

# Daily Defence Current Affairs

## 26 February 2026

### Exercise Agni Varsha

- The Indian Army, under the aegis of Headquarters Southern Command, conducted Exercise Agni Varsha at the Pokhran Field Firing Ranges to validate operational preparedness and integrated combat capabilities in the Desert Sector.
- The exercise focused on coordinated employment of combined arms, precision long-range fires and network-enabled command and control in a realistic battlefield setting.
- The Integrated Fire and Manoeuvre Exercise showcased the combat effectiveness of mechanised forces operating in synergy across multiple domains.
- Foreign defence journalists from twenty-five countries witnessed the demonstration, gaining first-hand insight into the speed, precision and decisive firepower of the Indian Army's Combined Arms Forces in the Thar Desert.
- The Integrated Manoeuvre Force comprised Main Battle Tanks (T-90), Infantry Combat Vehicles, K-9 Vajra, Sharang and Bofors artillery systems, rocket platforms, indigenous ALH Weapon System Integrated helicopters, Apache attack helicopters and a range of surveillance and strike drones, the release noted.



## Indian Navy's Mega Naval Exercise Milan concludes

- Indian Navy's premier multilateral maritime exercise Milan saw participation of 42 warships and submarines that included 18 ships from friendly countries.
- The exercise culminated on Wednesday with a closing ceremony held onboard India's indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant off the coast of Visakhapatnam.
- "Held under the theme 'Camaraderie, Cooperation, Collaboration', The Milan 2026 witnessed participation on an unprecedented scale, comprising 42 ships and submarines and, 29 aircraft. These also included 18 ships from the participating friendly foreign countries," the Indian Navy said.
- The mega exercise was held for over a week. It commenced with a harbour phase that featured bilateral engagements and international maritime seminar (IMS).
- This was followed by the 'Sea Phase', which comprised high-intensity operational drills focused on advanced warfare disciplines including integrated air defence and antisubmarine warfare exercises, maritime interdiction operations, communication exercises, and cross-deck flying operations.



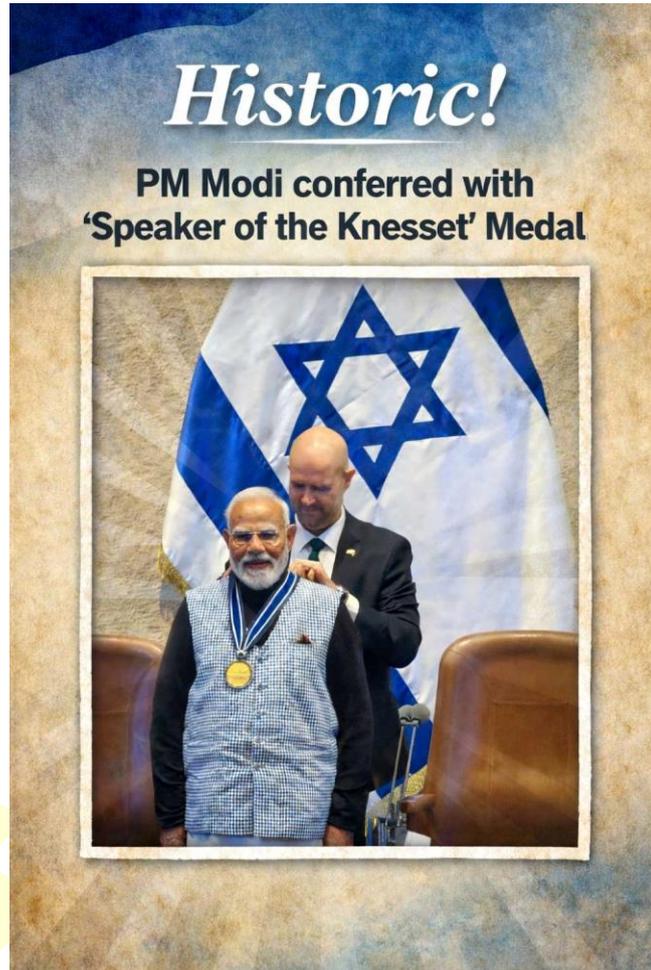
## What Is 'Iron Alliance'

- Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday proposed the formation of an "iron alliance" with India. Speaking in the Israeli Parliament - the Knesset - Netanyahu said, "In the face of extremist Islam that threatens all humanity and the free nations, we will build together an iron alliance - an alliance of nations that believe in moderation, in progress, in human dignity, in mutual respect. An alliance of nations that sanctify life and are ready to fight against those who sanctify death and seek to return us to the dark barbarism of the Middle Ages."
- Netanyahu described the bilateral ties in sweeping terms: "We've doubled our trade, tripled our cooperation, quadrupled our understanding in ways that I cannot begin to describe. It's been a wondrous friendship both personally, between our two countries and our two peoples. Israel is stronger than ever, and India is stronger than ever."
- **What is India's interest in Israel's Iron Beam system?**
- India is considering purchasing Israel's Iron Beam laser weapon system to enhance its air defense capabilities. This system, designed to intercept drones, rockets, and mortars, aligns with India's Mission Sudarshan, aimed at creating a multi-layered air defense architecture. The economic viability of Iron Beam makes it an attractive option for India, which is focused on modernizing its military capabilities.
- **How does the Iron Dome relate to India's defense strategy?**
- India is exploring elements of Israel's Iron Dome system to enhance its own air defense capabilities under the Sudarshan Chakra initiative. This system, known

for intercepting various aerial threats, could significantly improve India's multi-layered defense architecture, particularly against missile and drone attacks, aligning with India's goal of achieving strategic autonomy in defense.

- **'Hexagon Alliance'**
- Netanyahu's remarks on iron alliance come days after he proposed the formation of a Hexagon alliance - a strategic bloc in West Asia with India at its centre. The announcement was made on February 22 and released by Israel's foreign office. It comes at a time of increased regional tensions between Israel and Iran. Meanwhile, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia too have signed a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement. The SMDA, signed in September 2025, is often described by analysts as an 'Islamic NATO' - with Turkey too said to be keen on joining.





## Defence Security Corps Anniversary

- The Defence Security Corps is corps of the Indian Army responsible for providing security cover to the defence installations of the three services and other

sensitive installations. The DSC troops are sanctioned and attached to various bases/installations to ensure protection against sabotage and pilferage.

- Currently, the major sanction of DSC troops is for the Army and Air force installations. The Naval units and other user agencies have a sizeable deployment of this force.[2] DSC troops also provide security to some of the Indian Ordnance Factories, India's nuclear laboratories, and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) establishments.
- Due to the problems faced in protecting the defence depots, factories, and other installations, a new organization dedicated to the protection and security of defence-related installations was found necessary, and approval of the Government of India was accorded on 25 Feb 1947. The Corps was initially formed as 'Defence Department Constabulary' on 25 April 1947 with police titles and badges of rank. In 1948, the force was renamed as Ministry of Defence Security Corps (MDSC) with military titles and badges of rank.



## Seven Years of Balakot Airstrike

- On 26 February 2019, the Indian Air Force carried out a daring aerial operation deep inside Pakistani territory known as the Balakot airstrike. Seven years later, this mission — codenamed “Operation Bandar” — remains a defining moment in India’s modern defence history, remembered for its audacity and strategic intent.
- **What Was “Operation Bandar”?**
- The operation received its code name “Bandar” — meaning monkey — as a deliberate counter-intelligence measure. The confirmation of its success came through a coded message early that morning when then Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa called India’s National Security Advisor Ajit Doval over a highly secure line and said in Hindi: “Bandar mara gaya” (“the monkey has been killed”), indicating that the mission’s primary objective had been achieved.
- **The Strike Itself**
- At around 3:30 a.m. IST on February 26, 2019, twelve fighter jets — including Mirage 2000s escorted by Su-30MKIs — took off from the Gwalior Air Force Station on a high-security mission. The Mirage jets, flying in three formations, travelled several hours over Indian territory before crossing the Line of Control (LoC) into Pakistan-administered territory.
- The Mirage aircraft released precision-guided SPICE-2000 bombs on a location identified as a training camp of the militant group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) near Balakot. The Indian side reported that most bombs hit their intended targets just after 3:30 a.m., although one weapon failed to function due to a technical issue.
- **Tactical Planning and Execution**
- Indian planners chose February 26 partly because of favourable moon phase and radar conditions, enabling the jets to evade detection by flying low over the Pir Panjal range before entering Pakistani airspace.
- This operation was notable for being the first publicly acknowledged airstrike across the LoC since the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, and involved meticulous planning and actionable intelligence.
- **Why Was the Strike Launched?**
- The Balakot airstrike was India’s response to the Pulwama attack on February 14, 2019, in which a suicide bomber linked to JeM killed 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel in Jammu & Kashmir. Indian authorities stated

that the Balakot camp was a key base for training militants who targeted Indian forces.

- **Political and Strategic Impact**

- After the airstrike, a high-level meeting was convened by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, attended by top ministers and security officials, including the NSA, defence leaders, and intelligence chiefs. It was a rare moment of public recognition for India's intelligence agencies and the Indian Air Force leadership.
- The operation was widely reported in Indian media and has since been commemorated annually as a bold strategic response to terrorism.

