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समाचार पत्रों से चयनित अंश

Newspapers Clippings

डीआरडीओ समुदाय को डीआरडीओ प्रौद्योगिकियों, रक्षा प्रौद्योगिकियों, रक्षा नीतियों, अंतर्राष्ट्रीय संबंधों और विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी की नूतन जानकारी से अवगत कराने हेतु दैनिक सेवा

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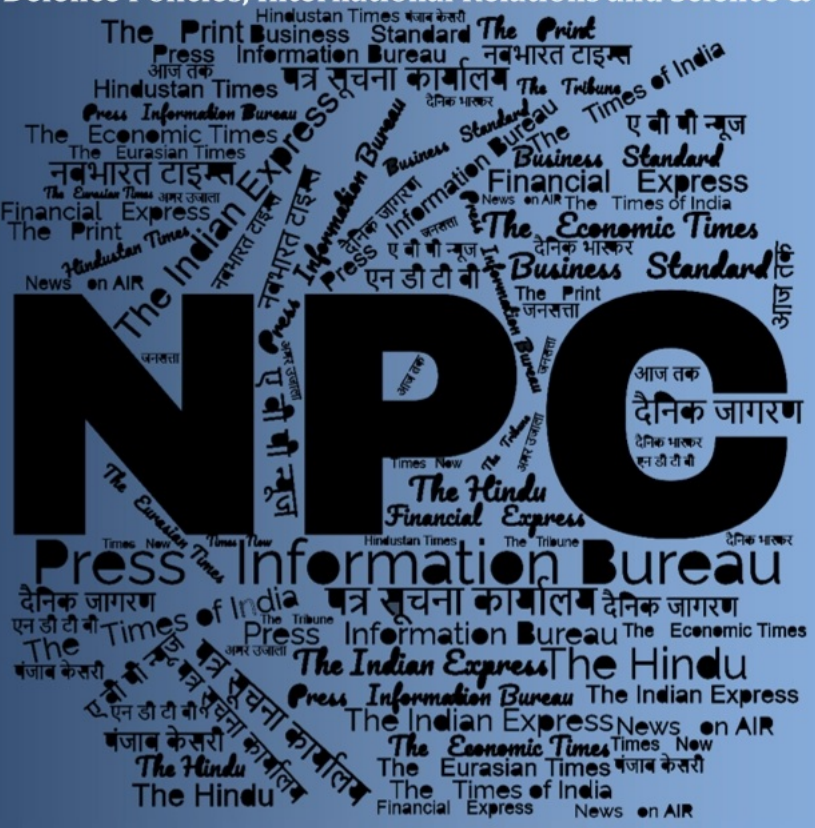

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CONTENTS

DRDO News

24th India-US Joint Technical Group Plenary held at DRDO HQs in New Delhi to advance cooperation in Defence Science & Technologies

Source:PIB, Dt. 05 Feb 2026

Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) hosted the 24th Indo-US Joint Technical Group Plenary Meeting in New Delhi on February 03-04, 2026. The meeting was co-chaired by Director General (Production Coordination & Services Interaction), DRDO Dr Chandrika Kaushik and Assistant Secretary of War for Critical Technologies, Office of the Under Secretary of War for Research & Engineering Mr Michael Francis Dodd.

The plenary was conducted in line with the vision and policy guidance of the framework for India-US Major Defence Partnership signed by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and the US Secretary of War Mr Pete Hegseth in October 2025. The delegations reviewed the ongoing cooperation in defence science & technology, discussed associated challenges, and examined proposals to further strengthen collaboration in critical & emerging defence technologies to meet the evolving requirements.

The discussions also focused on enhancing the participation of university-affiliated research centres, defence laboratories, and industries in cooperative research & development initiatives. Additionally, the meeting explored potential collaboration between the DRDO, and the Defence Innovation Unit under the Innovation Bridge framework & concluded with the signing of a project agreement.

