

Daily Defence Current Affairs

20-21 April 2026

Launch of DSC A 23

- DSC A 23, the fourth ship of five Diving Support Craft (DSC) project was launched on 19 Apr 2026 at Titagarh, Kolkata (WB) by Mrs Deepa Sivakumar, in the presence of Vice Admiral B Sivakumar, Chief of Materiel.
- The event was conducted with full naval traditions and ceremonial splendour, in presence of senior officials from Indian Navy and M/s Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL).
- The construction of Diving Support Craft is being undertaken by M/s TRSL, Kolkata. Featuring a 30 m long catamaran-hull form and an approximate displacement of 380 tons, these ships offer superior stability, enhanced deck area and improved sea-keeping characteristics.
- With 70% of main and auxiliary equipment sourced from indigenous manufacturers, Diving Support Craft are proud flag bearers of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives of Government of India (GoI) and Ministry of Defence (MoD).



RM-led IGoM Takes Stock of West Asia situation

- The Informal Group of Ministers headed by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, reviewed the current situation in West Asia and discussed India's preparedness as well as the future course of action during its fourth meeting at Kartavya Bhawan-2, New Delhi on April 18, 2026.
- Raksha Mantri termed the ground situation of the conflict as uncertain & volatile and emphasized on the need for India to remain prepared not only for de-escalation but also for any renewed escalation.
- Raksha Mantri made special mention of the Union Cabinet's approval of a proposal for the creation of 'Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool' with a sovereign guarantee of Rs 12,980 crore to facilitate continuous maritime insurance coverages.
- This domestic insurance pool ensures that Indian trade continues to have access to affordable insurance for vessels carrying cargo from any international origin to Indian ports and vice-versa, even when transiting volatile maritime corridors.
- The Ministers were informed that the Wholesale Price Index as well as Retail prices of all food commodities are stable and range bound. Additional allocation of 25 LMT wheat has been recommended by IMC for export.
- Amid firing by Iranian gunboats that forced two Indian-flagged tankers to turn back from the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday, the tenth Indian-flagged vessel managed to cross the strait.
- The ship, Desh Garima, laden with crude oil, was bound for Mumbai port. Iran has been sporadically permitting Indian vessels to sail through since it imposed a blockade on the strategic waterway last month, in the midst of its war with the United States and Israel which began on 28 February.



Varuna Shakti Naval Strength of Bharat

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj known as the "Father of the Indian Navy," recognised as early as the 17th century that a formidable indigenous maritime force was essential to counter colonial threats (Portuguese, British, Dutch) along India's Konkan coast.
- India's modern-day Navy is carrying forward this legacy in the maritime domain & have understood strategic importance of the key global chokepoint – The Strait of Malacca.
- One of the most important waterways in the world and a crucial global chokepoint, it facilitates quarter of global commerce between the Indian & Pacific oceans. Although this constricted route supports economies from East Asia to Europe, its bottlenecks increase the risk of piracy and geopolitical unrest.
- Situated between the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra, the Strait of Malacca is a funnel-shaped passage linking Pacific Ocean with Indian ocean. The Chokepoint in the Phillips Channel near Singapore, the navigable width narrows to a dangerous 2.7 km. Over 94,000 vessels transit annually.
- It carries 35% of the world's maritime oil and 20% of its natural gas, supporting the economies of south east Asia. It's closure would cost China an estimated \$63 million each week. China relies on this route for 80% of its oil imports.
- To mitigate the risk of a blockade, Beijing has pursued the "String of Pearls" — investing in ports like Gwadar (Pakistan) and Kyaukpyu (Myanmar) to create land-based energy corridors that bypass Malacca. This will help it mitigate its 'Malacca Dilemma'.

- India has leveraged its geography to act as a regional balancer. ANC Command established in 2001, this tri-service command sits just 600 km from the Strait, allowing India to oversee routes critical to East Asian freight.
- ANC undertakes patrols, anti-smuggling operations, and humanitarian missions, thereby enhancing India's influence in the context of regional tensions.
- INS Baaz (Great Nicobar): The southernmost air station for P-8I Poseidon patrols, providing oversight of the strait. INS Utkrosh and INS Kohassa: These bases support maritime reconnaissance operations with Do-228 aircraft and helicopters.
- **INS Kardip and INS Jarawa:** These serve as forward bases for corvettes, Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs), and logistics operations near critical chokepoints.



