



# Defence Professionals News & Analysis

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## Defense Business and Industry

### Will U.S. F-35 Sale Affect India's AMCA Program Progress?



15-Feb-25

Recent discussions about the U.S. proposal to sell F-35 stealth jets to India reflect a significant shift in defense relations, potentially enhancing India's military capabilities amidst regional threats from China and Pakistan. While the Indian Air Force (IAF) may be eager to acquire F-35s, concerns arise about their impact on the indigenous Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) program, which is still a decade away from operational readiness. Experts argue that while U.S. jets could augment India's air power, they may lead to greater dependency on foreign technology, complicating India's strategic autonomy. Additionally, the integration of F-35s poses challenges due to existing commitments like the Russian S-400 air defense system. Overall, India must carefully navigate this proposal, balancing immediate defense needs with long-term self-sufficiency in military production.

### Godrej Partners with ADA to Develop Actuators for AMCA



15-Feb-25

The Godrej Enterprises Group has signed a significant MoU with the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) to develop flight control actuators for India's Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), marking a pivotal step towards indigenous aerospace manufacturing. This collaboration enhances India's self-reliance in critical technologies, transitioning from Built to Print to Built to Spec capabilities, and embracing innovations like 3D printing. Notably, Godrej's advanced manufacturing capabilities were showcased at Aero India 2025, emphasizing its commitment to Atmanirbhar Bharat and strengthening India's position in the global aerospace market through precision engineering and robust partnerships with leading defense entities.

### IAF Invites Global Bids for 114 Multi-Role Fighters to Enhance Air Power



15-Feb-25

India is set to invite global bids for 114 multi-role fighters, a crucial move for the Indian Air Force (IAF) as it seeks to replace aging aircraft and counter regional threats, particularly from China and Pakistan. Potential competitors include U.S. firms like Lockheed Martin and Boeing, France's Dassault Aviation, Russia's UAC, and Sweden's Saab, all preparing local partnerships and supply chains. Despite traditional reliance on Russian military hardware, India's diversification efforts are evident, especially post-Ukraine war. The project represents a continuation of an earlier acquisition plan and reflects India's strategic emphasis on enhancing its air power amid evolving geopolitical challenges.

### Boeing and HPCL Join Forces for Sustainable Aviation Fuel in India



15-Feb-25

Boeing has partnered with HPCL to develop a sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) ecosystem in India, aiming to scale production and support certification of domestically produced SAF. This collaboration aligns with India's potential to be a key SAF producer due to its ethanol supplies and lipid feedstocks. Both companies emphasize reducing carbon emissions in aviation, with HPCL's R&D Centre focusing on innovative SAF technologies. As the global aviation sector seeks decarbonization, this partnership highlights Boeing's commitment to sustainable solutions, fostering advancements in India's aerospace ecosystem and contributing to long-term sustainability goals.

### Rafael and L&T Collaborate to Enhance Indian Defense with TROPHY APS



15-Feb-25

Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Larsen & Toubro (L&T) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to offer the TROPHY Active Protection System (APS) indigenously in India. This collaboration aligns with the Indian government's

initiatives like Aatmanirbhar Bharat and aims to enhance the operational capabilities and survivability of Indian Armed Forces' combat platforms. The partnership emphasizes the integration of advanced technologies into India's defense ecosystem while fostering local manufacturing. By customizing the TROPHY APS for Indian platforms, both companies demonstrate a commitment to strengthening India's defense capabilities and operational readiness, showcasing a significant step towards self-reliance in defense technologies.

## Trump's F-35 Offer to India: A \$2 Trillion Risk?



15-Feb-25

The F-35 fighter jet faces scrutiny over rising costs and performance issues, with a GAO report indicating that none of its variants meet availability targets and projected lifetime costs have surged to \$1.58 trillion. Safety concerns have emerged from several recent crashes, prompting skepticism from political figures like Donald Trump and Elon Musk, who question its design and relevance. As India seeks to bolster its defense capabilities, it must weigh the F-35's advanced features against these operational challenges and high maintenance demands. Ultimately, while the F-35 remains a cutting-edge aircraft, its sustainability and affordability raise significant concerns for potential buyers like India.

