



# Defence Professionals News & Analysis

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## Defense Business and Industry

### Safran Strengthens Commitment to India with New Delhi Office

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01-Mar-25

French defense major Safran has inaugurated its second office in New Delhi, enhancing its commitment to India's Make in India initiative and Aatmanirbhar Bharat vision. This new facility will bolster Safran's civil aviation and military support services while fostering collaboration with Indian industry. Safran's long-standing presence in India, spanning nearly seven decades, showcases its dedication to technology transfer and local industrial capabilities, which are crucial for India's self-reliance in aerospace and defense. The office reflects modern, inclusive design principles and underscores the strategic partnership between France and India, aimed at strengthening aerospace industrial cooperation and skill development in the region.

### MDL's Submarine Success Highlights Effective Tech Transfer

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01-Mar-25

The French Naval Group highlighted the successful transfer of technology in India's defense sector, particularly through the construction of four Scorpene-class submarines by Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) without foreign oversight. This achievement reflects the effective integration of indigenous technologies, including torpedoes developed by the DRDO. The company expressed confidence in its collaboration with India, emphasizing the importance of strategic partnerships for enhancing industrial resilience and supporting operational autonomy. Furthermore, the Naval Group's commitment to responsible technology transfer underscores the strengthening of international defense ties, reiterating its stance on long-term sovereignty solutions for allied nations.

### DRDO Launches Pinaka III MBRL: 120km Range Enhances Artillery

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01-Mar-25

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has unveiled the Pinaka III Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL), featuring a 120 km range and a larger 300mm caliber, significantly enhancing India's artillery capabilities to match regional threats. This upgrade is crucial, considering China's deployment of advanced artillery systems near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Pakistan's use of similar technology. Additionally, DRDO is exploring air-launch capabilities for the Pinaka, potentially revolutionizing the Indian Air Force's combat operations by providing long-range strike options against various targets and offering a cost-effective alternative to imported systems. The developments reflect India's commitment to bolster its defense posture through indigenous innovation, ensuring operational flexibility and increased range for both the army and air force.

### Philippines Considers India's Akash Air Defence After BrahMos Success

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01-Mar-25

The Philippines is looking to enhance its defense capabilities through the acquisition of India's Akash Air Defence System, following the successful induction of the BrahMos missile in 2022. This potential deal, valued at over \$200 million, underscores India's growing role as a global arms supplier, particularly in countering China's assertiveness in the South China Sea. Simultaneously, India's next-generation Akash-NG missile is set for high-altitude trials, which will test its performance in challenging terrains along the northern borders, enhancing its lethality against advanced aerial threats. With a range of 70-80 kilometers and the ability to engage multiple targets, the Akash-NG positions India favorably in regional defense dynamics against adversaries such as China and Pakistan. These developments highlight India's commitment to bolstering both its defense capabilities and

international partnerships in the face of escalating geopolitical tensions.

## Air Chief: India needs 40 jets yearly; private sector to boost production.



01-Mar-25

India's Air Chief Marshal AP Singh emphasized the urgent need for about 40 fighter jets annually to address the current deficit in the Indian Air Force (IAF). He highlighted that domestic production must ramp up, with Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) aiming to produce 24 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) yearly and potentially involving private players to augment production by an additional 12 to 18 aircraft annually. The air chief pointed to successful models like the C-295 partnership between Airbus and Tata Group as a template for future projects, including the fifth-generation Advanced Multirole Combat Aircraft and the Medium Role Fighter Aircraft program, which seeks to manufacture 114 jets in India.

## MDL to Build Six U-214NG and Three Scorpene Submarines for Navy



01-Mar-25

Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) is set to construct six advanced German U-214NG submarines and three enhanced Scorpene-class submarines for the Indian Navy, following approval from the Ministry of Defence. This simultaneous construction is anticipated to begin in 2025, enhancing India's naval capabilities, particularly through the integration of Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) systems in the Scorpene submarines. The project bolsters India-Germany defense ties and promotes local sourcing of components, benefiting the Indian defense industry. MDL aims to solidify its reputation as a global shipbuilder while positioning itself for future naval initiatives, showcasing its strong infrastructure and skilled workforce.

