

Daily Defence Current Affairs

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Indian Navy Strengthens Maritime Capability with Another MH-60R Seahawk Helicopter

- The **Indian Navy** has further strengthened its maritime aviation fleet with the induction of another **MH-60R Seahawk** helicopter at **Kochi**, increasing the number of operational helicopters to **21 out of the 24** ordered from the United States. The remaining three helicopters are expected to be delivered by the end of **2026**, completing the procurement programme.
- The **MH-60R Seahawk**, manufactured by **Lockheed Martin**, is one of the world's most advanced multi-role naval helicopters. It is designed to perform a wide range of missions, including **anti-submarine warfare (ASW)**, **anti-surface warfare (ASuW)**, search and rescue operations, maritime surveillance, and special operations support. These capabilities significantly enhance the operational effectiveness of the Indian Navy in safeguarding the country's maritime interests.
- India signed the agreement to procure **24 MH-60R helicopters** in **February 2020** under the **United States Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Programme** at an estimated cost of **USD 2.6 billion**. The helicopters were acquired to improve the Navy's shipborne aviation capability and strengthen anti-submarine operations in the Indian Ocean Region.
- The helicopter fleet was formally inducted into **INAS 334** at **INS Garuda, Kochi**, in **March 2024**. To ensure long-term operational readiness, India also signed a **₹7,995 crore sustainment package** in December 2025 covering maintenance, spare parts, logistics, and technical support.
- With India's expanding naval fleet, the requirement for multi-role helicopters continues to increase. The Navy is therefore considering an additional procurement, with the long-term requirement estimated to exceed **100 helicopters**. The continued induction of MH-60R helicopters will play a vital role in enhancing maritime security, anti-submarine capabilities, and overall naval preparedness.



US CENTCOM Confirms Destruction of Chabahar Port

- The **United States Central Command (CENTCOM)** announced that it had carried out a strike targeting a **surveillance tower at Shahid Kalantari Port in Chabahar, Iran**. According to CENTCOM, the facility was allegedly part of a maritime surveillance network operated by Iran's **Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)** to monitor commercial shipping in the **Gulf of Oman** and the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- CENTCOM stated that the objective of the operation was to reduce the IRGC's capability to coordinate attacks against commercial vessels and to protect freedom of navigation in one of the world's most strategically important maritime routes. The command argued that the strike was intended to improve security for international shipping operating in the region.
- The incident resulted in significant casualties. According to **Iran's Health Ministry**, at least **38 people lost their lives**, while more than **400 individuals were injured**. The casualties reportedly included women and a minor, with many others requiring medical treatment.
- The development has further heightened tensions in West Asia, particularly around the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's busiest energy trade corridors. Any disruption in this region has the potential to affect global oil supplies, international shipping, and regional stability.
- **Chabahar Port**, located in **Sistan and Baluchestan Province** on the southeastern coast of **Iran**, is one of the most strategically important ports in the Indian Ocean region. Situated along the **Gulf of Oman**, the port provides direct access to the Arabian Sea and serves as a vital trade and connectivity hub linking South Asia with Central Asia and Afghanistan. Due to its strategic location outside the

Strait of Hormuz, Chabahar has gained immense geopolitical and economic significance.

- India has played a key role in the development and modernization of Chabahar Port under a bilateral agreement with Iran. The project is part of India's broader strategy to improve regional connectivity, facilitate trade, and strengthen economic cooperation with Central Asian countries. Through this port, India can transport goods to **Afghanistan** and **Central Asia** without relying on land routes through Pakistan, thereby enhancing regional trade and strategic access.
- Chabahar is also a crucial component of the **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)**, a multi-modal transport network connecting **India, Iran, Russia, Central Asia, and Europe**. The corridor aims to reduce transportation time and logistics costs while expanding trade opportunities among participating countries.
- The port comprises two major terminals—**Shahid Kalantari** and **Shahid Beheshti**. India has been actively involved in the development of the **Shahid Beheshti Terminal**, where Indian companies have supplied equipment and operational support to improve cargo handling capacity. The port has emerged as an important transit hub for humanitarian assistance and commercial shipments destined for Afghanistan.
- Apart from its commercial importance, Chabahar has significant strategic value. It provides India with a stronger maritime presence in the western Indian Ocean and complements its broader vision of promoting secure and reliable sea trade routes. The port also contributes to regional economic development by improving infrastructure, increasing employment opportunities, and encouraging international investment.
- In recent years, Chabahar has attracted global attention due to its strategic location and its role in regional geopolitics. Despite various geopolitical challenges, the port continues to remain a key element of India's connectivity initiatives and its efforts to strengthen economic ties with neighbouring regions.



