



*Drishti IAS Presents...*



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# DEFENCE & SECURITY

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Drishti IAS, 641, Mukherjee Nagar,  
Opp. Signature View Apartment,  
New Delhi

Drishti IAS, 21  
Pusa Road, Karol Bagh  
New Delhi - 05

Drishti IAS, Tashkent Marg,  
Civil Lines, Prayagraj,  
Uttar Pradesh

Drishti IAS, Tonk Road,  
Vasundhra Colony,  
Jaipur, Rajasthan

e-mail: [englishsupport@groupdrishti.com](mailto:englishsupport@groupdrishti.com), Website: [www.drishtias.com](http://www.drishtias.com)  
Contact: Inquiry (English): 8010440440, Inquiry (Hindi): 8750187501

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## India Leads Global Arms Imports Amid Shifting Dynamics

### Why in News?

The latest data on international arms transfers from **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**, India emerged as the **leading arms importer globally during the period from 2019 to 2023**.

- During this timeframe, India's imports increased by **4.7%** when compared to the period from 2014 to 2018.

What are the Key Highlights of Recent SIPRI Data?

- **Arms Importers:** Nine of the 10 biggest arms importers in 2019–23, including the top 3 of **India, Saudi Arabia and Qatar**, were in Asia and Oceania or the Middle East.
  - Notably, Ukraine also rose as the **4<sup>th</sup>-largest arms importer** globally during this period.
- **Arms Exporters:** The **United States**, the largest arms supplier globally, witnessed a 17% growth in arms exports between the periods 2014–18 and 2019–23.
  - Concurrently, France ascended to become the **world's second-largest arms supplier**.
  - Europe accounted for a third of global arms exports, with a strong military-industrial capacity.
  - In contrast, Russia experienced a significant decline of more than half, with a decrease of **-53%**
- **India's Arms Import Dynamics:** Although Russia remained India's primary arms supplier, accounting for **36% of its arms imports**, this marked the first five-year period since 1960-64 where Russian deliveries made up less than half of India's total arms imports.
  - India is now increasingly turning to Western countries like **France and the USA**, as well as boosting its domestic arms industry, to meet its growing defence needs.

### What is SIPRI?

- It is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- It was established in **1966 in Stockholm (Sweden)**.
- It provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

### What are the Recent Indian Government Initiatives to Reduce Arms Imports?

- **About:** The **Indian Defence sector**, the second largest armed force is at the cusp of revolution.
  - In the **Interim Budget 2024-25**, the Defense Ministry received a total allocation of ₹6.2 lakh crore.
  - Within this allocation, ₹1.72 lakh crore was designated for capital expenditure, specifically for new procurements.
    - This capital allocation reflected a **5.78% increase** compared to the Budget Estimates from 2023-24.
- **Initiatives:**
  - **Positive Indigenisation Lists:** The government releases **Positive Indigenisation Lists** to identify specific components and subsystems that must be manufactured domestically.
    - The Department of Military Affairs has recently released the **5th Positive Indigenisation List**, which includes 98 items, further bolstering indigenous manufacturing in the defence sector.
  - **Increased FDI Limits in the Defence Sector:** It has been increased in 2020 to **74%** through the Automatic Route and up to **100%** via the Government Route.
  - **Defence Industrial Corridors:** Two dedicated **Defence Industrial Corridors** have been established in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh to boost defence manufacturing.
    - The Uttar Pradesh corridor encompasses nodes in Agra, Aligarh, Chitrakoot, Jhansi, Kanpur, and Lucknow.
    - The Tamil Nadu corridor includes nodes in Chennai, Coimbatore, Hosur, Salem, and Tiruchirappalli.
  - **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX):** iDEX aims to create an ecosystem for innovation and technology development in Defence and Aerospace.
    - It engages various stakeholders such as industries, MSMEs, startups, innovators, R&D institutes, and academia, providing them grants, funding, and support for R&D with potential for **Indian defence and aerospace needs**.
    - The initiative is funded and managed by the **Defence Innovation Organization (DIO)**, established as a not-for-profit company under the Companies Act 2013.

Note:

- **SRIJAN Portal:** It is a one-stop shop for vendors to find opportunities to manufacture defence equipment that was previously imported.
  - Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and other government agencies can use SRIJAN to post details about specific items they want indigenized.
  - This allows Indian companies to express their interest and collaborate on production.

