

# Daily Defence Current Affairs

## 08 May 2026

### Maiden Flight-Trial of Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation weapon

- DRDO and the IAF successfully conducted the maiden flight-trial of **Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA) weapon** off the coast of Odisha on May 07, 2026. TARA, the modular range extension kit, is India's first indigenous glide weapon system to convert unguided warheads into precision guided weapons.
- TARA has been designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad along with other DRDO laboratories to enhance the lethality and accuracy of a low-cost weapon to neutralise ground-based targets.
- It is the first glide weapon to utilise state-of-the-art low-cost systems. The development of the kit has been undertaken with Development cum Production Partners (DcPP) & other Indian industries, which have already started the production activity.
- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has congratulated DRDO, IAF, DcPP, and the Industry for the maiden flight-trial, describing it as a significant development in advancing India's indigenous defence capabilities
- Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO Dr Samir V Kamat also congratulated the teams associated with the successful flight-trial.



## Rajnath Singh Releases Film on Operation Sindoor in Jaipur

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday released a film on Operation Sindoor on the first anniversary of the military operation during his visit to Jaipur.
- The defence minister later went to the Jaipur Military Station where he launched the 27-minute cinematic tribute to Operation Sindoor during a joint commanders' conference organised by the Sapta Shakti Command.
- The **second edition** of Joint Commanders' Conference, on the **theme 'Military Capability in New Domains'**, was held in Jaipur, Rajasthan on May 07 & 08, 2026.
- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh and CDS Anil Chauhan graced the conference, which assumes significance as it coincides with the first anniversary of **Operation Sindoor**, a landmark Tri-service operation that stands testament to India's unflinching political will and military resolve characterised by surgical precision.
- Modern warfare is transitioning into a more complex and tech-driven paradigm with transformative impact of AI, development of unmanned systems & emerging threats that extend beyond traditional battlefields and target invisible frontiers.
- The conference will provide a pivotal forum to evaluate the challenges in emerging domains of cyber, space and cognitive warfare and chart a roadmap for capability development for resilient and future ready force with a decisive edge.
- Central to the agenda to accelerate indigenisation and Aatmanirbharta in defence production by fostering a domestic ecosystem of innovation & civil-military fusion.
- The conference also featured a demonstration of futuristic applications developed in-house and release of new doctrines pertaining to future warfare concepts and operational strategies.



## INS Sagardhwani Arrives In Cam Ranh, Vietnam

- INS Sagardhwani, an oceanographic research vessel, arrived at Cam Ranh, Vietnam on 05 May 2026, marking a significant step in India's scientific cooperation with Vietnam.
- On arrival, the ship was warmly received by Senior Colonel Tran Van Cuong, Deputy Head of Khanh Hoa Military Command, along with representatives from the Vietnam People's Navy and the Coast Guard. The ship will conduct scientific interactions with the Institute of Oceanography, Nha Trang, promoting collaboration in marine science and oceanography. The visit marks an important milestone in strengthening diplomatic and scientific ties between India and Vietnam, reflecting their shared commitment to advancing oceanographic research.
- During the port call, the Indian Navy will participate in a range of activities with the Vietnam People's Navy, including training exchanges, cross-training visits, friendly sports fixtures, and joint yoga sessions. Professional and social interactions are also planned.
- **INS Sagardhwani** is a specialised oceanographic research vessel commissioned in Jul 1994. The vessel has served as a key platform for marine scientific research, contributing significantly to advancements in marine acoustics and naval oceanography. This visit further reinforces India's commitment to

scientific excellence, regional cooperation, and enhanced maritime domain awareness.

- India and Vietnam share a deeply rooted relationship that has recently been elevated to an Enhanced **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** as of May 2026. This upgrade occurred during the state visit of Vietnamese President To Lam to India, highlighting Vietnam's role as a "key pillar" of India's Act East Policy and its Vision **MAHASAGAR**.
- **Recent Developments (May 2026)**
- During the recent high-level talks in New Delhi, the two nations solidified their ties with several major outcomes:
- **Strategic Upgrade:** Elevation of ties to an "Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership".
- **Trade Expansion:** Set a new bilateral trade target of \$25 billion by 2030 (up from approximately \$16 billion in 2024-25).
- **Digital Connectivity:** Agreed to link India's UPI with Vietnam's fast payment system for seamless cross-border transactions.
- **Defence & Security:** Established a 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue (Strategic Diplomacy-Defence Dialogue) involving Foreign and Defence Ministers.
- **Maritime Integration:** Vietnam officially joined the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) to promote a free and rules-based regional order.
- **Critical Agreements:** Signed 13 MoUs covering critical minerals, healthcare (pharmaceuticals), and the digitisation of ancient Cham manuscripts.
- **Core Pillars of Cooperation**
- The relationship is built on several key foundations:
- **Defence Partnership:** Vietnam is India's most trusted defence partner in Southeast Asia. Ongoing cooperation includes joint military exercises (like VINBAX), maritime security collaboration, and potential high-profile sales such as the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.
- **Economic Ties:** India is one of Vietnam's top 10 trading partners. Major Indian investments are focused on energy, agro-processing, and IT, with the Adani Group committing \$10 billion to Vietnamese infrastructure and energy projects.

