

# SUGOSHA DEFENCE

## DAILY NEWS & ANALYSIS

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### National

#### Akasa Air Pioneers India's MRO Self-Reliance With Noida International Airport AT Jewar Tie-Up

Akasa Air, the homegrown low-cost carrier that took to the skies in August 2022, has forged a landmark partnership with Noida International Airport at Jewar. The collaboration centres on establishing the airline's inaugural Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility right within the airport's premises. This move promises to deliver a suite of advanced maintenance services, bolstering the efficiency of Akasa's fleet and the wider aviation network.

#### DRDO's Scramjet Breakthrough: 12-Minute Hypersonic Endurance Ushers In Mach-6 Missile Era

DRDO has marked a significant milestone in its Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) program with a landmark 12-minute ground test of a scramjet engine on 9 January 2026. This test sustained hypersonic speeds, validating advanced thermal management systems and paving the way for operational Mach-6-plus air-breathing hypersonic cruise missiles.

The achievement builds on earlier successes, notably the 2020 flight test that propelled India into an elite group of nations mastering hypersonic technology. Central to this progress is active cooling technology, which manages extreme surface temperatures exceeding those in prior systems. This innovation ensures the engine's structural integrity during prolonged hypersonic flight, addressing one of the toughest challenges in scramjet design.

The HSTDV is engineered for speeds around Mach 6, equivalent to approximately 7,000 km/h. Such velocities enable rapid strikes, rendering the vehicle highly manoeuvrable and capable of evading conventional air defence systems like missile interceptors and radar networks.

Strategically, the HSTDV underpins the development of long-range hypersonic cruise missiles. These weapons could transform India's deterrence posture, particularly against regional threats, by delivering precision payloads at unprecedented speeds while minimising detection windows.

#### NewSpace Research & Technologies Triumphs With Sheshnag-20 Loitering Munition Flight Test Success

NewSpace Research & Technologies has marked a significant milestone in India's defence innovation by successfully flight testing its Sheshnag-20 loitering munition. The Sheshnag-20 is an electrically powered fixed-wing platform, designed for seamless integration into ground or vehicle-based operations. With a compact wingspan of two metres and a maximum take-off weight of 20 kilograms, it balances portability with potent capability. Its five-kilogram payload capacity enables versatile mission profiles, from surveillance to lethal engagement.

**Key performance metrics highlight its operational edge.**

The munition boasts an endurance of approximately one hour and a range of 30 kilometres, allowing rapid transit to target areas. It achieves speeds up to 150 kilometres per hour and operates at altitudes reaching 6,000 metres above mean sea level. These attributes support extended loiter times for target identification before strike execution. The cannisterised design simplifies logistics, enhancing storage, handling, and deployment across diverse terrains. Powered by batteries and a brushless DC motor, it delivers a low acoustic signature for covert missions.

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### Several Indian Defence Startups Race to Build Affordable Shahed-136 Class Long-Range Loitering Munition for Domestic and Global Markets

Indian defence startups are racing to develop Shahed-136-style long-range loitering munitions with about 1,000 km range, aiming to give India a low-cost deep-strike drone capability capable of swarm attacks and precision strikes against distant targets

- Solar Industries India Limited are engineering a strike drone with an impressive operational range exceeding 900 to 1,000 kilometres. This is a joint effort with the Bengaluru-based CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL). The final product is intended to match the capabilities of the Shahed-136, a platform that has transformed modern battlefield tactics through its extensive deployment in recent global conflicts. A vibrant and competitive ecosystem of Indian defence startups is now focused on producing cost-effective, long-range attack drones:
- NewSpace Research & Technologies (NRT): Recently showcased at the World Defense Show in Riyadh, NRT is developing the Sheshnaag-150. This fixed-wing, modular drone boasts a range of over 1,000 kilometres and a 5-hour endurance. Notably, it is equipped with advanced artificial intelligence that enables networked swarm attacks, allowing multiple drones to communicate, re-task dynamically, and strike collaboratively.
- VEM Technologies: Based in Hyderabad, this company has entered the race with its Chaser loitering munition. Leveraging an extensive background in producing aerospace structures and subsystems for prominent Indian missile projects like BrahMos, the company is designing the Chaser to strike targets at distances up to 1,000 kilometres using sophisticated electro-optical targeting to ensure precision.

