



# Defence Professionals News & Analysis

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## Defense Business and Industry

### Sona Comstar and ePlane Co. Collaborate on eVTOL Powertrains



01-Feb-25

Sona Comstar has partnered with The ePlane Co. to develop powertrains for electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft and drones in India, marking a pivotal advancement in the country's aerospace sector. This collaboration, formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding, leverages Sona Comstar's precision manufacturing expertise with The ePlane Co.'s innovative approach to eVTOL technologies. The partnership aims to produce essential components like gearboxes and motors, promoting "Made in India" solutions and enhancing the domestic aerospace industry. By focusing on sustainable urban air mobility, this initiative positions India as a significant player in the global aerospace market, potentially revolutionizing transportation and advancing technological self-reliance.

### Indian Army Enhances Surveillance with \$11.6M Camera Acquisition



01-Feb-25

The Indian Ministry of Defence has awarded an \$11.6 million contract to RRP S4E for the acquisition of advanced surveillance systems, including the long-range Viraj 28-B cameras and PR82 thermal imaging sights, aimed at enhancing the Indian Army's operational capabilities. The Viraj 28-B features HD 1080p resolution and can detect individuals at significant distances, while the PR82 offers effective night vision compatibility with various rifles. This procurement is part of the Indian Army's modernization initiative to improve situational awareness across diverse environments, ensuring rapid integration of these technologies for enhanced preparedness and effectiveness in the field.

### BEL's Advanced VHF Radar Boosts Defense Against Stealth Jets



01-Feb-25

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has delivered an advanced VHF radar system to the Indian Armed Forces, significantly boosting India's air defense capabilities against stealth aircraft like China's J-20 and Pakistan's potential J-35A. This radar, utilizing an Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA), can detect stealth jets at ranges up to 200 kilometers by exploiting the limitations of stealth technology in lower frequency bands. Its strategic deployment provides early warning, allowing the Indian Air Force to mobilize defenses effectively. By enhancing detection capabilities, this radar not only fortifies India's air defense but also serves as a deterrent against potential aggressors in the region.

### BEL to Seal Rs 25,000 Crore QRSAM Deal Within a Year



01-Feb-25

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) is set to finalize a significant Rs 25,000 crore deal for the Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) system within the next year, enhancing the Indian Army's air defense capabilities against low-level aerial threats. The QRSAM, developed by the DRDO, features all indigenous components, emphasizing India's commitment to self-reliance in defense technology. BEL's optimism indicates that previous technical issues have been addressed, promising better reliability and quicker response in dynamic battlefield scenarios. Once operational, the QRSAM will bolster the Army's ability to counter threats effectively, marking a major advancement in indigenous defense systems and supporting India's strategic autonomy in military capabilities.

## DRDO Launches Advanced Nose Cone for Tejas MkII, Boosting Self-Reliance



01-Feb-25

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has unveiled an advanced composite nose cone for the Tejas MkII, marking a crucial milestone in India's indigenous aerospace efforts. The new Radome, designed to enhance aerodynamic efficiency and reduce electromagnetic interference, utilizes high-purity quartz for superior strength-to-weight performance. This innovation not only optimizes the aircraft's design but also replaces an imported component, furthering India's self-reliance in defense technology. The smaller dimensions of the nose cone enhance the aircraft's capabilities, supporting advanced functions like in-flight connectivity and satellite communications, thereby reinforcing India's position in modern aerial combat capabilities.

## Sagar Defence Engineering Patents Innovative Drone Tech in Japan



01-Feb-25

Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt. Ltd. has achieved a significant milestone by securing a patent in Japan for its innovative drone technology, specifically a system for locating drone boxes for landing and charging. This patent not only enhances the operational efficiency of drone fleets through autonomous navigation and recharging capabilities but also positions the company to explore strategic partnerships in one of the world's leading technology markets. The development is crucial for applications in surveillance and emergency services, showcasing India's rising prowess in the defense technology sector and emphasizing the potential for further advancements in indigenous drone innovations.

