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Mon, 16 April, 2018

Successful flight tests of Rustom-II and other indigenous UAVs

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was created to make India self-reliant in the defence sector. On February 25, 2018, DRDO successfully flew its Rustom-II, a medium-altitude, long-endurance (MALE) unmanned aerial vehicle at its aeronautical test range located at Chalakere, Chitradurga.

This was the twin-engine Rustom-II's first flight in user configuration with higher power engine. With an endurance of 24 hours, the drone will carry out surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) missions for the Indian armed forces. The payload of the UAV will include synthetic aperture radar, electronic intelligence systems and situational awareness payloads.

This new drone is emblematic of several other UAVs showcased at DefExpo India, showing a strong will of the Indian public and private sectors to acquire an indigenous autonomy in the drone sector, however not aiming at challenging combat-proven UAVs like General Atomics' ones, for example. The drone sector appears as an iconic one for the "make in India" policy.

The Rustom-II appears to be an iconic success of the "Make in India" policy in the UAV sector (Picture source: Army Recognition)

http://www.armyrecognition.com/defexpo_2018_india_news_show_daily/successful_flight_tests_of_rustom-ii_and_other_indigenous_uavs.html

THE HINDU BusinessLine

Mon, 16 April, 2018

Combat drones to get lift from Govt

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), or drones, will play a major role in the contactless wars of the future, NITI Aayog member VK Saraswat said, adding that the Centre is in the process of firming up a roadmap to develop capabilities in the area.

Saraswat, who was the former head of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), said miniaturisation will be the key to all future vehicles. "We want smart systems and it can only be possible by using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a big way. There is need to pursue research in hypersonics, propulsion, stealth and other technologies," he said, addressing a technical meet of the Aeronautical Society of India (AeSI). DRDO's labs have developed indigenously a UAV called Rustom (warrior). In addition, the Defence Ministry is in talks with Israel for procuring some advanced versions and more of the Heron, which it already has in its arsenal.

Seconding Saraswat's views G Satheesh Reddy, Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister and D-G, Missiles and Strategic Systems, said: "The miniaturization of sensors and technologies will tremendously transform futuristic aeronautical systems. The systems will be smart, collaborative and lead to a large amount of sensor data, paving way for AI & machine learning of complex systems."

Global industries are looking to India for collaboration in manufacturing and domestic industries need to rethink their business models and adapt accordingly, said Reddy, who is the Chairman of the AeSI.

Vice-Chief of the Naval Staff, Ajit Kumar, said naval aviation was poised for expansion in numbers and technology. At present, the Navy operates a wide variety of aircraft that includes deck-based fighters and the latest P8i Long Range Maritime Aircraft.

The domestic industry has tremendous scope in providing home-grown solutions, and expertise in training personnel to maintain and operate assets, he said.

https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/combat-drones-to-get-lift-from-govt/article23549862.ece

MAIL TODAY

Mon, 16 April, 2018

IAF to propose Rs 6500 crore defence system to thwart 9/11 style attacks in New Delhi

The Indian Air Force would soon move a proposal for a Rs 6,500-crore multi-layered air defence system to thwart any 9/11-style attacks in the national Capital, government sources have told Mail Today.

As part of the plan, five to six units of the missile network would be deployed at various locations across the Capital, in a bid to provide 360-degree protection from all sides. During the 9/11 attacks, Islamic terrorists hijacked multiple passenger jets in the United States and used them as weapons to hit several important American symbols of power such as the World Trade Center twin towers in New York, Department of Defense headquarters in Pentagon and the Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.

"A proposal for acquiring the missile defence system from an American firm is expected to be discussed at a high-level meeting of the defence ministry in the next few weeks. If cleared, this will be a government-to-government deal for preventing 9/11-type attacks," the sources said.

The air defence system comprises various kinds of missiles for taking down targets at different altitudes and distances, including the Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) and Stinger missiles, which have different capabilities.

The missile grid would replace the Russian air defence systems that have been in service for several decades and have become obsolete, the sources said.

The new missiles would be capable of tracking multiple targets at a time and would be integrated with radar systems used by both military and civilian organisations that are used to manage the airspace, said officials.

"The missile system would be able to automatically identify any rogue aircraft deviating from its designated aerial route or moving towards any other direction and can engage it in a few seconds after warnings are issued to the erring plane," the sources said.

This programme would run concurrently to the indigenous ballistic missile defence shield project, under which protection would be provided to key cities such as Delhi and Mumbai from incoming ballistic missiles.

