

Current Affairs search results for tag: defence

### 1. NATO plans German-led air force exercise, "Air Defender 23" ( June 9, 2023 )

#### **NATO-plans-German-led-air-force-exercise-Air-Defender-23**

**NATO** is set to commence its **largest air force deployment exercise in Europe**, known as "**Air Defender 23**," according to German and US officials.

#### **An overview of the news**

- The exercise will span approximately **10 days, starting from 12th June**, and will involve the participation of around **220 military aircraft from 25 NATO and partner countries**.
- The exercise will be conducted across Germany, with some of the training taking place at **Ramstein Air Base**, one of NATO's largest air bases.

#### **Air Defender 23**

- The exercise is purely **defensive in nature**.
- Its primary objective is to **enhance the defense capabilities of participating nations** and ensure preparedness to respond to potential security challenges.
- The exercise also intends to send a message to other countries including Russia.
- The demonstration of NATO's unity and collective defense posture serves as a reminder of the Alliance's commitment to address **potential threats and maintain regional stability**.
- By conducting this exercise, NATO seeks to improve interoperability and strengthen the effectiveness of its air defense capabilities.
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#### **About NATO**

- **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, is a military alliance between **North American and European countries formed in 1949** and headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.
- It was created during the Cold War as a defence pact to prevent Soviet expansion and protect member states from possible aggression.
- The founding members of NATO were the United States, **Canada, and ten European countries, including Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom**.
- NATO Secretary General- **Jens Stoltenberg**

## 2. 'Agni Prime' ballistic missile successfully flight-tested by DRDO ( June 8, 2023 )

Agni-Prime

Generation Ballistic Missile 'Agni Prime' was successfully flight-tested by **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** from **Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island** off the coast of Odisha on June 7, 2023.

New

### An overview of the news

- DRDO's successful test flight of 'Agni Prime' missile marks a **significant achievement**.
- This was the first pre-induction night launch by the users after three successful developmental trials of the missile, **validating the accuracy and reliability of the system**.
- Range instrumentation such as **radar, telemetry and electro optical tracking systems** were deployed at various locations including two down-range vessels at the terminal point to capture flight data covering the entire trajectory of the vehicle.

### About 'Agni Prime' Missile

- The missile is a **two-stage canisterised missile**.
- It is the latest and sixth variant of the Agni series missiles, developed under the **Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP)**.
- The missile is equipped with multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles, enabling it to deliver warheads to separate locations. It has a **range of 1,000 - 2,000 km**.
- The missile has a **diameter of 1.2 m and a height of 10.5 m**.
- It has a payload capacity of up to **1.5 tonnes for carrying warheads**.
- The missile is capable of performing high maneuvers while homing in on its targets.
- After a series of user-associated launches, these missiles will be officially **inducted into the armed forces**.

## 3. Indian Navy undertakes first combat firing of Varunastra torpedo ( June 8, 2023 )

The **Indian Navy and the country's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** undertook the **first 'combat' test-firing of the Varunastra** heavyweight torpedo on 5 June.

### An overview of the news

- It will enhance the **anti-submarine warfare capabilities** of the indigenous Navy and give it a formidable force.

- The torpedo was fired from a submarine and successfully hit the target at a **distance of 40 km.**
- The test was conducted in the **Arabian Sea** in the presence of senior officials from the Indian Navy and the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO).

### **About Varunastra torpedo**

- It has been designed and developed by the **Naval Science and Technological Laboratory at Visakhapatnam** under the Defense Research and Development Organisation.
- **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)** is responsible for the **production of the Varunastra missile system.**
- This would become the mainstay of **anti-submarine torpedoes for all Navy warships.**
- It will **replace the old torpedoes** on all naval ships that can fire heavy-weight torpedoes.

### **Features of the Varunastra**

- It is **seven to eight meters long, weighs 1,500 kg** and has a **diameter of 533 mm.**
- When fired it can travel at **40 knots, or 74 kmph.**
- The **operational range is 40 km** and it can carry a warhead weighing 250 kg.
- Varunastra was inducted by Indian Navy **in 2016**
- It can be fired from all **Anti-submarine warfare (ASW)** ships capable of firing heavy-weight torpedoes in an intense countermeasures environment.

### **Benefits of the Varunastra Torpedo**

- It is a powerful and sophisticated weapon that will significantly enhance the **Navy's ability to detect, track, and engage enemy submarines.**
- It is the first indigenously developed heavyweight torpedo that is capable of meeting the Navy's operational requirements.
- This will reduce the Navy's dependence on foreign weapons systems.
- It is a cost-effective weapon that will save the Navy money in the long run.

