeshkian's election in July.
- Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said the "**comprehensive strategic partnership treaty**" to be signed by the two leaders covers all areas -- from trade and military cooperation to science, education and culture.
- The signing comes ahead of the Jan. 20 inauguration of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, who has pledged to broker peace in Ukraine and take a tougher stance on Iran.
- Iran joined the **BRICS bloc** of developing economies and Pezeshkian attended its summit, which was hosted by Russia in Kazan.
- Russia and Iran, which had troubled relations in the past, developed cordial ties after the **1991 Soviet collapse**, with Moscow emerging as a key trade partner and supplier of weapons and technologies for Tehran, which has faced bruising international sanctions.
- Russia has built **Iran's first nuclear plant** that was launched in 2013 and is building two more nuclear reactors there.
- Russia's ties with Iran have grown even closer after Putin sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022. Ukraine and the West have accused Tehran of providing Moscow with hundreds of exploding drones for use against Ukraine, which Moscow and Tehran have denied.



## Airbus & TATA Close In On India's First Private Helicopter Production Line

- Airbus Helicopters is nearing the conclusion of its site selection process for the H125 helicopter production line in India, in collaboration with TATA Advanced Systems Limited (TASL).
- This facility will mark a significant milestone as it will be the first private-sector assembly line for civil helicopters in the country, aligning with India's Make-in-India initiative.
- The Airbus H125, formerly known as the Eurocopter AS350 Écureuil, is a single-engine light utility helicopter renowned for its versatility and high performance across various mission profiles.



## Reliance Naval & Engineering Renamed

- The name of Reliance Naval and Engineering Ltd has been changed to **Swan Defence and Heavy Industries Ltd**, according to a regulatory filing.

- "The company's name has been changed from 'Reliance Naval and Engineering Ltd' to 'Swan Defence and Heavy Industries Ltd' w.e.f. January 2, 2025," the filing said.
- Earlier, Swan Energy took control of the management of Reliance Naval & Engineering after emerging as the winning bidder under an insolvency resolution process.



