# NEXT IAS

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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# ETHIOPIA'S LONG DORMANT VOLCANO HAYLI GUBBI ERUPTED AFTER 12,000 YEARS
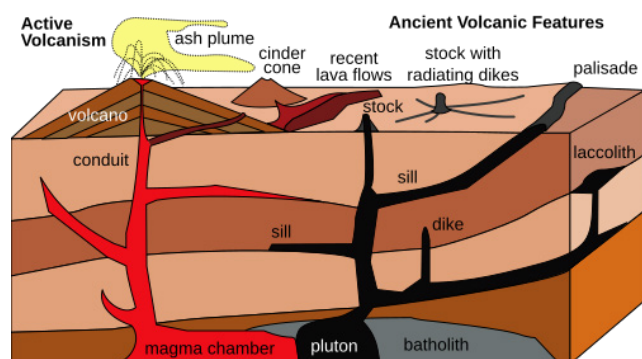
## In News

- A long-dormant volcano in Ethiopia erupted after 12,000 years, causing ash plumes across the red sea towards Yemen, Oman, and even parts of India.

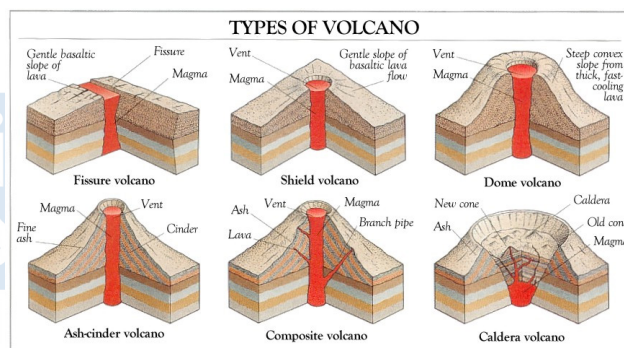## Ethiopia's Afar Depression and the East African Rift

- The Hayli Gubbi volcano is located approximately 800 kilometers northeast of Addis Ababa in Ethiopia's Afar region.
  - The **Afar Depression**, also known as the **Danakil Depression**, is a geological marvel where three tectonic plates meet: the **African (Nubian) Plate, the Somalian Plate, and the Arabian Plate.**
- This region is part of the broader East African Rift System (EARS), one of the most geologically active zones on Earth.
  - Under the East African Rift System (EARS), the African Plate is divided into the **Nubian Plate (western) and Somalian Plate (eastern).**

## What is Volcanism?

- **Overview:** Volcanism (or volcanic activity) is the phenomenon where molten rock (magma), gases, and volcanic ash escape to the Earth's surface through vents or fissures in the crust.

- **Eruption:** In the upper mantle, a weaker layer called the asthenosphere allows partially molten material to accumulate; buoyant magma then rises through cracks in the lithosphere. As pressure drops near the surface, dissolved gases (water vapour, carbon dioxide, sulphur gases, etc.) expand violently, driving magma upwards and producing an eruption.
  - Once magma emerges at the surface it is termed lava, which may be fluid (basaltic) or viscous (andesitic–rhyolitic) depending on composition.



- **Positive Consequences:** Helps scientists infer the structure and composition of Earth's interior from erupted rocks and gases.
  - Weathered volcanic ash produces highly fertile soils rich in nutrients.
  - Eruptions can also contribute to short-term global cooling when sulphur aerosols in the stratosphere reflect solar radiation, temporarily lowering surface temperatures.
- **Negative Consequences:** Volcanic eruptions degrade air quality through ash and toxic gases, leading to respiratory illness and acid rain that damages crops, water bodies, and infrastructure.
  - They can trigger associated hazards like earthquakes, landslides, lahars, pyroclastic flows, and lava flows, causing large-scale loss of life and property.
  - The volcanic plume has the potential to block visibility, and interfere with flight operations like fine particles could enter the engines and melt inside.



