

CONTENTS

S. No.	Title	Source	Page No.
DRDO News			1-5
1	Raksha Mantri reviews projects of indigenous military gas turbine engine development during visit to DRDO's GTRE in Bengaluru	<i>Press Information Bureau</i>	1
2	'पांच गुना तेज़ी से अगले पांच साल में तैयार करें एयरो इंजन'	<i>Dainik Jagran</i>	3
3	Committed to having own jet engine: Defence Minister sets 5-year deadline	<i>The Tribune</i>	3
4	Tata, two consortia led by L&T, Bharat Forge shortlisted for making fighter jets	<i>The Indian Express</i>	4
Defence News			5-13
5	MILAN 2026: 72 nations join mega naval drill in Visakhapatnam	<i>The Pioneer</i>	5
6	भारत के लिए 'नया रूस' बन उभर रहा है फ्रांस	<i>Dainik Jagran</i>	7
7	US envoy, top commander visit Army's Western Command HQ	<i>The Indian Express</i>	7
8	सेना की पश्चिमी कमान पहुंचे अमेरिका के राजदूत	<i>NavBharat Times</i>	8
9	A TRIPP across the South Caucasus	<i>The Tribune</i>	9
10	Visit of Vice Admiral Dimitrios Eleftherios Kataras, Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff	<i>Press Information Bureau</i>	11
11	Raksha Mantri inaugurates Missile Integration facility at BEL, Bengaluru; Flags-off Akash 3rd and 4th Regiment Combat systems & unveils Mountain Fire Control Radar	<i>Press Information Bureau</i>	12
12	सेना दिखा रही है दोहरे इस्तेमाल वाली AI तकनीक	<i>NavBharat Times</i>	13

DRDO News

Raksha Mantri reviews projects of indigenous military gas turbine engine development during visit to DRDO's GTRE in Bengaluru

Source: Press Information Bureau, Dt. 16 Feb 2026

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, on February 16, 2026, visited DRDO's Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) in Bengaluru, and reviewed the status of ongoing projects relating to indigenous military gas turbine engine development. He was briefed on the establishment's projects on the anvil, interactions with the Indian Industry, academia and R&D institutes, and the support provided to the defence forces. He also visited the exhibition showcasing various indigenous engines & their parts and witnessed the full afterburner engine test of the Kaveri engine.



Interacting with the scientists and officials, Raksha Mantri praised GTRE for its efforts towards bolstering national security through self-reliance, describing DRDO as the foundation of India's strategic capability. He underscored the critical importance of achieving Aatmanirbharta in aero engine technology in the present rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape, and stated that every effort is being made to prioritise the development of aero engines in India. "Supply chains are breaking and new ecosystems are developing. Nations possessing indigenous critical technologies will remain safe, secure, and sustain themselves," he stated, reiterating Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi-led Government's commitment to achieving self-reliance in every field.

Acknowledging GTRE's efforts in this critical technology domain, Shri Rajnath Singh exhorted the lab to strive and focus on next generation engines by building a nationwide robust ecosystem, while achieving self-reliance in aero engines. He added that "We are rapidly moving towards the design and development of the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA). We have made numerous attempts in the past to achieve expertise in the field of aero engines. Now, the time has come to complete those efforts. We cannot limit ourselves to only 5th generation engines. We must begin the development of 6th generation, advanced technologies as soon as possible. Research on them is the need of the hour. The use of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and new materials is increasing. We must stay ahead of the curve."

Raksha Mantri described aero engine development as an extremely complex endeavour, integrating thermodynamics, material science, fluid mechanics and advanced mechanical

engineering. Noting that even developed nations often take 25-30 years to develop next-generation engines, he urged Indian scientists to compress timelines in view of the nation's strategic needs. "We must assume that 20 years have already passed and we now have only 5-7 years left," he said, describing it as a call to action aligned with national aspirations.



Referring to Operation Sindoor, Shri Rajnath Singh emphasised that during the operation, the defence forces demonstrated India's growing Aatmanirbharta in the defence sector. "Whether it was communication systems, surveillance equipment, or attack weapons, everything was indigenous. This boosted the morale of our soldiers and instilled pride among citizens. In view of the evolving challenges, it is imperative to focus more on indigenous methods and provide our forces with world-class systems and equipment," he said.

Raksha Mantri praised GTRE for the joint study with the UK for aero engine development, adding that the process has been initiated with France as well for aero engines under the National Aero Engine Mission. "Both France and UK are very advanced in aero engine technology. These collaborations will not only provide us with the opportunity to learn new technologies, but also help us to understand the challenges they have faced over the past decades," he said.