## Samtel Avionics to Supply MFDs for HAL's Light Combat Helicopter



15-Feb-25

Samtel Avionics is set to produce multifunction displays (MFDs) for HAL's Light Combat Helicopter (LCH), enhancing its advanced avionics suite and operational capabilities in combat scenarios. This collaboration, following their successful delivery of over 1,000 MFDs for the Sukhoi Su-30MKI, aims to strengthen India's indigenous defense manufacturing under the "Make in India" initiative. The MFDs are designed to improve pilot situational awareness and efficiency, particularly in challenging environments. This partnership signifies a pivotal step towards achieving a self-sufficient defense ecosystem in India, showcasing the effective synergy between public and private sectors in the aerospace and defense industries.

## Adani Group Emerges as a Strong Contender for SSLV Contract



15-Feb-25

The Adani Group is emerging as a strong contender for the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) contract, competing against Bharat Dynamics Limited and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. This initiative aligns with the Indian government's goal to bolster the private sector's role in the satellite launch market, projected to grow from \$5.6 billion in 2025 to \$113 billion by 2030. Adani's financial strength, strategic partnerships, and commitment to indigenization position it favorably. With limited launch slots available from established players like SpaceX, Adani could capitalize on the demand for reliable launch services in South Asia, thereby enhancing India's presence in this lucrative sector and promoting self-reliance in defense manufacturing.

## Swan Defence Completes ICGS SAJAG Refit Ahead of Schedule



15-Feb-25

Swan Defence And Heavy Industries (SDHI) has successfully completed the refit of Offshore Patrol Vessel ICGS SAJAG ahead of schedule, transitioning from the planned November 2024 to March 2025 timeline. This early delivery, following the refit of fast patrol vessel Raj Ratan, highlights SDHI's operational efficiency and expertise in maritime repair and modernization. The project was executed in collaboration with Krasny Defence Technologies Ltd., reinforcing SDHI's role in enhancing India's maritime defense capabilities amidst increasing government investments in defense infrastructure. Director Vivek Merchant emphasized the company's commitment to self-reliance in shipbuilding, positioning SDHI as a key player in India's evolving maritime sector.

## L&T and WB Group Partner to Enhance Drone Tech for India's Defense



15-Feb-25

WB Group and L&T have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Aero India 2025 to enhance autonomous drone technology for India's military, focusing on decentralized collaborative autonomy. This partnership aligns with the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, emphasizing the development of indigenous defense solutions to meet the rising demand for unmanned aerial systems in reconnaissance and surveillance. The collaboration aims to bolster the capabilities of the Indian Armed Forces, reflecting WB Group's commitment to India's defense sector. Additionally, other companies, including TATA Elxsi and

Garuda Aerospace, are also advancing drone technologies for diverse applications, contributing to India's defense self-reliance strategy.

## Embraer to Establish India Subsidiary for Defense and Aviation by 2025 SHARE

15-Feb-25

Embraer plans to establish a subsidiary in India by Q2 2025, focusing on commercial and executive aircraft, defense, and engineering operations. This move follows an MoU with Mahindra Defence Systems to propose the C-390 Millennium as a Multi-Role Transport Aircraft (MTA) to replace the IAF's aging fleet. The MTA requirement includes 40-80 aircraft with specific cargo capacities, competing against the Airbus A400M and Lockheed Martin C-130J. Embraer aims to enhance India's self-reliance in defense through technology transfer and local supply chains, positioning India as a regional hub for tactical transport aircraft while addressing the IAF's operational needs effectively.

## DRDO Advances Compact Electromagnetic Railgun for Naval Warfare SHARE

15-Feb-25

The DRDO is advancing the development of a new compact Electromagnetic Railgun (EMRG), featuring modular components designed for rapid deployment and enhanced performance, capable of firing projectiles exceeding 2,000 m/s. This system includes a portable diesel generator for quick recharging and boasts improved rail longevity, sustaining over 50 shots. The EMRG signifies a pivotal shift in modern warfare, leveraging electromagnetic energy for superior range and precision, thereby bolstering India's naval strike capabilities and defense posture against emerging threats. This innovation underscores India's commitment to enhancing its defense technology and addressing contemporary security challenges effectively.

## US to Boost Defense Ties with India: F-35 Sale on the Horizon SHARE

15-Feb-25

The U.S. is poised to enhance its defense partnership with India by proposing the sale of advanced F-35 stealth fighters, a significant shift in military cooperation post the Modi-Trump summit. This initiative aligns with India's modernization efforts, projected to exceed \$200 billion over the next decade, and aims to counter regional security challenges, particularly from China. Additional defense collaborations include procuring Javelin anti-tank

missiles and Stryker vehicles, alongside the establishment of the Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance. While experts advise caution regarding over-reliance on U.S. technology, these developments reflect a strategic commitment from both nations to bolster military capabilities and regional stability.

