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DRDO hands over tech to defence firm to manufacture bullet-proof jackets

The DRDO and MKU Ltd exchanged license agreement and other related documents, a defence ministry official said. The MKU will produce bullet-proof jackets which will be lighter in weight than those being used by the armed forces currently.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has handed over its technology to a defence firm to manufacture bullet-proof jackets for the armed forces. The government has decided to procure 1.86 lakh bullet-proof jackets for the armed forces and a majority of them will be manufactured by Kanpur-based private firm MKU Ltd which was given the DRDO-developed technology.

The DRDO and MKU Ltd also exchanged license agreement and other related documents at an event today, a defence ministry official said. The MKU will produce bullet-proof jackets which will be lighter in weight than those being used by the armed forces currently. In his address, DRDO Chairman S Christopher asked the private firm to maintain a strict vigil on the quality of the bullet-proof jackets which will be used by the Indian Army and the paramilitary forces.

THE | DIPLOMAT *Read The Diplomat, Know the Asia-Pacific*

Indian Army Delays Induction of New Anti-Tank Guided Missile

By Franz-Stefan Gady

Indian Army wants more tests before ordering indigenous anti-tank missile.

The Indian Army is delaying the purchase of the third-generation anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) Nag saying that more trials are needed before a decision over missile's procurement can be made, according to media reports. "The developmental trials of Nag ATGM carried out earlier this month have only proven partial success, and many more user trials will be needed," an Indian Army official told *Defense News* last month. "The entire exercise of hot- and cold-region trials of the Nag missile will take more than one year to complete, after which the missile could be ready for production."

India's Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) successfully conducted flight tests of the Nag ATGM in early September. "With these two successful flight trials, and the flight test conducted earlier in June in the peak of summer, the complete functionality of Nag ATGM along with launcher system NAMICA has been established and marked the successful completion of development trials of Nag Missile," the Indian Ministry of Defense said announced the time. The induction of the missile has now been delayed by over a decade. One of the major issues remains the Nag's high price tag and various technical shortcoming including thermal sensors that are still not "up to the requirement," another Indian Army official related to *Defense News*. Overall, the Indian Army plans to procure up to 8,000 Nags with an immediate requirement of 2,000 ATGMs. However, the service is expected to place an order for only 500 NAGs initially.

As I explained last month, the missile, manufactured by India's sole missile producer, state-owned Bharat Dynamics Limited, has so far only been tested while mounted on the NAMICA combat vehicle:

Nag is a fire-and-forget ATGM with an estimated range of 4 kilometers. The Nag Missile Carrier (NAMICA) is an Indian license-produced variant of the Soviet-era BMP-II armored infantry fighting vehicle. NAMICA can launch Nag missiles from a retractable armored launcher that contains four launch tubes (the armored vehicle can carry up to 12 missiles in total) and the guidance package including a thermal imager for target acquisition. The missile's targeting system is based on visual identification prior to its launch ('lock-on-before-launch system').


DRDO has also been working on a more advanced air-launched variant of the Nag, the Helina ATGM with a maximum range of up to seven kilometers. "Once operational, the Helina will be part of the armaments of the indigenously designed Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) and the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) Dhruv advanced light helicopters (ALH)," I explained. The Helina is still in early stage of development.

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

Fri, 06 Oct, 2017

INDIA'S AIR COMBAT POWER PROBLEMS & PLANS



THE PROBLEM

1 IAF down to 33 fighter squadrons (each has 16-18 jets). These include

11	Sukhoi-30MKI squads	8	MiG-21 squads	5	Jaguar squads	3	Mirage-2000 squads	3	MiG-29 squads	3	MiG-27 squads
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2 IAF needs 42 squadrons to tackle collusive Pak-China threat