PTC Industries Secures Strategic BrahMos Missile Subsystem Contract

- **PTC Industries Limited** has secured a **two-year contract** from **BrahMos Aerospace** for the development, integration, and supply of a strategic missile subsystem. The contract represents the company's first major step into **systems-level integration** for advanced missile platforms, strengthening India's indigenous defence manufacturing ecosystem.
- The project involves the production of a **mission-critical structural assembly** that forms an essential part of the **BrahMos supersonic cruise missile**. Although the financial value of the agreement has not been disclosed due to strategic considerations, the project highlights the increasing participation of private Indian companies in sophisticated defence technologies.
- The manufacturing process will require advanced engineering capabilities, including **high-precision machining**, specialised joining techniques, control assemblies, and rigorous quality inspections. These technologies are essential for ensuring the reliability and performance of one of the world's fastest operational cruise missiles.
- PTC Industries is simultaneously expanding its advanced manufacturing facilities at the **Lucknow node of the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor**, with new capabilities for producing aerospace-grade titanium and superalloy

components. The project supports the government's **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** initiative and strengthens India's indigenous defence production capabilities.



Indian Air Force Participates in Exercise Pitch Black 2026

- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** has deployed its contingent to **Australia** for participation in **Exercise Pitch Black 2026**, the **Royal Australian Air Force's premier biennial multinational air combat exercise**. The exercise will be conducted from **20 July to 7 August 2026** in northern Australia and aims to enhance cooperation among participating air forces.
- The Indian contingent includes **four Rafale fighter aircraft, two C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft**, and more than **120 Air Warriors**. Their participation demonstrates India's growing commitment to international military cooperation and operational interoperability.
- Exercise Pitch Black 2026 will involve **around 100 aircraft**, over **2,500 military personnel**, and participation from **20 nations**. Countries taking part include the **United States, Japan, India, France, Germany, Singapore, Indonesia, South Korea, Thailand, Spain, Papua New Guinea**, and several others.
- The exercise provides valuable opportunities for participating forces to conduct complex air combat training, improve interoperability, exchange operational experiences, and strengthen defence partnerships. Since its inception in **1983**, Exercise Pitch Black has become one of the world's most significant multinational air warfare exercises.



Agnikul Cosmos Launches Mission-02

- Indian private space startup **Agnikul Cosmos** has announced **Mission-02**, an ambitious programme aimed at developing **India's first reusable orbital-class rocket booster**. The mission seeks to demonstrate controlled booster recovery while repurposing the upper stage as an in-orbit platform, marking an important milestone for India's commercial space sector.
- If successful, Mission-02 will place Agnikul among a select group of global companies pursuing reusable orbital launch technology. The project aligns India with leading space organisations such as **SpaceX**, **Blue Origin**, and **Rocket Lab**, which have successfully demonstrated reusable launch systems capable of significantly reducing the cost of space missions.
- Reusable rocket technology has transformed the global space industry by allowing launch vehicles to be recovered, refurbished, and flown multiple times. This approach dramatically lowers launch costs, increases mission frequency, and improves the commercial viability of space transportation.
- The announcement comes at a time of increasing international competition in reusable launch systems. By pursuing this technology, Agnikul Cosmos aims to strengthen India's position in the rapidly growing global space economy and support future commercial launches, space station missions, and deep-space exploration at significantly lower costs.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The Indian Navy recently inducted another MH-60R Seahawk helicopter, increasing the total number of inducted helicopters to:

- A) 18
- B) 20
- C) 21
- D) 24

Answer: C) 21

2. Exercise Pitch Black 2026, in which the Indian Air Force is participating, is hosted by which country?

- A) United States
- B) France
- C) Australia
- D) Japan

Answer: C) Australia

3. PTC Industries recently secured a strategic contract from which organisation for the development of a missile subsystem?