## HAL to Unveil 4 Tejas Mk2 Prototypes for Testing by 2025 SHARE

15-Feb-25

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) plans to roll out four Tejas Mk2 pre-production prototypes over the next three years, with the first expected by late 2025 and extensive testing culminating in over 1,000 sorties before production clearance by 2029. This aircraft, an advanced version of the indigenous Tejas Light Combat Aircraft, will undergo rigorous weapons trials starting in 2026, enhancing its combat capabilities. The proactive procurement of six F-414 engines illustrates a commitment to a seamless development process. The Tejas Mk2's advancements in payload capacity, range, and engine power are pivotal for India's self-reliance in defense aviation, significantly boosting the Indian Air Force's operational readiness.

## BDL and DRDO Forge Pact for Advanced Anti-Submarine Rocket SHARE

15-Feb-25

Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) has signed a License Agreement for Transfer of Technology (LAToT) with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the production of the Extended Range Anti-Submarine Rocket (ERASR) at Aero India 2025. This collaboration enhances India's naval defense capabilities by allowing BDL to manufacture advanced rockets compatible with the RBU 6000/IRL Launcher, significantly improving anti-submarine warfare efficiency. The agreement reflects India's commitment to self-reliance in defense technology, ensuring that the ERASR meets stringent naval requirements through technology transfer in propulsion, guidance, and warhead design. This initiative is pivotal for bolstering the Indian Navy's operational readiness against submarine threats.

## CSIR-CSIO, HAL, and BEL Unite for Indigenous Hawk HUD Development SHARE

15-Feb-25

In a significant advancement towards self-reliance in defense technology, the Central Scientific Instruments Organisation (CSIR-CSIO), Hindustan Aeronautics

Limited (HAL), and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) have signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Aero India 2025 to develop an indigenous Head-Up Display (HUD) for the Hawk 132 Advanced Jet Trainers (AJTs) used by the Indian Air Force (IAF). This initiative aims to enhance pilot training through advanced avionics, improving safety and combat effectiveness. The incorporation of a state-of-the-art HUD into the Hawk aircraft not only upgrades existing training systems but also sets a robust foundation for future indigenous avionics projects, reinforcing India's commitment to defense self-reliance.

## Indian Army Boosts Air Defense with TASL's Rajak Weapon Sights

15-Feb-25

The Indian Army is enhancing its air defense capabilities by procuring advanced Rajak Thermal Weapon Sights from Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL), as showcased at Aero India 2025. TASL has already delivered 28 units to the Northern Command and received a repeat order for 14 more, with plans to supply additional systems across various commands, including 29 to the Eastern Command and 72 to the Southern Command. The Rajak TWC systems will integrate with the Iglu MANPADS, significantly improving detection capabilities against aerial threats, including UAVs, at substantial ranges. This development underscores India's commitment to modernizing its defense technology and maintaining operational readiness against evolving threats.

## Astra Microwave to Produce 130 Uttam AESA Radars for Tejas

15-Feb-25

Astra Microwave Products Ltd is set to manufacture 130 Uttam AESA radars for the Tejas Mk1A and MkII fighter jet programs in collaboration with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). The first Uttam AESA radar is expected to be delivered soon for the Tejas MkII prototype. Initially, the Tejas Mk1A will feature Israel's ELM-2052 radar, but HAL plans to integrate the Uttam AESA radar starting from the 41st aircraft of the 83-aircraft order for the IAF. This indigenous radar, developed by India's LRDE, marks a significant advancement in India's defense capabilities, enhancing the effectiveness of its fighter jets with superior tracking and electronic warfare functions.

## HAL Assembles First F404-IN20 Engine for Tejas Mk1A Delivery

15-Feb-25

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has announced the successful assembly of the first F404-IN20 engine for the Tejas Mk1A, which is set to enhance India's aerial capabilities. This engine will be delivered by March, with the aircraft expected for IAF delivery by April. HAL has also confirmed an additional order for 120 engines, addressing previous supply chain disruptions caused by the pandemic. GE Aviation has reestablished its supply chain, ensuring a steady supply of components, thus solidifying the momentum of the Tejas program and meeting the operational needs of the Indian Air Force effectively.