Source: TH

# JUSTICE SURYA KANT BECOMES 53RD CJI

## Context

- Recently, Justice Surya Kant was sworn in as the **53rd Chief Justice of India (CJI),** succeeding Justice BR Gavai. The **oath of office** was administered **by the President of India** at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

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**Justice Surya Kant: Career Highlights**

- Born: In Hisar, Haryana (1962)
- Youngest Advocate General of Haryana (2000)
- Elevated as a judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court (2004)
- Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court (2018)
- Judge at Supreme Court (2019)

**Key Judicial Contributions of Justice Kant**

Abrogation of Article 370
Electoral Bonds Verdict
Pegasus Spyware Case
Suspension of Sedition Law
Lakhimpur Kheri Case

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### About the Chief Justice of India (CJI)

- **Origins in Colonial Judiciary:** The **position of Chief Justice** traces its lineage to the **Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William**, established under the **Regulating Act in 1774** by the British Parliament.

    - It was headed by a **Chief Justice**, with **Sir Elijah Impey** as the first to hold the title in India.
    - Over time, High Courts were established in **Calcutta (1862), Bombay, and Madras,** each led by a **Chief Justice under the Indian High Courts Act, 1861.**

- **Post-Independence Constitutional Framework:** The Constitution of India (1950) formally established the **Supreme Court of India under Article 124**, replacing the **Federal Court of India (1937–1950).**

    - **Justice Harilal Jekisundas Kania** became the **first Chief Justice of India** on January 26, 1950, the day the Constitution came into effect.

### Constitutional Mandates of the Chief Justice of India

- The Supreme Court of India is established under **Part V, Chapter IV (Articles 124 to 147)** of the Constitution of India. Key provisions include:

- **Article 124:** Establishment and constitution of the Supreme Court.

    - **Article 124 (1):** There shall be a **Supreme Court of India** consisting of a **Chief Justice of India** and **other Judges**.
    - **Article 124 (2):** Every Judge of the Supreme Court shall be **appointed by the President of India** by warrant under his hand and seal and shall hold office until he attains the **age of sixty-five years.**

- **Article 145:** It empowers the Supreme Court to make rules for regulating its practice and procedure, under the **leadership of the CJI.**

- **Article 146:** It grants the **CJI authority** over the appointment and service conditions of officers and servants of the Supreme Court.

- **Article 147:** It defines the term 'Supreme Court' to include the Chief Justice and other judges.

### Judicial Independence and Safeguards

- **Tenure Security:** The CJI can **be removed through impeachment** under **Article 124(4) and (5)**. The removal requires proven misbehavior or incapacity.

- **Financial Autonomy:** Salaries and allowances are charged on the **Consolidated Fund of India (CFI).**

- **Post-Retirement Restrictions:** The CJI cannot plead or act in any court or before any authority in India after retirement.

### Key Responsibilities of the CJI

- **Oath of President of India:** Every President and every person acting as President or discharging the functions of the President shall, before entering upon his office, **make and subscribe to an oath or affirmation in the presence of the Chief Justice of India** or, in his absence, the senior-most Judge of the Supreme Court available.

- **Judicial Leadership:** Presides over **Constitution Benches** and allocates cases to other judges.

    - **Master of the Roster:** The term refers to the **CJI's prerogative** to decide which judge hears which case. It was **reaffirmed by the Supreme Court in 2018**, declaring the **CJI as the 'spokesperson of the court'** and the sole authority over bench composition.

- **Administrative Head:** Oversees the functioning of the Supreme Court and its registry.

- **Collegium System:** Heads the collegium responsible for recommending appointments and transfers of judges in the higher judiciary.

- **Final Court of Appeal:** The Supreme Court is the final court of appeal in civil, criminal, and constitutional matters.

    - **Article 32:** It empowers the Court **to enforce Fundamental Rights** through **writs** like habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto, and certiorari.
    - **Article 136:** It grants the Court **discretionary power to grant special leave** to appeal from any judgment or order passed by any court or tribunal in India.

- **Judicial Review and Guardian of the Constitution:** The Supreme Court, under the leadership of the CJI, has the power to:

    - Strike down unconstitutional laws and executive actions.
    - Interpret constitutional provisions, especially in cases involving federal disputes, fundamental rights, and electoral laws.
    - Ensure **checks and balances** among the three branches of government.

- **Advisory Role:** Plays a consultative role in matters such as the appointment of Election Commissioners and Lokpal members.

### Challenges & Priorities For 53th CJI

- **Judicial Pendency and Backlog:** Over 90,000 cases are pending in the Supreme Court alone, with millions more across lower courts.

