

Daily Defence Current Affairs

12 January 2025

‘BRICS PLUS’ Naval Drills

- China, Russia, and Iran have commenced a week-long joint naval exercise in South Africa's waters, branded as a BRICS Plus operation aimed at bolstering maritime security and economic activities at sea.
- The drills, named Exercise WILL FOR PEACE 2026, kicked off on Saturday in Simon's Town Harbour near Cape Town, drawing immediate protests from locals opposed to the Russian naval presence.
- This expanded grouping builds on the original BRICS alliance of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, now incorporating Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.
- The exercises come amid escalating geopolitical frictions, particularly between the United States under President Donald Trump and several BRICS Plus states.
- Iran's involvement adds another layer, given its own naval posturing in the Middle East and alliances with Russia amid sanctions. Russia's presence, meanwhile, reflects its pivot towards non-Western partnerships following the Ukraine conflict, with joint drills reinforcing anti-Western narratives.



India Launches PARAM SHAKTI

- India has taken a significant stride in its pursuit of technological self-reliance with the unveiling of **PARAM SHAKTI**, a state-of-the-art supercomputing facility at **IIT-MADRAS**.
- Constructed entirely within the country, this powerhouse leverages C-DAC's indigenous RUDRA servers alongside open-source software, embodying the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision in advanced computing.
- PARAM SHAKTI boasts an impressive computational prowess, capable of executing over 3.1 quadrillion calculations per second. This remarkable performance catapults IIT-MADRAS into the league of India's most formidable academic computing centres, rivalled by few others in terms of raw power and efficiency.
- The facility's architecture draws on cutting-edge RUDRA servers developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), India's premier institution for high-performance computing.
- Materials science research gains a vital tool through PARAM SHAKTI's ability to perform atomistic simulations and predict novel alloys or composites. For defence applications, this translates to breakthroughs in lightweight, high-strength materials for aircraft fuselages and missile casings, bolstering India's manufacturing edge.



ISRO Launched Second Spy Satellite Mission

- India's space agency, ISRO, launched a series of pivotal strategic missions in early 2026, following a significant military operation scheduled for 12 January.
- ISRO website confirms that the **PSLV-C62 launched**, at 10:18 am IST on that date from Sriharikota, deployed the DRDO-developed hyperspectral Earth observation satellite **Anvesha**, also designated EOS-N1.
- Managed by **New Space India Ltd (NSIL)**, this mission also carried 18 co-passenger satellites from Indian and international partners, underscoring India's growing role in commercial space launches.
- Anvesha boasts cutting-edge hyperspectral sensors that capture data across narrow spectral bands beyond human vision or conventional cameras. These capabilities allow for the precise identification of camouflaged targets, such as hidden metals, vehicles, or troop concentrations, by analysing distinctive colour reflections in the electromagnetic spectrum.
- Another highlight is the PSLV-C63/TDS-01, which showcased high-thrust electric propulsion systems, indigenous travelling wave tube (TWT) amplifiers, and quantum key distribution technologies.



Iran Warns it will target US Troops

- Nationwide protests challenging Iran's theocracy saw protesters flood the streets in the country's capital and its second-largest city into Sunday, crossing

the two-week mark as violence surrounding the demonstrations has killed at least 116 people, activists said.

- With the internet down in Iran and phone lines cut off, gauging the demonstrations from abroad has grown more difficult. But the death toll in the protests has grown, while 2,600 others have been detained, according to the U.S.-based Human Rights Activists News Agency.
- Meanwhile, Iran's parliament speaker warned the U.S. military and Israel would be "legitimate targets" if America strikes the Islamic Republic, as threatened by President Donald Trump. Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf made the threat as lawmakers rushed the dais in the Iranian parliament, shouting:
- Those abroad fear the information blackout will embolden hard-liners within Iran's security services to launch a bloody crackdown, despite warnings from Trump he's willing to strike Iran to protect peaceful demonstrators.
- Trump offered support for the protesters, saying on social media that "Iran is looking at FREEDOM, perhaps like never before. The USA stands ready to help!!!" The New York Times and Wall Street Journal, citing anonymous U.S. officials, said on Saturday night that Trump had been given military options for a strike on Iran, but hadn't made a final decision.
- The State Department separately warned: "Do not play games with President Trump. When he says he'll do something, he means it."
- Parliament rallies
- Iranian state television broadcast the parliament session live. Qalibaf, a hard-liner who has run for the presidency in the past, gave a speech applauding police and Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, particularly its all-volunteer Basij, for having "stood firm" during the protests.



