

समाचार पत्रों से चयित अंश Newspapers Clippings

दैनिक सामयिक अभिज्ञता सेवा
A daily Current Awareness Service

Vol. 44 No. 56 20 March 2019



रक्षा विज्ञान पुस्तकालय
Defence Science Library
रक्षा वैज्ञानिक सूचना एवं प्रलेखन केन्द्र
Defence Scientific Information & Documentation Centre
मैटकॉफ हाऊस, दिल्ली - 110 054
Metcalf House, Delhi - 110 054

Were India and Pakistan on the brink of missile warfare amid recent hostilities?

NSA Ajit Doval had reportedly spoken with Pakistan's ISI chief Asim

Munir over a secure line hours after the dogfight in February

By Prathapan Bhaskaran

A reported Indian threat to hit at least six targets with missiles and Pakistani vow to retaliate with "three times" the force set off alarm bells in western capitals triggering their intervention to prevent the catastrophe and de-escalate the tensions in the wake Indian bombing of Balakot to avenge Pulwama terror strike and Pakistani raid across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, media reports say. During the conflict, New Delhi said it shot down a Pakistani F-16 fighter jet in a skirmish and lost a MiG-21 plane whose pilot Abhinandan Varthaman was taken alive after ejecting from the burning plane and was later returned to India.

Though Indian officials have denied knowledge of such a missile threat, a Reuters report said a Pakistani minister and a western diplomat separately confirmed the threat and avowed retaliation, a report in The Hindu said. The sources did not specify who delivered the threat or who received it. "We said if you will fire one missile, we will fire three," the Pakistani minister said.

India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval had reportedly spoken with Pakistan's ISI chief Asim Munir over a secure line hours after the dogfight over the LoC to tell him India was not going to back down. Doval told Munir that India's fight was with the militant groups that operated from Pakistani soil and it was prepared to escalate, a government source told Reuters.

A Pakistani government minister and a Western diplomat in Islamabad separately confirmed a specific Indian threat to hit six targets inside Pakistan, according to the report. They did not specify who delivered the threat or who received it, but the minister said Indian and Pakistani intelligence agencies "were communicating with each other during the fight, and even now they are communicating with each other".

Pakistan said it would counter any Indian missile attacks with many more launches of its own, the minister told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We said if you will fire one missile, we will fire three. Whatever India will do, we will respond three times to that," the Pakistani minister said.

Reports of the threat and counter threat set western diplomatic circles buzz and US National Security Advisor John Bolton was forced to intervene despite his preoccupation with President Donald Trump's summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in Vietnam. Washington, Beijing, and London reportedly joined hands to put pressure on the two countries to back down.

With two nuclear-armed nations arraigned across one of the world's most militarized borders and the LoC in Kashmir, there is always a threat of a misunderstanding and escalation, which keep world powers on edge.

Though sources confirm the exchanges did not go beyond threats and that at any point there was the threat of use of weapons other than the conventional ones, they did create tensions in world capitals.

Revealing the hectic behind-the-scenes action, the report said that Bolton was on the phone with Doval on the night of Feb 27 itself, and into the early hours of Feb 28, the second day of the Trump-Kim talks, in a bid to defuse the situation, a Western diplomat in New Delhi and an Indian official told Reuters.

Later, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who was also in Hanoi, called both sides to seek a way out of the crisis. "Secretary Pompeo led diplomatic engagement directly, and that played an essential

role in de-escalating the tensions between the two sides," State Department deputy spokesperson Robert Palladino said in a briefing in Washington on March 5. Pompeo spoke to Doval, the Indian and Pakistani Foreign Ministers Sushma Swaraj and Shah Mahmood Qureshi, respectively, Palladino said.

US Indo-Pacific Command Admiral Phil Davidson told reporters in Singapore last week that he had separately been in touch with the Indian navy chief, Admiral Sunil Lanba, throughout the crisis. On the morning of Feb 28, Trump told reporters in Hanoi that he expected the crisis to end soon. "They have been going at it and we have been involved in trying to have them stop. Hopefully, that is going to be coming to an end."