> **Other Concerns over the Chief Justice of India (CJI)**
> - Judicial Independence and Executive Influence;
> - Collegium System and Lack of Transparency;
> - Corruption and Misconduct;
> - Short Tenures and Missed Reforms;

  - The rising trend of **'miscellaneous applications'** and prolonged litigation has indicated **judicial efficiency and procedural discipline**.
  - He is expected to streamline case listing, **promote alternative dispute resolution (ADR)**, and enhance digital case management systems.
- **SIR Case:** A constitutional challenge involving **sovereign infrastructure reallocation** and federal fiscal powers.

Source: TH

# INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

### In News

- International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was recently observed with the theme **"UNiTE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls".**

### Background

- In 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, laying the foundation for global action.
- In 2000, the UN officially designated November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, encouraging governments, international bodies, and NGOs to hold annual awareness activities worldwide.

### Present status and Issues

- **Violence against women** and girls is one of the most widespread human rights violations, with nearly one in three women globally experiencing physical or sexual violence, and one woman or girl killed every 10 minutes by an intimate partner or family member.

- Online abuse is rapidly growing, targeting women in politics, activism, and journalism.
- The rise of such violence is driven by weak regulation, lack of legal recognition, impunity of platforms, evolving AI-enabled abuse, anti-gender equality movements, anonymity of perpetrators, and limited support for victims.

### India's Fight to End Violence Against Women: Laws and Legislations

- **National Commission for Women (NCW), established in January 1992**: Monitors legal safeguards, handles complaints online and offline, and runs a 24×7 domestic violence helpline.
- **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA):** Defines domestic violence broadly, covering physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse.
- **POSH Act, 2013:** Ensures workplace safety through Internal Committees (ICs) and Local Committees (LCs). MWCD's SHe-Box centralises complaint reporting and tracking.
- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023** (effective July 1, 2024): Replaces the IPC, strengthens penalties for sexual offences (including life imprisonment for rape of minors), expands definitions, and mandates audio-video recording of victim statements.

### Major Schemes and Support Services

- **Mission Shakti:** A mission-mode programme enhancing women's safety, security, and empowerment across their life cycle.
- **Swadhar Greh Scheme:** Provides shelter, food, legal aid, counselling, and rehabilitation for women in difficult circumstances.
- **One Stop Centres (OSCs):** District-level hubs offering integrated services — police support, medical aid, legal assistance, counselling, and temporary shelter.
- **Stree Manoraksha:** NIMHANS-led training for OSC staff on psychosocial and mental health support.
- **Helplines & Emergency Response:** Women Helpline 181 (24×7 nationwide support).
  - Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) 112 for police, fire, and ambulance services.
  - WhatsApp helpline (7217735372) for urgent assistance.

### Conclusion and Way Forward

- India is strengthening its response to gender-based violence through Mission Shakti's One Stop Centres, Women Help Desks, and helplines, alongside legal reforms like the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and digital tools and the Digital Shakti Campaign.

- These measures aim to ensure accessible reporting, survivor support, and faster justice, reflecting India's commitment to a safer, inclusive environment where women and girls can live with dignity and equality both offline and online.

Source :PIB

## SUPREME COURT PANEL FLAGS MASSIVE CUSTODIAL DEATH PROBE DELAYS

### Context

- A Supreme Court panel has released a **comprehensive report on prison reforms,** revealing deep systemic gaps in the investigation of custodial deaths.

### Major Highlights

- **Delays in custodial death probe:** It highlighted **severe delays in forensic examinations** due to a **52% staff vacancy in state forensic labs.**

  - As a result, 1,237 enquiries into custodial deaths remained pending in district courts for over a year as of 2023.

  - Prisoners who died in custody are often subject to **lengthy investigations.**

- **Issues in Prison Administration:** Prison manuals refer to prison work related to conservancy and sanitation as **'menial' or 'work of degrading character'**, which perpetuates a hierarchical view of labour.

  - In some states, prison manuals continue to retain provisions which perpetuate caste-based prejudices by assigning prison work based on the caste identity.

- **Disparity in Payments:** Significant disparities exist in the daily wages paid to prisoners, with amounts ranging from Rs 20 in Mizoram to Rs 524 in Karnataka.

