

अप्रैल

Apr

2024

खंड/Vol. : 49

अंक/Issue : 69

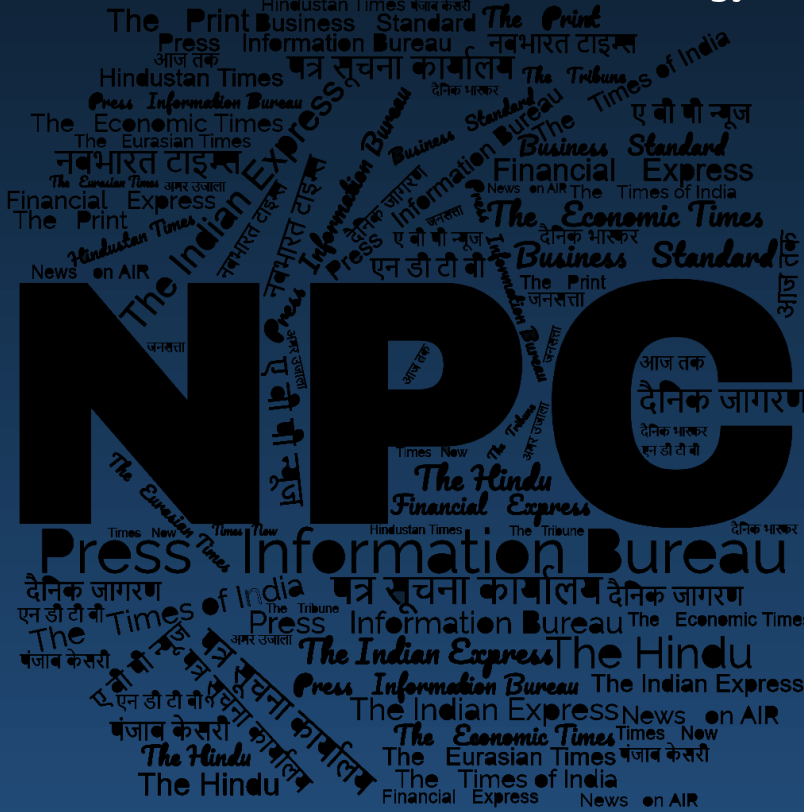
11-12/04/2024

# समाचार पत्रों से चयित अंश

## Newspapers Clippings

डीआरडीओ समुदाय को डीआरडीओ प्रौद्योगिकियों, रक्षा प्रौद्योगिकियों, रक्षा नीतियों, अंतर्राष्ट्रीय संबंधों और विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी की नूतन जानकारी से अवगत कराने हेतु दैनिक सेवा

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**Press Information Bureau  
Government of India**

**Ministry of Defence**

*Wed, 10 Apr 2024*

### **Defence Secretary Presides over First Steel Cutting of Fleet Support Ships for Indian Navy at Hindustan Shipyard Ltd in Visakhapatnam**

Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane presided over the first steel cutting of the Fleet Support Ships (FSS) for the Indian Navy at Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) in Visakhapatnam on April 10, 2024. The FSS, under construction at HSL, is first-of-its-kind with displacement of 44,000 tons and will play a crucial role in replenishing the fleet at sea with fuel, water, ammunition, and stores, thereby extending the operational capabilities of the Navy and enhancing its strategic reach.

The Defence Secretary also laid the foundation stone for augmentation of slipway and major infrastructure modernisation to enhance capacity and capability of the yard. The ongoing infrastructure upgrades, including the installation of a cutting-edge 300T Goliath crane and slipway upgrades, will further enhance HSL's capacity to undertake FSS and future projects like the Landing Platform Dock, reinforcing its role in meeting the defence and commercial sector requirements under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative.

In his address, Shri Giridhar Aramane termed HSL as an asset of the government. He stated that the present shipbuilding trend is showing an upcoming boom in orders from both defence and commercial sector and HSL should be geared up to take on any challenge.

