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Big boost to Indian defence, DRDO successfully test fires Glide Bomb

The bomb SAAW (Smart Anti Airfield Weapon) will be inducted soon into the Armed forces.

New Delhi: The government said on Friday that an indigenously developed light weight 'Glide' bomb has been successfully tested in Chandipur in Odisha, marking a major milestone in developing such weapons.

The bomb - SAAW (Smart Anti Airfield Weapon) - was dropped from an Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur on Thursday.

"The guided bomb released from the aircraft and guided through precision navigation system, reached the targets at greater than 70 km range, with high accuracies," the defence ministry said in a statement.

It said a total of three tests with "different release conditions" and ranges were conducted and were all successful.

The guided bomb is developed by the Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), along with other laboratories of the DRDO and the Indian Air Force.

Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman congratulated the DRDO scientists and IAF for the successful tests. Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and chairman DRDO, S Christopher, congratulated the team and said SAAW will be inducted soon into the Armed forces.

Director General Missiles and Strategic System of DRDO G Satheesh Reddy termed the test a major milestone in the indigenous capabilities to develop guided bombs.



Mon, 06 Nov, 2017

India's subsonic cruise missile Nirbhay ready for fifth trial

India's indigenous subsonic cruise missile, Nirbhay, which failed its last test in December 2015, is ready for its fifth trial, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) chief S. Christopher said on Sunday. "We are planning to have one probable trial (of the missile) next week," Christopher said, on the sidelines of a three-day international conference Fipsphysiocon-2017, organised by the Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences.

The DRDO chief said the glitches that led to failure in its fourth trial in December last year, have been removed. According to sources, the problem was related to the software of the missile, and has been resolved. This time, the missile will also have a turbojet engine instead of the turbofan engine used so far. Nirbhay's December 2016 trial was aborted halfway as the missile changed its targeted course. It had to be destroyed within minutes of taking off amid a threat that the missile could hit land.

The 750-1,000 km-long range missile's first test on 12 March, 2013 failed as it fell after 20 minutes of flight. The second on 17 October, 2014 was, however, successful. The third test on 16 October, 2015 saw the missile nose-dive after covering 128 km in the Bay of Bengal. The cruise missile is expected to supplement the Indo-Russian joint venture supersonic cruise missile BrahMos, which can carry warheads up to 290 km.



POWER PUNCH

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday visited forward army posts in remote Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh bordering China to take stock of the defence preparedness
- During her maiden visit to the state, she was accompanied by General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Command Lt Gen Abhay Krishna and other senior Army officers

- She was briefed on the situation and defence preparedness along the Line of Actual Control
- Sitharaman, who arrived in the state on a two-day visit on Saturday, interacted with the troops at forward army posts at Kibithu in Anjaw district and lauded their dedication to the service
- At the air force base in Chabua of Tinsukia district in neighbouring Assam, she was presented a static display of

the combat assets, including Sukhoi 30MKI fighter aircraft and advanced missiles. PTI

<< Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman interacts with the officers and jawans at Kibithu in Arunachal Pradesh on Sunday. PTI

Def Min Pushes for New Airbase on Pak Border

- *Will help IAF counter Pak attacks in case of war*
- *More airfields in offing on the eastern border*

Within two months in office, defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman is clearing the decks for setting up a new fighter aircraft base for the IAF in Gujarat to guard against any reckless acts by Pakistan. The facility at Deesa, which is located in Banaskantha district, is near the border and is expected to bridge the aerial gaps in the state that already has major fighter bases in Jamnagar in Saurashtra region as well as Bhuj and Naliya in Kutch.



The IAF has been planning to set up a new airbase in Deesa in Gujarat which has been in the files for the last many years. Due to the new defence minister's push, the plan is now moving fast.

— SOURCES, AIR FORCE

“The IAF has been planning to set up a new airbase in Deesa in Gujarat which has been in the files for the last many years. Due to the new defence minister's push, the plan is now moving fast towards reality,” senior sources in the Air Force told Mail Today. The officials said the plan to develop the base was discussed with Sitharaman during one of her first visits to Jamnagar after she took charge of the ministry in September. In the last few weeks, the proposal has moved swiftly and is expected to reach the Cabinet Committee on Security headed by the Prime Minister in the near future, the sources said.

