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(Online)

DRDO successfully test-fires Nag missile

The third-generation Fire and Forget anti-tank guided missile is equipped with many advanced technologies

A day trial of the Indian Army's Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) Nag, equipped with imaging infrared radar (IIR) seeker, was successfully conducted in Rajasthan on Tuesday, a defence statement said.

The missile was tested during the day for a reduced range of 3.2 km from the earlier target of 4 km.

While the missile was successfully tried during the night last year for the 4 km range, it had some trouble locating the target in the hot desert temperature during the day, according to reports.

The Defence Ministry said that the missile successfully destroyed the target during Tuesday's mission.

"The successful flight test (of Nag) further strengthens the country's defence capabilities," said Director-General (Missiles and Strategic Systems) G. Satheesh Reddy.

The third-generation Fire and Forget ATGM Nag is equipped with many advanced technologies including IIR Seeker with integrated avionics, a capability possessed by few nations in the world, said the Defence Ministry statement.

The test was carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation scientists with the participation of senior officials from the armed forces. IANS



Fri, 16 June, 2017

Robust Defence Diplomacy

Ausindex naval exercise a statement of rising India-Australia cooperation

The week-long joint naval exercise between India and Australia that has just begun off the coast of western Australia, must be seen as an effort on the part of both countries to boost defence diplomacy. Such collaborations go a long way in enhancing cooperation between the two countries and lead to a higher level of strategic partnership.

The importance of such exercises was in fact felt a long time ago. Besides having held a number of military drills over the years, this is the second such naval military exercise between the two countries. The first Australia-India Exercise was held in the Bay of Bengal in 2015. Most importantly, what brought both countries together was the growing influence of China, which has been staking territorial claims in the South China Sea and also showing interest in the Indian Ocean region. China's growing military might in the seas have also become a cause of worry for other countries such as the Philippines, Australia, Japan, South Korea, and also the US, which are united fronts to challenge the Chinese hegemony.

For India, the Middle Kingdom's increasing strategic footprint by way of increasing military exercises and investments in maritime infrastructural projects in the Indian Ocean region is a cause of concern. There have also been reports about the presence of Chinese submarines. Last year itself, a PLA-Navy submarine that was docked in Colombo, had sent ripples across the country. Australia has similar concerns around the Indian Ocean region.

What is more critical is the Chinese dominance in the South China Sea, which is an important commercial gateway for a significant portion of the world's merchant shipping. It is also an important economic and strategic sub-region of the Indo-Pacific.

The integration of waters has, therefore, become the new normal and compelled countries to come together to discuss matters of security; to maintain stability as prescribed in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. India has always been on firm grounds here on matter of navigation and has support from Australia and other countries.

The Chinese belligerence has, in fact, forced countries around the world to come together and conduct various military exercises at their levels. The India-US-Japan Malabar military naval exercise is one such initiative to keep a check on the militarisation of sea lanes.

This exercise has also a symbolic value in demonstrating India's commitment to free navigation in international waters under the UU convention — something which China has refused to accept. But even bilaterally speaking, such exercises will further strengthen relations between New Delhi and Canberra.

However, the next level in relationship can happen only when various obstacles to an enhanced free trade between the two countries are removed. Given the excellent relations both the countries share, this problem too should be sorted out sooner than later.



Fri, 16 June, 2017

Government unveils tit-for-tat public procurement policy

Nations that exclude Indian suppliers will face similar curbs

Entities from countries where Indian suppliers are not allowed to participate or compete in bids for government procurement, may be restricted or excluded from public procurement tenders in India.

Such a provision, relating to “reciprocity,” has been included in the Indian government’s new policy to encourage ‘Make in India’ by granting preference to local suppliers in public procurement.

“If a nodal ministry is satisfied that Indian suppliers of an item are not allowed to participate and/or compete in procurement by any foreign government, it may, if it deems appropriate, restrict or exclude bidders from that country from eligibility for procurement of that item and/or other items relating to the nodal ministry,” according to the Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India), Order 2017.

A five-member committee chaired by the Secretary in the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion has been set up to oversee the implementation of the policy. The committee “may assess issues, if any, where it is felt that the manner of implementation of the order results in any restrictive practices, cartelisation or increase in public expenditure and suggest remedial measures.”

The policy — approved by the Cabinet last month — is aimed at boosting domestic manufacturing and services, thereby creating employment and enhancing income, as well as to stimulate the flow of capital and technology into domestic manufacturing and services.

“As per the Order, the minimum local content shall ordinarily be 50%. The Nodal Ministry may prescribe a higher or lower percentage in respect of any particular item and may also prescribe the manner of calculation of local content. The margin of purchase preference shall be 20%,” according to an official statement.

The members of the standing committee include secretaries of commerce and electronics & IT, and joint secretaries of expenditure department and the DIPP. It will meet “as often as necessary, but not less than once in six months.”

China launches space telescope

Scientists will also study how to use pulsars for spacecraft navigation

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
BEIJING, 15 JUNE

China on Thursday launched its first space telescope to observe black holes, pulsars and gamma-ray bursts.

The 2.5-tonne Hard X-ray Modulation Telescope (HXMT) was launched via a Long March-4B rocket from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in Gobi Desert at 11 a.m., reports Xinhua news agency.

The HXMT, dubbed Insight, was sent into an orbit of 550 km above the earth to help scientists better understand the evolution of black holes, and the strong magnetic fields and the interiors of pulsars.

Through the telescope, scientists will also study how to use pulsars for spacecraft navigation, and search for gamma-ray bursts corresponding to gravitational waves. Insight is expected to push forward the development of space astronomy and improve space X-ray detection technology in China.

Insight can be regarded as a small observatory in space, as it carries a trio of detectors — the high energy X-ray tele-



A Long March-4B rocket carrying X-ray space telescope to observe black holes, pulsars and gamma-ray bursts blasts off from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center on Thursday. IANS

scope (HE), the medium energy X-ray telescope (ME) and the low energy X-ray telescope (LE) -- that cover a broad energy band from 1 keV to 250 keV, said Lu Fangjun, chief designer of the payload.

Based on the demodulation technique first proposed by Li Tipei, an academican of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) in 1993, the HE

has a total detection area of more than 5,000 sq.cm., the world's largest in its energy band.

"We are looking forward to discovering new activities of black holes and studying the state of neutron stars under extreme gravity and density conditions, and physical laws under extreme magnetic fields. These studies are expected