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MoD inks Rs 53,866.50 Cr Contracts With GRSE & GSL

- Ministry of Defence has signed contracts worth Rs 53,866.50 crore with Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE) and Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) for the acquisition of eight Next Generation Corvettes for the Indian Navy.
- Under the contracts, GRSE will construct five corvettes, while GSL will construct the remaining three.
- The project marks a significant milestone in India's indigenous warship design and construction capabilities, as it is the first project in which the ships will be indigenously designed by the Indian Navy and constructed by Defence Public Sector Undertakings selected through a competitive process.
- The NGCs will be equipped with state-of-the-art capabilities, including advanced missiles, weapons and sensor suites, enabling them to undertake missions across the air, surface and sub-surface domains.
- The induction of these ships will significantly enhance the Indian Navy’s operational capabilities in safeguarding maritime trade routes, conducting anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare operations, strengthening coastal defence, undertaking littoral combat operations and carrying out maritime presence and surveillance missions.
- The NGC project will provide a significant impetus to India’s indigenous shipbuilding ecosystem by strengthening collaboration among DPSUs, private shipyards and Indian industrial partners, including MSMEs.
- The construction of these ships is expected to generate approximately 72 lakh person-days of employment in the shipyards and 460 lakh person-days in ancillary industries and MSMEs over the next ten years.



IAF To Get New Refuelling Tankers

- Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) is reportedly nearing the award of a major contract worth approximately **$905.7 million** (around ₹8,000 crore) to supply **six aerial refuelling aircraft** for the IAF by converting **Boeing 767** passenger jets into **military tanker platforms**.
- The Israeli state-owned aerospace company has emerged as the sole qualifying contender after competing bids from Russian and European manufacturers reportedly did not satisfy the required evaluation standards.
- If finalised, the contract would represent one of the most significant recent air mobility acquisitions for the IAF.
- Under the proposed arrangement, IAI would acquire six Boeing 767 aircraft and convert them into **Multi-Mission Tanker Transport (MMTT) platforms**. In line with India's Make-in-India initiative, at least 30 percent of the project work is expected to be carried out domestically.
- HAL is likely to play a central role as IAI's Indian partner. The company is expected to undertake key activities including systems integration, electrical wiring modifications and structural enhancement work. Subject to the necessary approvals, deliveries are anticipated between 2028 and 2030.
- The Boeing 767-based MMTT solution relies on pre-owned commercial aircraft that are extensively modified by IAI's Bedek Aviation Group into military refuelling and transport platforms.
- The approach is widely regarded as a cost-effective alternative to procuring newly built tanker aircraft while still delivering substantial operational capability.

- Once inducted, the new tankers are expected to replace or supplement the IAF's ageing fleet of **Russian-origin Ilyushin Il-78 aircraft**, which have faced long-standing availability and maintenance challenges.
- The acquisition is intended to significantly improve the endurance and reach of frontline combat aircraft such as the **Rafale and Su-30MKI**, while also supporting future long-range operations involving other fighter platforms.
- Beyond their aerial refuelling mission, the aircraft will provide strategic airlift capability, cargo transport and troop movement functions, giving the IAF greater operational flexibility across a wide spectrum of missions.
- The tanker procurement forms part of India's broader effort to strengthen force-projection capabilities and enhance operational reach across the Indian Ocean region and along its extended borders.
- Aerial refuelling is widely regarded as a critical force multiplier, enabling combat aircraft to remain airborne for longer durations and conduct missions at far greater distances from their home bases.
- IAI brings more than four decades of experience in air-to-air refuelling technologies and has completed numerous tanker conversion projects for over a dozen customers worldwide, including the Israeli Air Force.
- Its extensive track record in aircraft conversion work, combined with HAL's anticipated participation, is expected to support both capability enhancement and domestic aerospace industrial development within India.