## **4. Sarbananda Sonowal flags off maiden International Cruise Vessel, MV Empress in Chennai ( June 6, 2023 )**

Sarbananda-Sonowal-flags-off-maiden-International  
Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, **Sarbananda Sonowal** flagged off

**India's first international cruise vessel - MV Empress, from Chennai to Sri Lanka** on June 5.

### **An overview of the news**

- This is the launch of the **International Cruise Tourism Terminal at Chennai** built at a cost of **Rs 17.21 crore**, ushering in a new era of **cruise tourism** and maritime trade in the country.
- On the occasion of Environment Day, Sonowal along with the port officials also planted 2,500 saplings at the port.
- The launch of the first cruise service between Chennai and Sri Lanka has opened a **new chapter in the cruise tourism sector** in the country.
- This is the result of an MoU signed during the Incredible India **International Cruise Summit** in 2022 between **Chennai Port and M/s Waterways Leisure Tourism Pvt Ltd** to start domestic and international cruise services.

### **International Cruise Vessel, MV Empress**

- It is a renowned and **luxurious cruise ship** that operates globally.
- It offers passengers a unique and unforgettable experience on the **open seas, combining comfort, entertainment, and leisure.**
- The vessel is equipped with state-of-the-art navigation systems and safety features, ensuring a secure and smooth journey for all on board.
- Its elegant design and modern amenities make it a preferred choice for travelers seeking a premium cruising experience.

## **5. NATO Launches Arctic exercise ( June 3, 2023 )**

### **NATO-Launches-Arctic-exercise**

**NATO countries** have started **military exercises in the Arctic region.**

### **An Overview of the News**

- The exercise involves approximately **1,000 allied forces from Norway**, the United Kingdom and the United States, along with NATO applicant Sweden.
- **Finland, NATO's newest member**, is hosting its first joint training in the Arctic region since joining the **Western alliance** in April.
- The exercise took place at **Rovajärvi in northern Finland**, near the Russian border, at one of Europe's largest artillery training grounds.

### **Oath to defend Finland:**

- NATO has pledged to protect its newest member, **Finland.**

- The decision to join NATO was influenced by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, which raised tensions between **Moscow and the West**.

**Participation and Scope of Practice:**

- About **6,500 Finnish soldiers and 1,000 vehicles** are participating in the exercise.
- The Arctic Challenge 2023 exercise also includes **150 aircraft from 14 NATO members** and partner countries.
- The objective of the exercise is **to enhance military cooperation and preparedness in the Arctic region**.
- Joint training reinforces NATO's commitment to collective defence and regional security.

**North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):**

- It is a military alliance between **North American and European countries formed in 1949** and **headquartered in Brussels, Belgium**.
- It was created during the Cold War as a defense pact to prevent Soviet expansion and protect member states from possible aggression.
- The founding members of NATO were the **United States, Canada, and ten European countries, including Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom**.
- NATO Secretary General- **Jens Stoltenberg**

**About Finland**

- Finland is the **31st member of NATO**.
- Prime Minister- **Sana Marin**
- Capital- **Helsinki**
- Currency- **Euro**

**6. Saudi naval cadet trains with Indian Navy for the first time ( June 3, 2023 )**

**55 cadets of the Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF)** underwent training with the **Indian Navy for the first time**.

**An Overview of the News**

- The cadets have been attached to the **Indian Navy's First Training Squadron ships, INS Tir and INS Sujata**, for afloat training.
- The cadets were given simulator training before commencing sea training.

- During sea flights, cadets received training in **navigation, seamanship, anchoring, coastal navigation, replenishment at sea, sea boats, fire fighting and emergency drills.**
- The **Chief of the Naval Staff** was apprised of the ongoing training activities and progress of the trainees.
- Navy Chief Admiral - **R Hari Kumar**

### **Indian Navy:**

- It is the **maritime branch of the Indian Armed Forces**, responsible for **protecting India's interests at sea.**
- The President of India holds the position of **Supreme Commander of the Indian Navy**, which vests ultimate authority and responsibility over naval operations.
- The Navy is commanded by the **Chief of Naval Staff**, who is a **four star Admiral.**
- Establishment - **26 January 1950**
- Headquarters - **New Delhi**

### **7. Air Marshal Rajesh Kumar Anand VSM takes over as Air Officer-in-Charge Administration (AOA) ( June 1, 2023 )**

**Air Marshal Rajesh Kumar Anand**, Vishisht Seva Medal took over as the **Air Officer-in-Charge Administration (AOA)** on 1 June 2023.

#### **An overview of the news**

- An alumnus of the **National Defense Academy**, the Air Marshal was commissioned as Air Marshal in the administrative branch of the Indian Air Force.
- In a career spanning over 36 years, the Air Marshal has held various field and staff appointments.
- Prior to his present appointment, he was the **Director General (Administration) at Air Headquarters, New Delhi.**
- For his distinguished service, he was **awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal by the President of India in January 2022.**

#### **Role of Air Officer-in-Charge Administration**

- Air Force Officer-in-Charge Administration is responsible for **overseeing the administrative functions of the Indian Air Force.**
- It includes the management of **human resources, logistics, infrastructure, welfare** and other administrative aspects of the organization.