- **Cultural & Civilisational Links:** The bond is reinforced by shared Buddhist heritage and the ancient Cham civilisation. India is actively involved in restoring the My Son Sanctuary, a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- **Connectivity:** Direct flights between major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Hanoi/Ho Chi Minh City have surged, supporting a boom in bilateral tourism.
- **Strategic Significance**
- Both nations share a common outlook on the Indo-Pacific region, advocating for freedom of navigation and adherence to international law (UNCLOS 1982), particularly regarding the South China Sea. Their partnership serves as a crucial counterbalance to regional geopolitical uncertainties and helps diversify global supply chains.



## 52<sup>nd</sup> All India Sainik Schools Principals' Conference

- Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Sanjay Seth inaugurated the 52nd All India Sainik Schools Principal's Conference at Sainik School Kazhakoottam, Kerala on May 07, 2026. The two-day conference commenced with a wreath-laying ceremony at the War Memorial, followed by the formal inauguration and lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the RRM.
- Deliberations during the conference focused on academic excellence, institutional performance review, policy matters, and future initiatives aimed at strengthening the Sainik School system.
- The conference also featured interactive sessions, discussions on various agenda points, and visits to the 'Gyan Mela' educational exhibition, which showcased innovative educational technologies and solutions.

- Addressing delegates from 33 Sainik Schools and Principals of 79 New Sainik Schools through video conferencing, Shri Sanjay Seth underscored the pivotal role of Sainik Schools in shaping disciplined, responsible, and patriotic youth. He emphasized the importance of academic excellence, leadership, and character-building in preparing future officers for the Armed Forces.
- He also noted that Sainik Schools have produced thousands of distinguished officers for the **National Defence Academy (NDA)**, **Indian Naval Academy (INA)**, and other military academies.
- During the Prize Distribution Ceremony, Sainik School Nagrota was awarded the prestigious Raksha Mantri Trophy for sending the maximum number of cadets to the NDA and INA in 2025. Sainik School Satara received the Certificate of Merit for Academic Excellence in Class X, while Sainik School Kazhakoottam secured the Certificate of Merit for Academic Excellence in Class XII for the academic session 2024–25.
- In alignment with the National Education Policy 2020 and the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government is establishing 100 new Sainik Schools. Under which, 86 new Sainik Schools have already been approved, and 79 schools are currently affiliated and operational. These schools are expected to uphold the same high standards as the existing 33 Sainik Schools, ensuring uniformity in quality and excellence across the country. The initiative aims to create greater opportunities for young people, including pathways to join the Armed Forces.



## US-Iran War

- U.S. ally the United Arab Emirates said its air defences were engaging missile and drone threats from Iran early on Friday in a further test of the shaky, month-long ceasefire between the U.S. and Iran.
- There were few details immediately available about the latest attack on the UAE, which came a day after the U.S. and Iran exchanged fire around the Strait of Hormuz, and as Washington awaited a response from Tehran to its proposal to end the conflict. Iran has often targeted the UAE and other Gulf countries that host U.S. bases since the war began on February 28.
- President Donald Trump said on Thursday three U.S. Navy destroyers were attacked as they moved through the strait, a conduit for around a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas flows that Iran has all but closed since the conflict started.
- "Three World Class American Destroyers just transited, very successfully, out of the Strait of Hormuz, under fire. There was no damage done to the three Destroyers, but great damage done to the Iranian attackers," Trump wrote on Truth Social.
- Iran's top joint military command accused the U.S. of violating the ceasefire by targeting an Iranian oil tanker and another ship, and of carrying out air attacks on civilian areas on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz and the nearby coastal areas of Bandar Khamir and Sirik on the mainland. The military said it responded by attacking U.S. military vessels east of the strait and south of the port of Chabahar.
- Average U.S. gasoline prices have climbed more than 40% since late February, rising by about \$1.20 a gallon to more than \$4, according to data from the American Automobile Association, as disruptions to oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz pushed crude oil prices higher.