## Second Archer-NG UAV Prototype Ready for Testing After Engine Trials



01-Mar-25

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully completed engine trials for two prototypes of the Archer-NG armed UAV, marking a significant advancement in India's indigenous UAV program. Scheduled for its first flight in early April 2025, the Archer-NG enhances India's aerial capabilities with improved stealth, endurance over 24 hours, and a ceiling of 30,000 feet. This Medium Altitude Long Endurance platform is designed for surveillance and

combat, featuring advanced payload integration options. As India aims to reduce reliance on foreign UAVs, the Archer-NG represents a cost-effective, domestically produced alternative aligned with its specific security needs, reinforcing India's commitment to self-reliance in defense technology.

## DEBEL Seeks Proposals for Innovative Wearable Flight Control System



01-Mar-25

The Defence Bio-Engineering & Electromedical Laboratory (DEBEL) under DRDO has issued an Expression of Interest for developing an Advanced Wearable Body-Controlled Flight System aimed at revolutionizing military aerospace technology. This innovative project seeks to integrate human biomechanics with avionics, enabling pilots to control aircraft through body movements rather than traditional cockpit instruments. Designed to enhance pilot efficiency and adaptability in high-stakes scenarios, the system will leverage advanced sensors and real-time data processing. DEBEL's existing expertise in wearable bio-signaling systems positions this initiative as a natural evolution in military flight technology, aligning with the demands of modern warfare and enhancing operational capabilities for Indian armed forces.

## Bharat Forge Launches 30mm Turret for FICV with Successful Trials



01-Mar-25

Bharat Forge, through its defense arm Kalyani Strategic Systems Ltd., has introduced a modular 30mm turret for the Indian Army's Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicle (FICV) program, showcasing promising trial results. This turret, made from welded ballistic aluminum, provides scalable protection and features a 30mm cannon capable of engaging various threats with different ammunition types. Its design ensures lightweight durability and adaptability, meeting the Army's needs for both mobility and protection. The turret's successful trials indicate that Bharat Forge is well-positioned to enhance India's self-reliance in defense technology, aligning with the nation's strategic goals for modernizing its military capabilities.

## Solar Industries India Wins ₹2,150 Crore in Defense Exports



01-Mar-25

Solar Industries India Limited has secured export orders worth ₹2,150 crore for defense products, marking a significant milestone in India's defense export ambitions. The Nagpur-based company, along

with its subsidiary Economic Explosives Limited, will leverage their advanced manufacturing capabilities to cater to international markets, despite specific recipient details remaining undisclosed. This deal underscores Solar Industries' growing competitiveness against established Western and Russian suppliers and builds on previous successes, including a ₹455 crore order for artillery rockets. The export portfolio, featuring high-energy explosives and precision munitions, is expected to enhance India's strategic position in the global defense industry.

## DRDO Showcases Project Dhvani Hypersonic Glide Vehicle Model in Hyderabad



01-Mar-25

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) recently unveiled a full-scale model of the Hypersonic Glide Vehicle (HGV) under Project Dhvani at the Vigyan Vaibhav defence exhibition in Hyderabad. This advancement signifies India's leadership in hypersonic technology, capable of speeds exceeding Mach 5 and designed to evade modern air defence systems. The innovative wave-rider design enhances performance by utilizing shockwaves for improved lift and reduced drag, allowing for extended range and payload capacity. With multiple configurations under development, Project Dhvani represents a strategic enhancement of India's military capabilities, reinforcing national security through advanced defense technologies.