CMD, HSL Cmde Hemant Khatri (Retd) extended gratitude to the Defence Secretary for being a key in the revival of HSL. He underlined the importance of construction of FSS as it provides business to nearly 550 MSMEs in-and-around Visakhapatnam and employment opportunity to over 3,000 personnel.

The ceremony was also attended by Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar among others.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2017619>

## **Army Conducts Training Exercise of Anti-Tank Guided Missile in Sikkim**

The Trishakti Corps of the Indian Army conducted a training exercise of Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) at a super-high altitude area of 17,000 feet in Sikkim.

Missile Firing Detachments from Mechanised and Infantry Units of entire Eastern Command participated in the training exercise, the defence ministry said in a statement.

"The training exercise encompassed comprehensive continuity training and live firing from different platforms on moving as well as static targets depicting battlefield conditions," the ministry said.

The anti-tank guided missile detachments demonstrated the capability to neutralise armoured threats with unparalleled lethality, ensuring mission success on treacherous mountains, it said.

"The ATGM system's performance in high-altitude environments reaffirms the aim of "Ek Missile Ek Tank", and showcased the accuracy and effectiveness of ATGM system in Super High-Altitude terrain," the defence ministry said.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/sikkim-indian-army-training-exercise-anti-tank-guided-missile-2526209-2024-04-12>

## **No Shortage of Funds due to Consolidation of Capital Budget of Three Services, Says IAF**

There will be no shortage of capital funds for the Indian Air Force (IAF) because of consolidation of the demand of three Services in the defence budget for 2024-25, the IAF said. It added that the funds sought for 2024-25 had already been allotted to the Services.

Prior to February 2024, capital funds had been allocated separately to the Army, the Navy and the Air Force.

"The Integrated Capability Development Programme, which is a 10-year plan, would be finalised by headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) and approved by the government. This would be prepared after taking inputs from the service headquarters. The Chief of Defence Staff would provide further inputs to the government after consulting the Service Chiefs," the IAF said in a written reply to questions from The Hindu.

In the interim budget presented in February, the government decided to consolidate the capital allocation for the three Services based on similar items of expenditure such as land, aircraft and aeroengines, heavy and medium vehicles among others. This mechanism will also expedite decision-making and ensure better utilisation of the capital budget, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) had stated earlier.

## **Flexibility in fund allocation**

The government has consolidated the demand of the three Services in the defence budget to bring flexibility in financial management by enabling the MoD to reappropriate funds amongst the Services, keeping in view the inter-services priority, the IAF said.

The total allocation for defence stands at ₹6.2 lakh crore for 2024-25 of which the capital allocation, which is for new procurements, stands at ₹1.72 lakh crore. Of the ₹6.2 lakh crore, 27.67% went to capital, 14.82% for revenue expenditure on sustenance and operational preparedness, 30.68% for pay and allowances, 22.72% for defence pensions and 4.11% for civil organisations under the MoD.

Prioritisation of defence procurements, before they are put before the MoD for approval, is with the CDS, and after approval from the Defence Acquisition Council, the procurement process kicks in. The procurement is overseen by the Defence Secretary.

The capital component includes funds for new procurements as well as committed liabilities, which are payments to be made during a financial year for contracts concluded in previous years. Unlike the Army, the Navy and the IAF – being significantly more technology intensive – have a major chunk of committed liabilities, which on occasions in the recent past had exceeded the entire capital allocation. To offset this, the services have been forced to defer payments of committed liabilities to the defence public sector undertakings (DPSU), so that they could pay foreign companies as any delay would lead to ‘default situation’ on contractual obligations. The Navy got a significant hike in allocation in the last few years to cover the shortfall.

Officials noted that the consolidation of the capital budget would help better address this issue.

## **Committee’s concern**

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence has in the past expressed concern at the widening gap between projections and allocations in the defence budget impacting defence modernisation. It had then recommended a dedicated fund for committed liabilities and new procurements.

