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1. Indian Navy commemorates 130th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's 'Satyagraha' in Durban (June 12, 2023)

INS Trishul, a flagship warship of the Indian Navy, celebrated the **130th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's 'Satyagraha'** at the **Durban port in South Africa**.

An Overview of the News

- The purpose of its visit was to commemorate the **130th anniversary** of an incident that took place on **7 June 1893 at Pietermaritzburg railway station**.
- The incident led to Mahatma Gandhi being **ejected from a train** and played an important role in his fight against discrimination.
- INS Trishul's visit to **Durban harbour** serves as a commemoration of Gandhi's '**Satyagraha**'.
- 'Satyagraha' refers to Gandhi's doctrine of nonviolent resistance.
- By celebrating 'Satyagraha' on board INS Trishul, the Indian Navy pays tribute to the principles of Gandhi and inspires generations to come.

About the visit of INS Trishul warship to Durban

- Its visit to Durban is part of the Navy's celebrations for **India's 75th Independence anniversary** and the resumption of diplomatic relations between India and South Africa 30 years ago.
- The visit included a commemorative meeting at Pietermaritzburg Railway Station, paying homage to the Gandhi Plinth and a performance by the **Indian Navy Band**.
- A '**Gandhi-Mandela-King Conference**' will be organised in association with the **Pietermaritzburg Gandhi Foundation** and the **University of KwaZulu-Natal**.

Mahatma Gandhi Satyagraha

- **Satyagraha was a nonviolent resistance movement** initiated by **Mahatma Gandhi** during the Indian independence struggle **against British rule**.
- Satyagraha was first employed in **South Africa in 1915** when Gandhi led a successful resistance against discriminatory racial laws.
- The movement gained momentum in India during the **1920s and 30s**, leading to important civil disobedience campaigns such as the **Salt March and the Quit India Movement**.
- The principles of satyagraha were also applied to other struggles around the world, including the **fight against colonialism in Africa and Latin America**.
- Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha is considered one of the most powerful and successful tools for social and political change, adopted by people across the world.

2. First edition of India, France and UAE maritime partnership exercise begins (June 10, 2023)

France-and-UAE

The **first edition of the India, France and UAE maritime partnership exercise** began in the **Gulf of Oman**.

An Overview of the News

- The exercise includes the participation of **INS Tarkash and French Ship Surcouf**, both equipped with integral helicopters, as well as **French Rafale aircraft and UAE Navy Maritime Patrol Aircraft**.
- The exercise focused on a wide range of naval operations, including surface combat, tactical firing, missile engagement on surface targets, helicopter cross deck landing operations, advanced air defence exercises and boarding operations.
- The primary objective of the exercise is to enhance trilateral cooperation between the three navies and address conventional and non-conventional threats in the maritime environment.
- The exercise serves as a platform for sharing of knowledge, experience and best practices in maritime security.
- The participating navies aim to strengthen ties, promote mutual understanding and promote regional security and stability in the maritime domain.

United Arab Emirates (UAE):

- Capital - **Abu Dhabi**
- Official language - **Arabic**
- Government - **Federal Islamic parliamentary elective semi-constitutional monarchy**
- President/Crown Prince - **Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**
- Prime Minister - **Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**
- Vice President - **Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan**

Oman:

- Capital - **Muscat**
- Currency - **Omani Rial**
- Official language - **Arabic**

- Sultan - **Haitham bin Tariq**
- Crown Prince - **Thiazin bin Haitham**

3. 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**

4. '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**.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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**

8. 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**

9. 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.

10. 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.**