

# समाचार पत्रों से चयित अंश Newspapers Clippings

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Wed, 06 Mar 2019

## Steps taken for permanent commissioning of women officers in armed forces: Defence Ministry

*“The Ministry of Defence has taken steps to ensure implementation of announcement made by the Prime Minister on August 15, 2018 regarding grant of permanent commission to women officers in the armed forces,” the ministry said in a statement*

New Delhi: The Defence Ministry on Tuesday said it had taken steps to ensure implementation of permanent commissioning of women officers in the armed forces, in line with the announcement made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech.

### Advertising

Addressing the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort in August 15 last year, Modi had announced that women officers recruited under the short service commission in the armed forces will have the option of taking up permanent commission, which he described as a “gift” to the “brave daughters”.

“The Ministry of Defence has taken steps to ensure implementation of announcement made by the Prime Minister on August 15, 2018 regarding grant of permanent commission to women officers in the armed forces,” the ministry said in a statement.

In so far as the Indian Air Force (IAF) is concerned, “all branches, including that of fighter pilots, are now open for women officers”, the statement added.

“In Indian Navy all non-sea going branches/cadre/specialisation have been opened for induction of women officers through short service commission. In addition to education, law and naval constructor branch/cadre, women SSC officers have been made eligible for grant of permanent commission in the naval armament branch, at par with male officers,” it said.

The proposal for induction of “three new training ships” for the Navy is under way, the ministry also said in the statement. “This will provide the requisite infrastructure for training of both men and women officers. Indian Navy will start inducting women in all branches, once the training ships are in place.”

Women officers will be granted permanent commission in the Indian Navy in “all the 10 branches” where women are inducted for short service commission, the statement said.

“So, besides the existing two streams of Judge Advocate General (JAG) and Army Education Corps, now permanent commission will be granted in Signals, Engineers, Army Aviation, Army Air Defence, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps and Intelligence also to women officers.

“SSC women officers will give their option for permanent commission before completion of four years of Commissioned Service, and they will exercise option for grant of permanent commission and their choice of specialisation,” it added.

SSC women officers will be considered for grant of permanent commission “based on suitability, merit etc and will be employed in various staff appointment”, the statement said.

The PM, in his speech on the occasion of Independence Day, had said, “I want to give good news to our brave daughters. Women officers who have been appointed through the SSC in the armed forces will get permanent commission through a transparent process. It is a gift for them.”

Under SSC, officers are allowed tenures ranging from five to 14 years of services. Permanent commission allows them to serve till the age of retirement.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/steps-taken-for-permanent-commissioning-of-women-officers-in-armed-forces-defence-ministry-5612931/>



Wed, 06 Mar 2019

## MoD okays Army HQ recast

*Operation, intel units to merge / 20% officers to move out*

*By Ajay Banerjee*

New Delhi: In the first major restructuring of the Army headquarters in the national capital, the Ministry of Defence is learnt to have reduced some 20 per cent of the officer posts, merged two weapons and systems procurement agencies and created a new post of Deputy Chief who will coordinate with military intelligence, operations and logistics wings.

Sources say Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has taken the decision in line with the government's resolve to make the 1.3-million strong Army leaner and fit for a 21st century war. A formal notification is expected anytime soon.

The new Deputy Chief will oversee strategy and operations, intelligence collation, conduct of operations and the movement of logistics. At present, the DG (Military Operations) and the DG (Military Intelligence) report to the Army Chief or Vice-Chief.

Also, the restructuring will merge the Master General Ordnance (MGO), who is currently under the Vice-Chief, and the DG (Weapons and Equipment) under a single vertical with the Deputy Chief (Planning and Strategy), which will be renamed Capability Development.

The officers who will be weaned off the headquarters will be sent to formations.

At present, there are an estimated 950 to 1,000 officers posted at the headquarters.

The MoD has also okayed the creation of a consolidated information warfare wing that will subsume two existing wings under the DGMI and the DGMO. The DG (Military Training) will now be merged with the Shimla-based Army Training Command.