Under the DRDO project, the plan is to take down ballistic missiles coming in from long ranges, up to 2,000 km or more at heights of 30 to 120 kilometres in the air, and the twin-layer system is in advanced stages of development.

In the last few years, India has been taking significant steps to improve its air defence capabilities as a number of new mechanisms to take on hostile aerial action have been inducted and many more new systems would be joining in the near future.

India recently started inducting the long-delayed Rs 20,000 crore Spyder missile systems into the Air Force and some of them have already been deployed on the western frontier to thwart any misadventure from the Pakistani side.

The Spyder (Surface-to-air Python and Derby) is a low-level, quick reaction missile (LLQRM) to neutralise hostile targets up to 15 km away and at heights between 20 and 9,000 metres. The Python-5 is currently the most capable air-to-air missile (AAM) in Israel's inventory, while the Derby is an active radar homing AAM that provides the SPYDER missile system with a fire-and-forget option. India has also signed a deal worth Rs 17,000-crore for the Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) system with Israel to equip the army Air Defence Corps to take out enemy planes and drones at ranges of up to 70 kilometres in the air.

The DRDO has also started a programme to develop a Quick-Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile system for the armed forces to bolster the air defence capabilities in both the western and the eastern sector.

https://www.indiatoday.in/mail-today/story/iaf-to-propose-rs-6500-crore-defence-system-to-thwart-9-11-style-attacks-in-new-delhi-1212973-2018-04-16

The Tribune
VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Mon, 16 April, 2018

Must sit down together to bring peace: Army Chief

Says radicalised Valley youth to soon realise gun not the solution

Army Chief General Bipin Rawat on Sunday said the radicalised youth of the Valley would soon realise that the gun was not the solution to their problem as neither security forces nor terrorists would achieve their goals through it.

Peace, he said, was the only way to improve the situation in Kashmir that had been witnessing militancy for about three decades now. “There is hope that the situation in Kashmir will improve.... There are some youths in Kashmir who have strayed and have been radicalised. They think they can achieve their goal through the gun.

“But the time is not far when even they will be convinced that neither the forces nor the terrorists will be

able to achieve their goals. We have to together find a way for peace and we will be successful in that," General Rawat said.

The Army Chief was speaking at the 70th foundation day of Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry Regiment. General Rawat, who has served extensively in Kashmir, said the concept of 'Kashmiryat' had to be brought back and the process should be initiated from the University of Kashmir.

He noted that "unity in diversity" was the real essence of Kashmiriyat and it was important to inform the youth about it. "To revive that Kashmiriyat, we need to get our act together. It is not difficult. We have to get our act together, sit down together, work together and make sure that we all get united and bring about peace," he added.

He said although a section of the people in the Valley had strayed, it was a "very small" number and the majority of the people desired peace and believed that they were Indians. "It is wrong to say that the situation in Kashmir has deteriorated. The atmosphere is vitiated but the situation has not deteriorated," he said. — PTI

THE HINDU

Mon, 16 April, 2018

Air force tests its sinews with 1110 aircraft

Operation Gaganskati simulates airborne assault, mass evacuation, deployment of air power in short and intense battles

The Indian Air Force is trying out a variety of new tactics and operational strategies during its ongoing exercise, Gaganshakti, in which over 1,100 aircraft are taking part. The exercise began on April 8 and will conclude on April 22.

On Saturday evening and night, the Air Force and the Army's Parachute Brigade undertook a battalion-level airborne assault operation in the desert sector.

"This assault included paradrop of 560 paratroopers, combat vehicles and GPS-guided cargo platforms. The landing force was dropped behind the simulated enemy lines to soften up the likely resistance to our own armoured offensive," the IAF spokesperson said.

Six C-130J transport aircraft and seven An-32 transport aircraft launched from multiple IAF bases for the operation. AWACS (airborne warning and control system) provided aerial surveillance and a fleet of Su-30 air-superiority fighters gave protection.

Real-time operation

Gaganshakti covers real-time coordination, deployment and employment of air power in a short and intense battle scenario, and joint operations with other services, the IAF said. "Concepts of accelerated operations, network-centric operations, long-range missions with concentrated weapon releases across all air-to-ground ranges in India, inter-valley troop transfer, flexible use of airspace, joint maritime air operations with the Navy, joint operations with the Army, simulated combat search and rescue for effective extraction of downed aircrew behind enemy lines, special operations with Garuds, mass casualty evacuation from highway and ALG (advance landing ground) operations, to name a few, would be tested," an Air Force press statement said. For the first time in IAF history, the indigenously made light combat aircraft has been deployed to test its efficacy and integration in the operational matrix of the IAF.

