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Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

Nirmala Sitharaman chairs first DAC, clears sonars, missiles for Navy

These sonars are designed, developed and manufactured indigenously by the DRDO and the Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory, Kochi.

Chairing her first Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) meeting, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday cleared two projects related to the Indian Navy. One of them includes the purchase of indigenous sonars worth Rs 200 crore for naval ships.

“It will provide a significant boost to the Navy’s anti-submarine warfare capabilities,” a statement said.

The upgraded sonars will be fitted to the Navy’s destroyers and frigates, Defence Ministry officials told news agency IANS.

These sonars are designed, developed and manufactured indigenously by the DRDO and the Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory, Kochi.

The DAC also cleared procurement of missiles for replenishing the naval inventory.

Sitharaman also reviewed the status of the Capital Acquisition Schemes and directed that the schemes are to be meticulously monitored and brought to maturity within stipulated timelines.

She said that holding DAC meets fortnightly will enable speeding up the process of capability development of the armed forces.

MAIL TODAY

Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

Defence minister okays Klub missiles for Navy

In her maiden Defence Acquisition Council meeting, Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday cleared several proposals to bolster firepower and capabilities of naval warships, including the procurement of Russian Klub missiles for the maritime force “The DAC cleared Indian Navy proposals worth Rs. 200 crore for upgraded SONARs for its destroyers and frigates through Make in India route. These will enhance the anti-submarine warfare capability of the force.

The meeting also cleared procurement of missiles for replenishing the naval inventory,” Defence ministry spokesperson Mattu J P Singh said. The Klub missiles, cleared for the Navy, would be equipped on the older warships, including the Kora class missile corvettes and the Delhi class frigates, as the newer ships operate with the latest BrahMos anti-ship cruise missiles. During the meeting, the Defence minister also made it clear that all issues related to the procurement cases should be sorted out before they are presented before the DAC, the apex-body for clearing procurements.

The Minister has decided to hold the DAC meetings on fortnightly basis to sort out the issues related to procurements and clear them in short timeframe. In the meeting today, Sitharaman also reviewed the status of the Capital Acquisition Schemes and directed that the schemes are to be meticulously monitored and brought to maturity within stipulated timelines. The armed forces have come into a mission mode in the last few weeks to present their requirements to Sitharaman to discuss stuck projects and proposals on a daily basis with the three service chiefs.

Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

Defence min OKs projects worth Rs 1k cr

The defence ministry on Wednesday cleared proposals for more upgraded hull-mounted Humsa sonars as well as short-range surface-to-surface missiles for Indian warships, together worth about Rs 1,000 crore. Chairing her first defence acquisitions council (DAC) meeting since taking over as the country's defence minister, Nirmala Sitharaman directed that different capital acquisitions schemes for modernisation of the armed forces should be “meticulously monitored” and brought to maturity within stipulated timelines.

“Towards this end, the minister stated that DAC meetings will be conducted once a fortnight from now to enable speeding up the process of capability development of the armed forces,” said an official. Sitharaman is slated to visit J&K on Friday to review the situation along the 778-km LoC. The visit comes at a time when the situation along the LoC is tense, with heavy firing from the two sides. The Army has been conducting “pre-emptive and punitive fire assaults” across the LoC after two soldiers were beheaded in a Pakistani BAT (border action team) operation in KG sector, Poonch on May 1. The Army on Tuesday foiled another BAT operation in Keran sector of Kupwara.

THE ASIAN AGE

Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

Army to have better telecom services

This will improve quality of communication services in the cantonments and military stations, Mr Prasad said.

New Delhi: To improve telecommunication facilities in Army cantonments and military establishments, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday cleared the proposal for providing defence land to communication operators for construction of shared communication towers and allied infrastructure on defence land.

elecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad informed that as per the revised policy of the defence ministry, defence land will be allotted on lease and grant of permission in defence areas and cantonments to access service licensees and companies registered with Department of Telecommunication (DoT) for setting up shared communication towers and allie infrastructure. This will improve quality of communication services in the cantonments and military stations, Mr Prasad said.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

Army `Inflicts Heavy Casualties on NSCN-K ...Killing or Injuring About 11 Terrorists'

By Shaurya Karanbir Gurung & Bikash Singh

Without recovery of bodies it is difficult to estimate casualties, but we are going by the ground reports: MoD sources; Own troops suffered no casualties. Own troops didn't cross border: Eastern Army Command

The Indian Army on Wednesday inflicted heavy casualties on the insurgent group NSCN-Khaplang, killing or injuring about 11 militants near the Indo-Myanmar border. The Army stated that it didn't suffer casualties and the operation was not a cross-border surgical strike.