The development comes less than a month after Air Chief BS Dhanoa declared that the IAF is prepared to fight a “short and swift war” at a short notice and that the force has the capability of striking across the border if the government decides. Sources said the new team in the defence ministry follows up all the long-pending proposals and suggestions that are brought to their notice during field visits. The project to set up the base in Deesa, which has a civilian airfield, has been hanging fire for a long time due to “procedural issues” and has been discussed many times at the ministry-level in the past. The need for creating a stronger presence of forces has been felt in view of the increasing economic activities on the Gujarat coastline including petroleum refineries and new ports coming up. This airbase would address the huge distance between the Barmer Air Force Station in Rajasthan and air force stations in Gujarat.

Officials say the facility would give the Air Force the capability to launch counter air campaign, counter surface force campaign and strategic air campaign in case of a war with Pakistan. The IAF also has plans of using the airbase as a training centre for its rookie pilots and for operating its remotely piloted vehicles. The Air Force has been working to plug gaps in the western sector with Pakistan in the last few years as it started operations from the Phalodi airbase under the south western air command a few years ago. In recent times, assets such as the SU-30MKI combat aircraft have been deployed under the command at the Jodhpur air force station along with new ground-based air defence systems on the western front.

Slowly but steadily, the Indian Air Force is preparing itself for a two-front war with both Pakistan and China as it has been developing airfields on both sides. On the Chinese side, the IAF has developed the Daulat Beg Oldie airfield in the eastern Ladakh sector while it is in the process of developing old advanced landing grounds in Arunachal Pradesh. Some of the airfields have already been readied while some of them would be ready for use in the near future. The force is also in the process of finding and developing more airbases in eastern Ladakh area to be able to airlift troops swiftly in case of a Chinese misadventure in border areas.

Navy eyes new warships worth Rs 45k cr by year-end

By Ajai Shukla

About two and a half years have elapsed since the navy last signed a contract for new warships – the Rs 45,381 crore deal in 2015 with Mazagon Dock Ltd, Mumbai (MDL) and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers, Kolkata (GRSE) for seven stealth frigates under Project 17A.

With numerous other warship purchases stuck in the defence ministry's famously clogged procurement pipeline, the navy has surrendered Rs 15,041 crore rupees during the last five years from its budgetary allocation for new warships.

(Rs crore)	Allocated	Spent	Under(-) / over(+)
2012-13	13617	11074	(-) 2543
2013-14	11772	8151	(-) 3621
2014-15	12576	13355	(+) 779
2015-16	16050	10765	(-) 5285
2016-17	12467	8096	(-) 4371
2017-18	11023	???	???

(Source: Union government budget documents)

In four of the last five financial years , the navy has surrendered thousands of crores of unspent money. It returned Rs 2,543 crore in 2012-13; Rs 3,621 crore in 2013-14; Rs 5,285 crore in 2015-16; and Rs 4,371 crore last year.

Only in 2014-15 did the navy manage to spend its allocation, overspending by Rs 779 crore.

Now, with contracts almost finalised for 23 new warships, the navy finds itself constrained by the lowest budgetary allocation since 2011-12. This year it has only Rs 11,023 crore for fleet expansion, compared to Rs 13,617 crore in 2012-13; Rs 11,772 crore in 2013-14; Rs 12,576 crore in 2014-15, Rs 16,050 crore in 2015-16, and Rs 12,467 crore last year.

This reduction in the fleet budget is compounded by inflation, which usually runs at 5-10 per cent annually for defence weaponry, including warships.

Now, with Rs 45,000 crore worth of warship contracts near signing, navy admirals tell *Business Standard* there is concern the government might cite a budget crunch. If the navy were to sign the impending contracts without delay, it would need to pay out Rs 4,500 crore, which is the traditional 10 per cent signing amount. However, most of this year's Rs 11,023 crore budget is pre-committed towards instalments on earlier contracts and on-going projects, including the construction of

Project 75 Scorpene submarines, Project 15B destroyers, Project 17A frigates, Project 28 corvettes, the indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, and others.

