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Make in India: DRDO proposed ATAGs to Indian Army for trial

In this fashion, the trail of 'make in India' in protection sector shall be troublesome, DRDO is ready for gun buy

By Abigale Lormen

The prime scientist, who just lately retired from DRDO, says Make in India remains to be operating on paper. DRDO scientists make high-quality high quality protection gear, however incorporating them right into a fleet of army forces is like chewing grains.

It is alleged that the DRDO has developed an anti-missile system to destroy enemy blows in superior air kind, however we can not say when it is going to be in a position to be part of the fleet of army forces. DRDO has developed 155 mm and 52 caliber cannon (Advance Todd Artillery Gun, ATAG) seeing the artillery demand within the military. This cannon is able to firing as much as the seventh zone primarily based on the acknowledged wants of the military.



It cannot solely hit enemy targets 48 km away, however has the power to fireplace 5 shells utilizing automated know-how in 30 seconds.

Whereas the cannon nonetheless current on the planet is firing solely until the sixth zone. DRDO scientists had additionally screened this exhibition on the Defense Exhibition in Lucknow. DRDO chief Satish Reddy can also be excited concerning the outcomes of the cannon check.

DRDO scientists say that it has efficiently met all of the requirements in current testing. It is now proposed to be handed over to the Indian Army for testing.

Israel's strain could also be heavy

The DRDO has developed the Advanced Todd Artillery Gun (ATAG) in collaboration with personal firms to deal with complaints concerning the high quality of the army. This consists of Kalyani Group firm Bharat Forge and Tata Defense. Technology each by DRDO and manufacturing by personal firms.

Both Tata Defense and Bharat Forge are massive protection firms. Both international locations provide protection gear to many international locations. Sources hooked up to the DRDO say that the standard of ATAG can not be questioned, however we can not say when it's going to discover a place within the Army fleet.

It is alleged that ATAG is the best gun on the planet, however beneath the strain of Israel, the Indian Army can take the initiative to take Israeli weapons. Whereas the Israeli gun isn't any higher than the DRDO gun. It is alleged that the Israeli firm had already been blacklisted.

US and Russia strain

The DRDO's anti-missile system is able to figuring out and destroying enemy blows 80 km away within the air. Former DRDO chief VK Saraswat has additionally been concerned within the improvement of this anti-missile system. Saraswat is now a member of NITI Aayog.

This system is able to penetrating enemy blows each outdoors the ambiance and inside the ambiance. But it's stated that India has signed the S-400 Triumph Anti Missile System from Russia. Similarly, the United States is pressuring India to ship its anti-missile system, NASSAM-2, deployed beneath the safety of Washington.

After this improvement, Indian scientists have begun seeing threats on the indigenous anti-missile system. Scientific sources say that whether or not it's military or air pressure and navy. Except for missiles like Agni, Prithvi, Akash, Nag, all three forces rely extra on international weapons relatively than army gear made with indigenous know-how.

<https://ourbitcoinnews.com/make-in-india-drdo-proposed-atags-to-indian-army-for-trial-in-this-way-the-path-of-make-in-india-in-defense-sector-will-be-difficult-drdo-is-waiting-for-gun-purchase/>



Sat, 22 Feb 2020

How this DRDO-made weapon will safeguard skies during Trump-Modi's roadshow

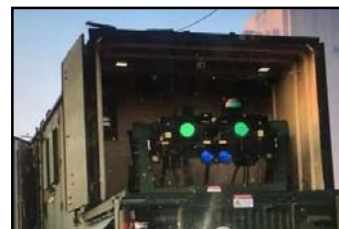
By Ravi Prakash Kumar

- *To keep an eye on the skies, a domestically manufactured anti-drone system has deployed in Ahmedabad*
- *The DRDO system can detect and identify drone threats at a moment's instance and terminate them*

The security arrangements for US President Donald Trump's maiden visit to India are underway on a war footing basis. Trump's visit begins on Monday and all the security checks including the President's private chopper, Trump's private cars have been imported from US, and a seven tier security circle are in place to make the safety foolproof.

Anti-drone system

To provide aerial security cover for President Trump, a domestically manufactured anti-drone system has deployed in Ahmedabad. The system successfully cleared trials conducted on Friday. The anti-drone system, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), is capable of neutralising any drones that may intrude into the designated security zone earmarked for the visiting US President.



The DRDO system can detect and identify drone threats at a moment's instance and terminate them. Unmanned aerial vehicles, mostly of small size, are called drones. They are controlled remotely and can be utilised by miscreants or militants for carrying explosives apart from other threats they pose.

The foolproof arrangement

The anti-drone system will work along with the local police, teams of the Rapid Action Force, the State Reserve Police Force, Chetak Commando and the Anti-Terrorist Squad.

All the state agencies will work closely with national agencies like the National Security Guard (NSG) and the Special Protection Group (SPG).

Heavy security has been deployed in Ahmedabad, where President Trump will accompany Prime Minister Narendra Modi on a unique 22-km long 'Unity in Diversity' roadshow, culminating in the 'Namaste Trump' event at the gigantic Motera cricket stadium.

Trump and Modi will take part in a 22km-long roadshow in Ahmedabad and jointly address a gathering at the newly- built cricket stadium in Motera area of the city.

Over 1,10,000 people are expected to attend the mega event christened "Namaste Trump".

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/how-this-drdo-made-weapon-will-safeguard-skies-during-trump-modi-s-roadshow-11582286736993.html>

डोनाल्ड ट्रंप को ड्रोन के हमले से बचाएगा DRDO का एंटी ड्रोन सिस्टम

डोनाल्ड ट्रंप की भारत यात्रा को लेकर भी इस प्रणाली को इस्तेमाल किया जाएगा.

ट्रंप की सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से एंटी ड्रोन सिस्टम को तैनात किया जा रहा है.

नई दिल्ली: ऐसे समय में जब भारत के खिलाफ आतंकी गतिविधि को अंजाम देने के लिए पाकिस्तान स्थित आतंकी समूहों द्वारा ड्रोन का इस्तेमाल किया जा रहा है. वहीं रक्षा अनुसंधान और विकास संगठन (DRDO) ने आतंकी समूहों के मंसूबे पर पानी फेरते हुए एंटी-ड्रोन सिस्टम विकसित किया है. इसका सफल परीक्षण भी कर लिया गया है. इसने परीक्षणों के दौरान UAV को सफलतापूर्वक बर्बाद कर दिया. बता दें कि डोनाल्ड ट्रंप की भारत यात्रा को लेकर भी इस प्रणाली को इस्तेमाल किया जाएगा. ट्रंप की सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से एंटी ड्रोन सिस्टम को तैनात किया जा रहा है.

ड्रोन से छोटे हथियारों और नशीले पदार्थों की तस्करी

वायु सेना, सेना, अर्धसैनिक बलों और VVIP सुरक्षा में शामिल लोग और सभी सुरक्षा एजेंसियां आतंकवादी समूहों और अन्य लोगों द्वारा उनका उपयोग शुरू करने के बाद एंटी ड्रोन प्रणालियों को प्राप्त करते हुए देख रही हैं. हाल के दिनों में ड्रोनो का उपयोग करते हुए छोटे हथियारों और नशीले पदार्थों की तस्करी के मामले सामने आए हैं, जो 3-4 किलोग्राम वजन ले जा सकते हैं. साथ ही ये बहुत कम ऊंचाई पर उड़ भी सकते हैं.

किलिंग सिस्टम का उपयोग करते हुए ड्रोन को मार गिराया

सरकारी सूत्रों ने मीडिया को बताते हुए कहा कि DRDO सिस्टम ने अपनी किलिंग सिस्टम का उपयोग करते हुए ट्रायल के दौरान एक आने वाले ड्रोन को सफलतापूर्वक मार गिराया. बता दें कि काउंटर ड्रोन सिस्टम में ड्रोन का पता लगाने और नष्ट करने दोनों की क्षमता है. वहीं गणतंत्र दिवस परेड को सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से इस बार सबसे पहले DRDO काउंटर ड्रोन सिस्टम को तैनात किया गया था. इस गणतंत्र दिवस पर चीफ गेस्ट ब्राजील के राष्ट्रपति जेयर बोल्सोनारो थे. उनको सुरक्षा प्रदान कराने के लिए इस सिस्टम का इस्तेमाल किया गया था. साथ ही प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी सहित अन्य गणमान्य लोगों भी मौजूद थे.

पाकिस्तान से आने वाले ड्रोनो को भी मार गिराया

गुजरात पुलिस ने बताया कि मोदी-ट्रंप रोड शो के लिए अहमदाबाद में एंटी ड्रोन सिस्टम तैनात किया जा रहा है, जहां उन्हें ड्रोन से किसी भी हवाई खतरे को नाकाम करने का काम सौंपा जाएगा. सूत्रों ने बताया कि हथियारों की तस्करी के लिए कई ड्रोन का इस्तेमाल पंजाब और जम्मू में पाकिस्तान के साथ नदी की सीमा पर किया जा रहा है, जहां छोटे ड्रोन बहुत कम ऊंचाई पर उड़ान भरते हैं और आपूर्ति गिराते हैं. हाल के ही दिनों में सीमा सुरक्षा बल के जवानों ने पाकिस्तान से आने वाले कुछ ड्रोनो को भी मार गिराया है.

<https://www.newsstate.com/india/news/namaste-trump-drdo-system-destroys-drone-in-trials-being-deployed-for-donald-trumps-security-130548.html>

Explained: What is biojet fuel, which powered the IAF aircraft mentioned by the PM in his Mann ki Baat?

History was made, the PM said, when the IAF's An-32 aircraft using a 10% blend of Indian biojet fuel took off from Leh's Kushok Bakula Rimpoche airport on January 31

New Delhi: In his monthly Mann ki Baat radio address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday (February 23) hailed the use of biofuel in an Indian Air Force transport aircraft, saying such innovations would bring down carbon emissions and lower the nation's oil import bill.

History was made, the PM said, when the IAF's An-32 aircraft using a 10% blend of Indian biojet fuel took off from Leh's Kushok Bakula Rimpoche airport on January 31. This was the first time that this mix was used in both engines of an aircraft, he said.

Biojet fuel

Biojet fuel, the PM said, is prepared from "non-edible tree borne oil", and is procured from various tribal areas of India. This fuel is made from Jatropha oil sourced from Chattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA) and then processed at CSIR-IIP, Dehradun.

Leh flight

According to a government release, the aircraft was flight tested and its performance was validated at Chandigarh Air Base prior to undertaking the operational flight to Leh.

Leh is at an altitude of 10,682 ft above mean sea level, and is among the world's highest and most difficult operational airfields. Even during clear weather, operating an aircraft at Leh is a challenge, given the reduced power output of the engines in the rarefied atmosphere, turbulent winds, and proximity of the mountains.

Why it matters

Evaluating the performance of biojet fuel under conditions prevalent in Leh was considered extremely important from an operational perspective. The success of the flight that the Prime Minister referred to validated the capability of the aircraft's engines to operate smoothly with biojet fuel at the extremities of the operational envelope. The tests were conducted by a team comprising test pilots from the Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment (ASTE), Bengaluru and pilots from the operational squadrons, the government said. The successful test flight also demonstrated the IAF's capability to absorb newer technology, while sponsoring indigenisation.

The technology

The technology to produce this fuel was developed by CSIR-IIP in 2013, but it could not be tested and certified for commercial use immediately. In 2018, the IAF sponsored this project and channelized its human and material resources for the complete range of fuel testing. On July 27 that year, addressing the CII-SIDM seminar on promoting indigenised technologies, then Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa, announced IAF's intention to promote biojet fuels.

On December 17, 2018, ASTE pilots and engineers flew India's first military flight using blended biojet fuel on the An-32 transport aircraft. The project was a combined effort of IAF, DRDO, Directorate General Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DGAQA) and CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/biojet-fuel-indian-air-force-an-32-pm-modi-mann-ki-baat-6282693/>

Mann ki Baat: PM Modi hails Indian Air Force plane using bio-fuel mixture

Addressing his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' radio address, he said "history was made" when an IAF AN-32 aircraft took off from Leh's Kushok Bakula Rimpoche airport using a mixture of 10 per cent Indian bio-jet fuel

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday hailed the use of a mixture of 10 per cent indigenously produced bio-jet fuel to fly an Indian Air Force transport aircraft, saying such efforts will not only help bring down carbon emissions, but also reduce the country's dependence on imported crude oil.