Part of four major in-house studies, the restructuring okayed now is called "Reorganisation of the Army headquarters" and is aimed at its integration.

The other three studies on which a decision is yet to be announced are "Reorganisation and rightsizing of the Army", "Cadre review of officers" and "Review of terms of engagement of rank and file".

The rightsizing move is aimed at having a balanced cadre to meet the aspirations of the officers. This will include longer tenures as Brigadier, Major General and Lieutenant General and faster promotion from Colonel to Brigadier. The purpose of the last one is to have a younger profile of the officers.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/mod-okays-army-hq-recast/738639.html>

# No bank guarantees meant a more expensive new Rafale deal

*INT's final report reveals how the Indian negotiating position was weakened and the French position bolstered by a parallel negotiating track*

*By N Ram*

Beijing: China plans to complete the construction of the artificial sun this year, achieving an ion temperature of 100 million degrees Celsius, an official has said.

In its final report submitted to the Defence Ministry on July 21, 2016, the seven-member Indian Negotiating Team (INT) estimated the cost of loading bank guarantees, which the French commercial suppliers with backing from the French government refused to do, as €574 million. This made the €7.87 billion inter-governmental agreement signed on September 23, 2016 by the National Democratic Alliance government for the aircraft and weapons packages for the 36 fly-away Rafale fighter jets more expensive by €246.11 million than the estimated aligned cost of the Rafale aircraft deal initiated by the United Progressive Alliance government.

### Detailed document

The “Report of the Indian Negotiating Team on Procurement of 36 Rafale Aircraft for Indian Air Force” is a detailed and revealing document to which *The Hindu* has access. The report states in paragraph 69: “The final offer of 7878.98 M€ (excluding additional mandatory weapons supplies of 10.55 M€) is 327.89 M€ lower than the aligned cost of 8205.87 M€ with respect of MMRCA [Medium Multi Role Combat Aircraft] offer *without taking into account the impact of BG [Bank Guarantees], which has been brought out at Para-23 above [emphasis added].*”

### How cost was arrived at

In fact, the INT report elaborates in paragraphs 21, 22, and 23 on how it arrived at €574 million as the cost of loading the bank guarantee. The computations were done on “an annual bank commission rate of 2% including confirmation charges by an Indian bank, as communicated by SBI on 02 March 2016,” and the total commercial impact of bank guarantees was worked out to a substantial 7.28% of the contract value.

Item	Aligned cost in € million (without Bank Guarantee costs)	Final price offered by French side in € million (without Bank Guarantee costs)
Aircraft package	7341.58 <sup>*</sup>	7169
Weapons package	718.29	710.45 <sup>#</sup>
Total	8059.87	7879.45
Financial impact of Bank guarantees	574	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7485.87</b>	<b>7879.45</b>

\*The aligned costs for aircraft package has been further rationalised due to optimisation of Spares Package offered by the French side      # Excluding the cost of optional Weapons Package, supplies recommended by MBDA for training and operational requirements of IAF      Source: Page 4 of the dissent note signed by the three domain experts of the Indian Negotiating Team

Table 1, sourced from the dissent note of the domain experts, shows that the aligned cost is lower than the final negotiated price with the financial impact of bank guarantees.

The INT report reveals that the Indian negotiators repeatedly pressed the French side to provide bank guarantees. The Ministry of Law & Justice had advised in writing, in December 2015, that as a legal safeguard government or sovereign guarantees should be obtained from France “in view of the Contract involving huge pay-outs value of procurement price before actual delivery of supplies and services, which *de facto* meant advance payment.” With the French side flatly refusing to accept this demand made during the negotiations, the Indian negotiators did their best to secure bank guarantees, which had been included in the original MMRCA proposal made by Dassault Aviation.

### Again of no avail

The INT contended at one point that “the best way to resolve the concerns of the Ministry of Law & Justice and difference in the opinion of both sides with respect to the impact of BG loading is to provide BG and the confirmation charges would be borne by the Indian side.” This again proved to be of no avail.