Planned modernisation of existing Su-30 fleet along with procurement of 12 more aircraft, acquisition of new engines for MiG-29 jets, C-295 transport aircraft under induction, and missile systems will be funded out of the budget being allocated, the MoD had stated. “Apart from this, to take the initiative of ‘Make in India’ further, the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) MK-I IOC/FOC configuration will be additionally funded to ensure state-of-the-art technology in domestic production. The Indian Navy projects such as acquisition of deck-based fighter aircraft, submarines, next-generation survey vessels etc. will all materialise through this allocation,” the MoD said after the interim budget.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/no-shortage-of-funds-due-to-consolidation-of-capital-budget-of-three-services-says-iaf/article68054123.ece>

# **The Tribune**

*Fri, 12 Apr 2024*

## **Indian Air Force Wants to Source Rafale Parts Locally**

The Indian Air force (IAF) has embarked on a journey to source some components locally for frontline fighter jet Rafale and heavy-lift helicopter Chinook.

A meeting of the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) is scheduled with the Chandigarh-based 3 Base Repair Depot of the IAF. A date for meeting is being planned from next month.

The IAF has provided a list of select items to the industry asking if anyone can produce these in India. Most items on the list comprise parts that are replaced after a defined period of time and don't form operating systems such as engines or onboard computer hardware or software. Some others are ancillary equipment that do not impact the operation.

The IAF has provided a list of 52 parts of Rafale that it can source from the Indian industry. In case of Chinook, the IAF is looking for 27 parts to be sourced from India.

Sources said the list of parts "is a requirement of the IAF that it believes can be sourced from India". The specifications have to match the original parameters set by Dassault in case of Rafale and Boeing in case of Chinook.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/india/iaf-wants-to-source-rafale-parts-locally-609911>

## THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Thu, 11 Apr 2024

### **India-US ESG Discusses Defence Cooperation, Highlights Comprehensive Partnership**

A meeting of the India-US Executive Steering Group (ESG) took place at the US Army Pacific Headquarters in Hawaii. The Indian delegation, led by Lt Gen TK Aich DCOAS (Strategy), was briefed on the capabilities of the Lightning Academy and Aviation Brigade, as stated by the Indian Army.

The ESG meeting serves as a platform to discuss and plan defence cooperation engagements between India and the US, according to the Indian Army.

The Indian Army's post on social media read, "India-US Executive Steering Group #ESG Meeting commenced at HQ US Army Pacific. The Indian delegation, headed by Lt Gen TK Aich DCOAS (Strategy), was briefed upon the capabilities of the Lightning Academy and Aviation Brigade. The #ESG meeting sets the framework to discuss & plan #DefenceCooperation engagements between both the Nations."

— adgpi (@adgpi)

India and the US share a comprehensive global strategic partnership, covering almost all areas of human endeavors. This partnership is driven by shared democratic values, convergence of interests on a range of issues, and vibrant people-to-people contacts, as stated by the Ministry of External Affairs.

In March, the closing ceremony of the bilateral Tri-Service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Amphibious Exercise between India and the United States, Tiger Triumph 2024, was held onboard the USS Somerset.

The Harbour Phase of the exercise, conducted at Visakhapatnam from March 18-25, included pre-sail discussions, Subject Matter Expert Exchange, Sports engagements, shipboarding drills, and cross-deck visits. Personnel from both navies also celebrated the festival of Holi together on March

25 as part of the cultural exchange program showcasing the vibrant and vivid culture of India, as mentioned by the Indian Navy.

The sea phase of the exercise was conducted from March 26 to 30, which included units of both countries undertaking maritime exercises at sea. This was followed by the landing of troops at Kakinada for the setting up of a joint command and control center and a joint relief and medical camp for HADR operations.