Addressing his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' radio address, he said "history was made" when an IAF AN-32 aircraft took off from Leh's Kushok Bakula Rimpoche airport using a mixture of 10 per cent Indian bio-jet fuel.

"This was the first time that this mix was used in both engines. Not just that, the airport from which this plane took off from Leh is not only one of the highest altitude airports in India but also in the world," the prime minister said. He pointed out that the bio-jet fuel is prepared from "non-edible tree borne oil" and is procured from various tribal areas of India.

"These efforts will not only reduce carbon emissions but may also reduce India's dependence on crude oil imports. I congratulate all the people involved in this significant mission, especially the scientists of CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) and Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun, who made it possible to develop the technology to fly an aircraft with bio-fuel," he said. Such efforts, the prime minister said, also empower the 'Make in India' initiative of the government.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/defence/mann-ki-baat-pm-modi-hails-indian-air-force-plane-using-bio-fuel-mixture/1876372/>

बिज़नेस स्टैंडर्ड

किसी भी हालात से निपटने को तैयार है

भारतीय सेना : लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल क्लेर

बीकानेर: भारतीय सेना की दक्षिण पश्चिमी कमान के कमांडर लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल आलोक क्लेर ने शनिवार को कहा कि भारतीय सेना किसी भी हालात से निपटने को तैयार है।

यहां सैन्य स्टेशन में एक कार्यक्रम में भाग लेने आए क्लेर ने पाकिस्तान की ओर इशारा करते हुए कहा कि 'नॉन स्टेट एक्टर' का प्रशिक्षण देना पश्चिमी पड़ोसी देश की सैन्य डिजाइन का हिस्सा है।

उन्होंने कहा, "हम जानते हैं कि उनके प्रशिक्षण कैंप कहां हैं। बालाकोट हमला इसका बहुत अच्छा उदाहरण है।"

उल्लेखनीय है कि भारतीय वायुसेना ने पिछले साल फरवरी में नियंत्रण रेखा के पार बालाकोट में आतंकी प्रशिक्षण शिविरों पर कार्रवाई की थी।

क्लेर ने कहा कि कई बार (नॉन स्टेट एक्टर की कार्रवाई के कारण) कुछ घटनाएं हो जाती हैं क्योंकि 24 घंटे शत प्रतिशत सुरक्षा चाकचौबंद रखना चुनौतीपूर्ण काम है।

उन्होंने कहा, “मैं आपको आश्वस्त करना चाहूंगा कि हमारी सेना की ओर से भी, इससे निपटने के लिए हमारी रणनीति में नयी सोच है।”

क्लेर ने कहा, “हमारी सेना और सीमाओं पर हमारा प्रशासन, केंद्रीय पुलिस बल, बीएसएफ तालमेल एवं आपसी सहमति से किसी भी तरह की स्थिति के लिए तैयार है। लेकिन फिर भी मैं कहना चाहूंगा कि आतंकवादियों द्वारा की जाने वाली घटनाएं एक दो बार हो सकती हैं और हमें (उनका उचित जवाब देने के लिए) तैयार रहना होगा।”

पाकिस्तानी ड्रोन द्वारा भारतीय सीमा में हथियार गिराए जाने की घटनाओं के बारे में क्लेर ने कहा, “ये छोटे ड्रोन हैं जिनकी क्षमता 1—2 किलो भार ले जाने की है। इनका इस्तेमाल नशीली दवाएं और छोटे मोटे हथियार गिराने के लिए किया जा रहा है। भारतीय सेना इसके खिलाफ कार्रवाई करती रहती है।”

उन्होंने बताया कि जो ड्रोन इस्तेमाल किए गए जा रहे हैं वे सैन्य प्रकार के नहीं हैं।

उन्होंने कहा, "युद्ध और शांति के समय में इस्तेमाल किए जाने वाले ड्रोन अलग होते हैं और सीमावर्ती इलाकों में जो गतिविधियां होती हैं, उनमें छोटे ड्रोन शामिल हैं न कि सैन्य कार्रवाई में इस्तेमाल होने वाले ड्रोन।"

आतंकवाद के मुद्दे पर सैन्य कमांडर ने कहा कि आतंकवाद के खिलाफ लड़ाई में आम लोगों की भी भूमिका होती है।

उन्होंने पंजाब का उदाहरण देते हुए कहा कि सेना, पुलिस, राज्य और केंद्र सरकारों ने आतंकवाद के खिलाफ प्रभावी कार्रवाई करने के लिए मिलकर काम किया और उसे वहां से प्रभावी तरीके से मिटा दिया गया।

उन्होंने कहा, “यह तय है कि संयुक्त प्रयासों से आतंकवाद का सफाया किया जा सकता है और पंजाब इसका बड़ा उदाहरण है। स्थानीय जनता को इसमें बड़ी भूमिका निभानी होती है। उन्हें राज्य प्रशासन और सरकार का समर्थन करना होता है।”

उन्होंने कहा कि सेना प्रत्यक्ष कार्रवाई करके आतंकवाद को कम करती है लेकिन इसमें राज्य के लोगों की भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका होती है।

रणबांकुरे डिवीजन के अनन्त विजय ऑडिटोरियम में अलंकरण समारोह में सेना के जवानों को वीरता और विशिष्ट सेवा पदक प्रदान किया गया। इसमें एक युद्ध सेवा पदक, बीस सेना पदक (वीरता), दो सेना पदक (विशिष्ट सेवा) और छह विशिष्ट सेवा पदक प्रदान किए गए।

पैराड्रपर मुकुट बिहारी मीणा और सिपाही मनदीप सिंह ने ऑपरेशन के दौरान सर्वोच्च बलिदान दिया, उन्हें मरणोपरांत पदक प्रदान किया गया। इसके साथ ही इक्कीस यूनिटों को राष्ट्र और भारतीय सेना में उनके उत्कृष्ट योगदान के लिए दक्षिण पश्चिमी आर्मी कमांडर के यूनिट प्रशस्ति पत्र से सम्मानित किया गया। कमांडिंग ऑफिसर और यूनिट के सूबेदार मेजर को सेना के कमांडर से प्रतिष्ठित पुरस्कार मिला।

https://hindi.business-standard.com/storypage_hin.php?autono=1848565

Meet the brave new Indian Army

A look at how India is preparing today for future battles with Pakistan and China

By N C Bipindra

One day in mid-September 2019, an Indian Army Brigadier commanding around 3,000 soldiers along the 1,126-km Line of Actual Control with China walked across to stiffly shake hands with a Colonel from the People's Liberation Army during a flag meeting at Bumla. The gesture signalled that India is prepared for war any time and if need be, can give a bloody nose to any of its enemies, irrespective of their size. It was the Brigadier who had asked for the meeting as protocol demanded, to convey a single message: the Indian Army will, for the first time ever, be carrying out a massive war-gaming exercise in its eastern region bordering China, somewhere around 100 km inside Indian territory. It was a sign to prepare for the unexpected—a possible war with the northern adversary.

India has made significant changes in its military structure, with the appointment of the first-ever Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, as the single-point military contact with the government and to bring about the much-needed synergy among the Army, Navy and the Air Force. The government has approved the Army's restructuring, to ensure that it has enough manpower and adequate specialist equipment to meet any challenges against Pakistan and China.

A month after that flag meeting, India's newly acquired Chinook heavy-lift helicopters flew over Arunachal Pradesh, the border state claimed fully by China. The twin rotors of Boeing-made helos whirred warnings against the backdrop of the clear blue skies, with BAE Systems-made M777 ultralight howitzers attached to its belly. They were taking part in the massive military exercise code-named 'Him Vijay' that saw a Division-sized troop of around 12,000 soldiers validate India's new warfare doctrines and concepts to perfect the art of winning any war against China. The US-made helicopter can carry loads up to 10 tonnes while the loaded M777s, weighing just 3,745kg (half the weight of a Bofors gun used in the 1999 Kargil war), can bring 155mm artillery firepower on enemy positions.

As the Indian troopers were practicing moves to counter China in the east, the Army on the western border with Pakistan launched a massive week-long military exercise in Barmer district, Rajasthan. Conducted by the Bhopal-based 'Sudarshan Chakra' Strike Corps, around 40,000 warriors honed their combat skills and validated their deep-strike capabilities in desert terrain and to deal a swift punitive blow to the adversary. The integrated air and land battlefield scenario saw the Indian troopers deploying the newly inducted T-90, T-72 and Arjun battle tanks, supported by the Mi-25 and Mi-35 attack helicopters, and the K-9 Vajra Self Propelled Artillery Gun System, Grad and Tunguska missiles and rockets slamming the enemy positions and blowing them to smithereens. Indigenous armed 'Rudra' helicopters boasting innovative military technologies and prowess of the army's Network Centric Force, ensuring effective communication between the sensor, shooter and decision-maker.

The September 2016 surgical strikes by the Indian Special Forces on Pakistani terror camps were a hit-back strategy never been attempted by India. It changed the paradigm of Indian reaction to Pakistani provocations with an unpredictability which is now a predicament for the Pakistan Army. The cross-border action is just a sample of the Indian Army's capability should a full-scale war break out. The Brave New Indian Army is envisaged as a lean, mean fighting machine with the capability to act swiftly and decisively against any attack. The success of all military power lies in its brain before the brawn is deployed; it requires experience combined with ideation and coordination. The appointment of India's first Chief of Defence Staff was to ensure seamless coordination with the

country's political command, which has placed national security and military empowerment on top of its agenda.



Coaction is behind the creation of another new post—Deputy Chief of the Army Staff Strategy DCOAS (Strategy)—who will handle military operations, military intelligence, strategic planning and operational logistics. Factoring in the importance of cyber warfare, a new information warfare wing and hybrid warfare is in the offing. The beginning of the change in strategy and modernisation was perhaps the unconventional public announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Paris on April 15, 2015, to buy 36 fully built Rafale fighter jets; his justification named “critical operational necessity”. Since January 2012, the Defence Ministry had been caught in the dithering and disagreements between the military and bureaucracy on the purchase of Dassault Aviation-built aircraft and the mainstay Sukhoi Su-30MKIs. With his Rafale decision, Modi was signalling the importance of cutting through red tape, for long the bane of arms procurement and modernisation in the military. The changes in the structure are in tune with the Indian Army’s Land Warfare Doctrine that was adopted in 2018 aimed at winning wars of the future. For, no bullet has been fired across the border between India and China for the last 40 years, except for minor skirmishes over territory. “But if there has been no war earlier, it doesn’t mean there will be no war in the future. We have to be prepared for a war at all times,” Indian Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane told this writer in late January. On the conflict scenario along the northern borders with China, all measures will be undertaken to enhance deterrence.