## Indian Navy Boosts Combat Power with Israeli Rampage Missile



01-Feb-25

The Indian Navy has successfully integrated the Israeli Rampage air-to-surface missile into its MiG-29K fighter jets, significantly enhancing its aerial combat capabilities amidst rising regional security threats. With a range of 250 kilometers and supersonic speeds, the Rampage allows for precise strikes on high-value targets while minimizing collateral damage. This integration not only strengthens India's naval deterrence against adversaries like China and Pakistan but also reflects a strategic collaboration with Israel and uniform capability enhancement across the Indian military branches. The advancement comes at a crucial time as

India seeks to counterbalance increasing military activities in the Indian Ocean region, bolstering its maritime security framework.

## Upgrading the ZSU-23-2: A Modern Air Defense Solution for India



01-Feb-25

The Indian Army is exploring the transformation of the ZSU-23-2, a Soviet-era anti-aircraft system, into a modern self-propelled air defense platform. This upgrade aims to enhance mobility and responsiveness against contemporary aerial threats, such as drones and low-flying aircraft, while leveraging existing inventory for cost-effectiveness. Potential improvements include advanced targeting systems and local production capabilities, supporting India's defense industry and the Make in India initiative. Though trials for these upgrades have been discussed, progress appears stalled, underscoring the challenges in modernizing legacy systems despite their potential role in a layered air defense strategy.

## BEL Confirms \$4 Billion Radar Deal with Russia, Boosting Local Manufacturing



01-Feb-25

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) is engaged in a government-to-government radar deal with Russia, valued at around \$4 billion, focusing on a long-range early warning radar system. This agreement prioritizes local manufacturing with at least 60% production in India, aligning with the Make in India initiative and enhancing domestic defense capabilities. While BEL's specific role in the project is yet to be defined by the Ministry of Defence, this collaboration could significantly bolster India's strategic defense posture, particularly against long-range threats. The concurrent development of an indigenous radar project by DRDO indicates India's commitment to balancing foreign acquisitions with domestic innovation.

## India Prioritizes Strategic Independence Over US Fighter Jet Pressure



01-Feb-25

Amidst U.S. pressure for India to procure American fighter jets, the Indian Air Force (IAF) remains cautious about options like the F-21 and F-15EX, citing strategic concerns as these aircraft do not match the advanced capabilities of Chinese stealth fighters. The stringent operational oversight requirements associated with the F-35A further complicate potential acquisitions, as they jeopardize India's operational sovereignty. The IAF's

preference for medium-weight fighters aligns with its long-term strategic interests, emphasizing the need for technologically superior platforms rather than succumbing to political pressure. Ultimately, India's defense strategy prioritizes maintaining independence in procurement choices while enhancing its air combat capabilities.

## F-35A Lightning II to Feature as Static Display at Aero India 2025

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01-Feb-25

The United States Air Force has announced that the F-35A Lightning II will only participate in Aero India 2025 as a static display, foregoing flight demonstrations initially anticipated. While this shift from previous shows may disappoint some, it provides an opportunity for attendees to closely examine the aircraft's advanced technology. This decision reflects complexities inherent in international military exhibitions, influenced by geopolitical factors and operational commitments. Nonetheless, the presence of the F-35 underscores the strengthening defense partnership between India and the U.S., which is crucial as India modernizes its air force and evaluates potential procurement options moving forward.

## Indonesia Delays BrahMos Missile Deal Amid Ongoing Talks

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01-Feb-25

Indonesia's ongoing discussions regarding the procurement of BrahMos missiles from India remain unresolved despite a recent visit from Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto during India's Republic Day celebrations. Indonesia is seeking additional time to evaluate the deal, indicating potential complexities in financial or technical aspects. This deal is crucial for enhancing defense cooperation between India and Indonesia, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, and underscores India's commitment to strengthening regional ties. The forthcoming defense delegation visit to Delhi for further negotiations is expected to address the procedural matters delaying the agreement, which is viewed positively as both nations are eager to finalize the deal.