The final INT report is silent on why the commercial impact of loading the bank guarantees was not factored into its exercise of comparing the costs of the new deal and the original MMRCA proposal (see Table 2). The same failure to explain the substantial missing factor in the aligned cost comparison is encountered in the Comptroller and Auditor General of India’s report on the Rafale deal presented in Parliament on February 13, 2019. More on this below.

**Table 2: Comparison of Costs**

Group	Designation of Supplies/Services	Benchmark Cost (€ million)	Aligned Cost (€ million)	Final Offer (€ million)
I	36 Flyaway Aircraft	2663.74	3302.13	3302.12
II	ISE equipment fitted on aircraft	0	0	0
III	Role equipment	233.98	386.95	386.95
IV	Tools, Testers & Ground Equipment (TTGE)	537.73	320.58	318.41
V	Spares	542.22	799.06	776.6
VI	Simulator Package	99.29	165.94	159.6
VII	Operational Support Equipment & HUMS	169.45	164.33	86.15
VIII	Documentation	0	79.73	79.72
IX	Associated Services	41.12	1886.62	1705.98
X	Performance Based Logistics (PBL)	160.48	236.25	206
XI	Simulators and Training Aids Annual Maintenance (STAAM)	87.24	147	147
Aircraft Package Grand Total (€ million)		4535.25	7488.58	7168.57
Weapons Package Grand Total (€ million)		526.86	718.29	710.41
<b>Grand Total (€ million)</b>		<b>5062.11</b>	<b>8206.87</b>	<b>7878.98</b>

It is not difficult to discover the reason for this conspicuous failure to take into account the commercial impact of bank guarantees and the awkward silence over this in the two reports. A parallel track of negotiations had been activated in 2015, unknown to most members of the INT, involving the Prime Minister’s Office and the National Security Adviser. We may recall here that a Defence Ministry note of November 24, 2015 had protested against the “parallel negotiations” being conducted behind the backs of the Defence Ministry and the INT by officials of the Prime Minister’s Office. The note stated that this had “weakened the negotiating position of MoD and the Indian Negotiating Team”. The then Defence Secretary, G. Mohan Kumar, had strongly endorsed this protest with his own hand-written noting, “RM may pl. see. It is desirable that such discussion be avoided by the PMO as it undermines our negotiating position seriously.”

Without pointing fingers at anyone, the INT report reveals the extent to which these parallel negotiations, which continued into 2016 and right up to the time of signing the IGA, weakened the Indian negotiating position and benefited the French side. The latter only had to rely on what had been agreed on along the parallel track with officials of the PMO and the National Security Adviser or cite the draft IGA or the Memorandum of Understanding, signed on January 25, 2016, as the effective closure of the deal. For instance, when on March 31, 2016 the Indian negotiators pressed for the inclusion of bank guarantees, citing legal advice from the Ministry of Law and Justice, all that the French side had to do was to assert that “the basic principle of Bank Guarantees had been explained several times earlier and that it was not compatible with the structure of the IGA and that Bank Guarantees were not acceptable.”

The more important reason for this silence on why the cost of loading bank guarantees fails to figure in the cost comparison lies in the Indo-French Joint Statement issued on April 10, 2015. On what was to take shape as the new Rafale deal, it reads as follows: “Government of India conveyed to the Government of France that in view of critical operational necessity for Multirole Combat Aircraft for Indian Air Force (IAF), Government of India would like to acquire 36 Rafale jets in fly-away condition as quickly as possible. The two leaders agreed to conclude an Inter-Governmental Agreement for supply of the aircraft on terms that would be better than conveyed by Dassault Aviation as part of a separate process underway; the delivery would be in a time frame that would be compatible with the operational requirement of IAF and that the aircraft and associated systems and weapons would be delivered on the same configuration as had been tested and approved by IAF, and with a longer maintenance responsibility by France.”

