



SUMATI IAS

Article-I

Major Defence Agreements



MAJOR DEFENCE AGREEMENTS

The “Pahalgam attack was the first escalation,” the government said during a special briefing on Operation Sindoor on Thursday. Responding to the Pakistani attack on **Indian military installations**, India also **attacked their military targets, even taking out an air defence system in Lahore**, using its latest loitering munitions such as the Israeli HAROPs and the HARPYS.

Major defence agreements of India

India–Russia Relations:

- India’s air defence capabilities were put to the test during Pakistani aerial strikes on multiple military installations and cities, during which the **Integrated Counter-UAS Grid** and key surface-to-air missile systems like the **S-400 Triumf (procured from Russia)**, **Barak 8 MRSAM**, and **Akash** were deployed.
- These systems form the backbone of India’s defence shield. In addition to these, India and Russia have established a strong defence partnership through agreements involving the acquisition of **MiG-29 jets**, **Kamov helicopters**, and **licensed production of military platforms** such as **T-90 tanks**, **Su-30MKI fighter aircraft**, **AK-203 rifles**, and the **BrahMos supersonic cruise missile**. Notably, the Indian Navy’s aircraft carrier, **INS Vikramaditya**, was formerly Russia’s **Admiral Gorshkov**.

India–UK Relations:

- India and the United Kingdom recently concluded a **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**, marking a milestone in their bilateral ties. In early 2025, the two nations formalised their defence collaboration under **Defence Partnership-I (DP-I)** at the **Aero India** event.
- Notable developments include a contract between **Thales UK** and **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)** for the delivery of **Laser Beam Riding MANPADS (LBRM)**, particularly the **STARStreak missile systems**, and a joint effort with **MBDA UK** to establish a facility in **Hyderabad** for advanced **air-to-air missile assembly and testing**. These initiatives aim to bolster India’s air combat capabilities and expand defence exports.

India–France Relations:

- In a recent intergovernmental deal, **India agreed to acquire 26 Rafale-M aircraft** — 22 single-seaters and 4 dual-seaters — for its navy, along with related simulators, equipment, weaponry, and logistics support.

- France, like Russia, has remained a dependable defence partner, notably refraining from imposing sanctions after India's **1998 nuclear tests**. Over the years, India and France have collaborated extensively in international platforms.
- Following the Ukraine conflict, France emerged as one of the top three destinations for **Indian defence exports in 2023–24**. Both countries have committed to a **Defence Industrial Roadmap** that includes joint projects such as the **Scorpene submarines**, additional **Rafale and helicopter procurement**, and efforts toward domestic manufacturing.

India–Thailand Relations:

- During the **6th BIMSTEC summit** held in Thailand, India and Thailand elevated their bilateral ties to a **strategic partnership**, emphasizing defence cooperation.
- The two sides agreed to create formal mechanisms for high-level consultations, including a **strategic dialogue between their National Security Councils**. Defence collaboration is to be strengthened through **technology transfer, joint training programs**, and **industrial partnerships**.

India–United States Relations:

- India and the United States launched the **US–India COMPACT** initiative to promote deep strategic cooperation in defence, technology, and commerce. During Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's visit to the US, both nations signed a **Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)** and a **Memorandum of Agreement on Liaison Officers**.
- SOSA will ensure mutual priority support for defence-related goods and services. India's inventory now includes several **US-origin defence platforms** such as the **C-130J Super Hercules, C-17 Globemaster III, P-8I Poseidon, Chinook and Seahawk helicopters, Apache attack helicopters, Harpoon missiles, M777 howitzers, and MQ-9B drones**. Talks continue on acquiring **F-35 Lightning-II** fighter jets.

India–New Zealand Relations:

- In March 2025, India signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on defence cooperation with **New Zealand**, a member of the **Five Eyes intelligence alliance**. The agreement aims to facilitate regular military engagement and deeper bilateral defence cooperation, signed during the New Zealand Prime Minister's visit to India.