Shri Rajnath Singh also highlighted the dual-use potential of such complex technologies, stating that GTRE is making high-temperature composites, which could significantly benefit civil aviation, power generation and space sectors in the future. He stated that India is one of the fastest-growing civil aviation markets in the world and technological advancements achieved today in defence aero engines could play a transformative role in civil aviation and economic growth tomorrow.

Raksha Mantri called for capitalising on the numerous opportunities India provides, making special mention of the free trade agreement between India and the European Union, which had been pending for 18 years, has now been completed. This trade agreement is an acknowledgement of India's growing economic and political power, he said. He also referred to his recent meeting with the Defence Minister of Greece, who he said, views India not as an emerging power, but as a superpower. Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO Dr Samir V Kamat and senior scientists & officials of GTRE were present on the occasion.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2228670®=3&lang=1>

*

'पांच गुना तेज़ी से अगले पांच साल में तैयार करें एयरो इंजन'

Source: Dainik Jagran, Dt. 17 Feb 2026

बेंगलुरु, एएनआइ: रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह ने सोमवार को गैस टर्बाइन रिसर्च इंस्टीट्यूट (जीटीआरई) को भारत की रणनीतिक क्षमता की मजबूत नींव बताते हुए वैज्ञानिकों से अगले पांच वर्षों में एयरो इंजन तकनीक में ऐतिहासिक उपलब्धि हासिल करने का आह्वान किया। उन्होंने कहा कि बदलते वैश्विक परिदृश्य में महत्वपूर्ण रक्षा तकनीकों में आत्मनिर्भरता अब विकल्प नहीं बल्कि अनिवार्यता बन चुकी है। राजनाथ ने डीआरडीओ विज्ञानियों की सराहना करते हुए उन्हें रक्षा की दूसरी पंक्ति भी बताया।

रक्षा मंत्री ने कहा कि जीटीआरई, जो रक्षा अनुसंधान एवं विकास संगठन (डीआरडीओ) के अंतर्गत कार्य करता है, दुनिया के प्रतिष्ठित संस्थानों में शामिल हो चुका है और इसके वैज्ञानिकों के लगातार सफल परीक्षणों ने देश की रक्षा तैयारियों को मजबूती दी है। उन्होंने वैज्ञानिकों से दशकों में होने वाले एयरो इंजन विकास को पांच साल की समयसीमा में समेटने की चुनौती स्वीकार करने का आग्रह किया।

रक्षा मंत्री ने कहा कि वर्ष 2047 तक विकसित भारत के लक्ष्य में बेंगलुरु और जीटीआरई की भूमिका निर्णायक होगी। सिंह ने वैज्ञानिकों को



बेंगलुरु में सोमवार को डीआरडीओ के गैस टर्बाइन रिसर्च इंस्टीट्यूट में प्रदर्शित एक उत्पाद की जानकारी लेते रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह • एएनआइ

पांचवीं पीढ़ी के इंजनों तक सीमित न रहकर छठी पीढ़ी और उससे आगे की उन्नत तकनीकों पर तुरंत काम शुरू करने का सुझाव दिया।

बीईएल में रडार और मिसाइल इंटीग्रेशन फैसिलिटी का उद्घाटन: रक्षा मंत्री ने सोमवार को भारत इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स लिमिटेड (बीईएल) में माउंटैन फायर कंट्रोल रडार का अनावरण किया, मिसाइल इंटीग्रेशन फैसिलिटी का उद्घाटन किया और आकाश तीसरे-चौथे रेंजमेंट कांबैट सिस्टम को रवाना किया। साथ ही पुणे स्थित एआइ सेंटर आफ एक्सीलेंस का दूरस्थ शुभारंभ और बीईएल की एआइ नीति लांच की गई, जिससे स्वदेशी वायु रक्षा क्षमताओं को मजबूती मिली।

*

Committed to having own jet engine: Defence Minister sets 5-year deadline

Source: The Tribune, Dt. 17 Feb 2026

Amid an ongoing crisis over supply of engines for fighter jets, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh -- on a visit to Bengaluru -- today reviewed the domestic jet engine, the Kaveri, and set a "five-year" deadline to finish the engine-project for the next generation of jets.

Separately, at another event at Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) in the same city, he flagged off two additional Akash air-defence missile systems -- which showed their prowess during Operation Sindoor against Pakistan in May last year. He also inaugurated the 'missile integration facility' on the premises and also remotely inaugurated the Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence (CoE-AI) located in Pune.

Earlier in the day, Rajnath was on a visit to domestic-engine maker, the Gas Turbine and Research Establishment (GTRE), in Bengaluru where he set a five-year deadline for DRDO scientists to develop the country's "indigenous aero engines". "India's current situation, our strategic needs and our ambitions are such that you should assume that your 20 years have already ended and now you have only five years left," the minister said.

