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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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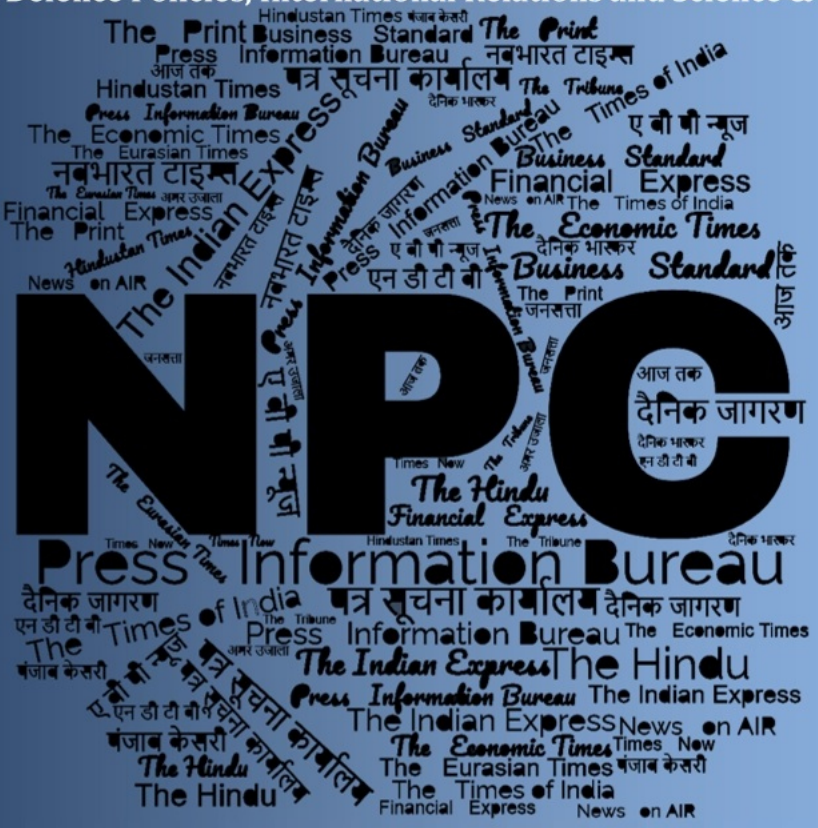

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Defence News

वायुसेना को मिलेंगे 114 राफेल लड़ाकू विमान

Source: Dainik Jagaran, Dt. 13 Feb 2026

रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह की अध्यक्षता में अब तक के देश के सबसे बड़े रक्षा सौदे को मिली मंजूरी

संजय मिश्र • जागरण

- रक्षा खरीद परिषद ने 3.60 लाख करोड़ रुपये के प्रस्तावों को दी हरी झंडी
- परिषद से कुछ अन्य सैन्य साजो-सामान की खरीद के लिए भी दी गई सहमति
- अगले सप्ताह भारत की यात्रा पर आ रहे फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुअल मैक्रों

नई दिल्ली: रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह की अध्यक्षता में रक्षा खरीद परिषद (डीएसी) ने वायुसेना के लिए युद्धक विमानों की कमी को पूरा करने के लिए देश के अब तक के सबसे बड़े रक्षा सौदे को स्वीकृति दी है। इसके तहत आपरेशन सिंदूर के हीरो रहे 114 और राफेल बहुउद्देश्यीय लड़ाकू विमानों की फ्रांस से खरीद की जाएगी। वायुसेना की मारक एवं प्रतिरोधी क्षमता में वृद्धि की दृष्टि से बेहद अहम माने जा रहे इन विमानों की खरीद भारत व फ्रांस की सरकारों के बीच अंतर्देशीय समझौते के तहत की जाएगी। इसमें 96 राफेल विमानों का निर्माण टेक्नोलाजी ट्रांसफर के तहत भारत में किया जाएगा, जबकि दासौ एविएशन 18 विमानों की आपूर्ति उड़ान के लिए तैयार स्थिति में करेगी। फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुअल मैक्रों की अगले हफ्ते भारत यात्रा से ठीक पहले डीएसी ने तीनों सेनाओं के लिए लगभग 3.60 लाख करोड़ रुपये के रक्षा खरीद आवश्यकता प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी प्रदान की। इनमें कांबैट मिसाइलें और एयर-शिप बेस्ड हाई एल्टीट्यूड स्यूडो सेटेलाइट (एस-एचएपीएस) की खरीद के साथ अमेरिका से छह और पी8आइ समुद्री सर्विलांस व एंटी-सबमरीन वारफेयर एयरक्राफ्ट की खरीद आवश्यकता प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी भी शामिल है।

मंत्रालय के अनुसार, राफेल की खरीद से युद्ध के सभी मौकों पर हवाई प्रभुत्व की भूमिका निभाने की क्षमता बढ़ेगी। दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी रक्षा खरीद में से एक माने जा रहे इस सौदे में मेक इन इंडिया को खास तवज्जो दी गई है। सौदे का ब्योरा अभी साझा नहीं किया गया है, मगर सूत्रों के अनुसार 96 विमान भारत में बनाए जाएंगे, जिनमें 50 प्रतिशत कल-पुर्जे स्वदेशी होंगे। इन 114 विमानों की लागत अभी उजागर नहीं की गई है, मगर अनुमान है कि यह 2.90 से 3.15 लाख करोड़ रुपये तक होगी। बता दें कि आपरेशन सिंदूर में राफेल जेट ने पाकिस्तान पर जमकर कहर बरपाया था। वायुसेना उपप्रमुख एयर मार्शल नागेश कपूर ने बुधवार को राफेल को आपरेशन सिंदूर का हीरो करार दिया था।