The Indian Navy added that cross-deck helicopter operations involving UH3H, CH53, and MH60R helicopters were undertaken between ships of the Indian Navy and the US Navy off Kakinada and Visakhapatnam. The participating units from the Indian Navy included a landing platform dock, large landing ship tanks, guided missile frigate, and long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft.

The Indian Army was represented by one Infantry Battalion Group, including mechanized forces, and the Indian Air Force had deployed one medium-lift aircraft, a transport helicopter, and the Rapid Action Medical Team (RAMT).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-us-esg-discusses-defence-cooperation-highlights-comprehensive-partnership/articleshow/109213429.cms>



*Fri, 12 Apr 2024*

## **We are Beginning a New Chapter in US-India Relations, Says US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin**

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin has told lawmakers that by bolstering the Indian military's capabilities, the nations can work together to uphold a more stable balance of power across the wider Indo-Pacific region.

He told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee during a Congressional hearing this week on the annual budget of the Department of Defense that the militaries of the US and India are accelerating operational activities to boost maritime security in the Indian Ocean.

"By bolstering the Indian military's capabilities, we can work together to uphold a more stable balance of power across the wider Indo-Pacific," Mr. Austin said, adding that "with this budget request, we are beginning a new chapter in US-India relations under our Major Defense Partnership".

The Defence Secretary said, "Our militaries are accelerating joint exercises, information-sharing and other operational activities to boost maritime security in the Indian Ocean."

"We are committed to ensuring that the growing US-India partnership supports the efforts of our broader network of allies and partners, especially the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue among Australia, India, Japan, and the United States," he said.

### **‘Unprecedented interoperability’**

At a separate Congressional hearing on the Indo-Pacific, the Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, Admiral John C. Aquilino, told lawmakers that a strong US-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership is essential to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

In 2023, the US and India launched INDUS-X and completed a roadmap for US-India Defence Industrial Cooperation to enhance bilateral defence industrial cooperation and innovation, he said. The proposed deal between GE Aerospace and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for domestic Indian production of the F-414 jet engines exemplifies this approach.

"The US and India are seeking unprecedented levels of interoperability by expanding cooperation in the air domain through the participation of US B-1B bombers in India's biennial air show AERO INDIA and bilateral air exercise COPE INDIA," Mr. Aquilino said.

He said that additionally, in the land domain, "we conducted the largest-ever bilateral joint amphibious exercise with India, TIGER TRIUMPH, improving our cooperation on maritime domain awareness and strengthening service-to-service ties".

"USINDOPACOM (or the United States Indo-Pacific Command) seeks to deepen cooperation under the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) to enable more regular and flexible engagements in the Indian Ocean region, including US ship repair in Indian shipyards," he said.

Two new Master Ship Repair Agreements were signed in 2023, and three US Navy vessels have recently received maintenance and repair in Indian shipyards, the US admiral said.

Mr. Aquilino also told lawmakers that in 2021, amid its long-running border dispute with India, China passed a land border law "which asserted that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the (People's Republic of China) are sacred and inviolable" and provided a legal framework for greater People's Liberation Army involvement in border security.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/we-are-beginning-a-new-chapter-in-us-india-relations-says-us-defence-secretary-lloyd-austin/article68056742.ece>

# THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Wed, 10 Apr 2024

## **India to Remain Sri Lanka's most Reliable Friend; Offers Modern Defence Equipment**

India on Wednesday said it is and will remain Colombo's most reliable friend and dependable partner as it underlined that New Delhi was willing to offer modern defence equipment to friendly partner countries like Sri Lanka. Addressing the Second India-Sri Lanka Defence Seminar here, India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Santosh Jha, said that like in other areas, India and Sri Lanka were cooperating closely on security and defence matters.

"Because of our geography, our security is interlinked and intertwined. And when we speak of security, we must remember that it has acquired a wider meaning than we have traditionally associated with it," Jha said and added, after the Covid19 pandemic and impact of Russia-Ukraine conflict, it has come to include energy, health, food and even economic security.