## BRO Raising Day

- The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) celebrated its 67th Raising Day on May 7, 2026. Established in 1960, the BRO is the lead agency responsible for the high-altitude infrastructure that supports the Vibrant Villages initiative.
- **Project Highlights from 2026:**
- **Project VARTAK:** Celebrated its 66th Raising Day in Tezpur, Assam, commemorating over 60 years of work on critical axes like the Bhalukpong–Tawang road.
- **Project DEEPAK:** Celebrated its 66th Raising Day on May 4, 2026, in Shimla, highlighting its role in maintaining the Manali–Leh axis and the historic Hindustan–Tibet Road.
- **Project DANTAK:** Celebrated its 66th Raising Day in Bhutan on April 24, 2026, marking decades of Indo-Bhutan infrastructure partnership.
- **Operational Motto:** "Shramena Sarvam Sadhyam" (Everything is achievable through hard work).
- **Current Focus:** Accelerating all-weather connectivity, including the construction of the Shinku-La tunnel to provide year-round access to Ladakh.
- Synergy Between VVP and BRO
- The BRO provides the physical backbone (all-weather roads and bridges) that allows the Vibrant Villages Programme to deliver social and economic services (hospitals, schools, and markets) to previously inaccessible regions
- Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP)
- Launched to transform border villages from being seen as "last settlements" to the "first villages" of India, the programme has recently entered an expanded second phase.

- **Phase II (VVP-II):** Approved in April 2025 as a Central Sector Scheme with a total outlay of ₹6,839 crore until FY 2028-29.
- **Expanded Scope:** While Phase I focused on the China border, Phase II now covers 1,954 strategic villages along borders with Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Myanmar.
- **Key Goals:**
- **Prevent Migration:** Creating livelihoods (tourism, cooperatives, skill development) to encourage border populations to stay in their ancestral homes, which is critical for national security.
- **Saturation of Schemes:** Ensuring 100% coverage of essential services like telecom, road connectivity, electricity, and health facilities.
- **Strategic Assets:** Training local populations to act as the "eyes and ears" of border guarding forces.
- **Recent Update (May 6, 2026):** Lt Governor Manoj Sinha launched several infrastructure projects under VVP Phase II in the border village of Regal, Jammu & Kashmir.



## REVIEW QUESTIONS

**1. The maiden flight-trial of the Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA) weapon was conducted by:**

- A) ISRO and DRDO
- B) DRDO and Indian Air Force
- C) Indian Navy and DRDO
- D) HAL and DRDO

**Answer:** B) DRDO and Indian Air Force

**Explanation:** The maiden flight-trial of TARA was successfully conducted by DRDO and the Indian Air Force on May 7, 2026.

---

**2. TARA is primarily designed to:**

- A) Launch satellites
- B) Detect submarines
- C) Convert unguided warheads into precision-guided weapons
- D) Destroy enemy aircraft

**Answer:** C) Convert unguided warheads into precision-guided weapons

**Explanation:** TARA is India's first indigenous glide weapon system designed to improve the accuracy and range of unguided warheads.

---

**3. Which DRDO laboratory led the development of the TARA weapon system?**

- A) ADE Bengaluru
- B) DRDL Hyderabad
- C) Research Centre Imarat (RCI)
- D) GTRE Bengaluru

**Answer:** C) Research Centre Imarat (RCI)

**Explanation:** TARA was developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad along with other DRDO laboratories.

---

**4. The film on Operation Sindoor was released in:**

- A) New Delhi
- B) Pune
- C) Jaipur
- D) Lucknow

**Answer:** C) Jaipur

**Explanation:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh released the film during his visit to Jaipur.

---

**5. The theme of the 2026 Joint Commanders' Conference was:**

- A) Future Naval Warfare
- B) Military Capability in New Domains
- C) Self-Reliant Armed Forces
- D) AI and National Security

**Answer:** B) Military Capability in New Domains

**Explanation:** The conference focused on emerging military technologies and future warfare domains.

---

**6. Which senior military officer attended the Joint Commanders' Conference along with Rajnath Singh?**

- A) Manoj Pande
- B) Bipin Rawat
- C) Anil Chauhan
- D) R Hari Kumar

**Answer:** C) Anil Chauhan

**Explanation:** Chief of Defence Staff Anil Chauhan attended the conference.

---

**7. INS Sagardhwani is a:**

- A) Missile destroyer
- B) Aircraft carrier
- C) Oceanographic research vessel
- D) Amphibious warfare ship

