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## Defence news

### I. India's Defence Landscape

**Dhruv Helicopter Fleet Under Scrutiny:** The Indian military's fleet of approximately 330 Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) Dhruv, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), remains under intense scrutiny. Following a series of crashes and a nationwide grounding three months ago, phased clearances have allowed some helicopters to resume operations. However, a comprehensive review of technical faults is ongoing, and the full fleet is yet to be cleared for unrestricted service. The Dhruv is crucial for the Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard, particularly in sensitive regions. HAL is collaborating with military and regulatory authorities on corrective measures, including enhanced maintenance protocols and potential system upgrades.

**India-UK Defence Industrial Roadmap:** India and the UK have firmed up a defence industrial roadmap for co-development and co-production of key defence products and platforms. This was finalized during wide-ranging talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Keir Starmer. The roadmap aims to promote collaboration in co-design, co-development, and co-production to meet demand in both countries and for the global market. This agreement is part of a broader "Vision 2035" roadmap to boost ties in technology, education, clean energy, and people-to-people contacts.

### Defence Minister at Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya

**Convocation:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to be the chief guest at the third convocation of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV) in Vadodara on Sunday (July 27, 2025). This central university, under the railway ministry, focuses on programs in rail, aviation, logistics, and other infrastructure-related fields crucial for national development and defence.

### Defence Sector Growth and Self-Reliance in

**India:** India continues to focus on enhancing defence self-reliance, with a target of US\$25 billion in defence production value by 2025, including US\$5 billion from exports. The Union Budget 2024-25 allocated US\$74.8 billion (₹6.21 lakh crore) to defence, reflecting a significant increase. India is transitioning from a major arms importer to an exporter, with key export items including HAL's ALH, BEL's Radar systems, and the BrahMos Supersonic Missile system. The FDI limit in defence has been raised to 74% to encourage foreign investments and collaborations. DRDO plays a key role in developing indigenous weapon systems like the Tejas fighter jet, Akash missile, Pinaka rocket system, and Arjun tank.

### II. International Military Exercises and Cooperation

**Exercise SHAKTI 2025 (India-France):** The 8th edition of the biennial India-French Joint Military Exercise SHAKTI concluded on July 1, 2025, at Camp Larzac, La Cavalerie, France (having started on June 18). This exercise aimed to enhance joint military capability for multi-domain operations in a sub-conventional scenario (e.g., counter-terrorism) and strengthen interoperability and camaraderie between the two armies.





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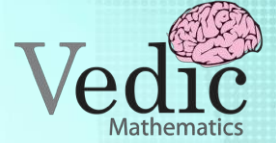
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**Talisman Sabre 2025 (Australia-led, Multinational):** India, along with 18 other nations, is participating in Talisman Sabre 2025, a major bilateral military drill led by Australia that commenced on July 13, 2025. This 11th iteration is the largest and most sophisticated warfighting exercise ever conducted in Australia, uniting over 35,000 military personnel. Activities include live-fire exercises, field training, amphibious landings, ground force maneuvers, and air combat and maritime operations.

**NOMADIC ELEPHANT 2025 (India-Mongolia):** The 17th edition of the India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT 2025 was held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from May 31 to June 13, 2025. This annual bilateral exercise is conducted alternately in India and Mongolia.

### III. Defence Technology and Geopolitical Updates

**Integration of Digital Solutions in Defence:** President Droupadi Murmu, on July 23, 2025, addressed probationers of the Indian Defence Estates Service, Military Engineer Services, and Central Water Engineering Service. She emphasized the necessity of integrating digital solutions like AI, drone-based land surveys, satellite imagery, and blockchain for property record maintenance in defence functioning. She also advised embracing green practices and renewable energy in defence infrastructure.