## Su-30MKI to Receive Advanced Virupaksha Radar Upgrade

15-Feb-25

The Indian Air Force's Su-30MKI fleet is set to receive a significant upgrade with the introduction of the Virupaksha Radar, a next-generation AESA system featuring 2400 TR modules. This radar will integrate seamlessly into the aircraft's existing infrastructure, maintaining compatibility with current AL-31F engines and the N011M BARS radar systems, thereby streamlining the upgrade process and minimizing costs. The enhanced radar technology will improve detection range, target tracking, and resistance to electronic countermeasures, positioning the Su-30MKI to effectively address modern aerial threats, including stealth aircraft. This development underscores India's commitment to advancing its defense capabilities and ensuring its air superiority.

## Dornier Aircraft Highlights India's Defense Innovation at Aero India 2025

15-Feb-25

At Aero India 2025, the Dornier aircraft demonstrated India's defense innovation, featuring indigenously developed radar, Electronic Support Measures (ESM), and Software Defined Radio (SDR), all created by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in an impressive 24-month timeline. This event, attended by the Director General of Electronics and Communication Systems, showcased live video transmission via the SDR, highlighting the rapid advancements in self-reliance under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The integration of such advanced technologies into the Dornier, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), reinforces India's



commitment to developing indigenous capabilities and enhancing operational effectiveness across its defense forces.

## Chad Delegation Explores Bharat Forge's Artillery Innovations



15-Feb-25

A high-level delegation from Chad, led by General Tahir Brahim Djouma, visited Bharat Forge and its subsidiary Kalyani Strategic Systems Limited to inspect advanced artillery systems, specifically the Mobile Autonomous Gun System (MArG MGS) and Gun Towing Vehicle (GTV). This visit underscores Chad's interest in modernizing its military capabilities through indigenous Indian defense solutions, notably the lightweight and mobile Garuda 105mm Self-Propelled Howitzer designed for various combat scenarios. Bharat Forge's advancements in the defense sector are increasingly attracting foreign interest, highlighting India's growing influence in global defense markets and its capacity to meet the evolving demands of allied nations.

## Adani Defence to Manufacture R-73E 'Raya' Missiles in India



15-Feb-25

Adani Defence and Aerospace has announced plans to locally produce the R-73E air-to-air missile, renamed Raya, in India, significantly enhancing the country's defense manufacturing capabilities. This initiative is part of the government's Make in India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat programs, aiming to reduce foreign reliance and strengthen domestic defense production. The R-73E missile, known for its agility and effectiveness in close-combat scenarios, has been a crucial asset in the Indian Air Force's arsenal, notably showcased during the 2019 Indo-Pakistan conflict. By establishing advanced manufacturing facilities and leveraging technology transfer agreements, Adani Defence is poised to become a key player in India's defense industrial ecosystem, contributing to national security and self-reliance.

## India's MoD Set to Approve Six More P-8I Aircraft for Security



15-Feb-25

The Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD) is reportedly set to approve a long-pending deal for six additional Boeing P-8I maritime patrol aircraft, driven by operational needs and US diplomatic pressures aimed at strengthening defense ties amid China's rising influence in the Indo-Pacific. The Indian Navy, currently operating 12 P-8I aircraft, emphasizes the necessity for 18 units

to effectively monitor the Indian Ocean Region, particularly following the retirement of older Soviet-era aircraft. Although budgetary constraints and escalating costs delayed the deal, the MoD is moving forward, underscoring India's commitment to enhancing maritime security capabilities through strategic acquisitions of US defense equipment.

## CDS Gen Anil Chauhan's Aero India 2025 Visit Enhances Defense Ties



15-Feb-25

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan's visit to Aero India 2025 significantly advanced India's strategic defense partnerships, featuring high-level discussions with military leaders and aerospace executives from various nations and firms. The emphasis was on enhancing military cooperation, indigenous manufacturing, and technology transfer under initiatives like Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat. Notably, the unveiling of a document on Network Centric Multi Domain Operations marks a strategic shift in preparing the armed forces for future warfare. The event highlighted India's growing stature as a defense market and producer, reinforcing its role as a reliable partner for global defense collaborations while pushing for self-reliance in defense manufacturing.

