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KEY EVENTS

Prime Minister Addresses the Nation from Red Fort on Independence Day

Prime Minister Narendra Modi [addressed the nation](#) from the ramparts of historic Red Fort, on the 77th Independence Day on 15 August 2023. The Prime Minister reiterated the government's unwavering resolve to ensure national security amid the current global security scenario, asserting that a number of military reforms are being undertaken to modernise the Armed Forces to deal with all future challenges. The Prime Minister also noted that there has been a drastic decline in the number of terrorist attacks and referred to the One Rank One Pension scheme, which was implemented by the Government as soon as it came to power.

Raksha Mantri's Message to Soldiers on Eve of 77th Independence Day

[Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh](#) in his message to soldiers through Akashvani on 14 August 2023, the eve of 77th Independence Day, reiterated that the Government was making all efforts to modernise the Armed Forces with state-of-the-art weaponry and the best training, to protect the country from all future challenges. He stated that special attention was being paid to ensure a dignified life for the soldiers not only during service but even after retirement.

Inter-Services Organisation (Command, Control & Discipline) Bill 2023 Passed

The Lok Sabha [passed](#) the Inter-Services Organisation (Command, Control & Discipline) Bill 2023 on 4 August 2023. The Rajya Sabha, [passed](#) the same on 8 August 2023. The 'ISO Bill-2023' is an Enabling Act which empowers Heads of

Inter-Services Organisations to exercise all the disciplinary and administrative powers as per the existing Service Acts/Rules/Regulations, irrespective of the service they belong to. Service personnel when serving in or attached to an Inter-Services Organisation will continue to be governed by their respective Service Acts.

Gen Pande Reviews Commissioning Course Parade at RMA, Sandhurst

General Manoj Pande, Chief of the Army Staff [reviewed](#) the 201st Sovereign's Parade of Commissioning Course 223 at the prestigious Royal Military Academy. General Manoj Pande is the first Chief of the Army Staff from India to be the Sovereign's Representative for the parade. The General interacted with key officials, including Chief of General Staff of the British Army, Commander of UK Strategic Command, among others.

Stealth Frigates Vindhyagiri and Mahendragiri Launched

Vindhyagiri, the sixth Stealth Frigate of Project 17A being built at GRSE, was [launched](#) on 17 August 2023 by the Hon'ble President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu. Project 17A Frigates are the follow-on class of the Project 17 (Shivalik Class) Frigates, with improved stealth features, advanced weapons & sensors and platform management systems. Seven Project 17A frigates are under various stages of [construction](#) at MDL and GRSE. Over 75 per cent of the orders of Project 17A, have been placed on indigenous firms including MSMEs, keeping in line with the Government's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

Mahendragiri, the last Project 17A Frigate, was [launched](#) by Dr (Smt.) Sudesh

Dhankhar, wife of Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, at M/s Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai on 1 September 2023. Mahendragiri, is the seventh ship of the Project 17A Frigates. Under the Project 17A program, a total of four ships by M/s MDL and three ships by M/s GRSE were under construction. The first six ships of the project have been launched so far by MDL and GRSE, during 2019-2023. Nearly 75 per cent of the orders for equipment and systems of Project 17A ships have been domestically procured.

India-Philippines Sign White Shipping Information Exchange Agreement

Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff and CG Admiral Artemio M Abu, Commandant of Philippine Coast Guard [signed](#) the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for exchange of White Shipping Information on 23 August 2023. The agreement will contribute to enhanced maritime safety and security in the region.

Indian Coast Guard Signs MoU with Philippines Coast Guard

The Indian Coast Guard [signed](#) a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) to enhance maritime cooperation on 22 August 2023. The MoU seeks to enhance the professional linkages between the two Coast Guards in the domain of Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE), Maritime Search & Rescue (M-SAR) and Marine Pollution Response (MPR).