## Defense Policy and Budgeting

### IAF Aims for Aerospace Dominance by 2047: Air Chief Marshal



01-Mar-25

Indian Air Force Chief Marshal AP Singh has articulated an ambitious vision for the IAF to evolve into a major aerospace power by 2047, underscoring the importance of indigenous manufacturing and technology. He emphasized the goal of producing 35-40 military aircraft annually, even prioritizing homegrown systems potentially offering slightly lesser performance over foreign alternatives. The IAF is actively involved in projects like Gaganyaan and aims to enhance interoperability with ground and maritime forces, focusing on automation and AI integration for improved decision-making. Additionally, ongoing projects include the TEJAS Light Combat Aircraft and advanced missile systems, all aiming for a fully indigenous inventory by

2047, reflecting India's commitment to self-reliance and robust air power capabilities amidst evolving global challenges. This strategic shift not only aims to enhance India's defense posture but also strengthens its defense manufacturing ecosystem.

## U.S. Advisor Questions Philippines' BrahMos Missile Effectiveness



01-Mar-25

Former U.S. advisor Ashley Tellis has expressed skepticism regarding the operational effectiveness of the Philippines' recent acquisition of BrahMos missiles, citing a lack of necessary Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) capabilities to effectively utilize the system. While acknowledging that the \$375 million deal enhances Philippine-India defense relations and serves as a strategic deterrent against Chinese threats, he argues that without robust infrastructure, the missiles may become more symbolic than operationally effective. In contrast, Indian sources defend the BrahMos' proven capabilities, suggesting that the Philippines could benefit from India's experience in developing the requisite systems for successful missile deployment.

## Geopolitics and Security Alliances

### US Military Aid to Ukraine Nears Halt Amid Policy Shift



01-Mar-25

Currently, the flow of U.S. military support to Ukraine has significantly diminished, with indications that it could cease entirely. Following a meeting between President Zelenskyy and President Trump, discussions on continued aid stalled, marking a potential shift in U.S. foreign policy towards Ukraine. The Pentagon confirmed that the final shipments of arms from the previous administration were on the horizon, raising concerns about Ukraine's ability to sustain its defense against ongoing Russian attacks. As European nations step up their contributions, the future of Ukraine's military assistance hinges on the effectiveness of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, which remains committed to supporting Ukraine amidst changing U.S. dynamics.

## PKK Calls Ceasefire with Turkey After 40 Years of Conflict



01-Mar-25

The PKK, designated a terrorist organization by Turkey and other nations, has declared a ceasefire with Turkey after over 40 years of armed conflict, responding to a significant appeal from its imprisoned leader, Abdullah Ocalan, to disband. This marks a critical moment in the long-standing Kurdish insurgency aimed at achieving autonomy within Turkey. Despite previous failed peace negotiations, this ceasefire reflects a potential shift towards reconciliation, though challenges remain as the Turkish government increases pressure on opposition figures. The situation underscores the complex dynamics of regional politics and the ongoing struggle for Kurdish rights, which will require careful management to ensure lasting peace.

## Taiwan Reports Surge in Chinese Military Activities Near Its Borders



01-Mar-25

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence reported increased Chinese military activity, with 17 PLA aircraft and 8 naval vessels detected near its territory, including 15 sorties crossing the Taiwan Strait's median line. This escalation comes amid Taiwan's ongoing efforts to bolster its defenses against perceived threats from China, highlighted by Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim's remarks at the Halifax International Security Forum. Hsiao emphasized the urgency of strengthening Taiwan's defense capabilities and fostering international partnerships to counter totalitarianism. As China continues to assert claims over Taiwan, this situation raises significant concerns about regional stability and the need for strategic vigilance by Taiwanese forces.

## EU's Ursula von der Leyen: India's Strategic Opportunity Amid Global Turmoil



01-Mar-25

EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen emphasized the need for closer security and defense cooperation between the EU and India amidst global instability, notably due to the Ukraine conflict. She proposed a potential partnership targeting cross-border terrorism, maritime security, and cyber threats, aligning with India's military diversification efforts. Additionally, the two parties aim to finalize a free trade agreement, which could become the world's largest, while also highlighting the transformative India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor for global trade. This

evolving relationship is poised to be a cornerstone of future geopolitical strategies, benefiting both regions economically and enhancing mutual security.

