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Defence News

India, Australia ink 12+ pacts on def, counter-terrorism & tech

Source: *The Times of India*, Dt. 17 Apr 2026

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New Delhi: As he held talks with visiting Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker, PM Narendra Modi stressed that India and Austria backed stable, sustainable and lasting peace in Ukraine and West Asia, reiterating that military conflict will not resolve issues. The visit, the first by an Austrian chancellor in 42 years, saw over a dozen agreements and announcements across counterterrorism, military affairs and technology.

In his media statement, Modi said the world was going through a serious and tense situation, with its impact felt by all. "In such a tense global environment, India and Austria are in agreement that solutions cannot be achieved through military conflict. Whether in Ukraine or West Asia, we support a stable, sustainable and lasting peace," he said, adding both sides agreed global institutional reform was essential.

On West Asia, MEA secretary Sibi George said both sides underscored dialogue

Macron dials Modi, discusses Hormuz

French President **Emmanuel Macron** spoke to PM Narendra Modi Thursday on developments in the West Asia conflict, including the Strait of Hormuz, in their third conversation since the US-Israel strikes on Iran on Feb 28. Both leaders emphasised securing safe passage for merchant shipping through the key energy waterway and a return to dialogue and diplomacy. "We discussed the situation in Western Asia and agreed on the urgent need to restore security and freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz," Modi said on X.



Talks come amid efforts by Macron and UK PM Keir Starmer to build a European coalition to ensure navigation once hostilities cease. France has called it a defensive mission. India, however, has shown little interest in joining any military coalition, focusing instead on engaging Tehran diplomatically. TNN

and diplomacy, including safe, unimpeded maritime passage. On Ukraine, they backed a comprehensive and lasting peace based on the UN Charter and international law.

Modi said eradicating terrorism remained a shared commitment. India and Austria signed a LoI to establish a Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism and condemned terrorism in all forms, including cross-border terror, Pahalgam attack and the Red Fort incident. Another LoI will provide an institutional framework for military

cooperation and defence technology partnership, building on the India-EU Defence and Security Partnership.

Bilateral ties received a boost in 2024 with Modi's Vienna visit, the first by an Indian PM in 41 years. Apart from six agreements, nine announcements were made in high-technology, education, space, startups and cyber security.

Modi said India-EU FTA marked a new phase, adding ties with Austria were entering a new era, with cooperation in defence, semiconductors, tech and biotechnology.

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Australia names India 'top-tier' defence partner in 2026 strategy, plans USD 887 billion investment

Source: *The Tribune*, Dt. 17 Apr 2026

Australia today released its 'National Defence Strategy for 2026' and named India as its 'top-tier' security partner and 'most important' defence partner. The document on national defence strategy,

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an update over the previous one in 2024, was released by the Australian Defence Ministry today. It said, "India is a top-tier security partner for Australia and our most important defence partner in the Northeast Indian Ocean." The Northeast Indian Ocean is central to the safety of Australia's sea lines of communication that are used by mercantile shipping, including for transporting crude oil, gas, and coal.

Australia's interests lie in a stable region that is well-disposed to Australia, the national defence strategy said. The Australian Government said it will continue to prioritise practical and tangible cooperation with India that enhances collective strength and directly contributes to Indo-Pacific stability. The two sides have Australia-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and are also partners in the Quad along with Japan and the US.

Australia also said it will 'continue to support' India's key role in the region and build interoperability by increasing the depth, complexity, and frequency of defence cooperation. "The Government will continue to pursue opportunities with India to drive practical bilateral and multilateral cooperation across all domains, defence industry cooperation, and information sharing," the document said.

The Australian defence strategy also said that, in addition to engagement with India, the Government's defence engagement in the Northeast Indian Ocean region will continue to focus on regularising the presence of Australian defence forces, including deployments, training, and exercises. This would include regional maritime domain awareness, defence industry engagement, and education and training cooperation. The Quad remains a vital diplomatic partnership between Australia, India, Japan, and the US.

"Australia will seek to expand cooperation between Australia, India, Japan, and the US to advance regional peace, security, and prosperity," it said, adding this includes strengthening maritime domain awareness, operational interoperability, and humanitarian assistance and emergency response cooperation.

The Australian Defence Ministry also put out an 'Integrated Investment Programme' that reaffirmed the longstanding practice of providing a 10-year funding model for defence. This funding model will provide defence, including the Australian Signals Directorate, Australian Submarine Agency, and Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Regulator, with total funding of USD 887 billion for a ten-year period till 2036. The total funding of USD 887 billion over the decade includes around USD 425 billion in allocated funding for the capabilities set out in the 2026 Integrated Investment Programme.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/india/australia-names-india-top-tier-defence-partner-in-2026-strategy-plans-usd-887-billion-investment/>

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INS Sudarshini arrives at Casablanca, Morocco

Source: Press Information Bureau, Dt. 16 Apr 2026

Indian Navy's Sail Training Ship, INS Sudarshini, made port call at Casablanca, Morocco on 15 Apr 2026, as part of its ongoing transoceanic deployment under Lokayan 26. The ship's arrival at this prominent port marks an important milestone in the expedition and reflects Indian Navy's sustained efforts to enhance maritime engagement in line with the vision of MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across the Region). The visit further

underscores the strengthening of bilateral relations and naval cooperation between India and Morocco.