India, Bangladesh hold Fifth Annual Defence Dialogue in Dhaka

India and Bangladesh [held](#) the fifth Annual Defence Dialogue on 28 August 2023 in

Dhaka. Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane, co-chaired the meeting with his Bangladeshi counterpart Lt Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman, Principal Staff Officer, Armed Forces Division. The ongoing defence cooperation activities between the two countries were reviewed and both sides expressed satisfaction at the increasing defence cooperation engagements.

Raksha Mantri Holds Talks with Kenyan Cabinet Secretary for Defence

Cabinet Secretary for Defence, Kenya Aden Bare Duale [arrived](#) in New Delhi on 28 August 2023 on a three-day visit to India. Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [held](#) talks with him on 29 August 2023. The two Ministers concurred on the need for deeper cooperation in maritime security of the Indian Ocean region. Capacity building and cooperation in defence industry and equipment was also discussed at length by the two sides. A MoU was signed between Goa Shipyard Ltd and Kenya Shipyard Limited in the field of capacity building and for collaboration in ship design and construction. Both sides agreed for joint training in counter insurgency and UN peacekeeping domains. Duale visited Indian shipyards and defence industries in Goa and Bengaluru during his stay.

Commander of Brazilian Army Visits India

General Tomas Miguel Mine Ribeiro Paiva, Commander of the Brazilian Army, was on a six day [visit](#) to India from 28 August to 2 September 2023. He called on General Manoj Pande, the Chief of the Army Staff, General Anil Chauhan, the Chief of Defence Staff and Giridhar Aramane, the Defence Secretary. Discussions underscored the shared goals of enhancing

defence cooperation and collaboration between the two nations.

Indian Navy steps up Preparations for Sagar Parikrama IV

The Indian Navy [signalled](#) the formal commencement of its preparations for Sagar Parikrama IV at Goa on 27 August 2023. As part of the same, the Ocean Sailing Node signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Cdr Abhilash Tomy (Retd), the ace circumnavigator and Golden Globe Race hero, to be Mentor and Coach to the two volunteer women officers, Lt Cdr Dilna and Lt Cdr Roopa, who will form the team undertaking the circumnavigation sailing expedition on Indian Naval Sailing Vessel Tarini next year.

AI Workshop Organised at INS Valsura 9-11 August 2023

The 5th edition of the three-day AI workshop on 'Artificial Intelligence for the Future Fleet' was [organised](#) at INS Valsura, Jamnagar from 09 – 11 August 2023. The key note address was delivered by VAdm MA Hampiholi, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command. In his keynote address, VAdm Hampiholi highlighted the initiatives taken by the IN in the niche field and stressed upon the importance of AI and its applications for the future fleet. Indian Navy Incubation Centre for Artificial Intelligence (INICAI) presented various AI initiatives being steered by the Indian Navy.

AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

Raksha Mantri Highlights Strides in Atmanirbharta in Defence

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh at a G-20 Summit organised by a private TV news channel in New Delhi on 19 August 2023

noted that giant strides towards [achieving](#) self-reliance in defence have been made. The Raksha Mantri highlighted various steps taken by the MoD towards achieving 'Aatmanirbharta', including eight positive indigenisation list, (four by Department of Military Affairs comprising 410 weapons and platforms for the Armed Forces and four others of 4,666 items by Department of Defence Production for the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and highlighted achievements such as aircraft carrier INS Vikrant and Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas.

Defence Indigenisation

Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt informed the Lok Sabha in response to a question on 11 August 2023 that capital procurement of defence equipment was being carried out as per Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP 2020) with a focus on Atmanirbhar Bharat. He noted that indigenisation, innovation and import substitution have been facilitated through various schemes. He stated that during the last five years (2018-23), 68 per cent of total contracts by value have been signed with Indian vendors.

Modernisation Budget for 2023-24

Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt informed the Lok Sabha on 11 August 2023 that funds under [Modernisation Budget \(Capital Acquisition\)](#) for Financial Year 2023-24 has been earmarked in the ratio of 75:25, where 75 per cent i.e. Rs 99,223.03 crore is for procurement through domestic sources and 25 per cent i.e. Rs 33,078.24 crore is for Foreign Procurement.