## India Strengthens Ties with Seychelles by Gift of Interceptor Boat



01-Mar-25

India has strengthened its maritime ties with Seychelles by gifting the Interceptor Boat PB Boudeuse, marking the fifth such contribution under its SAGAR vision aimed at enhancing maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region. This advanced patrol vessel will bolster Seychelles' capabilities to tackle threats like piracy and illegal fishing, showcasing India's commitment as a net security provider. The handover ceremony, attended by Seychelles President Wavel Ramkalawan, underscores the strategic significance of the partnership, especially amid growing external influences in the region. With over 50% of Seychelles' maritime assets now sourced from India, this collaboration illustrates India's robust defense manufacturing capabilities and dedication to regional stability.

### Military Operations

## IDF Takes Down Hezbollah Smuggler Threatening Regional Security



01-Mar-25

The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) recently reported the elimination of Muhammad Mahdi Ali Shahin, a Hezbollah operative involved in arms smuggling between Syria and Lebanon. Shahin was responsible for coordinating weapon purchases and shipments for Hezbollah, which poses a significant threat to Israel and undermines ceasefire agreements with Lebanon. The IDF emphasized that his activities were crucial for Hezbollah's efforts to rebuild its military capabilities, severely impacted by previous Israeli operations. This action illustrates Israel's commitment to countering threats from Hezbollah, highlighting the ongoing regional tensions and the complexities of maintaining security amidst persistent violations of agreements.

## Manipur Governor extends arms surrender deadline to March 6 for peace.



01-Mar-25

Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla has extended the deadline for the surrender of looted and illegal arms to March 6, in response to requests from both hill and valley communities. This decision follows a seven-day



period during which over 300 weapons were surrendered, indicating a community willingness to restore peace amidst ongoing ethnic violence that has claimed more than 250 lives since May 2023. The Governor emphasized that this extension is a final opportunity for individuals to contribute to societal security without facing punitive actions, highlighting a proactive approach to fostering communal harmony and stability in the region.

### **Amit Shah reviews Manipur's security, prioritizing illegal arms surrender.**



01-Mar-25

Union Home Minister Amit Shah reviewed the security situation in Manipur amid ongoing ethnic violence, following President's rule imposed on February 13, 2023. The focus was on restoring normalcy and facilitating the surrender of illegal arms, with over 300 weapons surrendered in a recent initiative. Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla, appointed by Shah, is actively engaging with local communities to address concerns and establish peace, following violent protests against Meitei demands for Scheduled Tribe status. Despite efforts, achieving lasting peace remains challenging, highlighting the complexities of ethnic relations in the region and the central government's commitment to restoring order.

### **Indian Armed Forces Conduct Tri-Service Exercise Desert Hunt 2025**



01-Mar-25

Exercise Desert Hunt 2025, an integrated Tri-Service Special Forces drill, was conducted by the Indian Air Force at Air Force Station Jodhpur from February 24 to 28, 2025. This high-intensity exercise involved elite forces from the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force, focusing on enhancing interoperability and coordination through activities such as airborne insertion, precision strikes, and counter-terrorism operations. Senior military officials supervised the exercise to validate joint doctrines, demonstrating the Indian Armed Forces' commitment to strengthening national security and ensuring effective responses to emerging security challenges through seamless inter-service cooperation. Such initiatives underscore India's proactive approach to defense readiness in a complex geopolitical landscape.

## **Terrorism and Counterterrorism**

### **Two Maoists Killed in Chhattisgarh; 83 Eliminated This Year**



01-Mar-25

In Chhattisgarh's Sukma district, two Maoists were killed during an encounter with security forces, part of an ongoing anti-Maoist operation led by personnel from the District Reserve Guard and the elite CoBRA unit of the CRPF. This incident marks a significant part of the broader effort against Maoist insurgency, with 83 Maoists eliminated in the state this year alone, 67 of whom were in the Bastar division. The operation demonstrates the Indian security forces' commitment and effectiveness in combating insurgency and restoring peace, emphasizing the importance of vigilance and strategic operations in ensuring national security.

