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Press Information Bureau
Government of India

Ministry of Defence

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Launch of 'AMINI', Fourth Ship of ASW SWC (GRSE) Project on 16 Nov 23 at M/s L&T, Kattupalli

'Amini', the 4th of 08 x ASW Shallow Water Craft (SWC) Project being built by M/s GRSE for Indian Navy, was launched on 16 Nov 23 at M/s L&T, Kattupalli. The Launch Ceremony was presided over by VAdm Sandeep Naithani, Chief of Materiel. In keeping with maritime tradition, Mrs Manju Naithani launched the ship to the invocation from Atharva Veda.

The ship has been named Amini to signify the strategic maritime importance accorded to the island of Amini at Lakshadweep, located about 400 Km west of Kochi. The contract for building eight ASW SWC ships was signed between MoD and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata on 29 Apr 19. As per the build strategy, four ships are being built at GRSE, Kolkata and balance four ships sub-contracted to M/s L&T Shipbuilding, Kattupalli for hull and part outfitting.

Arnala class of ships will replace the in-service Abhay class ASW Corvettes of Indian Navy and are designed to undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, as also Low Intensity Maritime operations (LIMO) and Mine Laying Operations. The 77m long ASW SWC ships with a displacement of 900 tons have a maximum speed of 25 knots and endurance of approx 1800 NM.

The third ship of the class was launched on 13 Jun 23 at M/s L&T, Kattupalli. Launch of four ships of the same class within a year highlights our strides in indigenous shipbuilding, towards AatmaNirbhar Bharat. The first ship of the project is planned to be delivered in early 2024. The ASW SWC ships will have over 80% indigenous content, thereby ensuring that large scale defence production is executed by Indian manufacturing units, generating employment and capability enhancement within the country.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1977458>



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Ministry of Defence

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

2023 Edition of the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD-2023): Day 2

The Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue 2023 (IPRD-2023), the annual apex-level regional strategic dialogue of the Indian Navy, continued today in New Delhi. The three-day conference is being conducted from 15 November 2023 to 17 November 2023.

The theme of the two professional sessions on the second day was “Maritime Connectivity through Shipping and Trade”. The day’s proceedings commenced with a special address by Admiral Karambir Singh (Retd), Chairman of the National Maritime Foundation, and former Chief of the Naval Staff. In his address, Admiral Singh offered a nuanced perspective of maritime connectivity and elaborated upon its six inter-related aspects. He also prognosticated about the potential advancements in shipping and port-connectivity in his talk. The special address was followed by the release of a report “India-Vietnam Dyadic Approached to Holistic Maritime Security in the Indo-Pacific” by Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of Naval Staff.

In the course of discussions that ensued in the first session, eminent panellists from Bangladesh, Canada, India, the UK and the USA, lent their expertise in deliberations on specific issues which included the contemporary and future influence of China on maritime ports, shipping, and trade, specifically in respect of island states of the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific; the opportunities, challenges, and prognosis of the Chennai-Vladivostok corridor; a comparative analysis of ‘Flags of Convenience’ versus national ownership and flagging; and the challenges of ship-recycling in the Indian Ocean Region and solutions thereof. The session was enriched by the sagacity of the moderator, Professor Geoffrey Till.

Special Address by the Hon’ble Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

The Hon’ble Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, acknowledged the sterling role of the Indian Navy and the National Maritime Foundation in furthering maritime thought in India, especially among the population, through initiatives such as the IPRD. He stated the India’s vision to grow to an eight trillion US dollar economy by 2030, and to 30 trillion USD economy by 2047 would be facilitated in large measure through the growth in her maritime sector. He brought out that the acronym SAGAR (Security and Growth for all in the Region) clearly encapsulated India’s maritime policy and elaborated upon various initiatives of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways in its support. He stressed the need to build resilience of port infrastructure and the maritime sector not only against sea level rise, but also against climate change as a whole. He specifically alluded to the Harit Sagar (Green Ocean) initiative of the Government which envisages several new projects related to green hydrogen, green port guidelines, renewable energy and biodiversity protection. The Hon’ble Minister also brought out the connectivity initiatives such as SAGARMALA, inland waterways, the recently announced India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the Eastern maritime (Chennai-Vladivostok) corridor. The minister also spoke about the government’s vision to make India a premier ship cruise hub in the region. In conclusion, the minister commended the efforts of the Indian Navy and the NMF in promoting and preserving India’s maritime interests. On completion

of his address, the Hon'ble Minister released a book entitled "Shipbuilding Trends and the Rise of Indo-Pacific", published by the NMF.