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96 राफेल विमान टेक्नोलाजी ट्रांसफर समझौते के तहत भारत में बनेंगे

18 विमानों की आपूर्ति फ्रांस से उड़ान के लिए तैयार स्थिति में होगी

नौसेना के लिए अमेरिका से खरीदे जाएंगे छह पी8आइ विमान

- डीएसी ने नौसेना के लिए अमेरिका से छह पी8आइ लंबी दूरी के समुद्री टोही विमानों की खरीद आवश्यकता को भी मंजूरी प्रदान की। इन्हें तैयार स्थिति में खरीदा जाएगा। इसमें टेक्नोलाजी ट्रांसफर शामिल नहीं है। इन विमानों के नौसेना में आने से इसकी एंटी-सबमरीन वारफेयर, समुद्री निगरानी तथा प्रहार क्षमता में काफी वृद्धि होगी।
- रक्षा खरीद प्रक्रिया 2020 की मेक-आइ कैटेगरी के तहत चार एमडब्ल्यू मरीन गैस टर्बाइन बेस्ड इलेक्ट्रिक पावर जनरेटर को नौसेना में शामिल करने से विदेशी निर्भरता कम होगी।
- भारतीय तटरक्षक बल के डोर्नियर एयरक्राफ्ट के लिए इलेक्ट्रो-आप्टिकल तथा इंफ्रा-रेड सिस्टम की खरीद प्रस्ताव को हरी झंडी दी गई जिससे समुद्री निगरानी क्षमता को प्रभावी बनाने में मदद मिलेगी। कांबैट मिसाइल सेना की सटीक मार करने के साथ ही स्टैंड-आफ ग्राउंड अटैक क्षमता को भी बढ़ाएगी।
- एस-एचएपीएस का इस्तेमाल इंटेलिजेंस, सर्विलांस और टोही उद्देश्य के साथ ही इलेक्ट्रानिक इंटेलिजेंस, टेलीकम्युनिकेशन और रिमोट सेंसिंग के लिए किया जाएगा।
- सेना के लिए एंटी-टैंक माइंस (विभव), आर्मर्ड रिकवरी व्हीकल्स, टी-72 टैंक, इंफैंट्री कांबैट व्हीकल्स (बीएमपी-II) के व्हीकल प्लेटफार्म्स की खरीद आवश्यकताओं को भी मंजूरी दी गई है। दुश्मन की मैकेनाइज्ड फौज को रोकने के लिए एंटी-टैंक आब्सटेकल सिस्टम के तौर पर विभव माइंस बिछाई जाएंगी।

एचएएल के साथ आठ डोर्नियर-228 विमानों का समझौता

रक्षा मंत्रालय ने गुरुवार को हिंदुस्तान एयरोनाटिक्स लिमिटेड (एचएएल) की कानपुर स्थित ट्रांसपोर्ट एयरक्राफ्ट डिवीजन के साथ भारतीय तटरक्षक बल के लिए आठ डोर्नियर-228 विमानों की खरीद के लिए एक समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं। इस समझौते का मूल्य 2,312 करोड़ रुपये है।

जागरण ब्यूरो, नई दिल्ली: फ्रांसीसी राष्ट्रपति वैश्विक एआइ समिट के लिए 17-19 फरवरी तक भारत यात्रा पर होंगे और उनकी यात्रा से पहले राफेल के खरीद प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी दी गई है, लेकिन अंतिम समझौते में अभी वक्त लगेगा। डीएसी के बाद पीएम मोदी की अध्यक्षता वाली सुरक्षा मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति खरीद प्रस्ताव पर अंतिम मुहर लगाएगी। इसके बाद ही रक्षा मंत्रालय व वायुसेना समझौते की प्रक्रिया को गति देंगे। अंतिम समझौते के बाद भी राफेल के उत्पादन व आपूर्ति होने में करीब पांच से सात वर्ष का समय लगेगा। राफेल की खासियत है कि यह हवा से हवा और हवा से जमीन दोनों पर सटीक हमले करने में सक्षम है। राफेल मेटियोर और स्कैल्प क्रूज मिसाइलों से सुसज्जित है जो लंबी दूरी से भी दुश्मन पर प्रहार कर सकता है। बता दें कि वायुसेना ने 114 बहुउद्देश्यीय लड़ाकू विमानों की खरीद के लिए अप्रैल, 2019 में आरएफआइ टेंडर जारी किया था। शुरुआती दौड़ में लाकहीड मार्टिन का एफ-21 तथा बोइंग का एफ/ए-18 और यूरोफाइटर टाइफून शामिल थे, मगर बाजी फिर राफेल के नाम रही।