Stating categorically that loading bank guarantees in the cost comparison would have led to the conclusion that the new deal was not on “better terms” than the original MMRCA proposal would have directly contradicted the promise made in the Indo-French Joint Statement, which the INT report acknowledges as “the guiding principle for determining better terms.”

However, as I reported in The Hindu of February 13, 2019, the three domain experts on the INT, whose eight-page note of dissent is appended to the INT report, had no such inhibitions about arriving at the conclusion that “the final price offered by the French Government cannot be considered as ‘better terms’ compared to the MMRCA offer and therefore not meeting the requirement of the Joint Statement”.

In its submission made to the Supreme Court of India, the government argued that it had obtained a Rafale deal on “better terms” than what had been envisaged in the preceding MMRCA procurement process. This claim also figures in Volume II of the CAG’s performance audit report relating to the Rafale deal. The CAG calculated the cost of bank guarantees separately but did not include it in the tabulation when it asserted that the deal signed by the Modi government was 2.86% lower than the UPA-era bid for the French fighter jet.

However, the CAG report entered this caveat: “In the offer of 2007 M/s DA had provided the financial and Performance Guarantees, the cost of which was embedded in the offer because the RPF had required the Vendor to factor these costs in the Price Bid. But in the offer of 2015 there was no such guarantee as it was an IGA...Therefore, the total saving of ‘AAB3’ million € accruing to the vendor by not having to pay these Bank Charges should have been passed on to Ministry. Ministry has agreed to the Audit calculations on Bank Guarantees but contended that this was a saving to the Ministry because the Bank guarantee charges were not to be paid. However, Audit noted that this was actually a saving for M/s DA when compared to its previous offer of 2007.”

### **Final INT Report calculations**

According to the final report of the INT, the cost of bank guarantees not provided by the French side for the new deal negotiated by the NDA government was calculated to be €574 million. The report also explicitly noted in paragraph 69 that the NDA government’s deal was €327.89 million lower, “without taking into account the impact of BG (Bank Guarantee).”

In a section titled “Impact of Bank Guarantee,” the INT calculated the commercial impact of bank guarantees for ‘Advance Payments’, ‘Performance Bond’ and ‘Warranty and MTBF Linked Bond’. The calculations were done at an annual bank commission rate of 2%, including confirmation charges by an Indian bank, as communicated by the State Bank of India on March 2, 2016. The total impact of bank guarantees came to 7.28%, “which translates to approximately 574 M€ for the offered cost of 7890M€.”

During the negotiations, the INT report notes, the French side “provided their version of the calculations for Bank Guarantee loading, reflecting a figure of 143 M€, which was at an annual commission rate of 0.5% without confirmation by an Indian bank”. The INT thereafter proposed that “if the Bank Guarantee charges are so low, the French side may provide the Bank Guarantees and confirmation charges would be borne by the Indian side as actuals. The suggestion was not agreed to by the French side.”

The Ministry of Law and Justice had suggested that the French side should provide the bank guarantees and that the Indian side could bear the cost of confirmation charges of loading of bank guarantee.

The Defence Acquisition Committee (DAC), chaired by the then Defence Minister, Manohar Parrikar, had directed the INT on July 14, 2016 to “determine BG (Bank Guarantee) impact based on rates at the source bank and bring out its recommendations on BG charges”.

### **The significance of bank guarantees in pricing**

With the French side refusing to give a sovereign or government guarantee, the Cabinet Committee on Security made a further concession by waiving the requirement of bank guarantees from the French commercial suppliers and instead settled for a legally non-binding ‘Letter of Comfort’ from the French Prime Minister. By contrast, during the submission of bids for the MMRCA tender to the UPA government, all companies, including Dassault Aviation, had submitted bank guarantees from first class banks of international repute.

