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## KEY EVENTS

### President Approves Gallantry Awards

President Smt. Droupadi Murmu [approved](#) gallantry awards to 70 Armed Forces personnel, including six posthumous, on the eve of the 77<sup>th</sup> Republic Day. The awards include: one Ashok Chakra; three Kirti Chakras; 13 Shaurya Chakras (one posthumous); one Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry); 44 Sena Medals (Gallantry, including five posthumous); six Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry); and two Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry). Additionally, 98 Mentioned-in-Despatches were approved, including five posthumous. Fifteen personnel from the Indian Navy and two from the Border Roads Development Board (posthumous) were also recognised.

### Raksha Mantri Meets Vice President of the EU Commission

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [met](#) Kaja Kallas, High Representative/Vice President of the European Union Commission, in New Delhi on 27 January 2026 to discuss bilateral security and defence cooperation. The RM highlighted the need for Indian and EU defence industries to synergise efforts to build trusted defence ecosystems and future-ready capabilities, complementing India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat vision and the EU's strategic autonomy. He noted that India's defence sector could play a key role in the EU's 'ReArm initiative' by providing alternative supply sources. Ms Kallas underscored the importance of collaboration in the Indian Ocean Region, advocating for joint exercises and the sharing of best practices. Both sides welcomed the proposal to position a

Liaison Officer at the Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) in Gurugram.

### Raksha Mantri Visits DRDO Headquarters

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [visited](#) the DRDO Headquarters in New Delhi on 1 January 2026 on the occasion of DRDO's 68<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day. He stated that DRDO-developed weapon systems played a decisive role during Operation Sindoor. The RM expressed confidence that DRDO will play a crucial role in the creation of the 'Sudarshan Chakra' air defence initiative for protecting vital installations. He called upon DRDO to continue focusing on innovation, deep-tech and next-generation technologies, and to further enhance collaboration with industry, start-ups and academia.

### Raksha Mantri Interacts with Viksit Bharat Young Leaders

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [interacted](#) with 78 youth participants at the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2026 in Delhi Cantonment on 10 January 2026. He described youth as the main drivers of India's journey towards Viksit Bharat and urged them to embrace multidisciplinary learning to keep pace with rapid technological advancements.

### Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence Visits NSTL

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence [conducted](#) a study visit to the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL) in Visakhapatnam on 20 January 2026. The delegation reviewed

NSTL-developed underwater systems, including torpedoes (ALWT, Varunastra, EHWT), mines (MIGM, PBGM), decoys (SFD, Torbuster), SMART, HEAUV, SWARM, and associated platforms and technologies. The committee appreciated NSTL's contributions in Maritime and Underwater Domain Awareness and its strategic role in supporting the Indian Navy's operational capabilities.

### **CDS Releases Military Quantum Mission Policy Framework**

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan [released](#) the Military Quantum Mission Policy Framework on 22 January 2026, outlining the policy and roadmap for integrating quantum technologies into the Armed Forces. The framework focuses on four pillars: Quantum Communication, Quantum Computing, Quantum Sensing & Metrology, and Quantum Materials and Devices, aiming to prepare the Services for future battlefields and achieve technological dominance. The document guides the synergisation of quantum capabilities across the Tri-Services, aligns with the National Quantum Mission, and establishes civil-military collaborations. It emphasises jointness, integration, and dedicated governance structures to ensure effective adoption of emerging technologies and achieve technological supremacy in defence.

### **Chief of Army Staff Visits UAE and Sri Lanka**

Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, [visited](#) the United Arab Emirates and Sri Lanka from 5 to 8 January 2026 to strengthen defence cooperation and

military-to-military ties. Gen Dwivedi interacted with the senior leadership in both countries. In the UAE, he addressed officers at the UAE National Defence College, while in Sri Lanka, the COAS addressed officers at the Defence Services Command and Staff College, interacted with officers at the Army War College, Buttala, and paid homage at the IPKF War Memorial.

### **Defence Secretary Addresses Defence Skilling Conclave**

Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh [addressed](#) the Defence Skilling Conclave on Defence, Aerospace and Strategic Sector Skill Development in Chandigarh on 10 January 2026. He stated that Aatmanirbharta in defence is a national imperative for achieving long-term strategic autonomy and highlighted the transformation of India's defence industrial ecosystem over the past decade. The Defence Secretary emphasised the importance of skilled manpower, outlined initiatives such as PM-SETU, and called for stronger industry-academia-government collaboration to strengthen the defence manufacturing ecosystem.

### **Secretary (Defence Production) Visits Kenya**

Secretary (Defence Production) Sanjeev Kumar, during his three-day visit to Kenya that [concluded](#) on 21 January 2026, urged the Kenya Defence Forces to explore collaborative opportunities with Indian defence companies. He addressed the third India-Kenya Defence Exhibition and Seminar in Nairobi on 19 January 2026, highlighting India's robust defence

industrial ecosystem and the importance of building on long-standing bilateral ties based on mutual trust and cooperation.

### **Secretary (Defence Production) Interacts with Heads of Academic Institutions**

Secretary (Defence Production) Sanjeev Kumar [held](#) a virtual interaction on 27 January 2026 with Directors and Deans from premier academic institutions, including IITs, NITs, IISc, along with DPSUs and other stakeholders. The discussion focused on aligning academic research with defence production needs and developing structured mechanisms for sustained engagement.

