

Daily Defence Current Affairs

25 July 2026

Operation Lancer

- Demonstrating prompt operational readiness, coordinated response and unwavering commitment to maritime safety, the A&N Command launched Operation Lancer to assist the distressed merchant vessel MV Pyra in the waters off Great Nicobar Island.
- Following the receipt of a distress call from the merchant vessel MV Pyra, which had suffered a propulsion failure and was adrift with the risk of grounding, the A&N Command immediately initiated a coordinated response. Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard ships, supported by three tugs, were swiftly deployed to the vessel's location.
- Through timely intervention and close coordination, MV Pyra was safely anchored in India's territorial waters off Great Nicobar Island, preventing a potential maritime emergency. A naval technical team subsequently boarded the vessel to assess the situation and provide technical assistance to restore its operational capability.
- The A&N Command remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring maritime safety and security, protecting the fragile marine environment and rendering timely assistance to all vessels in distress.
- Through sustained vigilance and operational readiness, the Command continues to safeguard India's maritime interests in the region.



Indian Navy Sailors Have Become The First-ever Indian Women Épée Fencers

- **Taniksha Khatri and Prachi Lohan** etched their names into Indian fencing history by becoming the first Indian women's **épée fencers** to qualify for the Main Table of 64 at the **Senior World Fencing Championships**, marking a breakthrough moment for the sport on the opening day of the 2026 edition at the **Asia World-Expo in Hong Kong**.
- Competing in the qualification rounds of the Women's Individual **Épée event**, the two Indians progressed through a highly competitive field after negotiating the round-robin pool stage and preliminary direct elimination bouts to secure places in the main draw.
- Their achievement marks the first time Indian women épée fencers have reached the Main Table of 64 at the prestigious global championship.
- The nine-day competition has brought together more than 1,000 fencers from over 100 countries. India has fielded a 24-member contingent comprising 12 men and 12 women across foil, épée and sabre disciplines.



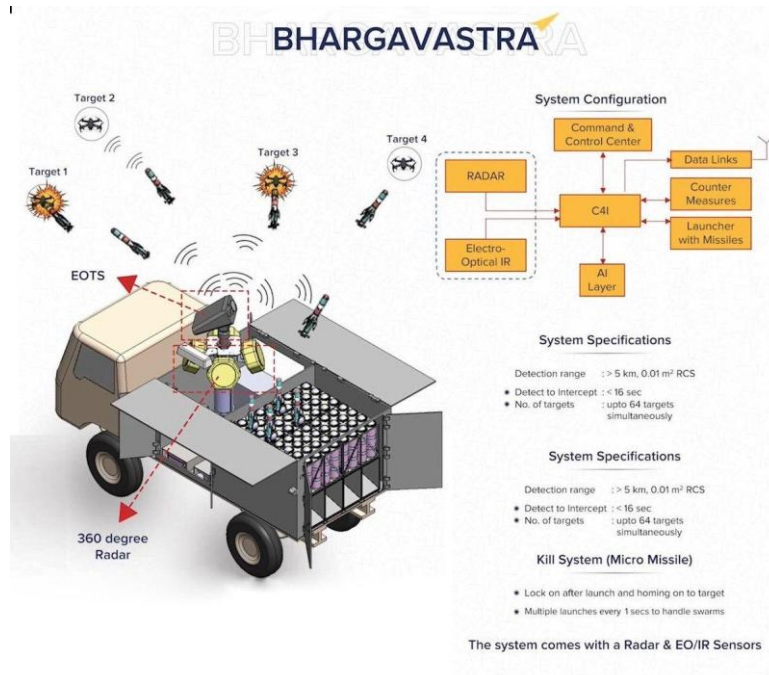
BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction

- Under India's BRICS Chairship 2026, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, successfully hosted the BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in New Delhi on 24 July 2026.
- BRICS Member Countries reaffirming their shared commitment to strengthening disaster resilience through enhanced cooperation, innovation and sustainable development.
- The Meeting marked a significant milestone in the evolution of BRICS cooperation on disaster risk reduction and concluded with the unanimous adoption of the BRICS Joint Statement on Disaster Risk Reduction, reaffirming the collective commitment of Member Countries to accelerate implementation of the BRICS Disaster Risk Reduction Work Plan (2025–2028) and deepen cooperation for building resilient societies.
- Addressing the Ministerial Meeting, Shri Nityanand Rai stated that the evolution of BRICS cooperation—from the Udaipur Declaration (2016) to the Kazan Declaration (2024) and the establishment of the BRICS Disaster Risk Reduction Group—reflects the growing recognition that disaster risk reduction is central to sustainable development, climate resilience and human security.
- He noted that under India's BRICS Chairship, the Group has adopted a practical and action-oriented approach under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," and appreciated Brazil for elevating the DRR Group to the Ministerial level.



