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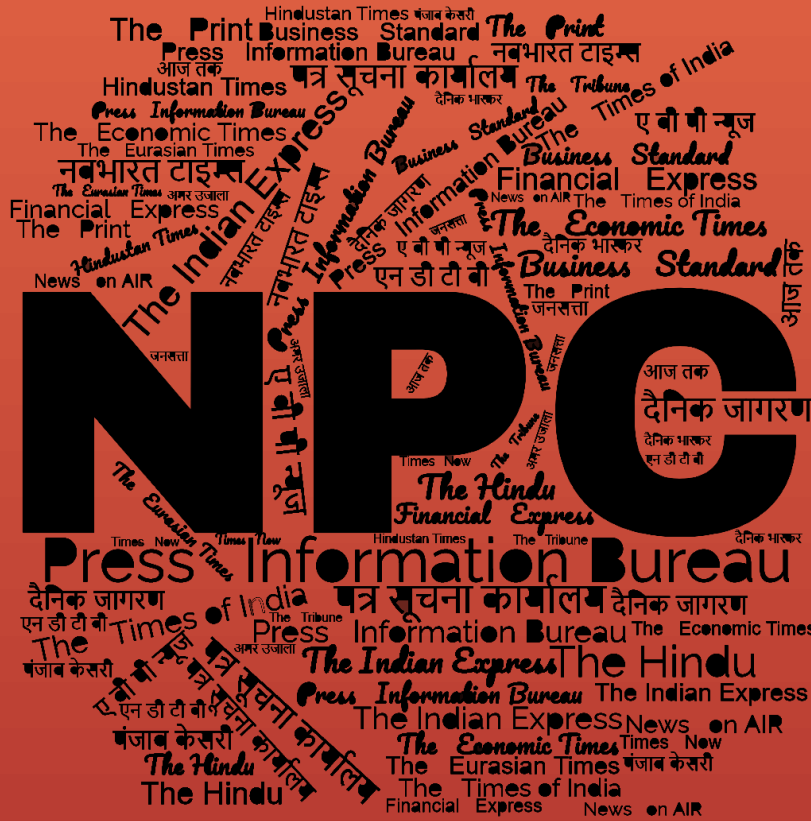
खंड/Vol. : 49 अंक/Issue : 86

08/05/2024

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CONTENTS

S. No.	TITLE	Page No.
DRDO News		1-2
DRDO Technology News		1-2
1.	DRDO Hands over Nine Defence Tech Projects to IIT-Bhubaneswar	<i>The New Indian Express</i> 1
Defence News		2-11
Defence Strategic: National/International		2-11
2.	Sixth Edition of Commandants' Conclave Held in Pune	<i>Press Information Bureau</i> 2
3.	BRO Celebrates its 65th Raising Day	<i>Press Information Bureau</i> 3
4.	Indian Naval Ships Delhi, Shakti, and Kiltan Arrived at Singapore, as a Part of Eastern Fleet Deployment to South China Sea	<i>Press Information Bureau</i> 4
5.	No Import of Ammunition from Next Year: Army	<i>The Economic Times</i> 5
6.	Army, IAF Conduct Joint Exercise at Multiple Locations in Punjab	<i>The Economic Times</i> 5
7.	Indian Navy Delegates Visit IFC	<i>The Times of India</i> 6
8.	India, EU Hold Dialogue on Defence, Security Cooperation, Including in the Indo-Pacific Region	<i>ANI</i> 6
9.	India Withdraws 51 Military Personnel from Maldives: Presidential Spokesperson	<i>The Economic Times</i> 8
10.	Belarus, Russia Conduct Tactical Nuclear Inspections to Check Army Combat Readiness	<i>Firstpost</i> 9
11.	Poland PM Calls on EU to Build Joint Air-defence System in Face of 'Russian Aggression'	<i>Firstpost</i> 10
Science & Technology News		11-12
12.	First Crewed Test Flight of Boeing Starliner Capsule with Sunita Williams Targeted for May 17	<i>The Hindu</i> 11



Wed, 08 May 2024

DRDO Hands over Nine Defence Tech Projects to IIT-Bhubaneswar

Nine projects sanctioned from the electronics and communication systems (ECS) cluster of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) were handed over to IIT-Bhubaneswar at a collaboration meeting here on Tuesday.