- A) DRDO
- B) HAL
- C) BrahMos Aerospace
- D) Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)

Answer: C) BrahMos Aerospace

4. Mission-02, recently announced by Agnikul Cosmos, aims to develop India's first:

- A) Human Space Capsule
- B) Reusable Orbital-Class Rocket Booster
- C) Lunar Rover
- D) Hypersonic Spaceplane

Answer: B) Reusable Orbital-Class Rocket Booster

5. The MH-60R Seahawk helicopter is primarily designed for which of the following roles?

- A) Ballistic Missile Defence
- B) Anti-Submarine Warfare and Maritime Operations
- C) Strategic Airlift Operations
- D) Airborne Early Warning Missions

Answer: B) Anti-Submarine Warfare and Maritime Operations

6. Which city will host the 16th edition of Aero India from February 8–12, 2027?

- A) Hyderabad
- B) Bengaluru
- C) Chennai
- D) Pune

Answer: B) Bengaluru

7. Which stealth frigate was commissioned into the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet as the sixth and final vessel of Project 17A?

- A) INS Mahendragiri
- INS Nilgiri
- INS Himgiri
- INS Udaygiri

Answer: B) Anti-Submarine Warfare and Maritime Operations

8. ICGS Saksham Is A

- A, Destroyer
- B. Aircraft Carrier
- C. OPV
- D. Refueling Ship

ANSWER: C

9. "Nuclearization of Asia" Book Written By

- A.** Rene Naba
- B.** VR Chaudhari
- C.** Gen Parvez Musharraf
- D.** APJ Abdul Kalam

ANSWER: A

10. Indian Coast Guard Formed On

- A.** August 18, 1978
- B.** September 18, 1978
- C.** March 18, 1976
- D.** April 18, 1976

ANSWER: A

11. 'MBT Bhishma' Is The Name Of :

- A.** Fighter aircraft
- B.** Tank
- C.** Armoured vehicles
- D.** Infantry regiments

ANSWER: B

12. Barak Is A

- A.** Surface-to-air Missile
- B.** Surface-to-Surface Missile
- C.** Air-to-air Missile
- D.** Surface-to-Sea Missile

ANSWER: A

13. "Ordnance Factory Day" in India Is Observed On

- A.** 14 March
- B.** 15 March
- C.** 16 March
- D.** 18 March

ANSWER: D

14. INS Valsura Located At

- A.** Jamnagar, Gujrat
- B.** Mumbai, M.H

- C. Kochi, Kerala
- D. A & NC

ANSWER: A

15. Exercise Maitree Conducted B/w India &

- A. Thailand
- B. Nepal
- C. Bangladesh
- D. Bhutan

ANSWER: A

16. Infantry School Of Indian Army Is At

- A. Mhow
- B. Bhopal
- C. Gwalior
- D. Jammu

ANSWER: A

17. Officers Training Academy Is At

- A. Chennai
- B. Bhopal
- C. Gaya
- D. Both A & C

ANSWER: D

18. Northern Army Command headquarters Is in

- A. Jaipur
- B. Udhampur
- C. Pune
- D. Lucknow

ANSWER: B

19. DF-41 ICBM Is A Missile Of

- A. India
- B. Russia
- C. China
- D. North Korea

ANSWER: C

20. The IAI Heron UAV Developed By

- A. USA
- B. South Korea
- C. Israel
- D. China

ANSWER: C