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KEY EVENTS

Australian PM visits INS Vikrant

Australian Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, [visited](#) INS Vikrant in Mumbai on 9 March 2023 in his first bilateral visit to India. Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff, received the Australian PM onboard the indigenous aircraft carrier.

President's Colour awarded to INS Dronacharya

INS Dronacharya, the Gunnery School of the Indian Navy, [was awarded](#) the prestigious President's Colour by the Hon'ble President of India on 16 March 2023. INS Dronacharya is entrusted with the training of officers and sailors of the Navy, Coast Guard and friendly foreign maritime forces on all aspects of gunnery and missile warfare.

1st India-Africa Army Chiefs' Conclave held in Pune

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh stated that India will continue to work with African nations to promote regional security, foster stability and enhance their defence capabilities. This was at the first edition of the India-Africa Army Chiefs' Conclave [organised](#) on the sidelines of the 2nd Africa-India Joint Exercise AFINDEX on 28 March 2023 in Pune. The Conclave was attended by Chiefs and representatives of 31 African nations.

Chief of Naval Staff, Royal Navy, visits India

Sir Ben Key, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, Royal Navy, [visited](#) India from 2-3 March 2023. Sir Key interacted with Adm R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff.

Raksha Mantri holds telephonic conversation with Israeli counterpart

On 3 March 2023, Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [held](#) a telephonic conversation with the new Defence Minister of Israel, Yoav Gallant. Shri Singh underlined the government's focus on indigenisation and domestic manufacturing of defence equipment. Both Ministers affirmed their commitment to further deepen bilateral defence relationship.

6th JWGACTC held in India

The 6th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Aircraft Carrier Technology Cooperation (JWGACTC) [was organised](#) under the auspices of the Indo-US Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) in India from 27 February-3 March 2023. An 11-member US delegation headed by RAdm James Downey, Programme Executive Officer (PEO), Carriers visited various defence installations in Delhi and Kochi.

Raksha Mantri holds telephonic conversation with his Australian counterpart

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh [held](#) a telephonic conversation with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence of Australia, Richard Marles on 9 March 2023. Both Ministers reaffirmed their commitment towards further strengthening the bilateral defence relationship.

Chief of Australian Navy Visits India

VAdm Mark Hammond, Chief of Navy, Royal Australian Navy (CN) [visited](#) India from 9-11 March 2023. VAdm Hammond interacted with Adm R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff. Initiatives to enhance interoperability towards the realisation of a Free, Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific/IOR, were discussed.

4th Defence Cooperation Dialogue between India and the Maldives held

India and the Maldives [conducted](#) the 4th Defence Cooperation Dialogue (DCD) in Male on 19 March 2023. The dialogue was co-chaired by Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane and his Maldivian counterpart, Chief of Defence Force, Maldives National Defence Forces, Major General Abdulla Shamaal.

India-Jordan Meeting on Defence Cooperation held

The 2nd Consultative Meeting on Defence Cooperation between India and Jordan [was held](#) in New Delhi on 21 March 2023. A range of issues were discussed, including military training, cyber security, military medicine and capacity building

4th India-Philippines Joint Defence Cooperation Committee meeting held

The 4th Joint Defence Cooperation Committee meeting between India and the Philippines [was held](#) in New Delhi on 31 March 2023. Both sides reviewed ongoing bilateral defence cooperation and discussed effective and practical initiatives to expand the engagements further.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

Union Cabinet approves contract for three Cadet Training Ships

On 1 March 2023, the Union Cabinet [approved](#) signing of a contract with L&T to acquire three Cadet Training Ships for Rs 3,108.09 crore.

Union Cabinet approves procurement of 70 HTT-40 Basic Trainer Aircraft

The Union Cabinet [approved](#) the procurement of 70 HTT-40 Basic Trainer Aircraft from HAL for the IAF for Rs 6,828.36 crore, on 1 March 2023. The HTT-40 is a turboprop aircraft with good low-speed handling qualities, thus providing better training effectiveness.

Keel laid for third 25T BP Tug, Yard 337 (Ashva)

The keel for third 25T Bollard Pull (BP) Tug, Yard 337 (Ashva) [was laid](#) in Kolkata on 2 March 2023. These tugs assist naval ships and submarines in berthing and un-berthing, turning and manoeuvring in confined waters.

First ever privately manufactured indigenised fuse handed over to Navy

The Indian Navy [received](#) for the first time a fully indigenised fuze YDB-60 for underwater Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Rocket RGB-60 used from major warships through a private manufacturer, M/s Economic Explosives Limited (EEL), Nagpur on 3 March 2023.