Technology Development Fund Scheme

Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt informed the Lok Sabha on 11 August 2023 that the

government has allocated a total of Rs 260 crore under the [Technology Development Fund \(TDF\) Scheme](#), since its inception from 2016 and Rs 64.35 crore has been disbursed as a grant-in-aid to industries for development of defence technologies.

Defence Modernisation

Raksha Rajya Mantri Ajay Bhatt informed the Lok Sabha on 11 August 2023 that [capital Outlay for modernisation](#) of defence services has gone up from Rs 80,959.08 crore in FY 2019-20 to Rs 1,32,301.27 crore in FY 2023-24.

LCA Tejas Successfully Test-Fires Indigenous ASTRA BVR Missile

Tejas, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) LSP-7 successfully [fired](#) the indigenous ASTRA Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air missile off the coast of Goa on 23 August 2023. The test launch was monitored by scientists of Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), DRDO, HAL along with officials from Centre for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC) and Directorate General of Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DG-AQA).

Chief of Air Staff Reviews LCA Programme

The Chief of Air Staff (CAS) Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari [reviewed](#) the status of the LCA programme on 22 August 2023. The CAS noted that the LCA has been the flag bearer of the IAF efforts towards indigenisation of its aircraft fleet. It was noted that all contracted fighter variants of the LCA Mk 1 had been delivered to the IAF. 83 LCA Mk-1A aircraft have also been contracted by the IAF in 2021, whose deliveries would commence by February 2024, as per HAL Chairman and Managing Director.

DAC approves proposals worth Rs 7,800 crore

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) [accorded](#) Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for capital acquisition proposals worth approximately Rs 7,800 crore on 24 August 2023, including for the procurement and installation of Electronic Warfare (EW) Suite on Mi-17 V5 Helicopters under Buy (Indian-IDDMM) category, and Ground-Based Autonomous System for mechanised infantry and armoured regiments to enable unmanned surveillance, logistic delivery of ammunition, fuel and spares and casualty evacuation. Proposals also related to procurement of 7.62x51 mm Light Machine Gun (LMG), ruggedised laptops and tabs for the Indian Army under Project Shakti, among others.

Defence Secretary Lays Keel of Four Fast Patrol vessels for Indian Coast Guard

Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane [laid](#) the keel of four Coast Guard Fast Patrol vessels (FPVs) on 25 August 2023 at Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL). The Defence Secretary applauded the efforts of GSL for achieving indigenization in collaboration with the Indian industry.

MoD inks Rs 19,000 crore contract with HSL for five Fleet Support Ships

The Ministry of Defence, on 25 August 2023, [signed](#) a contract with Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Visakhapatnam for acquisition of five indigenously designed Fleet Support Ships (FSS) for the Indian Navy at an overall cost of approx. Rs 19,000 crore. The Cabinet Committee on Security had approved the acquisition of these ships during its meeting on 16 August 2023.

Conclave-Cum-Symposium on Self Reliance in Missile Technology Held

The Missile Technology Conclave-cum-Symposium [themed](#) 'Aatmanirbharta in Missile Repairs & Indigenisation Technologies (AMRIT-2023)', was organised by INS Kalinga at Visakhapatnam on 23 August 2023. It is envisaged that the Indian Navy in particular and the Armed Forces in general will minimise dependence on foreign OEMs as the core competencies of domestic defence industry continues to get strengthened.

DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

Indian Navy Hosts PNG PM on Board INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata

Indian Naval Ships Sahyadri and Kolkata, mission [deployed](#) in the Eastern IOR, arrived at Port Moresby on 2 August 2023, for enhancing maritime partnership and cooperation with Papua New Guinea. The ships [received](#) Hon'ble Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea (PNG) James Marape during their port call. The PM, accompanied by Cabinet Members and Senior Government Officials, was jointly hosted onboard by the Indian Navy and the High Commissioner of India Inbasekar Sudaramurthi.

