

# 3 indigenously built naval ships to be commissioned tomorrow

*Dunagiri* is stealth frigate, *Agray* anti-submarine warfare craft and *Sanshodhak* is survey vessel

Amrita Nayak Dutta  
New Delhi, June 19



*Dunagiri* is equipped with advanced weapons and sensors, including BrahMos surface-to-surface missiles and the medium range surface-to-air missile system. PTI

been designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.

"Together, they reflect the Navy's balanced approach to capability development, strengthening blue-water operations, enhancing maritime domain awareness, and securing coastal waters against evolving threats," it said.

*Dunagiri*, the fifth Project

for defence and civil applications, and is equipped with advanced survey systems including autonomous underwater vehicles and remotely operated vehicles.

*Agray*, the fourth of the Aruna-class anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft, is equipped with lightweight torpedoes, indigenous rocket launchers, and shallow-water sonar systems to detect and engage underwater threats in littoral waters.

According to the statement, the three platforms demonstrate the growing maturity of India's indigenous shipbuilding ecosystem, with indigenous content exceeding 75 per cent.

It added that their construction involved extensive participation by Indian industry, including more than 200 MSMEs, and generated substantial direct and indirect employment.

In a statement earlier in the day, the Prime Minister's Office said that these inductions will significantly bolster the nation's operational capabilities, enhance maritime domain awareness, and strengthen the security of our coastal waters against geopolitical threats.

THE INDIAN Navy will commission three indigenously built frontline platforms — *Dunagiri*, *Sanshodhak*, and *Agray* — in Kolkata on Sunday, and the ceremony will be presided over by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

*Dunagiri* is an advanced stealth frigate, *Sanshodhak* is a survey vessel (large), and *Agray* is an anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft.

In a statement issued Friday, the Navy said the platforms represent key operational capabilities across maritime combat, hydrographic surveying, and anti-submarine warfare. They have

17A stealth frigate, is equipped with advanced weapons and sensors, including BrahMos surface-to-surface missiles and the medium range surface-to-air missile system, significantly enhancing the Navy's combat capability.

*Sanshodhak*, the fourth survey vessel (large), is designed for coastal and deep-water hydrographic surveys and collection of oceanographic and geophysical data

# Navy to get 12 sets of indigenous 1.25 MW gas turbine generators for Kolkata-class ships

Amrita Nayak Dutta

New Delhi, June 19

THE MINISTRY of Defence on Friday signed a contract with Bharat Forge Limited for the acquisition of 12 sets of 1.25 MW gas turbine generators at a cost of around Rs 425 crore for onboard power generation on Kolkata-class ships of the Indian Navy.

The marine gas turbine generators will have at least 60% indigenous content, and the contract will be executed over a period of five years.

The development is significant since the contract marks a major progress towards manufacturing indigenous marine gas turbine generators for Indian ships. So far, Indian warships have been fitted with marine gas turbine generators imported from Russia since the 1980s. Every warship has a combination of two to four marine gas turbine generators and marine diesel generators for power generation. However, over the last three years, the Navy has been working to indigenise gas tur-

bine parts and the compressor to reduce dependence on imports of spare parts for their maintenance and has been in talks with Indian firms. Work has been on to indigenise marine gas turbine generators by BHEL and Bharat Forge Limited.

In a statement issued Friday, the Defence Ministry said the procurement would enhance maritime self-reliance in critical strategic technologies and bolster the Indian Navy's operational readiness through indigenous production and end-to-end life-cycle support.

Separately, in a statement, Pune-based Bharat Forge Limited (BFL) said the 1.25 MW gas turbine generators will replace the lower-capacity units currently in service. "Awarded under the Buy (Indian) category of the Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020 (DAP-2020), the contract marks BFL's entry into the marine gas turbine (GT) business — and will deliver the first indigenous GT-based power plant to operate aboard Indian Naval ships," it added.

# Right to walk on safe footpaths a fundamental right, says SC

**Ananthkrishnan G**  
*New Delhi, June 19*

THE SUPREME Court on Friday held that the right to walk on secured footpaths is a fundamental right and urged the government to bring a law that declares this right and recognises the duty of municipal authorities and local bodies to build, demarcate, and maintain necessary pedestrian infrastructure.

“The right to walk is a fundamental right under Part III of the Constitution... The fundamental right to walk will take within its sweep the right to demarcated footpaths. These rights are primary and shall have priority over movement by motorised

vehicles,” said the bench of Justices P S Narasimha and Atul S Chandurkar.