**Answer:** C) Oceanographic research vessel

**Explanation:** INS Sagardhwani is a specialised vessel used for marine scientific research and naval oceanography.

---

**8. INS Sagardhwani visited which country in May 2026?**

- A) Indonesia
- B) Vietnam
- C) Japan
- D) Thailand

**Answer:** B) Vietnam

**Explanation:** The ship arrived at Cam Ranh, Vietnam on May 5, 2026.

---

**9. India and Vietnam upgraded their ties to:**

- A) Strategic Defence Partnership
- B) Global Economic Partnership
- C) Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
- D) Maritime Security Alliance

**Answer:** C) Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

**Explanation:** The two countries upgraded their relations during the visit of Vietnamese President To Lam to India.

---

**10. Vietnam officially joined which initiative promoted by India?**

- A) SAGAR Mission
- B) Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative
- C) BIMSTEC Maritime Grid
- D) Blue Economy Forum

**Answer:** B) Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative

**Explanation:** Vietnam joined the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) to support a free and rules-based Indo-Pacific order.

---

**11. The 52nd All India Sainik Schools Principals' Conference was held at:**

- A) Sainik School Satara
- B) Sainik School Nagrota
- C) Sainik School Kazhakoottam
- D) Rashtriya Military School Bengaluru

**Answer:** C) Sainik School Kazhakoottam

**Explanation:** The conference was inaugurated at Sainik School Kazhakoottam in Kerala.

---

### 12. Who inaugurated the 52nd All India Sainik Schools Principals' Conference?

- A) Rajnath Singh
- B) Narendra Modi
- C) Sanjay Seth
- D) Ajit Doval

**Answer:** C) Sanjay Seth

**Explanation:** Raksha Rajya Mantri Sanjay Seth inaugurated the conference.

---

### 13. Which Sainik School won the Raksha Mantri Trophy in 2025?

- A) Sainik School Satara
- B) Sainik School Kazhakoottam
- C) Sainik School Ghorakhal
- D) Sainik School Nagrota

**Answer:** D) Sainik School Nagrota

**Explanation:** The school received the trophy for sending the maximum number of cadets to NDA and INA.

---

### 14. The Strait of Hormuz is strategically important because it:

- A) Connects Europe and Asia
- B) Is the deepest sea route in the world
- C) Carries a major share of global oil shipments
- D) Hosts the largest naval base in Asia

**Answer:** C) Carries a major share of global oil shipments

**Explanation:** Nearly one-fifth of the world's oil and LNG supplies pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

---

**15. Which country reported missile and drone threats from Iran in May 2026?**

- A) Saudi Arabia
- B) Oman
- C) Qatar
- D) United Arab Emirates

**Answer:** D) United Arab Emirates

**Explanation:** The UAE stated that its air defence systems were engaging Iranian missile and drone threats.

---

**16. The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) celebrated its \_\_\_\_\_ Raising Day in 2026.**

- A) 65th
- B) 66th
- C) 67th
- D) 68th

**Answer:** C) 67th

**Explanation:** BRO celebrated its 67th Raising Day on May 7, 2026.

---

**17. The motto of the Border Roads Organisation is:**

- A) Service Before Self
- B) Shramena Sarvam Sadhyam
- C) Victory Through Strength
- D) Nation First Always

**Answer:** B) Shramena Sarvam Sadhyam

**Explanation:** The motto means "Everything is achievable through hard work."

---

**18. Which BRO project is associated with the Manali–Leh axis?**

- A) Project VARTAK
- B) Project DANTAK

- C) Project DEEPAK
- D) Project HIMANK

**Answer:** C) Project DEEPAK

**Explanation:** Project DEEPAK is responsible for maintaining strategic roads including the Manali–Leh axis.

---

**19. Vibrant Villages Programme Phase II covers villages along the borders with:**

- A) Only China
- B) China and Nepal only
- C) Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar
- D) All SAARC countries

**Answer:** C) Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar

**Explanation:** The expanded Phase II now includes villages along multiple international borders.

---

**20. One of the main objectives of the Vibrant Villages Programme is to:**

- A) Promote urban migration
- B) Develop private industrial zones
- C) Prevent migration from border villages
- D) Establish foreign trade hubs

**Answer:** C) Prevent migration from border villages

**Explanation:** The programme aims to create better livelihood opportunities and strengthen border security by encouraging people to remain in border regions.