लड़ाकू विमानों की स्क्वाड्रन संख्या निर्धारित 42 से 30 पर आ गई है, इनमें 2016 में खरीदे गए 36 राफेल के दो बेड़े शामिल हैं

वायुसेना में लड़ाकू विमानों की स्क्वाड्रन संख्या निर्धारित 42 से घटकर फिलहाल 30 पर आ गई है। इनमें 2016 में खरीदे गए 36 राफेल के दो बेड़े शामिल हैं।

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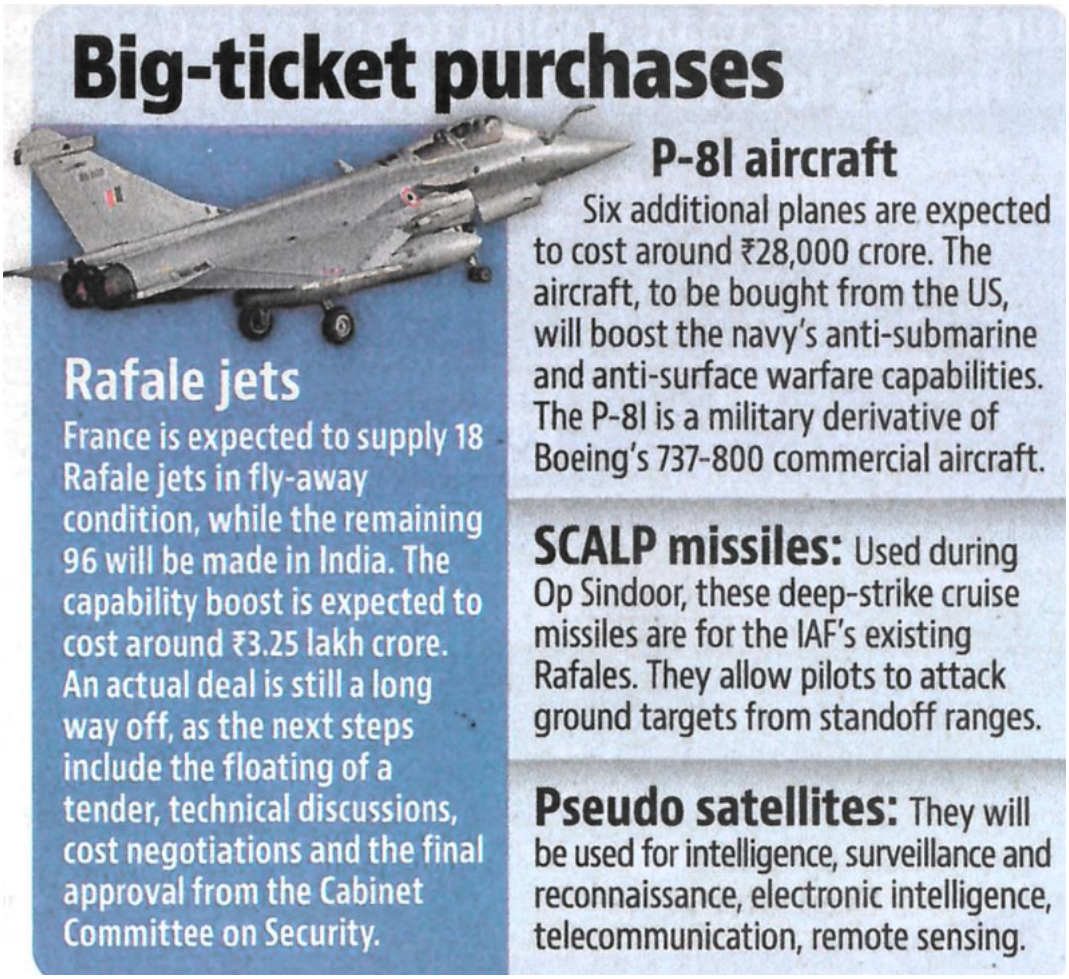
DAC nod for Rafale fighters, sub hunters

Source: Hindustan Times, Dt. 13 Feb 2026

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) has cleared the proposals worth ₹3.60 lakh crore to procure 114 new Rafale jets from France's Dassault Aviation, officials said on Thursday. For the Indian Air Force (IAF), AoN was approved for the procurement of Multi-Role Fighter Aircraft (MRFA) {Rafale}, Combat Missiles, and Air-Ships Based High-Altitude Pseudo-Satellite (AS-HAPS).

The majority of the MRFA to be procured will be manufactured in India. The Combat Missiles will enhance the stand-off ground-attack capability with deep-strike power and very high accuracy. The AS-HAPS will be utilised for persistent Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, Electronic Intelligence, telecommunications, and remote sensing for military purposes.

“The procurement of MRFA will enhance the capability of undertaking air dominance roles across the spectrum of conflict and significantly boost the deterrence capabilities of IAF with long range offensive strikes,” the defence ministry said in a statement.



“The Combat Missiles will enhance the stand-off ground attack capability with deep strike power and very high accuracy. The AS-HAPS will be utilised towards carrying out persistent Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, Electronic Intelligence, telecommunication and remote sensing for military purposes,” it said further.

