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# Defence News

## HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA REVIEWS THE INTERNATIONAL FLEET REVIEW 2026 OFF VISAKHAPATNAM

*Source: PIB, Dt. 18 Feb 2026*

The Indian Navy successfully conducted the International Fleet Review (IFR) 2026 off the coast of Visakhapatnam on 18 February 2026, with participation from 74 countries, marking a grand maritime spectacle that showcased global naval cooperation, professional camaraderie and India's maritime capability. IFR 2026 marked the third International Fleet Review hosted by India, following earlier editions at Mumbai (2001) and Visakhapatnam (2016).

### Presidential Review of the Fleet

(Press Release President's Secretariat -

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspxPRID=2229534@=3&lang=1>)

The Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, reviewed the Fleet from INS Sumedha, an indigenously built Offshore Patrol Vessel, which served as the Presidential Yacht for the occasion. INS Sumedha was adorned with the Ashoka Emblem and flew the President's Standard at the mast.

Following a Ceremonial Guard of Honour by a 150-person contingent and a 21-Gun Salute, the Hon'ble President embarked onboard INS Sumedha and sailed past the assembled Fleet of 52 anchored ships off the Visakhapatnam coast.

A total of 85 ships, including 19 foreign warships participated in the fleet review, reflecting the scale and diversity of maritime participation.



The Indian fleet included 60 ships of the Indian Navy, four Indian Coast Guard vessels, and one ship each from the Shipping Corporation of India and the National Institute of Ocean Technology.

The review also featured three Indian Navy submarines, one French Atlantique maritime patrol aircraft, and participation by over 60 aircraft, underscoring the multi-domain operational capability and the coordinated maritime presence on display.

The Hon'ble President also reviewed the Indian Naval Air Arm, marked by a fly-past of helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. This was followed by a mobile column of warships and submarines steaming past the Presidential Yacht. The event further featured maritime and waterfront demonstrations, including a Parade of sails, Search and Rescue operations and aerial manoeuvres by Hawk aircraft.

Addressing the occasion, Hon'ble President highlighted, "The spirit of friendship on display today through participation of so many friendly foreign countries highlights the truth that we are collected rather than divided by the seas. India's approach to international relations, including the maritime domain, is guided by our ethos of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' or 'the world is one family'. This approach reflects the wisdom that global security, growth, sustainability and stability are built through friendship." She further remarked, "The review also takes forward India's vision of MAHASAGAR, which stands for 'Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions'. The spirit of togetherness is well confirmed in this message of this review- 'United through Oceans'. It is a positive message to the global community that it is the collective naval strength that can overcome maritime challenges".

The International Fleet Review was also telecast live on Doordarshan television channels (DD National and DD Vijayawada) and was streamed live on the Indian Navy's official social media platforms- Youtube (@IndianNavyOfficial) and Facebook (@IndianNavy), enabling audiences in India and abroad to witness the proceedings. Recorded broadcast (Re-runs) of the event remain available for viewing on the same channels.

The International Fleet Review 2026 reaffirmed India's commitment to maritime cooperation, interoperability and collective security, in keeping with the theme "United Through Oceans", while highlighting the Indian Navy's indigenous capability, operational professionalism and enduring partnerships with like-minded navies.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2229820&reg=3&lang=1>

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## Army used locally made AI software along LAC

Source: The Tribune, Dt. 19 Feb 2026



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## Like weapons, test AI-enabled systems too: Lt Gen Shinghal

Source: The Indian Express, Dt. 19 Feb 2026

**Like weapons, test AI-enabled systems too: Lt Gen Shinghal**

Sukalp Sharma  
New Delhi, February 18

EVEN AS the Armed Forces are well aware of the "transformative" power of artificial intelligence (AI) and are working towards incorporating it in their decision support systems, Deputy Chief of Army Staff (Information Systems and Training) Lieutenant General Vipul Shinghal said India must take a responsible path in adopting AI-enabled systems in this domain by institutionalising human oversight and control, and putting AI-enabled systems through rigorous testing similar to other critical weapon systems.

Addressing a session at the India AI Impact Summit, he emphasised India could lead the world in responsible use of AI in military conflicts, and expressed hope that like various other successful international conventions relating to weapons and conflict, regulation of use of AI for military purposes will be achieved.