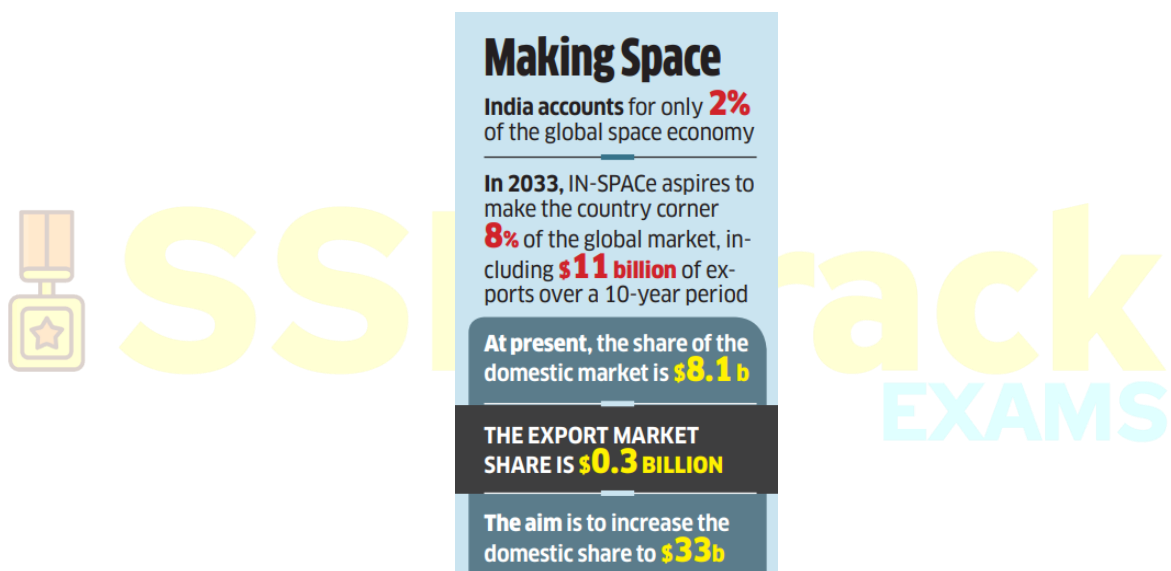
## Exercise Devil Strike

- The Indian Armed Forces have successfully concluded Exercise Devil Strike, a high-intensity joint military exercise held from January 16 to 19, 2025.
- This collaborative effort involved the elite airborne troops of the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force, showcasing their operational excellence and readiness to tackle diverse challenges in demanding environments.
- Cutting-edge technologies and state-of-the-art equipment were deployed to ensure efficient and accurate delivery of forces to remote locations, enhancing operational capabilities.



## Space Economy has Grown to \$8 billion to \$44 Billion

- The space economy has grown to \$8 billion and is projected to touch \$44 billion in the next decade.
- Milestones like the indigenous Gaganyaan Mission, the upcoming Chandrayaan-4 (2027), Shukrayaan (2028), and the Indian Space Station (2030) showcase India's robust trajectory.
- He lauded startups and FDI for fuelling innovation, with missions like SPADEX enabling docking capabilities, marking a leap in technological advancement. The Vyom Mitra robo mission was highlighted as a precursor to human space exploration.



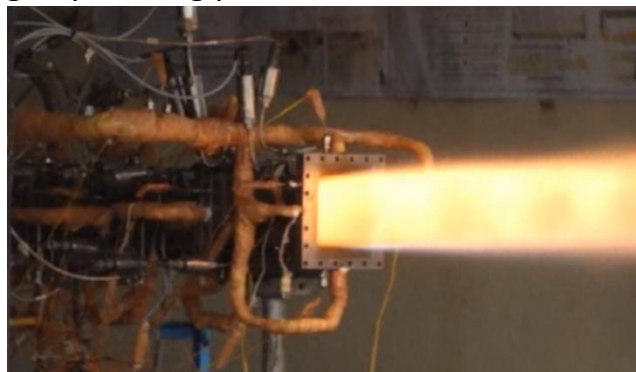
## Rs 1,561 Cr Contract Inked With Heavy Vehicles Factory

- MoD has signed a contract with Heavy Vehicles Factory, a unit of Armoured Vehicle Nigam Limited, for the procurement of 47 Tank-72 Bridge Laying Tanks for the Indian Army at a total cost of Rs 1,560.52 crore.
- The contract was inked by the senior officials of MoD and HVF/AVNL in the presence of Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh in New Delhi on January 21, 2025.
- The BLT is a critical equipment which is employed to launch bridges during offensive/defensive operations by Mechanised Forces. It provides integral bridging capability to the Tank and Armoured Vehicle fleet enhancing the battlefield mobility and offensive capability.



## DRDO Conducts Scramjet Engine Ground Test

- **Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL)**, a Hyderabad-based laboratory of DRDO has taken the initiative in developing a long-duration **Supersonic Combustion Ramjet or Scramjet powered Hypersonic technology**.
- DRDL recently developed these technologies and demonstrated a cutting-edge **Active Cooled Scramjet Combustor** ground test for 120 seconds for the first time in India.
- The successful ground test marks a crucial milestone in developing **next-generation hypersonic missiles**.
- Hypersonic missiles are a class of advanced weaponry that travel at speeds greater than **Mach 5** i.e., five times the speed of sound or more than **5,400 km/hr**.
- Several nations including **USA, Russia, India and China** are actively pursuing Hypersonic technology. The key to hypersonic vehicles is Scramjets, which are air breathing engines capable of sustaining combustion at supersonic speeds without using any moving parts.