The approval for procurement of the Rafale jets came just four days ahead of French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to India. The Indian Air Force's fighter squadron strength has come down to 29 in recent months, which is below the approved number of 42. Its workhorse MiG-21 was

retired in September and other early variants of the MiG-29, the Anglo-French Jaguar and the French Mirage 2000, are nearing the retirement, according to Reuters.

Apart from the upgrade for the IAF, proposals have also been cleared for the Indian Army for procurement of Anti-Tank Mines (Vibhav) and overhaul of Vehicle Platforms of Armoured Recovery Vehicles (ARVs), T-72 Tanks and Infantry Combat Vehicles (BMP-II). “Vibhav mines will be laid as anti-tank obstacle system to delay the advance of enemy mechanized forces. The overhaul of vehicle platforms of ARVs, T-72 Tanks and BMP-II will enhance service life of equipment ensuring readiness and operational effectiveness of the Indian Army,” the ministry said in its statement.

The Navy is also set for an upgrade with clearance for 04 MW Marine Gas Turbine based Electric Power Generator and P8I Long Range Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft. “Induction of 04 MW Marine Gas Turbine based Electric Power Generator under Make-I category of Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020 will minimise the dependency on foreign manufacturers, ensure self-reliance in power generation requirement of Indian Navy.

The acquisition of P8I aircraft will significantly boost the Navy’s combat/war-fighting capability of long-range anti-submarine warfare, maritime surveillance and maritime strike capability,” the ministry said.

https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-to-get-additional-114-rafale-jets-as-dac-clears-proposals-for-rs-3-60-lakh-crore-101770894004151.html

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रोल्स रॉयस भारत में अगली पीढ़ी के लड़ाकू विमानों के इंजन बनाएगी

Source: Dainik Jagaran, Dt. 13 Feb 2026

नई दिल्ली, प्रेट्र: रोल्स रायस भारत में अगली पीढ़ी के लड़ाकू विमानों के इंजन का निर्माण स्थानीय स्तर पर करेगी। खास बात यह है कि यह परियोजना किसी भारतीय कंपनी के साथ मिलकर तैयार की जाएगी और इसमें प्रयोग की जाने वाली तकनीकी का पूरी तरह हस्तांतरण भी किया जाएगा। बुधवार को प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी से मुलाकात के बाद कंपनी के सीईओ टुफान एर्गिनबिलगिक ने गुरुवार को एक रणनीतिक रोडमैप पेश किया। इस पहल के तहत रोल्स रायस भारत में अपने कार्यबल को दोगुना से ज्यादा करके लगभग 10,000 लोगों तक पहुंचाने और लोकल सप्लाई चेन सोर्सिंग में 10 गुना बढ़ोतरी करने पर

- भारतीय कंपनी संग परियोजना को पहनाया जाएगा अमलीजामा
- इसमें प्रयुक्त तकनीकी का पूरी तरह हस्तांतरण भी किया जाएगा

विचार कर रही है।

सीईओ ने कहा, "जैसे-जैसे हम भारत के रक्षा, विमानन और ऊर्जा सेक्टर में अपनी भागीदारी बढ़ाएंगे, वैसे-वैसे हम भारत में अपने इकोसिस्टम का विस्तार करेंगे।" सीईओ ने कहा, 'भारत के लिए हमारी महत्वाकांक्षा देश में हमारी दशकों पुरानी उपस्थिति, हमारे बढ़ते फुटप्रिंट, हमारी गहरी इंडस्ट्री पार्टनरशिप और एडवांस टेक्नोलाजी की मजबूत नींव पर खड़ी है।' फिलहाल 1,400 से ज्यादा रोल्स रायस इंजन अलग-अलग डिफेंस प्लेटफार्म पर काम कर रहे हैं। इसमें भारतीय वायुसेना और नौसेना के जगुआर कांबैट एयरक्राफ्ट और हाक ट्रेनर, आर्मी के अर्जुन मेन बैटल टैंक नौसेना के कई जहाज व सबमरीन शामिल हैं।

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Defence Ministry signs Rs 2,312-crore deal with HAL for 8 Dornier 228 aircraft, equipment for Coast Guard

Source: The Indian Express, Dt. 13 Feb 2026

The Ministry of Defence on Thursday signed a major deal with the state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the acquisition of eight Dornier 228 aircraft along with Operational Role Equipment for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) for Rs 2,312 crore.

In a statement, the Ministry of Defence said that a contract has been signed with the Kanpur-based Transport Aircraft Division of HAL under the Buy (Indian) category in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh in New Delhi.

This is the second major deal that the government has signed with HAL in this financial year. In September last year, the Ministry of Defence had signed a Rs 62,370 crore deal with HAL for the procurement of 97 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk1A for the Indian Air Force. This includes 68 fighters and 29 twin-seaters, along with associated equipment. The delivery of these aircraft would begin during 2027-28 and be completed over a period of six years.

Dornier 228 is a twin-engine turboprop and a multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft manufactured by HAL for the ICG. According to the ICG, the aircraft is lightweight with a wide range of operating speeds and fuel efficiency.

The ICG operates this aircraft in two variants in 228-100 and 228-200 series. The highly versatile aircraft can perform a variety of roles, including maritime patrol and surveillance, marine pollution contingency, search and rescue missions and medical evacuation.