Seven more projects are in the process of being sanctioned from ECS with a funding of Rs 18 crore. The IIT-Bhubaneswar will work on these sanctioned projects, which would be beneficial in electronics warfare, AI-driven surveillance, power systems and radar systems.

Informing about the projects, head of Electrical Science school of IIT-Bhubaneswar SR Samantaray said the collaboration of IIT-Bhubaneswar and DRDO will contribute to the emerging research and development need of defence applications, creating platform for 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat'.

This form of collaboration will enhance the sustainability of defence research programmes and will be part of the ecosystem for nation building. "The collaboration between the ECS Cluster of DRDO and IIT-Bhubaneswar is intended towards working for a common cause to fulfil the future needs of the country in the field of defence technology," he said. Speaking on the occasion, director general of ECS Binay K Das said DRDO is going through a transformation from being technology chasers to becoming technology enablers and trendsetters. "The goal is now to move beyond attaining self-reliance to setting standards for the Indian Armed Forces, for others across the globe to emulate. In this context, this collaboration, and the further opportunity to set up a Centre of Excellence at IIT-Bhubaneswar would prove crucial," he added.

He further advised the researchers and faculty members associated with various DRDO sanctioned projects to work systematically with proper review and risk management systems to complete the projects in time and come up with unique solutions.

On the collaboration with DRDO, director of IIT-Bhubaneswar Shreepad Karmalkar said the IITs across the country have moved beyond knowledge generation and dissemination to knowledge application, wealth generation through start-ups, entrepreneurship and producing quality teachers. In such a scenario, collaborations with DRDO for research in the field of defence mechanism and technology will pave a new path towards excellence, he said. Karmalkar emphasised on the role of research scholars in coming up with innovative ideas.

DRDO officials informed that they are looking forward to having collaborations with the academia for research and industry for taking the projects forward to the application level.

These collaborations with academic institutions aim at developing cutting-edge and next generation technologies to make India at par with the international standards in terms of defence technology.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/2024/May/08/drdo-hands-over-nine-defence-tech-projects-to-iit-bhubaneswar>

Defence News

Defence Strategic: National/International



Press Information Bureau
Government of India

Ministry of Defence

Tue, 07 Apr 2024

Sixth Edition of Commandants' Conclave Held in Pune

Conclave deliberates on defence strategies in nurturing future leaders of Indian Armed Forces.

The sixth edition of Commandants' Conclave was held at Military Institute of Technology, Pune under the aegis of HQ Integrated Defence Staff on 07 May 24. The Commandants of esteemed Armed Forces Training Institutions and War Colleges along with other senior leadership of Armed forces attended the Conclave and brainstormed on charting the course for future defence strategies in nurturing the future leaders of Indian Armed Forces.

Senior leadership gathered at MILIT, Pune and exchanged insights, shared best practices at institutions and strategised on building future-ready Forces. This landmark event underscores Indian Armed Forces' commitment to continuous improvement, innovation and collaboration in the face of evolving global challenges. This conclave served as a platform for the commandants and decision-makers of AFTIs to engage in open dialogue and discussions on fostering joint culture of learning and adoption of new technologies in training the future leaders of the Armed Forces.