N A V Y



1 Aircraft Carrier
1 Nuclear armed submarine
1 Nuclear powered submarine
15 Diesel powered submarines
10 Destroyers
13 Frigates
22 Corvettes
15 Amphibious craft
10 Patrol craft



0 Aircraft Carrier
0 Nuclear armed submarine
0 Nuclear powered submarine
8 Diesel powered submarine
0 Destroyers
9 Frigates
2 Corvettes
0 Amphibious craft
6 Patrol craft



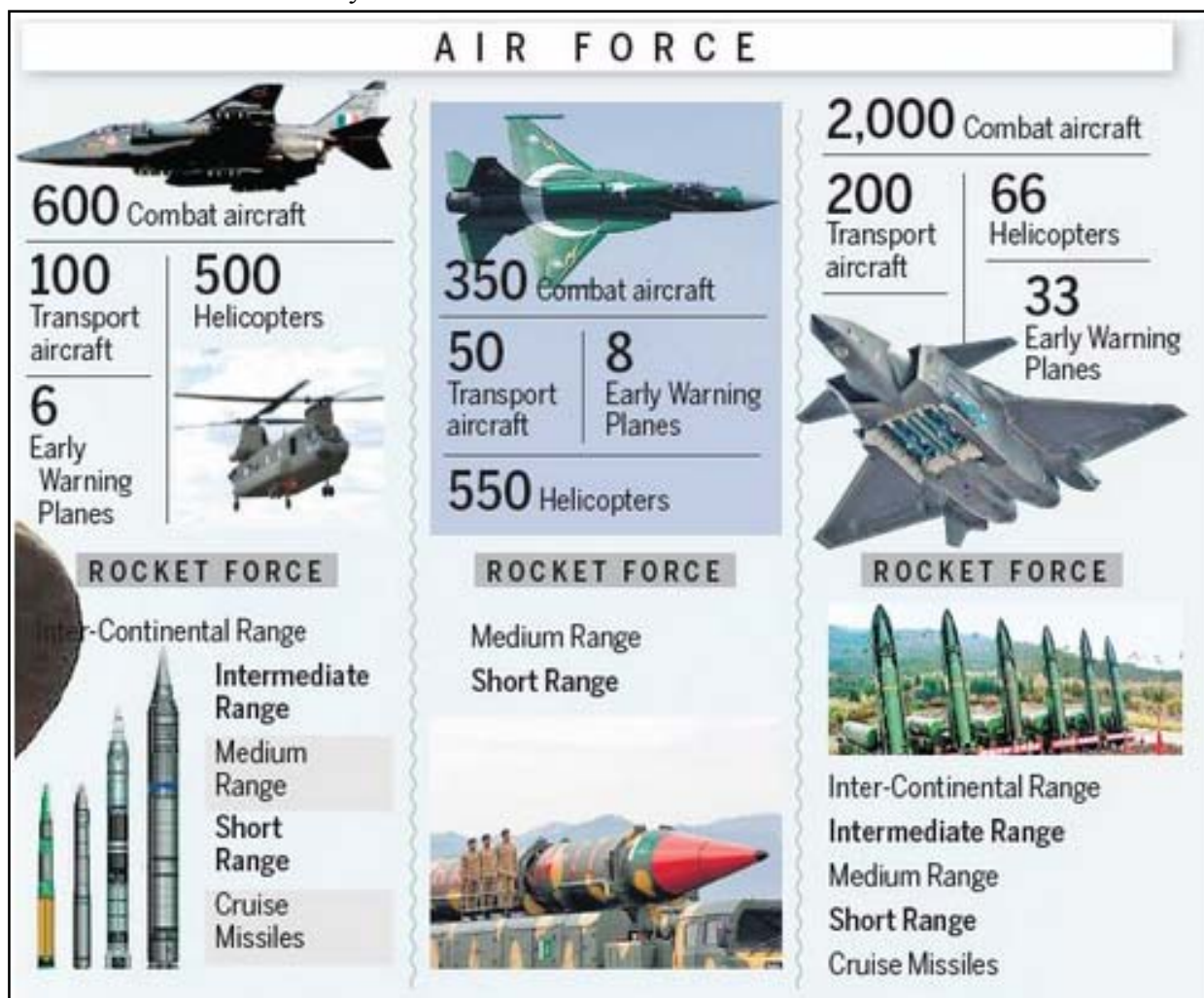
1 Aircraft Carrier
2 Nuclear armed Submarines
7 Nuclear Powered Submarines
47 Diesel powered submarines
28 Destroyers
51 Frigates
28 Corvettes
55 Amphibious craft
106 Patrol craft

Till 2013, India had only three strike corps—a war-fighting force of around 35,000 troopers each to penetrate behind enemy lines—to focus on Pakistan. The PLA and the Pakistan Army together can muster over two million armed personnel against India’s 1.3 million-strong military. Hence, outdated ideas of deploying large military formations on the battlefield have given way to the new Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs), specialist forces with warfare capabilities and equipment to suit the terrain and the task assigned for a battle. IBGs are a huge transition from the ‘Cold Start’ doctrine, a loose term for a swift, short war with Pakistan with deployment in just about two days.

The new Indian doctrine talks of using all its forces as IBGs, with equipment matching their envisaged roles and potential for greater flexibility. The IX Corps at Yol Cantonment in Himachal Pradesh, under the Chandimandir-based Western Army Command, will be the first to be tested, followed by the XVII Mountain Strike Corps. The IBGs involve the integration of infantry, armoured tank regiments, artillery, UAVs, engineers and signals into one fighting unit, whereas the old model had each of these functioning in silos. Now the Army plans to fully raise a dozen or more IBGs with about 5,000 soldiers each within a year. These battle groups, which are theatre-based formations for fighting a quick, short war, will be equipped with specialist weapons and platforms to meet their unique requirements. In the next two years, IBGs will cover the entire expanse of India’s western and eastern borders.

To arm these new battle groups, fresh procurement such as the Rs 20,000-crore contract for 464 more T-90 battle tanks has begun. IBGs—composed of a mix of infantry, artillery, air defence, signals and engineers—will be centred around T-90S tanks and will be backed by attack helicopters on the western border. A different battle composition will focus on China based on the terrain and nature of combat by using Chinook helicopters and ultralight M777 howitzers. This transition is to prepare India for what both General Rawat and General Naravane have warned of: a joint Pakistan-China two-front war to squeeze Indian troops and test their capabilities and capacities on both the western and northern borders. The new philosophy will maximise the joint resources of the three forces to maintain ascendancy and deterrence against India’s traditional rivals.

A big challenge for the Army is to meet its budgetary constraints effectively. This year, India's defence modernisation budget stands at \$16 billion against \$15 billion last year. In 2017, when the Sukma-based 33 Corps was engaged in a 72-day standoff with the PLA at Doklam, Indian Army commanders refused to wilt under pressure and retreat. The 33 Corps was mobilised with additional resources. However, the inherent disadvantage became apparent soon: the enhanced operation had consumed the army's total transportation budget for the remaining part of the year. No additional budget was allotted for the last quarter of the FY18 either. Fifty-five years ago, on October 20, 1962, the PLA crossed into Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, and started a war that lasted a month. The Chinese strategy was well thought out: after gobbling up 43,000 sq km of land in Aksai Chin, the PLA swiftly withdrew from Indian territory to avoid being trapped by snowfall. India lost 3,250 soldiers. An analytical assessment of force structuring, doctrinal advancement over the last 30 years and modernisation efforts will reveal the high level of complexity that has gone into optimising the Indian Army capabilities, and keeping pace with or stealing a march over its strong adversaries who threaten our borders and internal security.



India's New Formations

- In three years, Indian military will have joint theatre commands
- China Theatre Command
- Peninsular Theatre Command
- Air Defence Command

Cyber Defence Command
Space Command
Special Operations Command

Army's Force Structure

Old

Command 3 Corps
Corps 3 Divisions
Division 3 Brigades
Brigade 3 Battalions
Battalion 3 Companies

New

Two Integrated Battle Group = One Division

One Integrated Battle Group = Infantry, Armoured, Artillery, Signals & Engineers (Full fighting unit)

The Ether War Against China Picks Up

In September 2019, India's newest nuclear power plant at Kudankulam came under a malware attack which went unnoticed for almost 48 hours, before the government admitted to the breach. A combined investigation by the Department of Atomic Energy and the CERT-IN revealed that the infected computer belonged to a user who went online for administrative purposes. The attack on the facility was not an isolated cyber breach. Over the last decade, China is known to unleash military and nonmilitary offensives on enemy installations. Chinese military thinker Sun Tzu's Art of War says that a war can be won without having to go into battle.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has taken the idea to its next level. It wages digital war from air-conditioned facilities deep inside Chinese territory, without having to meet the enemy face to face. Since 2009, India has faced cyber-attacks on its critical facilities, including the National Informatics Centre servers, Defence Research and Development Organisation, Indian Space Research Organisation, Prime Minister's Office, and the Ministry of External Affairs, ranging from defacing of the website to even downing an Indian Air Force Sukhoi combat jet.

In April 1997, the Chinese Central Military Commission set up a 100-member elite corps to devise ways of hacking into computer systems of the US and other Western countries. In 2015, PLA decided to raise Strategic Support Force, which is being touted as the fifth service and not just a branch of PLA. Though the Indian military woke up to this challenge a decade ago, it is now in the process of setting up Cyber, Space and Special Operations Commands. The government has established cyber defence and space agencies with headquarters in New Delhi, along with a special operations division based in Agra.

These three key agencies are expected to secure Indian assets from attacks on its critical cyber and space assets. A fourth is dedicated to special operations such as the Surgical Strike deep inside Pakistan territory. While the Defence Cyber Agency will be spearheaded by the Indian Navy, the Defence Space Agency will be under the leadership of the Indian Air Force and the Armed Forces Special Operations Division under the Indian Army, each staffed with personnel from all three services. While the three are looking at raising a battalion-strength of around 1,000 initially, these would develop into larger formations over time. The cyber agency team is currently being trained at the National Technical Research Organisation, one of India's cyber-espionage spying units. Its current focus is to create assets with both defensive and offensive capabilities.

Battles India Fought

1947 with Pakistan: India successfully repels attack on Jammu and Kashmir, but loses control over parts of Kashmir. What went wrong: Midway through the war, India went to the UN against Pakistan, resulting in a ceasefire.

1962 with China: China's massive attack leaves India reeling; the defeat has had a deep scar on India's psyche. What went wrong: India failed to use air force, resulting in a disadvantage against the superior Chinese numbers.

1965 with Pakistan: India successfully defeats Pakistan's plan to cut off Kashmir from India's mainland.

What was right: Pakistan miscalculated India's strength and resolve to militarily defend its territory.

1971 with Pakistan: India inflicts a crushing blow to Pakistan, midwives creation of Bangladesh. What was right: India had done enough groundwork with Mukti Bahini, the underground resistance to Pakistan in East Pakistan.

1999 with Pakistan: India overthrows Pakistan Army regulars who clandestinely occupy Kargil heights.

What was right: Pakistan thought India would talk only peace with statesman Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the helm. But he took a military call.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/magazine/2020/feb/23/meet-the-brave-new-indian-army-2106224.html>

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Sat, 22 Feb 2020

'Like a rising sun': Here is how India Army's new headquarters will look like

Christened 'Thal Sena Bhawan', the complex will be spread over nearly 39 acres. "We have laid the first stone of the new Sena Bhawan... It will represent the unsung heroes of the armed forces who have sacrificed their lives for the country," he said. The Army headquarters is currently housed in the iconic South Block at Raisina Hill in Lutyens' Delhi

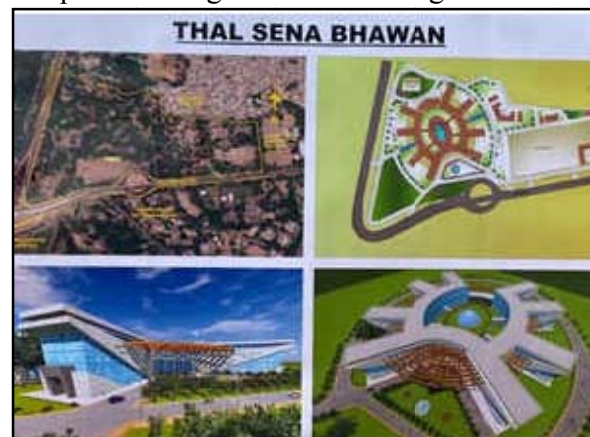
New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday laid the foundation stone of the Army headquarters' new building in Delhi Cantonment and asserted that the world now recognises India among powerful nations.

Christened 'Thal Sena Bhawan', the multi-storeyed complex is designed "like a rising sun" and it will be spread over nearly 39 acres, officials said.

"We have laid the first stone of the new Sena Bhawan. It will represent the unsung heroes of the armed forces who have sacrificed their lives for the country," Singh told a gathering at the ceremony.

The defence minister said the world now recognises that India is a not a "weak India, but it stands among the powerful nations globally" and the credit for that goes to "our brave soldiers and the jawans who have made sacrifices".

The Army headquarters is currently housed in the iconic South Block at Raisina Hill in Lutyens' Delhi.



The new department of military affairs headed by the chief of defence staff (CDS) will be housed in this new building, Singh said.

The defence minister also performed "bhoomi puja" (ground-breaking) ceremony at the venue, in the vicinity of the Manekshaw Centre.

The ground-breaking ceremony began with inter-faith prayers as four religious teachers, representing the four main religions of India, read lines from their sacred texts, wishing prosperity and well being for the building that will come up and people who will work in it.

Singh said the desire of soldiers who laid down their lives was not that people would know and recognise them, but "their only desire was that India should be a capable and a powerful country".

This foundation stone will serve as a source of inspiration for others, he said.