India-Russia Troop Pact

- India and Russia have taken a significant step forward in strengthening their defence partnership by formalising a pact that allows the stationing of up to 3,000 military personnel in each other's territory. This agreement marks a deepening of bilateral relations and reflects the growing strategic trust between the two nations.
- The deal extends beyond the deployment of troops, as it also permits the stationing of ships and aircraft in each other's territory. According to reports from Russia Today, the arrangement is designed to enhance operational cooperation and ensure smoother logistical coordination between the armed forces of both countries.
- The pact is part of the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS), which covers a wide range of military cooperation activities. These include joint military exercises, training programmes, and humanitarian missions.

- The framework is intended to provide logistical support for military formations during mutually agreed operations, whether they involve disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, or other collaborative undertakings.



Raksha Mantri to Undertake 3-day Visit to Germany

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh will undertake an official visit to Germany from April 21 to 23, 2026 to further strengthen the strategic defence partnership between the two countries.
- During the visit, Raksha Mantri is scheduled to hold bilateral talks with his German counterpart Mr Boris Pistorius and other senior leaders of the government.
- Discussions will focus on enhancing defence industrial collaboration, strengthening military-to-military engagements, and exploring opportunities in emerging domains such as cyber security, artificial intelligence, and drones.
- A Defence Industrial Cooperation Roadmap and Implementing Arrangement for Cooperation in UN Peacekeeping Operations Training are likely to be signed in the presence of both Defence Ministers.
- The visit will provide an opportunity to review the ongoing defence cooperation initiatives and identify new avenues for collaboration between the defence industries of both countries.
- Shri Rajnath Singh is also expected to interact with key representatives of the German defence industry, with a view to promoting joint development and co-production under the Make-in-India initiative.

- India and Germany share a strong & multifaceted strategic partnership, anchored in democratic values, rule of law, and a shared commitment to a rule-based international order. Defence and security cooperation has emerged as an important pillar of this partnership in recent years.



IAF's Garuda Special Forces to Get Advanced Compact UAV System

- The Indian Air Force is set to significantly enhance its operational capabilities with the planned induction of a new compact UAV system for its elite Garuda Special Forces. This move reflects India's growing emphasis on modern surveillance technology and indigenous defence manufacturing.
- **Procurement Initiative**
 - The Ministry of Defence has initiated the process by issuing a Request for Information (RFI) for acquiring a Micro UAV system. This system is expected to replace or upgrade the existing platforms currently used by the Garuda commandos. Importantly, the procurement is likely to be carried out under the "Buy Indian" category, promoting domestic production and technological self-reliance.
- **Key Features of the UAV System**
 - The proposed UAV will be a compact, lightweight, and man-portable system, designed specifically for special operations.
- **Features**

- Ability to operate in extreme environmental conditions, ranging from -20°C to $+50^{\circ}\text{C}$ Capability to function at high altitudes up to 16,400 feet
- Minimum operational range of 15 km
- Endurance of at least 60 minutes
- Operable by a two-person team
- **Advanced Operational Capabilities**
- Day and night surveillance
- Real-time situational awareness
- Target acquisition capabilities
- Operation in GPS-denied environments
- Autonomous and manual flight modes, including target tracking
- Secure, encrypted communication links



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who headed the Informal Group of Ministers (IGoM) reviewing the West Asia situation?

- A. Narendra Modi
- B. Amit Shah
- C. Rajnath Singh
- D. S. Jaishankar

Answer: C. Rajnath Singh

Explanation: The IGoM was chaired by Rajnath Singh.

2. The IGoM meeting on West Asia was held on which date?

- A. April 15, 2026
- B. April 18, 2026
- C. April 20, 2026
- D. April 10, 2026

Answer: B. April 18, 2026

Explanation: The fourth meeting was conducted on April 18, 2026.