The deadline should not come as a "shock or surprise", "it's a challenge. We have to achieve in these five years what other countries take 20 years to do. We have to give it our best," he said. "Every effort is being made to prioritise the development of aero engines in India," Rajnath Singh said. We have made numerous attempts in the past to achieve expertise in the field of aero engines. Now, the time has come to complete those efforts, he added.

So far, India imports engines even for its indigenous fighter jet, the Tejas. With more than 500 jets to be produced in India over the next 15-17 years, the non-availability of an engine is seen as a handicap for growth. The existing order for supply of 99 engines by US company General Electric for the Tejas is running a couple of years behind schedule. Last week, public sector plane-maker Hindustan Aeronautics Limited put out a statement that nine planes stand ready, but engines are awaited.

For the future, India is looking at a tie-up with Safran of France and Rolls Royce of UK for collaboration for the next generation of engines to power fighter jets. The minister said, "Both France and UK are very advanced in aero-engine technology. These collaborations will not only provide us with the opportunity to learn new technologies, but also help us to understand the challenges they have faced over the past decades." The minister also witnessed the "full afterburner" engine test of the Kaveri engine.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/india/committed-to-having-own-jet-engine-defence-minister-sets-5-year-deadline/>

*

Tata, two consortia led by L&T, Bharat Forge shortlisted for making fighter jets

Source: The Indian Express, Dt. 17 Feb 2026

TATA ADVANCED Systems Ltd as a standalone contender, a consortium of Larsen & Toubro and Bharat Electronics Ltd, and a Bharat Forge-BEML Ltd-Data Patterns consortium have been shortlisted by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** to design and develop prototypes of the proposed Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA).

The AMCA project is aimed at developing India's homegrown fifth-generation stealth fighter, a single-seat twin-engine jet with advanced stealth coatings and internal weapons bays. It is expected to produce over 125 fighter jets that could be ready for induction into the Air Force by 2035. India would then join a small list of countries with fifth-generation fighters like the US (F-22 and F-35), China (J-20), and Russia (Su-57).

The DRDO, through the **Aeronautical Development Agency**, had floated tenders in July 2025. Originally seven consortiums, including Adani Defence and HAL, had bid to partner with the DRDO for the AMCA project. The shortlisted bidders are expected to receive funding support from the government to build models of the AMCA, before manufacturing rights are given.

The AMCA project marks India's push to modernise its Air Force, including weapons and equipment upgrades. As part of this broader modernisation push, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) had last Thursday separately cleared the long-awaited proposal to buy 114 Rafale fighter jets from France under an inter-governmental deal for the IAF.

Of these, 90 jets would be manufactured in India, The Indian Express had reported earlier. The clearance came days before French President Emmanuel Macron's scheduled visit to India between February 17 and 19. The DAC, headed by Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, had also cleared the procurement of six additional P8I maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft from the US for the Navy.

State-owned HAL, according to sources, bid wrongly as there was a mistake in paperwork in what was a mandatory criteria, not just an evaluation criteria. While theoretically HAL could be allowed to bid later, but the company that develops the prototype has the advantage of going all the way, sources indicated.

While an email set to HAL on the bidding issues did not elicit any response, HAL's CMD, DK Sunil, had said last week that the Bengaluru-based state-owned company will participate in the bidding process for the license manufacturing of the indigenous fifth-generation fighter jet, even if the consortium it formed with two other companies is not shortlisted in the initial screening process.

"We are yet to receive any official communication about the firms being shortlisted in the screening process," he told The Indian Express, last week, adding that AMCA is a 10-year programme, and "even if we assume that HAL is not shortlisted in the initial screening for building the prototypes of the aircraft, we will bid when fresh tenders are floated for the license manufacturing of the jet."

<https://indianexpress.com/article/business/tata-two-consortia-led-by-It-bharat-forge-shortlisted-for-making-fighter-jets-10535728/>

*

Defence News

MILAN 2026: 72 nations join mega naval drill in Visakhapatnam

Source: The Pioneer, Dt. 17 Feb 2026

The ten-day mega multilateral naval exercise, 'MILAN,' hosted by the Indian Navy, has commenced at Visakhapatnam. The massive maritime international event, which commenced on Sunday, will see the participation of 72 nations, over 60 warships, and three foreign aircraft. The exercise showcases India's role as a major maritime power, featuring key participants like the US, Russia, Japan, Germany, the Philippines, UAE, South Africa, and various Southeast Asian and African nations.

The Indian Navy has deployed major assets, including aircraft carriers INS Vikramaditya and INS Vikrant, along with Visakhapatnam-class destroyers. As part of this prestigious exercise, the Navy inaugurated the MILAN Village on Sunday at the Eastern Naval Command, the defence ministry said on Monday.