"The question is never as to whether we should adopt AI-enabled systems, but how? We are clear this transition must be undertaken responsibly. So, what does a responsible and effective approach look like? First, we must institutionalise human control not as a slogan but as law. This requires clearly defining which functions may be assisted by AI, which may be recommended by AI and which may always remain human decisions. Second... AI enabled systems need to be treated as a weapon system and be tested accordingly," he said.

Lt Gen Shinghal said the



precedented speed, scale and efficiency, what deserves deeper reflection is the "new burdens AI places on leadership, command, responsibility, and strategic stability", he added.

Lt Gen Shinghal also emphasised that since "moral responsibility remains with the commander", military leadership development must evolve so that commanders "who are now going to be interrogating systems, interacting with systems and taking decision on them" are aware of possible pitfalls and challenges of AI-enabled systems, and how best to use such systems effectively and efficiently.

"Are we preparing our commanders and staff to lead in a world where machines can recommend, predict, and act faster than humans without allowing speed to substitute judgment? Command and control by commanders will exercise life and death decisions; can then be given to machines? If a machine recommends a strike with 90% accuracy and the commander takes a decision and it's the wrong decision, it gives him a moral buffer to say it was a machine that recommended it. But is that correct? These are questions that we need to answer," he said.

However, Lt Gen Shinghal stressed the Army and the Armed Forces "are fully cognisant of transformative power of AI to increase our official efficiency". "We are making every effort to ensure AI is incorporated into our decision support systems, into our surveillance recce and the other functions..." he said.

**... If a machine recommends a strike with 90% accuracy and the commander takes a decision and it's the wrong decision, it gives him a moral buffer to say it was a machine that recommended it. But is that correct? These are questions that we need to answer."**

**LT GENERAL VIPUL SHINGHAL,**  
DEPUTY CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF  
(INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND TRAINING)

battlefield is the most chaotic data environment, asking, "Are we subjecting AI enabled systems to the same rigor we subject new weapon systems to—trial evaluating them, fielding them in contested conditions and then applying them? After all, an AI-enabled system is not a software, it's a weapon."

While AI can inform decisions, Lt Gen Shinghal said, only humans can exercise judgment and bear responsibility for them. With AI systems armed with un-

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## महासागर में नौसेना का शक्ति दर्शन

Source: Navbharat Times, Dt. 19 Feb 2026

**मुर्मु ने लिया जायजा**

# महासागर में नौसेना का शक्ति प्रदर्शन




**राष्ट्रपति ने किया विशाखापत्तनम में इंटरनेशनल फ्लीट रिव्यू**

<b>85</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>21</b>
शिप शामिल, जिसमें 19 विदेशी वॉरशिप	जवानों की टुकड़ी से ऑपचारिक गार्ड ऑफ ऑनर	तोपों की सलामी दी गई राष्ट्रपति मुर्मु को

■ **NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली**

राष्ट्रपति द्रौपदी मुर्मु ने बुधवार को इंडियन नैवी के स्वदेशी ऑफिशर मैट्रिल वेसल आईएनएस सुमेधा से इंटरनेशनल फ्लीट रिव्यू किया। इस फ्लीट रिव्यू में कुल 85 शिप ने भाग लिया, जिनमें 19 विदेशी वॉरशिप भी शामिल थे।

आईएनएस सुमेधा को अशोक चिह्न से सजाया गया था और उस पर राष्ट्रपति का ध्वज लगाया गया था। 150 जवानों की टुकड़ी द्वारा ऑपचारिक गार्ड ऑफ ऑनर और 21 तोपों की सलामी के बाद, राष्ट्रपति आईएनएस सुमेधा पर सवार हुईं और विशाखापत्तनम तट के पास खड़े जहाजों के बेड़े के पास से गुजरीं।

एक सुदृढ़ समुद्री व्यवस्था समान विचारधारा वाले देशों में सामूहिक जिम्मेदारी, सहयोगात्मक कार्यवाई पर आधारित है। फ्लीट रिव्यू हमारे 'महासागर' के विज्ञान को भी आगे बढ़ाती है, जिसका अर्थ है 'क्षेत्रीय स्तर पर सुरक्षा और विकास के लिए पारस्परिक उन्नति'। -**द्रौपदी मुर्मु, राष्ट्रपति**