The court said that the fundamental right to walk on demarcated footpaths has a correlative duty. “If the road exists, there is a duty to ensure that there are demarcated... The duty bearers are the urban development authorities, municipal corporations, municipalities and even panchayats, who must endeavour to demarcate, construct, maintain, and safeguard footpaths and other necessary pedestrian infrastructure, as walking is integral to life,” the bench said.

It further added that “the violation of the right to walk on de-

marcated footpaths will entitle the citizens to invoke constitutional and legal remedies against duty bearers for restitution and compensation. This remedy is independent of the remedies that are available under the Motor Vehicles (MV) Act, 1988.” The judgment came in a motor accident claim case related to a five-year-old boy’s death. A man and his son were walking toward his school when a tanker hit the boy, crushing his waist and lower body later succumbing to the injuries.

On May 30, 2016, the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal (MACT) granted compensation of Rs 7.82 lakh, with 6 per cent interest per annum. The Supreme

Court enhanced it to Rs 11,44,628, and directed that it be paid within two months.

The Supreme Court noted “there was neither a footpath nor a pedestrian crossing” on the stretch of road where the accident happened and added that such incidents “continue to occur... till we restructure our rights regime as regards access to roads and recognise their correlative duties”. “It is rather strange that we failed to focus on recognising and securing this ‘right to walk’. It may be because wheels eclipsed our imagination, and our municipal administration was busy creating roads that are suitable for motorised vehicles,” the court added.

# Delhi HC upholds curbs on Telegram amid NEET row

Centre followed procedure as per Section 69A of IT Act and gave reasons for invoking emergency powers, says court; definition of 'information' in Act includes software and programmes, it says

**Ishita Mishra**

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday upheld the Centre's temporary ban on messaging platform Telegram, noting that the government's action was proportionate and justified in view of the alleged use of the platform by organised cheating networks linked to the NEET (UG), 2026, controversy.

Dismissing Telegram's challenge to the June 16 emergency blocking order, the court found that the Union government had followed the procedure prescribed under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act and had recorded adequate reasons for invoking its emergency powers.

## Court's endorsement

What the Delhi High Court said in the Telegram case

- Centre empowered under Section 69A of the IT Act to restrict 'entire platform' access
- Centre has cited circulation of purported examination papers and fraudulent activities targeting students as reason

- Govt. order not disproportionate as attempts to resolve through channel-specific take-downs failed
- Temporary restrictions were proportionate to the objective of preventing misinformation and criminal activity



A significant aspect of the ruling is the court's endorsement of the government's interpretation of Section 69A.

### 'Entire platform'

Rejecting Telegram's argument that the provision permits blocking only specific content and not an entire platform, the court

held that the Act's broad definition of "information" encompasses software and computer programmes. Since Telegram functions through software infrastructure constituting a "computer resource", the government was legally empowered to direct a temporary block on the platform, the court said.

"An application or platform performs logical, arithmetic and memory functions through electronic, magnetic or optical impulses, and includes input, output, processing, storage, computer software and communication facilities connected with a computer system or computer network. Accordingly, this court is of the view that Respondent No. 1 was empowered under Section 69A of the IT Act to issue directions for blocking public access to Telegram," it said.

The court rejected Telegram's contention that the order reflected non-application of mind.

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# HC upholds Telegram curbs amid NEET row

The court observed that the government had specifically cited the circulation of purported examination papers, fraudulent activities targeting students and the inability of existing measures to curb recurring violations.

Accepting the Centre's argument that repeated attempts to tackle the problem through channel-specific takedowns on Telegram had failed, the court said, "The government's measures are least restrictive. It cannot be held that the order is disproportionate."

According to material placed before the government, operators of fraudulent networks were routinely creating mirror channels, backup groups and successor accounts after enforcement action, rendering targeted removals ineffective, the court said. The judgment noted that authorities had concluded that "nothing short of a platform-level measure" would protect the integrity of the examination during the critical period preceding the June 21 re-test.

Telegram had argued that it was being unfairly singled out while other social media platforms continued to operate. The company told the court that it had cooperated with authorities, removed flagged content within hours, and had taken down over 900 links related to unlawful NEET content using a combination of artificial intelligence tools and manual moderation.

However, the court held that the emergent circumstances surrounding the NEET-UG controversy justified the government's intervention and that the temporary restrictions were proportionate to the objective of preventing misinformation and criminal activity.

# Culture Secretary Vivek Aggarwal is new FATF Vice-President

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Plenary has appointed Union Culture Secretary Vivek Aggarwal as the next Vice-President of the global anti-money laundering and counterterrorist financing watchdog for the 2026-2027 term.