"Due to our brave soldiers, our country is known as a capable and a powerful one, and India has the capacity and strength to face big challenges," the defence minister said.

Army Chief Gen M M Naravane, defence personnel and a large number of jawans were also present on the occasion.

"It will take at least about three-four years for the new building to come up," the army chief said on the sidelines of the event.

The office of the army chief is also located in the imposing South Block which is part of the historic Raisina Hill complex built during the colonial era as part of the "new imperial capital" of the British Raj.

The cost of the project will be in excess of Rs 700 crore, a senior official said.

The Defence Ministry in a statement later said the building, expected to be constructed in five years, will house offices, residential complex for security personnel with basic amenities.

"More than 1,700 officers -- both military and civilian -- and 1,300 sub staff will be accommodated in the new building," it said.

The new complex has been conceptualised as a multi-storey green building, adopting Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA) norms. Approximately 7.5 lakh sqm of area will be constructed to house the office complex and parking, the ministry said.

Presently, the Army Headquarters functioning is spread over several pockets like South Block, Sena Bhawan, hutments area, R K Puram and Shankar Vihar, it said.

Singh in his address also said that the need for a centralised office space for army had been felt for many years. "There were eight locations where offices are being run. Now it can function under one roof," he said.

He observed that there is movement of about 3,000-4,000 vehicles every day from various army establishments in the city and this would be not required once the 'Thal Sena Bhawan' comes up.

The North Block and South Block, Viceroy's House (now Rashtrapati Bhavan) and Parliament House, surrounded by a lush green landscape and imposing fountains, were built during the construction of New Delhi that started in 1912.

"The new building complex will also have 250 security personnel for whom lodging facility will be there on the campus. The building will comply to 'prestigious norms' and have a GRIHA-5 rating. It will have three entry-cum-exit points -- NH-44, Parade Road and Link Road," the senior official said.

There will be parking for 4,000 cars, he said.

Singh said, having a centralised office will lead to reduction in number of cars, and "many persons could even walk to the new Bhawan", which will help address the issue of pollution too.

At present, the South Block houses the prime minister's office and ministries of defence and external affairs, while the North Block has offices of the home and finance ministries. The two blocks fall under a very high-security zone.

Both the blocks, which symbolise the government authority since their inception in Lutyens' Delhi, are likely to be converted into a museum as part of the government's Central Vista Redevelopment project, officials in the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry had said in January.

The housing ministry is the nodal agency for the ambitious redevelopment project of the Modi government.

The officials had said that people would have access to the North and the South blocks once they are turned into museums.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/rajnath-singh-lays-foundation-stone-of-new-army-hq-building/articleshow/74237676.cms>

THE ASIAN AGE

Sun, 23 Feb 2020

A soldier's 'eve-olution'

*The board gives points to a candidate on various parameters,
such as if they have done high-altitude postings*

By Pawan Bali

The Supreme Court just levelled the playing field for Indian servicewomen by introducing permanent commission and non-combat command postings for them. Though some sticking points need to be addressed, a roadmap has been prepared and change is very much in the air.

The Supreme Court's judgment making women officers from the short service commission (SSC) eligible for permanent commission (PC) and holding of command in non-combat heralds a new era in gender equality in the male-dominated Indian Army.

Women officers form just four per cent of the total commissioned officers in the Indian Army despite being inducted since 1992. There are only 1,653 women officers in the Indian Army against close to 39,000 male officers.

After the Supreme Court order, the number of women officers in the Indian Army is expected to rise.

In 2008, women officers were given permanent commission in only two non-combat streams — the Judge Advocate General (JAG) and the Army Education Corps. In March last year, the defence ministry said that PC will be allowed in eight non-combat branches (signals, engineers, army aviation, army air defence, electronics and mechanical engineers, army service corps, army ordnance corps and intelligence) where women are inducted for SSC, taking the number of branches where women could get PC to 10.

But the defence ministry order restricted women to just staff positions and they were not allowed command position.

Now, the Supreme Court has struck down this provision, making them eligible for command positions. Moreover, the Court said that even women officers currently serving in these 10 branches will be eligible for PC and it must not be restricted to those who were recruited after the defence ministry's order was issued.

In a hard-hitting order, the Supreme Court said the "time has come for a realisation that women officers in the Army are not adjuncts to a male dominated establishment whose presence must be tolerated within narrow confines".

Women officers could now get command position in various non-combat postings like NCC battalions, record officers, training regiments and commandants of Sainik and military schools.

However, the road ahead is still full of challenges.

The men who join the Army as SSC officers can opt for PC after 10 years of service if they want to continue in the Army.

The Supreme Court order has said that some 255 women officers who are in service for 14-20 years and some 77 women officers who have above 20 years of service would be given the option of PC within three months.

Then there are women officers (600, by some estimates) who have completed 10 years of a total of 14 years of SSC. Indian Army chief Gen. M.M. Naravane has said that the Army will be sending letters to all eligible officers asking if they want PC.

But some officers said that there are difficulties for women officers to clear boards if judged on the same yardsticks as men because they were never “groomed” for PC.

They explain that the board gives points to a candidate on various parameters, such as if they have done high-altitude postings. As per the number of vacancies for PC, only those who secure top marks get qualified.

“But since women officers were not to get PC, their commanding officers usually did not give them postings where they could get more marks. These postings usually went to male officers and COs would also give more marks to male officers compared to women officers thinking that men will need them during their boards,” said an officer. He said that many women officers also did not go for junior commands that their male counterparts go for after 6-7 years of service and which is important to get promotions.

“So the thing is that within the current parameters how will these women will pass the boards to get PC? The only option will be to dilute these parameters and judge men and women officers differently,” said the official.

The court order says that those officers who have more than 14 years of service will continue to be in the Army till they complete 20 years of service in order to be eligible for pension even if they didn’t opt for PC or did not qualify for PC. The SC order said women officers with over 20 years of service who are not granted PC will retire and avail pension.

“It is the women officers with service between 10 years and 14 years who will bear the brunt of the changed circumstances,” said another officer. He said that since they were not eligible for PC they never cared about their annual confidential reports that carry the most marks in boards. “There is a possibility that these officers may go to the Supreme Court,” said the official.

Gen. Naravane has said that the Army has prepared a roadmap for granting PC to its women officers.

The road ahead

For the new women officers, physical training, posting and service courses will be changed and will be similar to those taken by male officers.

Women officers will be eligible for various courses just like their male counterparts in junior command that will allow them to progress in the service. They will be eligible for competitive exams for Staff College — which is for Major rank officers. “The women officers will now have to go to difficult postings if they want to opt for PC,” said a senior officer. He said that some postings that are considered as peace postings for male officers have currently been nominated as field postings for women officers. This will also change in the future.

Meanwhile, there are some apprehensions among male officers that the Supreme Court order may impact their peace postings. After being in difficult postings like Kashmir, forward areas and Siachen, male officers are usually put in peace postings where they can be with their families. “It should not be that women will keep getting peace postings by giving various excuses like they have small children and only male officers suffer, landing up in tough postings,” said an officer.

However, defence sources point out that women have proved their mettle and under tough conditions. There are many women who are posted in Kashmir, including female doctors risking their lives, said another senior official.

Last year, Indian Air Force Squadron Leader Minty Agarwal was awarded the Yudh Seva medal for distinguished service in wartime. She was one of the fighter controllers when Pakistan Air Force fighter aircraft entered Indian air space on February 27 post the Balakot air strikes. She had kept her cool in a trying situation and played a crucial role in repulsing the attack.

The Supreme Court, in its order, said “the engagement of women officers in the Army has been an evolutionary process”. Women officers were initially inducted in 1992 for just five years, which was extended for another five years. On incorporation of the provision for SSCs for women officers, they were allowed to become SSC officers and their tenure extended to 14 years. The SC order on PC and command is another milestone. Since last year, the Army has, for the first time, started recruiting women in military police.

The all-boys Sainik Schools in the country will start offering admission to girl students from the 2021-22 academic session. This will help in the creation of future women officers. The next crucial move will entail the storming of another male bastion — allowing girls to take admission in the prestigious National Defence Academy.

<https://www.asianage.com/360-degree/230220/a-soldiers-eye-evolution.html>

The Tribune

Sun, 23 Feb 2020

Woman in Army: How to assess on even scale without lowering benchmarks

Army may consider sweeping decisions

By Ajay Banerjee

New Delhi: After the Supreme Court directed the Indian Army to consider women for Permanent Commission and also for command appointments, implementing it requires administrative dexterity — how to assess women on an even scale with their male counterparts without lowering any existing benchmarks.

Such an equal assessment would be impossible as of now; rather, it would be farcical for the women officers who may be due for selection over the next five-six years or so. Maybe a transition period is fixed while slotting women officers as per their present experience and then putting them through the steps of military service like their male counterparts. Some immediate batches would require exemptions on the existing parameters.

If the Army does not take far-reaching administrative decisions, not many women officers, for no fault of theirs, will be eligible for Permanent Commission (PC) or command appointments over the next seven-eight years.

The apex court ruled that Short Service Commission (SSC) women officers should be given the option of becoming PC officers like their male counterparts and also directed that command appointments be opened up for women. The court’s decision applies to only SSC officers. The Army has a permanent recruitment system, too, which is not impacted by this SC ruling.

Lt Gen Anil Ahuja (retd), former Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Policy Planning and Force Development), says, “Women have not gone through the training steps like courses and critical

staff appointments for which their male counterparts have been groomed. A way has to be found, the system has to start adapting.”

Based on parameters

A harsh reality is that all SSC officers, including males, don't get Permanent Commission. There are some 370-400 SSC recruitments each year and annual vacancies are in the range of 240-250 every year. In other words, some 35-40 per cent don't make the cut or opt out of joining the Army full-time as PC officers. SSC officers serve for 14 years and males are permitted to apply for PC in all streams. The Supreme Court judgment gives women the same option.

Also, all those on PC need not necessarily get command posts. “Command in the Army is not automatic, there is a selection criteria, which has a high rejection rate,” says a middle-level officer.

All posts like Colonel, Brigadier, Major General and Lieutenant General are selection posts.

Courses like the junior command courses are mandatory only for men. Some of the men, even in non-combat streams, have opted for anti-terrorism operations and have been awarded gallantry medals. All these add up in final numbers and analysis. A young male Major from the SSC cadre, who opted for PC on completing 10 years of service, would be graded by his commander, a Colonel. On the other hand, a woman who joined alongside the male officer never had the option of even seeking PC, hence was not graded for command postings and her role in responsible positions was not even assessed.

How to go about it

Chandigarh-based lawyer Maj Navdeep Singh (retd) says, “One-time exemption or truncated capsule courses could be the option on a temporary basis.” He adds that women officers were unable to undergo certain courses because of non-implementation of the Delhi High Court decision of 2010.

According to Lt Gen Ahuja: “Let us accept a transition phase which may spread up to seven-eight years from now. Matters have to be seen in separate slots.”

For women who have now done up to six-seven years' service, they should be 'put through the steps' needed to command. Those with more than seven-eight years' service would need another option like giving them some selected command posts and quick training, he says, adding that “it will be difficult to implement overnight”.

Command selections are normally done when an officer has completed 14-15 years of service.

Possible scenarios

So, will the Army lower the benchmarks for selection as Permanent Commission officers to allow women to compete? Or will it make a one-time exemption only for women who have completed more than eight to 10 years or more in service? Or will it earmark (reserve) some vacancies for women?

In all three scenarios, the issues are knotty. If the Army lowers benchmarks, an equal number of male SSC officers will also qualify under the same parameters, making it an even more tougher selection. If one-time exemption is given, it has to be crafted carefully so that possible exemptions apply to only a few batches, say for the next six-seven years. This would bring women within the zone of consideration.

Other women with six-seven years' service can be asked to complete all selection parameters, including courses. Lastly, the Army cannot reserve slots for women; it would

go against the grain of the armed forces as there is no reservation or quota in any recruitment, selection or promotion in the armed forces.

Already the court has provided some criteria for women who have continued beyond 14 years of mandated SSC service pending the court appeal. It says, “Women officers on SSC with more than 14 years of service who do not opt for being considered for the grant of the PCs will be entitled to continue in service until they attain 20 years of pensionable service.”

The court says, as a one-time measure, the benefit of continuing in service until the attainment of pensionable service shall also apply to all the existing SSC officers with more than 14 years of service who are not appointed on PC.