**नौसेना के एयर विंग का भी निरीक्षण**

राष्ट्रपति ने भारतीय नौसेना के एयर विंग का भी निरीक्षण किया, जिसमें हेलिकॉप्टर और अन्य विमानों की पलवाई-पास्ट शामिल थी। कहा कि इंटरनेशनल फ्लीट रिव्यू समुद्री परंपराओं के प्रति राष्ट्रों की एकता, विश्वास और सम्मान को दर्शाती है। विभिन्न ध्वजों वाले जहाज और विभिन्न देशों के नाविक एकजुटता की भावना का प्रदर्शन करते हैं।

**भारतीय नौसेना के 60 जहाज शामिल**

फ्लीट में भारतीय नौसेना के 60 जहाज, भारतीय एंटरप्रक के चार जहाज, और शिपिंग कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया और नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ ओशन टेक्नोलॉजी का एक-एक जहाज शामिल था। नौसेना की तीन पनडुब्बियां, एक फ्रांसीसी अटलांटिक समुद्री निगरानी विमान और 60 से अधिक विमानों की भागीदारी भी रही।

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## Navy vigilant in protecting India's interests: President

Source: The Pioneer, Dt. 19 Feb 2026

# Navy vigilant in protecting India's interests: President

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
■ Visakhapatnam

President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday stated that the Indian Navy is vigilant in safeguarding the country's maritime interests and contributes to stability across the wider maritime commerce.

Presiding over the International Fleet Review (IFR) off Visakhapatnam coast aboard an Indian Naval warship in the Bay of Bengal, the President said the Indian Navy is deployed in the region to serve as a credible instrument of deterrence and defence against threats and challenges arising in the sea.

"Indian Navy is vigilant in safeguarding India's maritime interests and is contributing to stability across wider maritime commerce," Murmu said.

Further, she noted that the Indian Navy plays a vital role in promoting goodwill, building bridges of trust, confidence and friendship with navies around the globe.

According to the President, Visakhapatnam, which houses the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) of the Indian Navy, has a glorious maritime past. Today's event

underlines the enduring Naval significance of Visakhapatnam, she said.

Expressing happiness over witnessing the impressive fleet of warships and the display by naval personnel from India and friendly navies, Murmu conveyed her compliments to them.

IFR reflects unity, trust and respect among nations for maritime traditions, she said, adding that ships with different flags and sailors from different countries exhibit the spirit of togetherness.

Reflecting on India's relationship with the seas, the President noted that it is deep and enduring, stretching over centuries and called the oceans as pathways of commerce, connection and cultural exchange for India.

People enthusiastically celebrate the festival of *Bahá Jataá* in Cuttack during the week starting on *Karthik Purnima*, she said, underscoring that this festival is an expression of respect to the ancient sailors from what is now Odisha. It celebrates a

tradition of regular sea travel to Southeast Asia for various purposes since the ancient Kalinga empire.

"These travels contributed to the spirit and exchange of trade and goods, ideas and values shaping a shared cultural consciousness across the region," she said.

Further, the President observed that the fleet review takes forward India's fusion of *Mahasagar*, which stands for mutual and historic advancement of security and growth across regions.



President Droupadi Murmu, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi during the International Fleet Review at Visakhapatnam.

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# भारत इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स ने समुंदरी सुरक्षा का दिखाया डेमो, आईएनएस सूरत में ट्रायल

Source: Navbharat Times, Dt. 19 Feb 2026

**भारत इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स ने समुद्री सुरक्षा का दिखाया डेमो, INS सूरत में ट्रायल**

**जहाज पर कौन चढ़ा, कौन उतरा- सब रेकॉर्ड**

**समुद्र में हर हलचल पर नजर, सटीक विश्लेषण**

**बंदरगाहों की 24 घंटे निगरानी**

**हर खतरे को कुछ ही सेकंड में भाग लेता है AI सिस्टम**

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# India may induct 3<sup>rd</sup> N-powered missile sub in april

Source: The Hindustan Times, Dt. 19 Feb 2026

## India may induct 3rd N-powered missile sub in April

**HT Correspondent**  
letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** India is set to strengthen its nuclear triad, or ability to launch strategic weapons from land, air and sea, as the navy prepares to induct a new locally-made nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, officials aware of the matter said on Wednesday.