“Members approved the priorities of the FATF under the incoming U.K. Presidency, and appointed Mr. Vivek Aggarwal of India as the incoming Vice-President of the FATF (July 2026-June 2027),” said an FATF release. Mr. Aggarwal will succeed Giles Thomson, who has served as FATF Vice-President since July 1, 2025.

Currently serving as Secretary in the Culture Mi-



Vivek Aggarwal

nistry, Mr. Aggarwal has headed India’s delegation to the FATF. He led a multi-disciplinary team during India’s FATF Mutual Evaluation process. His selection is being viewed as a significant development for India’s role in global financial governance and efforts to strengthen international cooperation on issues of anti-money laundering, counterterrorist financing, and illicit financial flows.

# Pakistan is an example of a 'Frankenstein state', India says at UN

**Press Trust of India**

UNITED NATIONS

India has slammed Pakistan at the United Nations, calling it a "Frankenstein state" that gets shocked when its "own monster bites back", as it accused Islamabad of "hosting, training and deploying" terrorists.

The remarks were made by Anupama Singh, First Secretary at India's Permanent Mission to the United Nations, on Wednesday, after Pakistan and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) raised the issue of Jammu & Kashmir during the Interactive Dialogue on the UN High Com-

missioner's annual report. "We categorically reject the baseless and malicious allegations made by Pakistan," Ms. Singh said. "This is the country with a sitting Defence Minister who boasts of hosting, training, and deploying terrorists as state policy, and yet Pakistan calls itself a victim of terrorism."

"It (Pakistan) is a living example of a Frankenstein state, which is shocked when its own monster bites back," she added.

She also said that "denial of basic freedoms has brought matters to a point where even demands for rights and dignity are met with bullets and brutality."

# Moving from drone purchases to drone partnerships

The Indian government's planned \$2 billion drone procurement from domestic manufacturers reinforces its commitment to indigenous manufacturing and will boost the country's growing drone industry. It also signals a shift from buying large, sophisticated platforms such as fighter aircraft to smaller, cheaper and more attritable systems. This shift also means procurement practices will have to address the challenges that come with the territory.

Long-term capital procurement that deals with systems such as tanks and fighter jets, is likely to struggle to keep pace with the rapid demand for upgrades and modifications. The willingness to spend money on these platforms is a good sign, but the question now is whether procurement systems will spend it well.

## The economics of drones

Although public conversations about military drones typically focus on large uncrewed combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs) such as the MQ-9B Reaper and the Bayraktar TB-2, recent conflicts have exemplified the utility of smaller, cheaper drones.

These typically fall within the "micro" and "nano" drone categories, and are built to be cost-effective. Both Iran's use of drones against the United States and Israel, and the use of drones in the Russia-Ukraine war, have followed this principle. Intercepting drones that are being used to strike high-priced hardware, is typically far more expensive than the drones themselves. The trend across recent wars has been to produce vast numbers of cheap drones, and deploy them in large numbers. Creative uses and modifications of drones that were originally manufactured for commercial use, have also served as an inexpensive means to achieve military objectives.

Ukraine's use of first-person-view (FPV) drones that have been retrofitted with warheads has made many headlines. Innovation in the defence



**Adva Madhavan**

Researcher at the  
Takshashila  
Institution

India's drone  
ambitions  
require smarter  
contracts and  
continuous  
innovation

drone sector is therefore closely linked to innovation in civilian drone technology, creating a need for more iterative and collaborative research and development (R&D) processes. The case of the Chinese drone industry demonstrates the benefits of closer collaboration among industry, academia and the military.

## The challenge of drone relevance

The other unique aspect of procuring tactical drones, is that the challenge lies not in acquiring them, but in ensuring that they stay relevant. A state-of-the-art fighter jet or tank bought in 2015 is still relatively new today, and is reasonably competitive. Tactical drones bought today can be obsolete in as little as two to three years, as enemy capabilities and threat environments continue to evolve. Enemy electronic warfare (EW) units can adapt their jammers to the signal of a new drone in as little as six to eight weeks.

When Ukrainian engineers faced this issue, the solution was not to procure new systems with different communication links, but to replace radio links with fibre-optic cables. Processes need to be quick, and allow for rapid modifications and upgrades without the constraint of red tape and bureaucratic timelines.

Indian procurement frameworks have made some good provisions in this direction, but there is still scope for change. For instance, the draft Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) allows the armed forces to procure commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) systems, enabling them to purchase commercial drones wherever they can be utilised. The DAP also has provisions to streamline upgrades. The Defence Procurement Manual (DPM) allows financial buffers for unforeseen repairs and upgrade costs. These are sensible moves.