During the conclave, a wide range of key topics on strategic-resilience, technological advancement, human capital development, interoperability and jointness were discussed to harness innovation, technological advancement and to leverage the best practices of institutions for ensuring world class training at the AFTIs.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2019859>



**Press Information Bureau
Government of India**

Ministry of Defence

Tue, 07 Apr 2024

BRO Celebrates its 65th Raising Day

Defence Secretary commends BRO for playing a major role in the country's security & ensuring socio-economic progress of border areas

Exhorts BRO to infuse latest technology for faster completion of projects

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is celebrating its 65th Raising Day on May 07, 2024. To mark the day, an event was organised in New Delhi, which was presided over by Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane. In his address, the Defence Secretary lauded the BRO for fulfilling its responsibilities successfully in inhospitable terrain and tough weather conditions. He termed the BRO an extremely crucial organisation which, through its infrastructure projects in border areas, is playing a major role in the security of the country, besides ensuring the socio-economic progress of far-flung areas.

Shri Giridhar Aramane commended the BRO for completing the projects in a time-bound manner, exuding confidence that the Karmayogis will continue to ensure border infrastructure development in a record time. He urged the BRO to infuse latest technology and techniques for faster completion of projects, through which human efforts will be reduced & utilised more efficiently. Automation and mechanisation will be key for the BRO in the future, he said.

The Defence Secretary also recalled the valuable contribution of the BRO personnel in the relief and rescue efforts during the Silkyara Tunnel Collapse and the Sikkim Floods. He added that the Organisation will play an important role in the Vibrant Villages Programme which envisages comprehensive development of select border villages.

Speaking on the occasion, Director General, Border Roads Lt Gen Raghu Srinivasan extended greetings to all ranks of the BRO. He stated that the pan-India presence of the BRO reflects its commitment to national security, connectivity and development. He added that the tagline 'In the Silence of Our Great Mountains – Work Speaks' speaks volumes of the Organisation's dedication, perseverance and impact on the lives of the people residing in the remotest corners of the country. He exhorted all ranks to renew the pledge to continue 'Connecting Places Connecting People' and leaving a lasting legacy of progress, prosperity and unity.

The event also witnessed the unveiling of a compendium on Sela Tunnel as well as some books including 'Oonchin Sadaken', 'Path Pradarshak' and 'Path Vikas' by the Defence Secretary. He gave away Excellence Awards to the BRO personnel for the year 2023-24 and felicitated the women achievers of the Organisation. The Casual Paid Labourers who worked in various projects such as Sela Tunnel, as well as during Sikkim floods were also felicitated.

Raised with just two projects in 1960 - Project Tusker (now Vartak) in the East and Project Beacon in the North, the BRO has today become a vibrant organisation with 18 projects operating in 11 States and three Union Territories. It has now established its credentials as the leading infra construction agency in the high-altitude and difficult snow-bound areas.

The BRO executes road construction and maintenance works at altitude ranging from 9,000 ft up to 19,000 ft along the Northern and Western frontiers, primarily to meet the strategic requirements of the Armed Forces. In over six decades, it has constructed over 62,214 kms of roads, 1,005 bridges,

seven tunnels and 21 airfields in adverse climatic and geographical conditions along India's borders as well as in friendly countries, including Bhutan, Myanmar, Afghanistan & Tajikistan, thus contributing towards the nation's strategic objectives.

In 2023-24, the BRO completed a total of 125 infrastructure projects worth Rs 3,611 crore. This includes the construction of Sela Tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh on Balipara-Chardwar-Tawang Road. The tunnel was dedicated to the Nation by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi recently from Itanagar virtually. The BRO will soon commence the construction on 4.10-km long Shinkun La Tunnel. Once completed, this tunnel will become the world's highest tunnel at 15,800 ft bypassing Mila Tunnel in China at 15,590 ft.

The BRO accomplished the completion of two significant airfield projects namely Bagdogra and Barrackpore, marking yet another milestone in its journey of excellence. The foundation stone for Mudh Airfield Project was laid by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh recently. The BRO aims to complete the project within just two working seasons.