The inauguration ceremony was presided over by Vice Admiral Sanjay Bhalla, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, who formally opened the village for the participating navies and walked around the facilities set up to promote global maritime engagement.

The thoughtfully curated MILAN Village has been conceptualised and created as an experience zone that brings together delegates and naval personnel from over 70 countries in an atmosphere of camaraderie and friendship. It serves as a hub for social and cultural exchanges, enabling engagement beyond professional horizons. A central feature of the MILAN village is its emphasis on cultural exchange, offering a rich and immersive glimpse into India's diverse heritage and tradition. The village will host live performances by vocal artists, traditional folk-dance performances and cultural ensembles reflecting the vibrant artistic legacy of India.

The village features a variety of stalls featuring naval souvenirs, handicraft and handloom products. Together, they showcase craftsmanship from across the country. In addition, visitors will be treated to mouth-watering Indian cuisine, offering a diverse range of regional flavours and tastes of India. In his remarks, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, highlighted that "MILAN Village reflects the spirit of camaraderie and cultural connect that complements professional naval engagement. As Visakhapatnam hosts IFR, MILAN and IONS in close succession, this convergence represents a significant moment in India's maritime outreach and cooperative engagement with partner navies."

The opening of the MILAN Village also marks the beginning of a broader sequence of engagements and events being conducted at Visakhapatnam by the Indian Navy. Exercise MILAN 2026 will form a key pillar of India's historic maritime convergence alongside International Fleet Review (IFR) 2026 and the IONS Conclave of Chiefs. As one of the largest multilateral naval exercises in the Indo-Pacific, MILAN 2026 will bring together navies from across the globe to strengthen interoperability, maritime domain awareness, and collective response capabilities.

The Harbour and Sea Phases of the exercise will focus on complex maritime operations, including anti-submarine warfare, air defence, search and rescue, and cooperative security missions, reinforcing a shared commitment to free, open, inclusive, and rules-based seas. In the harbour, the programme will feature Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEE) and the International Maritime Seminar (IMS), enabling dialogue on shared maritime challenges, opportunities and priorities.

For young officers, activities will include cross-deck visits, ship-handling simulator training, Damage Control and NBC simulator training and demonstration of submarine rescue capabilities by a Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel (DSRV). These engagements will strengthen the collective ability to generate credible and coordinated responses at sea. During the sea phase, participating units will conduct a wide spectrum of operational drills in multinational groupings — carrier operations, seamanship evolutions, weapon firings, anti-submarine warfare, air defence drills and tactical manoeuvres.

As a cultural centrepiece of MILAN 2026, the MILAN Village embodies the theme "Camaraderie, Cooperation, Collaboration". It symbolises the shared commitment of participating navies for mutual cultural exchange, building bridges of friendship and forging collective maritime partnerships. The event will feature a Presidential Fleet Review at Sea by the Hon'ble President of India, showcasing indigenous platforms including INS Vikrant (India's first domestically built aircraft carrier), Visakhapatnam-class destroyers, Nilgiri-class stealth frigates, and Arnala-class anti-submarine warfare corvettes- reflecting India's transformation into a 'Builder's Navy'. The Indian

Navy ships would be joined by a diverse congregation of ships from friendly foreign countries, the Indian Coast Guard and the Merchant Marines.

<https://dailypioneer.com/news/milan-2026-72-nations-join-mega-naval-drill-in-visakhapatnam>

*

भारत के लिए 'नया रूस' बन उभर रहा है फ्रांस

Source: Dainik Jagran, Dt. 17 Feb 2026



फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुअल मैक्रों के साथ पीएम मोदी की होर्डिंग व कटआउट सोमवार को मुंबई में लगे दिखे • एएनआइ

- फ्रांसीसी राष्ट्रपति की भारत यात्रा आज से, मुंबई में मोदी के साथ मैक्रों की वार्ता
- रक्षा मंत्रियों की बैठक में कई अहम सौदों पर सहमति बनने की संभावना

मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह और फ्रांस की रक्षा मंत्री कैथरीन वैटरिन की अध्यक्षता में होने वाली बैठक में कई अहम रक्षा सौदों पर सहमति बनने की भी संभावना है। भारत और फ्रांस के संबंधों में रक्षा क्षेत्र केंद्रीय भूमिका निभा रहा है। रक्षा मंत्रालय के अनुसार, दोनों देशों के बीच रक्षा सहयोग समझौते को अगले 10 वर्षों के लिए नवीनीकृत किए जाने की उम्मीद है।

हाल ही में भारत सरकार की रक्षा खरीद परिषद ने फ्रांस से सौ से अधिक राफेल लड़ाकू विमान खरीदने का फैसला किया है। विशेषज्ञों का मानना है कि इतनी बड़ी संख्या में राफेल विमानों की खरीद से फ्रांस भारत के रक्षा आधुनिकीकरण का प्रमुख स्तंभ बनकर उभर रहा है।