The submarine, Aridaman, is expected to be commissioned into service in April, the officials said, asking not to be named. Aridaman

will be the navy's third Arihant-class submarine, and will serve as an undetectable launch platform for missiles armed with nuclear warheads.

The fourth SSBN codenamed S-4\* is likely to enter service in 2027, as previously reported by HT. SSBN stands for ship submersible ballistic nuclear or nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines.

Aridaman is in the final stages of trials and it will be commissioned soon, navy chief Admiral

**THE SUBMARINE, ARIDAMAN, IS EXPECTED TO BE COMMISSIONED INTO SERVICE IN APRIL: OFFICIALS**

Dinesh K Tripathi had said in December. The navy commissioned its second indigenous SSBN, INS Arighaat, at Visakhapatnam in August 2024. The

United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China are the only other countries that can deliver nuclear warheads from a submarine.

India's first indigenous SSBN, the 6,000-tonne INS Arighaat, was commissioned around 10 years ago and it successfully completed its first deterrence patrol in 2018, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi then announcing that the success of the submarine "gives a fitting response to those who indulge in nuclear blackmail."

The fully operational submarine then completed the sea leg of India's nuclear triad. Arighaat is armed with 12 B-05 submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) capable of delivering nuclear warheads up to 750 km away.

The last two Arihant-class submarines, Aridaman and S-4\*, are expected to be bigger and capable of launching longer range missiles. These SSBNs could be armed with K-4 SLBMs capable of striking targets up to 3,500 km away.

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# Science & Technology News

## AI to drive next era of space missions

Source: The Tribune, Dt. 19 Feb 2026

**AI to drive next era of space missions**

**GAGANDEEP ARORA**  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18**  
AI is set to play a major role in the future of space exploration, experts said at a session titled "Beyond Earth: How AI is Powering the Next Era of Space Exploration". Scientists and industry leaders discussed how AI was changing the way satellites and space missions work.

Speakers from ISRO centres said AI was crucial for deep-space missions because signals from Earth could take up to 20 minutes to reach spacecraft, satellites must make decisions on their own. Autonomous navigation, robotics and AI-based life-support systems are becoming essential. However, experts warned that reliability was the key. AI systems must be tested thoroughly and should be predictable before being used in critical missions.

ISRO scientists said work was underway on advanced robots, compact AI models for space and robotic arms for future space stations. Representatives of space companies spoke about updating AI models directly in satellites, similar to software updates on phones.

Dr Dipti Patil of MKSSS Cummins College of Engineering for Women said new AI methods, such as physics-informed neural networks, were helping validate autonomous systems. She added that students were highly interested in space technology and the growing space start-up ecosystem.

Dr Jagriti Dabas of ARMS 4 AI highlighted the importance of strong basics, data knowledge and the ability to adapt as AI evolves. The panel concluded that the future of space exploration would also depend on autonomous systems that could operate safely far from Earth.

## IN-SPACe launches ₹ 6 crore AI INSPIRED fund for integration

Source: The Tribune, Dt. 19 Feb 2026

**IN-SPACe launches ₹6-cr AI INSPIRED Fund for integration**

**NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18**  
The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) on Wednesday announced the launch of the AI INSPIRED (INnovating Space Performance with Intelligent Resilient Engines Development) opportunities in Space Sector programme during the India AI Impact Summit. It is designed to support the integration of AI with space exploration and applications, with a total outlay of up to Rs 6 crore, and a maximum of Rs 1 crore to each grantee. — TNS

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## AI impact summit marks a strategic Turning point

Source: The Statesman, Dt. 19 Feb 2026

# AI Impact Summit marks a strategic turning point

PRAVIN KAUSHAL

Artificial Intelligence is no longer a niche technological conversation. Today, AI is embedded in nearly every product, service, and policy debate. Whether necessary or not, the term "AI-powered" has become a marketing label across industries.