## India joins Eurodrone Programme as newest OCCAR Observer State

- The Government of India has officially become the newest Observer State in the OCCAR-managed **MALE RPAS (Eurodrone) programme**, led by Airbus Defence and Space as the industrial prime, an official statement noted.
- The **Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation** based in Bonn, Germany and overseeing several European defence programmes, has granted the Government of India, the Observer Status in the Programme following a formal request received in August 2024, the statement noted.
- This move is taken by OCCAR as a first step that shows India's willingness to explore opportunities to potentially collaborate on subjects of common interest between the country and Europe.
- India's interest follows the Government of Japan, which was recognised as the first official OCCAR Observer State in the MALE RPAS (Eurodrone) Programme in November 2023.
- The Chairmanship of the BoS was officially handed over officially on a yearly rotational basis, amongst the six OCCAR Member States, from **Belgium to Spain** in December 2024.



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XAMS

## International Solar Conference Celebrates 125 Years

- More than 200 solar physicists from India and abroad have come together in Bengaluru this week to discuss research in areas like Solar magnetism, Solar-stellar connection and space weather at an international conference.

- The conference **on 'Sun, Space Weather, and Solar-Stellar Connections'** has been organised by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory.
- The **Kodaikanal Solar Observatory** (KSO) of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, a cornerstone of Indian astronomy, established in 1899, has been at the forefront of solar research.



## Technology Dialogue 2025

- Addressing the “Technology Dialogue 2025”, held at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) here, Dr. Jitendra Singh unveiled “**Vision India Techade**”, envisaging global leadership role for India, particularly in innovation and technology.
- Highlighting the government’s initiatives like the **Anusandhan National Research Foundation** (ANRF), National Quantum Mission, and the India AI mission, he affirmed India’s commitment to making the 2020s a “**Techade for India.**”
- India’s vibrant StarUp ecosystem, with over 100 unicorns and a supportive policy environment, was described as a magnet for foreign direct investments in frontier technologies. Dr. Jitendra Singh stressed the importance of strong intellectual property rights frameworks to attract global investors while fostering equitable technology sharing.



## SANJAY - The Battlefield Surveillance System

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged-off 'SANJAY - The Battlefield Surveillance System (BSS)' from South Block, New Delhi on January 24, 2025.
- SANJAY is an automated system which integrates the inputs from all ground and aerial battlefield sensors, processing them to confirm their veracity, preventing duplication and fusing them to produce a Common Surveillance Picture of the battlefield over secured Army Data Network & Satellite Communication Network.
- It will enhance battlefield transparency and transform the future battlefield through a Centralised Web Application which will provide inputs to Command & Army Headquarters, and the Indian Army Decision Support System.
- The BSS is equipped with state-of-the-art sensors and cutting-edge analytics. It will monitor the vast land borders, prevent intrusions, assess situations with unparalleled accuracy and prove to be a force multiplier in Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance.
- SANJAY has been indigenously & jointly developed by the **Indian Army** and **BEL** creating a conducive ecosystem towards achieving 'Aatmanirbharta' as a follow up to the Indian Army's '**Year of Technology Absorption**'.





## Indian Army To Induct Indigenous Drones

- Indian company, IG Drones, has bagged a "significant contract" from the Indian Army which will require the supply of **VTOL (Vertical Take-Off and Landing)** and **FPV (First-Person View) drones**. As per the company these drones are indigenously manufactured, with no Chinese components.
- As per an IG Drones company official the deal was finalised in the second week of January and the complete delivery of both types of drones to the Indian Army has to be done in a month. He did not give both the drones' quantities and project costs.
- The company officials confirmed that the components like cameras fitted in their drones have been imported from abroad but they have ensured them not to be of Chinese origin, the official added.
- "As of August 2024, India had 398 drone startups, doubling in three years, surpassing China's 298. However, a recent Indian Army drone hijacking near the Pakistan border has raised security concerns, highlighting the need for certified, reliable companies to provide secure solutions".



