

Daily Current Affairs

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94th Indian Air Force Day 2026

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi today greeted the Air Warriors on the occasion of Air Force Day. The Prime Minister stated that India is proud of them, saluting their courage and commitment to protect the nation's skies.
- **Theme:** The official theme for the 94th anniversary is “Indian Air Force: Infallible, Impervious and Precise”.
- **Main Venue:** The grand ceremonial parade and spectacular air flypast are being held at the **Hindon Air Force Station** in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, returning to Hindon after a gap of three years.
- **Celebration Events:** The displays feature advanced fighter aircraft, helicopters, air defence systems, and a women-led rifle drill alongside precision aerial maneuvers.
- **National Tributes:** President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and other leaders extended their greetings, saluting the valor and dedication of India's air warriors.
- **Establishment:** Formed on October 8, 1932.
- **Motto:** “Nabhaḥ Spriśaṃ Dīptam” (Touch the Sky with Glory), taken from the Bhagavad Gita.



Launch and Keel Laying Of Fleet Support Ships

- FSS-1, the first of the Fleet Support Ships, under construction at Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam, was launched on 06 Oct 2026.
- In keeping with the Naval traditions, Smt Laila Swaminathan, President NWWA (Navy Welfare & Wellness Association), launched the ship in the presence of the Chief Guest, Hon'ble Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh.
- The event also marked the keel laying of FSS-5, the fifth of the Fleet Support Ships, and inauguration of Augmented Slipway, a key infrastructure upgrade at HSL, by the Chief Guest.
- The Fleet Support Ships are indigenously designed and built by HSL, Visakhapatnam with over 82 percent indigenous content signifying highest levels of mutual cooperation between the Navy, Shipyard, Defence industries and MSMEs.
- The ships will significantly bolster Operational logistics, thereby enhancing the Fleet's strategic reach and mobility.

- In their secondary role, these ships would be capable of undertaking Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations and Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) for expeditious delivery of relief material and evacuation of personnel.
- This prestigious project has significantly boosted the Indian Shipbuilding Industry and is a proud flag bearer of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiative of Government of India.



Indian Navy Receives Indigenous Military-Grade ROVs

- On 7 October 2026, Kochi-based company Eye ROV delivered two TROUT underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle systems to the Indian Navy. The delivery is the first of five systems ordered by the Navy and marks the delivery of India's first indigenously built military-grade ROV. The vehicle is rated to operate at depths of up to 300 metres.
- A Remotely Operated Vehicle is an uncrewed underwater vehicle controlled by an operator, commonly through a tether connecting it to a surface control station. ROVs can carry cameras, lights, sensors and manipulator arms for underwater observation and tasks.
- An autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV), by contrast, can navigate underwater without continuous direct control through a tether.
- The EyeROV TROUT is designed for underwater inspection, surveillance and reconnaissance, search and recovery, detection, and robotic intervention. Its stated operational features include manoeuvrability, navigation, endurance, operator control and operation in strong underwater currents and poor visibility.

- The TROUT was developed under the iDEX DISC 7 SPRINT Challenge. Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) is a Ministry of Defence initiative that supports the development of defence and aerospace technologies by innovators and enterprises. SPRINT refers to the Indian Navy's initiative to promote indigenous development of technologies for naval use.



Starlink Establishes 20 Gateway Sites in India

- Starlink has established 20 gateway sites in India, equipped with hundreds of antennas, as part of its ground infrastructure for satellite communications.
- At the India Mobile Congress 2026, SpaceX Vice President of Starlink Business Operations Lauren Dreyer said the company had developed India-specific security controls to keep Indian user data within the country. Starlink is awaiting final regulatory clearances before beginning commercial services.
- A satellite gateway is a ground station that links satellite networks with terrestrial communications networks. Gateway antennas transmit and receive signals between satellites and ground-based infrastructure, enabling connectivity between satellite users and internet or telecommunications networks.
- Starlink's network uses satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO), an orbital region extending to about 2,000 kilometres above Earth. LEO satellites have shorter orbital periods than geostationary satellites, which orbit at approximately 35,786 kilometres above the equator.
- Satellite broadband systems require both space-based satellites and ground infrastructure, including gateways.



France Tests M51.3 Ballistic Missile from Le Vigilant

- France test-fired an upgraded M51.3 strategic ballistic missile from the nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarine (SSBN) Le Vigilant on 6 October 2026. The unarmed missile was launched off Finistère in western France and splashed down in the North Atlantic, several hundred kilometres from any coastline.
- A submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) is a ballistic missile designed for launch from a submarine. An SSBN is a nuclear-powered submarine equipped to carry and launch ballistic missiles. France's M51 system is deployed on its SSBN fleet as part of the country's sea-based nuclear deterrent.
- The test, named Operation SMERTRIOS, was an acceptance firing after Le Vigilant completed a major mid-life refit, known in France as an IPER. It tested the submarine's ability to operate the M51 missile system after the refit.
- ArianeGroup manufactures the M51 missile. The M51.3 variant entered operational service on 24 October 2025, following its first land-based flight test from Biscarrosse in November 2023. Its estimated range exceeds 9,500 kilometres.
- The M51.3 is designed to carry TNO-2 oceanic nuclear warheads. The variant incorporates improved accuracy and penetration capabilities against missile defences. The missile's flight was tracked by the Directorate General of Armament's missile test directorate, with the range instrumentation ship Monge also involved.