But beyond the hype, AI is an evolving and transformative sector. Critical questions around ethics, governance, inclusion, and sustainability remain unresolved. In this global churn, one thing is clear: India cannot afford to remain a bystander.

The India AI Impact Summit 2026 marks a decisive step in that direction.

The India AI Impact Summit is a five-day international conference on Artificial Intelligence, being held from 16 to 20 February 2026. It is hosted by the Government of India under the India AI Mission.

This summit is significant for two reasons:

- It is among the largest AI summits hosted in the Global South.
- Its focus is not merely theoretical discussions, but real-world impact.

Previous global AI summits, primarily hosted in North America and Europe, focused heavily on AI risks, existential threats, and regulatory caution. India's summit shifts the emphasis toward deployment, development, and inclusive growth.

The core objective is clear: AI must benefit everyone—not just high-income nations or elite corporations.

More than 40 countries are participating, along with policymakers, global technology CEOs, academic experts, civil society representatives, and international organizations.

This makes it one of the most influential AI policy and technology

India is positioning itself not just as a participant, but as a convenor of global AI governance—especially for developing and emerging economies.

The message is simple: AI should not remain concentrated in a few developed nations. Emerging economies must have access, voice, and participation.

The summit is structured around three foundational pillars:

### People

- AI for education
- AI for employability
- AI for livelihoods and inclusion

Concerns about job displacement are real. India's approach focuses on skill development, reskilling, and ensuring AI becomes a tool for employability rather than unemployment.

### Planet

- Climate resilience
- Sustainable AI development
- Smart agriculture

AI must contribute to environmental sustainability rather than increase ecological strain.

### Progress

- Innovation-driven economic growth
- Responsible AI development
- Digital infrastructure expansion

AI is being positioned as a development multiplier, not merely a technological breakthrough.

A major highlight of the summit is the Global Impact Challenges initiative. India launched a large-scale competition to identify AI solutions with strong social impact. More than 4,650 applications were received. The participants were from more than 60 countries and 70 finalist teams were selected.

These teams are working on AI



climate resilience, agricultural intelligence, governance systems, education access and financial inclusion.

Special categories include women-led AI innovations and youth-focused AI initiatives, reinforcing the summit's inclusive approach.

India's broader ambition is to shape global AI governance norms. The key elements include Affordable AI access for emerging economies; Balanced global AI governance structures; Ethical AI standards; International regulatory collaboration, and a proposed Global AI Commons.

The Global AI Commons envisions shared AI tools, open datasets, and collaborative frameworks to democratize access. India aims to contribute to global AI standards—not merely adopt them.

Alongside the summit discussions, India is pursuing a bold infrastructure vision - a proposed \$175 billion AI Data City near Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. Visakhapatnam

for submarine cable landings; available land; existing industrial base and strategic political and economic push.

The vision goes beyond a single data centre. It includes hyperscale data centres, AI training compute clusters, GPU farms, semiconductor ecosystem support, cloud infrastructure hubs and Integrated AI R&D and manufacturing ecosystems. Over 760 projects are reportedly being linked under this initiative.

The major investments include Google's planned \$15 billion AI infrastructure investment and the Reliance-led consortium's \$11 billion data centre investment. If realized effectively, this could become one of India's largest digital infrastructure transformations.

For decades, India excelled in IT services. But services alone do not create global brands.

The AI Impact Summit signals a shift from outsourcing to ownership; from services to sovereign platforms; from participation to agenda-setting and from domestic scale to global

India's long-term goals include AI research and innovation leadership, start-up ecosystem growth, workforce development and skilling, infrastructure expansion and ethical AI governance influence.

The summit reflects a larger ambition: India wants to be not just an AI user, but an AI rule-maker. AI is shaping the future of economic competitiveness, national security, and social development.

The India AI Impact Summit 2026 is not just another conference. It is a signal. A signal that India recognizes the scale of the AI opportunity. A signal that India wants inclusive, responsible, and globally relevant AI growth. And perhaps most importantly - a signal that it is time for India to go global in AI leadership.

If this momentum translates into execution, the summit may mark the beginning of India's next technological chapter.

(The writer is a director, Minkal AI/Data Center)

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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