The key shortcoming of current procurement frameworks is that buyer-seller relationships

remain fundamentally transactional. The underlying assumption is that once the government identifies a requirement, it can issue a tender and procure a product that meets it.

However, in a domain where technology evolves rapidly, products require continuous iteration and improvement.

## Partnerships, not transactions

A more suitable model for tactical drone procurement may resemble a managed service contract rather than like purchasing hardware.

Much like large organisations that procure computers with maintenance, software updates and replacement support, the armed forces could enter longer-term agreements with drone manufacturers. Such contracts would provide industry with demand predictability while ensuring assured supply, upgrade pathways and surge production capacity during conflicts. They would also create a framework for continuous improvements, including performance enhancements and adaptations to evolving electronic warfare threats. Most importantly, they would foster closer collaboration between the armed forces and industry in a domain where technology changes rapidly and future requirements are constantly evolving.

While Indian policy frameworks continue to take steps in the right direction, perhaps structural changes within these frameworks could create an environment better suited to keeping pace with the evolution of tactical drones. India's domestic drone industry has the technical foundation to support a more sophisticated procurement relationship. The \$2 billion commitment is the clearest signal yet that the political will exists. Translating that into the right contractual architecture, one that prioritises sustained capability over one-off delivery, is the logical next step.

ISRAEL SAYS IT TARGETED HEZBOLLAH POSITIONS, INFRASTRUCTURE IN RESPONSE TO CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS

# Israel strikes kill 47 in Lebanon; Tel Aviv says 4 soldiers dead in Hezbollah attack

Will extract 'very heavy price', says Netanyahu

Reuters  
Jerusalem, June 19

ISRAEL AND Iran-backed Hezbollah agreed to a ceasefire on Friday, a US official said, after an escalation in hostilities in Lebanon sorely tested the US-Iranian interim deal to end the wider Middle East conflict.

A senior Israeli official and two Hezbollah sources confirmed the ceasefire to Reuters, which the US official said was due to begin at 4 pm. "If Hezbollah does not attack us, then for us it is not a time of war," the Israeli official said.

Israeli forces would remain in southern Lebanon, the official added. Two Lebanese security sources said Israel carried out a dozen airstrikes in the first hour after the ceasefire came into effect, but none were recorded after 5 pm. An Israeli military official confirmed that there had been no strikes since 5 pm but denied that Israel had carried out a dozen strikes after 4 pm.

Israeli airstrikes had killed at least 47 people in Lebanon since midnight, the Lebanese health ministry reported. Israel reported four of its soldiers killed in south Lebanon in one of the deadliest Hezbollah attacks of the war.

The Israeli official said Israel had the freedom to act against emerging threats and threats to its forces and territory. Earlier, Israeli Prime Minister



Smoke billows from southern Lebanon following an Israeli strike, as seen from Marjayoun on Friday. REUTERS

Benjamin Netanyahu had vowed to "extract a very heavy price" from Hezbollah for the killing of the four soldiers.

Israeli officials have voiced anger at the US-Iran pact, saying it does not go far enough to address Israeli concerns over Iran's nuclear programme.

Israel said it carried out strikes targeting Hezbollah operatives and infrastructure across several areas in response to repeated Hezbollah ceasefire violations.

Hezbollah denied it had violated the ceasefire, and accused Israel of repeatedly violating truce terms, including the terms of the US-Iran agreement. A

statement from the group accused Israeli forces of carrying out attacks that killed civilians, destroying homes and infrastructure, and continuing its

ground incursions.

Heavy fighting overnight was concentrated in an area north of the Litani River known as Al-Jal-Taher hill - high ground strategically important to Hezbollah where Israeli forces had sought to advance, a senior Lebanese security source said.

Hezbollah said its fighters ambushed an Israeli force advancing near the hill, destroying three Merkava tanks with guided missiles and targeting troops with rocket and artillery fire. Hezbollah said it later attacked Israeli forces had sought to enter the area to retrieve casualties.

Israel has seized a self-declared security zone in the south, saying it aims to shield northern Israel from Hezbollah attack. Its forces have been razing villages in the south where they say Hezbollah has embedded itself.

## Vance's defence of Iran deal rests on vague and misleading claims

Zolan Kanno-Youngs,  
Rebecca F Elliott,  
& Erica L Green  
Washington, June 19

VICE PRESIDENT JD Vance on Thursday defended the preliminary deal to stop the war with Iran as a "win for the American people." But he relied in part on a string of aspirational, vague and misleading claims about the agreement.