और सहयोग को नए एवं उभरते क्षेत्रों भी करेंगे। मैक्रों की यह भारत की में विस्तार देने पर चर्चा करेंगे। चौथी और मुंबई की पहली यात्रा है। मंगलवार शाम को मोदी और मैक्रों 17 फरवरी को बेंगलुरु में दोनों देशों संयुक्त रूप से 'इंडिया-फ्रांस ईयर के रक्षा मंत्रियों की अगुआई में भविष्य की रक्षा रूपरेखा पर चर्चा होगी। रक्षा आफ इनोवेशन 2026' का उद्घाटन

*

US envoy, top commander visit Army's Western Command HQ

Source: The Indian Express, Dt. 17 Feb 2026

US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor and Admiral Samuel J Paparo Jr, Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, on Monday visited the Indian Army's Western Command headquarters in Haryana's Panchkula and held discussions with senior officers.

According to a statement issued by the Western Command headquarters, the two US officials held substantive discussions with Lt Gen Manoj Kumar Katiyar, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Command, on strategic security dynamics along India's Western Front.

The delegation was comprehensively briefed on the Western Front perspective, including operational preparedness, distinguished legacy, execution of Op Sindoor and pivotal role being played by the Indian Army in nation-building and strengthening regional stability.



US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor and US INDOPACOM Commander, Admiral Samuel J Paparo, meet Lt Gen Manoj Kumar Katiyar, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Command, on Monday.

Earlier in the day, Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff said that Paparo called on Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan. "The discussions reaffirmed the strong and growing India-US #DefencePartnership, underpinned by shared strategic interests and a commitment to #RegionalSecurity and stability. Both leaders deliberated on enhancing #MilitaryCooperation, interoperability and joint operational capabilities between the two nations. Adm Paparo is on an official visit to India from 14-19 February," it said in a post on X.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/us-envoy-top-commander-visit-armys-western-command-hq-10535811/>

*

सेना की पश्चिमी कमान पहुंचे अमेरिका के राजदूत

Source: NavBharat Times, Dt. 17 Feb 2026

■ नई दिल्ली: भारत में अमेरिका के राजदूत सर्जियो गोर (Sergio Gor) भारतीय सेना के वेस्टर्न कमांड के दौर पर पहुंचे। जैसे ही यह जानकारी सामने आई, राजनीति भी तेज हो गई। एनबीटी

ने इस दौर पर जब अमेरिकी दूतावास से पूछा तो उन्होंने बताया, 'एंबेसडर (सर्जियो गोर) यूएस की इंडो-पैसिफिक कमांड

के कमांडर सैमुअल पपारो (Samuel Paparo) के साथ गए हैं'।

सेना की वेस्टर्न कमांड की जिम्मेदारी वाले एरिया में पाकिस्तान बॉर्डर आता है। अमेरिकी राजदूत के इस दौर पर सोशल मीडिया में चर्चा होने लगी। लोगो ने

सवाल उठाए कि एक विदेशी राजनयिक सेना के अहम ठिकानों में शुमार इस कमांड का दौरा क्यों कर रहा है? कुछ ने इसे US से बढ़ती दोस्ती से जोड़ा।

दरअसल विदेशी राजनयिक का सेना के कमांड हेडक्वार्टर्स जाना सामान्य नहीं है, लेकिन ऐसा भी नहीं है कि यह पहली बार हुआ है। रॉबर्ट ब्लैकविल 2001 से 2003 तक भारत में अमेरिकी राजदूत थे। तब वह नॉर्थ-ईस्ट बॉर्डर पर गए थे। साथ ही, फरवरी 2002 में सेना की 2-कोर के हेडक्वार्टर्स भी गए थे।

सोमवार को अमेरिकी राजदूत सर्जियो गोर ने X पर पोस्ट किया, 'अभी-अभी चंडीगढ़ पहुंचा हूँ। भारतीय सेना के वेस्टर्न कमांड का दौरा करने के लिए उत्साहित हूँ।' इसके तुरंत बाद उनके इस दौर की चर्चा होने लगी।

अमेरिकी कमांडर CDS अनिल चौहान से भी मिले



अमेरिकी कमांडर पपारो इससे पहले इंटिग्रेटेड डिफेंस स्टाफ (IDS) हेडक्वार्टर्स भी गए और CDS अनिल चौहान से मिले। दोनों ने सैन्य सहयोग बढ़ाने, एक-दूसरे की सेनाओं के साथ तालमेल और साझा ऑपरेशनल क्षमताओं को मजबूत करने पर भी विचार-विमर्श किया।

*

A TRIPP across the South Caucasus

-by Gaddam Dharmendra, Ex- Ambassador to Iran

Source: The Tribune, Dt. 17 Feb 2026

THE Caucasus doesn't usually get the attention it deserves from strategic analysts. Not surprisingly, two recent visits to Armenia this past fortnight have largely stayed below the radar. The first was by Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Anil Chauhan, and the second by US Vice President JD Vance. General Chauhan's visit marks a distinct uptick in bilateral relations, it being the first by India's seniormost serving military official. Vice President Vance's is the highest-level visit from the US since Armenia's independence in 1991.



Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan's visit to Armenia cements growing bilateral ties.

The scheduling of the two visits would appear to be coincidental. What is not, however, is their timing — both are taking place at a time of quiet competition and a consequent transformation in the South Caucasus. This region comprises Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Abutting them are three major powers, ie, Russia, Iran and Turkiye. This complex geography makes for a contentious strategic scenario, a Caucasian version of the "Great Game". This is evidenced by the renewal of their historic jostling by the three aforementioned powers to safeguard their regional influence. Adding to the mix is the role of extra-regional players like India, Israel and the US.

The visit to Yerevan of a high-level defence delegation led by India's CDS, General Anil Chauhan (Feb 1-4) cements growing bilateral ties. It widens the ambit of engagement and fits in with India's multi-alignment strategy. General Chauhan's official engagements included meetings with Armenian Defence Minister Suren Papikyan and Chief of the General Staff Edvard Asryan.

One significant outcome is the decision to expand defence cooperation to include military training, a sign of high mutual confidence. After its 2020 war with Azerbaijan, Armenia has increasingly turned to India to qualitatively upgrade its defence capabilities. Since 2022, India's defence supplies have grown significantly and are at present valued at \$2.2 billion. These include Akash

medium-range air-defence, Pinaka rocket launchers, 155-mm towed howitzers and other equipment.

General Chauhan also paid respects at the Armenian Genocide Memorial, a reminder of the genocide of around 1.5 million Armenians in 1914-15 under the Ottoman Empire. Türkiye's denial of that genocide continues to cloud Armenia-Türkiye ties. Less well known is the triangular ethnic relationship between Iran, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Iran is home to a substantial Azeri minority as also a small Armenian diaspora. In fact, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei is of ethnic Azeri stock. Türkiye and Azerbaijan are linked by their shared Turkish ancestry but while Türkiye is majority Sunni, the Azeris profess the Shia faith.

The Iran-Azeri relationship is further complicated by Iran's traditionally close ties with Armenia, a Christian majority country. If that were not confusing enough, Israel has steadily deepened its ties with Azerbaijan, securing a valuable strategic foothold on Iran's northern border. During the 2020 Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, Turkish military equipment was instrumental in Azerbaijan's success. At the time, Russia stayed neutral, despite its historical and religious ties with Armenia and their membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO). Armenia has since distanced itself from the CSTO and, to an extent, even from Russia. Instead, it has broadened its range of partnerships — with India, Iran and the US, which hosts a large Armenian diaspora.

The latter fact contextualises the visit to Yerevan by Vance (February 9-10). He held talks with Armenian PM Nikol Pashinyan and both sides announced cooperation in nuclear energy generation and of US military supplies to Armenia, essentially surveillance drones. From Armenia, Vance went to the neighbouring Azerbaijan. But the actual intent of Vance's visit appears to be to follow up on the peace deal announced by President Trump between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Washington DC in August. The deal seeks to bring to a close the four-decade simmering conflict between the two Caucasian rivals.

At the end of their trilateral meeting in Washington, both leaders predictably endorsed Trump for the Nobel while Trump took characteristic credit for closing another peace deal. Subsequent developments, however, indicate that mutual distrust between Armenia and Azerbaijan remains undiminished while Trump has moved on to other issues. However, the larger significance of last August's trilateral meeting was the announcement of the so-called "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" corridor or TRIPP. There is no formal mention of the TRIPP in the peace deal, but it forms part of a provision on "transit links". Notably, the agreement itself was merely "initialled" and requires completion of ratification processes by both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The TRIPP is ambitious in scope and has the potential to transform the region. It envisages redevelopment of Soviet-era transit rights linking Azerbaijan with its enclave of Nakhchivan. This corridor, presently referred to as the Zangezur corridor, is a 43-km route running across Armenian territory. The TRIPP envisages a rail and road link cutting across the southern Caucasus. From Nakhchivan, the TRIPP will extend into Türkiye and then on towards Europe, as the so-called Middle Corridor being promoted by Türkiye.