As reported in The Hindu of February 13, 2019, Sudhansu Mohanty, Financial Adviser (Defence Services), had recommended that in the absence of a sovereign or bank guarantee, “it would be prudent to involve the French government as far as releases are concerned” and that a practical way of doing this was to have the Indian government make further payments to an escrow account held under the charge of the French government and operated under terms and conditions agreed between the two governments. Mr. Mohanty’s recommendation too was ignored, and as noted in Paragraph 46 of the INT’s final report, the Indian payments were to be made directly to the two private companies, Dassault Aviation and MBDA France, through their dedicated bank accounts opened at the French government-controlled bank, Caisse des Depots Consignations (CDC), France.

The question of bank guarantees assumes additional importance as 60% of the payments were to be made in advance by the Indian government to the French commercial suppliers. These payments were to be made within 18 months of signing the deal, that is, by March 2018, although the first Rafale fighter jet would arrive in India only after 36 months, that is, in September 2019.

Following the publication of my investigative article on the Defence Ministry’s November 24, 2015 note of protest against “parallel negotiations”, the former Defence Secretary, Mr. Mohan Kumar, claimed that the note “had nothing to do with price. It was about sovereign guarantees and general terms and conditions.” He also asserted that “it was not about parallel negotiations, but about parallel viewpoints. We told them that there was no need for such discussions. I have written the note in that particular context. There was nothing very serious about it. It was when the negotiations started and later all issues had been settled. No interference or anything of that sort happened from the PMO in the final negotiations.” He explained further that “the parallel viewpoints were related to a collateral guarantee which India wanted in the deal. We had expressed different opinions about that discussion. That’s all it was.”)

What we learn from the INT report, the dissent note by the three domain experts, the legal advice from the Ministry of Law & Justice, and also the CAG's report is that Mr. Mohan Kumar was being economical with the truth. First, the issue of bank guarantees, which figured repeatedly in the negotiations, was specifically mentioned in the Defence Ministry's note of protest against the "parallel negotiations" that undercut the Indian negotiating position. Secondly, the refusal by the French side to provide bank guarantees, which had been an integral part of Dassault Aviation's 2007 MMRCA offer, had a substantial material bearing on the pricing of the new Rafale deal.

In a recent address at a media conclave, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that "India is feeling the absence of Rafale. The entire country is saying in one voice today, if we had Rafale probably the result would have been different." It is noteworthy that nobody of consequence, either in the political opposition or in the news media, has questioned the quality of, or the need for, the Rafale fighter jets. What has been in question is the process of decision-making, which has in many material respects been shown by investigative journalism to have deviated from the standard military procurement procedures laid down, as well as the pricing and other terms and accompaniments of the deal.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/no-bank-guarantees-meant-a-more-expensive-new-rafale-deal/article26441468.ece>



Wed, 06 Mar 2019

## Terror via sea, cautions Navy Chief

*Terrorists being trained, may take sea route to attack India, says Lanba in address to global experts*

New Delhi: Navy chief Admiral Sunil Lanba on Tuesday said there are reports about terrorists being trained to carry out operations through the sea against India even as New Delhi refuted Pakistan's claims of presence of an Indian Navy submarine in Pakistani waters in the Arabian sea.

Addressing a gathering of global experts at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue here, Lanba said the Pulwama attack was perpetrated by extremists that were "aided by a State" that seeks to destabilise India. But he did not name Pakistan.

"We have reports of terrorists being trained to carry out operations in various modus operandi, including through the medium of the sea," he said. His warning came days after the Pulwama attack. The 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attack in 2008 was carried out by 10 sea-borne terrorists of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), who hijacked an Indian fishing trawler to reach Mumbai and unleash mayhem.

While sounding a note of caution about the possibility of terrorists using the sea route for their actions, the Navy chief said this part of the world had witnessed multiple forms of terrorism in recent years and few countries in the region had been spared.

The global nature that terrorism has acquired in the recent times has further enhanced the scope of this threat, Lanba said. India, however, faces a "far more serious" version of "State-sponsored" terrorism, he said.

"We recently saw the horrific scale of the extremist attack in J&K about three weeks ago. This violence was perpetrated by extremists aided and abetted by a State that seeks to destabilise India," he said.

He added, "We have seen how quickly terror groups evolve across the globe. A particular brand of terror can well become a global problem in near future."