The various advanced platforms and equipment developed indigenously in India can also become viable, affordable and modern solutions for the Sri Lankan military, he said.

"Our support in recent years to Sri Lanka, during the Covid pandemic and the economic crisis, was driven by our sense of responsibility and obligation for our closest friend and neighbour. We stood shoulder to shoulder with our civilisational twin when it was needed most and without any



hesitation," he said, referring to the more than USD four billion in economic assistance extended to the country during its unprecedented economic turmoil.

"Many of you will agree that India is and will remain Sri Lanka's most reliable friend and a trusted and dependable partner," Jha said, adding, "Our bilateral cooperation is expanding and diversifying. It is buttressed by India's growing national capabilities."

Sri Lanka's State Minister of Defence Premitha Bandara Tennakoon, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Shavendra Silva and the Commanders of the Air Force and Navy apart from senior officials from the Sri Lankan Armed Forces were present on the occasion.

He said that under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India) vision, India has developed "significant capability development within the Indian defence industry.

"We have invested in research and development and promoted the use of innovation and new-age technologies to build capabilities that are future-ready," Jha said.

"The Indian defence industry today rolls out state-of-the-art systems, advanced technologies and world-class equipment," he said and named fighter aircraft, helicopters, naval vessels, electronic warfare systems, cyber security solutions, small arms and large calibre precision long-range artillery systems among others.

"Not only are we producing for our own national requirements, but we have been willing to make these capabilities available to our friendly partner countries like Sri Lanka," the High Commissioner said.

India's defence exports today stand at nearly USD 2.6 billion, a 10-fold increase over the past five years, he said, adding, "We export defence hardware and software to more than 85 countries with more than 100 indigenous firms active in this field."

"Today, India can offer high quality, low cost, and reliable technology in defence with an assured supply chain for long-term maintenance support," Jha added.

"As in other sectors, our endeavour has been that our growing capabilities must also benefit our neighbours, including Sri Lanka. We are committed to supporting the needs and requirements of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces," he added.

He also expressed confidence that the seminar, being held in Sri Lanka for the second time in the last two years, will focus on security and defence cooperation and help identify the shared priorities for the two nations.

Jha said that the event, which would showcase the various advanced platforms and equipment, would enable the Sri Lankan armed forces to familiarise themselves with various capabilities that have been developed indigenously in India. "We are confident that these can also become viable, affordable and modern solutions for the Sri Lankan military," he asserted.

Earlier, he reminded the gathering of their "shared civilisational past, common heritage and strong cultural connect" that has created "a natural warmth and comfort in dealing with each other."

Jha also said, as close and proximate neighbours, "cooperation is the only option" but added that it is "not driven by choice and opportunity alone."

"Our approach to Sri Lanka is guided by our neighbourhood-first policy and our SAGAR vision. This entails that we share with our closest neighbours all that we can based on their needs and aspirations. It also entails that our approach remains generous and non-reciprocal," he said.

SAGAR or Security and Growth for All in the Region is a flagship government initiative to help Indian Ocean Region neighbours.

Led by Anurag Bajpai, Additional Secretary, Department of Defence Production, India's Ministry of Defence, a large and very diverse delegation from the Indian defence industry, including some leading Indian Defence Public Sector entities and a wide range of industry players from the private sector, too attended the seminar.

Representatives from the Sri Lankan business too were in attendance.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-to-remain-sri-lankas-most-reliable-friend-offers-modern-defence-equipment/articleshow/109203864.cms?from=mdr>

# THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Wed, 10 Apr 2024

## **India Expands Strategic Presence; to have Defence Attaches in more Countries in Africa, Asia**

For the first time, India will post defence attaches in several countries including Ethiopia, Mozambique, Ivory Coast, Philippines, Armenia and Poland in line with its broader policy initiative to expand strategic ties with key regions, a move that comes amid renewed geopolitical rivalries. New Delhi is also appointing a new defence attache to the tiny African nation of Djibouti that serves as a major maritime gateway around the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, and is considered as a prized location for military bases, people familiar with the matter said on Wednesday.