Given the strained Armenia-Azerbaijan relations, Azerbaijan's only access is currently via Iranian territory. Once TRIPP becomes operational, its access to Nakhchivan will be from within Armenian territory, thereby bypassing Iran. Iran views the TRIPP with deep suspicion, as a strategic threat with the potential of stationing the US and Israel on its northern borders. Iran has countered by reaching out to India, for a trilateral arrangement with Armenia. This is, however, lying in abeyance, given Iran's own distractions. Thus, embedded in the two visits are signals of strategic intent being sent by India and America. The US has offered to manage the TRIPP, floating the idea of a 100-

year US lease for it. India has shown that it is not averse to entering the South Caucasus game of thrones. It has signalled to Turkey and Azerbaijan that their meddling in India's neighbourhood, support for Pakistan and, lately, Bangladesh, would come at a cost they would need to prepare for.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/a-tripp-across-the-south-caucasus/>

*

Visit of Vice Admiral Dimitrios Eleftherios Kataras, Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff

Source: Press Information Bureau, Dt. 16 Feb 2026

VAdm Dimitrios Eleftherios Kataras, Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff, is on an official visit to India from 16 to 19 Feb 2026, aimed at strengthening maritime cooperation and bilateral ties. VAdm Dimitrios Eleftherios Kataras had bilateral interactions with Adm Dinesh K Tripathi, Chief of the Naval Staff, and senior officials of MoD focused on furthering maritime engagements including joint operations, capacity building, joint training, and other issues of professional relevance.



VAdm Dimitrios Eleftherios Kataras paid tribute to fallen soldiers by laying a wreath at the National War Memorial. He also visited the International Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) at Gurugram. During his visit, VAdm Dimitrios Eleftherios Kataras will attend the International Fleet Review and MILAN 2026 at Visakhapatnam.

Hellenic Navy is an important maritime partner of the Indian Navy and the visit of VAdm Dimitrios Eleftherios Kataras marks a key milestone in India-Hellenic Navy-to-Navy relations and is aimed at promoting shared interests and overall maritime security.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2228942®=3&lang=1>

*

Raksha Mantri inaugurates Missile Integration facility at BEL, Bengaluru; Flags-off Akash 3rd and 4th Regiment Combat systems & unveils Mountain Fire Control Radar

Source: Press Information Bureau, Dt. 16 Feb 2026

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, on February 16, 2026, visited the Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) in Bengaluru, and inaugurated the Missile Integration facility at the premises, besides flagging-off the Akash 3rd and 4th Regiment Combat systems & unveiling the Mountain Fire Control Radar. He also remotely inaugurated the Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence (CoE-AI) located in Pune, and formally launched the company's AI Policy.

Raksha Mantri was briefed on a range of advanced indigenous defence technologies, including AI-based solutions developed by Indian start-ups, highlighting the growing emphasis on innovation and indigenisation in the defence ecosystem. He commended BEL for making headway in cutting-edge technologies such as electronic warfare systems, avionics, naval platforms, electro-optics, and tank electronics. "BEL has strengthened the network-centric operations. Its integrated systems, real-time data sharing, and decision support capabilities have taken our combat effectiveness to a new level," he said.



Shri Rajnath Singh was apprised of the ongoing R&D activities at BEL aligned with major national defence programmes, including the Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile Systems (QRSAM), Light Combat Aircraft Mark II (LCA Mk II), Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), Project Kusha (MR SAM/LR SAM), Counter Drone Systems, Naval Weapon Control Systems, etc. The briefing highlighted that indigenous R&D initiatives are enhancing operational preparedness across land, air, naval, and strategic domains, while reducing dependence on foreign technologies. Raksha Mantri acknowledged the fact that the systems developed in airspace defence, and counter-drone operations have demonstrated that India's indigenous solutions can meet global standards.

Raksha Mantri highlighted that indigenously developed air defence and anti-drone systems were effectively utilised to neutralise threats during Operation Sindoor. "The advancement in threat prediction, early warning, and response mechanisms using AI instills operational confidence in our

soldiers. They're assured that a strong scientific and engineering ecosystem always stands with them," he added. He underlined the importance of achieving victory with indigenous weapons and technologies in today's times, stating that only a self-reliant win gives the country renewed confidence.

Raksha Mantri stressed that AI and quantum computing are no longer futuristic concepts, and their use in real-time decision-making, autonomous systems, cyber defence, and precision operations is changing battlefield dynamics. For India to become a developed nation, he exhorted BEL, other DPSUs and industry partners to stay ahead of the curve in the new revolution that lies ahead. He encouraged the R&D community at BEL to collaborate with start-ups, industry, and academia for agile product development using the latest technologies in AI and autonomous systems. He also stressed upon the need for BEL to prioritise cross-disciplinary collaboration, innovation, and rapid prototyping to create world-class products, aligning with the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

Indigenisation initiatives undertaken by Central Research Laboratories, CoE-Electronics Warfare & Photonics, CoE-Communication, CoE-Radar & Weapon Systems & Product Development and Innovation Centre of BEL were showcased during the briefing. The start-ups and industry partners also exhibited their products.