The Indian security establishment is continuously working to address this menace, the Navy chief said, noting that "it is imperative that the global community works in concert to eliminate terrorism".

Lanba also emphasised the importance of the Indo-Pacific Region. “There is a renewed focus of the world on the seas. This is principally due to the geo-economic and geopolitical significance of the maritime domain.”

Meanwhile, India and Pakistan on Tuesday traded charges with the latter claiming that an Indian Navy submarine was forced to return from Pakistani waters after it was detected on Monday. New Delhi termed it as “false propaganda and spread of misinformation” besides rubbing Islamabad’s claim that its air force had shot down a SU-30 fighter plane.

On the submarine issue, the Pakistan Navy said it had identified an Indian submarine in its maritime zone. The official message said it “successfully detected and thwarted an attempt by the submarine to enter Pakistani waters.

The Pakistani Navy spokesperson also said, “The Indian submarine was not targeted keeping in view Pakistan’s policy of peace.”

The Pakistan Navy also released a video, shot from air, supposedly of the Indian submarine’s mast above water.

Brushing aside the Pakistan claim, the Indian Navy termed it as “false propaganda.” The brief statement also said the Navy does not “take cognisance of such propaganda” adding “our deployments remain undeterred.”

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2019/page1/terror-via-sea--cautions-navy-chief.html>



Wed, 06 Mar 2019

## **IAF to equip Su-30MKI with Israeli Spice-2000 bombs used in Balakot air strikes**

*The Indian Air Force will equip the entire fleet of Su-30MKI with Israeli-made Spice-2000 bombs used against Jaish-e-Mohammed training camps in Pakistan’s Balakot*

**New Delhi:** The Indian Air Force (IAF) is all set to equip its Su-30MKI combat aircraft with Israeli-made Spice-2000 bombs which were deployed to carry out air strikes on Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists training camp inside Pakistan. As per the government sources, right now the only aircraft which is capable of delivering bombs on enemy targets is Dassault’s Mirage 2000. However, after arming Su-30s with Spice bombs it will enhance the overall firepower of the multirole air superiority fighter.

India had purchased more than 200 bombs from Israel a few years back and the IAF has already conducted trials by launching the Spice-2000 on ground targets and the entire Su-30 fleet would be equipped with these bombs soon.

The Spice bombs are a derivative of Popeye air-to-surface missile and are fed with coordinates and satellite pictures of the target to home in and destroy the intended targets, reported ANI. The EO/GPS-guided guidance kit can transform unguided bombs or ‘dumb bombs’ into all-weather precision-guided bombs.

Once implemented, it will boost the attack capabilities of the Air Force. Currently, the IAF is operating around three squadrons of these planes and the IAF is planning to get around 20 more by the end of 2020.

The Spice-2000 bombs were used extensively during the air strikes on Pakistan on February 26 in Balakot in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. Spice bombs are comparable to the American-made Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM).

Meanwhile, the Defence Ministry rejected Pakistan's claim of shooting down a Sukhoi-30 jet of the Indian Air Force (IAF) during a dogfight with PAF's F-16 last week. In a statement, the ministry said that all the Sukhoi-30 aircraft which were deployed to check counter Pakistani jets landed back safely at their respective bases.

<https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/iaf-sukhoi-su-30mki-israel-spice-2000-balakot-khyber-pakhtunkhwa-jem-mirage-2000-paf-f/377433>

## THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Wed, 06 Mar 2019

# US justified F-16 sale to Pakistan in 2008 as deterrence against India

*India has asked the Trump admin to ascertain if the use of  
F-16s and AMRAAMs violated enduser conditions*

*By Pranab Dhal Samanta*

New Delhi: Pakistan's use of F-16s against India on February 27 has raised tough questions for Washington, which had justified the sale on grounds of not just combatting terror but also as providing "deterrence value" to Pakistan in case of a future conflict with India.