## Role of the Internet in Drug Trafficking

### Why in News?

Recently, the **International Narcotics Control Board** in its 2023 Annual Report, highlighted that online **Drug Trafficking** has increased the availability of drugs on the illicit market.

### Drug Trafficking:

- Drug trafficking refers to the **illegal trade involving the cultivation**, manufacture, distribution, and sale of illicit drugs.
- It encompasses a **wide range of activities associated with the illegal drug trade**, including the production of drugs such as **cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and synthetic drugs**, as well as the transportation and distribution of these substances.
- Drug trafficking **operates within a complex network of criminal organisations** that span across borders, regions, and even continents.

### What are the Key Highlights of the Annual Report by the International Narcotics Control Board?

- **Regional Drug Supply Trends:**
  - In Afghanistan, illicit **opium poppy cultivation** and heroin production declined dramatically.
  - The opioid crisis continues to have **serious consequences in North America** with the number of deaths that involve synthetic opioids other than methadone continuing to increase, **reaching more than 70,000 in 2021**.
  - Drug trafficking organisations continue to expand their operations in the Amazon **Basin into illegal mining**, illegal logging and wildlife trafficking.

- Record levels of illicit coca bush cultivation were recorded in Colombia and Peru, rising by 13% and 18% respectively.
- Seizures of cocaine reached a record level in 2021 in West and Central Africa, a significant transit region for cocaine.
- **South Asia** appears to be increasingly being targeted for the trafficking of **methamphetamine illicitly** manufactured in Afghanistan to Europe and Oceania.
- Pacific island States have transformed from solely transit sites along drug trafficking routes to destination markets for synthetic drugs.
  - This is posing significant challenges to communities and their public health systems.

### International Narcotics Control Board

- The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) is the **independent and quasi-judicial monitoring body** for the implementation of the **United Nations** international drug control conventions.
- It was established in 1968 in accordance with the **Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961**.
- Its secretariat is **located in Vienna, Austria**.
  - India's **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)**, cooperates with the INCB.

### Narcotics Control Bureau

- It was constituted by the Government of India in **1986 under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985**.
- It is the **apex coordinating agency** under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
- The National Policy on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances is based on **Article 47 of the Indian Constitution** which directs the State to endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption, except for medicinal purposes, of intoxicating drugs injurious to health.

### What are the Initiatives Taken by India to Curb the Drug Menace?

- **The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985:** It prohibits a person from **producing, possessing, selling, purchasing, transporting, storing, and/or consuming** any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.

Note:

- **The National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse** was also created under a provision of the NDPS Act, 1985, to meet the expenditure incurred in the implementation of the Act.
- **National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction:** The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has prepared a plan for Drug Demand Reduction for 2018-25.
  - This plan **focuses on preventive education, awareness generation, identification, counselling, treatment, and rehabilitation** of drug-dependent persons, as well as **training and capacity building of service providers** through collaborative efforts of government and **Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)**.
- **Nasha Mukt Bharat Campaign (NMBA):** NMBA was launched in 2020 to tackle the issue of Substance Abuse and a vision to make India drug-free. **It is a three-pronged attack combining:**
  - The supply curb by the **Narcotics Control Bureau**
  - Outreach and Awareness and Demand Reduction efforts by Social Justice and Empowerment
  - Treatment through the Health Department.
- **International Treaties and Conventions to Combat Drug Menace:** India is a signatory of the following international treaties and conventions:
  - **United Nations (UN) Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)**
  - **UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)**
  - **UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971)**
  - UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) 2000

## INS Jatayu in the Lakshadweep Islands

### *Why in News?*

The commissioning of INS Jatayu, an upgraded naval base in the **Lakshadweep Islands**, marks a significant development in **India's maritime security strategy**, particularly in the context of growing **Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean Region**.

- Additionally, the Indian Navy commissioned its **first MH-60R multi-role helicopter** squadron Indian Naval

**Air Squadron (INAS) 334** at Kochi, a major capability boost for its rotary fleet and its anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

What are the Key Highlights of INS Jatayu?