The meeting involved participation of senior officials, scientists, and technocrats representing institutions and laboratories under the US Department of War and the Department of State, along with DRDO scientists and officials from India's Tri-Services, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of External Affairs, and the National Security Council Secretariat.

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Defence News

5 Tejas Mark 1-A jets ready for delivery, 9 await engines : HAL

Source: The Tribune, Dt. 06 Feb 2026

5 Tejas Mark 1-A jets ready for delivery, 9 await engines: HAL

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 5

Public sector military plane manufacturer Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) on Thursday said it is "fully ready" to deliver five Tejas Mark 1-A fighter jets for the Indian Air Force (IAF). Another nine planes, the company said, were ready at its factory but awaiting engines from US firm General Electric (GE).

"We can confirm that five aircraft are fully ready for delivery, incorporating major contracted capabilities in accordance with the agreed specifications," HAL said. Sources said the aircraft were equipped with a powerful air-to-air missile.

Supply was originally scheduled to start in March 2024

Another nine aircraft had already been built and upon receipt of engines from GE, these would be made ready for delivery, the Bengaluru-headquartered company said.

"All design and development issues are being addressed in an expedited manner. HAL is in active discussions with the Indian Air Force to deliver the aircraft at the earliest," the company said, adding "it would meet the guidance (timeline) projected for the current financial year".

HAL said the "engine supply process from GE was positive", and that the future delivery outlook aligned with HAL's delivery plans.

Sources said the delay in the supply of F404 engines had pushed back the delivery schedule of the Tejas Mark 1-A jets. HAL is producing 180 of these aircraft for the Indian Air Force, with deliveries originally scheduled to start in March 2024. The GE engines were expected to arrive before that.

In July last year, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had asked his US counterpart Pete Hegseth to fast-track the engine deliveries. However, the process was further slowed as the India-US relations soured last year, delaying the induction of the jets.

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India-Kyrgyzstan joint forces exercise commences in assam

Source: The Pioneer, Dt. 06 Feb 2026

India-Kyrgyzstan joint forces exercise commences in Assam

TONY DAS
Guwahati

The 13th edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR, scheduled from 4 to 17 February 2026, has commenced in Missamari, Assam. Exercise KHANJAR is an annual training event conducted alternatively between India and Kyrgyzstan.

The last edition of the exercise was conducted in Kyrgyzstan in March 2025. The Indian Army contingent comprising 20 personnel is represented by troops from the Parachute Regiment

(Special Forces) and the Kyrgyzstan contingent also comprising equal strength is represented by ILBRIS Special Forces Brigade.

Aim of the exercise is to exchange best practices and experiences in Counter Terrorism and Special Forces Operations in urban and mountainous terrain. The exercise will also focus on developing advanced Special Forces skills of sniping, complex building intervention and mountain craft.

Exercise KHANJAR will provide an opportunity for both sides to fortify defence ties while addressing common concerns of international terrorism and extremism. The exercise reaffirms the commitment of India and Kyrgyzstan towards fostering peace, stability and security in the region.

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Defence Secretary visits Forward Areas in Bhuj - witnesses Jointness, Infrastructure Development and Capability Building Initiatives

Source: PIB, Dt. 05 Feb 2026

Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh visited forward areas in the Creek Sector in Bhuj, Gujarat on 04-05 February 2026. He interacted with Lt. General Dhiraj Seth, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command and other senior officers of the Konark Corps. He was briefed on various initiatives being undertaken in line with the Indian Army's Decade of Transformation Road map, transforming the Indian Army into a technologically advanced, combat-ready force capable of undertaking multi-domain operations.

The Defence Secretary visited the Joint Control Centre, jointly manned by the Tri-Services, Indian Coast Guard, BSF and other security agencies. The centre aims at synergising the multi-source sensor inputs in the region to deliver a unified surveillance picture and enhance situational awareness for ground commanders.

Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh witnessed the multi-agency capability Exercise 'TATRAKSHA', showcasing seamless integration of the Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Indian Coast Guard, BSF, and allied security agencies in coastal and amphibious operations. The exercise displayed real time surveillance, precision strikes, joint logistics and rapid response capabilities to handle emerging maritime and border threats, validating decisive integrated capability for a full spectrum of operations.

The Defence Secretary inaugurated the Monumental Flag, symbolising national pride and unity in the border region, and also witnessed a comprehensive operational display of new-generation weapon systems.

The visit reaffirmed the Government's continued focus on strengthening jointness, enhancing infrastructure, promoting indigenisation and developing future-ready, resilient and technologically advanced Armed Forces.

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Dornier sale, Su-30 upgrades focus of PM's Malaysia visit

Source: The Asian Age, Dt. 06 Feb 2026

Dornier sale, Su-30 upgrades focus of PM's Malaysia visit

Pact likely on semicon collaboration

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI
NEW DELHI, FEB. 5

India is looking at the sale of Dornier (maritime surveillance) aircraft to Malaysia, looking at opportunities to collaborate with the Southeast Asian nation on mid-life upgrades and retro-fitting of (French-origin) Scorpene submarines and has also offered proposals to Malaysia for modernisation, upgradation and mid-life maintenance of (Russian-origin) Sukhoi-30 fighter aircraft, MEA's secretary (east) P Kumaran said on Thursday, ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day official visit this weekend to Kuala Lumpur.

India is also looking to collaborate on semiconductors with Malaysia, which has expertise in this field, New Delhi said, adding that in the cultural sphere, a Thiruvalluvar Centre for Indian Studies (named after the ancient Tamil sage) will also strengthen ties between the two nations.

Narendra Modi

Asked about the timing of the visit, the MEA said Mr Modi was "delivering on the promise" made to his Malaysian PM Anwar Ibrahim in October last year that the visit would take place early this year.

During the visit that starts Saturday, Mr Modi will hold discussions with Mr Ibrahim to strengthen ties in a range of sectors, including defence and security, trade, digital, and semiconductors.

It may be recalled that in October last year, Mr Modi had skipped a visit to Kuala Lumpur and had instead participated in virtual mode at the India-Asean summit that was held there in the last week of October.

The senior MEA official said that Mr Modi had then promised the Malaysian PM that he would "make it upto him" by visiting in early 2026.

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DAC to weigh acquisition of rafale ahead of macron visit

Source: The Hindu, Dt. 06 Feb 2026

DAC to weigh acquisition of Rafale ahead of Macron visit

Eighteen aircraft are likely to be acquired in flyaway condition to meet immediate needs, with the rest to be manufactured in India, an official says; the source code will remain with the French side

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Ahead of French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to India for the artificial intelligence Summit, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, is scheduled to meet in the second week of February to consider key procurement proposals aimed at enhancing the operational capabilities of the armed forces.

A senior defence official confirmed that the DAC meeting would grant Acceptance of Necessity for several acquisition proposals. During his stay, President Macron is expected to meet Mr. Singh to discuss bilateral defence cooperation between India and France.

Another defence official said that multiple proposals will be tabled at the meeting, including the acquisition of 114 Rafale fighter aircraft from France. Following DAC clearance, the proposal will be placed before the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), chaired by the Prime Minister, for final approval.

The procurement will take the total Rafale fleet in India to 176, with the IAF already operating 36. PTI

Under the proposed plan, the bulk of the aircraft will be manufactured in India, with indigenous components accounting for approximately 30% to 40% of the overall content, providing a significant boost to domestic defence manufacturing. The official added that 18 aircraft are likely to be acquired in flyaway condition to meet the Indian Air Force's immediate operational requirements, while the remaining jets will be manufactured in India. The source code, however, will remain with the French side.