But all **MiG-21s & MiG-27s** to be **retired** by **2022**

Jaguars will also begin to **retire** by **2027**

Huge delay in indigenous **Tejas** fighters

Number of squadrons will **dip to 28** by **2027**

IAF will achieve **42 squadrons** only by **2032**

INTERIM MEASURES

- 63 MiG-29s & 51 Mirage-2000s being **upgraded** (with Russian & French help for ₹23,800 crore)
- **Improve** poor serviceability of fighter fleets
- **Boost availability** of at least 50 **critical spares**

PLANNED INDUCTIONS

- **36 remaining Sukhois** by **2019** (272 Sukhois contracted from Russia for ₹55,717 crore)
- **36 Rafales in 2019-2022** (₹59,000 crore inked with France in Sept 2016)
- **123 indigenous Tejas for over ₹70,000 crore** (1st 40 by 2022; 83 improved Tejas Mark-1A thereafter)

FUTURE PLANS

<p>1 114 single-engine fighters (for about ₹100,000 crore)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Preliminary tender to be floated in 3-4 weeks for Make in India ➤ Swedish Gripen-E & American F-16 in fray ➤ Import 16 jets in 3 years ➤ Begin production of rest 98 in 5 years 	<p>2 Buy 36 more Rafales from France (for about ₹40,000 crore)</p> <p>3 Push for desi 5th-Gen AMCA (advanced medium combat aircraft). Production 2035 onwards</p> <p>4 5th-Gen Sukhoi T-50 project with Russia (127 jets for \$25bn) on hold due to high costs & tech glitch</p>
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IAF chief: We can hit Pak's nuclear targets

As far as IAF is concerned, it has the ability to locate, fix and strike and that is not only for tactical nuclear weapons but for other targets across the border. — BS Dhanoa, IAF chief

Indian Air Force chief BS Dhanoa on Thursday said his force was capable of fighting a two-front war with China and Pakistan with its present assets and announced that the service had the capability to locate and destroy nuclear targets in Pakistan. "As far as IAF is concerned, it has the ability to locate, fix and strike, and that is not only for tactical nuclear weapons but for other targets across the border," Dhanoa said while addressing the annual Air Force day press conference.

The air chief marshal was asked whether India had the capability to disarm the Pakistani Tactical Nuclear Weapons which have been consistently used as a threat by Islamabad to blackmail the global community to ignore its role in aiding and abetting terrorism internationally. Last month, Pakistan's prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi had said that his country has developed short-range nuclear weapons to counter the 'Cold Start' doctrine of the Indian Army.

On the capability to fight a war simultaneously with China and Pakistan, Dhanoa said, "We need strength of 42 squadrons to carry out full spectrum operations in a two-front (war) scenario. It does not mean that we are not capable of fighting a two-front (war) as we speak. We have a plan B." He, however, clarified that the possibility of such a conflict was very low in the near future.

The IAF chief indicated that the Doka La stand-off between India and China was not yet over as the Chinese troops were still deployed in the Chumbi valley across the border and expressed hope that they would withdraw from there after their exercises get over. The IAF is prepared to fight at a short notice in full synergy with the other two sister services should the need arise, Dhanoa said, adding that the force was in a high state of readiness to fight a war. About a possible confrontation with China, he said India's air power was adequate. At the same time, he talked about what China could or could not do from Tibet. Our capability is adequate, he said. On whether the IAF provided any support to the Army for the surgical strike last year and during the Doklam face-off, the IAF chief said, whatever was asked from the air force was provided.

He refused to share further details. On the plans to expand the assets of the Air Force, he said the force would be adding 36 Sukhoi-30MKIs and Rafale combat aircraft each along with 123 Light Combat Aircraft in the near future to make up for its dwindling squadron strength. The IAF chief also informed that three women officers will be joining the fighter aircraft squadrons of the force by the end of this year and new batches of women fighter pilots would also come up soon.



Defence min reviews army reforms implementation

Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman took stock of the progress in implementing the ambitious reform process in the Indian Army under which nearly 57,000 officers and other ranks are being redeployed to enhance the combat capability of the force.