3. The Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool has a sovereign guarantee of:

- A. ₹10,000 crore
- B. ₹12,980 crore
- C. ₹15,000 crore
- D. ₹9,500 crore

Answer: B. ₹12,980 crore

Explanation: It was approved to ensure maritime insurance coverage during crises.

4. The Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool primarily ensures:

- A. Agricultural insurance
- B. Health insurance
- C. Maritime trade insurance
- D. Life insurance

Answer: C. Maritime trade insurance

Explanation: It ensures affordable insurance for shipping and trade routes.

5. Which strategic waterway was affected by tensions involving Indian vessels?

- A. Strait of Malacca
- B. Panama Canal
- C. Strait of Hormuz
- D. Suez Canal

Answer: C. Strait of Hormuz

Explanation: Tensions in the Strait of Hormuz impacted Indian tankers.

6. Who is known as the “Father of the Indian Navy”?

- A. Raja Raja Chola
- B. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

- C. Tipu Sultan
- D. Bajirao I

Answer: B. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

Explanation: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj laid the foundation of naval strength.

7. The Strait of Malacca connects which two oceans?

- A. Atlantic & Pacific
- B. Arctic & Indian
- C. Indian & Pacific
- D. Atlantic & Indian

Answer: C. Indian & Pacific

Explanation: Strait of Malacca links these two oceans.

8. Approximately what percentage of global commerce passes through the Strait of Malacca?

- A. 10%
- B. 25%
- C. 40%
- D. 60%

Answer: B. 25%

Explanation: It is a major global trade route.

9. The Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) was established in:

- A. 1995
- B. 2001
- C. 2005
- D. 2010

Answer: B. 2001

Explanation: ANC is India's only tri-service command.

10. Which country is part of the defence logistics pact with India?

- A. USA
- B. France
- C. Russia
- D. Japan

Answer: C. Russia

Explanation: Russia signed the RELOS agreement with India.

11. The India–Russia agreement allows deployment of up to how many troops?

- A. 1,000
- B. 2,000
- C. 3,000
- D. 5,000

Answer: C. 3,000

Explanation: Each country can station up to 3,000 personnel.

12. RELOS stands for:

- A. Regional Logistics System
- B. Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement
- C. Resource Exchange Logistics System
- D. Regional Engagement Logistics Operation

Answer: B. Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement

Explanation: It facilitates logistics cooperation.

13. Rajnath Singh's visit from April 21–23, 2026 is to:

- A. France
- B. Germany
- C. UK
- D. USA

Answer: B. Germany

Explanation: Germany is the destination.

14. Who is the Defence Minister of Germany?

- A. Olaf Scholz
- B. Boris Pistorius
- C. Frank-Walter Steinmeier
- D. Angela Merkel

Answer: B. Boris Pistorius

Explanation: Boris Pistorius is Germany's Defence Minister.

15. The discussions during the Germany visit include cooperation in:

- A. Agriculture
- B. Tourism
- C. AI and Cybersecurity
- D. Education

Answer: C. AI and Cybersecurity

Explanation: Emerging technologies are key focus areas.

16. The Garud Special Forces belong to which force?

- A. Indian Army
- B. Indian Navy
- C. Indian Air Force
- D. CRPF

Answer: C. Indian Air Force

Explanation: Garud is the special force of the IAF.

17. The UAV system being procured is categorized under:

- A. Buy Global
- B. Buy and Make
- C. Buy Indian
- D. Lease

Answer: C. Buy Indian

Explanation: Promotes indigenous defence manufacturing.

18. The UAV system will be operable by:

- A. One person
- B. Two-person team
- C. Five-person team
- D. Ten-person team

Answer: B. Two-person team

Explanation: It is designed for compact deployment.

19. The operational range of the UAV is at least:

- A. 5 km
- B. 10 km
- C. 15 km
- D. 20 km

Answer: C. 15 km

Explanation: It ensures extended surveillance capability.

20. The UAV system will provide:

- A. Only daytime surveillance
- B. Only communication
- C. Day and night surveillance
- D. Only mapping

Answer: C. Day and night surveillance

Explanation: It includes advanced ISR capabilities.

 **SSBCrack**
EXAMS