Sarvam and HQ IDS Establish Joint Framework for AI

- MoU has been signed with the Ministry of Defence. The MoU has been executed with HQ IDS, an organisation under the Ministry of Defence. Under the MoU, we will design, develop and deploy AI applications for the operational, training and decision-support requirements of the three Services, and provide follow-on technical support.
- Work under the MoU spans several projects across all three Services, with HQ IDS facilitating the engagement.
- Through the agreement, the three Services and the joint organisations gain access to the same foundation models, the same agentic infrastructure, and the same geospatial and perception systems. Doctrine and lessons learnt from one Service's projects can then inform the next.
- The MoU advances the Ministry of Defence's direction on military AI. India's armed forces are building their own AI layer that runs across the Services, developed with Indian partners.
- The focus areas are decision support, target acquisition and data fusion across the sensor-to-shooter loop, with human oversight retained on operational decisions. This AI layer will be built in India and deployed on sovereign infrastructure.
- The work will be carried out by Chanakya, our firewalled division focused on national security and defence. Chanakya will apply our AI stack, including foundation models such as Sarvam 105B.



Indian Navy Rescues Hijacked Fishing Vessel ‘Azini’

- In a swift and well-coordinated operation spanning over 48 hours, the Indian Navy successfully liberated the fishing vessel, Azini, from armed pirates. The operation culminated in the safe rescue of all 20 crew members, with no casualties or injuries.
- Fishing Vessel Azini was reported to have been hijacked by an armed pirate group earlier last month, off the north-eastern coast of Somalia.
- The hijacking represented a significant maritime security threat, with the possibility of the vessel being employed as a ‘mother ship’ for launching further pirate attacks against merchant shipping in the region.
- Responding to the situation, the Indian Navy tasked a mission-deployed warship to intervene, supported by a maritime reconnaissance aircraft.
- Working in close coordination, these platforms located the vessel after persistent surveillance, tracked its movements and employed calibrated non-kinetic measures to contain its movement and prevent its escape.
- Marine Commandos were augmented through a precision airdrop by an Indian Air Force (IAF) C-17 aircraft.
- The successful operation is testament to the Indian Navy’s high operational preparedness and ability to undertake complex maritime security operations through seamless inter-service coordination.
- It also underscores India’s unwavering commitment to remaining First Responder and Preferred Security Partner in the Indian Ocean Region.



US Strikes Iran's Qeshm Island Before Midterms

- The United States launched a 'secret' attack on Iran's Qeshm, the largest island in the Strait of Hormuz, amid Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's call for fresh military action against Tehran after US midterm elections. Strikes, first reported by the Wall Street Journal, appeared to be limited and were not a resumption of major combat operations, a US official told news agency Reuters.
- According to US officials, the latest assault was defensive in nature to prevent Iran from having the freedom to attack commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, a key conduit for oil shipments that has been largely blocked since the war began in late February.
- Quoting US officials, the WSJ reported that the US has not publicly announced the attacks so as not to signal any intention of resuming major combat operations.
- Iranian state media outlet IRNA, meanwhile, reported that five explosions were heard in rapid succession on the island and that some residents reported seeing two aircraft flying in its skies.
- The Timing
- The developments came amid reports claiming Israeli PM Netanyahu was pressing US President Donald Trump to consider fresh military action against Iran after the US midterm elections, even as the US leader has played down the possibility of a return to war, touting the possibility of a diplomatic deal.
- "We had a war with Iran. We won...I don't know if you even call it a war because we haven't been doing any fighting for months," Trump told reporters Monday.
- He also said that a deal with Tehran "could happen."
- Oil prices, sent rocketing by Iran's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz energy corridor, plunged by more than seven per cent on Monday on optimism over a possible end to the conflict.
- US Attacks On Iran
- Officials told WSJ that the US military has been engaged in smaller-scale strikes against Iran for several weeks. In one instance earlier this week, the official said Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps fired a surface-to-air missile at a US jet fighter, which fired back in self-defence.
- In a separate incident the same day, US forces reportedly intercepted an IRGC missile that originated out of Qeshm and was targeting commercial shipping.

- Qeshm, located at the mouth of the Strait of Hormuz, is home to a large underground missile site, naval base and a major desalination plant. The island has been a US target in earlier rounds of the fighting as well.
- What the US Said on Attack
- The US Defence Department referred a request for comment to the US Central Command (CENTCOM), which oversees American forces in the Middle East. CENTCOM did not respond to requests for comment, even as WSJ reported that the agency has laid the groundwork for broader strikes, including moving more missile defences and munitions into the region in recent weeks.
- CENTCOM chief Admiral Brad Cooper reportedly visited the White House last week to brief Trump on the conflict, who reportedly toned down his rhetoric in the hours before the first in-person votes.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The Ministry of Defence signed contracts worth ₹53,866.50 crore for the construction of how many Next Generation Corvettes?

