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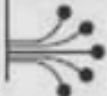
Karnataka's UAV test zone set for takeoff

By Kiran Parashar K M


The country's first of its kind Aeronautical Test Range (ATR) with a mega multi-agency complex for integrating and testing various Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAV) will be unveiled by Defence minister Arun Jaitley on Sunday. The ATR built at a cost of `1,300 crore in Varavoo Kaval near Challakere in Chitradurga district will have technical infrastructure on 4,090 acres and transit and residential facilities on 200 acres. The facility will be housing multiple agencies.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of the Ministry of Defence has developed the ATR, which has been partially operating since December 2010.

Facilities at ATR

	<p>A range control centre houses with an Air Traffic Display system, ATC, RF voice communication system, ground telemetry system, range computer system, mission video distribution and display system and range operational communication system.</p>		
<p>A 2-km long runway along with Taxiways. The runway can be extended to 3-km.</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; padding: 5px;"> <p>Two hangars with an annexe for integration and testing of unmanned aerial vehicles</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; padding: 5px;"> <p>A radar centre with a primary radar and secondary surveillance radar</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Two hangars with an annexe for integration and testing of unmanned aerial vehicles</p>	<p>A radar centre with a primary radar and secondary surveillance radar</p>
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	<p>Fibre optic network is spread over technical and non technical facilities</p>		

Other Infrastructure

<p>Management block, technical centre, MI room, cafeteria, tech office, MT yard, SP vehicle parking area, creche, main receiving station with HV DG sets, substations, security, DSC office, DSC accommodation and watch towers.</p>		<p>Community hall, shopping complex and residential accommodations of several types</p>
<p>Residential complex encompasses transit accommodations for senior scientists, scientists and NGOs</p>		

With the ATR's inauguration, DRDO can start testing some of the indigenous products being developed, including the naval and trainer versions of the Light Combat Aircraft, unmanned air vehicles Rustom 1 and 2; and the Airborne Early Warning & Control Systems meant for surveillance.

According to the Ministry of Defence, apart from DRDO, the multi-agency complex will house facilities of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

The ATR faced several hurdles before its completion. Local farmers had agitated against land acquisition for the project.

In 2013, work was halted by the National Green Tribunal from 21 August, 2013 to 03 September 2013 after Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) had withheld the 'Consent for Establishment' (CFE) application.

Later, it issued the CFE after which works resumed. In 2015, locals had expressed anxiety after a section of media said that Pakistan had claimed that India was constructing a secret underground Uranium Enrichment Plant near Challakere. Later officials had denied the claims.

Thu, 25 May, 2017
(Online)

DIAT to start course on food technology

Pune: The Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT) will offer a two-year master of science (MSc) course in food technology starting this academic year. The deemed university is controlled by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The course aims to provide trained personnel to secure the quality of food being supplied to troops at different locations, including Jammu and Kashmir as well as Northeast India. The DIAT has tied up with the Defence Food Research Laboratory (DFRL) in a bid to offer the course. A senior DRDO officer told TOI, "The Army headquarter specifically requested DRDO to come up with a special postgraduate course in food technology. Accordingly, the syllabus was selected as per the requirement of the forces." The DFRL has been conducting postgraduate diploma courses in food analysis and quality assurance in collaboration with the University of Mysore. A senior DFRL scientist said, "Officers from the Army Supply Corps (ASC), who inspect the food for the force, would undertake a diploma course at the laboratory.

So far, over 40 officers from the ASC have completed the course."As of now, the intake for the MSc Food Technology course has been restricted to 12 officers. A DIAT professor said, "In the first year of the course, candidates would mainly study theoretical aspects, while practical and research projects will be conducted at the DFRL thereafter."The DFRL would teach 15 different subjects on Food Technology across two semesters. "In the final semester, candidates will have to complete a six-month project that could be based on the troops' field requirement." he added. DIAT professors and DFRL scientists believe the course would help the armed forces to understand the nitty-gritty of food in detail.

Business Standard

Fri, 26 May, 2017

L&T, Punj Lloyd plan to tap Rs 2 lakh-cr defence orders

By Amritha Pillay

Defence ministry finalised strategic partnership model at a meeting of Defence Acquisition Council

With the government approval for a new strategic partnership policy in the defence sector, domestic manufacturers are hopeful of exploring huge order book opportunities.

"The strategic partnership policy is a big boost for Make in India in the defence sector. It will open up opportunities worth about Rs 2 lakh crore in defence manufacturing over the next 10 years," said J D Patil, senior vice-president and head of defence and aerospace, Larsen & Toubro.