- INS Jatayu, formerly **Naval Detachment Minicoy**, is commissioned as an upgraded naval base on Minicoy Island in the Lakshadweep archipelago.
  - It will operate under the operational control of the Naval Officer in Charge (Lakshadweep), Southern Naval Command.
- The base enhances the operational reach of the **Indian Navy** in the Indian Ocean, bolstering its capabilities for **anti-piracy, anti-narcotics, and surveillance operations**.
  - Situated in Minicoy, the southernmost atoll of the Lakshadweep archipelago, INS Jatayu strategically overlooks vital **Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs)**, strengthening India's maritime presence in the region.
- In light of China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean, INS Jatayu reinforces **India's ability to counterbalance and deter any attempts** to undermine its maritime dominance and territorial integrity.
- INS Jatayu will effectively be the **country's second naval base in Lakshadweep**. The Navy's first base on the islands, **INS Dweepprakash** in Kavaratti, was commissioned in 2012.
- INS Jatayu will be equipped with additional infrastructure, including an airfield and personnel housing, to support naval operations and ensure comprehensive security coverage.
- Minicoy Island, where INS Jatayu is located, sits at the **intersection of crucial Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs)** like the **Eight Degree Channel** and the **Nine Degree Channel**, making it susceptible to maritime pollution due to heavy maritime traffic.
  - Eight Degree Channel separates **Indian Minicoy island from Maldives**.
  - The Nine Degree Channel separates the **island of Minicoy from the Lakshadweep archipelago**.

### *The Lakshadweep Islands*

- India's smallest Union Territory, Lakshadweep ( 'a hundred thousand islands' in Sanskrit and Malayalam) is an archipelago consisting of **36 islands located between 220 km and 440 km from Kochi**.

Note:

- The islands, only 11 of which are inhabited, have a total area of only 32 sq km. It is directly under the control of the Centre through an administrator.
- The Lakshadweep is part of a **chain of coralline islands in the Indian Ocean that includes the Maldives to the south, and the Chagos archipelago farther beyond, to the south of the equator.**

### What are the Key Highlights of the INAS 334 Squadron?

- The Indian Naval Air Squadron (INAS) 334 is the first squadron of the **MH-60R helicopters**, also known as the **“Seahawks”**. The squadron was commissioned at **INS Garuda**, Kochi.
- The squadron is a part of the 24-aircraft Foreign Military Sales (FMS) contract signed with the **United States government** in February 2020.

- The MH 60R Seahawk, a maritime variant of the Blackhawk helicopter, is designed for various roles including:
  - Anti-submarine warfare, Anti-surface warfare, Search and rescue, Medical evacuation and Vertical replenishment.
- Deployment of Seahawks in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) strengthens the Indian Navy’s maritime presence, dissuading potential threats and ensuring a secure environment in this strategically crucial region.

### Commands of Indian Navy:

It has **three operational** and **one theatre commands**. Each command is headed by a Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief holding the rank of Vice Admiral.

Command	Establishment	Headquarters	Area of Responsibility
Western Naval Command	1963	Mumbai	Arabian Sea, coastline Gujarat to Maharashtra, including Goa, Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands
Eastern Naval Command	1971	Visakhapatnam	Bay of Bengal, coastline of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu
Southern Naval Command	1951	Kochi	Indian Ocean, the coastline of Kerala, Karnataka, and Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands

- **Andaman and Nicobar Command, 2001:** It is a **unified tri-services theatre command** based at Port Blair, A&N Islands.
  - It includes the **Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard.**

## DefConnect 2024

### Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Defence has organised DefConnect 2024, aimed at promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and **Self-Reliance** in defense production.

- The event serves as a platform to showcase the latest advancements in defense technology, foster collaboration between the public and private sectors, and encourage investment in defence startups.
- **Launch of Initiatives:**
  - DefConnect 2024 witnesses the launch of various initiatives aimed at promoting innovation and self-reliance in defence production, such as the **ADITI (Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX) Scheme** and **DISC 11 (Defense India Startup Challenge)**.
  - These initiatives underscore the government’s commitment to fostering a vibrant defense innovation ecosystem.

Note:

**Note:**➤ **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX):**

- iDEX, launched in 2018, is an initiative taken by the government to contribute towards modernization of the **Defence Industry**.
- It aims to promote innovation and technology development in Defence and Aerospace by engaging Industries (which includes **MSMEs**, start-ups, individual innovators, R&D institutes & academia).
- iDEX will be funded and managed by Defence Innovation Organization (DIO), and will function as the executive arm of DIO.
- **iDEX Prime** is a specific program **under the broader iDEX initiative**, focusing on larger, more complex challenges requiring greater financial support.
- **Funding: iDEX Prime offers significantly higher grants** compared to other programs under iDEX.
- **There are different editions of iDEX Prime** catering to specific needs:
  - **iDEX Prime (X):** This edition has larger challenges and grants compared to the regular iDEX Prime.
  - **iDEX Prime (SPRINT):** This edition focuses on **faster development cycles and shorter deadlines** for specific problem statements from the **Indian Navy**.