Largest acquisitions

Defence experts noted that once cleared by the CCS, the deal will rank among the largest defence acquisitions undertaken by India. The procurement will take the total Rafale fleet in the country to 176 aircraft, with the IAF already operating 36 Rafale jets and the Indian Navy having placed orders for 26 naval variants last year.

The AI summit is expected to see participation from representatives of several countries, including Brazil, Switzerland, Greece, Serbia, Spain and Finland.

Separately, Indian Air Force chief Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh, in his interaction with presspersons earlier, had flagged concerns over delays in fighter aircraft deliveries, noting that Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. has fallen behind schedule, partly due to delays in the supply of the F404-IN20 engines from GE.

The IAF has repeatedly underscored the urgency of strengthening its fighter fleet amid a rapidly evolving regional security environment. "To maintain a comfortable strength, we need two squadrons, around 30 to 40 aircraft, produced every year. Replacement is not a choice; it's a necessity," the Air Chief had said earlier.

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China shuns calls to enter N-talks after US-Russia treaty expires

Source: Hindustan Times, Dt. 06 Feb 2026

China shuns calls to enter N-talks after US-Russia treaty expires

Agencies
letters@hindustantimes.com

Military vehicles carrying DF-41 intercontinental ballistic missiles travel past Tiananmen Square during the military parade marking the 70th founding anniversary of People's Republic of China, on its National Day in Beijing, China, on October 1, 2019. REUTERS

BEIJING/WASHINGTON: China rejected calls to enter talks on a new nuclear treaty after a US-Russian agreement expired on Thursday, ending decades of restrictions on how many warheads the two powers can deploy, the AFP reported.

Campaigners have warned that the expiry of the 2010 New START treaty could trigger a global arms race, urging nuclear powers to enter negotiations.

The US-Russia agreement set limits on strategic nuclear weapons — the kind that each side would use to strike the opponent's vital political, military and industrial centres in the event of a nuclear war. It capped the number of deployed strategic warheads at 1,550 on each side, with no more than 700 deployed ground- or submarine-launched missiles and bomber planes, and 800 launchers, Reuters reported.

The United States has now said any new nuclear agreement would have to include China, whose nuclear arsenal is rapidly expanding.

China's foreign ministry joined a growing international chorus expressing regret on Thursday over the treaty's expiry, but said Beijing "will not participate in nuclear disarmament negotiations at this stage".

"China's nuclear capabilities are of a totally different scale as those of the United States and Russia," foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a news conference.

Russia and the United States together control more than 80% of the world's nuclear warheads. China's nuclear arsenal, meanwhile, is growing faster than any country's, by about 100 new warheads a year since 2023, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

China is estimated to have at least 600 nuclear warheads, SIPRI said. France and Britain, treaty-bound US allies, together have another 100, the AFP reported.

Signed during a warmer period of relations, US President Donald Trump did not follow up on Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin's proposal to extend New START's limits for one year. UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres called the expiry a "grave moment".

"For the first time in more than half a century, we face a world without any binding limits on the strategic nuclear arsenals" of Russia and the United States, Guterres said in a statement.

"This dissolution of decades of achievement could not come at a worse time — the risk of a nuclear weapon being used is the highest in decades," he said, after Russian suggestions of using tactical nuclear weapons early in the Ukraine war.

US, Russia close in on deal to continue New START N-arms treaty

The United States and Russia are closing in on a deal to observe the New START nuclear arms control treaty beyond its expiration on Thursday, Axios reported, citing three sources familiar with the talks.

Negotiations had been taking place over the past 24 hours in Abu Dhabi but an agreement had not been reached, Axios said, citing an additional source.

The Axios report on New START said it was unclear whether the agreement to observe the treaty's terms for an additional period of time, possibly six months, would be enshrined in any formal way.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Thursday Russia was still ready to engage in dialogue with the US if Washington responded constructively to a proposal by Moscow to keep abiding by the limits of the expiring New START nuclear treaty.