The response came after senior NSCN-K functionary Isak Sumi, in a Facebook post on Wednesday morning, claimed “three Indian soldiers were killed and an unconfirmed number injured, but there was no casualty or injury on the Naga Army“ during the encounter, which happened “at Langkhu village in Naga Self-Administered Zone inside Myanmar“.

Army was tracking the movement of NSCN-K's Mobile 2 Unit led by self-styled Lt Col Bopa Wangsa for quite some time, sources said. At about 4.45 am on Wednesday , an Army column was attacked by unidentified militants. “Own troops reacted swiftly and brought down heavy retaliatory fire of the insurgents. A large number of casualties were suffered by the insurgents. Own troops suffered no casualties. Own troops did not cross the border,“ the Eastern Army Command said.

“About 11 of their members are estimated to be killed or injured,“ said sources. In New Delhi, MoD sources said without the recovery of bodies it was difficult to estimate the casualties, but they are going by the ground reports.



Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

Panel on Kargil Arms Deals to Take Call on Need for CVC Report

By Raghav Ohri

BJP MP No need for report as CVC's findings already in public domain

The parliamentary panel looking into the arms purchases during the 1999 Kargil conflict will shortly take a call on whether to give up its insistence on the Central Vigilance Commission report on the matter.

BJP's Lok Sabha member Nishikant Dubey has suggested to a sub-committee attached to Parliament's public accounts committee, the committee on noncompliance and civil matters, that it drop its longstanding demand because the CVC's findings are already in the public domain, people aware of the matter told ET.

Dubey has told the chairman of the sub-committee that the contents of both the CVC report and another report by the Comptroller and Auditor General have been made public in a book by RV Pandit, said one of the persons, who did not wish to be identified.

A few other members have expressed similar views as Dubey and the sub-committee is expected to shortly take a final decision in this regard, the person said.

The PAC had in 2003 expressed its inability to release its report on arms purchases during the Kargil conflict, blaming it on the defence ministry's refusal to share CVC's findings. It had first sought the CVC report in 2001 on all major defence deals since 1989.

Following 'Operation Vijay', launched by the Indian Army to drive out Pakistani soldiers from Kargil during the tenure of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, a political standoff had erupted between the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress over the CVC report. The then chairman of PAC had demanded CVC's findings on emergency procurement of arms and ammunition during the operation.

In a report in 2003, the PAC said that while the CAG's findings on the arms purchases were made public, secrecy was being claimed by the defence ministry under procedures and conduct of business of the House to withhold the CVC report, describing it as an “anomalous situation“.

The PAC had raised eyebrows over the fact that access was allowed by the defence ministry to highly classified documents on arms purchases to Pandit, who wrote a book on the subject. It had also questioned the role of the then defence minister George Fernandes in sharing the classified information with Pandit.

Since then the PAC has been seeking the CVC's findings but to no avail. Now, the committee on noncompliance and civil matters, dealing with all cases of non-compliance prior to 2000, is looking into the matter. Significantly , this committee had earlier suggested reopening of the 1987 Bofors scandal that took

place during the Rajiv Gandhi-led Congress government. “The insistence on summoning the CVC files by the then PAC(s) apparently converted into an ego clash between the defence ministry and the committee,” said a senior government official. “Even after the contents were out in the public domain, the findings were never shared with the PAC. Since the information available in the public domain does not indict any official or functionary, it would be prudent to decide the matter.”

The CAG had said in its report that procedures were relaxed to quickly obtain replenishment for the Kargil conflict. However, it said, only `25 cr worth of ammunition was received on time while supplies valued at `2,150 cr were received well after the conflict.



Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

Time for the Army to Face Reality

By Pravin Sawhney

The Indian military, especially the Army, needs to change its mindset on warfare. If done, Pakistan will feel compelled to control its proxy war into India; and China will become careful in its intrusions

Chief of Army Staff General Bipin Rawat’s recent call for the Army’s supremacy as compared with the Air Force and the Navy for winning war is worrisome because it undermines modern war dynamics. Moreover, this will make bringing about military reforms, essential for winning the next war, difficult.

According to him, “Wars will be fought on land, and, therefore, the primacy of the Army must be maintained. The other services, the Navy and the Air Force, will play a very major role in support of the Army which will be operating on the ground because no matter what happens, we may be dominating the area or the air, but finally war will be won when we ensure territorial integrity of the nation. And, therefore, the supremacy and primacy of the Army in a joint services environment becomes that much more relevant and important.”