India–Indonesia Relations:

- Reflecting deep-rooted cultural and strategic ties, **Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto** was the Chief Guest at India's **Republic Day celebrations**. Both nations reiterated their commitment to enhancing cooperation in **maritime security, cybersecurity, counter-terrorism, and de-radicalisation**.
- They celebrated the ratification of the **Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA)** signed in 2018 and emphasized ongoing joint initiatives such as the **India–Indonesia Coordinated Patrol** and regular **military exercises** involving the army and navy

Joint Military Exercise

India actively participates in a wide range of joint military exercises across the three branches of its armed forces—Army, Navy, and Air Force—to strengthen defence cooperation, enhance interoperability, and share strategic and tactical knowledge with partner countries.

- **With the United Kingdom:**
 - **Exercise Ajeya Warrior** involves the **Indian Army** and the **British Army**, focusing on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban environments.
 - **Exercise Konkan** is a **bilateral naval exercise** between the **Indian Navy** and the **Royal Navy**, designed to boost maritime collaboration and operational synergy.
 - **Exercise Indradhanush-IV** is an **Air Force-level drill**, where the **Indian Air Force** and the **Royal Air Force** engage in joint air combat maneuvers, including aerial refueling and close-combat simulations.
- **With Thailand:**
 - **Exercise Maitree** is a **joint Army exercise** conducted between the **Indian Army** and the **Royal Thai Army**, focusing on counter-terrorism and jungle warfare.
 - The **India–Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT)** is a **naval exercise** aimed at enhancing maritime security through coordinated patrols in the Andaman Sea.
- **With the United States:**
 - **Exercise Yudh Abhyas** is a **bilateral Army exercise** focusing on joint military operations in counter-insurgency and humanitarian assistance scenarios.
 - **Exercise Vajra Prahar** is a **special forces training program** between the Indian and U.S. Armies to enhance joint tactical cooperation.
 - **Exercise Malabar** is a **high-end naval exercise** involving India, the U.S., and other Indo-Pacific allies, focusing on naval interoperability, anti-submarine warfare, and maritime security.
 - **Red Flag 16-1** is a prestigious **multinational air combat exercise** hosted by the United States Air Force, in which the **Indian Air Force** has participated to enhance aerial combat readiness and coordination with allied forces.

- **With Indonesia:**
 - **Exercise Garuda Shakti** is an **Army-level joint drill** with the **Indonesian Army**, aimed at improving tactical-level operations in counter-insurgency environments.
 - **Exercise Samudra Shakti** is a **naval exercise** with the **Indonesian Navy**, designed to improve interoperability in maritime security operations and joint navigation tactics

Five Eyes intelligence alliance

“Five Eyes” refers to an intelligence-sharing alliance of the **United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and New Zealand**. It was formed during World War II. The history of the ‘Five Eyes’ alliance dates back to an intelligence-sharing agreement signed between Washington and London

Precision-guided missiles of India

India has not officially disclosed the specific weapons used during **Operation Sindoor**, conducted in the early hours of May 7. The Indian Armed Forces, however, confirmed that precision strikes were executed against terrorist infrastructure located deep within Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). While the details of the armaments remain classified, India possesses several advanced long-range precision-guided weapons and drones that are likely candidates for such operations. These include:

- **HAMMER (Highly Agile and Manoeuvrable Munition Extended Range)**: Designed for the Rafale jets, HAMMER is an air-to-ground precision weapon capable of striking targets up to 70 km away. It is adaptable and can be integrated with different bomb configurations and guided munitions.
- **SCALP (Système de Croisière Autonome à Longue Portée – Emploi Général)**: Known as *Storm Shadow* in the UK, SCALP is a stealthy, air-launched cruise missile optimized for deep-penetration strikes. It functions effectively under all weather conditions and at night, making it a formidable tool for long-range precision targeting.
- **BRAHMOS**: This supersonic cruise missile is jointly developed by India’s DRDO and Russia’s NPO Mashinostroyeniya under the BrahMos Aerospace partnership. Capable of being launched from land, sea, and air platforms, BrahMos follows the “fire-and-forget” model and can maneuver along various flight trajectories to accurately strike its target.
- **METEOR**: The Meteor is an advanced Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM) equipped to handle high-threat environments, including those with dense electronic warfare activity. It enhances an aircraft’s capability to neutralize aerial threats from a significant distance