(A) 6
(B) 8
(C) 10
(D) 12

Answer: (B) 8

2. Which shipyard will construct five of the eight Next Generation Corvettes for the Indian Navy?

(A) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
(B) Goa Shipyard Limited
(C) Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited
(D) Hindustan Shipyard Limited

Answer: (C) Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE)

3. Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) is reportedly associated with the proposed supply of six aerial refuelling tankers to the IAF based on which aircraft?

(A) Boeing 737
(B) Boeing 767
(C) Airbus A330
(D) Boeing 777

Answer: (B) Boeing 767

4. Which Indian company is expected to partner with Israel Aerospace Industries in the proposed aerial tanker project?

(A) Bharat Electronics Limited
(B) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
(C) Bharat Dynamics Limited
(D) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited

Answer: (B) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)

5. Sarvam signed a Memorandum of Understanding with which organisation to develop AI applications for India's armed forces?

(A) DRDO
(B) Defence Intelligence Agency
(C) Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff
(D) National Security Council Secretariat

Answer: (C) Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS)

6. Which AI foundation model was specifically mentioned in connection with Sarvam's defence-focused division, Chanakya?

(A) Sarvam 105B
(B) Bharat AI 50B

(C) Chanakya 70B
(D) India GPT 100B

Answer: (A) Sarvam 105B

7. What was the name of the hijacked fishing vessel successfully rescued by the Indian Navy?

(A) Al Noor
(B) Azini
(C) Al Rahman
(D) Sea Guardian

Answer: (B) Azini

8. How many crew members were safely rescued during the Indian Navy's operation to liberate fishing vessel Azini?

(A) 15
(B) 18
(C) 20
(D) 25

Answer: (C) 20

9. Which Indian Air Force aircraft was used to carry out the precision airdrop of Marine Commandos during the Azini rescue operation?

(A) C-130J
(B) C-17
(C) IL-76
(D) AN-32

Answer: (B) C-17

10. Qeshm Island, which was reportedly targeted in limited US strikes, is located near which strategically important waterway?

(A) Strait of Malacca
(B) Bab-el-Mandeb Strait
(C) Strait of Hormuz
(D) Bosporus Strait

Answer: (C) Strait of Hormuz

11. Army Medical Corps Motto Is

A. Courage and Valor

B. Sarve santu niramaya

C. Service Before Self

D. Lethal

ANSWER: B

12. Glock 18 Is A

A. Destroyer

B. Machine Pistol

C. Assault rifle

D. Submachine gun

ANSWER: B

13. Which Is the Largest Uranium-producing Country In the World?

A. USA

B. India

C. Kazakhstan

D. Uzbekistan

ANSWER: C

14. Kaiga Atomic Power Plant Is In

A. Karnataka

B. Gujarat

C. Madhya Pradesh

D. Uttarakhand

ANSWER: A

15. Who established the Atomic Energy Commission of India in 1948?

A. P.K. Iyengar

B. M.R. Srinivasan

C. Vikram Sarabhai

D. Homi Bhabha

ANSWER: D

16. Nay Pyi Taw Is the Capital Of

A. Bhutan

B. Nepal

C. Afghanistan

D. Myanmar

ANSWER: D

17. “India’s Women Unsung Heroes” Book Is Written By

A. Chandrachur Ghose

B. Ruskin Bond

C. Dr. Thomas Matthew

D. Meenakshi Lekhi

ANSWER: D

18. Ex ‘Konkan Shakti’ conducted b/w India &

A. Qatar

B. UK

C. UAE

D. Japan

ANSWER: B

19. “Kartavyam Anvatma” (Duty before death) Is the Motto Of

A. RAJPUT REGIMENT

B. DOGRA REGIMENT

C. SIKH REGIMENT

D. None of the above

ANSWER: B

20. Which Country Isn’t the member of NSG?

A. USA

B. China

C. Pakistan

D. France

ANSWER: C