The Government in August had unveiled an ambitious reform initiative for the Indian Army based on recommendations of a committee headed by Lt Gen (ret'd) DB Shekatkar which was tasked with suggesting steps to enhance combat capability of the armed forces.

Sitharaman on Wednesday reviewed implementation of the reform process at a high-level meeting attended by Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa and top officials of the Defence Ministry. While accepting the panel's 65 recommendations dealing with the Army, the Government had left 34 suggestions relating to tri-services issues.

In the meeting, Sitharaman also discussed ways to implement some of the 34 recommendations of panel whose implementation will impact all the three services.

One of the major recommendations of the Shekatkar committee was appointing a tri-service chief and Government is yet to take a call on it. The sources said a number of issues including operational preparedness of the forces also figured in the meeting.

Gen Rawat briefed the defence minister about steps taken to implement the reform process in the Army.



Fri, 06 Oct, 2017

Tribunal quashes Army's order demoting Major General to Brigadier's rank

The AFT bench has also laid down certain guidelines regarding medical fitness of officers of high ranks such as Major Generals

By Man Aman Singh Chhina

The Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) has quashed the orders of Army Headquarters whereby a newly promoted Major General was demoted to the rank of Brigadier.

Acting on a petition filed by Major General Deepinder Singh of Army Ordnance Corps, the Jabalpur bench of the AFT, in its judgement on October 4, has found that the Army Headquarter issued orders reverting him to the rank of Brigadier within days of his promotion to Major General and did not even seek the approval of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) before doing so.

The Military Secretary (MS) branch of the Army Headquarters has come in for severe criticism by the bench of Lt Gen NB Singh and Justice Amar Saran who have said in the judgment that while issuing orders for demoting the Major General to the rank of Brigadier, the officer was not provided an opportunity for any hearing. The grounds of reversal of rank was stated to be an unacceptable medical classification for promotion to the rank of Major General and this ground too has been found to be untenable by the AFT.

The counsel for Major General Deepinder Singh, Colonel Rajiv Manglik told The Indian Express that he was cleared for promotion to the rank of Major General on May 26, 2017 and his promotion orders were issued on June 7 and he was posted as Deputy Commandant of the College of Material Management in Jabalpur. The orders of his demotion were issued on June 14 and the AFT has found that the rules and regulations that were relied upon while issuing the orders were themselves without the approval of the Ministry of Defence and were non-effective.

“It is inexplicable as to what was the hurry to revert him to the rank of Brigadier without a fair hearing. After all his promotion had been ordered by the respondents. His case could have been addressed in a deliberate manner and a considered decision taken either way keeping reasonableness and fairness in mind. It would have prevented the emotional trauma that he and his family have undergone in the twilight of his career in the military,” the judgement says. It goes on to say that it would have been well calibrated by the MS Branch so that such a contingency of reverting the rank of a senior officer does not arise.

Further commenting, the bench said that cohesion of the officer cadre is a battle winning factor and ensures operational effectiveness of the Army. “Military reputation and self-esteem of each member of our

armed forces has to be preserved and respected, at least by members of the uniformed community. It is expected that the responsibility for the faux pas in the instant case be fixed within the MS branch and suitable fire walls created to prevent such recurrence in future,” the bench said.

The AFT bench has also laid down certain guidelines regarding medical fitness of officers of high ranks such as Major Generals. “It must be accepted that pressures and stress of Army life including age and deployment effects could afflict even the fittest. A job content, deployability and cadre based promotion policy for each corps and rank consistent with Army Regulations would be a pragmatic and realistic step keeping in view that there is little room at the top and minor ailments will crop up as military men age in the operating environment prevalent at our borders,” the reads the judgement.

THE ASIAN AGE

Fri, 06 Oct, 2017

A salute to the bravery and endurance of our soldiers

By Anil Bhat

The story culminates in the Battalion accomplishing its task in the capture and occupation of the Salto Ridge line on the Siachen Glacier in 1984.