  - Several states pay prisoners much less than the prescribed minimum wage for their labour.

- **Mental Health Care:** The jail medical officers in most states have not received the required training in mental health care, which is a violation of the 2018 Mental Health Act and affects the well-being of inmates.

- **Delays in Judicial Process:** Delays in the judicial process, especially for accused persons in custody for more than a year, are a significant challenge in India's legal system.

### Custodial Deaths in India

- According to the National Human Rights Commission, there were **11,650 deaths in custody in India between 2016 and 2022.**

  - **Uttar Pradesh** alone has reported 2,630 custodial deaths, the highest in the country.

- **Magisterial Inquiries:** A 2023 analysis of NHRC and government data reveals between 2017 and 2022, only 345 magisterial inquiries were ordered nationwide into custodial deaths, resulting in just 123 arrests.

- **Vulnerable Groups:** NHRC data reveals that 71% of custodial deaths between 1996 and 2018 involved detainees from poor or vulnerable backgrounds.

### Why Custodial Deaths are Rampant in India?

- **Colonial Legacy of Policing:** The Indian police system is still heavily influenced by the Police Act of 1861, designed for control rather than service.

- **Weak Accountability Mechanisms:** Investigations into custodial deaths are often carried out by the same police department, leading to bias.

- **Torture as a Tool of Investigation:** Due to poor training and lack of forensic infrastructure, police often resort to third-degree methods to extract confessions.

- **Marginalisation and Vulnerable Groups:** Most victims come from weaker socio-economic backgrounds. Lack of legal literacy and resources prevents families from seeking justice.

- **Poor Implementation of Safeguards:** Safeguards under Article 21 & 22 of the Constitution, D.K. Basu guidelines (1997), NHRC directives, and Supreme Court judgments are often ignored.

  - Mandatory requirements like medical examinations, arrest memos, and informing relatives are routinely violated.

### Concerns

- **Erosion of Rule of Law:** It shows that constitutional safeguards that Article 21 – Right to Life, Article 22 – Protection against arbitrary arrest are being routinely violated.

- ◆ This undermines public confidence in the justice system.
- **Human Rights Image:** Internationally, India faces criticism in UNHRC, Human Rights Watch reports. This weakens India's moral authority when it speaks about human rights issues in other countries.
- **Police-State Perception:** High custodial deaths may create a perception of India as a police state rather than a welfare-oriented democracy.
- **Weak Criminal Justice System**: The weak criminal justice system in India is characterized by inefficiencies in adopting modern policing, forensic science, and technology-driven methods.

### Legal Initiatives to Curb Custodial Deaths in India

- **Supreme Court Guidelines (D.K. Basu vs. State of West Bengal, 1997):** It laid down mandatory arrest and detention safeguards: informing relatives, maintaining arrest memo, medical examination, legal counsel, production before magistrate within 24 hours.
  - ◆ These guidelines are treated as enforceable law under Article 141.
- **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC):** NHRC requires mandatory reporting of all custodial deaths within 24 hours.
  - ◆ Issues advisories and seeks compliance reports from states.
- **Supreme Court Directions on CCTV Cameras (2020, Paramvir Singh Saini Case):** Directed installation of CCTV cameras with night vision and audio in all police stations and prisons.
  - ◆ Ordered independent committees at state and district levels for monitoring.
- **Judicial Oversight:** High Courts and the Supreme Court regularly intervene in custodial death cases, order compensation, and monitor police reforms.
- **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 (replacing CrPC):** Introduces provisions for greater transparency in arrests, use of forensic methods, and citizen-centric procedures.
  - ◆ Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), 2023 modernise penal and evidentiary laws, reducing dependence on confession-based policing.

### Conclusion

- Custodial deaths remain a concern for India's democratic and constitutional values.

- While the government has introduced legal safeguards, judicial directions, and institutional mechanisms, their effectiveness depends on strict enforcement, police reforms, and a shift towards technology-driven investigations.

Source: IT

## INDIA - FRANCE TO JOINTLY MANUFACTURE HAMMER

### Context
- Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and France's Safran Electronics & Defence (SED) have signed a **joint venture agreement to manufacture the HAMMER** precision-guided air-to-ground weapon system in India.