## India's AMCA: Affordable 5th-Gen Fighter to Rival F-35 and J-20

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01-Feb-25

India's Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) program is advancing towards its first prototype rollout by late 2026 or early 2027, aiming to deliver a cost-effective 5th-generation fighter jet that rivals the F-35

and J-20. The Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) emphasizes affordability through a public-private partnership, potentially positioning the AMCA significantly cheaper than competitors like the F-35 at \$82.5 million and the J-20 at approximately \$110 million. With advanced capabilities in stealth technology and avionics, the AMCA is set to offer a compelling alternative for nations looking to modernize their air forces without exorbitant costs, enhancing India's standing in the global defense market.

## India Launches 9th ACTCM Barge, Boosting Naval Logistics and Self-Reliance

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01-Feb-25

The Indian defense sector marked a significant milestone with the launch of the 9th Ammunition Cum Torpedo Cum Missile (ACTCM) Barge, LSAM 23, at Suryadipta Projects Pvt Ltd, Thane. This initiative, part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India campaigns, underscores India's commitment to indigenous defense manufacturing. Constructed in collaboration with Indian firms and rigorously tested for seaworthiness, these barges enhance the operational capabilities of the Indian Navy by facilitating the transportation and handling of munitions. With eight barges already delivered, this project demonstrates the growth of India's defense industry and its strategic focus on self-reliance in defense logistics.

## Defense Policy and Budgeting

### Union Budget 2025-26: ₹6.81 lakh crore for Defence, up 9.53%

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01-Feb-25

India's Union Budget for FY 2025-26 has allocated a record ₹6.81 trillion (approximately \$78.70 billion) for the Ministry of Defence, marking a 9.53% increase from the previous year. This budget emphasizes modernization, with ₹1.80 trillion earmarked for capital outlay, representing a 4.65% rise, despite concerns that a significant portion is consumed by manpower costs (₹4.7 trillion). Analysts note that the slow pace of defence procurement hampers military buildup, particularly in crucial areas like aircraft and naval capabilities. However, the government remains focused on enhancing self-reliance in defence, with substantial allocations for domestic procurement and research initiatives, aiming to boost technological innovation and stimulate the economy while addressing border infrastructure needs.

## Union Budget Boosts Security Spending to Combat Naxalism

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01-Feb-25

The Union Budget 2025-26 allocates Rs 3,481.27 crore for security and infrastructure in combating Naxalism, reflecting the government's commitment to eradicate this menace by March 2026. This budget increase from Rs 2,463.62 crore in 2024-25 underscores the seriousness of the challenge, with significant actions taken, such as the establishment of 290 security force camps in affected areas since 2019 and ongoing operations resulting in the neutralization of numerous Naxalites. The proactive stance of the Indian government, led by Home Minister Amit Shah, highlights a strategic focus on enhancing security infrastructure to restore peace in Naxal-affected regions, an essential step for national stability and development.

## Union Budget 2025-26: Rs 2.33 lakh crore for Home Affairs, bolstering police forces.

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01-Feb-25

The Union Budget 2025-26 allocated Rs 2.33 lakh crore to the Ministry of Home Affairs, with a significant portion directed towards central police forces like the CRPF, BSF, and CISF, enhancing India's internal security and border management capabilities. This marks an increase from the previous year's budget, reflecting the government's commitment to strengthening security infrastructure, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir and border regions. Additionally, funds for police modernization and various safety initiatives indicate a proactive approach to addressing internal and external security threats, underscoring the Indian government's dedication to maintaining stability and safety in the nation.