On arrival, the Commanding Officer of INS Sudarshini called on Cmde Hassan Akouli, Commander of the Central Maritime Sector, Moroccan Navy, and Cmde Omar Nasri, Director of the Royal Naval School, Morocco. Discussions focused on exploring avenues for enhanced maritime collaboration and training exchanges between the two navies.

During the three-day visit, the crew of INS Sudarshini will engage with personnel of the Royal Moroccan Navy, host senior officials and distinguished guests onboard, and participate in professional and cultural interactions aimed at further strengthening naval cooperation, diplomatic ties, and goodwill. The visit also provides valuable exposure to the crew and trainees, while highlighting India's expanding maritime engagement, international outreach, and proficiency in ocean sailing.



It may be noted that over the past year, four Indian Naval ships – INS Tabar, INS Tarkash, INS Sumedha, and INS Tushil have visited Casablanca, significantly enhancing mutual trust and interoperability. Further, RAdm Mohamed Tahin, Inspector of the Royal Moroccan Navy had visited Southern Naval Command of the Indian Navy in Nov 2025 as part of his official visit to India.

As INS Sudarshini continues its voyage across historic sea routes and international maritime corridors, the expedition promotes the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, reinforcing India's commitment to global maritime cooperation and goodwill.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2252709®=3&lang=1>

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Science & Technology News

36 rocket parts returned to earth, ISRO confirms in a report

Source: The Tribune, Dt. 17 Apr 2026

By the end of December 2025, 36 rocket bodies have re-entered the Earth's atmosphere, Indian Space Situational Awareness Report (ISSAR) 2025 released by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said. No small satellite launch vehicle (SSLV) rocket bodies remained in orbit by the end of last year.

Spent rocket bodies are large, discarded upper stages orbiting Earth that constitute roughly 50 per cent of the total debris mass in Low Earth Orbit (LEO). These massive objects pose high collision risks, often containing residual fuel that can cause explosions. This proves that ISRO manages spent rocket debris to avert any mishap.

The report also stated more than 1.5 lakh close approach alerts were issued by Combined Space Operations Centre (CSpOC) of US Space Command for ISRO's Earth orbiting satellites to avoid collisions. There were four collision avoidance manoeuvres (CAMs) for geo synchronous earth orbit (GEO), while 14 CAMs, including one for NISAR, were performed for LEO satellites.

"All manoeuvre plans, including those of the CAMs, were subjected to close approach risk analysis to rule out any potential close approach with other neighbouring space objects within a few days of the manoeuvres. Eighty-two manoeuvre plans were revised to avoid post-manoeuve close approaches with other space objects for LEO satellites," the report said.

Last year, globally the highest number of space launches were recorded ever. There were 328 launch attempts, out of which 315 launches were successful in placing 4,198 known operational satellites. A total of 4,651 objects were added to the space object population in this year in a significant rise compared to the previous years- the space object population increased by 2,963 objects from 254 launches in 2024 and 3,135 objects from 212 launches in 2023.

Last year, 144 Indian spacecraft, including those from private operators and academic institutions were launched. The number of operational satellites owned by the Government was 22 in LEO and 31 in Geo-synchronous Earth Orbit (GEO). In addition, two Indian deep space missions, namely, Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter (CH2O) and Aditya-L1 at the Sun-Earth Lagrange's point, are also active. One of the notable events in 2025 was the lunar flyby of the Chandrayaan-3 mission's Propulsion Module, which was placed in a high-altitude Earth orbit in November 2023.

There were five launches from Sriharikota spaceport, namely GSLV-F15/NVS-02, PSLV-C61/EOS-9, GSLV-F16/NISAR, LVM3-M5/CMS-03, and LVM3-M6/Blue bird Block-2 mission. All of them, except PSLV-C61, successfully injected the payloads in their nominally designated orbits. PSLV-C61 suffered a third stage anomaly that resulted in a suborbital flight and could not inject the EOS-9 satellite into its orbit.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/india/36-rocket-parts-returned-to-earth-isro-confirms-in-a-report/>

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New research: Astronomers measure instant power of black hole jets

Source: *The Pioneer*, Dt. 17 Apr 2026

MARCIA DUNNAP
Cape Canaveral (US)