Others such as Punj Lloyd look to partnerships to cash in on the opportunity.

Ashok Wadhawan, president, manufacturing, Punj Lloyd, said, "The policy is the right strategy for the sector, as private players can now take the lead in production. Projects will be executed on time and cluster manufacturing will develop. We will partner with other players in designing and manufacturing large sub-systems for platforms just as we have been so for DRDO, OFB and HAL."

However, some are awaiting clarity on whether a single company will be allowed to partner for more than one of the four platforms. "We will need to wait for the fine print," a source in the sector said.

Some others expect the number of platforms would be restricted.

"In the meeting held with industry officials earlier, it was indicated each manufacturer would be allowed partnership for just one platform," said another source on the condition of anonymity.

The defence ministry finalised the strategic partnership model at a meeting of the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) on May 20.

The policy envisages the establishment of long-term strategic partnerships with qualified domestic sector majors. The Indian companies would tie-up with global OEMs, to seek technology transfer and manufacturing know-how to set up domestic manufacturing infrastructure and supply chains.

The defence ministry on Wednesday said four segments have been finalised for the model — fighter aircraft, helicopters, submarines and armoured vehicles.

Of these, industry officials expect orders worth Rs 60,000 crore from the submarine segment, another Rs 60,000 crore from single-engine fighters, Rs 50,000 crore for the armoured-vehicle segment, and Rs 12,000 crore for the helicopter requirements.

Amber Dubey, partner and India head of aerospace and defence at global consultancy KPMG, expects ordering activity to start within a year.

“Since we are ordering off-the-shelf products with minor adjustments according to Indian requirements, the first order should be placed in six months to a year. This is presuming we don’t spend two years or more in carrying out field trials in India across locations and seasons,” Dubey said.



Fri, 26 May, 2017

Now, Army HQ can modify officers’ ACRs

By Vijay Mohan

Two years after the practice of the Army headquarters modifying and moderating the annual confidential reports (ACR) of officers after those had been duly finalised by the appropriate chain of command was struck down by the Ministry of Defence, it is now being re-introduced. The policy was done away with earlier following a legal opinion rendered upon it by the Solicitor General. Assessments in ACRs are the basis of promotion. Following deliberations in the Army Commanders Conference held in April, Army headquarters — in a letter sent to all Commands last week — highlighted the salient features of the policy. The headquarters maintains it will curb the “inflationary” trend of commanders awarding high grades to assessees in routine.

Under this policy, the Military Secretary’s Branch will filter all ACRs by adopting a computer-assisted mathematical formula to identify assessment inconsistencies.

Individual cases will then be identified for further analysis by a board of officers, which will give specific recommendations — requiring the Army Chief’s final approval — of corrective action to be carried out in each case. The changes will be subject to review if an individual feels aggrieved.

The policy, according to the letter, will act as a precise tool to handle inflationary and deflationary assessments when warranted, control violation of NPN norms and assist in balancing assessments.

The present tools, the letter added, suffer from certain limitations and have failed to arrest inflationary trends.

Some officers, on the other hand, are of the opinion that the policy of moderating ACRs at Army headquarters amounts to questioning the credibility and judgement of senior reporting officers within a well-established hierarchical system assessment. It also runs the risk of promoting favouritism by targeting officers who have been otherwise found meritorious in original ACRs.

The implementation of the policy could also lead to more litigation involving service matters. A large portion of cases concerning the armed forces are associated with ACRs, promotions and distribution of vacancies amongst various arms and services at the higher echelons. There have been several judgments in the recent past where the courts have come down heavily on the Army in the manner in which promotion matters have

been handled. Also under scrutiny is the “value judgement” component of ACRs which accounts for 5 per cent of the marks awarded and is the discretion of the assessing officer.



Fri, 26 May, 2017

Lt Gen Anbu stresses relentless ops

Northern Command chief Lt Gen Devraj Anbu today emphasised the need for relentless intelligence-based operations to sustain pressure on the militant organisations.

Lt General Anbu said this with interacting with troops on the ground in north and south Kashmir.

An Army spokesman said Lt Gen Devraj Anbu today visited the formations and units in north and south Kashmir to review the prevailing security situation.

“The Northern Command chief interacted with troops on the ground and emphasised the need for undertaking relentless intelligence-based operations to sustain pressure on the terrorist organisations,” the spokesman said.

Commending the troops for their dedication to duty and high standards of professionalism, the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Northern Command asked them to continue strict vigil to thwart any nefarious designs of inimical elements, he said.