India's Amrit Kaal maritime vision in the Indo-Pacific is propelled by Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodi Ji's mantra of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region).

Spoke on our role in the region and growth prospects, at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue in New Delhi... pic.twitter.com/BN2xr0zcmH

— Sarbananda Sonowal (@sarbanandsonwal) November 16, 2023

Live: Speaking at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue in New Delhi. <https://t.co/IH1Jp5pAGD>

— Sarbananda Sonowal (@sarbanandsonwal) November 16, 2023

Professional Sessions

The second session of the day built upon the previous one, and explored in greater detail the trade and shipping facets of maritime connectivity in the Indian Ocean; the lessons emerging for maritime shipping and trade from the Russia-Ukraine conflict; India's engagement with the Djibouti Code of Conduct – Jeddah Amendment (DCoC-JA) and the Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Affairs (CGIMA) for promotion of security of shipping and maritime trade in the IOR; the supply chain challenges in respect of Rare Earth Elements (REE), Rare Metals (RMs), and Energy Critical Elements (ECE) in the Indo-Pacific, and the potential of the SAGARMALA project from a Sri Lankan perspective. This session, which was moderated by VAdm G Ashok Kumar (Retd), National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC), Government of India, and included participants from Australia, Germany, India and Sri Lanka. VAdm G Ashok Kumar (Retd) also released a book titled 'Gwadar - A Chinese Gibraltar', authored by Captain Alok Bansal (Retd), Indian Navy at the end of the second session.

The second day of the IPRD 2023 concluded with an enthralling cultural display of Indian dance forms by the School of Creative Hands (SOCH), at the resplendent Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1977465>



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Ministry of Defence

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

India - Sri Lanka Joint Exercise MITRA SHAKTI – 2023 Commenced Today

The ninth edition of Joint Military exercise "Exercise MITRA SHAKTI-2023" commenced today in Aundh (Pune). The exercise is being conducted from 16th to 29th November 2023. The Indian contingent, of 120 personnel, is being represented mainly by troops from the MARATHA LIGHT INFANTRY Regiment. The Sri Lankan side is being represented by personnel from 53 Infantry Division. 15 personnel from Indian Air Force and five personnel from Sri Lankan Air Force are also participating in the exercise.

The aim of the exercise is to jointly rehearse conduct of Sub Conventional operations under Chapter VII of United Nations Charter. The Scope of the exercise includes synergising joint

responses during counter-terrorist operations. Both sides will practice tactical actions such as raid, search and destroy missions, heliborne operations, etc. In addition, Army Martial Arts Routine (AMAR), combat reflex shooting and Yoga will also form part of the exercise curriculum.

Exercise MITRA SHAKTI – 2023 will also involve employment of Drones and Counter Unmanned Aerial Systems besides helicopters. Drills to secure helipads and undertake casualty evacuation during counter-terrorist operations will also be rehearsed jointly by both sides. Collective efforts will focus on achieving an enhanced level of interoperability amongst the troops and reduce the risk of life and property while keeping the interests and agenda of the UN at the forefront during peace keeping operations.