Pakistan Test-Fires Fatah-4 Cruise Missile

- Pakistan test-fired an extended-range version of its indigenously developed Fatah-4 ground-launched cruise missile on 6 October 2026. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) stated that the system can engage targets at extended ranges with high precision and lethality.
- The base version of the Fatah-4 reportedly has a range of up to 750 kilometres and an accuracy of five metres. It is a conventional cruise missile developed by Pakistan's National Engineering and Scientific Commission (NESCOM).
- Its terrain-hugging flight can take place at altitudes as low as 50 metres, a feature intended to reduce exposure to radar detection. The extended-range test validated additional technical parameters of several sub-systems.
- These sub-systems were incorporated to improve the missile's accuracy and survivability. ISPR did not publish the revised range or further technical specifications of the tested variant.
- Cruise missiles travel within the atmosphere and can use guidance systems to adjust their flight path. The Fatah-4's officially disclosed base-version specifications include a range of up to 750 kilometres and terrain-hugging flight as low as 50 metres.



LCA Fighter Engine Supplies Stabilise as GE Ships Four Sets to HAL

- Engine supplies for the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) are stabilising, with US manufacturer GE Aerospace shipping in four new sets last month, with production levels to go up further next year.
- In a statement, GE Aerospace said it remains focused on delivering the engines needed for the fighter jets to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). The state-owned entity is expecting GE to deliver more than 20 engines annually from 2027. The engine supplies are vital to delivering LCA Mk1A fighter jets to the Air Force. An order for 99 of the F404 engines was placed by HAL for \$700 million, with deliveries slated to start by 2024. However, due to supply chain issues, the deliveries increased significantly.
- Sources said penalties have been imposed on GE Aerospace for delays and liquidated damages are being imposed on the delivery of every delayed engine. An additional \$1 billion order for 113 F404 engines was inked with GE last year for the second batch of LCA Mk1A fighter jets. At the same time, HAL is continuing discussions with the US manufacturer for transfer of technology of the more advanced F414 engines. The next version of the Tejas fighter jet -- the LCA Mk2 -- is already under prototype.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was the official theme of the 94th Indian Air Force Day 2026?

- A. Touch the Sky with Glory
- B. Power in Partnership
- C. Indian Air Force: Infallible, Impervious and Precise
- D. Strength, Courage and Honour

Answer: C. Indian Air Force: Infallible, Impervious and Precise

2. The 94th Indian Air Force Day 2026 celebrations were mainly held at which location?

- A. Air Force Station Ambala
- B. Air Force Station Hindon
- C. Air Force Station Jodhpur
- D. Air Force Station Gwalior

Answer: B. Air Force Station Hindon

3. Which Fleet Support Ship was launched at Hindustan Shipyard Limited on 6 October 2026?

- A. FSS-2
- B. FSS-3
- C. FSS-4
- D. FSS-1

Answer: D. FSS-1

4. What is the approximate indigenous content of the Fleet Support Ships being built by HSL?

- A. More than 60%
- B. More than 70%
- C. More than 82%
- D. More than 90%

Answer: C. More than 82%

5. What is the maximum operating depth of the indigenous EyeROV TROUT system delivered to the Indian Navy?

- A. 100 metres
- B. 200 metres
- C. 300 metres
- D. 500 metres

Answer: C. 300 metres

6. How many satellite gateway sites has Starlink established in India?

- A. 10
- B. 15
- C. 20
- D. 25

Answer: C. 20

7. Which strategic ballistic missile was test-fired by France from the submarine Le Vigilant on 6 October 2026?

- A. M51.1
- B. M51.2
- C. M51.3
- D. M56

Answer: C. M51.3

8. What is the reported base-version range of Pakistan's Fatah-4 cruise missile?

- A. 500 km
- B. 650 km
- C. 750 km
- D. 1,000 km

Answer: C. 750 km

9. Which engine is currently used for the LCA Mk1A fighter aircraft?

- A. GE F404
- B. GE F414
- C. EJ200
- D. AL-31FP

Answer: A. GE F404

10. The more advanced GE F414 engine is being discussed in connection with which Indian fighter programme?

- A. LCA Mk1A
- B. AMCA Mk1
- C. LCA Mk2
- D. TEDBF

Answer: C. LCA Mk2