### **MoD Records Major Progress during ‘Year of Reforms 2025’**

The Ministry of Defence [recorded](#) significant progress in implementing wide-ranging reforms during the ‘Year of Reforms 2025’ to strengthen jointness, enhance preparedness, promote self-reliance and improve welfare delivery. MoD achieved around 80 per cent expenditure under the Capital Acquisition Budget by December 2025. Reforms were undertaken in acquisition and procurement processes, defence production, industry participation, jointness, future preparedness, operational integration, veterans’ welfare and digital pension delivery through SPARSH.

### **India–Japan Coast Guards Hold 22<sup>nd</sup> High-Level Meeting.**

The Indian Coast Guard and Japan Coast Guard [held](#) their 22<sup>nd</sup> High-Level Meeting in New Delhi on 14 January 2026,

reaffirming commitment to a free, open and rules-based maritime order. Both sides discussed cooperation in emerging technologies and multilateral maritime forums, including India’s presidency of the Coast Guard Global Summit and the upcoming International Coast Guard Fleet Review.

### **Think Tank Scholars Visit Air Force Station Hindon**

A delegation of 57 research scholars from leading think tanks [visited](#) Air Force Station Hindon on 10 January 2026 as part of an outreach programme. The visit aimed to enhance understanding of the Indian Air Force's operations and promote cooperation between the IAF and academic and research institutions.

### **Civil Aviation Infrastructure Project Inaugurated at Air Force Station Leh**

On 28 January 2026, a project to develop civil aviation infrastructure at Air Force Station Leh was inaugurated by the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta. The project strengthens civil aviation infrastructure in the region and reflects close coordination between the civil administration and other agencies involved in Ladakh’s development. The infrastructure was upgraded in record time despite high-altitude terrain and adverse weather conditions.

## **AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT**

### **Raksha Mantri Commissions ICGS Samudra Pratap**

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [commissioned](#) Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) *Samudra Pratap*, India’s first

indigenously designed Pollution Control Vessel, built by Goa Shipyard Limited, in Goa on 5 January 2026. With over 60 per cent indigenous content, the vessel is the largest ship in the ICG fleet and will enhance capabilities in pollution control, fire-fighting, maritime safety and extended surveillance. The RM described the ship as an embodiment of India's mature defence industrial ecosystem.

### **DRDO Successfully Tests Long-Duration Scramjet Engine**

DRDO's Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad, successfully [conducted](#) a long-duration ground test of a full-scale actively cooled scramjet combustor for the Hypersonic Missile Programme on 9 January 2026. The combustor and facility were designed by DRDL and realised with industry partners. Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh termed the achievement a solid foundation for India's hypersonic cruise missile development.

### **DRDO Successfully Flight-Tests MPATGM with Top-Attack Capability**

DRDO successfully [flight-tested](#) the third-generation Fire-and-Forget Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) with top-attack capability against a moving target at KK Ranges, Ahilya Nagar, Maharashtra, on 11 January 2026. BDL and BEL are the Development-cum-Production Partners for the system. Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh termed the test an essential step towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

### **Indian Navy Signs Contract for Three Bottom-Opening Non-Propelled Barges**

The Indian Navy [signed](#) a contract with M/s Suryadipta Projects Private Limited, Thane (an MSME shipyard), on 16 January 2026 for the construction and delivery of three 200-ton Bottom Opening Non-Propelled Barges. The contract underscores support for MSME shipyards, contributing to the growth of India's domestic shipbuilding ecosystem in line with the Maritime India Vision 2030.

## **DEFENCE DIPLOMACY**

### **Indian Navy's First Training Squadron Deploys to South East Asia**

Ships of the Indian Navy's First Training Squadron, INS Tir, Shardul, Sujata and ICGS Sarathi [undertook](#) a Long Range Training Deployment to South East Asia as part of the 110<sup>th</sup> Integrated Officers' Training Course. The squadron made port calls in Singapore, Indonesia, and Thailand to conduct professional interactions, training exchanges, and cooperative maritime activities.

### **16<sup>th</sup> ADMM-Plus EWG on Counter-Terrorism Held in New Delhi**

India and Malaysia [co-chaired](#) the 16<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus Experts Working Group (EWG) on Counter-Terrorism from 14-16 January 2026 in New Delhi. Delegations from 11 ASEAN member states and seven dialogue partners, including the US, China, Russia, Japan and Australia, participated. The meeting reviewed progress on the 2024-

2027 work plan and advanced multilateral cooperation on counterterrorism.

### **ICGS Sankalp Makes Port Call at Port Louis**

ICGS Sankalp, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, [arrived](#) at Port Louis, Mauritius, on 17 January 2026 as part of its ongoing overseas deployment to friendly countries in the Indian Ocean Region. The visit provided an opportunity to showcase India's indigenous shipbuilding capabilities and support the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Upon completion, ICGS Sankalp will proceed to Seychelles.

### **INS Sudarshini Embarks on Lokayan 26 Global Sailing Expedition**

Vice Admiral Sameer Saxena, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command, [flagged off](#) INS Sudarshini from Naval Base, Kochi on 20 January 2026, marking the commencement of Lokayan 26, a ten-month-long transoceanic expedition. During the expedition, the ship will cover approximately 22,000 nautical miles, visiting 18 ports across 13 countries. The voyage reflects India's vision of MAHASAGAR and the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, building bridges of cooperation and trust across oceans.

'The Defence Newsletter is a compilation of media reports and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Manohar Parrikar IDSA or the Ministry of Defence, Government of India'.