This is exactly how the then US Ambassador to Pakistan Anne Patterson had framed her embassy's pitch for an exception to allow for diversion of American counter-terrorism financial assistance to Pakistan for purchasing F-16s and related enhancements.

The package included 500 AIM-120-C5 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAMs), remnants of one of which was recovered and exhibited as evidence by the Indian Air Force.

"An enhanced F-16 program also has deterrence value by giving Pakistan time and space to employ a conventional, rather than nuclear, reaction in the event of a future conflict with India," wrote Patterson in her 20-paragraph communique, as disclosed by WikiLeaks, to Washington on April 24, 2008, giving reasons to justify the deal using US taxpayer money.

Those familiar with the ongoing conversation with the US told ET that India has already asked the Donald Trump administration to ascertain if the use of F-16s and AMRAAMs violated enduser conditions.

### **Congressional Nod to Divert Funds**

And if not, then New Delhi would want to know from Washington when it intends to revisit the terms. On Tuesday, the IAF put out a detailed statement on what happened on February 27, which appeared to be almost a replay of the scenario which Patterson had painted.

"During combat, use of F-16 by PAF and multiple launches of AMRAAM were conclusively observed. Prompt and correct tactical action by Su-30 aircraft, in response to AMRAAM launch, defeated the missile. Parts of the missile fell in an area east of Rajouri in J&K, injuring a civilian on ground," the IAF said in the statement.

Back in 2008, Washington moved for Congressional approval to divert funds, essentially a subsidy, within five months of Patterson's cable. And in his testimony on September 16, 2008, before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, admiral Jeffrey Wieringa, then director of the US Defence Security Cooperation Agency, disclosed that the Pakistan programme was structured by three Letters of Acceptance (LOAs) — first for 18 new F-16s, second for specialised munitions like the AMRAAMs, and third for mid-life update of Pakistan's older fleet of 46 F-16s.

In the context of the use of AMRAAMs by Pakistan, admiral Wieringa's statement seems instructive. "The second LOA provides for munitions and includes: 500 AIM-120C-5 AMRAAM, 750 Mark 84 2,000 lb general purpose bombs, 700 BLU-109 penetrator bombs... these weapons will be available to Pakistan beginning June 2010."

India was, however, assured by the George W Bush administration that the US had ensured a stringent monitoring system on the use and deployment of F-16s. This included informing the US on deployment of these assets in an exercise or in an operation in a third

On July 20, 2006, around the time when the decision to resume F-16 sales to Pakistan was made, the then assistant secretary of state for military affairs John Hillen informed the same House Committee of the stringent conditions.

"There is a two-man rule, so to speak, for access to this equipment and restricted areas, and F-16 flights outside of Pakistan or participation in exercises and operations with third nations must be approved by the United States government," he said.

The incidents of February 27 have, however, brought the whole issue back to the fore. In 2016, India had successfully blocked the effort of the Obama administration to sell eight additional F-16s to Pakistan by lobbying aggressively in the Congress.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/us-justified-f-16-sale-to-pakistan-in-2008-as-deterrence-against-india/articleshow/68279161.cms>



*Wed, 06 Mar 2019*

## **China hikes defence budget by 7.5%; GDP growth target 6-6.5%**

Beijing: China, the world's second largest military spender after the US, today announced a 7.5 per cent increase in its defence budget for this year, hiking it to a whopping \$177.61 billion, over three times that of India.

The GDP growth target has been set at 6-6.5 per cent for 2019, while it aims to maintain consumer inflation level at around 3 per cent and create over 11 million new urban jobs. The surveyed urban unemployment rate is projected to stay around 5.5 per cent. The 2019 defence budget of the country will be 1.19 trillion yuan (about \$177.61 billion), according to a draft budget report submitted by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang at the opening of the annual session of China's Parliament, the National People's Congress (NPC).

The increase this year is lower than that of last year's 8.1 per cent which amounted to \$175 billion. Last year, in yuan terms, China had allocated 1.11 trillion yuan.