The Defence Ministry statement noted that the programme is expected to generate significant direct and indirect employment by strengthening HAL's production ecosystem and supporting a broad network of MSMEs and ancillary industries.

"It will also create sustained opportunities in Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul and life cycle technical support," it added. "The contract reinforces the Government's commitment to Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make-in-India while bolstering India's maritime security architecture," the statement noted.

https://indianexpress.com/article/india/defence-ministry-signs-deal-hal-dornier-228-aircraft-coast-guard-10528994/

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In a first, IAF instructors to train British pilots at Royal Air Force Valley

Source: The Indian Express, Dt. 13 Feb 2026

For the first time, Indian Air Force instructors will impart training to British pilots at the Royal Air Force (RAF) Valley in the UK. According to a statement from the British High Commission, the decision in this regard was taken at the 19th UK-India Air Staff Talks in New Delhi on Thursday, where both countries have agreed to further enhance military training engagements.

Under the latest agreement, the Indian Air Force (IAF) will deploy three Qualified Flight Instructors (QFI) to Royal Air Force (RAF) Valley – the training base for British fast jet pilots, the statement

noted. “This marks the first time that Indian QFIs will impart fast jet training to British pilots at RAF Valley. The deployment will initially be for a period of two years,” it added.

IAF instructors will be deployed in RAF Valley to instruct on the BAE Hawk T2 or Texan T1 aircraft. During their tenure, the Indian QFIs will remain under IAF command while working for RAF commanders on instructional duties. An agreement on cooperation in military training was signed between the UK and India during PM Keir Starmer’s visit to Mumbai in October 2025.

According to the statement, the development closely follows the maiden deployment in January this year of an Indian Air Force officer as an instructor to the Royal Air Force College Cranwell – the air academy that trains the next generation of RAF officers.

With this, all three British military academies will now host Indian officers as instructors from respective services. The Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth already has an officer from the Indian Navy as one of its instructors since May 2024. This development was followed by the deployment of an Indian Army officer to Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in May 2025 as an instructor.

The statement quoted Air Vice Marshal Ian Townsend, Assistant Chief of the Air Staff, as stating that the signing of this Letter of Agreement is a significant step in strengthening the longstanding relationship between the Royal Air Force and the Indian Air Force.

“Bringing Indian QFIs into UK Military Flying Training Systems deepens our cooperation, enhances interoperability and reinforces our shared commitment to excellence in aircrew training,” he said. “Together, we are investing in the foundation of a long-term collaboration and shaping a partnership that is both enduring and strategic in its outlook,” he added.

Commodore Chris Saunders, MBE Royal Navy, Defence Adviser, British High Commission, said: “The forthcoming deployment of Indian Qualified Flying Instructors to the UK represents another significant milestone in our expanding defence relationship, positively building on the mandate of UK-India Vision 2035.”

“It reinforces the mutual trust and shared experience that underpins our training cooperation and exemplifies the increasingly sophisticated levels of interoperability we are building together across our services,” he added. “From the presence of Indian training officers instructing in each of the UK’s three officer training academies, to this next step of Indian instructors integrated into our professional flying training squadrons, we continue to build depth, understanding and cooperation at every level of the UK-India defence relationship,” he said.

The Air Staff Talks are part of annual engagements, with both sides usually represented by a 2-star officer or above to discuss areas of military collaboration. The previous edition of the staff talks was held in London in 2025.

In 2025, the UK and India conducted the largest ever maritime exercise involving the Carrier Strike Groups of both navies. This was closely followed by the joint army exercise Ajeya Warrior in Rajasthan. In 2023, the Indian Air Force participated in the UK’s multilateral air exercise Cobra Warrior for the first time. In 2024, the Royal Air Force was among the participants for IAF’s first multilateral air combat exercise Tarang Shakti.

https://indianexpress.com/article/india/in-a-first-iaf-instructors-to-train-british-pilots-at-royal-air-force-valley-10529300/

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US keen to cooperate with India via Quad, bolster defence ties

Source: Hindustan Times, Dt. 13 Feb 2026

Washington remains keen to cooperate with India through the Quad grouping and bolster defence ties with New Delhi, indicated the Trump administration's top diplomat for South Asia in a briefing before a subcommittee in the US House of Representatives.

Paul Kapur, who serves as Assistant Secretary of State handling US ties with South and Central Asia, added that the US is planning fresh arms sales to India. Kapur also pointed to the resilience of the US-India relationship despite recent tensions over trade and welcomed the recent framework agreement for a bilateral trade deal announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump earlier this month.

"India with its size, location and commitment to a free and open region anchors South Asia and more broadly, the western half of the Indo-Pacific, the United States and India maintain high level diplomatic touchpoints such as the 2+2 ministerial and cooperate closely in the defence, technology and energy sectors bilaterally and also through the Quad. Cooperation in these areas has remained robust even as we resolved long standing issues in our trade relationship, as evidenced by the renewed 10 year US-India defence framework agreement, the TRUST initiative and Indian purchases of US products ranging from drones to liquefied natural gas," Kapur said in his opening statement to the US House of Representative's subcommittee on South and Central Asian affairs. He added that the conclusion of a framework for a trade agreement between India and the US had opened up further opportunities for the relationship.