Both sides will exchange views and practices of joint drills on a wide spectrum of combat skills that will facilitate the participants to mutually learn from each other. Sharing of best practices will further enhance the level of defence cooperation between Indian Army and Sri Lankan Army. The exercise will also foster strong bilateral relations between the two neighbouring nations.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1977339>



Press Information Bureau
Government of India

Ministry of Defence

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Indian Navy Completes Second Gulf of Guinea Anti Piracy Patrol INS Sumedha furthers India's National Interests

INS Sumedha is on an Extended Range Operational Deployment and is currently operating in the Atlantic Ocean along the West Coast of Africa. During this period, INS Sumedha operated in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) undertaking a 31 days anti-piracy patrol. This is the second such patrol being undertaken by the Indian Navy in this crucial maritime region. The maiden GoG Anti piracy patrol was undertaken by INS Tarkash in Sep – Oct 22. The region is critical for India's National Interests as it is an important source for India's energy requirements. Sumedha's deployment also ensured enhancing Navy to Navy connect with regional navies including Senegal, Ghana, Togo, Nigeria, Angola and Namibia. The deployment was also used to further the capability of the regional partners through joint training undertaken by the ships' crew reiterating India and Indian Navy's focus on helping our friends and the philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (The World is One Family). Another highlight of the deployment was the ships participation in the maiden India- EU Joint Exercise in the GoG (<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1971391>).

INS Sumedha's operational deployment to a crucial geographical region of immense relevance to India has ensured our National Interests are further bolstered.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1977330>



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Ministry of Defence

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

**India Committed to Freedom of Navigation, Overflight &
Unimpeded Lawful Commerce in International Waters:
Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh at 10th ASEAN Defence
Ministers' Meeting-Plus in Indonesia**

**Calls for active collaboration among ASEAN and Plus countries for peace, prosperity &
security in the region**

“Dialogue & diplomacy way forward for global peace & stability”

**India's proposal to co-chair Expert Working Group on Counter-Terrorism endorsed by
ADMM-Plus**

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh attended the 10th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting - Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Jakarta, Indonesia on November 16, 2023. In his address, he affirmed the ASEAN centrality and appreciated its role in promoting dialogue & consensus in the region. He also reiterated India's commitment to freedom of navigation, overflight and unimpeded lawful commerce in the international waters in accordance with international laws, including United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982.

The Raksha Mantri called for regional security initiatives that are consultative and development-oriented to reflect the larger consensus among various stakeholders. He committed towards nurturing practical, forward-looking and result-oriented cooperation with ADMM-Plus for enhancing maritime security in the region. Highlighting that the conflicts extract a terrible toll in terms of human lives lost and livelihoods destroyed, disturb the stability at regional as well as global level and have adverse implications for food security, energy security etc, Shri Rajnath Singh reiterated India's commitment to work with ASEAN and Plus countries to ensure peace, prosperity and security, which is an apt theme for this year's ADMM Plus. He cited Mahatma Gandhi's famous quote on peace “there is no way to peace, peace is the only way”.

The Raksha Mantri stressed the role of dialogue and diplomacy to have enduring peace, and in ensuring global stability. He reaffirmed India's message to the world at large, that “this is not an era of war”, and spoke about the imperative to give up the “us versus them” mindset.

Shri Rajnath Singh appreciated ASEAN Member States' enthusiastic participation in India-ASEAN activities, particularly the Initiative for Women in UN Peacekeeping Operations, and Initiative for Marine Plastic Pollution Response. He also appreciated ASEAN Member States' active participation in the maiden ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise held in May this year, as well as in the Expert Working Group (EWG) on Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) activities, of which India and Indonesia are co-chairs in the current 2020-2023 cycle.

Recognising that terrorism is a serious threat to international peace and security, including in the ASEAN region, India proposed to co-chair the EWG on Counter-Terrorism. This proposal was endorsed by ADMM-Plus as terrorism remains a serious concern to countries in the region.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1977298>

Rajnath Speaks at ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus, Affirms Centrality of Region

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday attended the 10th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting - Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Jakarta, Indonesia. He affirmed the centrality of the region and appreciated its role in promoting dialogue and consensus.

The Ministry of Defence said, "He also reiterated India's commitment to freedom of navigation, overflight and unimpeded lawful commerce in international waters in accordance with international laws, including United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982."

The countries sharing maritime boundaries in the South China Sea have disputes on their maritime claims with China.

Rajnath called for regional security initiatives that are consultative and development-oriented to reflect the larger consensus among various stakeholders. He committed towards nurturing practical, forward-looking and result-oriented cooperation with ADMM-Plus for enhancing maritime security in the region.