Over the few years, the BRO has witnessed an exponential surge in budget expenditure, marking a remarkable leap forward in capabilities and impact. This increased budgetary support has empowered the organisation to undertake crucial projects, accelerate critical infrastructure development, and enhance its operational readiness.

The BRO has been at the forefront of promoting gender equality and inclusivity, offering key roles and opportunities to women. Officers like Col Ponung Doming is leading critical projects in Eastern Ladakh. Assistant Executive Engineer (Civ) Smt Nikita Chaudhary has played a pivotal role in successful completion of Sela Tunnel Project.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2019842>



Press Information Bureau
Government of India

Ministry of Defence

Tue, 07 Apr 2024

Indian Naval Ships Delhi, Shakti, and Kiltan Arrived at Singapore, as a Part of Eastern Fleet Deployment to South China Sea

Indian Naval Ships Delhi, Shakti, and Kiltan led by RAdm Rajesh Dhankhar, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet arrived at Singapore on 06 May 24 to a warm welcome by personnel of Republic of Singapore Navy and the High Commissioner of India in Singapore. The visit is part of the Operational Deployment of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet to the South China sea. This visit is poised to further strengthen the longstanding friendship and cooperation between the two maritime nations through a series of engagements and activities.

During the ships' stay in harbour, various activities planned to be undertaken include interactions with the High Commission of India, professional interactions with the Republic of Singapore Navy as also academia and community outreach amongst other activities, reflecting the shared values of both navies.

The Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore Navy have had robust relations spanning three decades of cooperation, coordination and collaboration with regular visits, exchange of best

practices, and reciprocal training arrangements. The current deployment underscores the strong linkages between both the navies.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2019815>

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Wed, 08 May 2024

No Import of Ammunition from Next Year: Army

The army is aiming to stop all import of ammunition from the next financial year as the domestic industry has ramped up its capacity to meet all demands and is even poised to bag a chunk of the global market, a senior procurement officer has said.

The army, which was heavily dependent on imports to meet annual requirements till a few years ago, has already found indigenous sources for close to 150 of the 175 types of ammunition it uses while it aims to completely cut off imports by 2025-26. "In the next financial year, we will not have any import of ammunition. Other than in cases where the quantity is too low and it is not economical for the industry to manufacture them," Maj Gen VK Sharma, ADG (Procurement), Indian Army said. The officer, who was speaking at a seminar on Ammunition Production organised by the PHD Chamber, said that the army currently is purchasing ₹6000-8000 crore worth of ammunition annually, all of which will now come from Indian sources.

With gradual curbs on imports through a negative list, as of now just 5-10% of requirements are met from foreign suppliers.

Besides Ordnance factories, which have now been corporatised, several private sector players have entered the field in the last few years, with new ammunition plants coming up in different parts of the country. The army believes that given the upcoming capacity, Indian companies can become a major player in the international market as well. "As far as world demand is concerned, a market worth over \$30 billion is available. At present not even 1% is coming from Indian sources. We have the capacity to come to 5-10% in the next 4-5 years and maybe 25-30% in the future," Maj Gen Sharma said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/no-import-of-ammunition-from-next-year-army/articleshow/109927173.cms>

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Tue, 07 Apr 2024

Army, IAF Conduct Joint Exercise at Multiple Locations in Punjab

Indian Army's Kharga Corps, under the aegis of Army's Western Command, successfully conducted a three-day joint exercise with the IAF at multiple locations in Punjab. The exercise was conducted to refine processes and validate employment of attack helicopters in support of mechanised operations in developed terrain, an official statement issued on Tuesday said.

The Gagan Strike-II exercise, which incorporated Apache and ALH-WSI helicopters, Unarmed Aerial Vehicles and special forces of Indian Army, was aimed at validating various force multipliers in support of ground offensive by strike corps along with live firing by helicopters as demanded by mechanised forces during offensive maneuvers, the statement said.

