

समाचार पत्रों से चयित अंश Newspapers Clippings

दैनिक सामयिक अभिज्ञता सेवा

A Daily Current Awareness Service



रक्षा विज्ञान पुस्तकालय
Defence Science Library
रक्षा वैज्ञानिक सूचना एवं प्रलेखन केन्द्र
Defence Scientific Information & Documentation Centre
मेटकॉफ हाऊस, दिल्ली 110054
Metcalfe House, Delhi-110054

Armed forces have always fought well: Arjan Singh

Indian armed forces have always fought well and nobody can ever say that they have let down the country while facing an enemy, Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh said on Thursday.

He was speaking at the release of a book, *In memoriam: The fallen air warriors*, authored by Air Marshal Bharat Kumar (retd).

Chronicle of warriors - The book chronicles the names of air warriors who died in aviation accidents.

Recollecting some of his experiences with the British Indian Air Force prior to 1947, Marshal Singh, the only five-star officer of the Indian Air Force (IAF), said the British thought we could never fight as much as we did.

“You can start a war but you cannot finish it yourself. That is the principle of war ... You cannot say that I want to withdraw, that depends on the opponent,” he said in reference to the Japanese during the Second World War.

Air Marshal Kumar said that the chronicle covered the period right from the inception of the IAF, 1932, till 2012, the first 80 years of the service.

‘MiG not flying coffins’ - Talking of the reliability of various aircraft in the inventory over time, Air Marshal Kumar said the reputation of MiG-21 aircraft as ‘flying coffins’ was not correct.

Stating that the IAF had inducted close to 900 MiG-21 aircraft of various variants, Air Marshal Kumar said, “We had 143 fatalities with the MiG-21 which is about 19 per cent. This is same as that of the Vampires (British jet fighter) considered one of the safest.”



Army, PLA top guns hold secret parleys

Second such unpublicised meet between two sides; third high-level talks in five weeks

Chinese Commander visits Kolkata, Delhi

- *Commander of PLA's western theatre Gen Zhao Zongqi visited India from December 8 to 10. He met Eastern Army Commander Lt Gen Parveen Bakshi in Kolkata and Vice-Chief of Army Lt Gen Bipin Rawat in Delhi*
- *On November 8, Defence Secretary G Mohan Kumar and deputy chief of the Joint Staff Department of China's Central Military Commission Sun Jianguo met quietly in Delhi*

A couple of meetings have been conducted between the top leadership of the Indian Army and a delegation of People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China led by senior General last week.

The meetings, conducted in New Delhi and Kolkata, and the visit have been kept under wraps, but sources confirmed to The Tribune that the Commander of the PLA's western theatre, Gen Zhao Zongqi, and his delegation was in India for three days — December 8 to 10.

This was the second unpublicised high-level meeting after the annual defence dialogue (ADD) between India and China was conducted without even a word being spoken about it in public on November 8. Defence Secretary G Mohan Kumar and Sun Jianguo, deputy chief of the Joint Staff Department of China's Central Military Commission, had met in Delhi. The latest round of meetings is the third engagement between the two neighbours in the past five weeks.

Indian Army Chief General Dalbir Singh Suhag had led a military delegation to China on a four-day (Nov 21-Nov 24) visit.

The Western theatre of PLA, carved out following a rejig in November last, covers Xinjiang and Tibet—it is tasked all along the entire 3,488 km un-demarcated Line of Actual Control (LAC) that is the de-facto boundary with India.

The Chinese delegation during its visit to Kolkata met Lt Gen Parveen Bakshi, the Eastern Army Commander and the seniormost commander after General Suhag. In Delhi, Vice Chief of Indian Army Lt Gen Bipin Rawat hosted a banquet for the Chinese delegation and also held talks.

The two sides exchanged views on military-to-military relations between the two countries, especially the cooperation between the PLA Western Theatre Command and the Indian military. The PLA Western theatre has some 4.5 lakh troops, tanks fighter jets, artillery regiments and India matches almost the same number all along the Himalayan divide running in an east-west axis.

The two sides agreed to jointly implement the important consensus reached by leaders of the two countries in May last year when a joint statement at Beijing, after a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping, had spoken about the need to “expand the exchanges between the border commanders, and establish border personnel meeting points at all sectors of the India-China border areas”.

MAIL TODAY

Fri, 16 Dec, 2016

Navy to scrap ₹800cr deal over delays

By **Ajit K Dubey** in New Delhi

THE Indian Navy is planning to scrap a deal worth ₹800 crore with a private sector shipyard over numerous delays in the 10-year period of the contract. According to sources, the contractor had only supplied one of the six vessels it had promised to deliver so far.

