



India Arms for the Future: The Technological Race Stirring China

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India has launched an impressive campaign to modernize its military capabilities, with the declared aim of effectively responding to potential future war challenges. The heart of this ambitious plan lies in the development of advanced strategic technologies, particularly in the field of hypersonic weapons, a rapidly expanding global field crucial for redefining regional military balances.

Lieutenant General Amardeep Singh Aujla outlined the vision of the Indian army during the forum “New Age Military Technologies Industry Capabilities & Way Forward”, emphasizing the need to shift from a defensive logic to a more dynamic deterrent capability. Among the highlighted priorities are hypersonic glide vehicles, Hypersonic Air-Breathing Engines (HEB), and advanced fourth, fifth, and sixth-generation missiles.

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“We want to change the deterrence equation,” Aujla declared, implying that India intends to become not only a reactive but also a proactive military player. The goal is to have ultra-fast and maneuverable weapons capable of challenging adversary defenses, reducing enemy response times, and forcing hostile actors to rethink their strategic posture.

Emerging Technologies and Enhanced Soldiers: The Future is Now

The Indian plan does not stop at hypersonic weapons. It includes a wide range of technological developments, from artificial intelligence applied to battle to transforming the individual soldier into an “augmented warrior.” According to Aujla, it is essential to move away from traditional “disposable” ammunition to embrace a new generation of smart armaments: suicide drones, loitering munitions, precision-guided projectiles, and directed energy weapons.

High-energy lasers, microwave systems, and anti-satellite devices are already at the center of research and development. These technologies are designed to counter new threats such as kamikaze drones, strengthen missile defenses, and ensure superiority in space, now considered the “new domain” of warfare.

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Additionally, there is a growing focus on electronic and cyber warfare. Offensive and defensive operations in cyberspace are seen as an essential element of the future Indian military doctrine. Building autonomous capabilities in this area, however, requires solid partnerships between the military, industry, and the technology sector.

An additional pillar of Delhi's plan is the enhancement of the individual combatant.

Exoskeletons, smart armor, augmented reality visors for command and control in the field, helmets equipped with artificial intelligence, and “smart” clothing for real-time monitoring of physical conditions: all converge towards the figure of the future soldier, agile, resilient, and interconnected. This approach not only improves tactical performance but also strengthens survival and operational effectiveness in high-intensity scenarios.

Geopolitical Objectives and Chinese Concerns

The Indian military strengthening cannot be fully understood without framing it in the broader strategic context of Asia. India, long in competition with China for regional influence, sees the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean as two theaters of priority interest. It is precisely in the latter, considered by Delhi as its “backyard,” that Indian naval projection is becoming increasingly assertive.

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In this regard, the Indian government has given the green light to Project 75, an ambitious program for the construction of nuclear-powered attack submarines. The first phase involves the construction of two units, with an estimated investment of 5.4 billion dollars, but the ultimate goal is to reach a fleet of at least six vessels. This naval development aims to balance — or overload — the growing Chinese maritime power in the Indo-Pacific region.

Lieutenant General Aujla reiterated that the success of the plan depends on a strategic alliance between the armed forces, political decision-makers, and industry. He proposed the creation of dedicated funds, faster approval procedures, a simplification of procurement, and infrastructures dedicated to innovation such as tech hubs. Without a favorable ecosystem, he warned, technological autonomy will remain a mirage.

China, observing India's progress, cannot help but be alarmed. Delhi's military advancement, although justified in defensive terms, risks triggering a new arms race in the region. Between technology, geopolitics, and power ambitions, India is charting a trajectory that could redefine Asia's balances in the next decade.

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