Talking of ‘Army’s supremacy and primacy in a joint services environment’ in today’s wars is akin to the French fighting the Second World War with the First World War tactics. The French, who had built the Maginot Line (defensive fortifications) in the 1930s believed that they could stop Hitler’s Army’s invasion. Unaware of the doctrine of fast mobility (blitzkrieg) which had been perfected by the German Panzer divisions, who managed to move their tanks through the Ardennes forest by passing the Maginot Line, the French lost the war even before it was joined. The lesson from this episode is that warfighting doctrines must keep pace with technology.

Today, technology has changed the complexion of warfare vertically and horizontally. Instead of the earlier three warfighting mediums, namely land, air and sea, three new ones have been added. These are cyber, space and electromagnetic mediums. Moreover, capabilities exist for long-range targeting with accuracy by precision guided munitions, beyond visual range missiles, surface-to-surface cruise missiles, unmanned combat air vehicles, to be used in real time by networking with help from space-based assets. Amongst the defence services’, the Air Force — given its reach and flexibility — is the best equipped to optimally utilise these technologies, while the Army is least suited to exploit them fully.

Given this, the primacy for land-warfare should go to the Air Force, so that it is able to shape the battlefields for the Army in a reasonable timeframe. Without this, the Air Force and the Army would end up fighting their own wars with sub-optimal results. Instead of separate service’s doctrine — as is the case now where the Army and the Air Force follow their own doctrines — the need is for a single doctrine for combined services warfighting. In addition to this, the Army and the Air Force should hone their core competencies

through intra-services (within the service) training. This is why comprehensive military reforms are needed to win the next war.

General Rawat's another contention that "war will be won when we ensure territorial integrity of the nation" is questionable. Winning war (with offensive capabilities) and maintaining territorial integrity (with defensive capabilities) are two different issues. While territorial integrity involves maintaining the status quo, winning war suggests a change in status quo in some fashion, be in the form of territory, prisoner of wars, attrition of opponent's warfighting machinery, or compelling the opponent to negotiate on one's terms.

Thus, while the Army has the primacy in upholding territorial integrity, this does not automatically win war. For example, the Indian Army maintains a robust defensive management posture on the Line of Control to ensure that the Pakistan Army does not alter it to tactical advantage. But this has not deterred the Pakistan Army from continuing with its proxy war, because it believes that the Indian military cannot defeat it in war.

Similarly, since the Indian Army lacks a comparable robust defensive management posture on the Line of Actual Control, China's defence forces continue with regular intrusions on the military line. For this reason, the Army, since 2007, has raised two divisions (each with 12,000 soldiers) and is raising the 17 Mountain corps, primarily to fill defensive gaps in peacetime on the military line.

Yet another belief of General Rawat that 'wars will be fought on land' underscores the continental mindset. It shows that the Army remains blissfully unconcerned about the Chinese Navy's forays in the Indian Ocean region, which since 2008 have increased steadily.

Two conclusions would not be out of place: That the Chiefs of Staff Committee (comprising the three defence services' chiefs) remains ineffectual, and the Army does not seem to have dovetailed the war scenario where the Indian Navy will not be able to support the land battles from the sea. Given this, what good are the calls made by umpteen Army chiefs that India needs a Chief of Defence Staff post and theatre commands, when the Army leadership does not acknowledge that on the seas, the Navy would have the primacy in war.

Unlike earlier times when the Indian Navy's war role was to support the land-battle, it is no longer the case. With the arrival of the Chinese Navy in India's backyard and its inter-operability (capability to fight together for common mission) with the Pakistan Navy, the naval war has assumed a dimension of its own. In this, it would be assisted by the air power. The Indian naval war objectives would be to protect our sea-lanes, military, civilian and merchant shipping assets, hundreds of islands, and to interdict enemy's shipping, blockading his ports and attempt to destroy its naval power.

Therefore, while the Indian Army will have the primacy to uphold the territorial integrity on land, the same task in the maritime domain will be done by the Coast Guard working under the Indian Navy. Regarding war, the Indian Air Force should be in the lead for land warfare, while the Indian Navy should be responsible for the sea warfare. Moreover, capabilities in the new warfighting domains should be available to support the three defence services.

Unless these realities are accepted by the military as a whole, the usefulness of comprehensive military reforms are difficult to visualise. Cosmetic reforms are a different matter. Two examples will help illustrate the point. One, the services are asking for the post of the permanent chairman, chiefs of staff committee. Why create this new post which will be responsible mainly for streamlining the annual defence allocations and acquisitions, when the same job can be done by the present chief of integrated defence staff with veto power in the chiefs of staff committee? Moreover, what good is marginally reducing the tail of the Indian Army as recommended by the recent Shekatkar Committee, when the need is to cut the teeth or combat elements?

The truth is that the Indian military, especially the Army needs to change its mindset on warfare. If done, Pakistan would feel compelled to control its proxy war into India, and China will become careful in its intrusions on the military line.