The Pakistani minister said China and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) also intervened in the matter. The government of the UAE said Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan spoke to both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. His announcement in Pakistan's parliament that the Indian pilot would be released helped thaw the situation further, and Abhinandan was sent back the next day. "I know last night there was a threat there could a missile attack on Pakistan, which got defused," Khan said. "I know, our army stood prepared for retaliation of that attack."

The two countries have gone to war three times since they gained independence in 1947, the last time in 1971. The two armies are trading fire along the line of control that separates them in Kashmir, but the tensions appear contained, reports say.

The militaries of both India and Pakistan regularly flight test missiles of different caliber and have claimed to have inducted ballistic missiles and terrain-hugging cruise missiles of different ranges. These missiles are regular items of display in national day parades in both capitals. Many of the missiles in their arsenals are capable of reaching any part of the other country and wreaking havoc.

India has inducted short-range ballistic missiles (SRBM) Prithvi 1, 2 and 3 missiles of ranges 150km to 350km, Dhanush, a ship-launched SRBM and vehicle launched Agni-1 of up to 1,200km range. Its arsenal also has medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) Agni 2 of up to 3,500km and intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM) Agni-3 of up to 5,000km range. Hypersonic cruise missile BahMos that can hit targets up to 500km away are also part of Indian arsenal.

Pakistani missile arsenal is equally impressive with SRBMs Hatf-1 that can hit targets 100km away, Hatf-2 'Abdali' of up to 200km range, Hatf-3 'Ghaznavi' that can reach up to 200km away, and the 700km-range Hatf 4 'Shaheen-1'. MRBMs include Hatf -5 'Ghauri' that can travel up to 1,500km and Hatf-6 'Shaheen-2' that can hit targets 2,500km away. Hatf-7 'Babur' is a cruise missile that can seek out targets up to 700km away while the Pakistani military has also deployed an anti-ship cruise missile (ASCM) Exocet that can hit targets up to 180km away.

<https://www.ibtimes.co.in/were-india-pakistan-brink-missile-warfare-amid-recent-hostilities-794118>



Wed, 20 Mar 2019

‘A simple, honest and inspiring man’

Classmates, teacher recall Parrikar’s can-do attitude and sense of fairness

By Shubha Sharma

Mumbai: Bakul Desai remembers the time he arrived at IIT Bombay on a rainy day in 1977, a big steel trunk in one hand, a “holdall” in another. He saw a man roaming barefoot outside the hostel warden’s office, and presumed he was a hired help.

The man readily helped him offload his things, and Mr. Desai pulled out ₹2 as a tip, “a princely sum in those days.” The man politely declined, saying, “*Main paise nahi leta, saheb* [I don’t take money, Sir].”

A short while later, to his horror, Mr. Desai saw the man sitting with a bunch of other students in the mess. He pointed to Mr. Desai, saying he was the man who tried to tip him. The students promptly ganged up to rag him, but the man came forward and pulled him away to safety. And that is how a lifelong friendship began between Mr. Desai and the man, who was later to become India's defence minister. "Manohar Parrikar taught me my first life lesson that day: 'Seek help but don't tip or bribe anyone'," says Mr. Desai.

More lessons were to come through his years at IIT, especially as the secretary of the canteen, working under Parrikar: how he got 40 to 50 students to work in the kitchen when the mess workers struck work, or how he went all the way to the Byculla wholesale market to bring back provisions, cutting down the mess bill. "I might resort to calling him Manu through our conversation," the Hyderabad-based entrepreneur says, "as that is how we knew him. Manu was one of the most diligent people I knew." His sense of fairness and discipline were strong, sometimes "carried to ridiculous extremes".

"When he was a minister, he had two mobile phones, one that he used to call the 'government phone' and the other a 'personal phone.' If I ever called him on the government phone, he would ask me to call on the other one."

'More than a friend'

Mr. Desai says he has lost more than a friend. "I have seen all sides of him, through ups and his downs. I miss his wit, his funny anecdotes."