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Science & Technology News

PARLIAMENT QUESTION: R&D OUTCOMES

Source: Press Information Bureau, Dt. 05 Feb 2026

The outcomes of public R&D expenditure are periodically evaluated through various mechanisms. One such study titled "Evaluation of Innovation Excellence Indicators" has been recently conducted by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India which evaluated outcomes of the 233 public-funded R&D laboratories/institutes spread across the country. The report highlights that during 2021–22 and 2022–23, a total of 1,622 patents were filed by 233 public-funded R&D institutes, while 1,356 patents were granted to 232 institutes. In addition, 1,839 technologies were transferred, 1,014 new products were developed, and 1,746 new services were introduced over the two-year period. Furthermore, the outcomes of all central sector schemes/programmes are being evaluated through the Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework (OOMF) coordinated by NITI Aayog. Also, third-party evaluation of various central sector schemes/programmes has been carried out for their continuation during the 16th Finance Commission period i.e. 2026-27 to 2030-31.

As part of the strategy to improve technology commercialization, industry collaboration and private sector R&D participation, the government has taken several new initiatives through programmes/schemes, missions and policy interventions. These are:

- Establishment of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) through the ANRF Act, 2023 to provide high level strategic direction for research, innovation and entrepreneurship in the fields of science & technology with a provision of ₹14,000 crore from the Central Government funding.
- Launch of the Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme, with a financial pool of ₹1 lakh crore over six years, to boost private sector research.
- Launch of National Missions such as National Quantum Mission to make India one of the leading nations in the development of Quantum Technologies & Applications (budget outlay: ₹6,003.65 crore), National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems (budget outlay ₹3,660 crore).
- Promotion of Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) and creation of Technology Hubs under National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems and National Quantum Mission to foster collaborative technology development.
- Implementation of programmes such as the National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI), Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) programmes, Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), and TIDE 2.0 (Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs) to foster innovation in academic and research institutions.
- Implementation of programmes like Fast Track Translation (FTT) & Fast Track Commercialization (FTC) to support translation and commercialization of laboratory research outputs and strengthening technology transfer and commercialization through Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), incubation centers, PPPs, and structured licensing models.
- Introduction of enabling policies such as the Geospatial Policy 2022, Space Policy 2023, and BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) Policy 2024, etc.

All these measures aim to boost technology commercialization, foster industry partnerships and expand private sector participation in national R&D.

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PARLIAMENT QUESTION: R&D EXPENDITURE

Source: PIB , Dt. 06 Feb 2026

India's Gross Expenditure on Research and Development (GERD) is 0.6-0.7 per cent of GDP. While India's present ranking in the Global Innovation Index (GII) is 38th, it has risen significantly from 81st in 2015 to 38th in 2025. The Government has taken several measures to increase the R&D expenditure to make India emerge as a high-tech manufacturing hub. These include:

- Progressive increase in budget allocations for scientific departments and research-oriented programmes.
- Launch of ₹1.0 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund.
- Establishment of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) with a budgetary provision of Rs. 14,000 crore from Central Government and mobilizing additional funding from non-governmental sources.
- Launch of National Missions such as National Quantum Missions (budget outlay: Rs. 6,003.65 crore), National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (budget outlay Rs. 3,660 crore), India Semiconductor Mission (budget outlay Rs. 76,000 crore), National Supercomputing Mission, etc.
- Promotion of Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) and creation of Technology Hubs under National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems and National Quantum Mission to foster collaborative technology development.
- Implementation of Technology-led innovation programmes such as: National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI), Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) programmes, Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and TIDE 2.0 (Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs) to strengthen India's innovation-to-manufacturing pipeline by supporting indigenous technology development, prototyping, scale-up, and industry linkages, thereby reducing dependence on imported technologies.
- Introduction of enabling policy frameworks such as: the Geospatial Policy 2022, Space Policy 2023, and BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) Policy 2024 with the provisions for increased participation from private sector.
- Strengthening commercialization of innovations from national laboratories and research institutes through the Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), incubation centers, public–private partnerships, and structured licensing models; etc.