The new defence attache in Djibouti will be the second one to hold the post in the island nation.

It is also learnt that New Delhi is planning to rationalise the strength of its teams of military officials in its embassy in Moscow and high commission in London.

A few of the defence attaches posted in these two countries are set to be deployed elsewhere as part of the rationalisation process that factored in various aspects of New Delhi's foreign policy priorities and optimum use of manpower.

The decision to appoint defence attaches in African countries of Ethiopia, Mozambique and Ivory Coast is in sync with New Delhi's priority to expand its strategic engagement with the African continent, one of the people cited above said.

Several African countries have already expressed keen interest in procuring Indian military platforms, equipment and hardware.

In the last few years, India has been positioning itself as a leading voice, flagging concerns, challenges and aspirations of the Global South or the developing nations, especially the African continent.

India's ties with the African continent have witnessed a major uptick amid China's persistent efforts to expand its influence in the African countries.

The induction of the 55-nation African Union as a permanent member of the G20 was seen as major milestones of India's presidency of the grouping of the world's 20 big economies in 2023.

India is also looking at further expanding defence ties with the Philippines against the backdrop of growing global concerns over China's increasing military assertiveness in the South China Sea.

The defence and strategic ties between India and the Philippines have been on an upswing in the last few years.

In January 2022, India sealed a USD 375 million deal with the Philippines for supplying three batteries of the missile.

The supplies of the missiles to the Southeast Asian country are set to begin soon, one of the people cited above said.

The decision to appoint a defence attache in Armenia comes as the country in the Caucasus region shows deep interest in enhancing its defence relations with India.

Last year, an arms deal to supply Indian military hardware including multi-barrel rocket launchers to Armenia was firmed up.

The deal came amid the Armenia-Azerbaijan clash over Nagorno-Karabakh.

India's decision to appoint a defence attache to Poland, which is a member of the European Union, is also being considered significant.

It is reflective of the desire to expand two-way defence ties, the people cited above said.

Last year, the European Union (EU) posted a military attache to its mission in India for the first time.

A total of 16 defence attaches from the Indian Army, the Navy and the Indian Air Force will shortly assume their new positions, the people cited above said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-expands-strategic-presence-to-have-defence-attaches-in-more-countries-in-africa-asia/articleshow/109202546.cms>



*Fri, 12 Apr 2024*

## **Biden Says US Support for Philippines, Japan Defence ‘Ironclad’ amid Growing China Provocations**

President Joe Biden said Thursday that U.S. defence commitment to Pacific allies was “ironclad” as he gathered Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the White House on Thursday in the midst of growing concern about provocative Chinese military action in the Indo-Pacific.

The U.S. and the Philippines have had a mutual treaty in place for more than 70 years. Mr. Biden’s forceful reinforcement of the American commitment comes in the midst of persistent skirmishes between the Philippine and Chinese coast guards in the disputed South China Sea.

“The United States defense commitments to Japan and to the Philippines are ironclad. They’re ironclad,” Mr. Biden said as he began three-way talks at the White House with Mr. Kishida and Mr. Marcos. “As I said before, any attack on Philippine aircraft, vessels or armed forces in the South China Sea would invoke our mutual defense treaty.”

Relations between China and the Philippines have been repeatedly tested by skirmishes involving the two nations’ coast guard vessels in the disputed South China Sea. Chinese coast guard ships also regularly approach disputed Japanese-controlled East China Sea islands near Taiwan.

The so-called “gray-zone” harassment by China has included shining military-grade lasers at the Philippine Coast Guard, firing water cannons at vessels and ramming into Philippine ships near the Second Thomas Shoal, which both Manila and Beijing claim. In 1999, Manila intentionally ran the World War II-era ship aground on the shoal, establishing a permanent military presence there.