'Bhargavastra' Counter-drone System To Complete Internal Trials

- Chairman of Solar Defence and Aerospace Ltd (SDAL), Satyanarayan Nuwal, said on Friday, that indigenous counter-drone system 'Bhargavastra' will complete its internal trials within the next two to three months, expressing confidence that the technology would pave the way for the development of the ambitious "**Sudarshan Chakra**" air defence system by 2030.
- Speaking after the demonstration of the indigenous, vehicle-mounted, multi-layered Counter-Swarm Drone System in Nagpur, Nuwal said the integrated system had already undergone several successful component trials and was progressing towards the next stage of evaluation.
- He said the system's radar can detect aerial threats up to 10 kilometres, while the Electro-Optical Tracking System (EOTS) has a range of six kilometres, exceeding the Army's current operational requirement of 2.5 kilometres.
- "Radar has a range of up to 10 km and the EOTS is six kilometres. As per the Army's requirement, its range is up to two and a half kilometres, but we have already started making this six-kilometre missile," he said.
- Expressing confidence in India's indigenous defence capabilities, Nuwal said Bhargavastra would serve as the foundation for a larger multi-range air defence programme.
- The system is integrated with an advanced Command, Control, Communication and Intelligence (C4I) architecture featuring radar, Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) sensors and passive RF detectors, enabling detection, tracking and engagement of multiple drone threats.



MEA Reaffirms Saudi Strategic Ties After NSA Doval's Riyadh Visit

- India on Friday reiterated its commitment to deepening strategic ties with Saudi Arabia following National Security Advisor Ajit Doval's recent visit to Riyadh, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.
- During a weekly press briefing, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal highlighted sustained high-level dialogue mechanisms between the two nations while responding to on NSA Ajit Doval's Riyadh visit.
- "We keep having these conversations with our partner countries, and the National Security Advisor's visit to Riyadh was also in that context to take our regular conversations forward. Some of the issues that you flagged were discussed, and we hope to continue to build our relationships with Saudi Arabia through the dialogue mechanism that we have between the NSAs on both sides," Jaiswal said.
- The spokesperson's remarks follow the NSA's official visit to the Gulf nation on 20 July, during which he assessed the advancement of India-Saudi bilateral ties and deliberated on the prevailing regional scenario.
- Detailing the engagement on social platform X on Tuesday, the Embassy of India in Riyadh posted, "Hon'ble NSA Shri Ajit Doval paid an official visit to Riyadh on 20 July. He was warmly received at the airport by H.E. Dr. Saud Al-Sati, Deputy Minister for Political Affairs, and Ambassador Dr. Suhel Khan."

- Expanding on energy cooperation, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Energy reported that NSA Doval and Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman bin Abdulaziz evaluated two-way collaboration and examined avenues to broaden the alliance, with a focus on joint initiatives to bolster energy security and guarantee stable supplies.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Operation Lancer was launched by which command of the Indian Armed Forces?

- A) Western Naval Command
- B) Eastern Naval Command
- C) Southern Naval Command
- D) Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Command

Answer: D) Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Command

2. During Operation Lancer, the distressed merchant vessel rescued by the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard was:

- A) MV Ocean Star
- B) MV Samudra
- C) MV Pyra
- D) MV Varuna

Answer: C) MV Pyra

3. Taniksha Khatri and Prachi Lohan became the first Indian women to qualify for the Main Table of 64 in which fencing discipline?

- A) Foil
- B) Sabre
- C) Mixed Team Épée
- D) Épée

Answer: D) Épée

4. The Senior World Fencing Championships 2026 were held in:

- A) Tokyo, Japan
- B) Seoul, South Korea
- C) Beijing, China
- D) Hong Kong

Answer: D) Hong Kong

5. Under India's BRICS Chairship 2026, the BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction was hosted by:

- A) NITI Aayog
- B) Ministry of External Affairs
- C) National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
- D) Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)

Answer: C) National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)

6. The BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction was organized in:

- A) Mumbai
- B) Hyderabad
- C) Bengaluru
- D) New Delhi

Answer: D) New Delhi

7. The indigenous Bhargavastra system is primarily designed as a:

- A) Ballistic missile defence system
- B) Anti-submarine warfare system
- C) Electronic warfare system
- D) Counter-drone system

Answer: D) Counter-drone system

8. According to the demonstration, the radar of the Bhargavastra counter-drone system can detect aerial threats up to:

- A) 5 km
- B) 6 km
- C) 8 km
- D) 10 km

Answer: D) 10 km

9. India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval visited which country to strengthen strategic cooperation?

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

Answer: D) Saudi Arabia

10. During NSA Ajit Doval's visit, India and Saudi Arabia discussed strengthening cooperation particularly in:

- A) Space exploration only
- B) Agriculture and fisheries only
- C) Tourism and culture only
- D) Strategic dialogue, regional security, and energy cooperation

Answer: D) Strategic dialogue, regional security, and energy cooperation