Significantly, Kapur pointed to potential new sales of weapons systems to India. "We also have some potential purchases of weapon systems in the pipeline that will help India to protect itself better, ensure its sovereignty, also will create American jobs, be good for both sides," he told representatives on the committee.

An expert in security and defence related issues in South Asia, Kapur was unable to provide further details on how Washington proposed to monitor New Delhi's purchases of Russian energy after Representative Keith Self questioned him on the subject.

"I think the Quad is a very important platform. It has done well. It was defunct in 2017 when it was revived during the first Trump administration, and it's grown in importance since then and it's a platform that enables us to connect and cooperate in unique ways with our like-minded partners. We were talking about India earlier in the quad and India's been an active participant, but we can promote our humanitarian tech-related defense and econ-related and trade-related interests," Kapur stated when questioned by Congresswoman Sydney Kamlager-Dove on prospects for the four-nation partnership.

India, US, Australia and Japan make up the Quad grouping that is viewed as a counterweight to China. However, key lawmakers made their disagreements with Trump's handling of relations with India.

"50% tariffs on India, one of the highest rates in the world, tore a needless rupture in bilateral ties that sacrificed decades of painstaking trust-building between our two countries. Dragging on negotiations for over a year cost us the timely convening of the annual Quad Leaders Summit and

weakened our posture in the Indo-Pacific," said Congresswoman Kamlager-Dove, who leads the Democratic members on the South and Central Asia subcommittee.

Kapur also addressed US priorities with Pakistan, especially in light of closer ties between the Trump administration and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government. Referring to Pakistan as an "important partner", he outlined critical minerals, trade and counterterrorism cooperation as key US focus areas in ties with Islamabad.

"Pakistan is another important partner in the region. We're working together with Pakistan to realise the potential of its critical mineral resources, combining US government seed financing with private sector know-how to the benefit of both of our countries. Our trade in energy and agriculture is expanding as well, and our ongoing counterterrorism cooperation helps Pakistan combat internal security threats while addressing transnational dangers that could harm the US or our partners," Kapur said.

https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/us-keen-to-cooperate-with-india-via-quad-bolster-defence-ties-paul-kapur-101770919974694.html

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Defence Budget: Reshaping India's defence priorities

-by Kripa Nautiyal, retired Additional Director General of the Indian Coast Guard

Source: The Pioneer, Dt. 13 Feb 2026

Wars do not begin with the first shot; they begin with years of neglected preparedness. When Operation Sindoor unfolded in May 2025, India demonstrated political resolve and operational precision. What it also revealed, less comfortably, were challenges in certain areas. The Union Budget 2026-27, presented on February 1, is the first opportunity for the government to respond institutionally to those lessons. With a record defence allocation of `7.85 lakh crore, it seeks to do exactly that.

The 15 per cent increase over last year's allocation of `6.81 lakh crore marks the largest year-on-year jump in a decade. More importantly, it signals a shift in strategic prioritisation. Defence now accounts for roughly 14.6 per cent of total central government expenditure and about 2 per cent of GDP, reversing a steady decline that had raised concerns within the strategic community. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has described the allocation as restoring balance between security, development, and self-reliance. The question is whether the numbers match the ambition.

A Budget shaped by conflict

Operation Sindoor — India's precision military action against terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir — cast a long shadow over this budget. The operation underlined the importance of real-time intelligence, rapid targeting cycles, secure communications, and credible deterrence across domains. Emergency procurement undertaken in its aftermath exposed both the armed forces' operational agility and the fragility of existing stocks and systems.

It is therefore unsurprising that the most significant feature of Budget 2026 is the sharp increase in capital expenditure. An allocation of `2.19 lakh crore — nearly 22 per cent higher than last year — has been provided for modernisation. Of this, around `1.85 lakh crore is earmarked specifically for capital acquisition, reflecting an attempt to rebuild hard combat capability rather than merely sustain the status quo. Major allocations for aircraft and aero-engines, naval platforms, and a wide

category of “other equipment” indicate a conscious move away from single-platform obsession towards a more diversified capability mix. This is consistent with contemporary warfare trends, where effectiveness increasingly depends on integration across air, land, sea, space, and cyber domains.

Modernisation vs maintenance

Revenue expenditure, amounting to about `3.65 lakh crore, will continue to meet the armed forces’ operational requirements—ammunition, fuel, maintenance, and personnel costs. Defence pensions alone account for approximately `1.71 lakh crore, or over one-fifth of the total defence allocation. When combined with salaries and allowances, personnel-related expenditure consumes nearly half the budget.

This structural imbalance remains the single biggest constraint on rapid modernisation. Even as capital allocations rise, the pace of capability accretion is moderated by commitments that are politically sensitive but strategically inflexible. Without long-term reform, every future defence budget will continue to wrestle with the same dilemma.

Technology and the changing character of war

Senior military leadership has been unequivocal in its assessment that India must adapt to the new character of warfare. Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan has emphasised the shift from network-centric to data-centric operations, while Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi has declared 2026 the “Year of Networking and Data Centricity.”