In 2006, Indian Navy had signed a contract with Gujarat-based Alcock Ashdown Gujarat Limited shipyard for building catamarans or survey vessels after it beat established players like L&T, ABG Shipyard and Garden Reach Shipbuilders in an open tender for the prestigious naval bid.

“Out of the six vessels which would have been built under the Makar class, only one vessel INS Makar has been supplied and commissioned into



INS Makar was the only vessel delivered in the last 10 years.

the Navy but the other vessels have been delayed a long time,” Navy officials told MAIL TODAY.

Along with INS Makar, five more ships with names Meen, Mithun, Mesh, Mahika and Mayank were also supposed to be built but there is no

indication on their scheduled timeline for induction from the vendor, the officials said.

Catamaran or survey vessels warships are planned to be used by the Navy to undertake coastal hydrographic survey, required for production of nautical charts and publica-

Gujarat contractor had beaten established firms to clinch deal

tions for improving navigation through waters closer to coasts.

“The ships were also to be made capable of limited coastal defence role in an emergency, limited search and rescue and limited ocean research,” the officials said. Alcock Ash Down could not be reached for comments.

hindustantimes

Fri, 16 Dec, 2016

‘Oz Navy was warned about Scorpene data leak, but didn’t act’

The whistleblower who exposed a trove of secret documents on the Scorpene-class submarines ordered by the Indian Navy had alerted an Australian Navy officer about the leak three years ago but no action was taken, according to a media report.

The Australian newspaper, which broke the story of the leak of the documents detailing the secret combat capabilities of the Scorpene in August, has identified the whistleblower as Rex Patrick, a senior adviser to

senator Nick Xenophon. The daily reported that Patrick showed a part of the confidential leaked data to Australia's most senior submariner, Rear Admiral Greg Sammut, in 2013 but "nothing had come out of it". Sammut said he passed the information on to Defence Intelligence, which never followed it up with him.

Xenophon also met defence minister Marise Payne on August 29 and handed her a data stick containing the secret information on the submarines designed for India by French shipbuilder DCNS. He also informed Payne that the person behind the story about the leak of 22,400 pages of information was Patrick, a former submariner. The leak caused a controversy in France and India, where the navy decided against giving DCNS an order for three more submarines in addition to the six it is already building. Separate investigations were also launched in India, France and Australia.

Xenophon has said that Patrick acted as a whistleblower who wanted to help to protect the integrity of Australia's \$50-billion future submarine project that has been awarded to DCNS.

Patrick said he received the data stick with the leaked files "by accident" in April 2013 after the information was stolen from DCNS by a former subcontractor in 2011 and made its way from France to Southeast Asia and then to Sydney.

He said he sat on the leaked documents for more than three years but decided to make them public because DCNS would design Australia's new submarine fleet after suffering a "catastrophic criminal leak of confidential data on its Indian submarine project".

After The Australian reported the leak, Sammut, as head of Australia's Future Submarine Project, told defence secretary Dennis Richardson and Payne of his discussion with Patrick in 2013. Patrick and Sammut gave different versions of their meeting three years ago. Patrick said he approached Sammut in the waiting room of a defence estimates hearing in May 2013 with the leaked data and made the significance of the data clear to him.

Sammut disputed Patrick's version of events and said he was not made aware of the significance of the data.

Sammut said he reported the matter to the then deputy-director of intelligence and security and it was agreed the Defence Intelligence Organisation would take up the matter. Patrick said the DIO did not make contact with him and nothing further happened.



Fri, 16 Dec, 2016

SC upholds IAF decision to sack airman for sporting beard

Mohammed Zubair was let go for growing beard even after being denied permission

Noting that "every Armed Force raised in a civilised nation has its own 'Dress and Deportment' Policy," the Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the decision of the Air Force to dismiss a Muslim airman for growing beard citing religious grounds. The apex court held that under the Armed Forces Regulations of 1964 the "touchstone for being allowed to grow one's hair or to retain a beard is where there is a religious command which prohibits either the hair being cut or a beard being shaved."

Otherwise, discipline and uniformity have precedence over the fundamental right to religion in the Forces, the court held. "For the effective and thorough functioning of a large combat force, the members of the Force must bond together by a sense of esprit-de-corps, without distinctions of caste, creed, colour or religion. Uniformity of personal appearance is quintessential to a cohesive, disciplined and coordinated functioning of an Armed Force," the three-member Bench, comprising Chief Justice T.S. Thakur and Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and L. Nageswara Rao, observed. The court pronounced the judgment on an appeal by Mohammed Zubair, who was recruited as Airman in the Air Force. Ansari was sacked for growing beard even after being denied permission.