## ISRO Successfully Launches GSLV F-15 Rocket With NVS-02

- ISRO in its historic 100th launch successfully launched the GSLV F15 rocket from the second launch pad at 06:23 hrs on January 29, 2025, carrying the NVS-02 navigation satellite. Over a span of 99 launches, various missions have been carried out from Sriharikota.
- GSLV-F15 was the 17<sup>th</sup> flight of India's **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle** and 11th flight with Indigenous Cryogenic stage. It is the 8th operational flight of GSLV with an indigenous Cryogenic engine and 100th Launch from the India's Spaceport Sriharikota. GSLV-F15 payload fairing is a metallic version with a diameter of 3.4 meters.
- The GSLV-F15 with indigenous Cryogenic stage placed NVS-02 satellite into a precise Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit.
- **Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC)** is India's independent regional navigation satellite system designed to provide accurate Position, Velocity and Timing (PVT) service to users in India as well as the region extending about 1500 km beyond the Indian landmass, which is its primary service area.
- NavIC is providing two types of services, namely, Standard Positioning Service (SPS) and Restricted Service (RS). NavIC SPS provides a position accuracy of better than 20 m ( $2\sigma$ ) and timing accuracy better than 40 ns ( $2\sigma$ ) over the primary service Area.



## Results Announced for the Best Marching Contingents & Tableaux

- The results for the best Marching Contingents and Tableaux of Republic Day Parade 2025 have been announced.
- Three panels of judges were constituted to assess the performance of Marching Contingents from the Services & CAPF/other auxiliary forces and tableaux from various States/UTs & Ministries/Departments of the Central Government.
- The panels have declared the following results:
- **Best Marching Contingent among Services - Jammu & Kashmir Rifles Contingent**
- **Best Marching Contingent among CAPFs/other auxiliary forces - Delhi Police Marching Contingent**
- Top three tableaux (States/UTs)
- **1<sup>st</sup> - Uttar Pradesh (Mahakumbh 2025 - Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas)**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> - Tripura (Eternal Reverence: The worship of 14 Deities in Tripura - Kharchi Puja)**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> - Andhra Pradesh (Etikoppaka Bommalu - Eco-Friendly Wooden Toys)**
- Best Tableau from Central Ministries/Departments
- **Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh)**
- **Special Prize:**
- Central Public Works Department (75 years of **Constitution of India**)
- 'Jayati Jai Mamah Bharatam' Dance Group
- **Popular Choice Category**
- **Best Marching Contingent among Services - Signals Contingent**
- **Best Marching Contingent among CAPFs/other auxiliary Forces - CRPF Marching Contingent**
- Top three tableau (States/UTs)
- **1st - Gujarat (Swarnim Bharat: Virasat Aur Vikas)**
- **2nd – Uttar Pradesh (Mahakumbh 2025 - Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas)**
- **3rd - Uttarakhand (Uttarakhand: Cultural Heritage and Adventure Sports)**

- **Best tableau from Central Ministries/Departments - Ministry of Women & Child Development (Multifaceted journey of women and children nurtured under the Ministry's comprehensive schemes)**



## CCS clears Army's Rs 10,000 crore Pinaka rocket deal

- In a mega success for indigenous weapon systems, the **Cabinet Committee on Security** has cleared the project to buy over **Rs 10,000 crore** worth of ammunition for the Indian Army's **Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher systems**.
- The Indian Army project to buy the **Rs 10,000 crore** plus ammunition including the **Area Denial Munitions and Pinaka Enhanced Range rockets** was cleared by the CCS.
- The project would be divided between the rocket manufacturer **Solar Industries of Nagpur** and the former **Ordnance Factory Board** company **Munitions India Limited (MIL)**.
- The DRDO is already in the advanced stages of making a **120 km** strike version of the Pinaka rockets and is expected to carry out its first test in the next financial year.
- The rockets cleared today by the CCS have a range of around **45 Kms** and can be very effective at both the **Pakistan and China border**.



