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KEY EVENTS

Raksha Mantri Conducts Annual Performance Review of 16 DPSUs

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [reviewed](#) the annual performance of 16 Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) in New Delhi on 1 September 2026. He noted that India recorded defence production of approximately ₹1.8 lakh crore in 2025–26, with DPSUs contributing ₹1.29 lakh crore, underlining their continued role in the country's defence industrial base. The Raksha Mantri called on DPSUs to deliver on time, reduce import dependence, strengthen R&D, expand exports, improve productivity, and support start-ups and MSMEs.

Raksha Mantri Calls Upon MSMEs to Invest in R&D

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, addressing an MSME event in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, on 1 September 2026, [called upon](#) MSMEs to invest a portion of their turnover in research, development and technology upgradation, while fostering partnerships with universities, IITs, research institutions, DRDO laboratories, start-ups and large industries. The RM highlighted initiatives such as Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI), which support start-ups, innovators and MSMEs in developing advanced defence technologies.

Raksha Mantri Holds Talks with Belgium's Defence Minister

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh held talks with [Belgium's Minister of Defence and](#)

[Foreign Trade](#), Theo Francken, in New Delhi on 3 September 2026. The two sides agreed to expand bilateral ties through defence cooperation dialogue, high-level visits, training and capacity building. They also discussed regional peace and security and acknowledged the need for greater maritime security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

Raksha Mantri Unveils 'RAKSHA' Document

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [released](#) the 'RAKSHA' document on defence diplomacy in New Delhi on 3 September 2026. The document outlines India's strategic roadmap and vision for global defence partnerships over the next decade, emphasising alignment of national security objectives with proactive international cooperation. Its key pillars include deepening bilateral and multilateral strategic partnerships; enhancing joint military exercises, training, and capacity-building programmes; promoting indigenous defence exports; and strengthening maritime security cooperation. The document also envisages a greater role for India as a Net Security Provider and First Responder in the Indian Ocean Region.

Raksha Mantri Highlights Enhanced Operational Freedom for Defence Forces

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh said the Defence Forces have been given greater operational freedom and resources to respond decisively to security threats, including the ability to strike adversaries within their territory. Speaking at an event in New Delhi on 7 September 2026, he

highlighted [India's counter-terrorism responses](#), including the Surgical Strikes, Balakot Airstrike and Operation Sindoor.

Raksha Mantri Calls on Sri Lankan President

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [called on](#) Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Disسانayake in Colombo on 9 September 2026. President Disسانayake reiterated that Sri Lanka would not allow its territory to be used for activities inimical to India's security interests. The two sides also exchanged MoUs on upgrading six L70 air defence guns for the Sri Lankan Air Force under a Government of India grant, and on academic cooperation between the National Defence Colleges of India and Sri Lanka. The two countries also exchanged an MoU on cooperation between the National Cadet Corps.

Raksha Mantri Calls on Sri Lankan Prime Minister

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [met Sri Lankan Prime Minister Dr](#) Harini Amarasuriya in Colombo on 9 September 2026. The two leaders highlighted the importance of India-Sri Lanka's shared heritage and strong people-to-people ties. They reaffirmed the need to pursue a shared developmental vision for regional peace, prosperity and the welfare of their people. The RM emphasised capacity building as an important pillar of bilateral cooperation.

Raksha Mantri Unveils Policy Initiatives to Strengthen Industry

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [unveiled](#) key policy initiatives at the 'VIMARSH'

DRDO-Industry Synergy Meet in New Delhi on 15 September 2026, aimed at strengthening MSME and deep-tech start-up participation in the defence ecosystem. The initiatives include a framework to reduce technical and financial entry barriers through direct funding, incubation support and access to DRDO testing facilities, along with a secure framework for sharing DRDO-developed software source codes with licensee industries. DRDO said it has handed over more than 2,300 technology transfers to over 1,100 industries so far.

Raksha Mantri Highlights Indigenous Defence Production

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh emphasised the role of [youth, start-ups and emerging technologies](#) and reiterated the importance of self-reliance and indigenous capabilities at an event in Kochi on 18 September 2026. He highlighted the growth of indigenous defence production from around Rs 40,000 crore in 2014 to nearly Rs 1.80 lakh crore, and defence exports from around Rs 600 crore to approximately Rs 40,000 crore, with Indian defence equipment reaching around 100 countries.

Raksha Mantri Highlights Holistic Approach to National Security

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh said national security extends beyond safeguarding geographical boundaries and requires a holistic approach to emerging threats, including drones, cyber-attacks, lone-wolf attacks, disinformation, and disruptions to economic and energy security, while [addressing](#) a defence conclave in New Delhi on 24 September 2026.