Mr. Biden, in a wide-ranging phone call with Chinese President Xi Jinping last week, raised concerns about China's operations in the South China Sea, including efforts to impede the Philippines, which the U.S. is treaty-obligated to defend, from resupplying its forces on the Second Thomas Shoal.

Chinese officials have bristled at criticism over their action in the South China Sea and blamed the U.S. for exacerbating tensions.

"No one should violate China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, and China remains steadfast in safeguarding our lawful rights," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said Thursday.

The White House billed the first-ever trilateral summit with Japan and the Philippines as a potent response to China's attempts at "intimidation" and sending a message that China is "the outlier in the neighborhood," according to an administration official.

The leaders are also expected to announce that their coast guards will hold a joint patrol in the Indo-Pacific this year, a follow-up on law enforcement drills carried out last year by the allies in waters near the disputed South China Sea. The U.S. Coast Guard will also welcome Filipino and Japanese coast guard members onto a U.S. Coast Guard vessel during the patrol for training, according to senior Biden administration officials who insisted on anonymity to preview the talks.

The summit comes a day after Mr. Biden held one-on-one talks with Mr. Kishida and feted the Japanese premier with a glitzy state dinner at the White House, a diplomatic honour meant to recognize Tokyo's growing clout on the global stage. It was also designed to send a clear signal that the Democratic administration remains determined to build what it calls a "latticework" of alliances in the Indo-Pacific even as it grapples with the Israel-Hamas war and Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine. Mr. Biden also hosted Marcos for a private meeting at the White House ahead of the scheduled three-way talks.

"Today's summit is an opportunity to define the future that we want, and how we intend to achieve it together," Mr. Marcos said.

Thursday's three-way summit will also have a large economic component with several major U.S.-based companies — including Meta, UPS and Greenbrier Energy — announcing investments in the Philippines, administration officials said. The new deals come after Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo visited Manila last month to announce more than \$1 billion in new investment by American companies in the Philippines.

Mr. Biden also announced that the three nations were launching a new economic corridor in the Philippines as part of the G7 Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment that would help develop clean energy, port, agriculture and other projects in the country. Mr. Biden said the leaders were forging a "new era" and predicted "a great deal of history in our world will be written in the Indo-Pacific in the coming years."

The United States, the United Kingdom and Japan on Wednesday announced joint military exercises in the Indo-Pacific in 2025. That followed the Pentagon revealing earlier this week that the U.S., the U.K. and Australia were considering including Japan in the AUKUS partnership, a grouping launched in 2021 that aims to equip Australia with nuclear-powered and conventionally armed submarines.

Mr. Kishida visited Capitol Hill on Thursday for an address to U.S. lawmakers that focused on the need to strengthen the partnership between the U.S. and Japan at a time of tension in the Asia-Pacific and skepticism in Congress about U.S. involvement abroad. He offered concern about "the undercurrent of self-doubt among some Americans about what your role in the world should be."

Mr. Biden has made improving relations with the Philippines a priority since Mr. Marcos became the country's president in June 2022. The relationship has had ups and downs over the years and was in a difficult place when Marcos took office. Human rights groups said Marcos' predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte's "war on drugs" resulted in thousands of extrajudicial killings.

Mr. Marcos, the son and namesake of the country's former dictator, as a candidate said he would look to pursue closer ties with China. But he's increasingly drifted toward Washington amid concerns about China's coercive action.

Mr. Biden hosted him for talks at the White House last year, the first Washington visit by a Philippine President in more than a decade. Mr. Biden also met him on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly soon after Mr. Marcos took office, and dispatched Vice President Kamala Harris to Manila in 2022 to meet him.