### About
- The accord follows a memorandum of understanding signed during **Aero India in 2025.**
  - ◆ Under the plan, a **joint venture company with 50:50 shareholding** will be incorporated in India.
- **The joint venture** will take up localisation of manufacturing, supply and maintenance of the HAMMER weapon system for the Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy.
  - ◆ Indigenisation is expected to gradually rise to nearly 60%, including sub-assemblies, electronics and mechanical parts.
- **The HAMMER (Highly Agile Modular Munition Extended Range),** is highly agile, and fit for operations in mountainous terrain like Ladakh.
  - ◆ Also known as a glide bomb, HAMMER precision-guided munitions have a range of up to 70 km and can be fitted to standard bombs of 250kg, 500kg, 1,000kg weights.
  - ◆ It is compatible with multiple combat aircraft, including the Rafale and the Light Combat Aircraft Tejas.
  - ◆ With a range of up to 70 km, it enables stand-off attacks from outside hostile air defence coverage.

### Major Highlights of the India-France Relations
- **India–France Strategic Partnership:** It was launched on 26 January 1998 and is India's first-ever Strategic Partnership.
  - ◆ **Core vision:** Enhance strategic autonomy and deepen bilateral cooperation.
  - ◆ **Key Strategic Pillars:** Defence and security, Civil nuclear cooperation and Space collaboration.

- **Expanding areas:** Indo-Pacific cooperation, maritime security, digitalisation, cyber security, climate change, sustainable development, advanced technologies, and, counter-terrorism.
- **Defence Cooperation:** It is reviewed via the Annual Defence Dialogue (Minister-level) and High Committee on Defence Cooperation (HCDC) (Secretary-level).
  - **Rafale Fighter Jets:** India procured Rafales from Dassault Aviation.
  - **Scorpene Submarines (Project P-75):** Collaboration with France's Naval Group, 6 submarines built in India; latest is INS Vaghsheer.
  - **Combat Aircraft Engine Development:** HAL and France's Safran Helicopter Engines signed an agreement under the IMRH programme to co-develop engines.
  - Recently both nations formally concluded an **Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) to procure Rafale-M fighter jets for the Indian Navy.**
  - **Future plans:** Co-development of next-gen fighter jet engines.
  - **Joint Exercises:** Shakti, Varuna, FRINJEX-23.
- **Economic Cooperation:** Within the European Union, **France remains India's fifth-largest trading partner,** following the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and Germany.
  - The bilateral trade between India and France has **more than doubled** in the last decade to **USD 15.11 Billion** in 2023-24.
  - Both countries are also moving to **jointly develop technologies and integrate existing technologies.**
  - The process of **enabling Unified Payment Interface (UPI) has been successful in France.**
  - **French technologies** especially in renewables, sustainable manufacturing and urban infrastructure development are being integrated in India.
- **Space Cooperation:** There is a over 60 years of collaboration between ISRO and CNES (French space agency)
  - France is a key supplier of space components, launch services (Arianespace).

- **Joint missions:** TRISHNA (satellite mission), MDA systems, ground station support.
- **Energy Cooperation:**
  - **International Solar Alliance (ISA):** Co-founded by India and France in 2015 to promote solar energy worldwide.
  - **Nuclear Energy Cooperation:** The first meeting of the special task force on nuclear energy in the framework of the Indo-French Strategic Dialogue, was convened in 2025.
    - Both sides have agreed to work on establishing a partnership on low and medium power modular reactors or Small Modular Reactors (SMR) and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMR).
- **Community:** There are an estimated 1,19,000 Indian communities in France, largely originating from erstwhile French colonies.

### Areas of Concern

- **Trade Imbalance:** Bilateral trade remains below potential, especially compared to India's trade with other EU nations.
- **Technology Transfer & Defence Restrictions:** While France has supported India's defence goals, there are concerns over the depth of technology transfer in big items.
- **Nuclear Liability Concerns:** Despite a civil nuclear agreement in 2008 and plans for reactors at Jaitapur, progress has been slow.
  - The Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (2010) poses hurdles for French firms as it imposes liability on suppliers in the event of a nuclear accident.
- **Geopolitical Differences:** France's strong economic ties with China may sometimes dilute full alignment with India on Indo-Pacific issues.
  - Differences in approach to Middle East geopolitics (e.g., stance on Iran, Israel–Palestine) occasionally diverge.

