

समाचार पत्रों से चयित अंश Newspapers Clippings

दैनिक सामयिक अभिज्ञता सेवा
A daily Current Awareness Service

Vol. 43 No. 110 29 May 2018



रक्षा विज्ञान पुस्तकालय
Defence Science Library
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India Capable Of Nuclear Test at Short Notice: Defence Research Chief

India is on par with many other countries when it comes to nuclear technology, defence research chief Dr S Christopher told NDTV

India is capable of conducting a nuclear test at short notice, defence research chief Dr S Christopher has told NDTV. This assertion from one of the country's top scientists comes 20 years after India successfully tested its nuclear capability in Pokhran. Dr Christopher sought to dispel any notion that India's nuclear technology was stuck at the 1998 level when five bombs were successfully tested. "Technology-wise, we are continuously growing; there is no doubt about it. You cannot stagnate in that position. I am honest to say that the growth is so tremendous we are almost on par with many other countries," Dr Christopher said in an exclusive interview. These remarks by the chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) are an expression of the country's technological readiness. The final call to go ahead with a nuclear test is a political decision taken by the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Committee on Security.

India had imposed a unilateral moratorium after the 1998 nuclear tests and continues to abide by it. According to the nuclear doctrine, there will be no-first-use of atomic weapons by India but in case an adversary strikes with atomic weapons, New Delhi will exercise the right to give an answer with a 'punishing second strike'. In 1998, then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had given DRDO, which was headed by APJ Abdul Kalam, 40 days to undertake the nuclear test. Asked if the DRDO could replicate that feat within the same timeline, Dr Christopher said "we are ready", adding that no field tests were needed due to available advanced technologies that can recreate a real time environment. "Everything in research and development you cannot test --- like, for instance, a mission to the moon. There are a lot of simulations that are possible today to say what exactly will happen," claimed Dr Christopher. On May 11 and 13, 1998 India had tested five nuclear weapons, including a hydrogen bomb. Two weeks later, Pakistan had responded with a set of five tests at its Chagai nuclear site.

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/india-capable-of-nuclear-test-at-short-notice-defence-research-chief-1858949>

As S Christopher completes term, DRDO to remain headless for 3 months

The Defence Research And Development Organisation (DRDO) could stay headless for as many as three months with the government failing to find a replacement for incumbent Selvin Christopher who retired on Monday. Efforts till late to grant him another extension in service could have delayed the appointment of a successor, with a search committee looking at probable names to recommend to the cabinet appointments committee.



Defence Secretary Sanjay Mitra will hold additional charge of the organisation till the government approves a scientist to take over the top position, an official notification said. The past few weeks has seen jostling for the post. DRDO has an annual budget of `17,861 crore. Outgoing chief Christopher who was already on a year's extension of service beyond the prescribed age but had been hoping for yet another extension.

This search committee list is expected to include the three seniormost scientists of DRDO, besides the first woman to have made it to the post of director-general in the organisation. Sources said that those in the fray include missile scientists G Satheesh Reddy, the scientific advisor to the defence minister and the head of the Brahmos missile project, Sudhir Mishra.

While Mishra and Reddy come from the missile scientist community that has traditionally 'ruled' DRDO, also in contention is Pravin K Mehta, who heads the Armament cluster of the research organisation from Pune. A surprise entrant to the selection shortlist could also be DG Jillelamudi Manjula who heads the Electronics & Communication Systems vertical at DRDO. As reported by ET, several top level appointments are pending at the defence ministry. The crucial posting to Northern Army Commander is still to be announced.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/s-christopher-completes-term-as-drdo-chief-def-secy-to-hold-addl-charge/articleshow/64356732.cms>

पंजाब केसरी

Tue, 29 May, 2018

रक्षा सचिव संजय मित्रा को DRDO प्रमुख की अतिरिक्त जिम्मेदारी

रक्षा सचिव संजय मित्रा को रक्षा अनुसंधान एवं विकास संगठन) डीआरडीओ (के प्रमुख पद की अतिरिक्त जिम्मेदारी सौंपी गई .प्रख्यात वैज्ञानिक एस क्रिस्टोफर का डीआरडीओ के प्रमुख का कार्यकाल पूरा होने के बाद संजय मित्रा को अतिरिक्त जिम्मेदारी दी गई है. कार्मिक मंत्रालय ने जारी एक आदेश में कहा कि योग्य प्राधिकरण ने मित्रा को तीन महीने के लिये रक्षा अनुसंधान एवं विकास विभाग) डीओडीआरडी (के सचिव तथा डीओआरडी के चेयरमैन की अतिरिक्त जिम्मेदारी सौंपी है .वह मंगलवार से अतिरिक्त जिम्मेदारी संभालेंगे. क्रिस्टोफर को पिछले साल मई में एक साल का सेवा विस्तार दिया गया था.

The Tribune

Tue, 29 May, 2018

Rocket launchers to get thermal sights

Will enable troops to detect, destroy enemy targets during night

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, on Monday approved the procurement of equipment valued at over Rs 6,900 crore, which includes Thermal Imaging (TI) Night Sights for the Rocket Launcher for accurate targeting of enemy bunkers even in complete darkness.