Last year, the Philippines agreed to give the U.S. access to four more bases on the islands.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/biden-hosts-philippine-and-japanese-leaders-as-worry-grows-over-chinas-indo-pacific-action/article68055621.ece>

## Science & Technology News



*Thu, 11 Apr 2024*

### **This IIT Kanpur Startup just Developed Wireless Charging System for EVs**

Simactricals, incubated at the prestigious Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC), IIT Kanpur, has announced the development of its wireless charging system for electric vehicles (EVs).

Founded in October 2020, Simactricals recently raised Rs 75 lakh through SanchiConnect pre-seed cohort program. This is in addition to Rs 44 lakh that the company has secured in government grants.

Simactricals' wireless charging system is designed to cater to a wide array of electric vehicles (EVs), including two-wheelers, three-wheelers and passenger vehicles (PVs). It can also be used to charge warehouse bots, rovers and drones.

The company developed its first prototype within 45 days. The inaugural project involved the creation of a wireless charging solution for Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) drones, allowing these unmanned aerial vehicles to land on designated pads for charging. The initial success laid the foundation for Simactricals to expand its reach within the EV ecosystem.

"Simactricals is driven by a passion for innovation and a commitment to simplifying the EV charging experience. Our wireless charging technology represents a leap forward in convenience and efficiency, making it easier than ever for EV owners to power up. We are excited to continue pushing the boundaries of what's possible in the EV industry," said Mihir Mishra, Founder and Director, Simactricals.

"At SanchiConnect, we are proud to support hardware deep tech startups like Simactricals that are leading the charge in sustainable technology. Simactricals' wireless EV charging system aligns perfectly with our mission to foster environmental responsibility and drive positive change," said Sunil Shekhawat, CEO, SanchiConnect.

At present, Simactricals is engaged with two-wheeler and three-wheeler manufacturers, collaborating on five proof of concepts (POCs) to demonstrate the efficacy of its wireless charging infrastructure.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/auto/latest-auto-news/story/this-iit-kanpur-startup-just-developed-wireless-charging-system-for-evs-2525945-2024-04-11>



*Wed, 10 Apr 2024*

## **Chandrayaan-4: ISRO Chief Somanath Shares Plans for Next Moon Mission in 2040**

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief S Somnath on Wednesday that the upcoming phase of the Chandrayaan project is in progress, aiming to advance India's lunar exploration efforts.

He indicated that Chandrayaan-4 marks the initial stride towards India's aspiration of landing an astronaut on the moon by 2040.

Addressing a press conference, Somnath said, "Chandrayaan-4 is a concept that we are now developing as a continuation of the Chandrayaan series...our honourable Prime Minister has announced that an Indian will land on the moon in 2040. So, if that has to happen, we have to have continuous moon exploration of various kinds."

"Chandrayaan-4 is the first step in the direction...to step a craft on the moon and collect sample and bring it back to Earth. It demonstrates the full cycle of going to the moon and coming back to Earth," he added.

Somnath further said that ISRO is working on plenty of other projects ranging from rocket and satellite projects to technology development projects. "There are plenty. We have major projects, rocket projects, we have satellite projects, application projects and technology development projects. Rocket projects are around 5-10, satellite projects are about 30-40, and application projects are in 100s and R&D projects are in 1000s," he added.

India made significant strides in space exploration with the successful landing of the Chandrayaan-3 lander module on the moon's South Pole on August 23, marking a historic achievement as the first country to accomplish this feat.

Earlier in January, India launched its inaugural dedicated solar mission, the Aditya-L1 spacecraft, positioning it into the Halo orbit around the sun.

Furthermore, the Gaganyaan project stands as another pivotal endeavor for India, aiming to demonstrate human spaceflight capability by sending a crew of three members into a 400 km orbit for a 3-day mission, safely returning them to Earth by landing in Indian waters.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/chandrayaan4-india-aims-for-moon-landing-by-2040-isro-chief-s-somnath-lunar-missions-astronauts-gaganyaan-11712730864706.html>

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