SSC women officers with over 20 years of service who are not granted PC shall retire on pension in terms of the policy decision.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/how-to-assess-on-even-scale-without-lowering-benchmarks-45750>

The Tribune

Sun, 23 Feb 2020

IAF women saw combat 20 yrs ago

Air Force has, without a doubt, been a clear path-breaker in gender parity

Even as the country debates about women getting commanding roles and Permanent Commission in the armed forces, the Indian Air Force was a path-breaker.

More than 20 years ago during the India-Pakistan Kargil war (May-July 1999), the Indian Air Force tasked two women pilots, Flight Lieutenant Gunjan Saxena and Flight Lieutenant Srividya Rajan, to drop supplies in the battle zone, locate Pakistani positions and undertake casualty evacuation of Army soldiers.

Once their copter even faced a Pakistani rocket, which fortunately missed and hit the hillside near the Kargil air strip. Movie director Karan Johar has already announced a movie on the life of Gunjan Saxena.

In 2018, the IAF inducted three women as fighter pilots. Flying Officer Avani Chaturvedi became the first Indian woman fighter pilot to fly solo. In May 2019, her colleague Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth became the first woman pilot to qualify to undertake combat missions on a fighter jet. They are based at airbases in North India and are part of IAF deployment.

Last year, Squadron Leader Minty Agarwal guided Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman during the February 27 dogfight. She was the ground-based flight controller and has been awarded the Yudh Seva Medal.

The IAF in August 2019 promoted Wing Commander Shailja Dhami to be the first commander of a flying unit — a helicopter unit at Hindon. She is a Permanent Commission officer. In May 2019, the IAF got Flight Lieutenant Parul Bhardwaj to lead the first all-women crew on board a Mi-17 helicopter.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/iaf-women-saw-combat-20-yrs-ago-45777>

The Tribune

Sun, 23 Feb 2020

First woman paratrooper would have opted for PC

By Ajay Banerjee

India's first woman to have qualified as an operational paratrooper, Capt Ruchi Sharma (retd), remembers her days in the force with pride and adds, "Back then, had there been a policy, I would have surely opted for Permanent Commission."

A paratrooper is the one who jumps from planes using a parachute to land at a designated spot. In war, it's usually carried out behind enemy lines, like at Tangail during the 1971 India-Pakistan war.

Having joined the Army in 1996 as a Short Service Commission officer, Capt Sharma served till 2003. Her pictures in uniform show the blue-coloured paratrooper insignia and the maroon beret. "We were aware of the fact that as SSC officers we had to leave after a certain time," says the Captain.

Narrating her experience in the Army, she recalls that "the maximum support to me came from the men (colloquial for non-officers); they were open to the idea of a woman being a paratrooper".

Capt Sharma has literally been in the thick of things, including Operation Parakram (2001-2002). "I was ready for combat and as an individual I think women should be given a chance to take up combat arms."

The talk about the 'need for additional logistics' in having women in combat is no more than an additional tent to sleep, Capt Sharma says.

The former officer has an important addition: "I am not even saying that men and women have equal physical strength. Having women will result in a good, healthy institution."

Capt Sharma, who is now an educationist, says it's her passion to mentor kids. She laughs when asked if some of her students understand her background as a qualified paratrooper of the Indian Army.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/first-woman-paratrooper-would-have-opted-for-pc-45785>

The Tribune

Sun, 23 Feb 2020

Implementation has to be evolutionary process

Expect paradigm shift regarding terms, service conditions of women officers.

But equality depends on same stringent policies being applied to both sexes

By Maj Gen Jagatbir Singh (retd)

Equality is part of the Preamble of the Constitution of India and on taking over command of the Army, General MM Naravane stated very clearly that the forces swear allegiance to the Constitution and that is what guides them in all their actions.

The Supreme Court, in its historic judgment, has ruled that all women officers of the Army shall be considered for Permanent Commission (PC) and command appointments. The verdict has brought in gender equality for women officers. It has resulted in a paradigm shift regarding the terms and service conditions of women officers and penetrated the armour-plated ceiling as far as they are concerned. It will no doubt be seen as a step in women's empowerment.

The induction of women as Short Service Commission (SSC) officers began in 1992 outside the medical stream. Initially, they could serve for five years, with an extension of five years. This was increased to a maximum of 14 years in 2006.

In 2008, PC was granted to eligible women officers serving in Judge Advocates General branch and Army Education Corps. During his Independence Day speech in 2018, the Prime Minister announced that women officers will be able to opt for PC in branches apart from the existing ones. In September last year, the government extended this to the eight supporting arms and services, namely; Signals, Engineers, Army Air Defence, Army Aviation, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps and Intelligence Corps, but restricted it to those commissioned after 2014.

The present judgment has granted PC to women officers of all 10 supporting arms and services, thereby making them eligible for command appointments also.

Complex process

The process of commissioning to command at the highest level in the Army is fairly complex and not easily understood by those outside the system. Initially, officers are commissioned in a particular arm/service either as a PC or SSC officer. The SSC officers presently go through a Selection Board (SB) after 10 years' service, at the Military Secretary's (MS) branch, to determine whether they are fit for retention, extension or PC. This is based on their performance till that period of time. An officer's rise thereafter is based on competence and vacancies.

Throughout their service, officers attend various courses of instruction among which the Junior Command and Senior Command are mandatory to command units. Selected officers are also nominated for the Higher Command and equivalent courses after successful command of their units. Apart from this, officers also attend the Defence Services Staff College based on their passing a written exam; this makes them eligible for certain key staff appointments. Vacancies for promotion are worked out by the MS branch and SBs are conducted by them.

The first SB is held for the rank of Colonel, after which the empanelled officers get to command their units. A successful command tenure is the prerequisite for further promotion.

India is not the only country having women officers. In fact, the US recently appointed Maj Gen Laura Yeager, a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot, as an Infantry Division Commander for the first time. More recently, in the UK, Capt Rosie Wild became the first woman to pass the Parachute Regiment Entrance Test.

Our Army has dealt with the induction of women in a very mature and progressive manner. It has trained them and given them adequate exposure over the years. They have been guided in career paths and given responsibilities depending upon their skill sets. To my mind, there has also not been a change in the charter of any appointment if held by a woman officer.

Dealing with challenges

While the current judgment is just and welcome and I am sure it will be implemented by the Army in letter and spirit, the implementation per se presents its own sets of challenges. We cannot have the existing equilibrium of rules, regulations, policies and procedures being altered to such an extent that there will be differences in the promotion and career progression criteria between both genders. The way ahead is not easy. An uncharted path lies between idealism and realism, which has to be navigated with care.

As brought out earlier, not all male SSC officers get PC, and not all male officers get empanelled for the rank of Colonel. In some cases, it is only 30 per cent of the officers being screened by a particular SB who are approved. The same stringent rules now need to be applied to women. Further, women need to be put through similar training as their male counterparts before they are able to tenant command appointments. The operational challenge is being able to give them adequate experience, exposure and responsibilities, and mentor them to prepare them for command.

It is felt that initially, command after selection at the MS branch could be restricted to certain static units in peace such as workshops, supply companies and appointments as Commander Works Engineers. These appointments need to be identified by the respective Line Directorates.

However, even this can only be done after they have attended the mandatory courses and commanded a sub-unit successfully. The Army has a robust selection procedure based on a complex set of rules, which include three-tiered Confidential Reports, holding certain criteria appointments, Record of Service and Individual Qualifications. These have ensured that the finest have risen in ranks. We must ensure that there is no dilution in this system and there are no separate vacancies earmarked for women.

Granting PC makes a woman officer eligible to serve up to and beyond 20 years, thereby making them eligible for pension. However, serving up to 58 years after reemployment in the rank of a Colonel is not satisfying for a professional soldier. We need officers who are highly motivated. Having a section of officers unable to rise in the Army due to lack of qualifications is not the answer.

Hence, the implementation of this judgment has to be an evolutionary process to ensure that both individual aspirations and organisational interests are met. We must continue to be guided by the credo of Field Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode that the country always comes first.

Equality depends on the same stringent rules, regulations and policies being applied to both sexes. We now need to remove the differentiation and treat both genders as officers. These are issues that need to be examined and resolved internally by the Army.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/implementation-has-to-be-evolutionary-process-45787>

The Tribune

Sun, 23 Feb 2020

Let us not be blind to nature of a battlefield

No bias in having kept women off active combat zone limits

By Lt Gen Baljit Singh (retd)

India has had a woman Prime Minister, a woman as President, Chief Ministers besides as heads of civil services departments, industry, banking and so on. Just a few days ago, there was a mother of three from Arunachal Pradesh who summited Everest. However, that does not suggest that in a cavalier, jingoistic manner, we now assign our women to combat in a war zone.

Unfortunately, over the past three decades, an ill-informed speculation had gained momentum that first demanded that women must not be debarred from entry into the armed forces, leading ultimately to the decree around 1992 that for a start, women would be eligible to compete for entry into the officers' cadre but with the caveat which restricted them to the non-combat services. A few years ago, the Indian Air Force was prevailed upon to induct women into their fighter pilot stream of officers and now, the Army too saw merit to follow suit.

A question that begs an answer is that why were women denied this opportunity hitherto? Well, the fundamental premise was, and remains so, that a woman's femininity and vulnerability must never be compromised, not even at the altar of women empowerment. True, women empowerment implies a societal mindset which honours and stands guarantee against the vulnerability of a woman's person. Unbelievable though it might sound, but the protection of a woman's honour and the life of an infant on or off the battlefield are a significant part of the unwritten creed of soldiering. This culture is imbibed from the very first moment when a young lad makes an entry into the profession of arms. For, he acquires a new persona which goes by the status of 'Gentleman Cadet'. The emphasis is on the prefix 'Gentleman', which implies a host of virtues: honesty, integrity, upright and steadfast character, professional excellence, humility, courage, courtesy, and above all, chivalry. And chivalry in the soldier's creed is all about honouring the person of a woman from any walk of life and caring for the life of infants in the course of duty.

On successful completion of training, the 'Gentleman Cadet' graduates to a 'Gentleman Officer', as distinct from a 'civil servant'. In the milieu of such an exacting officer corps of the Indian armed forces, not only will the 'lady officers' be accepted as equals but in addition they will function in a protective and chivalrous environment. But the circumstances of soldiering and the very nature of every active battlefield are unfortunately (for our lady officer) gender indiscriminating.

It is my firm conviction that the armed forces are not gender-biased. It is just that the incontrovertible nature of active combat zone and of combat zone simulated intensive training simply does not and cannot provide the kind of creature comforts for privacy and personal hygiene, so vital for the physical and emotional equipoise of the feminine gender. And it is this single factor which is and will create mental and emotional stresses for the lady officers (assigned to active combat missions), leading to depression, indiscipline and hyper-irritability.

PoW eventuality

No matter how reprehensible, but the fact is that plunder and rape have been the bane of war. There is the Geneva Convention on the treatment of PoWs and one can state with pride that at least the Indian Army has been its staunch adherent. But there are many nations which are not.

The greatest threat of trauma to a lady officer in active combat arises from the eventuality of falling a PoW. It is a fact that war does brutalise a soldier's or any man's psyche and he may commit the most horrid excesses. Take, for instance, the case of Major Rhonda Carnum of the US army whose helicopter was downed in Iraq. She had fractured both arms, a knee and had a bullet in the right shoulder. Her co-pilot's testimony of repeated rape was so horrid that it is best left unrecalled. Must we expose our women to such barbarity merely for attaining what some consider the ultimate in the empowerment of women?

No, the Indian armed forces are certainly not gender-biased for having kept the combat arms and active combat zone off-limits to its lady officers. But yes, our armed forces understand the risks involved to a woman's dignity in combat and let us hope the three Service Chiefs will stand by their well-founded convictions and put on hold the entry of women into combat zone, no matter how persistent and politically motivated the demands.

For the sake of the honour of our women, let us not be blind to the nature of a battlefield.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/let-us-not-be-blind-to-nature-of-a-battlefield-45791>

The Tribune

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Reservations over the SC ruling

We are not taking 'women in Army', but only 'women as officers'. Women are as brave as men, the problem lies in our social system. Are we really at par with the West in equality? Also, the assumption that women would stay away from the front since they join non-combat units is flawed. As CO, you are exposed to all dangers

By Lt Gen Raj Kadyan (retd)

In allowing women's entry into the Army, we simply copied a western concept, without relating it to our prevailing social milieu. In the West, their intake became necessary when not enough male members were forthcoming to don the uniform. In India, where there is almost a stampede for every recruitment rally, this is far from the case.