## India Considers US Stryker Deal Amid Stronger Indigenous WhAP

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01-Feb-25

India is evaluating a potential deal for US Stryker Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) amidst pressure from the Trump administration, despite the availability of a superior indigenous alternative, the DRDO-developed Wheeled Armoured Platform (WhAP). The Stryker's acquisition could enhance India-US defense ties and support the 'Make in India' initiative, but it may involve substantial US oversight. Conversely, the WhAP offers notable advantages, such as amphibious capabilities and better suitability for high-altitude operations, while promoting self-reliance in India's

defense sector. Ultimately, India's decision will hinge on balancing strategic partnerships with self-sufficiency in defense production.

## India's Defense Transformation: From Imports to Self-Reliance

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01-Feb-25

India's defense sector has significantly transformed since 2014, shifting from an import-dependent force to one focused on self-reliance and indigenous manufacturing, bolstered by rising defense budgets. The "Make in India" initiative has driven a record defense production of 1.27 lakh crore and exports of 21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, highlighting India's commitment to becoming a global defense hub. With ambitious targets of 3 lakh crore in production and 50,000 crore in exports by 2029, India is well-positioned to enhance its strategic partnerships and innovation, securing its role as a reliable defense partner on the global stage. This transformation not only strengthens national defense but also contributes to regional security.

## Geopolitics and Security Alliances

## MEA Confirms Safety of Indians Amid DRC Conflict Escalation

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01-Feb-25

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) assured that all Indian citizens in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are safe amidst escalating violence, particularly in Goma, where clashes with Rwanda-backed M23 rebels have intensified. Approximately 25,000 Indians reside in the DRC, with many in Goma having evacuated safely. The Indian embassy in Kinshasa is actively monitoring the situation and has issued advisories, urging those in potentially affected areas like Bukavu to relocate to safer locations. As the conflict has led to significant casualties and displacement, with over 400,000 people affected, the Indian government remains committed to the welfare and safety of its nationals in the region, highlighting the importance of diplomatic vigilance in turbulent geopolitical environments.

## PM Modi's Upcoming Washington Visit to Boost US-India Ties

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01-Feb-25

India and the United States are finalizing dates for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington to



strengthen their Comprehensive Global Strategic partnership. This visit, highlighted by recent discussions between PM Modi and President Trump, aims to enhance collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region and advance the Quad partnership. Both leaders expressed their commitment to global peace and security, addressing critical issues such as the situations in West Asia and Ukraine. The upcoming visit signifies India's growing strategic importance on the global stage and a deeper alignment with U.S. interests, reflecting a robust bilateral relationship that is poised to tackle emerging geopolitical challenges effectively.

## India Keeps Close Watch on Maldives' Economic Struggles

01-Feb-25

India is closely monitoring the economic situation in the Maldives, which is facing a potential crisis due to rising debt distress and agreements that may lead to revenue losses. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal emphasized the importance of maintaining communication with Maldivian authorities as they navigate these challenges. Additionally, Jaiswal highlighted the significance of upcoming discussions between the Border Security Force and the Border Guards Bangladesh, expressing expectations for adherence to mutually-agreed agreements. This proactive approach underscores India's commitment to regional stability and its strategic interests in ensuring economic resilience and security cooperation in South Asia.

## US-India Defense Ties Under Review Amid Global Tensions

01-Feb-25

The House Foreign Affairs Committee is set to scrutinize US-India relations, particularly in defense cooperation, amidst escalating global tensions. India ranks 11th on the committee's priority list, with a focus on enhancing bilateral defense ties, counterterrorism efforts, and economic relations in key sectors like technology and pharmaceuticals. The committee aims to bolster India's role in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue and address the challenges posed by China, including its violations of international agreements. This emphasis on India reflects the growing importance of strategic partnerships in ensuring regional stability and countering adversarial influences in South and Central Asia.