With this year's increase, China's defence spending moved closer to the \$200 billion mark, making it the highest spender on defence after the US. India's defence budget this year was increased by 6.87 per cent to Rs 3.18 lakh crore against last year's allocation of Rs 2.98 lakh crore. — Agencies

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/world/china-hikes-defence-budget-by-7-5-gdp-growth-target-6-6-5/738749.html>

# Here's why the U.S. just deployed a powerful THAAD missile defense system in Israel

*By Isabel Debre*

Jerusalem: The U.S. has deployed a highly advanced missile defense system in Israel for the first time, the American and Israeli militaries announced Monday, reflecting their shared concerns about Iran's development of powerful missiles.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hailed the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system, or THAAD, as a testament to the strength of the two countries' military ties, saying that it makes Israel "even stronger in order to deal with near and distant threats from throughout the Middle East."

Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus, an Israeli army spokesman, told reporters that a THAAD battery, flown in from the U.S. and Europe, arrived Monday at an air force base in southern Israel. He said that the defense battery has only been installed a few times elsewhere in the world, and tested the U.S. ability to carry out accelerated deployment of such powerful and complex weapons.

Israel already has an advanced multi-layered missile defense system, capable of intercepting everything from advanced guided long-range missiles outside the atmosphere to short-range unguided rockets fired from neighboring Gaza.

During this week's drill, the THAAD battery, which shoots down long and intermediate range missiles, will bolster Israel's existing systems. The deployment is temporary, and for now, the THAAD system will not be permanently integrated into the Israeli defense shield, Conricus said.

The U.S. military echoed said the deployment demonstrates the United States' "continued commitment to Israel's regional security" and more broadly shows that U.S. forces can "respond quickly and unpredictably to any threat, anywhere, at any time."

Conricus described the deployment as a defensive drill unrelated to current developments in the region, but it comes amid tensions with Iran and its Lebanese proxy Hezbollah. Earlier this year, tensions nearly escalated into a confrontation between the longtime foes when Israel struck Iranian military targets in Syria in retaliation for Iran launching a missile from Damascus toward northern Israel. The Iranian missile was successfully intercepted by Israel's defensive shield.

Israeli officials have repeatedly raised concerns about Iran's development of long-range missiles as well as Hezbollah's vast arsenal of rockets and missiles in neighboring Lebanon.

<http://time.com/5543182/united-states-thaad-anti-missile-israel/>

## **China to complete artificial sun device this year: official**

Beijing: China plans to complete the construction of the artificial sun this year, achieving an ion temperature of 100 million degrees Celsius, an official has said.

The HL-2M Tokamak device is designed to replicate the nuclear fusion process that occurs naturally in the sun and stars to provide almost infinite clean energy through controlled nuclear fusion, which is often dubbed as the "artificial sun."

Achieving an ion temperature above 100 million degrees Celsius is one of the three challenges to reach the goal of harnessing the nuclear fusion, and the core of the sun is widely believed to be 15 million degree Celsius, meaning that the ion at the device's core will be seven times higher than that of the Sun, Duan Xuru, an official of the China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) was quoted as saying by the state-run Global Times.

The other two challenges are containing the fusion within a limited space in the long term, and providing a sufficiently high density profile, Science and Technology Daily reported on Monday.

"The artificial sun's plasma is mainly composed of electrons and ions, and the country's existing Tokamak devices have achieved an electron temperature of over 100 million degrees Celsius in its core plasma, and an ion temperature of 50 million degrees Celsius, and it is the ion that generates energy in the device," Duan said.

To bring up the ion temperature to over 100 million degree Celsius, we need higher device parameters, injects and absorbs more energy, and operates with a more advanced working mode, Duan said.

The new HL-2M device will possess such capabilities, and hopefully will elevate the current device's plasma electric current level which shall greatly enhance the plasma's parameters providing a main technical support for China's participation in the experiment and operation of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), Science and Technology Daily reported.

The ITER is a large international scientific project that is a global collaboration of 35 countries, including China, Russia and the US.

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2019/world/china-to-complete-artificial-sun-device-this-year--official.html>