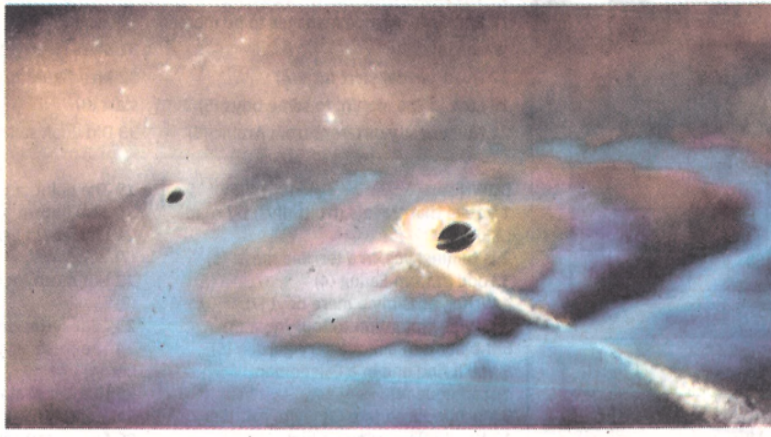
For the first time, scientists have measured the instantaneous mind-blowing power of jets blasting from a black hole. The jet power from this relatively close black hole-star system is equivalent to 10,000 suns, an international research team reported Thursday. They also tracked the jet speed: roughly 355 million mph (540 million kph) — half the speed of light.

Located 7,200 light-years away, Cygnus X-1 features not only a black hole — the first one ever identified more than a half-century ago — but a blue supergiant star, its constant companion. A light-

year is nearly 6 trillion miles (9.7 trillion kilometers).

The University of Oxford's Steve Prabu and his team based their findings on 18 years of high-resolution radio imaging obtained by a global telescope network. He conducted the research while still at Australia's Curtin University, which led the study published in *Nature Astronomy*.

Prabu and his colleagues were able to measure the swift power of these "dancing jets" as he calls them, as they were pushed in opposite directions by the star's wind. The group based its calculations on how much the jets were bent by the stellar wind as well as computer model-



ing. Until now, a black hole's jet power had to be averaged over tens of thousands of years, the researchers said.

Prabu said a key finding is that 10 per cent of all the energy released as matter falls toward the black hole is

carried away by the jets. On the skimpy side as black holes go, the one in Cygnus X-1 is continually pulling

gases from its stellar playmate as they orbit one another. Discovered in the 1960s, the binary system is located in our Milky Way's Cygnus, or swan, constellation. The supergiant star feeds material to the black hole, giving it "something to eat" and launch as jets," Prabu said in an email.

These jets can help scientists better understand how black holes help shape galaxies and other cosmic structures through large-scale shocks and turbulence.

Prabu plans to apply similar techniques to other black holes. "It would be exciting to measure jet power in many more systems," he said. (AP)

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1.5 lakh collision alerts for Indian satellites in 2025

Source: *The Times of India*, Dt. 17 Apr 2026

Earth's orbit is turning into a high-speed traffic grid and Indian satellites are swerving to stay safe. More than 1.5 lakh close approach alerts were issued for Indian space assets in 2025, exposing mounting collision risks in an increasingly crowded sky.

Data from Indian Space Situational Assessment Report 2025 shows about 1.6 lakh alerts globally, many generated by the US Space Command's Combined Space Operations Center. Each alert flags a potential nearmiss — a sign of how tightly packed orbital paths have become. Behind record-breaking launches lies mounting operational pressure. A surge in satellite constellations, often deployed in clusters exceeding 100 objects in a single day, has shrunk reaction windows and complicated tracking.

For Isro, that has meant constant vigilance. Indian missions carried out 18 collision avoidance manoeuvres (CAM) during the year — 14 in low Earth orbit and four in geosynchronous orbit — to steer clear of danger. "All manoeuvre plans, including CAMs, were subjected to close-approach risk analysis to rule out potential close approach with neighbouring space objects within a few days of the manoeuvres; 82 manoeuvre plans were revised to avoid post-manoevr close approaches with other space objects for LEO satellites, and two were revised to avoid post-manoevr conjunctions for GEO satellites," the report found.

Deep-space missions faced similar constraints. Chandrayaan-2 orbiter executed 16 orbit manoeuvres, with plans altered twice to avoid risks. Globally, 315 successful launches in 2025 placed 4,651 objects in orbit — far higher than 254 launches in 2024 and 212 in 2023. Of these, 4,198 are operational satellites.

While 1,911 objects re-entered the atmosphere, the total population in orbit continues to grow. A tipping point looms. Active satellites could outnumber debris within this decade, raising stakes for coordination as more objects move through narrow corridors at high speeds.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/science/1-5-lakh-collision-alerts-for-indian-satellites-in-2025/articleshow/130320741.cms>

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The Tribune
The Statesman
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਕੇਸਰੀ ਜਨਸੱਤਾ
The Hindu
The Economic Times
Press Information Bureau
The Indian Express
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नवभारत टाइम्स
दैनिक जागरण
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The Pioneer