Gorichen, a majestic peak in the Eastern Himalayas at an altitude of 22,500 feet, is the highest in Arunachal Pradesh. Beautiful to look at and providing a fantastic view from the top, it is extremely tough climb for mountaineers. Siachen, which in the Balti language (of Baltistan) means a land with an abundance of roses, is the name of one of the five largest glaciers in the East Karakoram Range of the Northern Himalayas, at an average altitude of 5,400 meters (17,700 feet) above sea level, is considered as the highest and coldest in the world. The name itself is most ironic as not a blade of grass grows in that entire area.

Gorichen to Siachen is an account of how the 19th Battalion of the Kumaon Regiment, popularly known as the “Unnis” and “Mountain Marauders”, was pitched into very challenging actions in peacetime and how it succeeded as the pioneers in establishing control of the Salto range to defend the Siachen Glacier. With the coldest of temperatures — around minus 40 degrees — and with the highest of features at over 20,000 feet of altitude, Siachen is the most exacting of active battlefields in the world. The author considers it an honour to have led the first battalion ever to be deployed there. The story culminates in the Battalion accomplishing its task in the capture and occupation of the Salto Ridge line on the Siachen Glacier in 1984.

Raised in 1979, 19 Kumaon, in the short span of barely five years till its occupation of the formidable Salto Ridge, had been preparing and training itself for any eventuality. While doing so, volunteering for an expedition to scale Mount Gorichen, in 1982 even though with limited resources and inadequate expertise, proved to be a good precursor to its deployment in Siachen. The other task was aid to civil authorities in Assam in 1983, when the Battalion was spread over a distance of 400 kms, too wide a stretch for a single battalion.

The rigorous training schedule undertaken to prepare the battalion for the Siachen Glacier proved the saying, “The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war”. For Unnis, the move to Siachen Glacier meant traversing 630 Kms, including crossing Zoji La (La means a mountain pass), which was covered with about 40 feet of snow and Khardungla, which, during winters, is considered impassable on foot with full battle loads. The Battalion was fortunate to achieve this stupendous task without suffering any serious casualty.

All these actions and more while on the glacier have been lucidly described by the author in the book, which also happens to be the first ever to be written about military operations at a battalion and lower levels. Every chapter elaborates on tasks accomplished by forming plans after carefully examining the options available. Various situations described in the book can be a matter of debate as to whether any other courses of action were available with the inputs at hand from the field. The chapters on Operation Meghdoot, fought for

the first time in world military history at unprecedented altitudes and extreme cold conditions, are rare revelations.

The book is all the more valuable not only for armed forces, but even civilian leaders as it highlights bravery, determination endurance and other attributes of good soldiers on the one hand and on the other, the unfortunate aspects of poor planning, haphazardness and some negative traits of senior commanders, fortunately, only a few.

While the bureaucracy can be blamed for depriving the army of some crucial requirements, senior military leadership too has to share the blame. An awful example: After almost two months of use, the clothing worn by soldiers deteriorated considerably and had to be kept together with needle and thread by the soldiers themselves-from a small hold-all pouch, ironically officially named “housewife”. Owing to extensive walking on rough terrain, the single pair of snow boots per soldier started getting holes in the soles. Wet feet can lead to frostbite and worse, gangrene. The men were using ingenuous methods of blocking the holes in their boots. Even after two months there was no special extreme cold weather clothing even for those doing night sentry duties. There was no highly required mountaineering equipment issued like climbing boots, crampons, ice axes and good quality sleeping bags. Operations at extreme high altitude were conducted with the same clothing authorised for up to 9,000 feet. Hats off to the indefatigable soldiers of Unnis, who, like their comrades in the Indian Army are known for, bore all these shortcomings, maintained their morale and remained ready to take on any task.

There are also situations when a military commander’s mindlessness, to put it mildly, which also sometimes infects his close staff officers, causes avoidable problems. An example: After the arduous 630 kms move of the Battalion, the first order issue to it by the sector headquarters in its operational setting was providing troops for “administrative duties” involving two non-commissioned officers (NCOs), six soldiers, a clerk, a mess waiter and even a bugler, as well as separately, a working party of one NCO and nineteen soldiers.