Table 2: Navy's warship pipeline

Indigenous aircraft carrier (INS Vikrant) : 1
Project 15B stealth destroyers : 4
Project 17A stealth frigates : 7
Project 1135.6 frigates (from Russia) : 4
Project 28 corvettes : 1
Project 75 submarines (Scorpene-class) : 6
Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASWC) : 16
Mine Counter Measure Vessels (MCMV) : 12
Hydrography Survey Vessels : 5
Cadet Training Ships : 3
Naval Offshore Patrol Vessels (NOPV) : 5
Deep Sea Rescue Vessels (from UK) : 2
Landing Platform Docks (LPD) : 4
Fleet Support Ships (FSS) : 5

The admirals say the contracts for 23 new warships depends upon whether the government agrees to allocate an additional Rs 4,500 crore towards the “Navy Fleet” accounting head in the defence budget.

“The government thought it fit to take back Rs 4,371 crore last year and Rs 5,285 crore the year before. So, hopefully, it will find a way to enhance this year’s allocation by a similar amount”, says a senior admiral, speaking anonymously.

The 23 contracts nearing finalisation are for the building in Indian shipyards of five hydrographic survey vessels, two diving support vessels, and 16 anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft (ASWC). These will involve a pay out of about Rs 20,000 crore over 5-7 years, with an advance of Rs 2,000 crore to be paid this year. “We have concluded cost negotiations with the shipyards that will build these vessels. By the year-end, the first two contracts should be signed. The one for ASWC needs to be cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Security, so we are targeting March 31”, said a MoD official closely involved in these procurements.

Besides these, the navy hopes to conclude another big contract this year for building four “landing platform docks” (LPDs). The estimated Rs 25,000 crore contract is currently at the bid-opening stage.

After concluding these Rs 45,000 crore worth of contracts this year, the navy’s target for 2018 is a Rs 25,000-30,000 crore contract for four Grigorivich-class frigates (Russian nomenclature: Project 1135.6). Two of these stealth frigates will be built in Russia, while Goa Shipyard Ltd will build the other two.

The MCPP and LTIPP both talk about increasing the navy’s warship strength from the current 140, to 198 warships by 2027. This would involve increasing the navy’s warship numbers by 5-6 every year; in addition to replacing 2-3 warships that retire after completing their service lives.

Towards this, the navy has about 75 vessels of various types in the procurement pipeline, which will be completed by 2027.

THE ASIAN AGE

Mon, 06 Nov, 2017

Saab and Adani to build UAVs & copters

Widerstrom said Saab was excited about the Indian market and was looking forward to the implementation of the strategic partnership model.

New Delhi: Swedish defence giant Saab and the Adani group are looking at producing a broad portfolio of products including UAVs and helicopters for the Indian armed forces, besides eyeing a billion-dollar deal for supplying fighter jets to the Indian Air Force.

The head of the Adani Group’s defence and aerospace division, Asish Rajvanshi, said a joint venture between the two focuses on developing “foundational capabilities” to produce a wide-range of products in the aerospace sector for the domestic as well as export markets.

In September, Saab and the Adani Group had announced a collaboration in defence manufacturing entailing billions of dollars of investment and said the joint venture would produce Gripen military jets in India if it won the single-engine aircraft deal.

Chairman and managing director of Saab Group’s India operation Jan Widerstrom too said the JV was not only eyeing the lucrative fighter jet deal but also looking at other areas.

Mr Rajvanshi and Mr Widerstrom said the joint venture was aiming at building unmanned aerial vehicle (UAVs), military helicopters and various other aerospace components and equipment with a broad focus on developing a world-class ecosystem for the aerospace sector in India.

“If Gripen does not happen, it does not matter. We have started the journey of building foundational capabilities. We will pursue the UAV programme, the helicopter programme,” Mr Rajvanshi told a news agency when asked about the future of the JV if it did not get the fighter jet deal.

The government is set to start the process soon for procuring a fleet of single-engine fighters for the IAF and US defence firm Lockheed Martin will be a major competitor for Saab for the deal.

The fighter jets will be produced jointly by a foreign aircraft maker along with an Indian company under the recently launched strategic partnership model which seeks to bring in high-end defence technology to India.

Official sources said the the RFI (request for information), kick-starting the acquisition process, will begin “very soon”.

In May, the government had unveiled the strategic partnership model under which select private firms will collaborate to build military platforms such as submarines and fighter jets in India in partnership with foreign entities.

Mr Widerstrom said Saab was excited about the Indian market and was looking forward to the implementation of the strategic partnership model.

