

Amid China standoff, India set to boost naval power with 3rd N-sub in 6 months

2nd N-Sub Inducted; Crucial For Strategic Balance, Says Rajnath

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New Delhi: India plans to commission its third nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) in another six months to further bolster its sea-based leg of the nuclear weapons triad, after the second such boat was formally inducted into the Strategic Forces Command as INS Arighaat at Visakhapatnam on Thursday.

The third SSBN, undergoing trials ahead of her commissioning as INS Aridhaman early next year, is slightly bigger than the first two, INS Arihant & INS Arighaat, and consequently capable of carrying more long range nuclear-tipped missiles.

Significantly, INS Arighaat is also capable of carrying some K-4 missiles, which have a strike range of over 3,000-km, unlike her forerunner INS Arihant that is armed only with the 750-km range K-15 missiles, sources told TOI.

This is crucial for credible strategic deterrence amid the continuing military confrontation with China. Capable of staying submerged for months, SSBNs are most secure, survivable and stealthy platforms for second-strike capabilities, which in turn de-

ter an adversary from launching a surprise first strike.

The commissioning of INS Arighaat, which has a 6,000-tonne displacement and four silos on its 'hump' for vertical missiles launch, was conducted at a secret ship-building centre in Vizag, with defence minister Rajnath Singh, CDS General Anil Chauhan, Navy chief Admiral Dinesh Tripathi and DRDO chief Samir Kamat in attendance.

"INS Arighaat will further strengthen India's nuclear triad, enhance nuclear deterrence, help in establishing strategic balance and peace in the region, and play a decisive role in the country's security," Singh said.

Recalling former PM Vajpayee's "political will" that put India on a par with nuclear weapon states by conducting the Pokhran-II tests in 1998, Singh said, "It is essential for us to develop rapidly in every field, including defence, especially in today's geopolitical scenario. Along with economic prosperity, we need a strong military. Our govt is working on mission mode to ensure that our soldiers possess top-quality weapons and platforms made on Indian soil."

Indigenous technological

STRATEGIC DETERRENCE

INS Arighaat

Displacement
6,000 tonne

Width:
11 m

Top Speed
24 knots
(44 kmph)
underwater

Missiles
K-4 missiles with
a strike range
over 3,000km

Powerplant
83 MW pressurized
light-water reactor

Endurance:
Can stay
submerged
for months

Length: 111.6 m

NUCLEAR TRIAD

A Land Vector

Prithvi-II (350km), Agni-1 (700km), Agni-2 (2,000km), Agni-3 (3,000km) & Agni-5 (over 5,000km) missiles inducted by the Strategic Forces Command

B Air Vector

Sukhoi-30MKI, Mirage-2000, Jaguar & Rafale fighters can deliver nuclear gravity bombs

C Sea Vector

> Two nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, INS Arihant & INS Arighaat

> Next 2 SSBNs will be slightly larger, with a length of 125m & displacement of 7,000 tonne. 3rd SSBN to be commissioned as INS Aridhaman early next year

> Plan to build over 13,000-tonne SSBNs, with 190 MW-reactors
> Development of K-5 (5,000km) and K-6 (6,000km) missiles also in progress



INS ARIHANT

improvements on INS Arighaat make it "significantly more advanced" than its predecessor Arihant, which became fully operational in 2018. "The two together will enhance India's capability to deter potential adversaries and safeguard its national interests. INS Arighaat's hull

and size may be the same as INS Arihant but she is a much more capable version with lot of internal engineering upgrades," an official said.

INS Aridhaman and the fourth under-construction SSBN will be even more potent. With a 7,000-tonne displacement & 125-metre long,

they will be able to carry larger number of K-4 missiles.

The four submarines, built under the classified advanced technology vessel project launched in 1990s at a cost of over Rs 90,000 crore, are of course less than half the size of SSBNs of countries like the US, China and Russia.

University of Southampton is 1st foreign varsity to set up India campus under NEP

■ UGC had in 2023 announced Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India Regulations

NEW DELHI, Aug 29 (PTI)

THE UK's University of Southampton has become the first foreign university to set up its offshore campus in India under the new National Education Policy, the Center announced on Thursday.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) had in 2023 announced Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India Regulations.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar handed over a Letter

'India sees education as key vehicle to accelerate engagement with world'

NEW DELHI, Aug 29 (PTI)

INDIA sees education today as a "key vehicle" to accelerate a more intensive engagement between the country and the world, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Thursday.