Undoubtedly, women are as courageous and as brave as men. They can accomplish every task that men can, and perhaps with greater finesse. The problem lies in our social system.

Are we really at par with the West in women equality? On my first metro ride in Paris, when I noticed a young woman standing in the passageway, I got up and offered her the seat. But my guide restrained me, saying that it might offend her. By my gesture, I was told, I was trying to tell her that she is weaker than me. In India, apart from having a 'women only' compartment in every metro train, there are additional two seats in every general compartment marked for them. Ironically, alongside are

also two seats reserved for the elderly and the disabled. I am not aware if any woman has ever taken umbrage at this implied equivalence.

Thousands of farmers have committed suicide in India. One has yet to hear of a woman farmer doing so. That is because there is a clear separation of roles. Traditionally and historically, soldiering too has been a man's profession.

Even the social reformists would agree that by inducting women into the Indian Army, we haven't achieved equality in real terms. We are not taking 'women in the Army', but only 'women as officers in the Army'. That limits the entry to girls who are graduates, around 4 per cent of the women's population. Have we really implemented the concept of equal opportunity, or are we just mouthing populism?

Practical challenges

Once while leading a long duration patrol in the India-Myanmar-Bangladesh border hills, a soldier developed very high fever. A doctor on wireless advised that we strip him and give him a cold sponge. That helped. If it were a woman soldier, I shudder to even contemplate.

Our Corps headquarters had a system of a night duty officer. The officer had to sleep in the duty room with a clerk and a messenger sleeping in the adjacent room. The women officers showed hesitation. The male officers ended up doing extra night duties. A young lady officer of the JAG department had a small baby. Her duties entailed frequent outstation commitments. She never said no, but I felt inhibited in sending her out.

In a TV debate, a senior lady police officer narrated how bravely she handled a riotous mob. Women's bravery is fully acknowledged. But there is an essential difference. At the end of the day, the police officer returned to the security and safety of her home. But in the Army, the women have to live among men and rough it out in the field. They may bear the hardships and discomforts, but our society has not prepared them to live with lack of privacy.

While grant of Permanent Commission to the women officers per se is welcome, this would entitle them to all the promotions like their male counterparts. The assumption that since women only join non-combat units and would thus stay away from the front is flawed. Service units are involved in providing ammunition, rations, maintenance services, etc. to troops in the battle zone. Visiting areas where men get deployed being an essential command function, the women commanding officers would thus be exposed to all combat dangers, including the risk of being captured.

As of now, women are not being taken into the combat arms. While holding 'deployment of women officers in combat role is a matter of policy and the competent authority had to look into it', the Supreme Court said, '...there is no constitutional basis to deny them equal opportunity.' There is an apprehension that this leaves the doors open for further litigation to demand combat role for women.

Indian society is indeed changing. But equality, as we understand from the West, is still way off. The Army is a part of society and must reflect the prevailing social norms. But let it move in tandem. It would not be prudent to make the force handling national security a laboratory for social experimentation.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/reservations-over-the-sc-ruling-45790>

Small arms, big dreams

INDIA is one of the world's largest small arms markets. Equipping the forces has been a challenge. Multiple procurement channels for the same weapon types added to the chaos. A FICCI report on the Indian Small Arms Sector has recommended the government hand-hold the private sector to enable the armed forces to cut down induction times. The report, presented at the international

small arms conference held in Delhi on February 20, recommended aggregating small arms requirements of all forces to standardise weapons and end decentralised purchase orders. This will enhance the defence ministry's buying leverage. The report advised streamlining the licensing process and for design R & D within the private sector to decrease import dependence.





Browning M2 on display

AN ICONIC US military weapon, the M2 .50 caliber Heavy Machine Gun (HMG) is set for induction into Indian service. The Ordnance factory Trichy will produce iterations of this 12.7 mm weapon under a transfer of technology from Elbit of Israel.

OFB officials say it was because Elbit finished as the lowest bidder in an Indian Navy requirement for 457 gun mounts costing ₹1,142 crore. The HMGs will be fitted on Stabilised Remote Gun Control Systems (SRGCS), remotely operated gun platform on warships and patrol vessels of the navy and the

Browning M2 makes India debut

coast guard. 747 SRGCS will be procured for both forces. The HMG was on display (pictured, sans remote gun mount) at the Defexpo 2020 in Lucknow.

The Indian Army's Para-SF units too have a requirement for .50 caliber HMGs for its Light Strike Vehicles but without the remote turrets.

SIX MH-60S FOR NAVY IN A YEAR

THE INDIAN Navy will get its first six MH-60 'Romeo' multirole helicopters in six months. The \$2.6 billion deal to buy 24 helicopters was cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Security days before US President Donald Trump's visit.

The first six helicopters, built to US standards, say naval sources, and will be delivered so the Navy can train its flight crews in the first year. A key difference between the US Navy and Indian Navy MH-60s are that the US Naval variant has one weapon station on each stub, and the Indian variant will have two. These helicopters will be upgraded to Indian standards. The MH-60R are also operated by all the navies of the 'Quad', an informal grouping of the US, Japan, Australia and India. Australia may join the Malabar 2020 series exercises, to be held in Indian waters this year.

IT COSTS over ₹5 crore and a decade to train a naval nuclear reactor officer to maintain the reactors of the growing fleet of ballistic missile submarines. A case of nepotism has cost the Navy two such officers. On February 12, a division bench of the Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) ruled in favour of Cdr SS Luthra, who retired after he wasn't promoted. The AFT ordered him be promoted to Captain. This is the AFT's third judgement in favour of Cdr Luthra since 2014. In 2017, the tribunal imposed a ₹5 lakh fine on Vice Admiral PK Chatterjee for favouring his son-in-law, Captain AY Agashe, over the petitioner. Captain AV Agashe quit last year for personal reasons.

The two deserving candidates

THE government decided to honour the late Manohar Parrikar by renaming the MoD's premier defence think tank after him. The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) will be known as the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. In his tenure of over two years, Parrikar had notable achievements. He revived the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas project, and set up a committee of experts led by Lt General DB Shekatkar, which suggested defence reforms. The government may have overlooked another deserving candidate -- the late K Subrahmanyam, doyen of India's strategic community who headed IDSA for over two decades, authored the Kargil Review Committee report and championed the India's nuclear weapons programme.



Manohar Parrikar

Explained: How to unify defence resources

Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat is working on a timeline for the rollout of joint commands of the Army, Navy and Air Force. What are the existing commands in India, and how will jointness help?

By Krishn Kaushik

New Delhi: On Monday, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat said his office is working on a tentative timeline for the establishment of joint commands among the three defence services — Army, Navy and Air Force — beginning with an Air Defence Command. With the creation of the CDS post on December 31, the government has set the ball rolling for bringing jointness and integration among the services.

What are joint commands?

Simply put, it is a unified command in which the resources of all the services are unified under a single commander looking at a geographical theatre. It means that a single military commander, as per the requirements, will have the resources of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force to manage a security threat. The commander of a joint command will have the freedom to train and equip his command as per the objective, and will have logistics of all the services at his beckoning. The three services will retain their independent identities as well.

There are two tri-services commands at the moment. The joint command at the moment, the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC), is a theatre command, which is headed by the chiefs of the three services in rotation. It was created in 2001 after a Group of Ministers had given a report on national security following the Kargil War. The Strategic Forces Command was established in 2006 and is a functional tri-services command.

What is the structure right now?

There are 17 commands, divided among the three services. The Army and the Air Force have seven commands each, while the Navy has three commands. The commands under the Army are Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, Central, Southwestern and the Army Training Command. The Air Force has Eastern, Western, Southern, Southwestern, Central, Maintenance and Training commands, and the Navy is divided into Western, Eastern and Southern commands.

These commands report to their respective services, and are headed by three-star officers. Though these commands are in the same regions, but they are not located together.

How do joint commands help?

One of the main advantages is that the leader of a unified command has control over more varied resources, compared to the heads of the commands under the services now. For instance, the head of one of the proposed commands, Air Defence Command, will have under him naval and Army resources, too, which can be used as per the threat perception. And the officer commanding the Pakistan or China border will have access to the Air Force's fighter jets and can use them if needed.

Rawat clarified, however, that not all naval resources will be given to the Air Defence Command, nor will all resources of the Air Force come under another proposed command, Peninsula Command, for the coasts. The Peninsula Command would give the Navy Chief freedom to look at the larger perspective in the entire Indian Ocean Region in which China's presence is steadily increasing.

The other key advantage is that through such integration and jointness the three forces will be able to avoid duplication of resources. The resources available under each service will be available to other services too. The services will get to know one another better, strengthening cohesion in the defence establishment.

When will the new commands be ready?

CDS Rawat has said a study for a proposed Air Defence Command has already been initiated and a report on the details of the command are expected by end of March. He said the Air Defence Command should start becoming operational by the end of this year, and the Peninsula Command by the end of 2021, followed by theatre commands — joint commands looking at the land boundaries — with the first of these to begin rolling out by the end of 2022.

Army chief General M M Naravane is not as optimistic about the timeline for the theatre commands, and said on Thursday that the idea is still at a “very preliminary” stage, and added that at the moment it is “just very loud thinking”. He said the rollout of the theatre commands will take “much longer”.

How many such commands are expected to roll out?

While the number of commands India needs is still being studied, the CDS has envisaged that there could be between six to nine commands. It is not certain how many land-based theatre commands on the borders will come up. The CDS said it will be studied, and the study group will be given the options for creating two to five theatre commands. One possibility is to have single commands looking at the China and Pakistan borders respectively, as they are the two major threats. The other option is to have a separate command for the border in the Jammu and Kashmir region, and another command looking at the rest of the western border. There could be independent commands looking at the border with China which is divided by Nepal.

There will be two functional commands as well. A proposed Logistics Command will bring the logistics of all the service under one person, and the CDS is also looking at a Training and Doctrine Command, so that all services work under a common doctrine and have some basic common training.

A committee headed by Lieutenant General D B Shekatkar had earlier recommended three new commands: Northern, for China; Western, for the Pakistan border’ and Southern, for maritime security.

Do militaries of other countries have such commands?

Several major militaries are divided into integrated theatre commands. China’s People’s Liberation Army has five theatre commands: Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern and Central. Its Western Theatre Command is responsible for India.

The US Armed Forces has 11 unified commands, of which seven are geographic and four functional commands. Its geographic commands are Africa, Central, European, Indo-Pacific, Northern, Southern and Space. Cyber, Special Operations, Transportation and Strategic are its functional commands.

Rawat has said India will not follow any country and find its own structure for the unified commands.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-how-to-unify-defence-resources-indian-army-air-force-navy-6282960/>

‘Whole of nation approach worked in J&K’

The Tribune Interview Lt-Gen KJS Dhillon

By Arun Joshi

Lt-Gen KJS Dhillon, Corps Commander of 15 Corps, whose tenure in Kashmir was marked by many events, some of them unprecedented in nature with new and tough challenges, said he was an extremely satisfied commander as he leaves the Valley for his next assignment.

In an e-mail interview with The Tribune, Lt-Gen Dhillon reflected on the challenges thrown up by attacks like Pulwama and the situation that had to be handled after the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5 last year. Excerpts from the interview

What have been the challenges for the Army after the revocation of Article 370?

The Indian Army, in conjunction with other security forces, has a two-fold mandate. One is on the Line of Control (LoC) and the other is counter-infiltration operations against the terrorists which are being supported by the Pakistan army and pushed through the LoC. In the hinterland, the Indian Army is working in synchronisation with other security forces for counter-terrorist operations wherein most of the terrorist leadership of various “tanzeems” (organisations) has been neutralised in the past year. There is a sense of security and peace prevailing in the Valley, which is visible in business, tourism, BDC elections, recent board examinations and the day-to-day routine life of a normal Kashmiri. The morale of the forces, including the administrative and logistic support, has been of very high standard and we continue to maintain it.



What is the ‘Whole of Nation’ approach to maintain peace in Kashmir?