- **Different Perspectives on Outcomes**

- While Indian authorities described the mission as successful in damaging a terror facility and sending a strong message, independent analyses and open-source satellite imagery studies, such as those referenced in neutral sources, have questioned the extent of physical damage on the ground. Some external assessments suggest limited visible structural destruction at the targeted site, and Western satellite images reportedly showed minimal obvious impact.
- This contrast reflects the broader complexity of evaluating military strikes solely through imagery, especially at night and in remote terrain.



## REVIEW QUESTIONS

**1. Exercise Agni Varsha was conducted at which location?**

- A. Mahajan Field Firing Range
- B. Pokhran Field Firing Range
- C. Babina Cantonment
- D. Deolali Artillery Centre

**ANSWER: B**

**2. Which of the following platforms was part of the Integrated Manoeuvre Force during Exercise Agni Varsha?**

- A. Tejas Light Combat Aircraft
- B. Arjun Mk-1A Tank
- C. T-90 Main Battle Tank
- D. Rafale Fighter Jet

**ANSWER: C**

**3. Exercise Milan 2026 concluded onboard which Indian naval vessel?**

- A. INS Vikramaditya
- B. INS Chennai
- C. INS Vikrant
- D. INS Kolkata

**ANSWER: C**

**4. The theme of Exercise Milan 2026 was:**

- A. Secure Seas for All
- B. United Maritime Strength
- C. Camaraderie, Cooperation, Collaboration
- D. Strength through Partnership

**ANSWER: C**

**5. The Defence Security Corps (DSC) was initially established in 1947 under which name?**

- A. Armed Forces Security Wing
- B. Defence Installation Guard
- C. Defence Department Constabulary
- D. Military Security Organisation

**ANSWER: C**

**6. Which missile system developed by India that can hit a target at a distance of more than 5000 kilometers?**

- A. Arjun
- B. Akash
- C. Agni - V
- D. Nag

**ANSWER: C**

**7. Joint Ex B/w The India And Singapore Is Called:**

- A. Bold Kurukshetra
- B. SLINEX
- C. Indra
- D. Yudha Abhyas

**ANSWER: A**

**8. Quad Was Founded On**

- A. 2017
- B. 2018
- C. 2019
- D. 2020

**ANSWER: A**

**9. Where Is The Hq Of The Training Command of The IAF?**

- A. Kochi
- B. Vishakhapatnam
- C. Bengaluru
- D. Mumbai

**ANSWER: C**

**10. Air Marshal Rank of IAF Is Equivalent to which rank of the Indian Navy?**

- A. Commodore
- B. Captain
- C. Commander
- D. Vice Admiral

**ANSWER: D**

**11. 'Ex Zapad' Conducted B/W India &**

- A. Qatar
- B. Russia

- C. UAE
- D. Maldives

**ANSWER: B**

**12. IBSAMAR Trilateral Naval Exercise Held Between India, Brazil And \_\_\_?**

- A. North Korea
- B. Switzerland
- C. Singapore
- D. South Africa

**ANSWER: D**

**13. The Port Duqm Is In**

- A. Yemen
- B. Iran
- C. Iraq
- D. Oman

**ANSWER: D**

**14. Madrid Is The Capital Of**

- A. Spain
- B. Sri Lanka
- C. UAE
- D. Maldives

**ANSWER: A**

**15. "Fit At Any Age" Book Is Written By**

- A. Ajay Bhatt
- B. Sitaram Yechuri
- C. Vikram Sampath
- D. Retd. Air Marshal PV Iyer

**ANSWER: D**

**16. Lamitye Exercise Held B/W India And \_\_\_?**

- A. Thailand
- B. USA
- C. Qatar
- D. Seychelles

**ANSWER: D**

**17. Which Of The Following Is Not Main Organ Of United Nations?**

- A. International Court of Justice
- B. Economic and Social Council
- C. Secretariat
- D. International Monetary fund

**ANSWER: D**

**18. "Badri Vishal Lal Ki Jai" Is The War Cry Of**

- A. GARHWAL RIFLES
- B. MARATHA LIGHT INFANTRY REGIMENT
- C. THE GRENADIERS
- D. PUNJAB REGIMENT

**ANSWER: A**

**19. NAMICA Stands For**

- A. Nag Missile Cart
- B. Nag Missile Carrier
- C. Nag Missile Corn
- D. None

**ANSWER: B**

**20. Akash Is A Medium-range Mobile Surface-to-air Missile System Developed By The\_\_\_**

- A. HAL
- B. TATA
- C. Mahindra
- D. DRDO

**ANSWER: D**