

Current Affairs (2023): Defence At a Glance

* The **Inter-Services Organization (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023**, a key prerequisite for theatre commands, got parliamentary approval in August 2023. The act empowers the Commander-in-Chief and the Officer-in-Command of Inter-Services Organizations with disciplinary and administrative powers over personnel from the other services serving in them. It also empowers the Central Government to constitute an Inter-Services Organization.

* Project Sanjay-

* Indian Army aims to transform and achieve the vision Project Sanjay, a **"future-ready, technology-driven, lethal and agile force."**

* This project focuses on building the **Army's Battlefield Surveillance System**.

* The primary objective of this system is to provide commanders and staffers with a composite operational picture for faster decision-making. Bharat Electronics Limited is the system integrator of this ambitious project.

* **First Airbus C295** - The First C295 aircraft for India has successfully completed its inaugural flight, marking a significant achievement towards its delivery in the latter half of 2023. In September 2021, India obtained 56 C295 aircraft to succeed the legacy AVRO fleet.



* Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the **Bharat Drone Shakti-2023 exhibition** at Hindon Air Base in Ghaziabad, also formally inducting the C-295 transport aircraft into the Indian Air Force.

* The Indian Army inaugurated its **First Vertical Wind Tunnel (VWT)** at the Special Forces Training School (SFTS) in Himachal Pradesh. The cutting-edge facility provides military trainees with a controlled environment to enhance their Combat Free Fall (CFF) skills by simulating real-life free fall conditions.

* The 14th edition of the Indo-US Joint Special Forces exercise **"Vajra Prahar 2023"** began at the Joint Training Node, Umroi, Meghalaya.

* **Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC) 2023**- The 4th edition of GMC was held by the Indian Navy under the aegis of Naval War College in Goa. The **GMC is the Indian Navy's outreach Initiative** providing a multinational platform to harness the collective wisdom of practitioners of maritime security and the academia towards garnering outcome-oriented maritime thought.

* The 13th IPACC was held at the Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi. This biennial event was co-hosted by **Indian Army and the US Army Pacific**. It served as a unifying platform for army chiefs from 30 Indo-Pacific nations. Theme was **"Together for Peace: Sustaining Peace and Stability in the Indo-Pacific Region"**.

* Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) extended the **Armed Forces (Special) Powers Act (AFSPA)** in parts of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland for another six months starting from October 1. The AFSPA

gives the power to:

* Arrest anyone without a warrant and use force if needed

* Fire after giving warning or use other kinds of force even if it causes death.

* Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted its annual training exercise, **"Trishul"**. The exercise was designed to test the operational preparedness of the Western Air Command (WAC).

* Army Commanders' Conference 2023-

* Army Commanders' Conference (ACC) is an apex-level biannual event which is an institutional platform for conceptual level deliberations, culminating in making important policy decisions for the Indian Army.

* The conference decided to implement **Command Cyber Operations and Support Wings (CCOSW)**.

* The CCOSWs will assist the Indian Army's formations in taking up cyberspace security challenges posed by the growing warfare capabilities of adversaries.

* Insurgency in Assam:

* Recently, the Dimas National Liberation Army (DNLA), an insurgent group operating mostly in Assam's Dima Hasao district, signed a peace agreement with the Government.

* Both Union Home Minister and Assam Chief Minister declared that this peace settlement marked the end of the tribal insurgency in Assam.

* Common Uniforms for Officers of Brigadier Rank and Above-

The Army has decided that Brigadiers and above rank officers will have a common uniform from 1st August irrespective of their parent cadre and appointment. The Indian Army made the decision during the Army Commanders Conference. There will be no change to the uniform worn by Colonels and below-rank officers.

* **ASEAN India Maritime Exercise (AIME-2023)**- The opening ceremony of the inaugural ASEAN India Maritime Exercise AIME-23 was held at Changi Naval Base, Singapore. The harbor phase of the exercise was held at Changi Naval Base and the Sea Phase in the South China Sea. The AIME-23 is aimed at **promoting maritime cooperation and enhancing trust, friendship and confidence amongst ASEAN and Indian Navies**.

* Country's First Air Force Heritage Centre

* Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the nation's first Indian Air Force Heritage Centre in **Chandigarh**.

* The heritage centre highlights the IAF's role in various wars. It houses **5 vintage aircraft** and will provide visitors with **cockpit exposure** and an **experience with flight simulators**.

* **11th edition Exercise, 'Khanjar'**-India-Kyrgyzstan joint military exercise, 'Khanjar', commenced on January 22 in Himachal Pradesh.

* **2024 Global Firepower Rankings**- The US leads the military strength rankings, followed by Russia and China in 2nd and 3rd spots. India placed 4th for the second straight year.

* **Operation Sarvashakti**- The Indian Army's Operation Sarva shakti in Jammu and Kashmir at Pir Panjal range to flush out terrorists who have ambushed Indian troops in Rajouri and Poonch.

* **'Desert Cyclone'**- The Indian and UAE armies have commenced their first-ever joint military training exercise called 'Desert Cyclone' in Rajasthan on January 2 to enhance counter-insurgency capabilities in desert terrain.