“There is a need to shape it in a way that it focuses on enabling the strategic partner to build up a long term sustainable capability rather than specific business oriented capacity,” he said.

The government has been focusing on strengthening the capability of the IAF. In September last year, India signed an Euro 7.87-billion (approx `59,000 crore) deal with the French government for the purchase of 36 Rafale twin-engine fighter jets.

The IAF was keen on a follow-on order of 36 additional Rafales.

The supply of Rafale jets is scheduled to start from September 2019. Sources said the IAF would start receiving a fresh fleet of 36 Sukhoi jets from 2019.



Mon, 06 Nov, 2017

Indian Navy carrier may get US aircraft launching system

US Was Ready To Power The Emals With Integrated Electric Propulsion Rather Than Nuclear Power As The Cost Of Latter Alone Is Over \$1 Billion Or ₹6.5 Thousand Crore

New Delhi: Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi meeting US President Donald Trump on November 13, India and the US made some progress on the defence front with a proposed Indian Navy carrier to be fitted with an electric power-propelled electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS).

A 11-member US team led by rear admiral Brian Antonio, program executive officer, aircraft carriers, met his Indian counterpart vice-admiral DM Deshpande, controller, warship production and acquisition in Goa from October 29-31.

The visit of the US team to India's sole aircraft carrier, INS Vikramaditya on October 31, ruffled the Russians with Moscow protesting to India through diplomatic channels about taking Americans to a Russian built platform.

The protests, according to south block officials, were brushed aside as the bilateral sale agreement with Russia does not impose any such conditions on India.

Former US defence secretary Ashton Carter had also visited INS Vikramaditya with then defence minister Manohar Parrikar on April 16, 2016.

Sources said that at the meeting of the joint working group on aircraft carrier technology, the US was ready to power the EMALS with integrated electric propulsion rather than nuclear power as the cost of latter alone is over \$1 billion or ₹6.5 thousand crore.

This will involve installation of giant capacitors for storage and discharge of power.

The proposed ship, labelled IAC-II, will be powered by heavy fuels instead of nuclear reactors as the cost of the latter runs into a prohibitive ₹2 lakh crore. The decision to stick to electric propulsion was taken as maintenance and disposal costs of nuclear aircraft carriers are very high.

The proposed cost of electrically propelled carrier will be around ₹1.5 lakh crore.

While the figures of development of IAC-II are mindboggling, the fact remains that India needs a minimum of two aircraft carriers to guard its east and west coast and dominate the Indian Ocean and beyond.

With Chinese PLA Navy's focus shifting to carrier based aviation to project power in East and North Asia, India along with its allies needs long sea legs to ensure that lanes of communications and overflights are not unilaterally restricted by any aggressor.

In January, the Indian Navy had issued a request for intent for 57 carrier-based aircraft following which the US (F-18), France (Rafale), Sweden (Sea Grippen) and Russia (MiG-29 K) submitting detailed proposals by May. It is understood that President Trump is expected to discuss the F-18 and F-16 offer to India during his meeting with PM Modi to boost military capacities and dominance.



Mon, 06 Nov, 2017

Agusta Westland May Have To Forego Rs 3 Cr Bank Guarantee

Italian helicopter manufacturer Agusta Westland involved in the VVIP chopper scam, may now have to forego Rs 3 crore bank guarantee it had deposited to bid for a tender floated by the Indian Navy to procure 56 naval utility helicopters. The Italian company may have to forego the amount as it has neither deposited it in the court, nor given a bank guarantee of a nationalised bank or banks such as ICICI, Axis Bank or HDFC as directed by the High Court.

The court had made it clear that not complying with its directions, would lead to revocation of the interim order staying the Government from invoking the amount.

The amount of Rs 3 crore was deposited by the company along with the pre-contract integrity pact, which was one of the conditions of the request for technical and commercial proposal (RFP) issued to it by the government.

The integrity pact, signed in 2013, said that if a successful bidder violated the agreement, it would entail forfeiture of the bank guarantee.

Central Government standing counsel Anurag Ahluwalia, appearing for the Centre, had told the court that on October 17, 2014, the bank guarantee was invoked and full payment of the amount was demanded as the company had allegedly violated the integrity pact. In its petition challenging the invocation of the bank guarantee, the company has said that the government in its invocation letter did not say that the RFP has already been withdrawn.