Drones, counter-drone systems, artificial intelligence, secure data networks, and integrated air defence are no longer force multipliers — they are force essentials. The contemplation of new organisational structures, including specialised missile or drone formations, reflects lessons drawn not only from Operation Sindoor but also from conflicts in Ukraine, West Asia, and the Indo-Pacific. In modern war, the side that sees first, decides faster, and strikes precisely usually prevails. In this context, the allocation of `29,100 crore to the Defence Research and Development Organisation, with a strong bias towards capital expenditure, is significant. The continued emphasis on indigenous development under the Atmanirbhar Bharat framework is strategically sound, though success will depend on timelines, quality control, and the armed forces’ willingness to induct domestically developed systems at scale.

Maritime and coastal security

Maritime security has also gained renewed attention. While the Indian Coast Guard’s budget is accounted for separately from the core defence allocation, its expansion aligns with India’s growing recognition of the maritime domain as a key arena of strategic competition. Coastal security, maritime domain awareness, and presence across the Indian Ocean Region are no longer secondary concerns; they are integral to national security in an era of grey-zone threats and great-power rivalry.

Persistent gaps and uncomfortable comparisons

Despite its scale, the budget has drawn scepticism from analysts who argue that 2 per cent of GDP remains inadequate for a country facing a two-front challenge. Parliamentary committees and strategic experts have long recommended defence spending closer to 3 per cent of GDP, particularly if modernisation is to keep pace with emerging threats.

Comparisons with adversaries are sobering. China continues to expand its military capabilities with sustained real-term increases, while Pakistan allocates a higher percentage of its GDP to defence despite severe economic stress. Inflation and currency depreciation further erode the real purchasing power of India's nominal increase, particularly for imported platforms and subsystems.

Capability gaps persist. The Indian Air Force continues to operate significantly below its authorised fighter squadron strength. Submarine numbers remain inadequate for credible sea denial, and helicopter and training aircraft fleets require urgent renewal. These are not deficiencies that one generous budget can resolve; they require consistent investment over multiple budget cycles.

A Necessary, Not Transformative, Step

The Union Budget 2026-27 is best understood as a necessary correction rather than a decisive transformation. It acknowledges that national security has costs that cannot be deferred indefinitely. It provides the armed forces with greater fiscal headroom to address immediate gaps exposed by Operation Sindoor and to accelerate stalled modernisation programmes.

Yet money alone does not buy preparedness. Outcomes will depend on procurement efficiency, decision-making speed, technological absorption, and institutional adaptability. The armed forces' transition towards data-driven warfare will test not just budgets, but doctrine, training, and leadership culture.

The Real Test

Budgets are statements of intent; wars are tests of consequence. The true measure of this record allocation will not be found in expenditure statements or parliamentary debates, but in whether India's armed forces emerge more networked, more resilient, and more capable of imposing costs on adversaries across the conflict spectrum. Operation Sindoor reminded India that deterrence is credible only when backed by readiness. The 2026 defence budget moves the needle in the right direction. Whether it moves it far enough — and fast enough — will determine if the next crisis finds India merely resolute, or truly prepared.

https://dailypioneer.com/news/defence-budget-reshaping-india-s-defence-priorities

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Indian Navy assumes first-ever Command of Combined Task Force (CTF) 154

Source: Press Information Bureau, Dt. 12 Feb 2026

In a landmark development underscoring India's commitment to collaborative maritime security and capacity building in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond, the Indian Navy has assumed command of Combined Task Force (CTF) 154, a key multinational training task force under the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).

The change of command ceremony was conducted on 11 Feb 2026 at CMF Headquarters in Manama, Bahrain, and was presided over by VAdm Curt A Renshaw, Commander, CMF / US NAVCENT / US Fifth Fleet. VAdm Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (DCNS), Indian Navy, and senior military leaders from other member nations were in attendance. Cmde Milind M Mokashi, Shaurya Chakra, of the Indian Navy, formally took over as Commander CTF 154 from the outgoing Commander of the Italian Navy.

CTF 154 is specifically oriented towards training and capacity building of member nations of CMF. It reflects the region's growing trust in India's professional expertise, operational experience, and a role as a *Preferred Security Partner* among the 47 nations of the CMF.

CTF 154, established in May 2023, is dedicated to enhancing maritime security through multinational training programs across the Middle East and the wider region.

The training focuses on five core pillars: Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), Law of the Sea, Maritime Interdiction Operations, Maritime Rescue and Assistance, and Leadership Development. The task force conducts regular Maritime Security Enhancement Training (MSET) events, exercises like Compass Rose and Northern/Southern Readiness, and outreach to build partner nations' operational capabilities against common threats such as illegal trafficking, piracy, and irregular migration.

CTF 154 operates alongside CMF's other task forces: CTF 150 (Maritime Security), CTF 151 (Counter-Piracy), CTF 152 (Maritime Security in Arabian Gulf) and CTF 153 (Maritime Security in Red Sea). The Indian Navy looks forward to a productive tenure, delivering high-impact training initiatives and reinforcing global maritime partnerships for peace, prosperity, and security.

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2226776&reg=3&lang=1

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QA-industry conclave to discuss future of quality assurance in naval & defence manufacturing

Source: Press Information Bureau, Dt. 12 Feb 2026

A Quality Assurance (QA) Conclave, on the theme 'Traceability, Speed and Trust – Leveraging Technology for Smarter Quality Assurance', will be held at Manekshaw Auditorium, New Delhi on February 13, 2026. It will bring together senior officials from the Ministry of Defence, Indian Navy,

Quality Assurance agencies, shipyards, defence PSUs, and leading industry partners to deliberate on the future of quality assurance in naval & defence manufacturing.