## India-Bangladesh DG-level border talks scheduled for February 17-20

01-Feb-25

India's Border Security Force (BSF) and Bangladesh's Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) will engage in DG-level talks in New Delhi from February 17 to 20, aimed at addressing border-related issues and reinforcing mutually agreed Memorandums of Understanding. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal emphasized the importance of cooperation for security and trade infrastructure along the Indo-Bangladesh border. Additionally, India is closely monitoring the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where ongoing conflicts have affected a community of around 25,000 Indian nationals, with the Embassy providing advisories and support. These initiatives highlight India's proactive stance on regional security and the welfare of its citizens abroad.

## US Warns of China's Rising Influence Near Panama Canal

01-Feb-25

The U.S. expresses concerns over China's growing influence around the Panama Canal, highlighting it as a national security issue for both the U.S. and Panama. Mauricio Claver-Carone, the U.S. special envoy for Latin America, pointed to increasing Chinese presence in ports and telecommunications, while emphasizing that past Panamanian governments contributed to this situation. As U.S. diplomacy intensifies in the region, including a visit by Marco Rubio, fears persist that China's economic foothold could overshadow U.S. interests. This development underscores the importance of monitoring geopolitical shifts, which may have implications for India as it navigates its own strategic partnerships in a changing global landscape.

## Bhutan Army's Lt. Gen. Batoo Tshering Visits India to Boost Ties

01-Feb-25

Lieutenant General Batoo Tshering, Chief Operations Officer of the Royal Bhutan Army, is on an official visit to India from February 1 to 6, 2025, aimed at strengthening the defense ties between Bhutan and India. His itinerary includes visits to significant military institutes, cultural sites, and meetings with top Indian defense officials, including the Chief of the Army Staff and the National Security Advisor. This visit highlights the deep-rooted cultural connections and mutual defense interests, further solidifying the strategic partnership between the two nations, reflecting India's

commitment to regional security and cooperation in South Asia.

## Terrorism and Counterterrorism

### Military Operations

#### Mob Blocks CRPF in Manipur's Poppy Field Operation, 4 Vehicles Damaged SHARE

01-Feb-25

In Manipur's Kangpokpi district, a mob of approximately 80 individuals attempted to obstruct a security operation by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and local police aimed at destroying illegal opium poppy fields. The confrontation resulted in four vehicles being damaged, primarily to their windshields. However, the security forces managed to control the situation using minimum force, and operations resumed after reinforcements arrived. This incident highlights the ongoing challenges faced by Indian security forces in combating drug cultivation and underscores the importance of maintaining law and order in sensitive regions, which is crucial for regional stability and national security.

#### Rafale M Selection: Indian Navy Faces Training and Storage Challenges SHARE

01-Feb-25

The selection of the Rafale M fighter jet by the Indian Navy has raised concerns over operational limitations akin to those faced with the MiG-29K, particularly due to its non-foldable wings affecting carrier storage and maneuverability. The absence of a carrier-compatible twin-seater trainer variant restricts real-world training for pilots, thereby hindering their proficiency in carrier operations. While the Rafale M enhances combat capabilities, potential compromises in operational readiness and increased reliance on simulation training could impact the Navy's effectiveness. It may thus necessitate further investments in training and modifications to fully leverage the aircraft's advanced capabilities within the unique operational environment of India's aircraft carriers.

#### India Pushes for Swift Extradition of 26/11 Suspect Tahawwur Rana SHARE

01-Feb-25

India is actively pursuing the early extradition of Tahawwur Rana, a suspect in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, from the United States, following a favorable ruling from the US Supreme Court. Rana, a Canadian national of Pakistani origin, is linked to key conspirator David Coleman Headley. The External Affairs Ministry confirmed that India is coordinating with US authorities on procedural matters. The 26/11 attacks resulted in 166 fatalities and nearly led to war between India and Pakistan, highlighting the ongoing challenge of tackling terrorism and seeking justice for victims, as India continues to urge Pakistan to hold those responsible accountable.