The recent exercise showcased high levels of synergy and jointmanship among the two services, it said. The focus was to practise centralised and decentralised attack helicopter missions duly supported by other force multipliers in a dense air defence environment and engagement of planned and impromptu targets in the battlefield, it said.

Ground force commanders exercised employment of aerial assets, including drones for enhanced situational awareness and destruction of mobile and static targets.

The exercise enabled formations and units of Western Command to execute joint operations, with seamless integration of all ground and aerial assets to achieve laid down objectives.

Lt Gen Manoj Kumar Katiyar, general officer commanding-in-chief Western Command, and GOC Kharga Corps complimented all ranks of Kharga Corps, Indian Air Force and Army Aviation for their professional excellence and synergy of effort in conduct of integrated operations, the statement said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/army-iaf-conduct-joint-exercise-at-multiple-locations-in-punjab/articleshow/109926582.cms>

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Wed, 08 May 2024

Indian Navy Delegates Visit IFC

A delegation from the Eastern Fleet of Indian Navy, led by Rear Admiral Rajesh Dhankhar, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, visited the Information Fusion Centre (IFC) in Singapore today. The visit aimed to enhance maritime security cooperation and strengthen bridges of friendship between India and Singapore. During the visit, the delegation held deliberations on the current maritime security landscape in the region and ways to mitigate emergent threats. They also discussed the cross-pollination of ideas between IFC Singapore and the Indian Navy-hosted IFC-IOR, fostering a collaborative approach to addressing shared maritime challenges.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/visakhapatnam/indian-navy-delegates-visit-ifc/articleshow/109930590.cms>



Tue, 07 Apr 2024

India, EU Hold Dialogue on Defence, Security Cooperation, Including in the Indo-Pacific Region

The delegation of the European Union organised a 'Road to Schuman' seminar in the national capital, where security experts discussed the security landscape in the region and threats dynamics and identified avenues for cooperation, ahead of the Schuman Forum in Brussels later this month. In an official post on X, EU Ambassador to India, Herve Delphin, said, "Growing security inter-

connectedness between European Union and Indo-Pacific region means more cooperation with Asian partners, including India."

"Ahead of the next Schuman Forum which will be held in Brussels end of May, this seminar held in Delhi brought together European and Indian security experts to exchange on the security landscape in the region and on the perspectives for EU and India to increase cooperation in defence matters and in non-traditional security domains," Delphin said in the seminar on Monday.

The EU and India have made significant steps in the past years to deepen their security and defence cooperation including counter-terrorism, cyber and maritime security. The Indo-Pacific at large and the Indian Ocean in particular are key areas where this cooperation can be further enhanced, Delegation of the European Union said in a press release.

"On May 6, the Delegation of the European Union to India organised a Road to Schuman event titled 'The security environment in the Indo-Pacific region and the EU's role as a security actor in partnership/cooperation with India', gathering prominent security and defence experts and practitioners, think tanks, academia, diplomats, Indian government officials and EU member state representatives," the release added.

This initiative is part of the Road to Schuman events that will feed into the second edition of the Schuman Security and Defence Forum, which will take place in Brussels on 28-29 May.

The seminar provided a platform for dialogue, exchange of views on specific regional security challenges, maritime security environment, and policy developments covering the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and India's Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative, EU-India maritime cooperation, and regional initiatives to address international maritime security issues.

According to the release, the seminar also enabled an assessment of the current and emerging challenges in the Indo-Pacific region while identifying future avenues for cooperation between the European (EU) and India. The first-panel session focused on the "Overall security environment in the Indo-Pacific region: dynamics and likely evolution". The panellists Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan, Director General, National Maritime Foundation, Vice Admiral Girish Luthra, Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation; and Brigadier Rahul Bhonsle, Director, Security Risks Asia discussed the origins and evolution of the Indo-Pacific concept, as well as its current geopolitical dimension and the different actors operating in it.