Recognising that terrorism is a serious threat to international peace and security, including in the ASEAN region, India proposed to co-chair the EWG on counterterrorism. This proposal was endorsed by ADMM-Plus as terrorism remains a serious concern to countries in the region.

"The Defence Minister stressed the role of dialogue and diplomacy to have enduring peace, and in ensuring global stability. He reaffirmed India's message to the world at large, that "this is not an era of war", and spoke about the imperative to give up the "us versus them" mindset," said the MoD.

Rajnath appreciated ASEAN member states' enthusiastic participation in India-ASEAN activities, particularly the Initiative for Women in UN Peacekeeping Operations, and Initiative for Marine Plastic Pollution Response. He also appreciated ASEAN Member States' active participation in the maiden ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise held in May this year, as well as in the Expert Working Group (EWG) on Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) activities, of which India and Indonesia are co-chairs in the current 2020-2023 cycle.

Rajnath also met the US Defence Secretary and his Indonesian and Vietnamese counterparts on the sidelines of the meeting.

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and Rajnath "used this opportunity to quickly review the tremendous progress achieved in India US defence partnership in recent years. They discussed how India and the US could contribute together to ASEAN centrality in the Indo Pacific and the cause of "Peace Prosperity and Security" - The theme of ADMM Plus 2023 meeting," said the Ministry of Defence in a statement.

They also discussed ways to expand the India-US partnership to address emerging challenges and further strengthen the common efforts towards a more secure world.

The two leaders had earlier met in New Delhi on November 10 where they had resolved to advance defence technology cooperation with joint research in emerging areas.

During his meeting with the Defence Minister of Indonesia Mr Prabowo Subianto, Rajnath appreciated Indonesia's leadership of ASEAN this year and the excellent organisation of the ADMM-Plus.

The two ministers took stock of the bilateral defence relationship and re-committed to further strengthen cooperation, particularly in the maritime domain. They also reviewed the regular exchanges in the form of training, staff talks & exercises, and discussed avenues for promotion of defence industry collaboration. Both countries have co-chaired the Expert Working Group (EWG) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) for the cycle 2021-2024.

Rajnath also held talks with the Minister of National Defence of Vietnam General Phan Van Giang and reviewed the progress in the implementation of the 'Joint Vision Statement on India-Vietnam Defence Partnership towards 2030' signed during his visit to Vietnam in June 2022. "They committed to work together for the deepening of the multifaceted bilateral defence ties, spanning across a wide spectrum

covering training, capacity building, defence industry cooperation, UN Peacekeeping, bilateral ship visits and exercises."

Singh also met with Secretary General of ASEAN Dr Kao Kim Hourn on the sidelines of 10th ADMM-Plus. While reiterating India's continued support to ASEAN Centrality, Rajnath appreciated ASEAN Member States' enthusiastic participation in India-ASEAN activities including the 1st ASEAN-India Informal Defence Ministers' Meeting, maiden ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise, India's Initiatives for Women in UN Peacekeeping Operations and for Marine Plastic Pollution Response.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2023/nov/16/rajnath-speaks-at-asean-defence-ministers-meeting-plus-affirms-centrality-of-region-2633491.html>



Press Information Bureau
Government of India

Ministry of Defence

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh Holds Bilateral Meetings with his Indonesian & Vietnamese Counterparts on the Sidelines of 10th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting - Plus in Jakarta

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh held bilateral meetings with his Indonesian and Vietnamese counterparts on the sidelines of 10th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting - Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Jakarta, Indonesia on November 16, 2023. During his meeting with the Defence Minister of Indonesia Mr Prabowo Subianto, the Raksha Mantri appreciated Indonesia's leadership of ASEAN this year, and the excellent organisation of the ADMM-Plus.

The two Ministers took stock of the bilateral defence relationship and re-committed to further strengthen cooperation, particularly in the maritime domain. They also reviewed the regular exchanges in the form of training, staff talks & exercises, and discussed avenues for promotion of defence industry collaboration. Both countries have co-chaired Expert Working Group (EWG) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) for the cycle 2021-2024.