### Conclusion

- India–France defence cooperation is a cornerstone of their wider Strategic Partnership.
- With shared interests in sovereignty, multilateralism, and regional stability, both countries are set to elevate ties further under the Horizon 2047 vision — making defence ties more collaborative, innovative, and export-oriented.

Source: BS

## ═══ NEWS IN SHORT ═══

### PRIME MINISTER PAYS TRIBUTE TO LACHIT BORPHUKAN ON LACHIT DIWAS

#### In News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi remembered Lachit Borphukan, describing him as a symbol of courage, patriotism, and true leadership.

#### Lachit Borphukan

- He was Born on 24 November 1622 to Momai Tamuli Barbarua and grew up during a turbulent era of Mughal–Ahom conflicts.

- He was a legendary Ahom commander renowned for his leadership in the 1671 Battle of Saraighat, where he decisively defeated **Mughal forces under Raja Ram Singh I and safeguarded Assam.**

- He is recognized for his skill and integrity. He was appointed as one of the five Borphukans by King Chakradhwaj Singha, entrusted with administrative, judicial, and military duties, and came to symbolize Assamese courage, valor, and identity.

#### Legacy

- He is considered one of the greatest of Assamese heroes, symbolising the valour, courage, and intelligence that defines the Assamese self-identity.

- The **Battle of Saraighat** established him as a master strategist and is commemorated today through the Lachit Borphukan Gold Medal, which is awarded to the best cadet of the National Defence Academy.

Source :PIB

### GAVI, UNICEF INK DEAL TO PROVIDE EASY ACCESS TO MALARIA VACCINE

#### Context

- Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and UNICEF have announced a new agreement that will make the **R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccines significantly more accessible.**

#### About

- UNICEF is the world's largest buyer of vaccines, delivering nearly **three billion doses of vaccine every year.**

- **WHO has prequalified two malaria vaccines to-date**: R21/Matrix-M (co-developed by the University of Oxford and Serum Institute of India] and RTS,S/AS01 (developed by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), PATH and partners).

- Both vaccines are **prequalified and recommended by WHO** to prevent malaria in children and are safe and effective.

- Both vaccines reduce malaria cases by **about 75%** when given seasonally in areas of highly seasonal transmission — where half of childhood malaria deaths occur.

#### Malaria

- Malaria is a **vector-borne infectious disease** caused by **Plasmodium parasites** and transmitted to humans through the bite of an **infected female Anopheles mosquito.**

- **Source: TH**

### EXERCISE SURYAKIRAN

#### Context

- India and Nepal have commenced the 19th edition of the joint military Exercise Suryakiran in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.

#### About

- Started in **2011**, Exercise Suryakiran is conducted **annually** between the Indian Army and the Nepal Army on a **reciprocal basis** in both countries.

  - The **18th edition** was held in **Saljhandi, Nepal**.

- This joint military exercise focuses on counterterrorism and operations in challenging terrains, with troops engaging in rigorous drills such as jungle survival, combat first aid, ambush tactics, and heliborne operations.

#### Do you know?

- The Indian Army has also been at the forefront of India's humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations in Nepal, particularly during the 2015 earthquake and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: DDNews

### INS MAHE

#### Context

- INS Mahe, India's **first Mahe-class anti-submarine warfare** shallow watercraft, was commissioned at the Naval Dockyard by the Chief of Army Staff.

**About**

- INS Mahe is named after the historic coastal town of Mahe on the Malabar Coast. The ship has over 80% indigenous components.

- **Features:** It has a twin-shaft diesel propulsion generating over 6 MW of power and this gives it a top speed of 25 knots, a range of 1,800 nautical miles at 14 knots, and an endurance of 14 days.

  - **The key indigenous elements in Mahi include** propulsion and power management systems, integrated combat management suite, medium-frequency hull-mounted sonar, multi-function surveillance radar, torpedo and ASW rocket systems.

**Significance**

- Once fully inducted, the Mahe-class will replace the Navy's older Abhay-class corvettes.

- INS Mahe will strengthen the anti-submarine warfare grid along the coastline and improve tracking of underwater threats in the littoral zone.

- It will also enhance monitoring of diesel-electric submarines operating in the Indian Ocean.

Source: TH

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