## Cabinet Approves 'National Critical Mineral Mission'

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, has approved the launch of the **National Critical Mineral Mission** (NCMM) with an expenditure of Rs.16,300 crore and expected investment of **Rs.18,000 crore** by PSUs, etc.
- As part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and recognizing the indispensable role of critical minerals in high-tech industries, clean energy, and defence, the Government of India has undertaken several initiatives over the past two years to address challenges in the critical minerals sector.
- There is a need to establish an effective framework for India's self-reliance in the critical mineral sector. In line with this vision, the Finance Minister announced the setting up of the Critical Mineral Mission in the Union Budget for 2024-25 on 23rd July 2024.

**Critical minerals are essential for economy**

- **Energy Transition:** Green technologies like solar panels, wind turbines, batteries, and electric vehicles are integral to the transition toward clean energy and a low-carbon economy.
- **Economic Development:** Industries such as high-tech electronics, telecommunications, transport etc heavily rely on these minerals.
- **National Security:** These minerals are vital for defence, aerospace, nuclear, and space applications, necessitating the use of high-quality and reliable materials.
- **Agriculture:** Fertilizer minerals like phosphorite, glauconite etc are important for agriculture sector.

8

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

**1. From January 1, 2025, personal staff officers for the service chiefs of the Army, Navy, and IAF will be appointed from:**

- A. Their own service
- B. Sister services
- C. Civilians
- D. Retired officers

**ANSWER: B**

**2. Who assumed command of the Indian Air Force's Western Air Command on January 1, 2025?**

- A. Air Marshal Rakesh Singh
- B. Air Marshal Vivek Choudhary
- C. Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra
- D. Air Marshal Arun Mehta

**ANSWER: C**

**3. What has the Ministry of Defence designated 2025 as?**

- A. Year of Modernization
- B. Year of Reforms
- C. Year of Development
- D. Year of Innovation

**ANSWER: B**

**4. Who was the Guest of Honour during India's first Republic Day in 1950?**

- A. President Sukarno of Indonesia
- B. Prime Minister Nehru
- C. Queen Elizabeth II
- D. President Roosevelt of the USA

**ANSWER: A**

**5. Exercise GARUDA SHAKTI is a joint training exercise between:**

- A. Indian Army and Indonesian Navy
- B. Indian Air Force and Indonesian Air Force
- C. Indian Special Forces and Indonesian Special Forces
- D. Indian Navy and Indonesian Coast Guard

**ANSWER: C**

**6. What is the motto of DRDO?**

- A. "In Defence of the Nation"

- B. "Strength's Origin is in Science"
- C. "Excellence in Innovation"
- D. "Technology for Peace"

**ANSWER: B**

**7. What technology is the UK's Ministry of Defence promoting with the development of a groundbreaking atomic clock?**

- A. Cybersecurity
- B. Quantum Technology
- C. Artificial Intelligence
- D. Hypersonic Technology

**ANSWER: B**

**8. Which drone manufacturer signed an agreement with REIL to establish a Remote Pilot Training Organisation?**

- A. Idea Forge
- B. Garuda Aerospace
- C. DJI
- D. Skylark Drones

**ANSWER: B**

**9. Which region has been under illegal Chinese control since the 1950s, leading to conflict during the 1962 war?**

- A. Arunachal Pradesh
- B. Ladakh
- C. Aksai Chin
- D. Sikkim

**ANSWER: C**

**10. Which shipyard launched two indigenously designed and constructed Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs) for the Indian Coast Guard?**

- A. Cochin Shipyard Limited
- B. Goa Shipyard Limited
- C. Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
- D. Hindustan Shipyard Limited

**ANSWER: B**

**11. What are the names of the two Fast Patrol Vessels launched by Goa Shipyard Limited?**

- A. Arjun and Akshay
- B. Amulya and Akshay
- C. Vikram and Amulya
- D. Akshay and Surya

**ANSWER: B**

**12. Where will the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of Aero India 2025 be held?**

- A. Hyderabad, Telangana
- B. Bengaluru, Karnataka
- C. New Delhi, Delhi
- D. Pune, Maharashtra