Shri Rajnath Singh also held talks with the Minister of National Defence of Vietnam General Phan Van Giang. The two Ministers reviewed the progress in the implementation of the 'Joint Vision Statement on India-Vietnam Defence Partnership towards 2030' signed during the visit of Raksha

Mantri to Vietnam in June 2022. They committed to work together for the deepening of the multifaceted bilateral defence ties, spanning across a wide spectrum covering training, capacity building, defence industry cooperation, UN Peacekeeping, bilateral ship visits and exercises.

The Raksha Mantri also met with Secretary General of ASEAN Dr Kao Kim Hourn on the sidelines of 10th ADMM-Plus. While reiterating India's continued support to ASEAN Centrality, Shri Rajnath Singh appreciated ASEAN Member States' enthusiastic participation in India-ASEAN activities including the 1st ASEAN-India Informal Defence Ministers' Meeting, maiden ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise, India's Initiatives for Women in UN Peacekeeping Operations and for Marine Plastic Pollution Response.

The Raksha Mantri further appreciated ASEAN Secretariat's excellent support in implementation of ASEAN-India projects. They exchanged views on ways and means to further enhance ASEAN-India cooperation in view of advancing the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Earlier in the day, Shri Rajnath Singh attended the 10th ADMM-Plus. He congratulated the Indonesian Defence Minister for the successful chairmanship of ADMM-Plus. During the course of the meeting, the Raksha Mantri welcomed Laos as the new chair of ADMM-Plus and wished them all success for conduct of events in 2024.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1977391>

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Holds Conversation with US Counterpart Austin in Jakarta

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held a brief conversation with his American counterpart, Lloyd Austin, in Jakarta on Thursday, focusing on the India-US strategic ties and ways to strengthen the common efforts towards a more secure world. In the interaction that took place on the sidelines of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), Singh and Austin discussed how India and the United States could contribute together to ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific region, officials said.

Ten-nation regional grouping ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) is a major stakeholder in the Indo-Pacific.

The ADMM-Plus is a platform comprising the 10-nation ASEAN and its eight dialogue partners -- India, China, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the US.

Indonesia is hosting the meeting as the current chair of the ADMM-Plus.

The Singh-Austin conversation came less than a week after the two ministers held wide-ranging talks in New Delhi that centred around an ambitious agenda to deepen the India-US bilateral strategic ties in the face of China's increasing military assertiveness.

Indian officials said both leaders used the opportunity in Jakarta to quickly review the "tremendous progress" achieved in the India-US defence partnership in recent years.

They discussed how the two countries could contribute together to ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific and to advance "peace, prosperity and security".

Singh and Austin also discussed ways to expand the India-US partnership to address emerging challenges and further strengthen the common efforts towards a more secure world, the officials said.

The two leaders met in New Delhi on November 10 and resolved to advance the defence technology cooperation with joint research in emerging areas.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defence Secretary Austin travelled to India last week to attend the fifth edition of the "2+2" ministerial dialogue with their Indian counterparts.

Ways to expand the cooperation between India and the US figured in the "2+2" dialogue as well.

There have been growing global concerns over China's military assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/defence-minister-rajnath-singh-holds-conversation-with-us-counterpart-austin-in-jakarta/articleshow/105263181.cms>



Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Major Boost to Military Transportation: Govt to Procure Lorries and Trucks with Specific Features

In the past few years, the Indian government has shifted its focus towards boosting the Indian defence system with the induction of highly advanced war equipment and other important gear. In line with that, it has come up with a major plan to bolster the transport capabilities of the country's armed forces with the acquisition of approximately 5,000 lorries for all three wings of the Indian defence system.

Government's move to achieve the goal

To meet the requirement for the acquisition of transportation systems, the government has issued two distinct Requests for Information (RFI). In addition to lorries, the government is also looking forward to procuring 2,500 trucks designated for the Indian Army.

What makes these lorries different from others

The operational potential of the vehicles makes them different from others. These vehicles are specifically designed to operate in tough situations such as high altitudes, cross-country regions, hilly terrains and desert conditions.

The Lorries are intended to be used as general services load carriers with assorted payload capacities of 5 to 7.5 tonnes. While the 7.5-tonne vehicles will serve in more plain areas, the 5-tonnes lorries will be deployed in demanding terrains to meet the requirements of the defence force.