➤ **Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO):**

- **Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO)**, is a not for profit organisation formed under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013.
- It is funded by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL). It provides high-level policy guidance to iDEX.

**What is Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) scheme?**➤ **About:**

- The ADITI scheme worth Rs 750 crore for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 falls under the **iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence) framework** of Department of Defence Production (DDP), Ministry of Defence.
- Under the scheme, **start-ups are eligible to receive grant-in-aid** of up to Rs 25 crore for their research, development, and innovation endeavours in defence technology.

- The scheme will nurture the innovation of youth, and help the country leap forward in the field of technology.
  - In the first edition of ADITI, 17 challenges – Indian Army (3), Indian Navy (5), Indian Air Force (5) and Defence Space Agency (4) - have been launched.

➤ **Objective:**

- It aims to develop about **30 deep-tech critical and strategic technologies** in the proposed timeframe.
- It also envisages to create a '**Technology Watch Tool**' to bridge the gap between the expectations and requirements of the modern Armed Forces and the capabilities of the defence innovation ecosystem.

**What are Government Initiatives Regarding Defense?**

- **First Negative Indigenisation**
- **Positive Indigenisation List**
- **New FDI Policy in Defence Sector**
- **Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020**
- **Defence Industrial Corridors**

**Exercise MILAN 2024****Why in News?**

**Exercise MILAN 2024** recently concluded with the closing ceremony held aboard the **INS Vikrant**, marking the end of the Sea Phase off **Visakhapatnam**.

**What is MILAN 2024?**

- **MILAN 2024** is the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the biennial **Multilateral Naval Exercise** held at Visakhapatnam, under the aegis of Eastern Naval Command.
  - The central aim of MILAN is to enhance professional interaction between friendly navies and gain experience in multilateral large-force operations at sea.
  - It made a beginning in the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands** in 1995. The navies of **Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka** and **Thailand** participated in this edition.
- **The 2024 exercise consisted of two phases:**
  - **Harbour Phase** featuring International Maritime Seminar, city parades, tech exhibitions, expert exchanges, youth officer gatherings, and sports events.

Note:

- The International Maritime Seminar was themed 'Partners across Oceans: Collaboration, Synergy, Growth'
- **Sea Phase** involves the participation of ships, and aircraft from friendly nations, Indian Navy's carriers, and other units.

### What are the Recent Major Developments Related to the Indian Navy?

- **Commissioning of New Ships:**
  - **INS Vikrant:** India's **first indigenously-built aircraft carrier**, a major milestone in achieving self-reliance in defense manufacturing.
  - **INS Mormugao:** A stealth guided-missile destroyer, part of the **Project 15B** for enhancing anti-surface warfare capabilities.
  - **INS Vagir:** A new **Kalvari-class submarine**, bolstering the Navy's underwater power.
  - **INS Sandhayak:** It is the first Survey Vessel Large (SVL) ship commissioned into the Indian Navy recently.
- **Recent Acquisition Programs:**
  - **Project 17A Frigates:** Advanced stealth frigates under construction at indigenous shipyards.
  - **Project 75I Submarines:** Program to build six indigenously-designed submarines with advanced stealth and firepower
- **Submarine Rescue Advancements:**
  - Acquisition of advanced **Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicles (DSRVs)** by the Indian Navy in 2018 and 2019 from the United Kingdom, enhancing submarine rescue capabilities.
    - India is among the 12 countries possessing this niche technology, highlighting its strategic importance.
  - Also, induction of two indigenous **Diving Support Vessels (DSVs)** by Hindustan Shipyard Ltd, Visakhapatnam, further strengthened submarine rescue operations.
    - DSRV system's capabilities include locating submarines up to 1,000 metres depth using advanced sonar technology and remotely operated vehicles.

**Note:** The Indian Navy recently announced that it had successfully engaged a land target with the **BrahMos missile** at an enhanced range of 900 km.

## Nausena Bhawan

Recently, the Union Minister for Defence inaugurated '**Nausena Bhawan**', the first Headquarter building of the **Indian Navy**, in New Delhi.