The thermal imaging night sights used by the Army and the Air Force will be bought through established Indian vendors, in effort to boost indigenisation, the Defence Ministry said in a statement. "The TI sight for 84mm RL will be used by troops in operations to facilitate accurate and continuous engagement of moving and static enemy targets and destruction of field fortifications (bunkers) during hours of complete darkness," the statement said. The night sight will enable troops to detect and recognise enemy tanks and soldiers' movement during night and engage them with greater efficiency.

Furthermore, the effect of camouflage and concealment will be drastically reduced as RL detachments will be able to ascertain location of enemy taking cover behind foliage and thin-walled constructions with greater ease. The DAC also accorded approval for undertaking design and development of the long-range dual band Infrared Imaging Search and Track System (IRST) for SU-30 MKI aircraft and subsequently, for procurement of at least 100 IRSTs.

The system will be able to operate in day and night conditions and substantially enhance the capabilities of the aircraft. “In the last eight months alone, the DAC has pursued modernisation of the armed forces with greater vigour and has accorded major thrust on indigenisation. Approvals for procurement of equipment valued at Rs 43,844 crore, have been accorded, of which, Rs 32,253 crore would be Made-in-India, through the indigenous route,” the statement added. — PTI

The Indian EXPRESS

Tue, 29 May, 2018

Why no male nurses in Army: Delhi High Court

“It is very antiquated, very stereotyped. How can you have an entire nursing branch without any males, especially in the Army,” the bench observed.

The Delhi High Court on Monday described the Indian Army’s practice of having only women in its nursing service as “antiquated” and asked the Centre why men cannot be inducted in that branch of the defence force. A bench of Acting Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice C Hari Shankar issued a notice to the Ministry of Defence seeking to know its stand by October 10 on a PIL by Indian Professional Nurses Association, alleging “blatant discrimination” in recruitment for the Indian Military Nursing Service.

“It is very antiquated, very stereotyped. How can you have an entire nursing branch without any males, especially in the Army,” the bench observed.

hindustantimes.com

Tue, 29 May, 2018

Military purchases worth R6k cr soon

The defence acquisition council (DAC) on Monday set the ball rolling for buying military hardware worth ₹ 6,900 crore, including thermal imaging night sights for rocket launchers and equipment that will enhance the capabilities of the air force’s Sukhoi-30 warplanes, a ministry spokesperson said.

The council, headed by defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman, approved the purchase of the hardware through the indigenous route to boost India’s capabilities to locally produce weapons and systems.

“The thermal imaging sight for 84mm rocket launchers will be used by troops in operations to facilitate accurate and continuous engagement of moving and static enemy targets and destruction of bunkers during hours of complete darkness,” the spokesperson said. The slow pace of acquisition has hurt India’s military capabilities. The government inked a \$100-million contract for 1.86 lakh bullet proof jackets for the army, a decade after the force moved the case. Financial constraints, cumbersome procedures and unrealistic qualitative requirements set by the armed forces are among the key factors that hinder modernisation, said a senior official who did not wish to be named. “Forget the bigger purchases, the system is such that we take a decade to equip soldiers with new assault rifles and bullet proof vests,” he said.

Ammunition is also a problem area. The army told a parliamentary panel in March that it was short of ₹ 6,380 crore to build ammunition stocks necessary for war for 10 days. The panel was also told that even as China and Pakistan were modernising their militaries at a lightning-fast pace, a looming financial crisis was crippling India’s combat capabilities.

The equipment cleared for purchase on Monday is significant as it will enable the army to “detect and recognise” enemy tanks and soldiers. The DAC also approved a project for the design and development of Long Range Dual Band Infrared Imaging Search and Track System (IRST) for SU-30 MKI fighters. Experts said Sitharaman’s predecessors in the ministry had also cleared the decks for weapon purchases worth lakhs of crores but not many of those clearances translated into deals.

“The projects that have been given a go-ahead are at the acceptance of necessity stage (the first step toward making procurement under the Defence Procurement Procedure). The real test would be to see how many of these cases end up as contracts ...” said military affairs expert Air Vice Marshal Kapil Kak (retd).

‘S-400 deal with Russia will make Indo-US interoperability harder’

The chairman of the US House Armed Services Committee, William Thornberry, on Monday flagged concerns about the proposed sale of Russian S-400 Triumf air defence missile systems to India saying it would complicate interoperability between Indian and American forces. His comments come at a time when India and Russia are hoping to hammer out the ₹ 39,000crore deal in October when Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin meet in New Delhi for the annual summit between the two countries.

India and Russia are exploring ways to bypass American sanctions through an alternative payment route, officials familiar with the negotiations said. “There’s lot of concern in the US administration and the Congress with the S-400 system. And there is concern that any country, and not just India, that is looking at acquiring the system...it will make interoperability harder,” said Thornberry, who was here on Monday with three members of the committee. He said new US legislation would inject flexibility for countries dependent on Russian equipment, but America’s concerns about the S-400 sale were “completely separate from any sanctions or legislation.”