## Geopolitics and Security Alliances

### India Rejects Third-Party Mediation in China Border Dispute



15-Feb-25

India has firmly reaffirmed its long-standing bilateral policy in addressing its border dispute with China, rejecting any third-party mediation proposed by US President Donald Trump. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri emphasized that India will continue to engage directly with China to resolve issues stemming from their strained ties, particularly following the 2020 Galwan Valley clashes. The recent disengagement and revival of dialogue mechanisms signal India's commitment to peace in border areas, underscoring that normalization of ties with China hinges on maintaining stability along their borders. This steadfast approach reflects India's confidence in managing its territorial disputes independently, highlighting its strategic autonomy in international relations.

## Zelensky Demands Security Guarantees Amid U.S.-Russia Talks

 SHARE

15-Feb-25

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky emphasized Ukraine's demand for security guarantees at the Munich Security Conference amid concerns over U.S. negotiations with Russia. He asserted that Ukraine would not accept peace deals made without its involvement, a direct response to potential concessions by the Trump administration to Moscow. Zelensky called for Europe to establish its own armed forces to ensure collective security, highlighting the dangers of a poorly-concluded conflict that could empower Russia. Simultaneously, U.S. officials expressed their commitment to supporting Ukraine, even as mixed messages about NATO membership and territorial integrity surfaced, reflecting the complexities of geopolitical alliances and the imperative for Ukraine to remain integral to any peace discussions.

## India and US Boost Space Collaboration with New Innovation Bridge

 SHARE

15-Feb-25

India and the US have called for enhanced collaboration in space exploration, highlighting 2025 as a landmark year for civil space cooperation, including a NASA-ISRO initiative to send the first Indian astronaut to the ISS. Prime Minister Modi and President Trump launched the INDUS Innovation bridge to foster partnerships in critical technologies like AI, semiconductors, and space sustainability. The TRUST initiative will facilitate government and private sector collaboration on emerging technologies, ensuring sensitive tech protection. This partnership is pivotal for strengthening defense capabilities and technological advancement, reinforcing both nations' leadership in innovation essential for the 21st century.

## Trump Declares Brics "Dead," Threatens Tariffs Over De-Dollarization

 SHARE

15-Feb-25

US President Donald Trump declared that the Brics alliance is "dead," threatening to impose a 100% tariff on member nations if they attempt to replace the US dollar with an alternative currency. He reiterated that the US has significant leverage over Brics countries, insisting they would face dire economic consequences if they pursued de-dollarization. Trump's remarks come in the context of increasing discussions among Brics nations, including calls for enhanced use of local currencies, which he views as a direct challenge to US economic dominance. This situation highlights the

ongoing geopolitical tensions surrounding currency hegemony and the potential ramifications for international trade dynamics.

## ITAR Review Enhances India's Defense Ties with US Allies

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15-Feb-25

The recent ITAR review by the Trump Administration offers an opportunity for India to align more closely with key US allies regarding military trade, potentially enhancing India's status as a Major Defence Partner. The amendment to the US Arms Export Control Act could facilitate easier access to high-end technology for India, overcoming current barriers that hinder defense sales. Additionally, a special ITAR status for India, coupled with a Reciprocal Defence Procurement agreement, would significantly improve interoperability and co-production capabilities between the two nations. This strategic upgrade aims to bridge the existing trust gap and bolster the Indo-US defense partnership amid evolving geopolitical dynamics.

## China Critiques US-India F-35 Deal, Stresses Peace in Asia-Pacific

 SHARE

15-Feb-25

The recent discussions between the US and India have focused on strengthening defense ties, with US President Trump announcing plans to provide India with F-35 stealth fighters, a move criticized by China as destabilizing for the Asia-Pacific region. China's Foreign Ministry emphasized that such military cooperation should not target third parties, while Pakistan expressed concerns about the potential disruption to regional military balance. Nevertheless, India and the US are advancing initiatives like the Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance to enhance defense collaboration across multiple domains, underscoring their commitment to bolstering strategic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific to ensure regional security and stability.

## India-US Forge 10-Year Pact to Strengthen Defense Cooperation

 SHARE

15-Feb-25

A new 10-year agreement between India and the US aims to deepen defense strategic ties, enhancing military readiness and interoperability. Key components include a review of arms transfer regulations and negotiations for a Reciprocal Defence Procurement agreement to align procurement systems. The focus will be on defense technology cooperation in advanced areas such as space and missile systems, and

integration of US-origin equipment into India's military, enhancing capabilities across platforms like C-130J and P-8I. This partnership reflects a growing convergence of strategic interests, potentially reshaping military cooperation and improving regional security dynamics.