#### Ten Naxalites with Rs. 6 Lakh Bounty Surrender in Chhattisgarh SHARE

01-Feb-25

Ten Naxalites, including high-value targets with a cumulative bounty of Rs 6 lakh, surrendered to police in Bijapur, Chhattisgarh. Notable among them are Arjun Madkam, a committee member of the outlawed CPI (Maoist), and Hadma Tati, the vice-president of a local revolutionary committee. Their surrender indicates a potential decline in Maoist influence in the region, as evidenced by the 23 Naxalites surrendering and 46 arrests in 2025. This reflects the effectiveness of the Indian security forces' counterinsurgency operations, highlighting a significant step towards restoring peace and stability in the affected areas. Such developments are pivotal in India's broader strategy to combat insurgency and ensure national security.

#### Clash in Balochistan: 18 security personnel, 12 terrorists killed SHARE

01-Feb-25

In a recent violent clash in Balochistan, Pakistan, 18 security personnel and 12 terrorists were killed during an operation against attempts to establish roadblocks by militants. The Pakistani military stated that this act of terrorism was aimed at disrupting peace in the region, which has been grappling with violence from Baloch extremists. Following a resurgence in attacks since the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan, security forces have intensified operations, particularly in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. With 2024

proving to be one of the deadliest years for Pakistani security forces, the ongoing struggle against terrorism emphasizes the need for a robust counter-terrorism strategy to ensure regional stability.

## Gunfight Erupts in Bijapur as Security Forces Target Naxalites

🔒 SHARE

01-Feb-25

An encounter between security forces and Naxalites occurred in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district during an anti-Naxalite operation. The gunfight began around 8:30 am in the Gangaloor police station area, with ongoing exchanges of fire. A joint team comprising the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Special Task Force (STF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and its elite CoBRA unit is actively engaged in the operation, initiated based on intelligence regarding the Maoist presence in the region. This incident underscores the Indian government's commitment to combating insurgency and maintaining internal security in conflict-prone areas, demonstrating the effectiveness and coordination of its security forces.

## Cybersecurity and Information Warfare

## Budget 2025: 48% Boost for MeitY, Focus on AI, Cybersecurity, and Electronics

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01-Feb-25

The Union Budget for FY26 announced a significant 48% increase in allocations for the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), emphasizing the IndiaAI Mission and production-linked incentives (PLI) for semiconductors and electronics. While the budget enhances funding for cybersecurity initiatives, it has drawn criticism for insufficient clarity on the India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 and modest AI investments. Experts argue that while the increase in cybersecurity funding is necessary given rising threats, more substantial investment in AI and semiconductor initiatives is crucial for maintaining competitiveness against global counterparts like the US and China, highlighting the need for strategic focus on long-term development and innovation.

## South Korea probes China's DeepSeek over data privacy issues.

🔒 SHARE

01-Feb-25

South Korea's data protection authority plans to inquire into China's DeepSeek amid rising concerns over its

data collection practices, following a notable increase in South Korean users. This inquiry will seek clarification on DeepSeek's policies regarding personal data usage for AI training and could lead to further investigations. The situation has prompted a sell-off in South Korean tech stocks, with significant foreign divestment, highlighting the apprehension over potential data privacy violations associated with the Chinese AI firm. Such developments underscore the growing geopolitical tensions surrounding data security and privacy in the tech sector, which could influence policy responses across nations.

## Australia Warns Users: Exercise Caution with DeepSeek AI

🔒 SHARE

01-Feb-25

Australia's Science Minister Ed Husic has raised concerns about the Chinese AI chatbot DeepSeek, emphasizing the need for users to exercise caution due to its data privacy practices. Similar apprehensions have been expressed by U.S. officials, including a ban on its use by the Navy. DeepSeek collects extensive user data, raising alarms about potential surveillance and data misuse linked to its Chinese ownership. While some experts argue that data collection is common among AI models, the lack of stringent data protection regulations for DeepSeek exacerbates fears. Regulatory bodies like the UK's ICO are beginning to address these risks, advocating for user rights and transparent data practices.