The US passed the Countering America’s Adversaries through Sanctions Act earlier this year. The Indian Air Force wants to induct the missile systems to shore up defences in the northern and western sectors. Russia, the country’s top arms supplier, accounted for 62% of India’s arms imports during 2013–17, according to report released by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in March.

China warns US vessels to leave disputed waters

China's military announced Sunday that it had despatched warships to challenge two US Navy vessels that sailed through waters in the South China Sea that China claims as its own. The Chinese confronted the US ships and warned them to leave, the Ministry of National Defense said in a statement posted on its website, but other details of the encounter were not immediately clear. The US vessels — the Higgins, a destroyer, and the Antietam, a cruiser — passed within 12 nautical miles of the Paracel Islands, an archipelago in the northern part of the disputed waters of the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam.

The chief spokesman for China's Ministry of National Defense, Senior Col Wu Qian, said that the United States "gravely violated Chinese sovereignty". The high-seas confrontation, while not unprecedented, came as tensions have been rising between the United States and China on a number of fronts, from trade to the on-again-off-again talks with North Korea over its nuclear programme. In recent months, China has appeared more determined to defend its claims in the South China Sea, reinforcing and arming its bases in the Paracel Islands and farther south in the Spratly Islands, even though the various islands, reefs, shoals and other outcroppings are also claimed by Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan and others.

On May 18, China announced that it had for the first time landed its H-6K strategic bomber on an outpost in the Paracels, Woody Island. Earlier in the month, the United States also formally protested the deployment of missiles and radar equipment on three artificial islands China has built in the Spratly Islands.

US officials accused Beijing of breaking a promise the Chinese leader, Xi Jinping, made in 2015 when he said China did not intend to militarise the disputed territories. In retaliation for the deployment, the Pentagon last week rescinded an invitation for China to participate in a multinational naval exercise this summer near Hawaii. The two US warships involved on Sunday were carrying out manoeuvre known as

"freedom of navigation operations". The operations, which the Obama administration curtailed somewhat but which picked up again under US President Donald Trump, are intended to exercise what the United States says are its rights under international law.

China, whose claims on the islands in the Paracel and Spratly Islands are not recognised, argues that passage within 12 nautical miles constitutes a violation of the country's territory under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. In April, Chinese ships and aircraft challenged three vessels of the Australian navy as they traveled to port calls in Vietnam. "The United States naval vessels Antietam and Higgins entered without Chinese government permission into territorial waters" around the islands, which China calls the Xisha Islands, Mr Wu said in the statement.

China's military, he said, would be "firm and unwavering in its determination to strengthen sea and air operational preparedness construction" on the islands. The two ships passed within 12 miles of four islands — Tree, Lincoln, Triton and Woody — according to a US defence official. A spokesman for the US 7th Fleet, Cmdr Clay Doss, did not discuss the details of the Chinese challenge but said that in 2017, US warships conducted similar operations in the waters of 22 different countries, including allies of the United States. The operations "are not about any one country", he said in a statement, "nor are they about making political statements".

दैनिक जागरण

Tue, 29 May, 2018

समुद्री सुरक्षा पर सहयोग बढ़ाएंगे भारत और पाकिस्तान

भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच शीर्ष स्तर की वार्ता भले ही न हो रही हो लेकिन दोनों देशों के कई महकमे आपस में विचारों का आदान-प्रदान कर रहे हैं। समुद्री सीमा को लेकर सोमवार को दोनों देशों के तटरक्षक बलों के बीच वार्ता हुई। वार्ता में समुद्र में मछुआरों के सीमा उल्लंघन पर खासतौर से चर्चा हुई। सहमति बनी है कि दोनों देशों के समुद्री सीमा से संबंधित बलों के महानिदेशक अब हॉटलाइन से जुड़ेंगे। दोनों देशों के मछुआरे समुद्र में मछली पकड़ते हुए अक्सर दूसरे देश की सीमा में पहुंच जाते हैं। अक्सर वे गिरफ्तार भी होते हैं और बाद में समझौते के तहत छोड़े जाते हैं।

भारतीय तटरक्षक बल के महानिदेशक राजेंद्र सिंह ने बताया कि वार्ता का मुख्य मुद्दा मछुआरों द्वारा समुद्री सीमा का उल्लंघन है। लेकिन प्रदूषण, बचाव और तलाश के मामलों में सहयोग पर भी चर्चा हुई। इन मसलों पर चर्चा के लिए पाकिस्तान की समुद्री सुरक्षा एजेंसी के महानिदेशक एडमिरल जका उर रहमान के नेतृत्व में चार सदस्यीय दल भारत आया हुआ है। पाकिस्तानी दल में एक अधिकारी रक्षा मंत्रालय और एक अधिकारी विदेश मंत्रालय का भी है। इनके अतिरिक्त पाकिस्तानी उच्चायोग में तैनात डिफेंस अटैची और राजनीतिक मामलों में सचिव भी वार्ता में शामिल हुए।