## Trump Backs Modi, Urges Non-Interference in Bangladesh Crisis SHARE

15-Feb-25

In a recent discussion, Trump emphasized that the U.S. should refrain from interfering in Bangladesh's internal matters while highlighting PM Modi's concerns over the political instability and anti-government protests in the country. Trump also announced the suspension of U.S. aid to Bangladesh and introduced a trade agreement with India aimed at boosting imports of American oil and gas, indicating a strengthened India-U.S. partnership. This situation underscores India's strategic interest in ensuring stability in Bangladesh, particularly concerning the welfare of its minority communities and maintaining robust bilateral relations amidst regional tensions. Such developments signify India's proactive diplomatic stance and its alignment with U.S. interests in the region.

## Congress Critiques US F-35 Deal as Profit-Driven, Not Partnership SHARE

15-Feb-25

Congress MP Tariq Anwar criticized the US's intention behind selling F-35 jets to India, alleging it primarily seeks profit rather than a genuine partnership. He emphasized that the US has shown a lack of respect for India, particularly regarding illegal immigrants. However, he acknowledged the positive step of extraditing Tahawwur Rana, a figure related to the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which could aid the Indian judicial process. Anwar's comments reflect skepticism about PM Modi's negotiation skills, questioning whether effective diplomacy can occur without safeguarding citizens' interests. Overall, this dialogue highlights the complexities in US-India relations amid ongoing defense discussions.

## Pakistan Alarmed as Trump Greenlights F-35 Deal for India SHARE

15-Feb-25

The recent announcement by US President Donald Trump to provide India with F-35 stealth fighter jets has caused significant alarm in Pakistan, with media outlets expressing fears over a shifting military balance in South Asia. They anticipate that India's acquisition of

the F-35 will compromise Pakistan's air defense capabilities, prompting calls for an urgent response, including potential military modernization and closer ties with China. Analysts warn that this deal could trigger an arms race in the region, further destabilizing security dynamics. The overarching narrative highlights Pakistan's concerns about maintaining parity with India, illustrating the deep-seated anxieties regarding regional power shifts and defense strategies.

## Military Operations

### Israeli Drone Strike Highlights Tensions in Southern Lebanon SHARE

15-Feb-25

Lebanese media reported an Israeli drone strike near Ainata, south Lebanon, amid ongoing violations of a fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. The ceasefire, established after extensive conflict, entails a phased withdrawal of Israeli forces and the deployment of the Lebanese military alongside UN peacekeepers. Despite the ceasefire, both parties have accused each other of infractions, with Israel maintaining air operations in Lebanon. Notably, Lebanon's parliamentary speaker mentioned that while Israel is expected to withdraw by February 18, it will remain in five locations, a demand rejected by Beirut. This situation underscores the complexities of regional security and the challenges in achieving lasting peace.

### Stryker Vehicles Struggle in Ladakh, Boosting Indigenous Options SHARE

15-Feb-25

The US-made Stryker Infantry Combat Vehicle faced significant challenges during high-altitude trials in Ladakh, primarily due to its underpowered 300hp engine, leading to inadequate mobility in extreme conditions. In response, General Dynamics plans to upgrade the Stryker to a 600hp engine, with re-trials anticipated post-upgrade. This situation has renewed interest in indigenous alternatives like the Wheeled Armoured Platform (WhAP), which is tailored for Indian terrain and meets self-reliance goals. While the Stryker's potential partnership aligns with the US-India technology collaboration, critics argue that prioritizing indigenous development would better serve India's defense needs and strategic autonomy in high-stakes border areas.

## Terrorism and Counterterrorism

### India and US urge Pakistan to curb cross-border terrorism [SHARE](#)

15-Feb-25

India and the US have united in condemning cross-border terrorism, particularly from Pakistan, as emphasized in a joint statement following talks between Prime Minister Modi and President Trump. They called for the extradition of individuals linked to past attacks, including the 2008 Mumbai attacks, and pledged to counter terrorist groups like Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba. Additionally, the leaders committed to enhancing nuclear cooperation through the US-India 123 Civil Nuclear Agreement, facilitating the construction of US-designed reactors in India. This collaboration not only strengthens defense ties but also reinforces economic partnerships, highlighting the importance of mutual support in combating terrorism and fostering energy security.