Fundamental right - Mr. Zubair claimed his fundamental right to freedom of religion. The Air Force countered that keeping a beard was not an essential practice of their faith unlike in the Sikh religion. The court

had sought an opinion from senior advocate Salman Khurshid, who said growing a beard was only “desirable” in Islam.

Further, the Defence Ministry’s 2003 notification clarified that only those Muslim personnel who sported a beard along with moustache at the time of commissioning (prior to January 1, 2002), would be allowed to retain them.

“Regulations and policies in regard to personal appearance are not intended to discriminate against religious beliefs nor do they have the effect of doing so. Their object and purpose is to ensure uniformity, cohesiveness, discipline and order which are indispensable to the Air Force, as indeed to every armed force of the Union,” Justice Chandrachud, who authored the judgment, observed. The court held that Article 33 of the Constitution has the authority to impose restriction on the fundamental rights of Armed Forces personnel, considering the “overarching necessity of a Force which has been raised to protect the nation is to maintain discipline.”



Fri, 16 Dec, 2016

India cautions Russia, Iran against engaging with Taliban

Feels Moscow Move May Stir Serious Trouble

India sounded a warning on Thursday to countries like Russia and Iran, which appear to be trying to change the ground situation in Afghanistan by engaging Taliban politically .

In a response, MEA spokesperson said, “In so far as the Taliban is concerned, they have to respect the internationally agreed red lines, give up terrorism and violence, sever all ties with al-Qaida, agree to follow democratic norms and not do anything which will erode the gains of the last 15 years.” This is an unusual cautionary note from India aimed at its oldest strategic partner. Even though India prefers to treat Russia with kid gloves, it feels Moscow's latest moves in Afghanistan have the potential to stir serious trouble. MEA spokesperson Vikas Swarup stressed India and Russia's special relationship. “We do not see any downward trend in our bi lateral relationship,” he said. But it is clear that India has been disturbed by recent events.

Addressing Afghanistan's upper house on the weekend, Russian envoy Alexander Mantytskiy was quoted as saying, “Zamir Kabulov (a high-ranking official in Russia's foreign ministry) said our interests are the same as Taliban in fighting Daesh.” Russia now says it regards Taliban as a “national military-political movement“, but IS as a global jihadist movement that could destabilise Russia's `near abroad' -central Asia.

Even Iran has been reaching out to Taliban, with the aim of keeping IS out of the Afghan region. According to an Iranian news agency , an influential Iranian cleric declared this week that Tehran has invited “moderate figures such as Taliban“ to attend a conference on international Islamic Unity , saying, “Iran has always held contacts with some parties in the Taliban movement.“

Iran denies any ties with Taliban, but Afghan officials have recently accused Tehran of not only harbouring families of senior Taliban commanders, but supplying them with sophisticated weapons that are destabilising the country.



Fri, 16 Dec, 2016

General’s first gambit

Pakistan army chief’s choice of officers reflects dynamics within the army — and with civilian administration.

It has taken almost two weeks for Pakistan’s newly appointed army chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, to affect his first major reshuffle of senior generals, filling key slots that had fallen vacant, where he would like

to have trusted aides of his own choice. This would indicate he was forced to proceed cautiously, given the manner of his elevation to the top post on November 28, 2016, superseding at least two other eligible contenders from the rather top-heavy cohort of the 62nd PMA Long Course — Lt. General Ishfaq Nadeem Ahmed, Corps Commander, 2 Corps, Multan, and Lt. General Javed Iqbal Ramday, till lately Corps Commander, 31 Corps, Bahawalpur.

The main issue here was whether the superseded lieutenant generals would follow well-established military tradition, asking for premature retirement once they were overlooked, or if they would complete their normal tenures till their retirement slated for August, 2017. The latter option may have constrained Bajwa's freedom to act. But after initial foot-dragging, both Ishfaq Nadeem and Javed Iqbal Ramday decided to hang up their boots. In the postings and promotions announced, newly promoted Lt. General Sher Afghan, erstwhile IG, Frontier Corps in Baluchistan, has been posted as Corps Commander to 31 Corps, Bahawalpur. Lt. General Sarfraz Sattar, formerly DGMI and erstwhile defence attache in India, promoted earlier in Raheel's time, goes as corps commander to 2 Corps, Multan. This is usually headed by officers from the Armoured Corps and slotting Sattar, an Armoured Corps officer, is reverting to form. This posting was not announced publicly initially — which could indicate that Bajwa faced some resistance.