After August 5 last year, the strategy to maintain peace and calm in the Valley was based on well-synergised, coordinated and integrated actions involving all stakeholders, including security forces, JKPF, CAPFs and, most importantly, the civil administration. In addition, other societal stakeholders like opinion-makers, elders of society, mediapersons and professionals from government organisations were also consulted regularly to arrive at the most suitable and appropriate methodology to deal with the situation and ground-level feedback.

In a nutshell, I can say, it was a “Whole of nation” approach. I am very satisfied with the way calm and peace have prevailed in the Valley. In spite of best efforts of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, minimal loss of civilian life and security forces has been the hallmark of efforts of all stakeholders for the maintenance of peace in Kashmir. There are no restrictions whatsoever other than mobile Internet beyond 2G and some apps. Markets are open, business is booming, tourists are arriving and winter sports are being organised on a grand scale.

What has been the Army’s responsibility to strengthen relations with people after the revocation of Article 370?

In addition to our conventional role and mandated job, we have a responsibility towards the “awam” (public) of Kashmir whom we treat as our “humsaya”. Various initiatives of the Army to support aspirations and daily needs, especially of women and youth, are being pursued in a very organised and proactive manner. There are at least 28 Army Goodwill Schools (AGSs), 10,000 students, and not a single student has become terrorist, with 100 per cent result in most of the AGS

exams. Our initiative of “Operation MAA”, an appeal to mothers of local boys who have gone astray, has been highly successful in generating a positive atmosphere for the “return” of local youths who have joined terrorist organisations. We have been successful in the “return” of more than 50 such boys.

What has been the impact of Internet shutdowns on anti-militancy operations?

Counter-terrorist operations are based on inputs from various intelligence sources, including human intelligence, with technical intelligence being only one of them. Hence, the blocking of the Internet and mobile services temporarily did not have any major impact on counter-terrorist operations.

What have been the challenges after the Pulwama attack?

We are trained for facing challenging situations and we take considered and most appropriate decisions to deal with any emerging situation. The perpetrators of the Pulwama attack were brought to justice within 100 hours by the efforts of all security forces, intelligence agencies and civil administration in a very integrated manner. Terrorist threats are being neutralised almost daily, in one way or the other. All agencies dealing with counter-terrorist operations continue to be on work 24 x 7 to ensure peace in the Kashmir Valley.

What is AFSPA shield?

The AFSPA is an act of Parliament and we (Army) in India, being a mature democracy, are governed by the legislations passed by Parliament.

Your comments on stone-throwing incidents and challenges of upcoming summer in Kashmir.

Pakistan-sponsored proxies who are instigating and indulging in stone throwing have failed in their attempts and these incidents have come down to negligible in recent months. The recruitment of local youths in terrorist groups has also reduced by more than 45 per cent from 2018 to 2019. Besides the “Whole of nation” approach, we have plans (for 2020 summer season in Kashmir) in place to thwart any attempts by Pakistan to disrupt the prevailing peace and cause damage to life and property of Kashmiris. All stakeholders are very much part of the plan.

Have you been a satisfied commander?

As a professional, all my assignments through my career, spanning approximately 37 years, have had their fair share of adventure, challenge and, most importantly, professional satisfaction at the end of each tenure, having accomplished the job assigned to me in a most professional and ethical manner in keeping with the traditions and ethos of the great Indian Army. A major hallmark of my tenure as the Corps Commander, 15 Corps, was the tremendous synergy achieved amongst various security forces, intelligence agencies and civil administration, with the singular aim of maintenance of peace in the Kashmir Valley. We have been able to touch the lives of the common Kashmiris, particularly those who ‘returned’ from the clutches of terrorism back to their families, due to the efforts of all stakeholders, especially under “Operation MAA”. I am an extremely satisfied commander.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/whole-of-nation-approach-worked-in-jk-46215>

Air Force could give quicker promotions in retention plan

A troubling trend of pilots leaving the Indian Air Force (IAF) during the last two years to join private airlines that offer better salary and perquisites has rung the alarms bells in the force

By Rahul Singh

New Delhi: The Indian Air Force (IAF) may review its promotion policy to allow group captains to become air commodores faster as part of an overarching plan to improve their career prospects and keep pilots from quitting service, two senior government officials said on condition of anonymity.

A troubling trend of pilots leaving the air force during the last two years to join private airlines that offer better salary and perquisites has rung the alarms bells in the IAF, compelling it to take stock of the problem and devise ways to retain talent.

More than 200 middle-rung IAF pilots took premature retirement, or what the air force calls premature separation from service (PSS), during 2018-19, said the first official cited above. He stressed that the figure was far higher than acceptable. The IAF received applications from more than 300 officers for early retirement over the last two years, of whom 200 were released.

“The number of officers who were allowed to leave is too high. According to our assessment, if more than 60 pilots quit every year, it can cause an imbalance in our functioning. We cannot allow the numbers to go beyond what is acceptable,” said the second official cited above said.

The IAF is handling the pilot retention problem by adopting a multi-pronged approach that includes reviewing the promotion policy to remove stagnation, tightening the eligibility criteria for granting PSS, giving officers greater clarity about career growth and fine-tuning the human resource policy to address issues related to postings, tenure and family requirements.

Hindustan Times reported on February 15 that the IAF was working to tighten rules to prevent its pilots from leaving service and a raft of measures were being implemented to arrest the trend of officers quitting the air force to take up well-paying flying jobs outside.

The promotion policy is being reviewed to remove stagnation at a critical career juncture – the group captain level (equivalent to a colonel in the army).

“It can take up to 13 years for a group captain to be promoted as an air commodore (equivalent to a brigadier). We are examining the possibility of bringing it down to around 10 years to address the aspirations of officers,” the first official said.

A middle-rung IAF pilot earning up to ₹2 lakh a month could land up a salary that is four times higher as captain in a private airlines. Most pilots quit service after being overlooked for promotion and completing 20 years of service, which entitles them to a pension.

“We are not talking about a blanket ban on pilots leaving the air force. But some restrictions are being imposed so that the IAF does not suffer. Simultaneously, we are adopting a proactive approach to address issues that are bothering people,” the first official said.

The second official said pilots who had been overlooked for promotion would be given top priority for early release, followed by officers who make it to the next rank only in the last promotion board. While most pilots usually look at leaving after being overlooked for promotion, there have been cases of people putting in their papers before reaching that stage.

“The 200 pilots who quit during 2018-19 included officers who had not been superseded and were doing well. That can’t be allowed to go on. We are looking at those issues very carefully,” the second official added.

Experts said it was critical for the IAF to ensure that it had adequate number of pilots for operational utilisation.

“It takes years to operationalise a pilot. And then comes a time when he needs to give back to the country the time and effort invested in him. People join the air force of their own free will. The IAF has to enforce policies that ensure minimum strength of pilots is maintained to carry out operational roles,” said Air Vice Marshal Manmohan Bahadur (retd), additional director general, Centre for Air Power Studies.

He added that the IAF’s human resource policies looked at the human aspect and career progression of officers and there were in-built mechanisms to make sure that genuine cases for early discharge did not suffer.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/air-force-could-give-quicker-promotions-in-retention-plan/story-RGDV8jBNEuOxq6OiwigaeN.html>

hindustantimes

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India, US line up major defence advancements

The first official said President Trump was only keen on visiting Delhi but that India insisted that he do a public event in Ahmedabad on February 24, as a sort of direct outreach to Indians

By Shishir Gupta

New Delhi: With a trade deal off the table, India and the US are looking to focus sharply on defence cooperation during the two-day visit of US President Donald Trump to India, and will, in all likelihood, indicate a calendar for the signing of the third foundational military communication agreement between the two countries during the visit, top officials familiar with the matter said on condition of anonymity.

Talks on the finalisation of the Basic Exchange and Co-operation Agreement (BECA) are scheduled to begin as early as March, one of the officials said. BECA will allow India and the US to exchange geospatial maps to get pinpoint military accuracy of automated hardware systems and weapons such as cruise and ballistic missiles, apart from its civilian use.

In addition, the two countries are likely to sign multiple deals for defence purchases, added this person. This includes a \$2.4 billion deal for 24 MH-60R Sikorsky helicopters, and a \$930 million deal for six Apache AH-64E attack helicopters for the army from Boeing, both of which were approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security earlier this week. There could also be a further order of eight Poseidon P8I multi-mission aircraft for the Indian Navy and a full spectrum missile shield for New Delhi.

The forthcoming visit is a rare one because President Trump will be accompanied by First Lady Melania Trump, daughter Ivanka Trump, and her husband Jared Kushner. Daughter Ivanka was conveyed a personal invite from PM Modi after which she agreed to accompany her parents and husband. The officials said the Trump administration suggested a visit after the US elections, but that the Indian side convinced them otherwise.

The first official said President Trump was only keen on visiting Delhi but that India insisted that he do a public event in Ahmedabad on February 24, as a sort of direct outreach to Indians. Agra, this person said, was added at the First Lady’s insistence. The second person said that the idea is for the

President and the First Lady, and Kushner and Ivanka Trump to see the Taj Mahal in Agra at sunset on February 24. If they make it back to Delhi early enough, this person added, they might have a quiet private dinner with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Bilateral talks are scheduled for the following day.

The joint statement at the end of the talks will also likely focus strongly on terrorism and cooperation between the two countries on tackling it, the second person said. The US, he pointed out, had emerged India's staunchest ally on this front in recent years — whether it is the listing of terrorist Masood Azhar or raising the issue of Pakistan sheltering India's most wanted man, Dawood Ibrahim, at the Asia Pacific FATF meet. The statement may also mention a deepening of hydrocarbon trade between the two countries. From almost nothing in 2014, the US' hydrocarbon exports to India have risen to around \$9 billion.

While both countries are keen on a trade deal, there are some sticky issues, the two officials said, adding that there is also ambition on both sides to announce a substantial deal rather than an incremental one. Market access to Indian products and tariffs remain sticky issues, they added, as does India's digital nationalism in the financial payments space.

However, progress on BECA should help offset that, the two officials said.

Along with Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) and Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), BECA is one of the foundational military communication agreements between the two countries.

LEMOA, which allows the Indian and American defence forces to use each other's facilities and establishes procedures of easier access of supplies and services required by them, was signed in 2016.

COMCASA, which allows the US to transfer communication equipment to India that allow secure transmission of data and real-time information between the armed forces of the two countries, was sealed during last year's Two-Plus-Two talks in Washington.

And in December last, the two countries signed the Industrial Security Annex to the General Security of Military Information Agreement, which provides a boost to the Make in India initiative by allowing sharing of classified information between defence manufacturers of the two countries with the full backing of governments.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-us-line-up-major-defence-advancements/story-0G3o0JKSTu8ydfwtI9frfK.html>

The Indian **EXPRESS**

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In boost for India-US defence ties, talks likely on key foundational pact

*Sources said this would complete the “troika” of foundational agreements,
which will allow India-US defence partnership to be enhanced and completely
move away from the traditional technology denial regime*

By Shubhajit Roy

New Delhi: In what could turn out to be a major outcome in India-US defence cooperation, New Delhi and Washington are likely to move forward on negotiations for the final foundational agreement — the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA). US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi are expected to discuss fast-tracking the pact and moving ahead on it as early as in March this year.

Officials from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Pentagon are expected to get together to expedite the negotiations.

Sources said this would complete the “troika” of foundational agreements, which will allow India-US defence partnership to be enhanced and completely move away from the traditional technology denial regime.

BECA largely pertains to geo-spatial intelligence requiring sharing information on maps and satellite imaging for defence purposes. The US has already submitted a draft pact, and India has sought more details on the extent of information needed to be shared under this arrangement.

If BECA is ticked off the list, Indian government sources told The Sunday Express that this will complete the chain of compatibility as two — out of three foundational agreements — have already been operationalised by the current Trump administration.

While the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) was signed in the last months of the Barack Obama administration in August 2016, it was actually operationalised under Trump’s regime. It was the first of a set of three military agreements that the US considers “foundational” for a functional military relationship.

The LEMOA allows the military of each country to replenish from the other’s bases.

In September 2018, the second agreement — the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) — which enables access to advanced technologies from the US was signed. In a sense, it facilitates access to advanced defence systems and enables India to optimally utilise its existing US-origin platforms. The general agreement signed by the US is called the Communication and Information on Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA) but the name was changed to COMCASA to reflect its India-specific nature.