## Miscellaneous

## ISRO and ESA Join Forces for Microgravity Research in Axiom-4

🔒 SHARE

01-Feb-25

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the European Space Agency (ESA) have signed an agreement to collaborate on microgravity research during the Axiom-4 mission, which will feature Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla. This partnership aims to conduct joint experiments on the International Space Station, focusing on the effects of microgravity on various biological and agricultural processes. The initiative enhances India's position in the global space exploration landscape and opens avenues for advancements in human health, physical sciences, and biotechnology. The collaboration underscores India's commitment to international cooperation in space research, bolstering its scientific community and capabilities in human spaceflight.

## Trump's Tariffs on Canada, Mexico, and China Take Effect Saturday



01-Feb-25

The Trump administration has initiated tariffs on imports from Canada, Mexico, and China, with rates set at 25% for most goods from Canada and Mexico, and 10% on all Chinese imports. These tariffs aim to address issues related to illegal immigration and drug trafficking, potentially leading to a 0.4% decrease in U.S. economic output and an average household tax increase of over \$830 by 2025. The administration defends these measures as essential for protecting American workers, though they risk disrupting trade relations and prompting retaliatory actions from affected nations. Further tariffs on oil and gas imports may also be considered, indicating a fluid trade policy landscape.

## Trudeau Promises Strong Yet Fair Response to U.S. Tariffs



01-Feb-25

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau emphasized a "forceful but reasonable" response to potential U.S. tariffs, stressing that such measures could harm both nations' economies and security. He highlighted Canada's essential contributions in vital sectors like steel, aluminum, and clean energy to the U.S. economy, reinforcing the importance of their trade relationship. Trudeau's comments coincide with ongoing diplomatic efforts by Canadian ministers in Washington aimed at persuading U.S. lawmakers to reconsider these tariffs. His insistence on exploring all options reflects Canada's determination to advocate for its economic interests while maintaining a collaborative bilateral relationship.

## President Murmu Celebrates Kashmir-Kanyakumari Railway Link



01-Feb-25

President Droupadi Murmu highlighted the significance of a new railway link connecting Kashmir to Kanyakumari, marking it as a "new era of unity" and promoting national integration. This project not only enhances connectivity across diverse regions but also aims to bolster economic growth, with key structures like the Chenab bridge, the highest railway bridge globally, and India's first rail cable bridge, the Anji Bridge. Furthermore, the operationalization of 71 Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat, and NAMO Bharat trains, along with the recent addition of 17 new Vande Bharat trains, reflects India's commitment to modernizing its rail infrastructure and improving transportation access nationwide.

## Jammu and Kashmir Sees Lowest Violence in 20 Years This January



01-Feb-25

January 2024 marked the most peaceful start in over two decades for Jammu and Kashmir, with only one soldier and two militants killed, a stark contrast to 203 fatalities in January 2001. This decline in violence is attributed to enhanced counter-insurgency operations, improved intelligence networks, and growing public support for security measures. While the situation has markedly improved, officials remain vigilant against sporadic infiltration attempts and isolated attacks that could disrupt stability. Overall, the data reflects a positive trend in security, highlighting the effectiveness of India's strategic approach in maintaining peace in the region.

## PM Modi to Join Global AI Summit in Paris, MEA Confirms



01-Feb-25

Prime Minister Modi will attend an AI summit in Paris on February 10-11, as confirmed by MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal. This summit will gather global leaders from various sectors to discuss critical issues surrounding AI governance, including ethical use, sustainability, and the potential for AI to benefit the public interest. With nearly 1,000 participants expected, the event presents a vital platform for India to showcase its advancements in AI and enhance international partnerships in technology. India's participation underscores its commitment to leading discussions on innovative solutions to global challenges through collaborative governance in AI.

