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Autonomous Aerostat Completes Three-Day Continuous Trial

- An IISc-incubated deep-tech Start-Up in Bangalore has achieved a significant milestone after successfully completing a continuous three-day test of its autonomous tethered aerostat system, demonstrating a level of automation rarely seen in this class of aerial platform.
- Developed by Thinking Balloon, the aerostat is designed to operate with minimal human involvement, carrying out critical functions entirely on its own.
- During testing, the system autonomously launched, maintained its position in the air, recovered itself, docked its ground station and replenished its lift gas without requiring human intervention.
- The achievement represents an important step towards persistent aerial platforms capable of remaining deployed for extended periods while reducing manpower requirements.
- The company has been developing the technology as part of its vision to create automated aerial infrastructure for surveillance, communications and monitoring missions.
- Incubated at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, the Start-Up has also received support from the Bangalore City Police during the development and testing process. The project highlights growing collaboration between academic research institutions, industry and public-sector stakeholders in advancing indigenous aerospace technologies.



Kalashnikov Expands India Partnership With MP-155

- Russia's Kalashnikov Concern has announced a licensing agreement to manufacture its MP-155 shotgun in India, marking a new phase in its cooperation with Indian industry and extending beyond assault rifles into systems being marketed for close-range drone defence.
- The announcement was made by Kalashnikov Concern chief Alan Lushnikov during an interaction with journalists at Patriot Park near Moscow. According to his remarks, production of the MP-155 in India will be carried out with support from the Russian company, although neither the Indian manufacturing partner nor the value and timeline of the project have been disclosed.
- Lushnikov described the MP-155 as a civilian hunting weapon that has demonstrated utility in counter-drone applications. However, he did not identify any Indian military customer, nor did he indicate that the Indian armed forces have placed an order for the weapon.
- Unlike the AK-series rifles for which Kalashnikov is globally recognised, the MP-155 is a gas-operated, semi-automatic smoothbore shotgun developed primarily for hunting. The weapon is offered in multiple configurations and is capable of firing a range of ammunition loads, giving operators flexibility for different roles.
- Kalashnikov has previously promoted a specialised anti-drone variant of the shotgun, claiming it can engage low-flying unmanned aerial systems at distances of roughly 50 to 100 metres.
- The company presents the weapon as part of the final layer of a wider counter-drone architecture, complementing surveillance sensors, interceptor drones, automated gun systems and missile-based air-defence assets.

- The latest announcement does not clarify which version of the MP-155 will be produced in India. It also remains unclear whether specialised anti-drone ammunition is included in the arrangement. Details concerning production volumes, manufacturing location and the level of localisation have not been revealed.



Bharat Forge Subsidiary KSSL Unveils Indigenous 120mm Rapid Attack Mortar System

- Engineering major Bharat Forge's defence subsidiary, Kalyani Strategic Systems Limited (KSSL), has unveiled the 120mm Rapid Attack Mortar System (RAMS), a new indigenous weapon platform designed to provide rapid-response mortar fire support for highly mobile forces.
- The system is integrated onto an agile 4x4 vehicle and has been developed to meet the demands of modern warfare, where armed forces require faster response times, enhanced mobility and greater protection for troops operating in contested environments.
- RAMS is capable of firing directly from the vehicle itself, eliminating the need for crews to dismount and deploy the mortar before engagement. This significantly reduces crew exposure to hostile fire, shortens the sensor-to-shooter cycle and helps keep personnel protected throughout combat operations.
- KSSL stated that the vehicle-mounted mortar system enables operators to move quickly from transit mode to firing mode and then reposition rapidly after engagement. This "shoot-and-scoot" capability is intended to improve

survivability on battlefields increasingly characterised by persistent surveillance and fast target acquisition.



Raksha Rajya Mantri Launches Revamped Gallantry Awards Portal

- Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Sanjay Seth launched the revamped Gallantry Awards portal **(https://gallantryawards.gov.in)** in New Delhi on November 12, 2026. The portal is a dedicated digital initiative to honour the courage & supreme sacrifices of the Gallantry Awardees and preserve their legacy for future generations.
- The re-developed portal features an enhanced, citizen-centric User Interface and User Experience, with intuitive navigation, responsive design and improved accessibility.
- The key features include dedicated sections on Events, Memorials and Museums, Warpedia, Awardees, Gallantrypedia (Articles), Media and an interactive Tribute Section enabling citizens to explore the nation's military history & pay homage to its bravehearts.
- The Gallantry Awards Portal also hosts Veer Gatha as a dedicated digital space, with a page for every edition that brings its introduction, topics, timeline, evaluation criteria, rewards, resources, results, felicitation ceremony, media gallery and student activities together in one place.

- Through this, Veer Gatha connects students directly with the stories of the Gallantry awardees. Students learn about the courage and sacrifice of these heroes and express what they learn through their own entries.