Required specification for the Lorries

According to the issued RFI, several key specifications are required to be developed in the upcoming vehicle. The vehicles must be equipped with 4×4 drive systems, which means the torque will be supplied to both axles, the front and the rear. Additionally, they should be adaptable to the diverse terrain and climatic conditions of the country. It is expected that the formal Request for Proposal will be issued within the next six months.

Operational parameters for the Lorries

As per the requirements of the operational parameters, the dimension and weight of the vehicle must allow them to smoothly pass through a Class 18 bridge and can be transported by a broad gauge section of the railway.

Moreover, the vehicle should be designed to be converted into a flatbed configuration by removing the side walls, superstructure, and tailboards.

The vehicle should have the capability to carry 34 warriors on foldable side-facing seats, along with their personal weapons and equipment.

The RFI has also focused on the fuel efficiency of the vehicle. They should travel at least five kilometres per litre.

Additionally, the engine's average lifespan should exceed 15 years or 1,50,000 kilometers, whichever comes first.

Specification of trucks

In a separate RFI, talking about the procurement of 2500 trucks, the Indian Army released the required specification of trucks.

The trucks, which will be deployed in general services, should have a payload capacity of 2.5 tonnes. They should be designed to perform in different terrains, such as high altitudes, hilly areas, plains, cross-country regions, and desert environments, adapting to the adverse climatic conditions witnessed in the country.

This move by the government will significantly enhance the potential of the defence force to perform in any circumstances.

<https://www.news9live.com/knowledge/major-boost-to-military-transportation-govt-to-procure-lorries-and-trucks-with-specific-features-2351646>



Thu, 16 Nov 2023

German Engines Available now but India to Use American Power Plants for Entire Zorawar Light Tank Project

Indian agencies have decided that they will continue to use the American Cummins engine for the entire Zorawar light tank project, which got delayed by a few months due to issues in the supply of German engines.

"The German clearances have come now and their firms are ready to supply the engines but it has now been decided that we will go ahead with the Cummins engine only for the entire programme," sources in the Defence Research and Development Organisation said.

The Zorawar light tank project was earlier planned to be developed with a German engine but it got delayed due to a lack of German export control clearances known as BAFA clearance after which it was decided to be developed with the American engine.

The Zorawar light tank is a joint venture between DRDO and private sector firm Larsen and Toubro.

The light tank prototype with the American Cummins engine is almost ready and will start undergoing trials by the end of this year.

After the internal trials, the main trials will start in the desert sector first and after that, they will be taken to the high-altitude areas of Ladakh and the Sikkim sector.

The tank is planned to be used in all terrains and will be tested in all conditions for that purpose, the sources said.

The need for the light tank was felt during the ongoing standoff with China in 2020 when the People's Liberation Army showed up along the Line of Actual Control with their light tanks which can travel and manoeuvre faster than the conventional tanks.

The tank has been named after the legendary General Zorawar Singh who led multiple successful victories in Tibet which is now controlled by the Chinese Army.

After the standoff started, the Indian Army had to induct a considerable number of T-72 and T-90 tanks in operational areas, gaining tactical surprise over the adversary and thereby forcing the adversary on a back foot.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/german-engines-available-now-but-india-to-use-american-power-plants-for-entire-zorawar-light-tank-project20231116203108/>



Thu, 16 Nov 2023

MoS Ajay Bhatt Discusses Defence Cooperation with UAE Counterpart; Meets Indian Contingent in Dubai Air Show

Union Minister of State Ajay Bhatt met his UAE counterpart Mohammed Ahmed Al Bowardi and discussed opportunities for cooperation in defence sector and explored newer avenues, the Indian Embassy in Abu Dhabi said in a statement on Thursday.

The MoS for Defence and Tourism also visited the Indian Air Force contingent in the Dubai Air Show and interacted and complemented the dignitaries for their display.

Bhatt is on an official visit to Dubai and he is accompanied by an eminent delegation of senior officials and experts from defence sector. Five Defence PSUs are also participating in the Dubai Air Show viz, HAL, BDL, MIDHANI, DRDO and BEL.