Amol Gokhale, professor in the mechanical engineering department at IIT Bombay, says he saw the seeds of what Parrikar was to be in his later years, back in 1973, as his classmate. "When the Emergency was declared in the late 1970s, he started mobilising the student population, and had to go underground. He would emerge suddenly, at 1 a.m or 2 a.m, in my room and I would take him through the portions covered in class. He got all of us registered as voters when elections were subsequently declared. Although he was highly intelligent, he was not as devoted to studies. Still, he did fairly well in academics."

Much later, Mr. Gokhale closely saw how his friend worked professionally, when he was in the DRDO and Parrikar was the defence minister. "He understood the inner workings of the DRDO from me, not just as a picture painted to a politician." The two things that stood out for him then — how Parrikar always did his homework: "he read every word of every file and went a couple of layers beyond what he read", and how he could see through the "dealers" in Delhi: "he would throw them off guard with one technical question."

'Had a spark in him'

Krishna Mohan Gupt, who taught Parrikar industrial design at IIT, says he could "see the spark in him, his commitment and his sense of focus," back then. "He was the kind of person who was very particular, once he took on a responsibility. He would never leave things half-done."

Besides his can-do attitude, his friends and his teacher also recall his simplicity. In Mr. Desai's words: "Just like Albert Einstein once said about Mahatma Gandhi, I say about Manu: 'I can't believe such a man walked the earth.' I can't believe he was for real; someone as simple, as clear, as honest and as inspiring."

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/a-simple-honest-and-inspiring-man/article26572917.ece>

IAF is grossly under-equipped

Lack of empathy and understanding of an operational requirement due to bureaucratic procedures and attitudes is a cause for concern. In any other country, where the political and bureaucratic climate is cognisant of military urgencies, many heads would have rolled

New Delhi: The Pulwama and Balakot incidents have pushed into the background the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on the Indian Air Force (IAF) acquisitions, of which the Rafale deal hogged the limelight. Despite the favourable Pulwama end state being achieved, albeit temporary, there is an imperative that needs urgent government attention. Tucked away in the CAG report is a cry beseeching a look into what one may call 'defence distress', paraphrasing the term from the agrarian and farmers' distress that every politician is talking about. The last two are vote banks which no politician can be reticent about, as they are leveraged through morchas, hartals and strikes. Unfortunately, when defence distress strikes, it is deadly, and often 'fatal' in a way. The Balakot incident demonstrated resoundingly that India has had enough of Pakistan's support to terrorism; however, it should not divert our attention from the fact that defence pangs are a reality and the tell-tale signs should be recognised and acted upon. There are three pointers that need elaboration; though IAF examples are discussed, the issues are valid for other defence forces too.

Critiquing sub-optimal defence procurement procedures, CAG has commented that the non-conclusion of a usage contract precluded the use of the flight simulator for the C-130 Hercules aircraft till 2016, despite it being ready four years earlier. In the interim, India lost five air warriors and a multi-million-dollar aircraft in 2014, attributed to a training issue. This is the first pointer — lack of empathy and understanding of an operational requirement due to bureaucratic procedures and attitudes (remember, the simulator was fully ready). In any other country, where the political and bureaucratic climate is cognisant of military urgencies, many heads would have rolled.

The second pointer is of an intangible kind, which, if neglected, shows up with deadly results later. The HAL-built HPT-32 trainer was grounded in 2009 after many accidents, 13 of which were fatal. Many red flags had been raised about the stone-like gliding quality of the HPT after an engine failure (a frequent occurrence). The IAF had pulled along till the proverbial straw fell on the camel's back and we lost two flying instructors at the Air Force Academy (AFA). The HPT was grounded, throwing the training profiles of rookie pilots into bedlam, and for the next few years a sub-optimal training pattern on the HJT-16 Kiran was followed. The emergency purchase of the Pilatus aircraft revolutionised training; AFA's flight line was chock-a-block with the gleaming new trainers till 2017 or so when, due to non-finalisation of maintenance contracts, a severe lack of spares ensued. This is the situation even now, as per media reports. However, training has to continue to ensure a regular pilot feed for frontline squadrons and one is sure that cannibalisation (shifting) of spares among aircraft is being done and extension given to parts whose life is expiring. The situation must be similar for some other fleets, too, as many acquisition and upgrade programmes have been inordinately delayed, a fact stated by the Air Chief last month. This unacceptable situation is the second indicator of a serious problem, where lack of funds could be pushing reliability of war-fighting equipment towards an unsafe zone, which may translate into tragic results later.