**ANSWER: B**

**13. What is the theme for Aero India 2025?**

- A. "Aerospace for the Future"
- B. "The Runway to a Billion Opportunities"
- C. "Innovation in Flight"
- D. "Soaring to New Heights"

**ANSWER: B**

**14. What is the purpose of the BHARATPOL portal launched by Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah?**

- A. To streamline domestic policing
- B. To enable real-time information sharing for international police assistance
- C. To enhance public access to legal resources
- D. To coordinate state police activities

**ANSWER: B**

**15. When did Indonesia become a full member of the BRICS group?**

- A. 2009
- B. 2010
- C. 2024
- D. 2025

**ANSWER: D**

**16. Who succeeded S Somanath as the chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)?**



- A. K Sivan
- B. V Narayanan
- C. A S Kiran Kumar
- D. Radhakrishnan Nair

**ANSWER: B**

**17. What is the name of the military drills conducted by Iran near the Natanz nuclear enrichment plant?**

- A. Azadi
- B. Eqtedar
- C. Basij
- D. Pasdaran

**ANSWER: B**

**18. Where is Chabahar Port located?**

- A. Northern Iran, Caspian Sea
- B. Southeastern Iran, Gulf of Oman
- C. Western Iran, Persian Gulf
- D. Central Iran, Lake Urmia

**ANSWER: B**

**19. Which organization launched the Fast Patrol Vessels Amulya and Akshay for the Indian Coast Guard?**

- A. Goa Shipyard Limited
- B. Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
- C. Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers
- D. Hindustan Shipyard Limited

**ANSWER: A**

**20. Where was the 18th edition of the India-Nepal joint military exercise SURYA KIRAN held?**

- A. Nepal
- B. India
- C. Sri Lanka
- D. Bangladesh

**ANSWER: A**

**21. When was the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) established?**

- A. 28 August 1970
- B. 15 January 1965
- C. 26 January 1950
- D. 2 October 1975

**ANSWER: A**

**22. Who was elected as Lebanon's new president, ending the prolonged political deadlock?**

- A. Saad Hariri
- B. Michel Aoun
- C. Joseph Aoun
- D. Hassan Diab

**ANSWER: C**

**23.INS Mormugao recently participated in a Maritime Partnership Exercise with which country?**

- A. United States
- B. Russia
- C. France
- D. United Kingdom

**ANSWER: C**

**24.What is the timeline set by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to achieve a drug-free India?**

- A. 2030
- B. 2035
- C. 2040
- D. 2047

**ANSWER: D**

**25. What is the length of the main tunnel in the Sonamarg Tunnel project?**

- A. 12 km
- B. 6.4 km
- C. 8.6 km
- D. 7.2 km

**ANSWER: B**

**26. Which three naval combatants were dedicated to the nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi?**

- A. INS Kolkata, INS Vikramaditya, INS Vela
- B. INS Surat, INS Nilgiri, INS Vaghsheer
- C. INS Chennai, INS Shivalik, INS Sindhuraj
- D. INS Delhi, INS Talwar, INS Karanj

**ANSWER: B**

**27. Which organization signed a contract with the Ministry of Defence for supplying MRSAM to the Indian Navy?**

- A. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)
- B. Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)
- C. Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)
- D. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)

**ANSWER: C**

**28. What is the approximate cost of the MRSAM contract signed by the Ministry of Defence?**

- A. Rs 1,500 crore
- B. Rs 2,960 crore
- C. Rs 4,000 crore
- D. Rs 5,200 crore

**ANSWER: B**

**29. Which contingent won the Best Marching Contingent among Services in the Republic Day Parade 2025?**

- A. Rajput Regiment
- B. Gorkha Rifles
- C. Jammu & Kashmir Rifles
- D. Sikh Regiment

**ANSWER: C**

**30. Which state's tableau won first place in the Popular Choice Category in the Republic Day Parade 2025?**

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Tripura
- C. Gujarat
- D. Uttarakhand

**ANSWER: C**