Vance, speaking at the White House, sought to counter criticism that the deal would reward and embolden Iran without ensuring that the US achieved the main objectives laid out by President Donald Trump at the start of the fighting.

The agreement, which reopened the Strait of Hormuz, appeared to provide some economic relief to Americans on Thursday, as oil and gas prices dropped to levels not seen since the early days of the war.

Vance highlighted the development as he continued his increasingly prominent role as a defender of the deal.

"We have all the cards," Vance said, adding, "If they change their behavior, big things are going to happen for Iran and for the world. If they don't, no skin off our backs."

But he sought to divert atten-

tion from the text of the memorandum of understanding released by the two sides on Wednesday, which appeared to give Iran a number of immediate benefits.

Vance claimed that one immediate concession in the memorandum of understanding - lifting oil sanctions on Iran - was "not a new benefit" for the country. The claim ignores how the economic penalties in place before the war forced Iran to re-

sort to desperate methods to sell oil. In the memorandum, Iran reiterated its long-standing commitment not to pursue a nuclear weapon, an assurance US and its allies have long regarded as largely meaningless.

Vance projected confidence that the final agreement would include terms upholding Trump's goal of ensuring that Iran cannot possess nuclear weapons, and that Iran would not benefit from the changes promised in the memorandum if it does not comply with the US demands.

"They have promised not to enrich, they have promised they would allow inspectors in to destroy that highly enriched stockpile," Vance said. "That's why the deal contemplates a number of benefits if they do those things, but it doesn't do anything if they don't actually meet promises."

Israel-Lebanon talks to be held in Washington next week, says US

Washington: The next round of Lebanese-Israeli talks will be held June 23-25 in Washington, the US State Department said on Friday following a call between US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Lebanese president Joseph Aoun.

Rubio "reiterated the need to disarm" Hezbollah and reaffirmed US "support for the Government of Lebanon's efforts for a fully sovereign Lebanese state..." spokesperson Tommy Pigott said. REUTERS

# Israel and Hezbollah ‘agree to halt fighting’; U.S.-Iran talks uncertain

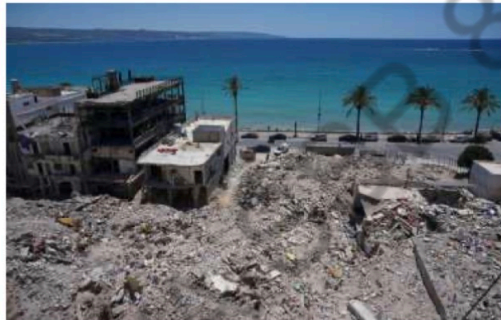
Israel carried out attacks soon after officials announced a ceasefire mediated by Qatar, U.S. and Iran, reports media; Israel's Defence Minister Katz says IDF would remain in southern Lebanon and would never allow people to return to their homes

**Associated Press**  
JERUSALEM

Israel and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah militant group agreed on Friday to halt the heavy fighting in southern Lebanon that had threatened to unravel an interim agreement between the United States and Iran to end their war, officials said. Neither Israel nor Hezbollah immediately confirmed the truce.

It came after a heavy exchange of fire killed 47 people and wounded 97 others in Lebanon and four Israeli soldiers.

Hezbollah and Israel went to war shortly after the outbreak of the wider



**Laid to ruin:** Rubble from buildings destroyed in Israeli strikes in the southern port city of Tyre, Lebanon on Friday. AP

conflict, with Hezbollah firing rockets and drones at civilian communities in northern Israel and Israel seizing large swaths of southern Lebanon.

The interim agreement

to end the Iran war has already reopened the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran effectively closed, cutting the global economy off from supplies of oil. The deal would also relaunch talks

on Iran's nuclear programme.

But the accord already faces threats, chiefly from Lebanon, with the fighting there leading to a delay in the start of talks planned for Friday in Switzerland.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to keep Israeli forces in southern Lebanon until the threat is eliminated. Hezbollah has refused to halt its attacks unless Israel commits to withdrawing from Lebanon, which Iran says is also a condition of the deal.

Hours after officials told news organisations about the truce, Israeli artillery fire could still be heard from northern Israel along

the Lebanese border, and a large explosion was seen erupting inside Lebanon, according to a pressperson in northern Israel.

Word of the attempt to halt the fighting came from two regional officials and a U.S. official. The effort was mediated by Qatar, the U.S. and Iran, the regional officials said.

Earlier on Friday, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said Israeli forces would remain in southern Lebanon “from the Mediterranean coast to the heights of Beaufort”.

“The 200,000 residents who lived in the security zone are not returning. None of them are returning,” Mr. Katz said.