Raksha Mantri Highlights Indian Navy's Growing Strategic Role

At the second edition of the Indian Navy's biannual [Commanders' Conference 2026](#) in New Delhi on 29 September 2026, Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh highlighted the Navy's role as a First Responder and Preferred Security Partner in the Indian Ocean Region. He noted that the deployment of Indian warships in the South China Sea, Mediterranean and Atlantic Ocean demonstrated the Navy's blue-water capability and strategic reach. Highlighting Operation Urja Suraksha, he underlined the Navy's role in safeguarding the movement of Indian-flagged merchant vessels and India's energy security. The RM also noted that recently commissioned warships contained over 75 per cent indigenous content and highlighted the Navy's assumption of command of Combined Task Force-154.

India and Belgium Explore Deeper Defence Industrial Collaboration

Raksha Rajya Mantri Sanjay Seth and Belgium's Minister of Defence and Foreign Trade Theo Francken [discussed](#) opportunities for deeper India-Belgium defence industrial cooperation through co-development and co-production during the India-Belgium Defence CEOs Roundtable and B2B Meetings in New Delhi on 3 September 2026. The RRM highlighted iDEX and ADITI as platforms for bilateral research, development and industrialisation involving start-ups and MSMEs. The two sides also exchanged multiple MoUs in robotics, ammunition, electro-optics, anti-drone technologies and other niche capabilities.

RRM Addresses 43rd Indian Coast Guard Commanders' Conference

The 43rd [Indian Coast Guard \(ICG\) Commanders' Conference](#) was held in New Delhi on 17 September 2026. Raksha Rajya Mantri Sanjay Seth highlighted the growing importance of networks, sensors, software, data, Artificial Intelligence, autonomous systems, cyber capabilities and space-based technologies. The RRM also emphasised closer cooperation with start-ups, industry, DRDO and research institutions to strengthen operational capabilities.

COAS General Dhiraj Seth Visits Russia

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Dhiraj Seth visited Russia from 16 to 18 September 2026. The COAS's visit [aimed](#) at strengthening the longstanding India-Russia defence partnership and military-to-military cooperation. Gen. Seth held discussions with Colonel General Andrei Nikolayevich Mordvichev, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Land Forces, and interacted with senior Russian Ministry of Defence officials on contemporary military developments, defence industry and procurement.

India and Vietnam Reaffirm Commitment to Stronger Defence Ties

Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh [met](#) Vietnam's Deputy Minister of National Defence, Senior Lieutenant General Nguyen Truong Thang, in New Delhi on 13 September 2026, following the meeting between the Prime Ministers of India and Vietnam on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit. The discussions focused on strengthening the Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

through joint initiatives, technology sharing and defence industrial collaboration. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to expanding maritime and defence cooperation and highlighted the importance of coordination through multilateral mechanisms, particularly the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus).

India-Morocco Inaugural Joint Defence Committee Meeting Held

India and Morocco held their inaugural [Joint Defence Committee](#) (JDC) meeting in New Delhi on 8 September 2026. The JDC was established under the MoU on defence cooperation signed during Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh's visit to Morocco in September 2025.

Second India-Fiji Bilateral Joint Working Group Meeting Held

The second India-Fiji bilateral Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting was [held](#) in New Delhi on 28 September 2026. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to expanding bilateral defence cooperation, including greater defence industry collaboration and specialised military training.

Second JDC meeting between India and Ethiopia Held in Addis Ababa

India and Ethiopia held their second [Joint Defence Cooperation](#) (JDC) meeting in Addis Ababa on 28 September 2026. The JDC mechanism was established under the Defence Cooperation MoU that the two countries signed in February 2025, with the first meeting held in New Delhi in October 2025.

India and Republic of Korea 10th Joint Committee Meeting Held

The 10th India-Republic of Korea Joint Committee Meeting (JCM) on Defence Industries and Logistics Cooperation was [held](#) in New Delhi on 29 September 2026. The two sides reviewed ongoing cooperation and discussed avenues to expand collaboration between their defence industries, including greater engagement in defence production and logistics.

AVM Shakti Sharma Becomes First Non-Medical Woman Two-Star Officer

Air Vice Marshal Shakti Sharma [became](#) the first woman officer from the non-medical stream to attain the rank of Air Vice Marshal, or equivalent, on 1 September 2026. She assumed the appointment of Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Education) at Air Headquarters.

AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

DAC Clears Capital Acquisition Proposals Worth about Rs 1.10 lakh crores

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, [accorded](#) Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) to various capital acquisition proposals of the Defence Forces estimated at approximately Rs 1.10 lakh crore on 7 September 2026. Approximately 98 per cent of the procurements under the approved proposals will be sourced from Indian industry.