- The AOA plays a critical role in driving modernization efforts and improving administrative efficiency within the Indian Air Force.

## **8. P Upadhyay INAS takes over as Director General of Naval Armament ( June 1, 2023 )**

**P Upadhyay, INAS** has taken over as **Director General of Naval Armament (DGONA)** from **KSC Iyer**, who superannuated on 31 May 23.

### **An overview of the news**

- P Upadhyay is an **officer of the 1987 batch** of Indian Naval Armament Service.
- He joined the Naval Armament Organization of the Indian Navy on 12 July 1989.
- An **Electrical Engineering Graduate** from SGSITS Indore, he earned his Post Graduate degrees from Devi Ahilya University in Electrical Engineering with specialization in '**Digital Techniques and Instrumentation**' in 1988.
- He is postgraduate in Mechanical Engineering from University of Pune with specialisation in '**Guided Missiles**', in 1995.
- In a span of 34 years, he has held various important assignments at NAD (Visakhapatnam), NAD (Karanja), NAD (Trombay), NAD (Alwaye).
- He is an alumnus of **Naval Defence College** of NDC-53.
- He is also adept at missile and torpedo maintenance apart from having expertise on ammunition disposal.

### **Naval Armament**

- The Naval Armament Directorate is responsible for the **development, procurement, and maintenance** of armament systems for the Indian Navy.
- It plays a vital role in equipping the naval forces with advanced weaponry and supporting their operational readiness.
- It plays a crucial role in promoting indigenous development and self-reliance in armament systems.
- P. Upadhyay will contribute to the Indian Navy's "**Make in India**" initiative by supporting **indigenous research, development, and production capabilities**.

## **9. 'Sudarshan Shakti Exercise 2023' ( May 28, 2023 )**

The **Sapta Shakti Command** of the **Indian Army** conducted exercise '**Sudarshan Shakti 2023**' along the western borders in **Rajasthan and Punjab**.

### **An Overview of the News:**

- **Aim:** The exercise aimed at transforming the forces into a modern, lean and agile combat combination capable of taking advantage of new age technologies.
- **Objective:** It focused on validating operational plans in a network-centric environment, involving combat power, combat support and logistics support.
- **Synergized Application:** The exercise involved coordinated application of combat power, combat support and logistic support under all enemy threat zones including grey zone warfare.
- **Force Multipliers and Niche Technologies:** The exercise integrates force multipliers such as special forces and niche technologies, including drones, tethered drones, stray ammunition and electronic warfare.
- **Objectives of the meeting:** To facilitate the exercise to meet the stated objectives of the five pillars of transformation enunciated by COAS Gen Manoj Pandey in January 2023.
- **Commitment to Preparedness:** "Sudarshan Shakti 2023" highlighted the commitment of the South Western Command and its attached units to maintain a high level of operational preparedness and capability to fight technology-intensive future conflicts.

## **10. Successful completion of naval exercise 'Al Mohed Al Hindi 23' ( May 28, 2023 )**

The sea phase of the **second edition** of the bilateral exercise '**Al Mohed Al Hindi-2023**' between the **Indian Navy and the Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF)** was conducted at **Al Jubail, Saudi Arabia** from 23-25 May 2023.

### **An Overview of the News:**

- **INS Tarkash, INS Subhadra and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA)** participated from the Indian side in the exercise.
- Whereas, the Royal Saudi Naval Force was represented by **HMS Badr and Abdul Aziz, MH60R Helo and UAVs**.
- The three-day exercise, conducted in the waters of the Arabian Sea, witnessed a wide range of maritime operations.
- The successful conduct of '**Al Mohed Al Hindi - 2023**' showcased the high level of professionalism, interoperability and exchange of best practices between the two navies.
- The bilateral exercise has been successful in meeting all its set objectives.

### **INS Tarkash:**

- It is a state-of-the-art stealth frigate belonging to the **INS Talwar** class commissioned on 9 November 2012.
- The ship is named from the Sanskrit word 'Tarkash', meaning "arrow quiver," symbolizing its versatility.
- INS Tarkash is equipped with advanced weapon-sensor technologies and has the capability to deal with all types of threats.
- The design of INS Tarkash incorporates stealth technologies and a special hull for low radar cross-section.
- In April 2023, INS Tarkash was used as part of '**Operation Kaveri**' to evacuate Indian nationals from **Sudan** due to internal unrest.

### **INS Subhadra:**



- It is a patrol vessel of the **INS Sukanya** class.
- The vessel has served as a test bed for the Dhanush ship-launched ballistic missile.