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PARLIAMENT QUESTION: GRANTS BY CSIR

Source: PIB, Dt. 05 Feb 2026

- The issue of grant of Special Pay, two additional increments and Professional Update Allowance (PUA) to Scientists of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has been examined in detail by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in its 34th Report (2025-26), tabled in Parliament.

The PAC has noted that while the Ministry of Finance had, in January 2001, approved these incentives for CSIR, subject to certain conditions, including that additional financial implications would be met from CSIR's own resources, CSIR could not maintain a separate identifiable head to monitor such expenditure. However, CSIR has stated before PAC that it has been regularly deploying internal resources to supplement Government grants to meet any shortfalls in salary and establishment expenditure, including incentives.

- PAC has observed that CSIR, while implementing the Sixth Central Pay Commission, revised the rates of these incentives on the pattern of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) without obtaining explicit prior approval of the Department of Expenditure (DoE). CSIR has submitted that the revision was adopted with approval of its Governing Body, and that proposals seeking concurrence of the Ministry of Finance/Department of Expenditure for regularisation of these incentives are presently under examination in DoE.
- No instance of pilfering of public funds or deliberate fraud has been established. The matter pertains to procedural and approval-related issues in the implementation of incentive schemes, which have been examined by the PAC, and the issue is currently under consideration of the Department of Expenditure for regularization.
- In line with the recommendations of the PAC, CSIR has sought the concurrence of the Ministry of Finance/Department of Expenditure for the regularisation of the incentives. The proposals submitted by CSIR are under examination in DoE. Further action, if any, will be taken in accordance with the outcome of this examination and applicable rules.

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Bharat GenAI Large Language Model to complete text models in all 22 scheduled languages this month: Dr. Jitendra Singh tells Rajya Sabha

India building first sovereign AI model with speech and vision capabilities across Indian languages: Dr. Jitendra Singh

AI compute, innovation hubs and private funding central to India AI Mission, says the Minister

Source: PIB, Dt. 05 Feb 2026

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh told the Rajya Sabha that text-based artificial intelligence models under the Bharat GenAI initiative will be completed in all 22 Constitutionally recognised Indian languages within this month, while speech and vision capabilities have already been developed for 15 languages. The Minister said the initiative represents India's first government-owned sovereign large language model designed specifically for Indian languages and societal context.

Replying to a starred question during Question Hour, Dr. Jitendra Singh said Bharat GenAI is an outcome of the IndiaAI Mission launched in March 2024 and has been conceived as a national foundational model. He explained that the distinguishing feature of the initiative is its sovereign character combined with its focus on India's linguistic and cultural diversity, unlike similar models elsewhere that cater largely to linguistically homogeneous societies.

Dr. Jitendra Singh informed the House that Bharat GenAI has three principal components—text, speech and vision—along with dedicated domain applications such as agriculture, Ayurveda and the legal system. While text models across all 22 scheduled languages are expected to be completed this month, he said speech and vision models are currently available in 15 languages and will be expanded further. He added that the programme is structured as a dynamic process, with scope to go beyond the scheduled languages to include dialects and regional variations as more data becomes available.

On the institutional architecture supporting the initiative, the Minister said the Bharat GenAI consortium is being spearheaded by IIT Bombay, with participation from several other institutions including IIT Hyderabad, IIT Madras, IIT Kanpur, IIT Mandi and IIT Indore. He said this consortium-based approach reflects an integrated "whole-of-science" and "whole-of-nation" framework rather than a region-specific effort.

Dr. Jitendra Singh further said 25 technology innovation hubs have been established as part of the broader ecosystem supporting emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, machine learning and cybersecurity. He noted that four of these hubs—at IIT Indore, IIT Kanpur, IIT Dhanbad and the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru—have been upgraded to facilitate closer co-location of industry and research, easing the pathway for technology transfer.