HAL Hands Over Two LCA FOC Twin Seater Trainers

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) [handed over](#) two LCA Tejas Final

Operational Clearance (FOC) Twin Seater Trainers and three HTT-40 Basic Trainer Aircraft to the Indian Air Force (IAF), and four Dhruv Next Generation (NG) helicopters to Pawan Hans Limited (PHL), in Bengaluru on 18 September 2026, in the presence of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh and Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu. The RM called for greater public-private synergy across design, development, manufacturing, certification and lifecycle support, and emphasised indigenous development of next-generation technologies.

IAF Organises Dronathon 2026

The IAF [organised](#) Dronathon 2026 at the Pokhran Range, Jaisalmer, from 14 to 16 September 2026, to provide domestic manufacturers an opportunity to showcase capabilities and advancements in Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) and Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (CUAS). The IAF also [released](#) its 'IAF UAS Roadmap' to guide industry, academia and research organisations on future capability priorities.

MoD Signs Contract with BDL for 160 Satellite Smart Anti-Airfield Weapons

The MoD [signed](#) a contract with Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) to procure 160 Satellite Smart Anti-Airfield Weapons (SAT-SAAW) and associated equipment for the Indian Air Force (IAF) at a total cost of Rs 810.79 crore under the Buy (Indian-Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured) category on 23 September 2026. SAT-SAAW is an air-to-ground precision-guided glide bomb that can be launched from Jaguar, Hawk and Su-

30MKI aircraft. The system will have 60 per cent indigenous content.

DRDO Signs First High-Value Deep-Tech TDF Agreement

DRDO [signed](#) its first high-value deep-tech project agreement under the Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme with start-up Zero India Private Limited for indigenous development of a 20 mK dilution refrigerator for quantum applications on 24 September 2026. The project is the first high-value agreement under the Rs 500 crore corpus approved for deep-tech and cutting-edge projects. Dilution refrigerators are specialised cryogenic systems that can reach millikelvin-range temperatures needed to operate and test quantum computing platforms and related technologies.

DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

India and Japan Conduct Exercise Veer Guardian-2026

The Indian Air Force (IAF) and Japan Air Self-Defence Force (JASDF) conducted the bilateral air exercise [Veer Guardian 2026](#) at Air Force Station Jodhpur from 9 to 22 September 2026. The IAF participated with a mix of frontline combat aircraft, including the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, Su-30MKI and Rafale, while the JASDF participated with F-2A fighter aircraft.

Colombo Security Conclave Table Top Exercise Held

The three-day [Table Top Exercise](#) (TTX) conducted under the aegis of the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) was held at Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam,

on 11 September 2026. The exercise focused on developing a coordinated response to illicit maritime activities in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), with delegations and maritime security experts from CSC member states and observer nations participating in simulated operational scenarios. The exercise reaffirmed the CSC's commitment to regional peace, stability and prosperity in line with the MAHASAGAR vision.

India-US Joint Military Exercise Yudh Abhyas 2026 Held

The 22nd edition of the India-US Joint Military Exercise [Yudh Abhyas](#) commenced at Auli in Uttarakhand and Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan on 15 September 2026, with 600 personnel from each side participating. The exercise focused on enhancing the two armies' joint military capability to employ Integrated Battle Groups in mountainous and semi-mountainous terrain, with an emphasis on infantry-dominated operations.

India-Sri Lanka Maritime Exercise SLINEX-26 Held

The 13th edition of the India-Sri Lanka bilateral maritime exercise [SLINEX-26](#) was held at Visakhapatnam from 17 to 21 September 2026. Conceptualised in 2005, SLINEX has evolved into an important forum for maritime cooperation between the two Navies.

India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise Nomadic Elephant Held

The 18th edition of the India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise [Nomadic Elephant](#) commenced at the Foreign Training Node, Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand, on 21 September 2026, with 45 personnel from each side participating.

ICG Participates in QUAD-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Ship Shaunak sailed from Chennai to Perth, Australia, on 25 September 2026 as part of the QUAD-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission involving India, Australia, Japan, and the United States. Aligned with the QUAD Foreign Ministers' Joint Statement of 26 May 2026, the mission reflects the four countries' shared commitment to a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based maritime order in the Indo-Pacific.

Second ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise Held in Philippines

The second edition of the [ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise](#) (AIME-2026) was held at Subic Bay, Philippines, on 28 September 2026, with Indian Naval Ships Sahyadri and Kulish participating alongside maritime forces from ASEAN Member States. Conducted under the theme 'Anchored in Trust, United at Sea', the exercise included professional and operational engagements aimed at enhancing mutual understanding, cooperation and interoperability.

"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'.