## **Mil Personnel & Veterans**

### **Dr. Mayank Sharma appointed new Controller General of Defence Accounts**



01-Mar-25

Dr. Mayank Sharma has taken charge as the new Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) as of March 1, 2025. A distinguished officer from the 1989 batch of the Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS), he brings over three decades of experience in various governmental roles, including the Defence Accounts Department and key positions within the Cabinet Secretariat. His representation of India at significant international platforms, such as the United Nations and the International Anti-Corruption Academy, highlights his diplomatic acumen and commitment to enhancing India's defense financial management. Dr. Sharma's leadership is expected to strengthen the integrity and efficiency of defense accounting in India, crucial for the strategic advancement of the Indian Armed Forces.

## Miscellaneous

### BSF Responds to Smugglers, One Bangladeshi Killed in Tripura SHARE

01-Mar-25

A recent incident along the Indo-Bangladesh border in Tripura's Sepahijala district involved a group of 20-25 Bangladeshi smugglers who intruded into Indian territory near the BOP Putia area. The Border Security Force (BSF) personnel confronted the intruders, resulting in an attack on the guards, injuring one BSF jawan. In self-defense, a BSF jawan fired a round from a Pump Action Gun, leading to the death of one Bangladeshi smuggler later in the hospital. The situation highlights ongoing security challenges along the border, exacerbated by cross-border smuggling activities, and underscores the BSF's commitment to protecting national sovereignty while maintaining law and order. Additionally, Mumbai Police apprehended 16 Bangladeshi intruders, reflecting a broader crackdown on illegal activities linked to cross-border elements. This coordinated response by Indian forces demonstrates a proactive approach to border security and law enforcement.

### Zelensky Stands Firm Amid Trump's Criticism Over Ukraine's Defense SHARE

01-Mar-25

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky faced a tense confrontation with former U.S. President Donald Trump, who accused him of ingratitude and urged him to accept a truce with Russia. Despite the heated exchange, Zelensky asserted that he did not feel the need to apologize and emphasized the importance of U.S. support in Ukraine's defense against Russian aggression. European leaders quickly rallied behind Zelensky, expressing unwavering support for Ukraine, while Trump's remarks have raised concerns that he may favor a deal that compromises Ukraine's territorial integrity. This situation underscores the precarious nature of U.S.-Ukrainian relations amid ongoing military challenges.

### Manipur Police Urged to Resist Extortion Amid Armed Threats SHARE

01-Mar-25

In Manipur's Kangpokpi district, police personnel have been instructed to resist extortion demands from illegal organizations, following reports of armed groups collecting unlawful taxes amid ongoing conflict. The

district's Superintendent of Police, Manoj Prabhakar, emphasized the importance of not yielding to these pressures, urging personnel to report any threats. This directive aligns with the establishment of an anti-extortion cell, comprising state police and central armed forces, aimed at addressing escalating extortion activities, with over 50 militants arrested recently. This proactive stance reflects the government's commitment to maintaining public safety and countering organized crime effectively in the region.

### Supreme Court: Rohingya Kids Can Challenge School Denials SHARE

01-Mar-25

The Supreme Court of India has ruled that Rohingya children with UNHCR cards can seek admission to public schools, and if denied, they may approach the high court. The court emphasized that children should first apply to schools before taking legal action. The plea highlighted discrimination faced by Rohingya refugees in accessing education and health services due to the absence of Aadhaar cards. Advocates argue that these refugees deserve equal access to public resources. This ruling underscores India's commitment to non-discrimination in education, reflecting a nuanced approach to refugee rights within its legal framework.