He said this in his address at an event held here on handing over a Letter of Intent to the University of Southampton which will be establishing a campus in India under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. "Today's event is also a testament to the strong and multi-faceted bilateral ties between India and the United Kingdom, of which education is a particularly important pillar. At the heart of this progress lies the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020," the Union Minister said. The NEP 2020 is a policy which "champions internationalisation" and aims to position India as a "global player in education", he added. It is more than just a policy, it is in fact a vision for the future of education in India, one that "aspires to elevate our standards to the highest global level," the EAM asserted.

of Intent (LoI) to university representatives at an event here.

According to officials, the University of Southampton

submitted a proposal for opening a branch campus in Gurugram that was approved by the UGC standing committee, comprising noted academics from India and abroad, for issuing a LoI as per regulations. "The degrees awarded by the India campus of the University of Southampton will be the same as in the host university. The programs offered in the branch campus of University of Southampton in India will have the same academic and quality standards," UGC Chairman Jagadesh Kumar said.

"The Indian campus of the University of Southampton is expected to start its academic programs in July 2025. The courses offered will be in subjects focusing on business and management, computing, law, engineering, art and design, biosciences and life sciences," he added.

July-Aug monsoon across India set to be among two wettest in last 30 years

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New Delhi: With the run of good rains continuing for over two months, the monsoon in July and Aug this year is set to be among the two wettest the

► Cricketer Radha rescued from flooded Guj home, P 14

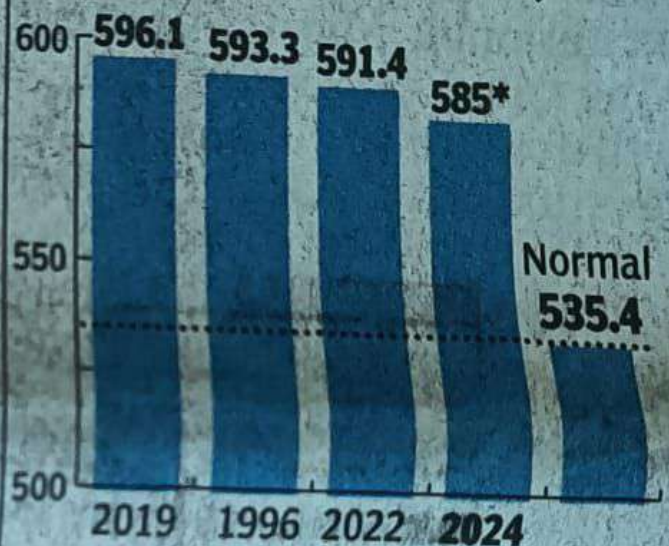
country has seen in 30 years, bringing good news for kharif-crop sowing and for soil moisture in subsequent months.

Rain recorded across India in July-Aug currently stands at 585mm and is expected to cross 595mm in the next two days, which will be around 11% higher than the long period average (535.4mm). This will be close to or higher than 596.1mm recorded in 2019, the wettest July-Aug in the 30 years.

This follows better-than-expected rains in the country in

RAIN BOUNTY

Highest July-Aug Rainfall (mm, all India since 1994)



*With 2 days of Aug left, final figure is expected to be 595mm or more
Source: IMD

Aug, which came on the heels of a 9% surplus in July. As of Aug 29, average rainfall across India during the month was 16% above normal. IMD had forecast Aug rains to be in normal range (94-106% of LPA).

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India, China discuss to narrow down differences along LAC

NEW DELHI, Aug 29 (PTI)

INDIA and China on Thursday had a “frank, constructive and forward-looking” exchange of views on the situation along the LAC to “narrow down” differences and find an early resolution to outstanding issues, the MEA said.

The 31st meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination (WMCC) on India-China Border Affairs was held in Beijing, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement.

During the meeting, it was reiterated that “restoration of

peace and tranquillity, and respect for the LAC are the essential basis for restoration of normalcy in bilateral relations”, it said.