During the visit, he met with his UAE counterpart, Minister of State for Defence Affairs, Mohammed Al Bowardi, at Dubai Air Show. During the meeting, both ministers reviewed the ongoing defence cooperation and explored several new avenues for cooperation.

The MoS also conveyed the greetings of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to his UAE counterpart Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

On his part, Mohammed Al Bowardi reiterated his commitment to further strengthen defence ties in sync with the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement signed between the two countries in 2017.

The UAE MoS thanked Bhatt and the accompanying delegation. The leaders also visited the detachment accompanying the Advanced Lightweight Helicopter Sarang and the Lightweight Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, which are participating in the Dubai Air Show with aerobatic

displays. During the meeting, both ministers also discussed participation in the joint exercises planned for 2024.

The two leaders also exchanged views on the recent developments in the region and Bhatt assured Bowardi that India stands steadfast with peace, harmony and stability in the region and beyond, the statement read.

Bhatt visited the India Defence Pavilion and interacted with the Indian team comprising India's premier defence companies, including HAL, BDL, and Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited, among others, who have brought models of their flagship products for exhibitions.

He also visited the exhibitions of various aircraft including India's flagship fighter jet LCA Tejas. During the visit, experts from both sides also interacted and reviewed the existing cooperation.

Bhatt also interacted with the press and expressed his satisfaction with India's presence in the Dubai Air Show, the ongoing India-UAE defence partnership and ways to take this partnership forward to new heights, the statement added.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/middle-east/mos-ajay-bhatt-discusses-defence-cooperation-with-uae-counterpart-meets-indian-contingent-in-dubai-air-show20231116223036/>



Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Xi Jinping-Joe Biden Meeting: 7 Key Takeaways from US-China Strategic Dialogue amid Global Tensions

Joe Biden and Xi Jinping held a US-China Summit on November 15. The US President and his Chinese counterpart discussed various global and bilateral issues. Here are 7 key takeaways.

Middle East

At the summit, President Biden emphasised the Middle East. He called for peace and stability. The complex roles of the US and China in this region were underscored.

Taiwan

Taiwan was a major topic. Xi Jinping described it as crucial in US-China relations. He urged the US to respect commitments regarding Taiwan's independence. Xi favoured peaceful reunification but didn't rule out force. Biden stressed the US's commitment to regional peace.

Taiwan elections

With Taiwan's January elections approaching, Biden asked China to respect the island's democratic process. Despite China's military presence near Taiwan, there seemed no immediate invasion threat.

Iran

Biden sought China's help to de-escalate tensions with Iran. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi confirmed talks with Iran were ongoing. Biden made it clear: Hamas issues are separate from broader Palestinian concerns, as per CNN.

Fentanyl production

A key discussion was on fentanyl production. China pledged to target related companies. The US plans to monitor these efforts, the publication added.

Military communications

The summit led to a key agreement: restoring military-to-military communications. This step is crucial as it helps lower the risk of misunderstandings. It also aids in managing tensions between the two military forces.

Positive conclusion

Despite not achieving a joint statement or formal cooperation declaration, the summit ended on a positive note. Biden expressed optimism about the "real progress" made in the talks. He highlighted the importance of this engagement between the world's leading powers amid increasing global tensions, the publication added.

<https://www.livemint.com/politics/news/xi-jinping-joe-biden-meeting-7-key-takeaways-from-us-china-strategic-dialogue-amid-global-tensions-11700098241556.html>



Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Ukraine Conflict: Ukraine Deploying Indigenously Developed SIGINT System

Ukraine has developed and is deploying a signals intelligence (SIGINT) system on the frontline called Eter, the Ukrainian Minister for digital transformation, Mykhailo Fedorov said on 14 November.

Eter is a radio-electronic intelligence complex developed by Ukraine-based company Falcons and supported by the defence technology cluster Brave1. It comprises three direction finding (DF) systems for the detection of communication signals, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and electronic warfare systems, the company states .

The complex can operate for up to 24 hours in automatic mode, employ correlation-interferometric DF methods, and can detect equipment using frequency-hopping spread spectrum (FHSS) techniques, the company detailed. A number of complexes can also be connected to form a large network.