The book, with many photographs gives the reader, particularly the uninitiated, an idea of the kind of challenges of terrain and weather conditions and unfavourable situations Indian Army troops function in.

There are dilemmas of command which a commander often faces during operations. When viewed in retrospect, it is very difficult to imagine and appreciate the operational environment which existed at the time of the decision. For example in Chapter 12, “The Longest Day”, should a young officer like Second Lieutenant Poondir have volunteered for a suicidal mission? More so, should the commanding officer have permitted such a mission knowing fully well that it may not succeed, or did he have any other option?

The book offers today’s leaders an opportunity to judge the actions taken more than 30 years ago with the advantage of the knowledge of the course history has taken and to discuss if it could be any different or any better. This book is most recommended not only for all young military officers and junior leaders in all walks of life, but also for senior military commanders, particularly as it mentions some avoidable blunders and glitches.

It can also be enjoyed by students, scholars, adventure lovers and avid readers, because many of the daunting feats related in it make it an adventure-thriller.

Anil Bhat, a retired Army officer, is a defence and security analyst based in New Delhi

Fri, 06 Oct, 2017

China widens road 10km from Doklam row site

China is now upgrading and widening its existing motorable road in the Bhutanese territory of Doklam after Indian troops stopped the PLA in June from extending it towards the Jampheri Ridge, which overlooks the strategically vulnerable Siliguri Corridor or the so-called “Chicken's Neck“ area.

India has not yet objected to China's fresh road-construction activity , which is taking place around 10 kilometres from the Doklam faceoff site, because it is not southwards towards the militarily sensitive Jampheri Ridge area. “The PLA is using the construction material and bulldozers it had brought to the faceoff site to improve the road it built some years ago,“ said a source.

Doklam is a disputed territory between Bhutan and China, and India backs the former's claim on it. “China is reinforcing its claim on the Doklam territory by upgrading the road around 10km north and east of the faceoff site. The PLA has been controlling the road for some years and regularly sends patrols to the area,“ the source added.

This comes at a time when both India and China are maintaining stepped-up military force-levels near the Sikkim-Bhutan-Tibet tri-junction despite troops having disengaged from the faceoff site on August 28. It was on June 16 that Indian soldiers had come down from their nearby Doka La post to cross over into Bhutan to prevent Chinese troops from constructing a road in Doklam.

It had triggered an over 70day eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation at Doklam, leading both the countries to move forward additional infantry battalions as well as armoured (tanks), artillery , missile and air defence units to back their small number of troops on the actual stand-off site, as was then reported by TOI.

“Both the armies continue to be on high operational alert,“ said a source. The assessment is that there will be no change in the ground situation till the crucial congress of the Chinese Communist Party from October 18, with Chinese President Xi Jinping all set to get a second term to consolidate his power.“Once the winter sets in, the PLA troops may have to shift back to Yatung, their last major town in Chumbi Valley . We have to watch-and-wait,“ he said.

Just last month, Army chief General Bipin Rawat had warned China would continue efforts to nibble away disputed territory through “salami slicing“ and other measures.



Fri, 06 Oct, 2017

Pentagon pumping millions more into missile defence

The Pentagon is injecting USD 440 million more into missile defence, including yet another expansion of its fleet of missile interceptors, to counter North Korea's accelerating push for a nuclear-armed missile capable of hitting the United States. As a reflection of its urgency, the Pentagon asked Congress to let it shift funds from the current budget rather than wait for the next defence budget. The Pentagon already had USD 8.2 billion in its missile defence budget prior to the add-ons.

The Pentagon today spelled out USD 367 million of the shifted money, with the rest expected to be announced later. The spending has come under increased scrutiny as North Korea's nuclear and missile programs have progressed and critics have questioned whether the Pentagon has developed missile defences that would work in combat. Some of the additional USD 440 million is for projects that are classified secret,

including USD 48 million more for development of technology for cyber “operations,” according to a breakdown of the spending by the Pentagon's budget office.