Air Force Commanders' Conference

- Rajnath Singh has called upon the Defence Forces to strengthen and sustain both offensive and defensive dimensions of the 'element of surprise' to maintain operational readiness against conventional and emerging threats arising from rapid technological advancements and the evolving nature of modern warfare.
- Addressing the Air Force Commanders' Conference in New Delhi on November 12, 2026, he emphasised the need to continue bolstering intelligence and surveillance capabilities, enhance integration among systems and identify potential threats before they unfold.
- "Our Defence Forces must develop capabilities and methods that leave the adversary with no time to react or recover, while simultaneously ensuring that we are never caught off guard by an unexpected move from the enemy.
- Shri Rajnath Singh asserted that contemporary conflicts are extending beyond traditional battlefields into non-contact domains, with missiles, drones and advanced weapon systems playing a significant role.
- Raksha Mantri called upon the Indian Air Force (IAF) to develop dedicated doctrines and architectures for emerging domains of warfare, including electronic, cyber and space.

- Rajnath Singh highlighted that the Defence Forces are undergoing a transformative phase, encompassing reforms in wide-ranging areas, including organisational structures, jointness & integration, and operational concepts.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which IISc-incubated Indian startup successfully completed a three-day continuous trial of its autonomous tethered aerostat system?

A) Skyroot Aerospace
B) Thinking Balloon
C) Agnikul Cosmos
D) NewSpace Research

Correct Answer: B) Thinking Balloon

2. The autonomous aerostat developed by Thinking Balloon is primarily designed for which of the following applications?

A) Satellite launching and navigation
B) Surveillance, communications and monitoring
C) Underwater surveillance
D) Space exploration

Correct Answer: B) Surveillance, communications and monitoring

Q3. Russia's Kalashnikov Concern has announced a licensing agreement with India for manufacturing which weapon?

A) AK-203 Rifle
B) MP-155 Shotgun
C) Dragunov Sniper Rifle
D) PKM Machine Gun

Correct Answer: B) MP-155 Shotgun

4. According to Kalashnikov Concern, the specialised anti-drone variant of the MP-155 can engage low-flying UAVs at approximately what distance?

A) 10–20 metres
B) 25–40 metres
C) 50–100 metres
D) 150–200 metres

Correct Answer: C) 50–100 metres

5. Kalyani Strategic Systems Limited (KSSL), a subsidiary of Bharat Forge, has unveiled which indigenous weapon system?

A) 155mm Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System
B) 120mm Rapid Attack Mortar System
C) Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher
D) Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System

Correct Answer: B) 120mm Rapid Attack Mortar System

6. Which operational capability of the indigenous 120mm Rapid Attack Mortar System (RAMS) helps improve battlefield survivability?

A) Underwater firing capability
B) Shoot-and-scoot capability
C) Satellite-based missile interception
D) Autonomous aerial refuelling

Correct Answer: B) Shoot-and-scoot capability

7. Who launched the revamped Gallantry Awards Portal in New Delhi on 12 November 2026?

A) Rajnath Singh
B) Narendra Modi

C) Sanjay Seth
D) Ajay Bhatt

Correct Answer: C) Sanjay Seth

8. During the Air Force Commanders' Conference on 12 November 2026, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh emphasised developing dedicated doctrines for which emerging domains of warfare?

A) Land, Sea and Air
B) Nuclear, Biological and Chemical
C) Electronic, Cyber and Space
D) Mountain, Desert and Jungle

Correct Answer: C) Electronic, Cyber and Space

9. "If you win, you need not have to explain...If you lose, you should not be there to explain!" Said By__

A. Winston Churchill
B. Adolf Hitler
C. Subhas Chandra Bose
D. Bhagat Singh

ANSWER: B

10. Air Marshal Rank of IAF Is Equivalent to Which Rank of Indian Army?

A. Brigadier
B. Lt. Gen
C. Captain
D. Major General

ANSWER: B

11. Current Secretary-General of NATO Is__.

A. Jens Stoltenberg
B. Admiral Rob Bauer
C. General Tod D. Wolters
D. None of the above

ANSWER: A

12. "It Is Our Duty To Pay For Our Liberty With Our Own Blood." Said By__

A. Pandit Nehru
B. Mahatma Gandhi

C. Subhas Chandra Bose
D. Bhagat Singh
ANSWER: C

13. 'The Communist Manifesto' Book Written By__.
A. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
B. Alexis
C. Thomas Paine
D. Niccolo Machiavelli
ANSWER: A

14. OPEC Hq Is In
A. Budapest, Hungary
B. New York, USA
C. Luanda, Angola
D. Vienna, Austria
ANSWER: D

15. IPCC Was Created By
A. WMO & UNEP
B. IMO& UNESCO
C. IMF& WTO
D. UNO& UNFCCC
ANSWER: A

16. Madagascar Is In
A. Pacific Ocean
B. Indian Ocean
C. Black Sea
D. Arctic Ocean
ANSWER: B

17. Which Is Not The Member Of SAARC?
A. Bangladesh
B. Myanmar
C. India
D. Pakistan
ANSWER: B

18. With reference to MILAN Exercise, consider the following statements:

1. It is a multilateral Naval Exercise conducted by the members of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
2. MILAN 2026 conducted in the East China Sea.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
ANSWER: D

19. Mitra Shakti Ex Conducts B/W

A. India & Indonesia
B. India & UK
C. India & Sri Lanka
D. India & Thailand
ANSWER: C

20.Varuna Ex Conducts B/W

A. India & Indonesia
B. India & UK
C. India & France
D. India & Thailand
ANSWER: C