In the second panel session, speakers discussed the "EU-India security partnerships and cooperation, opportunities/constraints and how India considers EU as a security actor".

The three panellists Indrani Bagchi, CEO, Ananta Aspen Centre, Professors Srikanth Kondapalli, Jawaharlal Nehru University; and Swasti Rao, Associate Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses exchanged on the existing and potential areas of convergence between the EU and India in the security and defence field, in a bilateral and multilateral context.

During her address, Joanneke Balfoort, Director of security and Defence policy, at European External Action Service, said, "In this interconnected world, mutually beneficial peace, security and defence partnerships are more needed than ever. We see India, a country with considerable strategic weight on the global security balance, as a key partner for the EU in the Indo-Pacific."

On the occasion, Herve Delphin, EU Ambassador to India said, "The global environment has turned more volatile and unstable with war and security threats on the rise. The EU is adapting to this new reality by enhancing its own security and defence but also by working together with international partners to address common security challenges to promote peace and stability. The growing inter-connectedness between dynamics in Europe and the Indo-Pacific region means that cooperation with Asian partners and most notably with India has become more important than ever".

He added, "Ahead of the next Schuman Forum which will be held in Brussels end of May, this seminar held in Delhi brought together European and Indian security experts to exchange on the security landscape in the region and on the perspectives for EU and India to increase cooperation in defence matters and in non-traditional security domains."

He further said, "EUNAVFOR Operation ASPIDES, recently launched in the Red Sea, together with EUNAVFOR ATALANTA, is a concrete example of the EU commitment to regional maritime security in the Indian Ocean region. While we have already stepped up our cooperation with India in the areas of Maritime Security, Counter-terrorism, Cyber-security, Non-proliferation and Disarmament, other areas like Space, Hybrid and Cyber threats and security dimensions of Artificial Intelligence are possible areas of growth for EU-India cooperation."

The second edition of the Schuman Security and Defence Forum (Schuman Forum) will take place in Brussels on 28-29 May 2024. It will bring together high-level representatives of the European Union (EU), EU Member states and partner countries, international and regional organisations, as well as leading think tanks and academia.

The Forum aims at looking for avenues of cooperation on how ongoing and potential peace, security and defence partnerships can respond to the most pressing common security threats and challenges and contribute to global peace and security as well as uphold the international rules-based order and multilateralism. India is one of the key partners invited to the Forum.

On the morning of May 6, the EU and India also held their second Security and Defence Consultations, co-chaired by Director Balfourt on the EU side and Vishvesh Negi, Joint Secretary (International Cooperation), Ministry of Defence on the Indian side.

During the consultations, the two sides agreed to deepen their cooperation in security and defence. They both reiterated their commitment to a free, open, inclusive and rules-based maritime order in the Indo-Pacific region, underpinned by respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, democracy, rule of law, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded lawful commerce, and peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, notably the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Both the European Union and Indo-Pacific countries have a stake in each other's prosperity and security. With its Indo-Pacific Strategy and the Global Gateway, the EU aims to contribute to stability, security, prosperity and sustainable development in the Indo-Pacific, fostering the principles of democracy, rule of law, human rights and international law acting as an "intelligent facilitator" for peace and security in non-traditional security domains, in full partnerships with the other actors in the region mainly India.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/india-eu-hold-dialogue-on-defence-security-cooperation-including-in-the-indo-pacific-region20240507231220/>

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Tue, 07 Apr 2024

India Withdraws 51 Military Personnel from Maldives: Presidential Spokesperson

India has withdrawn 51 of its soldiers from the Maldives so far, the government here has said ahead of the May 10 deadline set by President Mohamed Muizzu for the complete withdrawal of Indian

military personnel from his country. The Maldivian government earlier announced that two batches of Indian soldiers had left the country. However, the exact figure was not disclosed previously.

The Chief Spokesperson of the President's Office Heena Waleed, in response to questions regarding the issue, said on Monday, that a total of 51 Indian soldiers have been repatriated so far.