MoD signs Rs 667 crore contract for six Dornier-228 aircraft

The MoD [signed](#) a contract for the procurement of six Dornier-228 aircraft for the IAF from HAL at the cost of Rs 667 crore on 10 March 2023. The IAF uses the aircraft for Route Transport Roles and communication duties and will help bolster its operational capability in remote areas.

MoD inks contract for refit of Sindhukirti Submarine

The MoD [signed](#) a contract for Normal Refit of Sindhukirti Submarine at Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Visakhapatnam at an overall cost of Rs 934 crore on 13 March 2023.

Indian Army awards first contract for iDEX Project

On 14 March 2023, the Indian Army [awarded](#) the first-ever procurement order of iDEX project as per the revised procedure. The contract for 'Integrated Mobile Camouflage System (IMCS)' for mechanised forces was signed with M/s Hyper Stealth Technologies Pvt Ltd.

Maiden successful flight test of DRDO's indigenous Power Take off Shaft

The maiden successful flight test of Power Takeoff (PTO) Shaft [was conducted](#) on LCA Tejas Limited Series Production (LSP)-3 aircraft in Bengaluru on 14 March 2023. The PTO shaft, a critical component in the aircraft, will support the requirements of future fighter aircraft and their variants at competitive cost.

DRDO conducts successful flight tests of Very Short Range Air Defence System

The DRDO [conducted](#) two consecutive successful flight tests of the Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) missile at the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha on 14 March 2023.

Defence Acquisition Council approves proposals worth Rs 70,500 crore

On 16 March 2023, the DAC [accorded](#) Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for capital acquisition amounting to over Rs 70,500 crore under Buy {Indian-IDD (Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured)}. Indian Navy proposals constituted more than Rs 56,000 crore.

Second ship of ASW SWC (GRSE) project, 'Androth', launched

'Androth', the second of the 08xASW Shallow Water Craft (SWC) Project, being built by M/s GRSE for Indian Navy [was launched](#) in Kolkata on 21 March 2023. Eight ASW SWC ships are being built by GRSE.

MoD inks contracts for Medium Power Radars and Radar Warning Receivers

On 23 March 2023, the MoD [signed](#) two separate contracts with BEL, at a total cost of over Rs 3,700 crore, to enhance the operational capabilities of the IAF. The first contract,

worth over Rs 2,800 crore, pertains to the supply of Medium Power Radars (MPR) 'Arudhra'. The second contract, at an overall cost of Rs 950 crore, relates to 129 DR-118 Radar Warning Receivers (RWR).

MoD signs contract for procurement of Integrated Electronic Warfare Systems

The MoD [signed](#) a contract with BEL, Hyderabad, to procure two Integrated Electronic Warfare Systems, 'Project Himshakti', at approximately Rs 3,000 crore on 24 March 2023.

MoD inks contracts for procurement of Automated Air Defence Control and Reporting System

The MoD [signed](#) three contracts on 29 March 2023 – two with BEL, Ghaziabad and one with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) – at a total cost of nearly Rs 5,400 crore, for automated air defence control and reporting system and electronic support measure (ESM) systems.

MoD signs contract for 13 Lynx-U2 Fire Control Systems

The MoD [signed](#) a contract with BEL, Bengaluru to procure 13 Lynx-U2 Fire Control Systems for the Indian Navy at a total cost of over Rs 1,700 crore on 20 March 2023. The Lynx-U2 System is a Naval Gun Fire Control System designed and developed indigenously.

MoD signs contracts for Offshore Patrol and Next Generation Missile Vessels

The MoD [signed](#) contracts with Indian shipyards on 30 March 2023, to acquire 11 Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels and six Next Generation Missile Vessels at an overall cost of approximately Rs 19,600 crore. These ships will enable the Indian Navy to meet operational requirements such as anti-piracy, counter-infiltration among others.

MoD inks contract with BrahMos worth Rs 1,700 crore

On 30 March 2023, the MoD [inked](#) a contract with BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited (BAPL) for procurement of Next Generation Maritime Mobile Coastal Batteries (Long range) and BrahMos missiles at a cost of over Rs 1,700 crore. These systems will enhance the multi-directional maritime strike capability of the Indian Navy.

MoD inks contracts for improved Akash Weapon System and Weapon Locating Radars

The MoD [signed](#) contracts to procure an improved Akash Weapon System and 12 Weapon Locating Radars, WLR Swathi (Plains), for the Indian Army at an overall cost of over Rs 9,100 crore on 30 March 2023.

MoD signs contract for modernisation of Naval Aircraft Yards

The MoD [signed](#) a contract with Ultra Dimensions Pvt. Ltd. (UDPL), Vishakhapatnam, for the modernisation of Naval Aircraft Yards (NAYs) at Goa and Kochi, at the cost of Rs 470 crore on 31 March 2023. The modernisation will reduce dependence on foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) for repairs.

DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

Indian Air Force participates in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri.

The IAF [participated](#) in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri with the Japan Air Self-Defence Force (JASDF) from 1-2 March 2023. The exercise was organised on the sidelines of the Indo-Japan Joint Army Exercise, Dharma Guardian.

INS TRIKAND participates in Cutlass Express exercise

INS Trikand [participated](#) in the International Maritime Exercise/ Cutlass Express 2023 (IMX/CE-23) held in the Gulf region from 26

February-16 March 2023. The exercise witnessed participants from over 50 nations with the common aim of enhancing maritime security.

Indo-France Joint Military exercise Frinjex held

The maiden Joint Military Exercise FRINJEX-23 between Indian Army and French Army [was conducted](#) at Pangode Military Station, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala from 6-7 March 2023.

French Navy Ships Visit Kochi

French Navy Ships FS Dixmude, an amphibious helicopter carrier and La Fayette, frigate, [visited Kochi](#) as part of a circumnavigation mission Jeanne d'Arc from 6-10 March 2023.

Maritime Exercise with French Navy

Guided missile frigate INS Sahyadri, [participated](#) in a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with French Navy (FN) ships FS Dixmude, a Mistral Class Amphibious Assault Ship and FS La Fayette, a La Fayette Class Frigate from 10-11 March 2023. The exercises included cross-deck landings, boarding exercises and seamanship evolutions.

Exercise La Perouse held

The 3rd edition of the multilateral Exercise La Perouse [was conducted](#) in the Indian Ocean Region from 13-14 March 2023, with the participation of personnel, ships and helicopters from Australia, France, India, Japan, the UK and the US Navy.

Maritime Exercise with Japan Maritime Self Defence Force

INS Sahyadri [engaged](#) in a maritime partnership exercise with the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) ship JS Suzutsuki, an Akizuki Class Destroyer in the Arabian Sea on

11 March 2023. The exercises included cross-deck landings by integral helicopters.

India-Singapore exercise 'Bold Kurukshetra' held

The Singapore Army and Indian Army [participated](#) in the 13th edition of Exercise Bold Kurukshetra, a bilateral armour exercise at Jodhpur Military Station, India from 6-13 March 2023.

4th Table Top Exercise under Colombo Security Conclave held

Indian Coast Guard Region (North East) [conducted](#) the 4th edition of the Table Top Exercise under the aegis of the Colombo Security Conclave in Kolkata from 14-16 March 2023. Representatives from Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Mauritius, along with Observer countries, Bangladesh and Seychelles, participated. Tackling threats from anti-national elements, marine pollution response, search and rescue and damage control at sea were on the agenda.

Konkan Military Exercise conducted

Konkan 2023, the annual bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy, [was held](#) off the Konkan coast in the Arabian Sea from 20-22 March 2023. INS Trishul, a guided missile frigate, and HMS Lancaster, a Type 23 guided missile frigate, undertook multiple maritime drills to enhance interoperability and imbibe best practices.

India participates in Exercise Sea Dragon 23

A P8I aircraft of the Indian Navy [participated](#) in 'Exercise Sea Dragon 23', the third edition

of the coordinated multilateral ASW exercise for Long Range MR ASW aircraft, conducted by the US Navy on 14 March 2023.

INS Sujata visits Port Maputo, Mozambique

INS Sujata of the Southern Naval Command, Kochi, [visited](#) Port Maputo, Mozambique, from 19-21 March 2023. About 40 personnel of the Mozambican Navy visited the Ship for Cross deck training, briefing about diving ops, training on VBSS and light weapons, among others.

First Training Squadron visits Madagascar

The First Training Squadron (1TS) ships of the Indian Navy, INS Tir and ICGS Sarathi, [visited](#) Port Antsirananana, Madagascar, from 20-23 March 2023. Officers from the Malagasy Navy and representatives from Indian Embassy in Madagascar received the ships.

INS Sumedha visits Algiers

INS Sumedha [visited](#) Algiers, Algeria on 26 March 2023. The visit aims to strengthen bilateral ties and enhance maritime cooperation and interoperability between the two navies.

India-Africa Joint Military Exercise 'AFINDEX-23' held

The 2nd edition of the joint military exercise 'The Africa-India Field Training Exercise' (AFINDEX-2023) [was held](#) at Foreign Training Node, Aundh, Pune from 16-29 March 2023. 25 nations of the African continent participated in the multinational Exercise. The exercises dealt with humanitarian mine action and Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) under the UN mandate.

'The Newsletter is a compilation of media reports and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Manohar Parrikar IDSA or the Ministry of Defence, Government of India'.