## Foreign Diplomats to Experience Maha Kumbh Mela on Feb 1, 2025



01-Feb-25

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has announced that foreign diplomats will visit the Maha Kumbh Mela on February 1, 2025, despite recent security concerns following a tragic stampede during the Mauni Amavasya bathing ritual. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal highlighted the diplomats' plans to experience the cultural significance of this extraordinary event, which is the world's largest public gathering. Their itinerary includes a boat arrival at Sangam, a holy dip, and visits to key sites like Akshayvat and the Bade Hanuman Temple, as well as engagement with the Digital Maha Kumbh Experience Centre, showcasing India's rich cultural heritage and resilience in ensuring safe festivities.



## RIR to Launch India's First SiC Semiconductor Plant in Odisha



01-Feb-25

RIR Power Electronics is set to establish India's first silicon carbide (SiC) semiconductor plant in Odisha with an investment of ₹618.60 crore, following a 50% subsidy approval from the state government. This facility, focusing on SiC-based devices vital for electric vehicles, renewable energy, and defense, will enhance local manufacturing capabilities and promote skill development. The initiative underscores Odisha's strategic role in India's semiconductor ecosystem, reflecting the country's commitment to boosting domestic production and reducing reliance on imports, particularly in critical sectors like defense. Overall, this project is a significant step towards strengthening India's technological and industrial foundation.

## LinkedIn lawsuit over AI data use dismissed, reaffirming user trust.



01-Feb-25

A proposed class action lawsuit against LinkedIn for allegedly violating customer privacy by disclosing private messages to train AI models was dismissed. The plaintiff, Alessandro De La Torre, withdrew the lawsuit shortly after filing, following LinkedIn's assertion that the claims lacked merit. LinkedIn emphasized that it never shared users' private messages for AI training, which was confirmed by company representatives. This case highlights ongoing concerns about data privacy in the AI sector, yet LinkedIn's proactive communication and transparency regarding their data handling practices demonstrate a commitment to user trust and compliance with privacy standards.

## Three Indian Nationals Go Missing in Iran During Business Trip



01-Feb-25

Three Indian nationals have gone missing in Iran after traveling there for business, prompting the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to take action with Tehran. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal confirmed that contact was lost shortly after their arrival. The

Indian government is in constant communication with the families of the missing individuals and has raised the issue with both the Iranian Embassy in Delhi and the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The MEA expressed hope for cooperation from Iranian authorities to locate the missing nationals and ensure their safety, highlighting India's proactive diplomatic engagement in safeguarding its citizens abroad.

## PM Modi Lauds ICG as Key Guardian of India's Maritime Security



01-Feb-25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) on its Raising Day, emphasizing its role as a formidable guardian of India's maritime security, disaster response, and environmental protection. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also commended the ICG for its courage and dedication in defending the nation's maritime boundaries. Established in 1977 with just seven ships, the ICG has evolved into a robust force with 151 ships and 76 aircraft, maintaining constant vigilance over India's extensive maritime domain. The ICG's motto, "Vayam Rakshamah" (We Protect), underscores its commitment to safeguarding the nation's interests at sea, crucial for India's security and economic stability.

## Indian Navy to Launch First Half Marathon in New Delhi



01-Feb-25

The Indian Navy is set to host the inaugural Indian Navy Half Marathon (INHM) on February 2, 2025, in New Delhi, expecting over ten thousand participants across three race categories: 21.1 km, 10 km, and 5 km. The event, organized in partnership with IDFC FIRST Bank, aims to promote fitness, discipline, and national pride, featuring a scenic route covering India Gate and Kartavya Path. Dignitaries, including the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, will grace the event, while the Indian Navy Slam will honor dedicated runners completing all four races in different cities. This initiative underscores the Navy's commitment to health and camaraderie, enhancing community engagement and motivation among citizens.

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