Lt General Anbu also reinforced the need for synergy among all security agencies to effectively meet any emerging security challenges and maintain a safe, secure and peaceful environment for the people.

During the visit, Lt General Anbu was accompanied by Chinar Corps Commander Lt Gen JS Sandhu.



Fri, 26 May, 2017

Missing Sukhoi: China pays close attention; IAF search on

The Chinese military today said it was paying “close attention” to the incident in which an Indian Air Force fighter jet with two pilots on board went missing along the Sino-India border two days ago.

Paying “close attention” to it, Chinese defence spokesman Col Ren Guochang said when asked at a briefing about whether the Chinese military would help trace the missing Sukhoi fighter jet. However, he refused to give any details.

In Assam, search operations continued for the third day today for the missing Sukhoi-30 fighter jet that went missing on May 23 after taking off from Salonibari airbase here on a routine training sortie, sources said.

Ren’s remarks appeared positive compared to the curt comments of Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang who had said that he has no information on the missing plane and warned India that it should avoid disrupting peace and stability in Arunachal. — PTI

Trump admin proposes \$800 mn coalition support for Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 25 MAY

The Trump administration has proposed to give Pakistan USD 800 million as reimbursement for its military and logistical support in counter-terrorism operations in the next fiscal, a defence department official has said.

The administration has proposed the amount - a cut of USD 100 million compared to the previous time - in its annual budget proposals under the Coalition Support Fund (CSF), a Pentagon programme to reimburse US allies that have incurred costs in supporting counter-terrorist and counter-insurgency operations. Pakistan is one of the largest recipient under the fund and has received USD 14 billion since 2002. But for the past two years, the Congress has imposed conditions on disbursement of money under the fund.



"The FY 2018 budget proposal seeks USD 800 million in CSF for Pakistan. The CSF authority is not security assistance, but reimbursements to key cooperating nations for logistical, military, and other support provided to US combat operations," Adam Stump, Defence Department spokesman for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia told PTI yesterday. For 2016 fiscal year, Pakistan was authorised to receive up to USD 900 million under CSE. "The deputy secretary of defence signed the authorisation to disburse USD 550 million in fiscal year

2016 coalition support fund to Pakistan for logistical, military, and other support provided to the US operations in Afghanistan for the period of January-June 2015," Stump said.

"The Department recognises the significant sacrifices the Pakistan military has made in the fight against terrorism, and appreciates Pakistan's continued support for transit of materiel to coalition forces in Afghanistan," he said in response to a question. "Disbursement of the remaining USD 350 million requires the Secretary of Defence to certify that Pakistan has taken sufficient action against the Haqqani Network. The Secretary has not yet made a decision on certification," Stump said.

For the first time in 2016, then Secretary of Defence Ashton Carter had declined to certify that Pakistan met the certification requirement, resulting in the loss of USD 300 million fund for it.

US sends warship in South China Sea, Beijing alarmed

Calls it 'provocative action', warns America to correct mistake

First operation under Trump

- *'Freedom of navigation' sail was the US' first since October and the first since Donald Trump took office in January*
- *It comes after friendly exchanges between the US and China to settle trade issues and vows to cooperate to contain the nuclear programme of North Korea*
- *The United States Freedom of Navigation programme challenges "excessive claims" to the world's oceans and airspace*

The US has sent a navy warship near an artificial island in the disputed South China Sea as part of the first "freedom of navigation" operation under President Donald Trump, prompting China to say the "provocative action" violated its sovereignty.

The guided-missile destroyer, USS Dewey, patrolled within 20 km of Mischief Reef, part of the Spratly Islands over which several countries, including China, have competing claims.

A crucial shipping route, China claims ownership of the vast majority of the South China Sea, including the Paracel and Spratly island chains, a claim disputed by numerous other countries including the Philippines and Vietnam. The Chinese government has reclaimed land and built up artificial islands in the sea, including on Mischief Reef, and deployed military assets to them.

The exercise is the first since October and comes after friendly exchanges between the US and China to settle trade issues and vows to cooperate to contain the nuclear programme of North Korea, a Chinese ally.

Pentagon spokesman Jeff Davis said, "We operate in the Asia-Pacific region on a daily basis, including in the South China Sea. We operate in accordance with international law." The patrols are "not about any one country, or any one body of water", he told the Wall Street Journal.

In Beijing, China reacted sharply to the action saying the US warship had entered the South China Sea "without permission".

China's Defence Ministry said two Chinese frigates had "warned and dispelled" the US Navy ship after it had entered its waters "without permission." "We firmly opposed to the US behaviour of showing force and boosting regional militarisation, and have made solemn representation to the US side," Defence Ministry spokesman Ren Guoqiang said.