The third warning is where op-preparedness starts getting affected. Under-equipping of the Indian Army was one of the major causes of the 1962 China debacle. At a recent conference, tears welled up in a retired Lt General's eyes while narrating the humiliation the armed forces had felt then. "Thank God for the subsequent 1965 Indo-Pak war that brought back some self-respect," remarked the General. After 1962, the government funded an accelerated re-equipping plan and the victory in the 1971 war bears witness to that effort. However, as per recent media reports, we are on the downslide

again with a shortage of fighter squadrons and many critical items; soldiers' rifles are having to be imported by the fast-track route, ammunition is in short supply, and sniper rifles, Naval helicopters and MiG-29 fighters for the IAF are planned to be imported too. But will these just remain plans, as this year's defence acquisition budget is insufficient even for previously concluded contracts? Answers to these pointers have a bearing on what happens hereafter.

Will the post-Pulwama happenings deter Pakistan? The answer is an emphatic no. It is time to remember Bernard Brodie, the doyen of strategic thought, who said, "Avoidance of blackmail can be achieved only by demonstrating that our readiness to accept risks need not be and is not less than the blackmailer's."

History shows that adversaries cannot be reformed as per one's wish but have to be coped with through management strategies in which hard power is vital to prevent blackmail. Addressing defence concerns (though not a vote catcher) is an imperative first step to 'manage' Pakistan and simultaneously weigh against China. While short-term responses after the Pulwama attack will be implemented, long-term solutions require tons of money and decades of time spread over many governments. Of the three attributes that determine deterrence to prevent blackmail — resolve, capability and capacity — the Balakot incident demonstrated the first two; the third, dependent on an indigenous arms base, is in short supply. Politicians of all hues need to put their shoulders to the wheel and address defence preparedness in a bi-partisan manner — indigenous defence R&D and manufacture must be kickstarted. Hard power, in quality and quantity, is the key to building deterrence to avert future Pulwamas. Can every political party elaborate, in its election manifesto, what it would do to address defence preparedness? That would indeed be welcome.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/iaf-is-grossly-under-equipped/745832.html>



Wed, 20 Mar 2019

Army set to fast-track light machine gun buy

After ordering 72,400 assault rifles from the US under the fast track procedure (FTP), the army is now looking to take the same route to equip its soldiers with 16,000 new light machine guns (LMGs), two officials familiar with the matter said on the condition of anonymity

By Rahul Singh

New Delhi: After ordering 72,400 assault rifles from the US under the fast track procedure (FTP), the army is now looking to take the same route to equip its soldiers with 16,000 new light machine guns (LMGs), two officials familiar with the matter said on the condition of anonymity.

The FTP can be invoked in cases where "undue/unforeseen delay" in buying weapons is seen to be adversely impacting the military's capacity and preparedness, said one of the officials cited above.

"Indian Army teams will visit weapon manufactures in several countries including the US, Bulgaria and South Korea in the coming weeks to initiate the LMG purchase. Tenders for buying LMGs have been scrapped in recent years as only a lone vendor met the army's requirements, delaying the projects," said the second official. A single-vendor situation is a strict no-no under India's arms purchase policy.

"Previous attempts to buy LMGs have not come to fruition. It's important to compress the acquisition process as is being done under the FTP route. It's a critical shortfall in capability that is now being addressed on priority," said former army vice chief Lieutenant General AS Lamba (retd).