Bajwa himself had to cope with some rather scurrilous rumour-mongering when it became known that he was emerging as a strong “dark horse” for the chief's post. A prominent Jamiat-e-Ahle Hadis maulvi alleged Bajwa was an Ahmedi or had Ahmediya links. The reference may have been to Bajwa's wife, who is a niece of late Major General Iftikhar Janjua, a highly regarded Ahmediya army officer who died with his boots on in the 1971 war. In the old days, before Ahmediyas were ostracised, Sunni Muslims sometimes converted to the Ahmediya faith. Since Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jamaat-ud-Daawa chief Hafiz Mohd Saeed belongs to the Ahle Hadis sect, another interpretation around this canard was that influential Islam-pasand elements in Punjab were hedging their bets and cautioning the political leadership against selecting a chief who would continue the Raheel Sharif line — cracking down on select terror groups, especially those having Tehrik-e-Taliban (TTP) links. The report elicited a formal denial from the defence ministry.

Bajwa's next problem was to quickly fill up the crucial chief of general staff (CGS) slot, fallen vacant due to the kicking upstairs of the senior most Lt. General Zubair Mahmood Hayat to the post of chairman, joint chiefs of staff committee. Soon after the army chief's selection was announced, media circles in Pakistan were agog with the reported shifting of Southern Command and 12 Corps Commander Lt. General Amir Riaz as CGS and posting of the military secretary Lt. General Shahid Baig Mirza to Baluchistan. Intriguingly, this was quickly denied by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). One reason for scuttling this move could be a perception in civilian circles that Amir Riaz, then-DG, Military Operations, was a possible “hawk” during Imran Khan's 2014 “dharna” in Islamabad, which was rumoured to have some resonance in military circles. Bajwa has now chosen Bilal Akbar, erstwhile DG, Pak Rangers, to be his CGS, opting for the advantage of better controlling a relatively junior lieutenant general in that post.

Bajwa has expectedly brought in a new DG, ISI. Every chief likes to have his own man in this crucial slot. Rizwan Akhtar was Raheel's man and worked over two years in this assignment. So his shifting could be fairly routine. He goes as head of the National Defence University. Bajwa has brought in the experienced and senior Naveed Mukhtar, former Corps Commander, 5 Corps, Karachi, as the new DG, ISI. He was earlier deputy director general in ISI, looking after its counter-terrorism division. Mukhtar's shift was expected among PML (N) circles and could be seen as the collegiate senior generals' choice for this powerful post. It may also reflect Mukhtar's good rapport with the new chief. Bajwa may have taken the additional insurance of sounding out Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif before formalising this choice.

Among other changes, Bajwa has shifted out Raheel's DG, ISPR, Lt. General Asim Saleem Bajwa to the somewhat inconsequential post of Inspector General, Arms — never before had a DG, ISPR been elevated to the rank of a lieutenant general. Asim Bajwa's media blitzkrieg to glorify Raheel's achievements drew adverse criticism, albeit after his retirement. The new chief has reverted to form, appointing a major general to this post, Fida Hussain Malik, lately serving as GOC, 11 Div, Lahore. Here again, a possible minimal deference to

political sensibilities can be discerned for Fida Hussain may have developed good relations with the Sharif brothers as one of the two divisional commanders in Lahore.

Lt. General Nazir Butt, who came from the highly regarded commandant, Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul post, to the National Defence University on promotion last year, goes as the new corps commander to 11 Corps, Peshawar, replacing Hidayat ur Rahman, regarded to have done a fairly good job in Operation Zarb e Azb in his two-year stint at Peshawar. He goes to GHQ as IG,(Training and Evaluation), the “lucky mascot” post which both Raheel and Bajwa held earlier.

These postings do not follow any particularly discernible or familiar pattern, either seeking parity between fighting arms or sending out new promotees to field assignments. However, they do indicate that the COAS is slowly setting out the pawns on his chessboard. Over the next two years, senior lieutenant generals from PMA Long Courses 63 to 66 would phase out before Bajwa’s term as chief draws to a close in November, 2019. It would be too early to assess who becomes a strong contender for the next succession or how the army chief’s relationship with the civilian political leadership develops in the days to come.