- IG Defence: Joining the fray is this Noida-based startup, which recently unveiled Project KAL. This sleek, delta-wing attack drone is engineered for deep-penetration strikes, matching the 1,000-kilometre range and 3-to-5-hour flight endurance of its competitors. Project KAL is specifically designed to seek and destroy strategic assets such as radar stations and logistical hubs deep inside hostile territory.

The simultaneous development of these platforms signifies a strategic evolution in India's defence procurement strategy. Rather than depending on a monopoly supplier, the government is actively fostering a competitive environment among multiple manufacturers.

### Global

#### Japan prepares new electronic warfare aircraft for testing

Japan is preparing a new airborne electronic warfare aircraft derived from the Kawasaki P-1 maritime patrol platform.

The aircraft will conduct signals intelligence, radar detection, and electronic jamming missions.

The system is intended to replace aging EP-3 Orion electronic intelligence aircraft used by the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force.

Development funding includes roughly 41.4 billion yen requested in Japan's FY2025 defense budget.

The platform will support Japan's growing focus on electromagnetic warfare and cross-domain military operations.

#### Israel Approves Emergency Military Funding as Iran War Rages

Israel has approved an \$827-million emergency budget allocation for military purchases. The document added that the move constituted "an exceptional emergency decision intended solely to address needs arising from the conduct of the fighting." The funds will be drawn from the state budget, totaling \$222 billion, and approved by the government on March 12, with adoption by the Knesset expected by March 31

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## North Korea Conducts Test of Nuclear-Capable Rocket Launchers

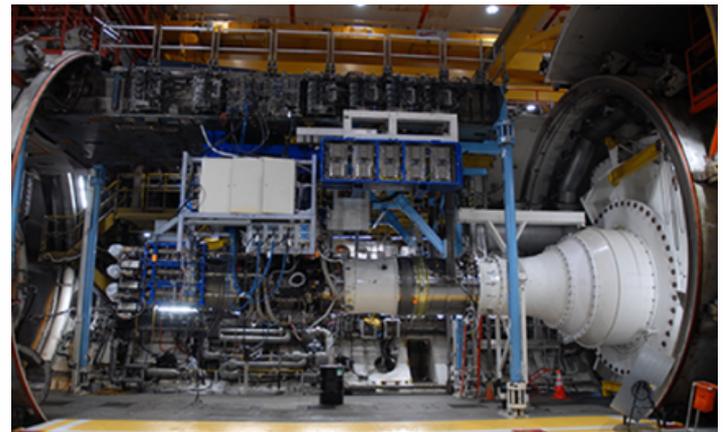
North Korea tested nuclear-capable rocket launchers, a day after Seoul detected the launch of around 10 ballistic missiles.

The test comes after South Korean and US forces kicked off their springtime military drills, due to run until March 19. It said the test involved 12 600mm-calibre ultra-precision multiple rocket launchers and two artillery companies. The rockets battered an island target in the East Sea of Korea more than 360 km away



## Rolls-Royce completes altitude, operability testing on F130 engine for B-52J programme

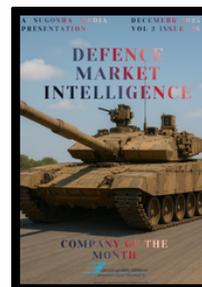
Rolls-Royce completed altitude and operability testing for its F130 engine as part of the US Air Force's (USAF's) B-52J programme. The B-52J Stratofortress was tested with the F130 engine at the US Air Force Arnold Engineering Development Complex (AEDC) in Tullahoma, Tennessee, on “long-duration, high-altitude strategic missions”; “operability testing with distortion screens to replicate turbulent, real-world airflow and confirm engine stability under stress”; and Integrated Drive Generator (IDG) testing with Boeing to test electrical power stability



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- The Defense Post – Israel emergency defence funding
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- Indian Defence News – Akasa Air MRO facility at Noida International Airport

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