

समाचार पत्रों से चयित अंश Newspapers Clippings

दैनिक सामयिक अभिज्ञता सेवा
A daily Current Awareness Service

Vol. 43 No. 93 08 May 2018



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Army mulls permanent commission for women

Sitharaman promises synchronised position for all three services

The Army is considering granting permanent commission to Short Service Commission women officers in streams other than the currently allowed Judge Advocate General Department and Education Corps. Speaking at a function organised by the FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), the women wing of the business



Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with FICCI Ladies Organisation chief Pinky Reddy (R) and its former head Vinita Bimbhet (L) at release of 'Gender Parity Survey Report' in New Delhi. Manas Ranjan Bhui

body, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said her ministry was “working day and night to open up the defence sector for women”. The minister said “each of these services has taken their own approach towards getting women a limited option of getting into their force and as a result there is no parity within the three services either”. “The Air Force has opened it up for women to be fighter pilots and that is absolutely the front-end and top-notch level to which women can reach whereas in the Army, women are still not up for many of the positions except for the Medical Corps,” she said. The minister promised to take a synchronised position for all the three services.

A senior official said they were “looking to meet aspirations by creating a specialist cadre that

will include image interpretation, cyber cell, information technology cell, language specialisation and air traffic control”. Acting on a petition for permanent commission in 2012, the Supreme Court had asked the Army not to release any woman officer from service till the finalisation of the case. In April this year, the Defence Ministry had told the Supreme Court that the government was not averse to granting permanent commission to woman officers in the Army. The court was also told that no permanent commission would be granted in combat roles as no SSC was offered in this stream.

- 1,561 woman officers working in various streams of the Indian Army at present
- 292 of them are in the Army Ordnance, which is highest among all the streams
- 246 woman officers continuing beyond 14 years pending the SC instructions

In first meet, DPC to focus on ammo stock

The Defence Planning Committee (DPC) has made it clear that the priority of the military should be to have adequate ammunition inventory for a 30-day war rather than acquiring hi-tech weapons, according to defence ministry officials. The Defence Planning Committee (DPC) has made it clear that the priority of the military should be to have adequate ammunition inventory for a 30day war rather than acquiring hi-tech high value weapons platforms from foreign arms makers, according to defence ministry officials familiar with happenings at its first meeting.

Headed by national security adviser Ajit Doval, the DPC, which has the three service chiefs, and the defence, foreign and expenditure secretaries as members, met on May 3. South Block officials who spoke on condition of anonymity told Hindustan Times that the apex committee came to the conclusion that the armed forces just about had adequate ammunition for a short 10-day war but were keen on buying high value

futuristic platforms. The DPC decided that before the Indian armed forces commit to acquiring any platform in the future, the manufacturer will have to set up an ammunition factory through the joint venture route in India.

The DPC advocated that ammunition purchase should be an on-going process with 25% of inventory dedicated for training purposes. This decision was taken after it was brought to the notice of the recently created DPC that the armed forces largely bought ammunition from the revenue budget and appeared more focused on acquiring big ticket hardware such as aircraft carriers and top-end fighter planes from their capital budget. Focusing on ammunition as part of capability development, the DPC said, according to the officials, was the need of the hour. Before India undertook surgical strikes in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir in 2016, it made emergency purchases of ammunition, laser guided bombs and missiles from Russia. This was the case even after the military was mobilised after Parliament attack in December 2001 and after the Kaluchak massacre in May 2002.

The DPC, which has been set-up on the basis of a 2009 Defence Minister operational directive and the Chiefs of Staff Committee, also reviewed the situation on the Line of Actual Control with China and Line of Control with Pakistan. It was decided that all border infrastructure projects should be completed by 2022 even if they involves private companies such as Mahindra & Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro, and the Kalyani group, in road and bridge building. PM Narendra Modi's informal summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping was also discussed within the apex group with the bottomline being that there should be no lowering of the guard or delaying of critical infrastructure projects in the name of any perceived bonhomie.

Business Standard

Tue, 08 May, 2018

L&T Defence to make Quad launcher for BrahMos missiles

The production units of the QCIL will be ready for deployment on Indian naval ships in the next 18 months

L&T Defence, the defence arm of Larsen & Toubro (L&T) and one of the leading industry partners of BrahMos Aerospace (BAPL), has completed the design and prototype realisation of the 'Quadruple Canisterised Inclined Launcher' (QCIL or Quad Launcher) for BrahMos missiles. After rigorous trials, it has handed over the prototype Quad launcher to BAPL. The Quad launcher is designed for launching BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles in inclined configuration on-board Indian naval ships. The launcher, the firm says, provides superior firepower as compared to the twin canister, deck mounted launchers and has a capability to support and launch four missiles in a single or salvo mode. The production units of the QCIL will be ready for deployment on



Indian naval ships in the next 18 months.