The company claimed that it was not informed of any alleged breach of the integrity pact and that once the Government had withdrawn the RFP, it had no right to seek enforcement of the bank guarantee. It had said that the government instead was obligated to return the bank guarantee.

Mon, 06 Nov, 2017

Two militants killed in J-K's Uri, DGP says they were Border Action Team

By Bashaarat Masood

The Jammu and Kashmir Police chief said a major tragedy has been averted as the militants were part of Pakistan's Border Action Team (BAT).

Two militants were killed on Sunday morning as the Army foiled an infiltration bid in Uri sector of north Kashmir. The Jammu and Kashmir Police chief said a major tragedy has been averted as the militants were part of Pakistan's Border Action Team (BAT).

A defence spokesperson said, "Army foiled a major infiltration attempt by the terrorists on night of 04-05 November along the Line of Control (LoC) in Uri sector in Baramulla district. The terrorists, who tried to infiltrate by exploiting difficult terrain conditions along LoC, were intercepted by the alert Army troops on duty close to LoC."

"The terrorists thereafter resorted to indiscriminate firing and in the ensuing gun battle two terrorists were killed while escaping towards the Line of Control," said the spokesperson.

The state police, however, said the gunned down militants were part of BAT. "BAT action bid foiled by Army and JKP (J&K Police). Two terrorists killed in Dulanja Uri. No casualty on our side. Possible tragedy averted," Director General of Police S P Vaid tweeted.



Mon, 06 Nov, 2017

Saudi Arabia intercepts missile targeting main airport

Saudi Arabia said the missile was shot down by its air defence forces, with fragments of the missile landing in an uninhabited area.

Saudi Arabia said its forces intercepted a ballistic missile fired on Saturday from Yemen toward one of the kingdom's major international airports on the outskirts of the capital, Riyadh.

The missile was fired across Saudi Arabia's southern border by Yemen's Houthi rebels, according to several Houthi-owned media outlets, including Al-Masirah and SABA. The rebels are at war with the kingdom.

Saudi Arabia said the missile was shot down by its air defence forces, with fragments of the missile landing in an uninhabited area north of the capital. Saudi Arabia's Civil Aviation Authority said the missile did not cause any damage to the King Khalid International Airport and that flights were not disrupted.

This is the first time that a Houthi missile has come so close to a heavily populated area, and it appears to be the farthest that such a missile has reached inside Saudi Arabia. Riyadh is around 620 miles (1,000 kilometers) north of the border with Yemen.

A Saudi military spokesman condemned the attack in a statement, saying the missile was fired "indiscriminately" toward a populated civilian area.

Saudi military forces have intercepted missiles fired by Houthis several times since March 2015, when a Saudi-led coalition launched a war against the rebels and their allies after they captured northern Yemen and

ousted the Saudi-backed president from power. The kingdom has also imposed an air and sea blockade on Yemen.

The stalemated war has killed more than 10,000 civilians and displaced 3 million others, pushing the Arab world's poorest country to the brink of famine

The U.S., which is one of the kingdom's most important military suppliers, has backed the coalition with logistical support.

Saudi Arabia accuses its rival, Shiite power Iran, of training and helping arm the rebels. Iran denies that it has provided material support, though it acknowledges its political support of the Houthis.

News outlet Al-Masirah said the missile launched Saturday evening was made in Yemen and was the third to be fired toward Riyadh this year. It reported the rebels saying the missile was fired in response to "Saudi-American aggression and crimes against the people of Yemen."

Earlier this week, a suspected airstrike by the Saudi-led coalition killed at least 29 people, including children, in northern Yemen.



Mon, 06 Nov, 2017

Warm Air Made 2017 Ozone Hole Small

Measurements from satellites this year showed the hole in Earth's ozone layer that forms over Antarctica each September was the smallest observed since 1988, scientists from NASA and NOAA announced today. According to NASA, the ozone hole reached its peak extent on September 11, covering an area about two and a half times the size of the United States and then declined through the remainder of September and into October.

NOAA ground and balloon-based measurements also showed the least amount of ozone depletion above the continent during the peak of the ozone depletion cycle since 1988. NOAA and NASA collaborate to monitor the growth and recovery of the ozone hole every year.