The conclave aims to highlight the critical role of digital technologies in strengthening quality assurance processes, enhancing traceability across the manufacturing chain, accelerating approvals & certifications, and building long-term trust among stakeholders. It will serve as a common platform for policy makers, practitioners, and industry leaders to exchange best practices and chart a roadmap for a modern, technology-enabled QA ecosystem.

The technical sessions will feature focused panel discussions on Digital QA for Shipbuilding – Traceability, Speed and Trust; QA Policy Compliance and Industry Collaborations; and QA in Naval Shipbuilding and Replenishment Orders for Spares. These discussions will address key challenges and opportunities in shipbuilding, spares provisioning, policy compliance, and collaborative quality assurance frameworks.

Several important initiatives will be launched during the conclave, including Release of the Indian Naval & Marine Industry – A Capability Catalogue to strengthen industry engagement and information sharing; Promulgation of the Joint Service Guidelines on Common Information Model for integrated data management of combat systems and sensors; and Conferment of Green Channel Status and Self-Certification to eligible industry partners in recognition of proven quality performance.

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2226841&reg=3&lang=1

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Science & Technology News

Parliament Question: Achievements under NQM

Source: Press Information Bureau, Dt. 12 Feb 2026

Department of Science & Technology is implementing the National Quantum Mission. The progress achieved under the Mission in 2025 is given below:

i. Under the Mission, four Thematic Hubs (T-Hubs) have been established in the financial year 2024–25. These hubs focus on key areas: Quantum Computing at the Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru, Quantum Communication at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras in association with C-DoT, Quantum Sensing & Metrology at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, and Quantum Materials & Devices at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. These hubs have been incorporated as Section-8 Companies by their respective host institutions and have constituted their respective Hub Governing Boards (HGBs) for effective governance and administration. Funds have been released to all four T-Hubs to initiate their operations. The hubs are now fully functional and are engaged in a activities including Technology Development, Human Resource Development, Entrepreneurship Development & Industry Collaboration and International Collaborations.

ii. State-of-the-art fabrication and central facilities are being established at premier institutions for indigenous quantum hardware development.

iii. Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi has demonstrated quantum entanglement based free space secure communication over 1km distance at IIT Delhi campus.

iv. Under NQM, exclusive guidelines were formulated to onboard and support quantum startups through funding, access to national infrastructure and mentorship. Eight startups have been supported under the Mission, and a rolling Call for Startups is operational to induct early-stage ventures across all four quantum verticals.

Notable outcomes achieved by startups are:

- QuNu Labs Pvt. Ltd. has developed and demonstrated a 500 km Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) network that detects eavesdropping and ensures secure encryption key distribution to protect confidential data.
- QpiAI created a 64-qubit scalable, fault-tolerant Quantum Processor Unit (QPU) to achieve quantum advantage in real-world applications.
- Prenishq, developed a high-precision diode laser with superior beam quality and stability for quantum communication and computing.
- PQuest Group under the IIT Bombay's Quantum Sensing & Metrology T-Hub launched India's first indigenous Quantum Diamond Microscope (QDM) for advanced magnetic field imaging.

These efforts contribute directly to India's capabilities in quantum communication, computing and sensing. Under NQM, state-of-the-art fabrication and central facilities are being established at IIT Bombay, IISc Bengaluru, IIT Kanpur and IIT Delhi to create world-class quantum device development capability in the country.

- Facilities for quantum computing hardware at IISc Bengaluru and IIT Bombay focus on superconducting, photonic and spin-qubit platforms.
- Quantum sensing and metrology facilities at IIT Bombay and IIT Kanpur support development of advanced sensor systems.
- The quantum materials and devices facility at IIT Delhi is aimed at indigenous fabrication of materials and components required for scaling quantum technologies.

These shared national facilities focus on providing access to researchers from academia, startups, industry and strategic sectors under defined governance and utilisation frameworks coordinated through the Mission and the respective host institutions.

To build a quantum-ready workforce under the National Quantum Mission, UG Minor and M.Tech programmes in Quantum Technologies were launched in collaboration with All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). A dedicated Call for Undergraduate Teaching Laboratories in Quantum Technologies has also been issued to promote hands-on learning among students. In parallel, to prepare for cybersecurity challenges posed by quantum computing, a Concept Paper on India's Quantum-Safe Ecosystem has been developed recommending national post-quantum cryptography standards, regulatory and compliance frameworks and promotion of indigenous R&D.

Further, a dedicated Task Force comprising representatives from academia, industry, R&D laboratories, start-ups and government agencies has been constituted to guide migration to

quantum-resistant cryptography and establish testing and certification mechanisms. DRDO has established a Quantum Test and Research Centre (QTRC) for setting up facilities for QKD lab, Post Quantum Cryptography and Quantum Random Number Generator mainly for security analysis, evaluation and integration testing. This information was submitted by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Dr. Jitendra Singh in Rajya Sabha on 12th February 2026.

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2227070&reg=3&lang=1

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