According to rules, weapons sought to be bought under the FTP should already be in the military's armoury, have undergone trial evaluation, or be in service in foreign militaries so that the time

required for evaluation is minimised. The army has a requirement of more than 40,000 LMGs. The army is looking for 7.62mm x 51mm weapons with an effective range of at least 800 metres.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/army-set-to-fast-track-light-machine-gun-buy/story-K3e7XBnsf93qasRm2hsccO.html>



Wed, 20 Mar 2019

EC: Don't use activities of defence forces for political propaganda

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Tuesday advised political parties and candidates against indulging in any political propaganda involving activities of defence forces, days after it reiterated its standing instructions asking them not to use photographs of defence personnel in advertisements.

“Political parties/candidates are advised that their campaigners/candidates should desist, as part of their election campaigning, from indulging in any political propaganda involving activities of defence forces,” the poll panel said in its advisory.

Sources in the EC said that while general references to wars, military actions including the recent air strikes as well as extolling defence forces for the same would not be restrained, as and when such references link these actions to a party in power at the time or a political person or persons, it would be construed as political propaganda involving the defence forces. The commission said the new advisory was in continuation to its March 9 instructions restraining parties and candidates from using pictures of defence personnel or events involving defence personnel, in their campaigns.

The latest advisory comes against the backdrop of complaints against parties for using the armed forces for political gains, especially in the aftermath of the Pulwama attack and the February 26 IAF air strike in Pakistan.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/ec-dont-use-activities-of-defence-forces-for-political-propaganda/articleshow/68489951.cms>

फंड के इंतजार में राफेल का हैंगर

Poonam.Pandey@timesgroup.com

■ **नई दिल्ली :** इंडियन एयरफोर्स के लिए फ्रांस से रफाल फाइटर जेट आने हैं लेकिन फंड की कमी की वजह से रफाल को रखने की जगह अभी तक तैयार नहीं हो पाई है। जनवरी से अब तक काम 1-2 पैसेट ही आगे बढ़ पाया है। जहां अंबाला में रफाल को रखने के लिए हैंगर तैयार नहीं हैं। वहीं ग्वालियर में इंडियन एयरफोर्स के फाइटर जेट सुखोई-30 के हैंगर के रिपेयरिंग का काम अटका है।

मिलिट्री इंजीनियर्स सर्विसेज बिल्डर्स असोसिएशन ऑफ इंडिया (एमईएस बीएआई) पिछले साल फरवरी से लगातार बकाया पेमेंट का मसला उठा रहे हैं। एमईएस के बिल्डर्स रफाल के लिए हैंगर



एयरफोर्स से नहीं मिला फंड, इंतजार में हैं रक्षा मंत्रालय के कॉन्ट्रैक्टर्स

बनाने के साथ ही सुखोई-30 के लिए बने हैंगर्स को रिपेयर करने का काम कर रहे हैं। जनवरी में असोसिएशन के सदस्यों से रक्षा मंत्रालय को अलर्ट करते हुए कहा कि फंड की कमी की वजह से काम नहीं हो पा रहा है। एमईएस बीएआई के प्रेजिडेंट

प्रवीन महाना ने बताया कि उसके बाद हमने रक्षा मंत्रालय सहित वित्त मंत्रालय के कई अधिकारियों से मुलाकात की। हमें लगातार नई नई तारीख दी जा रही है और कॉन्ट्रैक्टर्स फंड के इंतजार में हैं। जनवरी तक कॉन्ट्रैक्टर्स का करीब 2000 करोड़ रुपये बकाया था। अब तक एयरफोर्स की तरफ से फंड जारी नहीं हुआ है जबकि एयरफोर्स के कई अहम प्रोजेक्ट पर काम चल रहा है और फंड की कमी की वजह से कॉन्ट्रैक्टर्स चाह कर भी काम को आगे नहीं बढ़ा पा रहे हैं। अंबाला में रफाल फाइटर जेट को रखने की जगह बन रही है। रफाल सितंबर तक आना है। लेकिन जनवरी तक जहां इसका काम 40 पैसेट ही पूरा हो पाया था, तब से महज 1-2 पैसेट काम ही आगे बढ़ा है।