### Three Jammu and Kashmir employees, including a cop, dismissed for terror ties. [SHARE](#)

15-Feb-25

Jammu and Kashmir's Lt Governor Manoj Sinha has dismissed three government employees, including a police constable, for their alleged links to terrorist organizations, invoking Article 311 of the Constitution. The dismissals follow increased scrutiny and intensified anti-terror operations in the region, with over 70 such terminations in recent years. The sacked individuals were involved in terrorist activities, including arms smuggling and radicalizing youth, highlighting ongoing security challenges. This decisive action underscores the commitment of Indian authorities to dismantle terrorist networks and enhance national security, reinforcing the imperative to maintain vigilance in combating extremism in Jammu and Kashmir.

### NIA Charges Babbar Khalsa Operatives in Punjab Leader's Murder [SHARE](#)

15-Feb-25

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has charged two Babbar Khalsa International operatives, Dharminder Kumar and Harwinder Kumar, for the murder of Vishwa Hindu Parishad leader Vikas Bagga in Punjab, revealing a conspiracy involving operatives from several countries, including Pakistan and Germany. The NIA

took over the investigation from Punjab Police, uncovering a network that provided logistical support, funding, and weapons for the assassination. The charges highlight the persistent threat of terrorism in India and underscore the necessity for robust counter-terrorism measures and international cooperation to dismantle such transnational networks. Ongoing investigations aim to apprehend additional suspects and expose the conspiracy's full extent.

## Cybersecurity and Information Warfare

### Defenders Guide 2025: Strengthening APJ Cybersecurity Against AI Threats [SHARE](#)

15-Feb-25

The "Defenders Guide 2025" emphasizes the urgent need for organizations in the Asia Pacific and Japan (APJ) to bolster their cybersecurity frameworks amid escalating threats, particularly from AI-driven attacks. With APJ's cybersecurity landscape being fragmented and lacking centralized oversight, the report introduces a new risk scoring model and strategies for enhancing network architecture, especially concerning vulnerabilities in VPNs and web applications. It underscores the necessity of a "defense in depth" approach and proactive measures against emerging threats in container environments like Kubernetes. The guide aims to empower security leaders with actionable insights to effectively tackle the evolving digital threat landscape and support business growth in a secure manner.

## Mil Personnel & Veterans

### US Army Halts Transgender Enlistment Amid Policy Shift [SHARE](#)

15-Feb-25

The US Army has announced a halt to the enlistment of transgender individuals and the facilitation of gender transition procedures for service members, effective immediately. This decision follows a series of executive orders by President Donald Trump, reinstating a ban on transgender service members that had been lifted during President Biden's administration. The Army stated that individuals with a history of gender dysphoria will be treated with dignity and respect, yet the policy shift marks a significant reversal in military personnel inclusivity. This development reflects ongoing debates over military policy and inclusivity,



raising questions about the future of diversity within armed forces.

## Miscellaneous

### Modi Promises Repatriation of Illegal Indian Nationals in US SHARE

15-Feb-25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed India's readiness to repatriate its nationals living illegally in the US, emphasizing the need to combat human trafficking. During a joint press conference with President Trump, Modi highlighted the importance of the Indian community in the US and announced plans to open consulates in Los Angeles and Boston. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the Quad initiative for peace in the Indo-Pacific and discussed energy and trade agreements, asserting a strengthened US-India partnership. Modi also appreciated the extradition of terrorism suspect Tahawwur Rana, underscoring cooperation in counter-terrorism efforts and democratic values between the two nations.

### Indian Air Force Safely Defuses WWII Bomb in Assam SHARE

15-Feb-25

A 182-kg World War II era bomb was successfully defused by the Indian Air Force in Lakhimpur district, Assam, on Thursday. Discovered near the Jhili river, the bomb posed a risk as it was still active at the time of recovery. The operation was conducted with meticulous planning, ensuring wildlife safety by clearing a 3.5 km radius around the defusal site, as confirmed by local officials. This incident highlights the Indian Air Force's expertise in handling potentially hazardous situations and reflects the proactive measures taken by Indian authorities to maintain safety and security in the region while also protecting the environment.