The Pentagon has never acknowledged that it has engaged in cyber operations against North Korea's nuclear or missile programs. The New York Times earlier this year reported that in 2014, then-President Barack Obama ordered Pentagon officials to step up their cyber and electronic strikes against North Korea's missile program in hopes of sabotaging test launches. The more conventional approach to countering North Korea's missiles is what the Pentagon calls ground-based interceptors, which are anti-missile missiles that would be launched from underground silos at Fort Greely in Alaska in the event the US decided to try to shoot down a North Korean missile aimed at the United States.

The interceptors are designed to slam into an incoming enemy missile outside the Earth's atmosphere, obliterating it by the force of impact. The USD 440 million in extra funds for missile defence include USD 128 million to begin a new expansion of the missile interceptor force in Alaska. That includes USD 81 million to begin increasing the number of interceptors from 44 to 64, and USD 47 million to begin buying parts for 10 of the additional 20 underground silos in which the interceptors are installed.



Fri, 06 Oct, 2017

ISRO to set up research centre in Guwahati

Guwahati, Oct 5: The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) will set up a research centre here for start ups, academicians, environmentalists and entrepreneurs.

ISRO would set up the exclusive research facility in Assam to explore the possibility of using geospatial technology, which include data generated through global positioning system (GPS), geographical information systems (GIS) and satellite remote sensing for expediting the development of Assam, officials said here.

Remote sensing technology would be used for accurate flood warning system, prevention of soil erosion and landslides to name a few, they said.

The state government would provide land to ISRO free of cost for the research centre, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal told ISRO Chairman A S Kiran Kumar during a meeting between them here today, the officials said.

The state government would ink an MoU with the department of space for leveraging the potentials of the state for using space technology, they said.

Sonowal also requested the ISRO chairman to integrate space technology with Act East Policy so that space technology can be used as a bridge between the North East and other south east Asian countries.

He sought ISRO's help to use space technology for drawing a broad remote sensing map to stop illegal trade of natural resources.

The Chief Minister hoped that the government and ISRO would work together in carrying out survey of the depth of the Brahmaputra river which could help the state government's proposed move to dredge it from Sadiya in Tinsukia to Dhubri in the state.

Ishiguro wins Nobel Prize for literature

By Simon Johnson and Justyna Pawlak Reuters

Kazuo Ishiguro, the British author of *Remains of the Day*, has won the Nobel Prize for Literature, the Swedish Academy said on Thursday, honouring an "exquisite novelist" a year after giving it to singer-songwriter Bob Dylan.

Born in Japan and raised in Britain, Ishiguro, 62, won the Man Booker Prize for the 1989 novel that was made into an Oscar nominated movie starring Anthony Hopkins as a fastidious and repressed butler in postwar Britain. "He is an exquisite novelist. I would say if you mix Jane Austen and Franz Kafka you get Ishiguro in a nutshell, Sara Danius, permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy, told Reuters. The award of the 9-millioncrown (\$1.1 million) prize marks a return to a more mainstream interpretation of literature after it went to the American troubadour Dylan, a decision that critics said snubbed more deserving writers.

The Academy hailed Ishiguro's ability to reveal "the abyss beneath our illusory sense of connection with the world ... in novels of great emotional force" that touch on memory, time and self-delusion. "What I'm interested in is not the actual fact that my characters have done things they later regret. I'm interested in how they come to terms with it," told the New York Times after *The Remains of the Day* was published. Ishiguro has also waded into politics, calling a rise in hostility towards immigrants after the British voted to leave the European Union as "a fight over the very soul of Britain".

"Never has there been a better opportunity, at least not since the 1930s, of pushing ... xenophobia into neo-Nazi racism," he wrote in the Financial Times last year, urging "a sharply divided, bewildered, anxious, leaderless nation" to unite around its "essentially decent heart".