Sweden to Invest \$1.6 Billion In Air Defence Systems

- Sweden will spend 15 billion Swedish crowns (\$1.6 billion) on air defence aimed at primarily protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure, the government said on Sunday.
- Sweden has, like most European countries, invested heavily in defence following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, Sweden's vast territory has remained vulnerable to aerial threats.
- "The experience from the war in Ukraine clearly shows how crucial a robust and resilient air defence is," Defence Minister Pal Jonson told reporters at a security conference in northern Sweden.
- He said Sweden would buy short-range air defence systems to protect cities, bridges, power plants and other critical infrastructure.
- On Sunday Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson criticized the U.S. administration's "threatening rhetoric" against Greenland and Denmark, saying the U.S. should thank Denmark for being a loyal ally.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Exercise **WILL FOR PEACE 2026** is associated with which of the following?
 - A. India–Japan naval cooperation
 - B. NATO maritime patrol mission
 - C. BRICS Plus joint naval exercise
 - D. ASEAN coastal security programme

ANSWER: C

2. PARAM SHAKTI, recently inaugurated at IIT Madras, is best described as:

- A. An AI-based missile guidance system
- B. A satellite launch vehicle
- C. An indigenous supercomputing facility
- D. A cyber security command centre

ANSWER: C

3. Which satellite launched by ISRO carries hyperspectral imaging sensors for strategic surveillance?

- A. Cartosat-3
- B. RISAT-2BR1
- C. Anvesha (EOS-N1)
- D. GSAT-24

ANSWER: C

4. Iran warned that which countries' forces would be considered legitimate targets if attacked?

- A. Saudi Arabia and UAE
- B. United States and Israel
- C. United Kingdom and France
- D. NATO member states

ANSWER: B

5. Sweden's \$1.6 billion defence investment is primarily aimed at strengthening:

- A. Naval submarine fleet
- B. Cyber warfare capabilities
- C. Long-range missile arsenal
- D. Air defence systems for civilian protection

ANSWER: D

6. ABHYAS HEAT was successfully flight-tested from

- A. Kochi
- B. Konkan Coast
- C. Chennai
- D. ITR, Chandipur Coast

ANSWER: D

7. ABHYAS Is Designed & Developed By

- A. Aeronautical Development Establishment
- B. Aeronautics Development Establishment
- C. Aeronautical Development Estimate
- D. None

ANSWER: A

8. Army War College Is Located At

- A. Mhow
- B. Nashik
- C. Pune
- D. Noida

ANSWER: A

9. AUSINDEX Ex hosted by

- A. USA
- B. Sweden
- C. France
- D. Australia

ANSWER: D

10. Commander Rank of Indian Navy Is Equivalent To Which Rank of IAF? “

- A. Air Marshal
- B. Flight Lt.
- C. Captain
- D. Wing Commander

ANSWER: D

11. INS Utkrosh Naval Air Station Is Located At

- A. A&N
- B. Lakshadweep
- C. Puducherry
- D. None of the above

ANSWER: A

12. SNC Is In

- A. Mumbai
- B. Kochi

- C. Chennai
- D. Panaji

ANSWER: B

13. Monrovia Is The Capital Of

- A. Liberia
- B. Qatar
- C. Madagascar
- D. Liechtenstein

ANSWER: A

14. "A Century Is Not Enough" Book Is Written By

- A. Sachin Tendulkar
- B. David Reich
- C. Rahul Dravid
- D. Sourav Ganguly

ANSWER: D

15. Rear Admiral Rank Of Indian Navy Is Equivalent To Which Rank Of IAF?

- A. Air Vice Marshal
- B. Group Captain
- C. Commodore
- D. Major

ANSWER: A

16. Farkhor Air Base operated by Indian Air Force in collaboration with the__

- A. Iranian Air Force
- B. Israel Air Force
- C. USA Air Force
- D. Tajik Air Force

ANSWER: D

17. What is the name given to India's first-ever satellite and nuclear-missile tracking ship?

- A. INS Tez
- B. INS Parvat
- C. INS Eklavya
- D. INS Dhruv

ANSWER: D

18. What is Arjun Mk1A?

- A. Anti-tank Guided Missile
- B. Main Battle Tank
- C. Fighter jets
- D. Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

ANSWER: B

19. Which country hosted the multinational Exercise Desert Flag?

- A. UAE
- B. US
- C. UK
- D. France

ANSWER: A

20. Which country hosted Exercise KAKADU?

- A. Australia
- B. US
- C. UK
- D. France

ANSWER: A