(The writer is editor, FORCE newsmagazine)

Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

No Indian Soldiers on Afghan Soil

Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman is right to say India will help Afghanistan's reconstruction with aid, but will not send troops to fight there. She said this in the presence of her American counterpart James Mattis: presumably Washington DC will read her signal loud and clear.

One year ago, Donald Trump promised to bring US troops home from Afghanistan. Last month, he changed his mind: American reinforcements will start pouring into Afghanistan in its 16-year war. This flip-flop will disappoint his economically backward, socially conservative constituents, the base for disproportionate number of servicemen: most families would like their boys home. So, despite the current surge, Trump is under pressure to cut down American military activity overseas. It would be ideal for the US to outsource the dangerous business of fighting to allies. President Trump would prefer that citizens of other nations put their lives at risk to further Washington's geopolitical goals. The carrot for doing that, presumably, will be greater access to American technology, finance and physical capital. For India, in terms of numbers the largest democracy in the world, this is a tough ask to agree to.

After the US bombed the Taliban out of power in 2001, India resumed large-scale humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. But our biggest achievement was to build Route 606, a 218-km highway from the Iranian border to Delaram and Zaranj, two busy centres of commerce in Afghanistan, finished in 2009. In Iran, the route continues south to the port of Chabahar, on the Gulf of Oman. This road connects landlocked Afghanistan to global maritime trade. It allows supplies to bypass dangerous and unstable routes across Pakistan. India should deliver this sort of constructive help, not boots on the ground.

Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

India's 2nd moon date in March '18

New Delhi: India is aiming for the moon, again. The Indian Space Research Organisation's (Isro) second unmanned moon mission, Chandrayaan 2, will lift off in March 2018, a decade after Chandrayaan 1 was launched, sources told Hindustan Times on Tuesday.

Chandrayaan 2 would be launched on a Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark 2 (GSLV Mk 2) that will blast off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh, sources said, refusing to disclose the exact lift-off date.

GSLV Mk 2 is the largest launch vehicle developed by India and has several successful missions to its credit, as per the website of the space agency.

Weighing 3,250kg, Chandrayaan (moon vehicle) 2 will have an orbiter, lander and rover.

The orbiter will be launched into a lunar orbit where the lander will separate, make a soft landing on the moon and deploy the rover, Isro sources added.

It will be an advanced version of Chandrayaan 1, with the launch of which India becoming only the fourth country to hoist its flag on the moon after the US, erstwhile USSR and Japan.

India launched Chandrayaan 1 on October 22, 2008. It included a probe, impactor and orbiter. The probe crash-landed on lunar surface on November 14, 2008. The mission was lauded for costing a fraction — about \$80 million — of similar missions. Japanese's SELENE cost \$480 million.

Chandrayaan 2 is expected to cost \$91 million.

Less than a year after the launch, Chandrayaan 1 faced numerous technical difficulties and on August 29, 2009, Isro lost contact with the craft, well before the mission length of two years. It nevertheless fulfilled some 80% of its designated tasks.

पंजाब केसरी

Thu, 28 Sept, 2017

जल्द सच साबित होगा 'सुपरसोनिक उड़ान' का सपना



पंकज सुमन

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी) जल्द ही सुपरसोनिक हवाई यात्रा का सपना सच साबित होने वाला है। नासा ने अपने रेडिकल सुपरसोनिक प्लेन का परीक्षण किया है जिससे हवाई यात्रा में क्रांति आ सकती है। नासा की योजना है कि वह 2018 की शुरुआत में करार हासिल कर लेगा और 2021 तक उड़ान का परीक्षण शुरू कर देगा। स्पेस एजेंसी अब विंड टनल में अपने विमान के माडल की टेस्टिंग कर रही है। व्यूएसएसटी प्रारंभिक डिजाइन नासा के लो बूम फ्लाइट प्रदर्शन प्रायोगिक वायुयान का प्रारंभिक डिजाइन चरण है जिसे एक्स

- यह विमान 55,000 फीट की ऊंचाई पर भर सकता है उड़ान
- ध्वनि की गति से दोगुनी है अधिकतम स्पीड

प्लेन भी कहते हैं। इस नए विमान से केवल छह घंटे में न्यूयार्क से लॉस एंजिल्स की यात्रा संभव होगी। विमान का डेमो 94 फीट लंबा है। एक पायलट के लिए रूम है। 55,000 फीट की ऊंचाई पर उड़ान भर सकता है। इस विमान की अधिकतम गति ध्वनि की गति से दोगुनी है और इसमें 92 से 128 पैसंजर बैठ सकेंगे।