Responding to questions on inclusion of institutions from the North-East, the Minister said the process of expanding the innovation ecosystem is ongoing and not closed. He emphasised that languages from the North-Eastern region are already included among the 22 scheduled languages being covered under Bharat GenAI, and that institutional participation will also widen as the ecosystem evolves.

Addressing concerns related to the availability of computational resources, particularly graphics processing units (GPUs), Dr. Jitendra Singh acknowledged that compute capacity is central to advanced AI development. He said the IndiaAI Mission has a dedicated compute pillar to provide access to shared computational resources at subsidised rates for eligible users. He added that the mission has been designed to evolve, with access also being enabled through alternative sources as requirements grow.

The Minister said private sector participation is being actively encouraged, and referred to the recent launch of a ₹1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation funding initiative aimed at supporting projects closer to deployment. He said this funding framework would also cover AI-related infrastructure and compute requirements.

On access and pricing of Bharat GenAI models, Dr. Jitendra Singh said the framework is currently under discussion. He clarified that while the platform is sovereign in nature, it is not intended to be closed, and mechanisms are being worked out to determine data sharing, safeguards and pricing, including possible discounts, for different categories of users.

Concluding his reply, Dr. Jitendra Singh said Bharat GenAI is intended as a continuously evolving national capability rather than a one-time exercise.

He said the emphasis would remain on inclusiveness, linguistic authenticity and gradual expansion, ensuring that the initiative keeps pace with technological change while remaining rooted in India's social and linguistic realities.

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Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) Sets Course for India's Innovation-led Journey to 2047, Strengthening R&D driven Economic Growth, says Dr Jitendra Singh at Foundation Day Event

India Rewrites Its Research Playbook as ANRF Leads Partnership-Driven Innovation, Says Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh addresses the ANRF Foundation Day Event

Post-Pandemic Global Momentum Creates New Research Opportunity for India with ANRF's Integrated Science–Humanities Approach, Says Dr Jitendra Singh

Source: PIB, Dt. 05 Feb 2026

India's research ecosystem is entering a decisive new phase with the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) emerging as a catalyst for globally aligned, mission-driven and partnership-based research, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said at the ANRF Foundation Day Function held in New Delhi on Wednesday.

The Foundation Day event was organised at Prithvi Bhawan, Ministry of Earth Sciences. The programme was attended by Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood; Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Prof. Abhay Karandikar; CEO, ANRF, Dr Shivkumar Kalyanaraman; senior officials from science departments, and representatives from academia, industry, and research institutions.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh traced the journey of ANRF from its conception to its operational launch, describing it as a rare institutional reform shaped through sustained deliberations and wide-ranging consultations. He said the Foundation was designed after studying global research models while creating a framework suited to India's scientific, social, and cultural context.

The Minister said ANRF differs from conventional research funding agencies by its emphasis on collaboration across disciplines and sectors. Along with science and industry, the Foundation brings social sciences, humanities and culture into its governance and programme design, reflecting the integrated nature of contemporary research and innovation.

Referring to recent global developments, Dr Jitendra Singh said the post-pandemic period has renewed international interest in life sciences and indigenous knowledge systems. India, he said, is uniquely positioned to contribute original research perspectives, including in areas where traditional knowledge complements modern science.

The Minister said ANRF is steadily moving towards a model where a significant share of research support is expected to come from non-government sources, including industry and philanthropy. Early response to the Foundation's programmes, particularly the strong participation from the

private sector, signals a gradual shift in India's research culture towards outcome-oriented collaboration.

Dr Jitendra Singh also spoke about mission-mode initiatives being taken up under ANRF, including programmes on electric mobility, advanced materials, batteries, power technologies and artificial intelligence for science and engineering. These initiatives, he said, reflect a move away from ministry-bound approaches towards team-based national research efforts.

Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood, said ANRF has been conceived as a bridge between laboratories, universities, and industry, with the aim of taking science beyond publications and into society.