In line with the guidance provided by the two Foreign Ministers’ meetings in Astana and Vientiane in July to accelerate the discussions, and building on the WMCC meeting held last month, “the two sides had a frank, constructive and forward-looking exchange of views on the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to narrow down the differences and find early resolution of the outstanding issues”, the statement said. For this, they fur-

ther agreed for “intensified contact through diplomatic and military channels”.

Gourangalal Das, joint secretary (east Asia), from the MEA led the Indian delegation. The Chinese delegation was led by Hong Liang, director general of the Boundary & Ocean Affairs Department of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In the meantime, the two sides decided to jointly uphold peace and tranquillity on the ground in the border areas, in accordance with relevant bilateral agreements, protocols and understandings reached between the two Governments, the MEA statement said.

Iran has further increased its stockpile of uranium: UN

VIENNA, Aug 29 (AP)

IRAN has further increased its stockpile of uranium enriched to near weapons-grade levels in defiance of international demands, a confidential report by the United Nations' nuclear watchdog said on Thursday.

The report by the International Atomic Energy Agency said that as of August 17, Iran has 164.7 kilograms (363.1 pounds) of uranium enriched up to 60 per cent. That's an increase of 22.6 kilograms (49.8 pounds) since the IAEA's last report in May.

Uranium enriched up to 60 per cent purity is just a short,

technical step away from weapons-grade levels of 90 per cent. The IAEA report, which was seen by The Associated Press, says Tehran has also not reconsidered its September 2023 decision to ban the most experienced nuclear inspectors from monitoring its nuclear program and that IAEA surveillance cameras remain disrupted.

The report further says that Iran has still not provided answers to the nuclear watchdog's years-long investigation about the origin and current location of man-made uranium particles found at two locations that Tehran has failed to

declare as potential nuclear sites. The locations are known as Varamin and Turquzabad.

The IAEA report comes just days after Iran's supreme leader opened the door to renewed negotiations with the United States over his country's rapidly advancing nuclear program, telling its civilian government there was "no harm" in engaging with the "enemy."

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's remarks set clear red lines for any talk taking place under the new government of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian and reiterated his warnings that Washington was not to be trusted.

PM Modi invited for SCO meet in October in Pak

ISLAMABAD, Aug 29 (PTI)

PAKISTAN has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) heads of Government meeting being organised here in October, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said here on Thursday.

During a weekly press briefing, the Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that invitations have been sent to the heads of countries to participate in the meeting which will take place on October 15-16, the 'Dawn' newspaper reported.

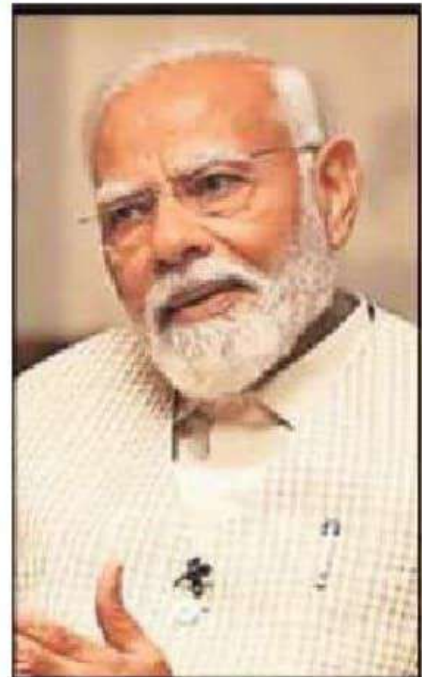
"An invitation has also been sent to the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi," Baloch was quoted as saying in the report. Baloch said some countries had already confirmed

participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) heads of Government meeting. "It will be informed in due course which country has confirmed," she added.

Islamabad and New Delhi have a long history of strained relations, primarily due to the Kashmir issue as well as the cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

India has been maintaining that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan while insisting that the onus is on Islamabad to create an environment that is free of terror and hostility for such an engagement.

The SCO Summit will be preceded by a ministerial meeting and several rounds of senior officials' meetings focusing on financial, economic, socio-



cultural, and humanitarian cooperation among the SCO member states.

The SCO, comprising India, China, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is an influential economic and security bloc.