"All Indian military personnel in the country will be withdrawn from the Maldives by May 10. As of now, 51 soldiers stationed at two platforms have been repatriated," Heena was quoted as saying by the Edition.mv news portal.

She however refused to disclose the exact figure of the Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives, stating the details would be shared at a later date, Sun.mv. news portal reported.

According to previous announcements by the Maldives government, 88 Indian soldiers were stationed in the country to operate two helicopters, a Dornier aircraft and at the Senahiya military hospital. The two helicopters and the Dronier aircraft were gifted by India.

President Muizzu, widely seen as a pro-China leader, had set May 10 as the deadline for the withdrawal of the Indian military personnel from his country.

Repatriation of Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives was a key pledge of Muizzu during his presidential campaign.

India has already withdrawn some of its military personnel operating three aviation platforms in the Maldives. The military personnel were replaced by Indian civilian technical experts.

India and the Maldives have also agreed to withdraw the remaining Indian troops before May 10. The two sides held the fourth meeting of the bilateral high-level core group in New Delhi on May 3.

"Both sides noted with satisfaction that the Government of India will replace military personnel at the last of the three aviation platforms by May 10 and all the logistical arrangements are going ahead as per schedule," the Maldivian foreign ministry said on Friday after the core group meeting.

Two batches of Indian soldiers in the Maldives have left the country, including soldiers who operated helicopters in Addu and the Dornier aircraft in Haa Dhaal Hanimaadhoo. Indian civilian personnel arrived in both areas last month to replace the soldiers, the media here reported.

The Maldives is India's key maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean Region and occupies a special place in its initiatives like 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and the 'Neighbourhood First Policy' of the Modi government.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-withdraws-51-military-personnel-from-maldives-presidential-spokesperson/articleshow/109924114.cms>



Tue, 07 Apr 2024

Belarus, Russia Conduct Tactical Nuclear Inspections to Check Army Combat Readiness

Belarus has started inspections to assess the readiness of its army to deploy tactical nuclear weapons along with Russia. State news agency Belta quoted Defence Minister Viktor Khrenin as

saying President Alexander Lukashenko had ordered a surprise inspection of forces in charge of such weapons.

The entire range of activities from planning, preparation and use of strikes with tactical nuclear weapons will be checked during the inspection, Khrenin said.

The checks involved an Iskander missile division and a squadron of Su-25 aircraft, he added.

Tactical nuclear weapons, unlike their intercontinental counterparts, are designed for battlefield use against troops rather than cities, with yields as small as about 1 kiloton. For comparison, the bomb dropped on Hiroshima during World War II had a yield of 15 kilotons. These weapons, including aerial bombs, short-range missile warheads, or artillery munitions, are compact and can be discreetly transported by truck or plane.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko revealed in April that “several dozen” Russian tactical nuclear weapons had been deployed in Belarus under an agreement with President Vladimir Putin, aimed at deterring the West. These weapons are distinct from strategic warheads, which target entire enemy cities.

Russia announced on Monday that it would conduct military exercises involving the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons, citing threats from France, Britain, and the United States. Ukrainian military intelligence dismissed the drill as routine, labelling it as “nuclear blackmail” typical of Putin’s regime.

Unlike strategic weapons, which are subject to arms control agreements between Moscow and Washington, tactical nuclear weapons have never been limited by such pacts. Russia has not disclosed specific details or numbers regarding these weapons.

Last year, Russia moved some of its tactical nuclear weapons into Belarus, an ally situated near Ukraine and NATO members Poland, Latvia, and Lithuania. Lukashenko, known for his authoritarian rule, had long advocated for the stationing of nuclear weapons in Belarus, which maintains close military ties with Russia and was involved in the conflict in Ukraine.