- Previously, the Navy operated from 13 different locations, necessitating a consolidated headquarters.
  - The major bases of the Indian Navy are located at **Mumbai, Goa, Karwar, Kochi, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Kolkata and Port Blair.**
- The building has achieved **Green Rating IV** under the integrated habitability assessment.
- Every year, **Indian Navy Day** is celebrated on **4<sup>th</sup> December** to respect the Indian Navy's counter-attack in Operation Trident during the **Indo-Pakistan War 1971.**

Read more: [Indian Navy Day 2023](#)

## Indian Navy Advances Atma Nirbhar Bharat with ASW SWC Project

Recently, the Indian Navy's shipbuilding program achieved a significant milestone with the launch of 'Agray' and 'Akshay', the 5th and 6th ships of the 08 x **ASW (Anti-Submarine Warfare) Shallow Water Craft (SWC)** Project.

- These ships are being built by M/S Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) in Kolkata for the Indian Navy.
- These ships signify a transition from the aging **Abhay Class Corvettes** to the more advanced **Arnala Class**, designed for anti-submarine and mine laying operations in coastal waters.
- The project reflects India's commitment to bolstering indigenous defense manufacturing, with over **80% of the content sourced domestically.**
- Notably, in the past year, **3 indigenous warships/submarines** have been delivered, with a total of 9 warships launched, underlining the nation's determination to strengthen its maritime capabilities through self-sufficiency.

Read more: [Indigenisation of Defence](#)

Note:



## Test-Firing of Indigenous 1500 HP Tank Engine

Recently, the Defence Secretary presided over the maiden **test-firing of the country's first indigenously-made 1500 Horsepower (HP) engine for Main Battle Tanks** at BEML Limited's (formerly Bharat Earth Movers Limited) Engine division in Mysuru complex.

- The 1500 HP engine represents a paradigm shift in **military propulsion systems**, possessing cutting-edge features such as a **high power-to-weight ratio**, and operability in **extreme conditions**, including high altitudes, sub-zero temperatures and desert environments.
  - Equipped with advanced technologies, the engine stands on par with the most advanced engines globally,
- India has many main battle tanks (MBTs), including the **T-90M Bhishma**, **ARJUN MBT**, and **K-9 Vajra**.
- BEML Limited, a **'Schedule 'A' Company under the Ministry of Defence**, plays a pivotal role and serves India's core sectors like Defence, Rail, Power, Mining and Infrastructure.

Read more: [Arjun MBT MK-1A](#)

## Tiger Triumph

Recently, the joint India-U.S. tri-service **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise, Tiger Triumph**, commenced on the Eastern seaboard.

- The primary objective of the exercise is to enhance interoperability for conducting HADR operations and refine **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** to facilitate swift and effective coordination between the armed forces of both countries.
- This exercise includes ships with helicopters and landing crafts, Indian Navy aircraft, Indian Army personnel and vehicles, Indian Air Force aircraft and helicopters, and the Rapid Action Medical Team (RAMT).
- Other Exercises Between India and US are-
  - [Yudh Abhyas](#)
  - [Vajra Prahar](#)
  - [Cope India](#)

Read more: [India-US Relations](#)

## India and Brazil hold First Inaugural '2+2' Dialogue

India and Brazil conducted their **first-ever '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue**, discussing cooperation in key areas.

- The talks focused on expanding cooperation in various areas, including energy, **critical minerals**, technology, and **counter-terrorism**.
- The '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue involves the participation of the **defence and foreign ministers of two countries**, along with their respective counterparts, to discuss strategic and security-related issues, as well as diplomatic matters.
- India conducts '2+2' dialogues with key strategic partners: the **US, Australia, Japan, and Russia**. The US holds the oldest and most significant '2+2' talks partnership with India.

Read more: [India-Brazil Relations](#), [India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue](#), [India-Australia 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue](#)

## LAMITIYE-2024

Recently, the Indian Army contingent participated in the **10<sup>th</sup> edition of Joint Military Exercise "LAMITIYE-2024"** with the **Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF)**.

- LAMITIYE, meaning 'Friendship' in Creole language (one of the official languages in the Seychelles), has been a **biennial training event since 2001**.
- **Aim:** Enhance interoperability in Sub-conventional Operations in Semi-Urban environments under Chapter VII of the **United Nations Charter on Peace Keeping Operations**.
- **Activities:** Field Training Exercise, combat discussions, lectures & demonstrations.
- **Importance:** Building and promoting bilateral military relations, exchanging skills and experiences.
- **Seychelles** is an island nation in the Indian Ocean, **northeast of Madagascar**. The country is known for its beaches, coral reefs, nature reserves, and rare animals, including giant Aldabra tortoises.
  - The **Aldabra Atoll**, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, is the world's largest raised coral atoll and it is home to the largest giant tortoise population in the world.