Mass evacuations

Apart from wartime drills, the IAF is carrying out exercises to test its ability to carry out mass casualty evacuation in the northern sector.

The press statement said that in a simulation earlier this week, 88 "casualties" were airlifted from Leh to Chandigarh. A C-17 Globemaster aircraft was converted for this role by fixing support structures for stretchers in the main cabin. "An indigenously developed patient transfer unit (PTU), capable of providing in-flight critical care to patients, was demonstrated during the exercise," the IAF said.

After landing in Chandigarh, a green corridor was made available, in liaison with Chandigarh civil authorities, to transfer the "patients" swiftly to the Command Hospital in Chandimandir, the Air Force said.

For the first time, the IAF formalised the concept of a forward surgical centre (FSC). It is set up in a remote forward location to enhance the medical capabilities of a forward base away from a service hospital, thus providing medical facility to IAF and Army personnel in remote areas.

Naliya is the first Air Force Station where such a centre has been operationalised, using men and material of the IAF, the statement added.

On April 14, the IAF conducted maritime air operations on the western seaboard, to validate its capabilities over the extended area of interest in the Indian Ocean region.

"In the long-range strike concept validation, the Su-30s, airborne from a base on the eastern coast, engaged multiple targets, in the western seaboard, at distances beyond 2,500 km and landed in a southern base, thus covering a total distance of 4,000 km in a single mission," the IAF statement said. During this operation, the IL-78 flight refuelling aircraft provided mid-air refuelling to the Su-30 fighters.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Mon, 16 April, 2018

Defence budget to focus on intense war needs

By Shaurya Karanbir Gurung

Faced with a deficiency in ammunition, the Indian Army is working on a proposal to utilize its budget in a judicious way to meet its critical requirements, government officials said.

The plan is to spend less on certain types of ammunition, such as a particular missile and spares for vintage vehicles, and instead use that money on buying new equipment and procurement for making up the ammunition level for 10 (I), or 10 days of intense war.

The army believes these measures will not only save a few thousand crores, but also help substantially meet its requirement of ammunition for the next three years. But the situation is grave, because there will still be a requirement of additional funds to make up for the deficiency, the officials said.

In addition, due to contracted liabilities (payments anticipated during a financial year for contracts concluded the previous years) and emergency procurement of ammunition and spares, there will be a need for prioritizing procurements based on the budget available.

"For making up the levels of am munitions and spares, emergency procurement and 10 (I) procurement have been undertaken. But, no additional funds have been given for them," an official said.

This issue is likely to be discussed at the Army Commanders' Conference on Monday. A key agenda for the conference is the "optimisation of limited budget to ensure making up of critical deficiency in ammunition", the army said.

TIMES OF INDIA

Mon, 16 April, 2018

India may lose aircraft carrier edge over China

By Rajat Pandit

China is set to begin preliminary sea trials of its second carrier within a month or so, even as it steams ahead with plans to also construct mammoth nuclear-powered ones, signaling its hard-nosed intent to project military power on the high seas in the years ahead.

China's scorching pace in constructing aircraft carriers confronts India, which has been operating such sea-going airbases or "flat-tops" for over five decades now, with the very real prospect of losing its long-standing edge over its larger neighbor in this arena.

India is currently making do with just one aircraft carrier in the shape of the 44,400-tonne INS Vikramaditya, the refurbished Admiral Gorshkov inducted from Russia for $2.33 billion in November 2013.

Sources say the long-delayed 40,000-tonne indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC-I) or INS Vikrant, being built at Cochin Shipyard, is likely to begin sea trials only by October 2020 now. It will become fully-operational, with its aviation complex and long-range surface-to-air missiles, only by 2023 at the earliest. Sanctioned by the government way back in January 2003, INS Vikrant will now cost Rs 19,341 crore.

To make matters worse, the 65,000-tonne IAC-II (tentatively christened INS Vishal) remains a mere pipe-dream due to politico-bureaucratic apathy despite the Navy first moving the Defence Acquisitions Council for it in May 2015.

"The proposed project to construct IAC-II has gone around in circles, with the defence ministry constituting a three-member expert committee to review the proposal after three detailed studies. But the committee never really got going. It's likely to be revived soon," said a source.

The Navy has also ditched its ambition of having nuclear-propulsion for IAC-II for much greater endurance, which will also significantly bring down the overall costs. But the carrier will have CATOBAR (catapult assisted take-off but arrested recovery) configuration to launch fighters as well as heavier aircraft for surveillance, early-warning and electronic warfare from its deck. Till now, India has operated carriers with angled ski-jumps for only fighters to take off under their own power in STOBAR (short take-off but arrested recovery) operations.