The deployment of tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus, which has a 1,084-kilometer (673-mile) border with Ukraine, would allow Russian aircraft and missiles to reach potential targets there more easily and quickly if Moscow decides to use them. It has also extended Russia’s capability to target several NATO allies in Eastern and Central Europe.

<https://www.firstpost.com/world/belarus-russia-conduct-tactical-nuclear-inspections-to-check-army-combat-readiness-13768244.html>



Tue, 07 Apr 2024

Poland PM Calls on EU to Build Joint Air-defence System in Face of 'Russian Aggression'

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk called on to step up the bloc’s defence capabilities and asked the European Union to mobilise at least \$108 billion to jointly develop an air defence system as the bloc contends with Russian aggression. Speaking at the European Economic Congress, a meeting of politicians and business figures in Katowice, Tusk said that a long debate on ramping up the EU’s defence capability must culminate in a decision soon.

Poland is strengthening its defence capabilities, allocating over 4% of its Gross Domestic Product in the face of the conflict in Ukraine.

Tusk also said that Europe must be prepared in the next dozen or so months and the entire next five years for a situation in which no power in the world will dare raise a hand against it.

A joint air defence “must become a European project that will be a financial effort to build a dome over Europe,” he said. “We have many more initiatives and meetings than real actions to defend the European sky.”

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission stressed the need for increased defence spending in Europe. She also announced her intention to propose new defence projects if she remains in office for another term. Von der Leyen also reiterated her support for the creation of a full-time EU defence commissioner to bolster the European defence industry.

<https://www.firstpost.com/world/poland-pm-calls-on-eu-to-build-joint-air-defence-system-to-counter-russian-aggression-13768271.html>

Science & Technology News

THE  HINDU

Wed, 08 May 2024

First Crewed Test Flight of Boeing Starliner Capsule with Sunita Williams Targeted for May 17

The target date for the next attempt to launch Boeing Co's Starliner space capsule on its first crewed test flight featuring Indian-American Sunita Williams has been pushed back to no earlier than May 17, to replace a pressure valve on its booster rocket, NASA said on Tuesday.

The CST-100 Starliner's debut voyage carrying astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS) has been highly anticipated and much-delayed as Boeing scrambles to compete with Elon Musk's SpaceX for a greater share of lucrative NASA business.

The test flight was called off on Monday night with less than two hours left in the countdown after a pressure regulation valve malfunctioned on the upper-stage liquid oxygen tank of the Atlas V rocket that was to launch the new capsule into orbit.

The two-member crew — NASA astronauts Barry Wilmore, 61, and Sunita Williams, 58 — had been strapped into their seats aboard the spacecraft for about an hour before launch activities were suspended.

The rocket, a separate component from the Starliner capsule, was furnished for the mission by United Launch Alliance (ULA), a Boeing-Lockheed Martin joint venture.

After Monday night's aborted launch attempt, NASA, Boeing and ULA announced that they would seek to try again as early as Friday, May 10.

But in an update posted Tuesday evening, NASA said more time was needed after ULA "decided to remove and replace" the faulty pressure valve. That will require the rocket to be rolled back to its

hangar on Wednesday for repairs, leak checks and other reviews ahead of a second launch attempt, NASA said.

Those operations pushed the potential launch date back another week, NASA said.

The target date for the next attempt to launch Boeing Co's Starliner space capsule on its first crewed test flight featuring Indian-American Sunita Williams has been pushed back to no earlier than May 17, to replace a pressure valve on its booster rocket, NASA said on Tuesday.

The test flight was called off on Monday night with less than two hours left in the countdown after a pressure regulation valve malfunctioned on the upper-stage liquid oxygen tank of the Atlas V rocket that was to launch the new capsule into orbit.

After Monday night's aborted launch attempt, NASA, Boeing and ULA announced that they would seek to try again as early as Friday, May 10.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/first-crewed-test-flight-of-boeing-starliner-capsule-with-sunita-williams-targeted-for-may-17/article68152001.ece>