**Lockheed Martin's Q2 2025 Advancements:** Lockheed Martin highlighted key accomplishments in Q2 2025 (published July 22, 2025), including a successful flight test of the PAC-3 Missile Segment Enhancement (MSE) and the delivery of the first 25 production units of the Javelin Lightweight Command Launch

Unit (LWCLU). They also reported on the operationalization of their Integrated System and Test Lab for uncrewed aerial systems and progress on the Next Generation Overhead Persistent Infrared (Next Gen OPIR) GEO satellite constellation.

**Thailand-Cambodia Border Dispute:** On July 24, 2025, Thailand and Cambodia entered open conflict over a long-term border dispute, exchanging gunfire and airstrikes. This escalation followed months of simmering tensions and marks the deadliest clash between the two countries in over a decade.

**Adversary Entente Task Force Update (Global Adversaries):** The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) is tracking strategic interactions between major US adversaries (Russia, China, Iran, North Korea). Updates from July 23 and July 9, 2025, highlight:

Iranian Defense Minister's visit to Moscow for military assistance post-Israel-Iran war, with Iran potentially viewing China as a more reliable partner.

Iran's pursuit of Chinese investment for transit hub development to mitigate sanctions.

Trilateral talks between Iran, China, and Russia on nuclear negotiations.

Russia and Iran's concerns over growing Turkish influence in the Caucasus.

China and Russia's cooperation in legitimizing and providing international cover for certain Western-designated terrorist organizations.

**New Telecom Policy Draft (India):** The Indian government released a draft telecom policy on July 25, 2025, incorporating next-generation







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technologies like 5G/6G, AI, IoT, quantum communications, satellite networks, and blockchain. While not exclusively defence, these technologies have significant dual-use potential for military applications and cybersecurity. The policy aims to attract Rs 1 lakh crore investments annually and create 10 lakh new jobs by 2030.

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### MCQS

1. What is the approximate number of Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) Dhruv currently in the Indian military's fleet?

- a) 150
- b) 200
- c) 330
- d) 400

**Answer:** c) 330

The first point, "Dhruv Helicopter Fleet Under Scrutiny," states: "The Indian military's fleet of approximately 330 Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) Dhruv, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), remains under intense scrutiny."





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**2. What is the primary aim of the India-UK Defence Industrial Roadmap finalized between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and British counterpart Keir Starmer?**

- a) To increase India's import of UK defence products.
- b) To establish UK military bases in India.
- c) To promote co-design, co-development, and co-production of defence products.
- d) To conduct joint naval exercises only.

**Answer:** c) To promote co-design, co-development, and co-production of defence products.

The text under "India-UK Defence Industrial Roadmap" says: "The roadmap aims to promote collaboration in co-design, co-development, and co-production to meet demand in both countries and for the global market."

**3. Which international military exercise, led by Australia, involved India and 18 other nations, commencing on July 13, 2025?**

- a) Exercise SHAKTI 2025
- b) NOMADIC ELEPHANT 2025
- c) Talisman Sabre 2025
- d) Malabar 2025

**Answer:** c) Talisman Sabre 2025

Under "International Military Exercises and Cooperation," it is stated: "India, along with 18 other nations, is participating in Talisman Sabre 2025, a major bilateral military drill led by Australia that commenced on July 13, 2025."

**4. What is India's target for defence production value by 2025, including exports?**

- a) US10billion
- b) US25 billion
- c) US50billion
- d) US75 billion

**Answer:** b) US25billion\*

This section "Defence Sector Growth and Self-Reliance in India" mentions: "India continues to focus on enhancing defence self-reliance, with a target of US\$25 billion in defence production value by 2025, including US\$5 billion from exports."

**5. Which two countries entered into open conflict over a long-term border dispute on July 24, 2025, exchanging gunfire and airstrikes?**

- a) India and Pakistan
- b) Russia and Ukraine
- c) Thailand and Cambodia
- d) China and Vietnam

**Answer:** c) Thailand and Cambodia

Under "Defence Technology and Geopolitical Updates," it explicitly states: "On July 24, 2025, Thailand and Cambodia entered open conflict over a long-term border dispute, exchanging gunfire and airstrikes."

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