Note:



Read more: [India-Seychelles](#)

## Indian Army's AH-64E Apache Helicopter Induction

The **Indian Army Aviation Corps** took a significant step towards modernisation with the establishment of its first unit dedicated to operating **AH-64E Apache attack helicopters** in Jodhpur, Rajasthan.

- In 2020, **Boeing** signed an agreement with the Government of India for the acquisition of six more Apache helicopters for the Indian Army.
  - The **AH-64 Apache** is the world's most advanced multi-role combat helicopter. Used by the US Army and a growing number of international defense forces.
- This marks a pivotal moment as the Apaches will become the **second attack helicopters** in the Army's arsenal, following the indigenous **Light Combat helicopter Prachanda**.

Read more: [AH-64E Apache attack helicopters](#)

## Exercise Bharat Shakti

A Tri-Services Live Fire and Manoeuvre Exercise named "**Bharat Shakti**" is being conducted in Pokhran, Rajasthan, demonstrating India's indigenous defence capabilities.

- It included successful test firing of the long-range **AGNI missile** with advanced **MIRV technology**.
- Key equipment and weapons systems featured in the exercise include **T-90 (IM) Tanks**, Dhanush and Sarang Gun Systems, **Akash Weapons Systems**, Logistics Drones, Robotic Mules, Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH), Naval Anti-Ship Missiles, **Light Combat Aircraft Tejas**, Light Utility Helicopters, and Advanced Light Helicopters.
  - However, the **LCA Tejas fighter jet tragically crashed** during a training exercise.

Read more: [Exercise Kavach](#)

## Marine Security Belt 2024

Iran, Russia, and China began a joint naval drill in the **Gulf of Oman**. The drill, called "**Marine Security Belt 2024**". The drill, which includes warships and aviation, is their fourth joint military exercise since 2019.

- Naval representatives from Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Oman, India, and South Africa are acting as **observers** during the exercise.
- The Gulf of Oman is a western extension of the **Arabian Sea** and is situated in the Middle East between the countries of **Iran, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates**.
- The Gulf connects the **Arabian Sea with the Strait of Hormuz**, which then empties into the **Persian Gulf**.
  - The Gulf of Oman is bordered by Pakistan and Iran in the north; by the United Arab Emirates in the west and by Oman in the south.



Note:

Read more: [China-Iran Strategic Cooperation Pact](#)

## NATO's DIANA Program

Recently, the **Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA)** initiative board approved a proposal to **establish an accelerator and two test centres in Finland**, with a mission to foster technology, innovation, and business development for both civil and defence purposes.

- DIANA is a **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** established organization to **accelerate dual-use innovation capacity** across the Alliance. It provides companies with resources, networks, and guidance to develop deep technologies for critical defence and security challenges.
- All **NATO nations are members of DIANA**. The DIANA Board of Directors is responsible for governance and comprises representatives from every Allied country.

Read more: [North Atlantic Treaty Organization \(NATO\)](#)

## Sea Defenders-2024

Recently, the maritime security exercise 'Sea Defenders-2024' was held between the **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) at **Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands**.

- The Exercise included a variety of scenarios including a **Pollution Response Demonstration**, in which Indian Coast Guard ships and aircraft showcased their expertise in responding to **oil spills** and other environmental hazards at sea.
  - It also simulated **Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) Operations** for inspecting vessels suspected of illegal activity.

- Furthermore, the joint exercise provided a platform for personnel from both coast guards to refine their firefighting and damage control skills, fostering a spirit of collaboration and camaraderie.

Read more: [Indian Coast Guard](#)

## Samudra Laksamana

The **Samudra Laksamana** (Bilateral Maritime Exercise) between **India and Malaysia** was recently concluded off the coast of **Visakhapatnam**.

- It involved the participation of the **Indian Naval Ship Kiltan** and **Royal Malaysian Ship KD Lekir** aimed to reinforce ties and promote interoperability between the two navies.
- The other exercises between India and Malaysia are:

- **Exercise Udarashakti: Air Force**
- **Exercise Harimau Shakti: Army**



Read more: [Samudra Laksamana](#)

Note:



**Key Points**

**Details**

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**Summary**

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