"It takes over a decade in India to build a carrier after the government's approval. But China is constructing them at a furious pace. It eventually wants six carrier strike groups, with at least two of them being nuclear," said a senior officer.

After inducting its first carrier 65,000-tonne Liaoning in 2012, China will soon begin sea trials of its domestically-built Type-001A carrier, which is slated for induction in 2019. "It's designed for only STOBAR operations. But their future carriers are likely to have CATOBAR and nuclear-propulsion, and be almost as large as US carriers," said the officer.

The US has 10 Nimitz-class nuclear-powered super-carriers, each of which is over 100,000-tonne and capable of carrying 80-90 fighters, to project power and unleash strikes around the globe. One of them, the USS Theodore Roosevelt, with its accompanying warships and strike group, recently sailed through the contentious South China Sea to show the flag to China.

the pioneer

Mon, 16 April, 2018

6-day Army commanders' conference begins today

Top Army commanders will review the regional security architecture and deliberate on key challenges facing the nation, particularly along the borders with China and Pakistan, at a six-day-long conference beginning here on Monday.

Army officials said the conference, to be chaired by Army chief Gen Bipin Rawat, will also deliberate on "specific issues" relating to various frontline formations and explore ways to speed up infrastructure development along the border with China.

There will be detailed discussions about the situation along the borders with China and Pakistan, they said. "Important issues that are likely to be discussed are management of the extant security dynamics, mitigation of future security threats and enhancement of combat edge over potential adversaries," Army PRO Col Aman Anand said.

He said other issues like infrastructure development for capacity enhancement along the northern borders, review of strategic railway lines, optimisation of limited budget to ensure making up of critical deficiency in ammunition.

Officials said a major focus of the conference will be to bolster the Army's overall operational preparedness along the nearly 4,000 km long border with China.

Troops of India and China were locked in a 73-day standoff in Doklam from June 16 last year after the Indian side stopped building of a road in the disputed area by the Chinese Army. The face-off ended on August 28. Sources said India has deployed more troops and increased patrolling along the borders with China following the Doklam face-off.

Col Anand said issues relating to projects being implemented by the Border Road Organisation as well as matters relevant to welfare of troops will be discussed in detail.

The Army Commanders' Conference is held biannually for important policy decisions. Officials said the conference will discuss the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir. There will be subject-specific deliberations during the last three days of the conference which is also likely to discuss implementation of the modernisation process in the Army.

Business Standard

Mon, 16 April, 2018

Pak successfully test fires enhanced version of Babur cruise missile

Pakistan today successfully test fired an enhanced version of indigenously-built Babur cruise missile that can deliver conventional and non-conventional weapons with a range of 700 kilometers.

'Babur Weapon System-1 (B)' incorporates advanced aerodynamics and avionics that can strike targets both at land and sea with high accuracy, the army said in a statement.

"Equipped with the Terrain Contour Matching (TERCOM) and all time Digital Scene Matching and Area Co-relation (DSMAC) technologies, which enable it to engage in various types of targets with pinpoint accuracy even in the absence of GPS navigation, thus making it an important force multiplier for Pakistan's strategic deterrence," the army said.

Army further said that it is a low-flying, terrain-hugging missile, which carries certain stealth features and is capable of carrying various types of warheads.

The director general of Strategic Plans Division (SPD), chairman National Engineering and Scientific Commission (Nescom), senior officers from SPD and strategic forces along with scientists and engineers of strategic organisations were present to witness the launch.

President Mamnoon Hussain and Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi appreciated the scientists and engineers on the successful conduct of the missile test.

THE ASIAN AGE

Mon, 16 April, 2018

Pak Army Chief in push for India talks

Gen. Bajwa's remarks came during his speech at the passing-out parade of cadets at the Pakistan Military Academy in Kakul on Saturday

The peaceful resolution of India-Pakistan disputes, including the core issue of Kashmir, can be found through comprehensive and meaningful dialogue, Pakistan's Army Chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa has said.

Gen. Bajwa's remarks came during his speech at the passing-out parade of cadets at the Pakistan Military Academy in Kakul on Saturday, according to a statement by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the country's armed forces.

"It is our sincere belief that the route to peaceful resolution of Pak-India disputes — including the core issue of Kashmir — runs through comprehensive and meaningful dialogue. While such dialogue is no favour to any party, it remains the inevitable precursor to peace across the region," he said.