### China to Train Pakistan's Astronaut for First Foreign Mission to Tiangong SHARE

01-Mar-25

China and Pakistan have signed a cooperation agreement for training Pakistani astronauts for future missions to China's Tiangong space station, marking a significant step in international collaboration in space. This initiative allows developing nations like Pakistan to participate in manned space programs, showcasing China's commitment to sharing its space technology and resources. Experts suggest this initiative enhances China's status as a major spacefaring nation and reflects its intention to lower barriers for other developing countries in space exploration. This strategic partnership not only strengthens ties between China and Pakistan but also positions China as a leader in promoting global space endeavors, potentially reshaping geopolitical dynamics in the space sector.

### Aditya-L1 Captures Key Solar Flare, Advancing Solar Research SHARE

01-Mar-25

India's Aditya-L1 mission has achieved a significant milestone by capturing an unprecedented view of a

powerful X6.3-class solar flare kernel, enhancing our understanding of the Sun's explosive activity. The Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT) onboard Aditya-L1 observed brightening in the near-ultraviolet range, revealing crucial links between flare energy and plasma heating in the solar corona. This groundbreaking research, conducted by a team from the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, positions India as a leader in solar physics. These findings not only fill existing knowledge gaps but also pave the way for future discoveries, showcasing India's advanced capabilities in space science and its commitment to global scientific collaboration.

## Delhi HC to decide on Christian Michel's bail in AgustaWestland case

🕒 SHARE

01-Mar-25

The Delhi High Court has reserved its verdict on Christian Michel's bail plea in the AgustaWestland money laundering case, involving a Rs 3,600-crore scandal linked to the purchase of VVIP helicopters. The Enforcement Directorate opposes the bail, citing Michel as a flight risk, while his counsel argues for release due to time already served. Michel, extradited from Dubai in 2018 and facing allegations of receiving €30 million, underscores the significant financial losses to the exchequer from the deal. This case highlights ongoing vigilance by Indian authorities against corruption in defense procurement, reflecting a commitment to integrity in military spending.

## ISRO to Restart SpaDeX Mission Experiments on March 15

🕒 SHARE

01-Mar-25

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is set to resume experiments on the SpaDeX mission from March 15, focusing on satellite separation and re-docking techniques. Initially launched on December 30, the mission successfully docked its two satellites, SDX01 and SDX02, on January 16. ISRO Chairman V Narayanan highlighted the importance of this mission for mastering future technological projects, including

plans for electrical power transfer between the satellites. The ability to conduct experiments in a 10-15 day window every two months underscores ISRO's commitment to advancing space capabilities, enhancing India's position in the global space arena.

## ISRO Launches Groundbreaking Nuclear Thermal Rocket for Deep Space

🕒 SHARE

01-Mar-25

ISRO has launched an innovative nuclear thermal rocket propulsion system featuring a 10 kW RF-powered plasma engine, marking a significant advancement in space technology for India. This engine boasts a specific impulse of 4,000 to 10,000 seconds, surpassing traditional chemical rockets, and offers benefits like variable thrust, fuel agnosticism, and reduced erosion. Collaborating with BARC, ISRO aims to integrate this with nuclear power sources, enhancing deep-space mission capabilities. While promising, the project will require overcoming challenges in scaling and safety, particularly given the complexities of nuclear propulsion, with testing expected to occur between 2026 and 2028.

## IAF Enhances Regional Connectivity and Civil-Military Ties with Project UDAN

🕒 SHARE

01-Mar-25

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has launched a Boeing-737 flight from Kolkata to Hindon and Goa as part of Project UDAN, enhancing regional air connectivity. Inaugurated by Civil Aviation Minister Mr. Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, this initiative highlights exemplary civilian-military cooperation and emphasizes Hindon airport's strategic significance for military and civilian operations. The introduction of these flights will alleviate air traffic congestion in the National Capital Region (NCR) and demonstrates the IAF's commitment to nation-building beyond its primary defense role. This move not only strengthens logistical capabilities but also fosters greater accessibility across India, supporting regional development.

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