### ISRO unveils world's largest 10-tonne Vertical Planetary Mixer for solid motor propellant. SHARE

15-Feb-25

ISRO has developed a significant technological advancement by creating a 10-tonne Vertical Planetary Mixer for solid motor propellant production, described as the world's largest of its kind. This innovation, realized in partnership with the Central Manufacturing Technology Institute and part of India's Atmanirbharata initiative, enhances the efficiency, quality, and

throughput of solid motors, pivotal for Indian Space Transportation Systems. The mixer, weighing 150 tonnes and featuring multiple hydrostatic-driven agitators, signifies India's growing capabilities in indigenous technology and self-reliance in the space sector. This development underscores India's commitment to innovation and bolstered national security through advanced space capabilities.

### Sunita Williams, after 8 months in space, will return next month. SHARE

15-Feb-25

Sunita Williams, who has been stranded on the International Space Station (ISS) for eight months due to technical issues with the Boeing Starliner, is set to return to Earth next month. NASA has expedited the Crew-10 mission scheduled for March 12, 2025, to bring new crew members and facilitate her return via SpaceX's Crew Dragon capsule. This switch underscores NASA's growing reliance on commercial partners like SpaceX for crew safety and mission success. Williams has effectively managed her time as ISS commander, overseeing important scientific research while waiting for the resolution of the spacecraft's malfunctions, highlighting the resilience and adaptability of crewed space missions.

### Aero India 2025 Wraps Up with Stunning Aircraft Showcases and Innovations SHARE

15-Feb-25

Aero India 2025 concluded successfully, showcasing significant advancements in global and indigenous defense technologies, with over 900 exhibitors participating. Notably, the event featured the first joint display of the American F-35 and Russian Su-57, underscoring India's strategic defense partnerships. Indigenous achievements like the Light Combat Aircraft (TEJAS) and the Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) were highlighted, alongside thrilling aerobatic performances. The public engagement was remarkable, with over 100,000 visitors attending the last two days, emphasizing the event's importance in boosting India's defense industry and fostering a greater appreciation for military aviation among the populace. This vibrant display of innovation solidifies India's position in the global defense arena.

## India and Nepal to Fast-Track Talks on Key Hydroelectric Projects



15-Feb-25

India and Nepal have agreed to accelerate discussions on three significant hydroelectric projects: the Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project, Saptakoshi High Dam, and Sunkoshi Storage cum Diversion Scheme. The focus will also be on addressing flooding and irrigation issues, with a plan for the sixth meeting of the Joint Expert Group to finalize the detailed project report for the Pancheshwar project, central to the Mahakali Treaty. Despite past disputes, including the height of the Sapta Koshi dam, both countries are committed to enhancing cooperation in energy and water resources, marking a positive step towards bolstering regional ties and ensuring mutual benefits in hydroelectric development.

## Extradition of Terror Accused Tahawwur Rana: A Major Win for India



15-Feb-25

The extradition of Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a key conspirator in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, has been heralded as a significant success for India, particularly following U.S. President Donald Trump's announcement during his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. GL Batra, father of Kargil War hero Captain Vikram Batra, emphasized the importance of this extradition in bringing justice to the victims, which includes many security personnel and foreign nationals. This development underscores India's growing diplomatic influence and its commitment to combat terrorism, reinforcing the strengthened ties between India and the U.S. in addressing such security challenges.

## India's Surveillance Program Boosted by Private Sector Collaboration



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India's space-based surveillance program, SBS-3, is set to launch its initial satellites between 2027 and 2028, marking a significant shift with substantial private sector involvement for the first time. This ₹27,000 crore initiative will see 31 satellites constructed by private firms, while 21 will be developed by ISRO. Additionally, a partnership with France aims to enhance technological capabilities through co-development of surveillance satellites. This new phase highlights India's commitment to expanding its space assets for defense and civilian purposes, including ocean surveillance by the Indian Navy, thereby reflecting a strategic vision for leveraging private sector innovation in national security.

## INS Tushil Arrives in Karwar, Boosting India's Naval Strength



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INS Tushil, the first of two follow-on P1135.6 stealth frigates, has arrived at Karwar, India, after a significant journey of over 12,500 nautical miles from Russia. This advanced warship enhances India's maritime capabilities with cutting-edge systems like BrahMos and Shtil missiles, reinforcing its position in the Indo-Pacific region. The frigate's voyage, which included port calls in eight nations, exemplifies India's growing maritime diplomacy and commitment to regional stability. Built under a \$2.5 billion deal with Russia, INS Tushil's commissioning aligns with India's Make in India initiative, fostering defense cooperation while bolstering its naval strength and strategic partnerships.

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