

Defence warship INS Imphal commissioned

CM Biren Singh thanks PM, Rajnath Singh for acknowledging Manipur's importance

IMPHAL, Dec 22 (PTI)

MANIPUR Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Friday thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for acknowledging the importance of Manipur and naming a defence warship after the State capital Imphal.

Addressing the curtain raiser ceremony of the Commissioning of INS Imphal, Indian Navy's stealth guided missile destroyer, he also thanked Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and all the Navy officials for taking this

The commissioning of INS Imphal not only adds another dimension to our country's maritime capabilities but also stands as a testament to the indomitable spirit of our armed forces," he later said on X.

"This warship, named after our vibrant State's capital, Imphal, reflects the unity and strength that define us as a nation... May INS Imphal sail with pride, safeguarding our nation and contributing to the peace and security of our region," he said in the post.

Equipped with BrahMos sur-



initiative.

"It is a proud moment for all Manipuris and we will all stand for a strong and united India... I thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for acknowledging the importance of Manipur and naming a defence warship after Imphal," Singh said at the programme held at Kangla here.

face-to-surface missiles and anti-submarine indigenous rocket launchers, the ship was delivered to the Indian Navy on October 20 by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai.

On the ethnic strife in the State, the Chief Minister said peace has been restored in the State.

'World at pivotal juncture and winds of change blowing in India's favour'

NEW DELHI, Dec 22 (Agencies)

THE world is at a pivotal juncture and winds of change are blowing strongly in India's favour, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari said on Friday.

The Air Chief Marshal also said that India's rise in the Global South marks a "pivotal point" in international affairs.

He was speaking at a seminar on "India and Global South: Challenges and Opportunities".

"Rooted in a rich historical tapestry, the country's emergence from colonial shadows to a prominent global player brings forth a myriad of challenges and opportunities," the chief of Indian Air Force said.

"Understanding the complex dynamics at play is crucial in navigating a future shaped by interconnectedness," he said.

The 20th Subroto Mukherjee



seminar was organised by Centre for Air Power Studies.

"As we navigate these uncharted skies, air power being a key component of national power, would undoubtedly play a pivotal role and also serve as a symbol of national strength, a tool for peace and collaboration," he added. Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari said the IAF may easily act as a catalyst for progress, fostering strategic partnerships and contributing to the collective advancement of the Global South.

"Rooted in a rich historical tapestry, the country's emergence from colonial shadows to a prominent global player brings forth a myriad of challenges and opportunities"

- Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari

"Our air power engagements with the countries of the Global South have resonated across the board and allowed us to exchange best practices, improve interoperability and build trust," he said.

The IAF chief noted that these engagements are crucial for tackling shared security challenges and ensuring regional stability. "We have increased the footprint of training and cooperation with these nations," he said.

On the global geopolitical developments, the Chief of Air

Staff said the landscape of international relations is constantly shifting and traditional power structures are increasingly being challenged by new players. "The threat of global conflict looms large, fuelled by ideological divisions, resource scarcity and climate change. This has created interconnected challenges like economic disparity and resource exploitation," he said. He observed that "black swan" events like COVID-19, and conflicts across the world have aggravated the situation.

Macron

R-DAY chief guest

NEW DELHI, Dec 22 (PTI)

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron will be the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations on January 26 that would make him the sixth French leader to grace the prestigious annual event.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Macron will be visiting India at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India had invited US President Joe Biden to be the Republic Day chief guest but he expressed his inability to travel to India in January.

The reasons for Biden's decision are believed to be the State of the Union address in late January or early February, Biden's focus on his re-election bid and Washington's increasing focus on the Hamas-Israel conflict.

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For terrorists who ambushed Army vehicles

POONCH/JAMMU, Dec 22 (PTI)

SECURITY forces on Friday launched a massive cordon and search operation in the forest area of Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district and a National Investigation Agency team also visited there, a day after five Army personnel were killed and two others injured in a terrorist attack.

The General Officer Commanding (GOC), XVI corps, Lt Gen Sandeep Jain visited Ground Zero and reviewed the situation with top Army and police officers, officials said.

"Indian Army and White Knight Corps salutes the bravery and supreme sacrifice of four soldiers in Surankote on yesterday while fighting the scourge of terrorism", White Knight Corps, or XVI corps, wrote on X.

An official said aerial monitoring using helicopters is also being conducted and sniffer dogs have been pressed into service to track down the terrorists who ambushed two Army vehicles in the area on

GOC, NIA visit terror attack site



Security personnel with sniffer dog during a search operation on Friday near the terror attack site in Poonch district. (PTI)

Thursday afternoon.

"A massive cordon and search operation has begun this morning after a night cordon in area," an officer told PTI. The operation was still going on.

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He said that additional troops have been inducted into area to track down the terrorists involved in the firing.

On Thursday, around 3.45 pm, the two Army

vehicles carrying personnel to the site of a cordon-and-search operation came under attack at a blind curve at Dhatyar Morh between Dhera Ki Gali and Buliaz under the jurisdiction of the Surankote police station.

The officer quoted above said the Dhera Ki Gali (DKG) Road has been closed for traffic. Top officials of army and police are monitoring in the situation at the ground.

The heavily-armed terrorists, believed to three to four in number, initially took position on hill tops and chose a blind curve to target the Army vehicles.

After the attack, they reportedly mutilated the bodies of at least two soldiers and have taken weapons of some of them, officials say. The security officials say that investigation of site is being carried out to know the pattern and use of weapons including steel core bullets in the ambush.

Security experts said on (Contd on page 5)