THE ASIAN AGE

Fri, 16 Dec, 2016

China: Weapons in South China Sea not militarisation

China’s defence ministry said on a verified social media account that the construction was mostly for civilian use.

Beijing: China said on Thursday that the deployment of weapons in the South China Sea had “nothing to do with militarisation”, calling the construction of defensive facilities “normal”.

The comments came after images released by the US-based Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) showed a series of hexagonal structures on each of seven islets China constructed on uninhabitable rocks and reefs. The structures appear to be large anti-aircraft guns and close-in weapons systems (CIWS) designed to take out incoming missiles and enemy aircraft, the AMTI said.

Speaking at a regular press briefing, foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told journalists that he was not aware of the report, but said that islands in the South China Sea were the country’s “inherent territory”.

“To conduct construction on China’s own territory and deploy necessary national defence facilities is quite normal,” he said, adding that the deployment of defensive weapons had “nothing to do with militarisation”.

China’s defence ministry said on a verified social media account that the construction was mostly for civilian use, and that necessary military installations were for self-defence. “If someone were flexing his muscles outside your door, wouldn’t you get a slingshot ready?” it wrote.

Tensions in the strategic area have been brewing for years, with China, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam making competing claims in waters with vital global shipping routes and what is believed to be significant oil and natural gas deposits.

China deploys weapons in S China Sea islands

Sutirtho Patranobis

spatranobis@hindustantimes.com

BEIJING : China has positioned anti-aircraft guns and advanced weapons systems on disputed islands and reefs in the South China Sea (SCS), an US think-tank has said after releasing new satellite pictures. It also said Beijing has further fortified ongoing constructions in the region.

The images taken in November show "significant point-defence capabilities, in the form of large anti-aircraft guns and probable close-in weapons systems (CIWS), at each of its outposts in the Spratly Islands," the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI), part of the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) said.

But Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said on Thursday the deployment had "nothing to do with militarisation". "To conduct construction on China's own territory and deploy necessary national defence facilities is quite normal," he said.

The new images revealed new construction on Fiery Cross, Subi and Mischief reefs on the Spratly islands, known as Nansha in China.

The islands and reefs are also claimed by Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei and Taiwan.

"AMTI began tracking the construction of identical, hexagon-shaped structures at Fiery Cross, Mischief, and Subi Reefs in June and July. It now seems that these structures are an evolution of point-defence fortifications already constructed at China's smaller facilities on Gaven, Hughes, Johnson, and Cuarteron Reefs," AMTI said.

"China has built nearly identical headquarters buildings at each of its four smaller artificial islands. The two smallest of the islets, Hughes and Gaven Reefs, feature four arms built off of these central structures." *(With inputs from agencies)*



■ A satellite image shows what CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative says appear to be anti-aircraft guns.

REUTERS

'Invade and take Taiwan by force'

HT Correspondent

letters@hindustantimes.com

BEIJING: China should invade Taiwan, seen by Beijing as a breakaway province, and reunite it by force, the state media said on Thursday, days after US president-elect Donald Trump questioned the efficacy of the "One-China" policy.

Weeks before assuming office, Trump angered China by directly speaking to Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen - the first such conversation between Washington and Taipei in decades - and talking about breaking the longstanding US policy of looking at Taiwan as part of mainland China.

China reacted to Trump through government officials and the state media. On Thursday, the nationalistic Global Times tabloid, affiliated to the Communist Party of China's mouthpiece People's Daily, came out with the strongest posture yet.

An editorial in the newspaper called for reshaping China's Taiwan policy, saying it should not be dictated by the US or Tsai's party, the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

"If the Chinese mainland won't pile on more pressure over realis-

ing reunification by using force, the chance of peaceful unification will only slip away," it said.

"The future of Taiwan must not be shaped by the DPP and Washington, but by the Chinese mainland. It is hoped that peace in the Taiwan Straits won't be disrupted. But the Chinese mainland should display its resolution to recover Taiwan by force. Peace does not belong to cowards," the editorial added.

Beijing should nurture forces in Taiwan, that want unification, it said. "The military status quo across the Taiwan Straits needs to be reshaped as a response and punishment to the current administration of the Democratic Progressive Party's destruction of the political status quo in cross-Straits ties. And we should also foster forces which support reunification through a variety of ways on the island," it said.

"It is possible for Washington to activate the Taiwan card in a crude manner at any moment. The tacit understanding and hidden rules made between China and the US over the Taiwan Straits can hardly be respected for long. Even the one-China policy can be attacked unexpectedly," the editorial said.