Just before COMCASA was signed, India was elevated to Tier I of the Strategic Trade Authorisation (STA) licence exception list by the US government in August 2018. New Delhi considers the STA-1 list as the “holy grail” of Indo-US defence partnership. Insiders say joining this elite club of NATO and US allies is expected to lead to more high-technology trade and commerce.

Sources said that once BECA is signed, India will move towards a smoother and easier flow of technology from the US.

Having been deprived of high-technology from the Western countries, especially from the 1970s till 1990s, this has been one of India’s core objectives since signing the Indo-US nuclear deal in 2008.

In the last few months of Obama’s administration, when Modi went to the US in June 2016, the US administration recognised India as a “major defence partner”. This new status has committed the US to facilitate technology sharing with India to a level commensurate with that of its closest allies and partners, and industry collaboration for defence co-production and co-development.

Currently, in the US defence arrangements, there is no country with the status of “major defence partner”. They are either North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) allies or bilateral treaty allies.

Sources said the US administration, under Trump, has “moved fastest” on the track to operationalise the concept of “major defence partner”, almost in line with NATO allies or bilateral treaty allies.

However, there is a hitch: a US law which aims to penalise countries which source defence technologies from Russia. Source said India has maintained that buying S-400 missile system from Russia is in India’s “national security interests”, and Washington must understand India’s strategic requirements.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/donald-trump-india-visit-us-defence-ties-foundational-pact-6281841/>

How defence partnership ringfences ties between India and US

By Rajat Pandit

New Delhi: Expansive defence cooperation has been, and will continue to be, the lodestar of wider India-US ties. Whether Bush Jr or Obama, or now Trump, bilateral defence ties have been on an upward trajectory for almost two decades now despite persisting disputes on other fronts like trade and tariffs.

Consider this: starting virtually from scratch, US has notched up Indian defence deals worth \$20 billion for aircraft, helicopters and howitzers in just the last 13 years, managing to displace India's long-standing military supplier Russia for a few years. Several more deals worth over \$7 billion are in the pipeline.

These deals, though, are a small part of the ever-tightening strategic embrace between the two nations, both wary of the rise of an aggressive and expansionist China in the Indo-Pacific. From a flurry of joint exercises for greater interoperability between their armed forces to foundational military pacts, and operational intelligence-sharing to expanding security cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region, India and the US have set a scorching pace that has astounded many sceptics.

But it's not all hunky-dory. US is upset with India for inking the \$5.43-billion deal for S-400 Triumf missile systems with Russia in October 2018, and then following it up with a \$3-billion deal to lease an Akula-1 nuclear-powered attack submarine in March 2019.

Besides, the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) between India and the US to co-develop and produce cuttingedge military technologies has failed to take off since being launched in 2012. But Indian and US officials contend DTTI is now being jump-started, with the two sides agreeing last October to focus on seven projects. These include a "short-term" one to develop drone swarms that can overwhelm enemy air defences and a "long-term" one on anti-drone technology called "counter-UAS rocket, artillery and mortar systems".

"DTTI will now steadily move forward. Moreover, there is also growing integration between Indian and American defence industries," said a senior Indian official.

Similarly, joint exercises, from the naval "Malabar" (with Japan as the third regular participant) to the counterterror "Vajra Prahar" and "Yudh Abhyas", are becoming wider in scope, size and complexity. The two sides also held their first-ever triService exercise, "Tiger Triumph", in Bay of Bengal last November.

India is now also moving towards finalising the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-Spatial Cooperation (BECA), the fourth and final foundational pact with the US after the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) of 2002, the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) of 2016 and the Communications, Compatibility and Security Arrangement (COMCASA) of 2018.

While LEMOA provides for reciprocal logistical support, COMCASA has paved the way for India to get greater access to military technologies. BECA will enable the US to share advanced satellite and topographical data for longrange navigation and missiletargeting with India. "The next meeting to discuss BECA will be in March. It will probably be ready for inking by next year," said a senior official.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/how-defence-partnership-ringfences-ties-between-india-us/articleshow/74262419.cms>

Trump India visit: Lockheed Martin's Dr Vivek Lall is the industry architect of US-India defence relationship

The deal for the Indian Navy has been approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) earlier this week and is estimated to be for \$ 2.6 billion

By Huma Siddiqui

Lockheed Martin has scored the largest US-India defence deal with the approval of the multibillion dollar order of 24 MH60R helicopters since the US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi took their respective offices. The deal for the Indian Navy has been approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) earlier this week and is estimated to be for \$ 2.6 billion. The last big order the company had signed was for six C-130J Super Hercules in 2008.

Since Dr Vivek Lall joined Lockheed Martin in the US a few years ago some key significant decisions have been taken by Lockheed to strengthen the US-India relationship including the global supply chain.

The US aerospace giant Lockheed's long-standing 10-year-old joint ventures with Tata have now delivered more than 100 C130J empennages for the global supply chain as well as more than 150 S92 cabins. Additionally, Lall announced to bring critical complex F16 wing build capability from Israel to India last year. The first wing prototype is currently being built by Indian industry and expected to be completed this year. Lockheed also decided to offer India the F21 fighter exclusively with India unique capabilities for the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Earlier this month a Lockheed Martin Delegation from the US to DefExpo was led by Dr Lall where a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL). The US aerospace major last year had also signed MoU with BEML. Several start-up companies have also signed MoUs with Lockheed last year during their supplier conference.

Speaking at an event at MIT, Boston last year, Dr Lall helped to incubate several Indian StartUps under the India Innovation Growth Program sponsored by Lockheed and the Department of Science and Technology. Lall who has also been appointed to the US Federal Aviation Advisory Committee almost two years ago has been key to several crucial India-US defence deals in his various assignments.

Prior to his appointment at Lockheed Martin he was Chief Executive in charge of US and International Strategic Development at General Atomics (makers of the Predator UAV) based in San Diego. As has been reported by Financial Express Online earlier, India is in advanced talks with the US Government for procurement of 30 armed Guardians for all three services.

Sources have indicated to Financial Express Online that the LoR is expected to be issued this year. Both the US President Trump and Prime Minister Modi had noted this acquisition in their joint statement in Washington DC a few years ago and it is expected next week there will be discussions on a variety of defence items between both heads of state.

Major Defence Deals concluded under Dr Lall

Boeing Company's P8I Anti Submarine Warfare (ASW) aircraft for the Indian Navy. Eight aircraft have been inducted in the Indian Navy and the deal was worth \$ 3 billion.

22 Anti-ship Harpoon missiles from Boeing in a deal worth \$ 200 million.

The Boeing AH-64E Apache Guardian Attack Helicopters and CH-47F (I) Chinook helicopters for the Indian Air Force (IAF) in a deal for \$ 5 billion.

10 C-17 Globe master III heavy-lift transport aircraft for \$ 4 billion.

Negotiations for 30 Drones from General Atomics (deal yet to be signed) worth \$ 3 billion was spearheaded by him.

And now the biggest deal for 24 MH60R multi-role helicopters for the Indian Navy for \$ 2.6 billion.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/defence/trump-india-visit-lockheed-martins-dr-vivek-lall-is-the-industry-architect-of-us-india-defence-relationship/1876073/>

THEWEEK

Sun, 23 Feb 2020

Arms in arms

The defence deals that India and the US could soon sign

By Pradip R Sagar

Donald Trump might find it difficult to sell American milk to India, what with the pushback from the Indian dairy industry, but arms are a whole other story. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, India's defence purchases from the US jumped a whopping 569 per cent between 2013 and 2018. In the same period, defence imports from longtime ally Russia came down from 76 per cent to 58 per cent. Currently, US arms sales to India stand at around \$18 billion, and could reach \$25 billion after deals in the pipeline are cleared.

“Defence is now driving the relationship and, as the two countries come closer on the idea of the Indo-Pacific, this aspect will only get stronger,” Harsh V. Pant, a professor at King's College, London, and head of the strategic studies programme at the Observer Research Foundation, told The WEEK. “This visit will see a few major deals being signed and future possibilities explored.”

The sale of 24 MH-60 Romeo Seahawk helicopters for \$2.6 billion seems to be the most immediate deal; both parties have finished the groundwork. The helicopters, built by Lockheed Martin's Sikorsky Aircraft, will be procured under the 'government-to-government' route. The MH-60 is the US navy's primary anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare helicopter and is capable of search and rescue, and supply missions. The Cabinet Committee on Security gave the nod to the MH-60 helicopters on February 19, and it might find mention in the Narendra Modi-Trump joint statement.

Then comes the deal to procure six more Apache attack helicopters, worth around \$1 billion, for the Army. Called 'flying tanks', the helicopters are capable of detecting and engaging 256 moving targets.

On February 11, the US approved the sale of an Integrated Air Defence Weapon System for \$1.9 billion to India. Popularly known as National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System-II (NASAMS-II), it can shoot down multiple aerial threats in a 9/11 type of attack. But defence sources claim that the deal will take some time to fructify as Delhi has already signed the deal for an S-400 air defence system with Russia.

At the time of the deal with Russia, the US had threatened India with sanctions. But India managed the pressure well, said observers, and moved ahead with the S-400 deal with limited repercussions, so far.

“US policy toward Russia remains muddled and there are no clear indications as to whether it will sanction India in even perfunctory ways for its purchase of the S-400 system,” Joshua T. White,

former White House official and currently associate professor at The Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, told THE WEEK.

The other deals include the move to acquire 30 armed Sea Guardian (Predator-B) drones for more than \$2.5 billion for the three services. If that happens, India would be first country outside the NATO alliance to get such a weapon from Washington.

The Pentagon has also agreed to sell two missile defence systems to Air India One for an estimated \$190 million, a move that will enhance the security of planes flying the prime minister and the president.

There is also the Indian Navy's plan to acquire 10 more Boeing Poseidon-8I long-range maritime aircraft. The deal, worth over \$3 billion, will be finalised under the foreign military sales programme.

The Indian Navy needs 57 multi-role combat fighter jets, and Boeing's F/A18 jet is seen as a strong contender for this role. Lockheed Martin has also offered to make its F-21 jets exclusive to the Indian Air Force. The F-21 is in the race to get the IAF's tender for 114 medium multi-role jets. "These [deals] have been in the pipeline for a long time and are not unexpected [during Trump's visit]," said White.

The Afghan question

Apart from focussing on defence deals, Donald Trump will also have Afghanistan on his mind, in particular the fallout from the withdrawal of US forces from the trouble-torn nation.

For India, though, failure to intervene will also have costs—key among them, the risk that southern Afghanistan could become a safe haven for jihadists, and an obvious possibility of them joining hands with Pakistan-based terror outfits.

Analysts believe that there is no pressure from President Trump for India to send troops to Afghanistan as the US 'Strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia', announced in August 2017, clearly states that "We want India to help us more with Afghanistan specially in area of economic assistance."

"I doubt that President Trump will bring any assurances to Prime Minister Modi regarding Afghanistan. The US-Taliban deal that has been provisionally announced is merely the first phase in what will, at best, prove to be a long process of negotiation between the Taliban and various Afghan elites. India has its own equities but rather little leverage over the peace process itself," Joshua T. White explained.

Harsh V. Pant believes that Afghanistan will be a challenge in the short-to-medium term as the US wants to get out and have a deal with the Taliban before the presidential elections. India is much more pessimistic about the Taliban and its future intentions. "Trump's visit will allow India to tell its side of the story directly to Trump," Pant added.

Military observers believe that India doesn't have the logistical and technological means to support a counter-insurgency mission in a third country like Afghanistan.

"In terms of military deployments whatever troops we send have to organise themselves to operate from secure bases, which consume a lot of manpower and resources and then we have to have adequate combat power available to be able to conduct operations to achieve desired aim. For this purpose, a brigade group or a division, to my mind, is really not a viable strength. And if you need larger formations, operational logistics would be a huge challenge and these challenges cannot be wished away," explains retired Lt. Gen Anil Ahuja.

Ahuja is a former deputy chief of integrated defence staff (policy planning and force development) and presently associated with a Delhi-based strategic think tank, Delhi Policy Group. Ahuja also emphasised the Indian Army is yet to forget its losses in its intervention in Sri Lanka.

<https://www.theweek.in/theweek/cover/2020/02/22/arms-in-arms.html>