Raksha Mantri interacted with start-ups & young scientists and motivated them to come out with more and more advanced Indigenous technologies. Secretary (Defence Production) Shri Sanjeev Kumar, Additional Secretary & DG (Acquisition) Shri A Anbarasu, Chairman & Managing Director, BEL Shri Manoj Jain and other officials were present on the occasion.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2228831®=3&lang=1>

*

सेना दिखा रही है दोहरे इस्तेमाल वाली AI तकनीक

Source: NavBharat Times, Dt. 17 Feb 2026

नई दिल्ली: भारतीय सेना तेजी से खुद को डेटा-आधारित और AI-सक्षम फोर्स में बदल रही है। AI Summit में सेना स्वदेशी AI एप्लिकेशंस पेश कर रही है, जिनमें शिक्षा, आपदा प्रबंधन, साइबर सुरक्षा, ट्रांसपोर्ट सेफ्टी और डिजिटल इफ्रगस्ट्रक्चर की सुरक्षा जैसी क्षमता है। AI समित में आर्मी इनका प्रदर्शन कर रही है। ये आर्मी ने इनहाउस डिवेलप की है। इनका मिलिट्री और सिविल यानी ड्युअल यूज किया जा सकता है।
पूनम पाण्डे की रिपोर्ट:

Vehicle Tracking System:

यह एक AI आधारित फ्लीट मॉनिटरिंग सिस्टम है, जो GPS टेलीमेट्री, डेटा एनालिटिक्स और रियल-टाइम डैशबोर्ड को जोड़कर काम करता है। यह काफिले (कॉन्वॉय) की निगरानी, लॉजिस्टिक्स की बेहतर जानकारी और रास्तों को बेहतर तरीके से तय करने में मदद करता है।

Deepfake Video Detection System:

यह एक AI आधारित प्रणाली है, जो चेहरे और सिग्नल पैटर्न के विश्लेषण की मदद से नकली या छेड़छाड़ किए गए वीडियो की पहचान करती है। इसका मकसद भ्रमक जानकारी, झूठे प्रचार जैसी चुनौतियों से निपटना है।



Proactive Mobile Security System:

यह एक AI आधारित मोबाइल प्रोटेक्शन सल्यूशन है, जो असामान्य गतिविधियों, मैलवेयर के खतरों और संदिग्ध डेटा ट्रांसमिशन पैटर्न की पहचान करता है।

XFace (AI Facial Recognition System):

यह एक AI आधारित पहचान और सत्यापन प्रणाली है, जो तस्वीरों और वीडियो के जरिए तेजी से पहचान की पुष्टि करती है। यह ठिकानों की सुरक्षा, निगरानी करता है।

Driver Fatigue Detection:

यह एक पोर्टेबल AI डिवाइस है, जो ड्राइवर की थकान या नींद आने की स्थिति को रियल-टाइम में पहचानकर तुरत अलर्ट देता है। लंबी ड्राइविंग की परिस्थितियों में भी भरोसेमंद है।

AI-in-a-Box: यह एक छोटा, आसानी से तैनात किया जा सकने वाला हाई-कंप्यूट प्लेटफॉर्म है, जो सुरक्षित या बिना इंटरनेट वाले वातावरण में भी लोकल स्तर पर AI मॉडल चला सकता है। यह दूरदराज या संवेदनशील ऑपरेशनल क्षेत्रों में AI के उपयोग को संभव बनाता है।

SAM-UN (सिचुएशनल अवेयरनेस मॉड्यूल फॉर यूएन): यह एक वेब-आधारित प्लेटफॉर्म है, जो जियोस्पेशियल इंटेलिजेंस, स्ट्रक्चर्ड रिपोर्टिंग और AI एनालिटिक्स को एक साथ जोड़ता है। इससे मिशन की योजना बनाने, निगरानी, समन्वय और तेज प्रतिक्रिया के लिए रियल-टाइम में जानकारी मिलती है।

PRAKSHEPAN: ये AI आधारित सैन्य जलवायु और आपदा पूर्वानुमान प्रणाली हैं। ये भूस्खलन, बाढ़ और हिमस्खलन जैसी आपदाओं का 3 से 7 दिन पहले तक पूर्वानुमान कर सकती हैं। यह संवेदनशील ऑपरेशनल क्षेत्रों के लिए सटीक है।

*

The Tribune
The Statesman
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਕੇਸਰੀ ਜਨਸੱਤਾ
The Hindu
The Economic Times
Press Information Bureau
The Indian Express
The Times of India
Hindustan Times
नवभारत टाइम्स
दैनिक जागरण
The Asian Age
The Pioneer