Indian Naval Ships Visit Port Rashid, Dubai

The Indian Navy's frontline platforms INS Visakhapatnam and INS Trikand under the Command of Rear Adm Vineet McCarty, Flag Officer Commanding, Western Fleet, [visited](#) Port Rashid, Dubai from 8-11 August 2023. [Rear Admiral McCarty](#) met Brigadier Abdullah Farj Al Mehairbi, the Deputy Commander of UAE Naval Forces at Abu Dhabi Naval Command. They agreed on increasing the interaction

between the two Navies in order to jointly tackle the common challenges of piracy, smuggling, human trafficking, enhance maritime security and undertake joint HADR operations, should the need arise. The ships undertook professional interactions with UAE Naval Force and shared best practices to further enhance cooperation and strengthen ties between the two navies. Bilateral exercise 'Zayed Talwar' was held with the UAE navy to enhance interoperability and synergy between the two navies.

Malabar 2023 Held off Sydney, Australia

The 27th edition of MALABAR 2023 was held at/off Sydney from 11-21 August 2023 with ships and aircraft from the Indian Navy (IN), the US Navy (USN), Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). The RAN participated in the Malabar exercises for the first time in 2020. MALABAR 2023 was conducted in two phases, which included a harbour phase from 11-15 August 2023 and a sea phase from 16-21 August 2023. The Indian Navy was [represented](#) by indigenously built Destroyer INS Kolkata, Frigate INS Sahyadri and P8I Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

INS Vagir on Extended Range Deployment Reaches Fremantle, Australia

INS Vagir, the Indian Navy (IN) submarine, on an extended-range deployment, reached Fremantle, Australia on 20 August 2023. During her stay in Australia, INS Vagir will participate in various exercises with RAN units on the West Coast of Australia. Concurrently, on the East coast of Australia, Indian Naval ships and aircraft are involved in Exercise MALABAR 23 from 11-21 August 2023 and AUSINDEX 23 from 22-

24 August 2023. During the ongoing deployment, basic, intermediate and advanced-level Anti-Submarine exercises are scheduled. In addition, the RAN submarine and Indian Naval P8i aircraft are scheduled to exercise with INS Vagir.

INS Sunayna Visits Port of Durban, South Africa

INS Sunayna [visited](#) port of Durban, South Africa from 21-25 August 2023. Joint training sessions were conducted on various aspects of navigation, firefighting, damage control and Visit Board Search & Seize (VBSS). The ship [undertook](#) Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with South African Navy Ship SAS King Sekhukhune I off Durban, on leaving harbour, furthering jointness and interoperability.

5th Edition of AUSINDEX 23 Held at Sydney

The 5th edition of biennial AUSINDEX maritime exercise between Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) was [conducted](#) from 22-25 August 2023 at Sydney, Australia. INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata participated in the exercise along with HMAS Choules and HMAS Brisbane from RAN. Besides ships and their integral helicopters, the exercise also witnessed participation of fighter aircraft and maritime patrol aircraft.

Multinational Exercise Bright Star 23 Held at Cairo, Egypt

An Indian Army contingent comprising of 137 personnel will [participate](#) in the 'Exercise Bright Star 23', being conducted from 31 August to 14 September 2023 at Mohammed Naguib Military Base in Egypt. The multinational tri-services joint military exercise will be led by US CENTCOM and Egyptian Army. An IAF contingent will also [participate](#) in the exercise scheduled to be held at Cairo (West) Air Base, Egypt from 27 August to 16 September 2023. Contingents from the US, Saudi Arabia, Greece and Qatar, along with India are participating in the exercises. The IAF contingent consists of five MiG-29s, two IL-78s, two C-130 and two C-17 aircraft.

UAE Navy SME Delegation Visits Indian Navy Facilities

A three member UAE Navy Subject Matter Expert Delegation visited specialised [Meteorology, Oceanography and Weather Modelling units of Indian Navy](#) (IN) at Kochi, Goa and New Delhi in August 2023. The IN, through its dedicated units, has been supporting many countries in the IOR with training in the above mentioned fields as well as providing daily weather forecast services to ensure maritime safety in the region.

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