China's Foreign Ministry too criticised the US move. "The act damaged China's sovereignty and security interests, and could have easily led to an air or sea accident," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Lu Kang said.

"[China] resolutely opposes any country sailing or flying freely that could pose damage to China's sovereignty and security interests. At present, through the joint efforts of China and ASEAN countries, the South China Sea situation has cooled down." "The acts of the US have seriously disrupted the process of dialogue and consultation." "We urge the US to correct this mistake," he said.

Meanwhile, responding to China's protest, the Pentagon today defended its latest Freedom of Navigation Operations in SCS, asserting that these are as per well established international norms.

"US forces operate in the Asia-Pacific region on a daily basis, including in the SCS. All operations are conducted in accordance with international law and demonstrate that the US will fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allow," Gary Ross, a Pentagon spokesman said. "We have a comprehensive Freedom of Navigation Operations programme that seeks to challenge excessive maritime claims to preserve the rights, freedoms, and uses of the sea and airspace guaranteed to nations under international law." — PTI



Fri, 26 May, 2017

Iran builds 3rd underground missile factory

Iran has built a third underground ballistic missile production factory and will keep developing its missile programme, the semi-official Fars news agency quoted a senior commander of the elite Revolutionary Guard as saying.

The development is likely to fuel tension with the US in a week when President Donald Trump, on his first foreign trip, has called Iran a sponsor of militant groups and a threat to countries across the Middle East. "Iran's third underground factory has been built by the Guards in recent years ... We will continue to further develop our missile capabilities forcefully," Fars quoted Amirali Hajizadeh, head of the Guard's airspace division, as saying.

Since taking office in January, Trump has imposed new sanctions on Iran in response to its recent missile launches, putting Tehran "on notice". Iran has reacted defiantly. Newly re-elected pragmatist President Hassan Rouhani said on Monday: "Iran does not need the permission of the US to conduct missile tests." — Reuters

Trump urged not to withdraw from Paris Agreement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 25 MAY

As many as 36 Democratic Senators have urged US President Donald Trump not to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, arguing that the historic climate change deal for the first time made major emitters like India and China acknowledge that they have a responsibility to curb carbon pollution.

"We write to express our strong support for the Paris Climate Agreement, and to urge you to keep the United States party to the agreement," the Democratic Senators wrote in a letter to Trump ahead of this week's G-7 meeting.

They argued in the letter that backing out of the agreement after years of negotiations and strong US leadership on the issue would be a self-inflicted injury to America's economy and leave its interests unrepresented on the world stage.

The Senators said that renegeing on the agreement could put American health and safety at risk, and would leave the US economy and small businesses to miss out on vital investment and job opportunities while the rest of the world moves forward with trillions of dollars of investment in resilient infrastructure, low-carbon energy, sustainable agriculture and new technologies.

"While American communities and businesses grap-

'While American communities and businesses grapple with the impacts of climate change, we know that this is a global challenge and it demands a global response. That is why the Paris Climate Agreement is so vital. For the first time, the Paris Agreement provides a platform in which all countries acknowledge that they have a responsibility to do their fair share to curb the carbon pollution that is driving climate change, including other major emitters like China and India.'

ple with the impacts of climate change, we know that this is a global challenge and it demands a global response," the letter said yesterday.

"That is why the Paris Climate Agreement is so vital. For the first time, the Paris Agreement provides a platform in which all countries acknowledge that they have a responsibility to do their fair share to curb the carbon pollution that is driving climate change, including other major emitters like China and India," the Senators wrote.

Over the next several years, parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change will meet to determine how the Paris Agreement will be implemented when it goes into effect in 2020.

Issues of long standing bipartisan interest will be discussed and decided in those meetings, including matters of transparency and verification of emissions reductions from other countries.

"A US retreat from the Paris Agreement would isolate us from the 196 nations working

together within the framework of the Paris Agreement, reaching outcomes on international economic policy that will effect US interests whether we are party or not," the Senators warned.

"A retreat from Paris would harm the trust, faith, and goodwill that America has earned from other nations, and will inevitably harm our ability to work cooperatively to advance our foreign policy goals. Our allies were insulted by the Bush Administration's decision to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol, and we suffered real foreign policy and diplomatic setbacks as a result," the Senators said.

According to a senior administrator, Trump believes that the Paris Agreement on climate change is not good for the US and he would stay in this international agreement only if he feels that it would improve the economy and create jobs.

"The President believes that the Paris agreement is not a great deal for America," the official said.