The company deliberately omits the range of the system on its website.

According to Fedorov, Eter is deployed with several separate units of the armed forces, helping soldiers to "perform combat missions, launch drones, and engage enemy positions". For example, before deploying a UAV, soldiers can utilise Eter to check for Russian radio signals to determine a safe route for the vehicle.

Eter is mobile and modular, enabling damaged components to be easily replaced, Fedorov added.

<https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/ukraine-conflict-ukraine-deploying-indigenously-developed-sigint-system>

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Russia Loads Missile with Nuclear-capable Glide Vehicle into Launch Silo

Russia's rocket forces loaded an intercontinental ballistic missile equipped with the nuclear-capable "Avangard" hypersonic glide vehicle into a launch silo in southern Russia, according to a defence ministry TV channel broadcast on Thursday. President Vladimir Putin announced the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle in 2018, saying it was a response to U.S. development of a new generation of weapons and a U.S. missile defence system that it could penetrate.

As it approaches its target, the Avangard glide vehicle detaches from the rocket and is able to manoeuvre sharply outside the trajectory of the rocket at hypersonic speeds of up to 27 times the speed of sound (about 21,000 miles per hour or 34,000 kilometres per hour).

The 'Zvezda' television channel owned by the Russian defence ministry showed a ballistic missile being transported to a launch silo, slowly raised into vertical position and then lowered into a shaft in the Orenburg region near Kazakhstan.

Russia installed its first Avangard-equipped missile in 2019 at the same Orenburg facility.

Russia and the United States, by far the biggest nuclear powers, have both expressed regret about the steady disintegration of arms-control treaties which sought to slow the Cold War arms race and reduce the risk of nuclear war. But the United States, Russia and China are developing a range of new weapons systems, including hypersonic ones.

The United States casts China as its biggest competitor and Russia as its biggest nation-state threat, while U.S. President Joe Biden argues that this century will be defined by an existential contest with between democracies and autocracies.

Russia says the post-Cold War dominance of the United States is crumbling and that Washington has for years sown chaos across the planet while ignoring the interests of other powers.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-installs-one-more-hypersonic-nuclear-missile-ifax-2023-11-16/>

Science & Technology News

Thu, 16 Nov 2023

Chandrayaan 3 Rocket's Body Re-enters Earth, Falls in Pacific: ISRO

The Chandrayaan 3 launch vehicle's upper stage re-entered Earth's atmosphere on Wednesday as predicted in the North Pacific Ocean, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said.

“The cryogenic upper stage of the LVM3 M4 launch vehicle made an uncontrolled re-entry into the Earth’s atmosphere, around 14:42 IST Wednesday,” ISRO said in a statement.

Chandrayaan 3 — India’s moonshot

Chandrayaan 3, India’s third lunar mission, blasted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota on July 14. After about a month, the Vikram lander with the Pragyan Rover successfully landed on the moon on August 23. This made India the first country in world to land near the lunar South Pole and only fourth country to have controlled lunar landing.

The lander and rover entered sleep mode after completing 10 days of lunar exploration. Meanwhile, the propulsion module is still orbiting the moon after separating from the lander.

Chandrayaan 3 launch vehicle’s upper stage returns

“This rocket body (NORAD id 57321) was part of the vehicle that successfully injected the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft into the intended orbit of 133 km x 35823 km with a 21.3 degree inclination on July 14,” ISRO said.

ISRO adheres to global compliances

ISRO said the rocket body re-entered Earth’s atmosphere within 124 days of launch, fully complying with the “25-year rule” for Low Earth Orbit objects recommended by Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC).

Post Chandrayaan-3 injection, the upper stage had also undergone “passivation” to remove all residual propellant and energy sources to minimise the risks of accidental explosions as per the space debris mitigation guidelines prescribed by the United Nations and IADC. Passivation and Post-mission disposal of this rocket body in adherence to the internationally accepted guidelines once again reaffirms India’s commitment to preserve the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/chandrayaan-3-update-launch-rocket-s-body-re-enters-earth-falls-in-pacific-isro-101700123052282.html>