He said the Foundation places equal emphasis on research funding and building a culture of inquiry, especially at a time when technological capability has become central to national resilience, economic strength, and global standing. Prof. Sood said ANRF's mission-mode programmes and private sector participation have the potential to reshape how research translates into real-world impact.

Concluding his address, the Minister said ANRF will play a central role in building an ecosystem that supports research, innovation, and technology translation, with long-term impact on India's economic and technological growth. He said science and innovation will remain key pillars as India advances towards its national development goals.

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The end of New START and a new era of nuclear rivalry

Source: The Hindu , Dt. 06 Feb 2026

The end of New START and a new era of nuclear rivalry

NEWS ANALYSIS

Vasudevan Mukunth

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) officially expired on February 5, marking the end of the last remaining bilateral agreement constraining the nuclear arsenals of the U.S. and Russia. The New START treaty emerged from a period of diplomatic reset between Washington and Moscow in the late 2000s.

After entering into force on February 5, 2011, New START set up verifiable limits on the strategic offensive arms of both nations, including capping the number of deployed warheads to 1,550, and required both parties to reach these limits within seven years and maintain them thereafter. It also allowed 18 on-site inspections a year, mandated data exchange, and set up a bilateral commission to resolve issues.

New START was constantly beleaguered. Russia often argued that U.S. missile defense systems undermined the strategic balance, suggesting that if one side could neutralise the other's retaliatory strike, the 'mutually assured destruction' dynamic would be broken. The U.S. expressed concerns over conventional prompt global strike capabilities, where precise conventional warheads are placed on ballistic missiles, systems that New START counted under its nuclear limits.

Later Russia also unveiled several novel strategic systems, including the Sarmat heavy ICBM and the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle. While

The treaty was originally set to expire in 2021. AP

the U.S. successfully argued that these should be counted under New START, other systems like the nuclear-powered underwater drone Poseidon and nuclear-powered cruise missile Burevestnik remained outside the treaty's technical definitions.

No binding limits

The treaty was originally set to expire in 2021. Just days before the deadline, the Biden administration and the Kremlin agreed to a one-time, five-year extension, moving the expiration date to February 5, 2026. But in February 2023, after the conflict in Ukraine escalated and undermined bilateral relations, President Vladimir Putin said he was suspending Russia's participation in New START because, Moscow said, the U.S. was seeking a "strategic defeat" of Russia and that western aid to Ukraine made on-site inspections in Russia impossible. The U.S. soon followed.

Today, for the first time since 1972, there are no legally binding limits on the number of strategic nuclear weapons the U.S. and Russia can deploy. The formal channels to verify the locations and status of nuclear forces have ceased to exist, forcing intelligence agencies to rely entirely on satellite imagery and other unilateral methods, which are more error-prone and easier to politicise. Nuclear and non-nuclear strategic systems are also entangled today and that, together with the premium both sides place on non-contact options like cyberattacks, can threaten nuclear command and control without crossing a nuclear threshold. This is why analysts have stressed the loss of predictability rather than the appearance of new warheads alone.

New START's expiry also makes the prospect of including China and other nuclear states in a larger nonproliferation regime harder in practice. Washington can now argue that it shouldn't be the only state constrained while Beijing grows. Moscow can argue that it shouldn't accept constraints while NATO's aggregate capabilities shape its security environment. And Beijing has already argued that its arsenal is smaller than those of the U.S. and Russia and that therefore it's "not fair or reasonable" to demand it enter their disarmament framework now.

In 2025, Arms Control Association board chairman Thomas Countryman argued that the most realistic near-term path is a regime with three prongs: the U.S. and Russia establishing measures to restore basic level of transparency, the P5 group standardising definitions and modest transparency practices; and setting up of nonproliferation tools such as hotlines, launch notifications, incident prevention, and fissile material security, to involve more states without immediately forcing them to count each other's warheads.

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