

# CDS asks industry to help boost def space

₹25k Cr Earmarked To Meet Needs Over Next Few Yrs'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** All stakeholders in the defence space arena should work on bolstering India's counter-space capabilities, chief of defence staff General Anil Chauhan said on Wednesday, in remarks that come in the backdrop of China rapidly developing and deploying potent anti-satellite (A-Sat) weapons.

Indian armed forces will roughly spend over Rs 25,000 crore in the next few years to meet its defence space requirements, ranging from building a constellation of surveillance satellites to secure communications networks.

"It is the right time for the private industry to utilise this opportunity. I think it is time to build a highly-capable at-manirbhar (self-sufficient) defence space ecosystem," the CDS said, inaugurating the three-day 'DefSat' seminar and exhibition here.



Chief of defence staff General Anil Chauhan (left) at the DefSAT defence conference at Manekshaw Centre in Delhi on Wednesday

The industry should partner the armed forces in augmenting ISR (intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance) capabilities by developing multi-sensor satellites, launch-on-demand services, and a robust network of ground stations. There is also the need to develop indigenous positioning, navigation and timing (PNT) services by strengthening the NAVIC constellation, he said.

Stakeholders in the defence-space ecosystem also need to focus on counter-space capabilities as a deterrent for

safeguarding the country's space assets from enemy attacks, Gen Chauhan said.

Stressing the "vitality" of space for mankind as well as for the armed forces, CDS said space can be used as a force-multiplier to enhance combat capabilities in the traditional domains of land, air, sea as well as newer ones like cyber-warfare.

During the seminar, Gen Chauhan listed out the major initiatives taken by the government to capitalise on space to strengthen the capabilities of the armed forces.



# India may host NSA-level Quad meeting later this month

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**New Delhi:** India may host a meeting of Quad at the level of national security advisors on the margins of the Raisina Dialogue that will take place from February 21 to 23. Efforts are still on to finalise the meeting which, if it happens, will provide an early opportunity for the Quad countries — Australia, India, Japan and US — to reaffirm their support to cooperation on a range of issues, after the Quad summit couldn't take place last month because of President Joe Biden's unavailability.

The summit will now be hosted by India towards the end of the year, after US elections. Quad foreign ministers had met on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue last year, while their Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov was still in Delhi. Lavrov has not yet been invited this year for the Dialogue, which is hosted by the ORF in partnership with India's foreign ministry, according to a source who spoke on condition of anonymity. Greek Kyriakos Mitsotakis is expected to be chief guest at the event.

US NSA Jake Sullivan will be here for the conference including a meeting with his counterpart Ajit Doval in which they will undertake a comprehensive review of Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) under which two sides are looking to expand technology and defence industrial cooperation.

Sullivan is expected to raise the issue of US ongoing probe into the alleged and foiled plot to assassinate Khalistan separatist and American national Gurbatwant Singh Pannun and seek an update on India's own investigations into the information shared by US authorities in the case. The plot was allegedly masterminded by an Indian official who remains unnamed.

Unlike in the case of another Khalistan leader who was killed in Canada, India has been cooperating with US in Pannun case as it believes US has acted more discreetly than Canada by backing its claims with actionable information.

# HISTORIC

## U'khand Assembly passes UCC Bill

DEHRADUN, Feb 7 (ANI)

**THE** Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill was passed on Wednesday in the Uttarakhand Assembly with a comfortable majority during a special session.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, during the debate on the Uniform Civil Code, said on Wednesday that the State Legislature is going to create history with the passing of the Uniform Civil Code and that



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami speaks during a special session of the State Assembly in Uttarakhand, in Dehradun on Wednesday. (PTI)

every citizen of the State is filled with pride.

The Uniform Civil Code which proposes similar or uniform laws for all communities, was tabled on Tuesday during the special session by the Chief Minister.

"Today, I want to congratulate all the people of the State on this occasion, because today the legislature of our Uttarakhand is going to create history. Being witnesses to this historical

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# Microsoft to help India become world leader in AI: Nadella

MUMBAI, Feb 7 (IANS)

**AS INDIA** embarks on its Artificial Intelligence (AI) journey, Microsoft will



help the country become self-reliant by fostering a skilled AI workforce and empow-

ering every sector and industry to transform with AI, the company's Chairman and CEO, Satya Nadella, said.

During his address, Nadella, who is on a two-day visit to the country, announced that Microsoft will provide 2 million people in India with AI skilling opportunities by 2025, to help close skills gaps and strengthen India's ability to thrive in the AI era.

"India is uniquely positioned to make the promise of AI a reality. We are committed to partnering broadly across the public and private sector to help close the nation's AI skills gap," Nadella said.