

September  
2022

# समाचार पत्रों से चयित अंश Newspapers Clippings

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खंड : 47 अंक : 176 16 सितम्बर 2022

Vol.: 47 Issue: 176 16 September 2022



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# DRDO News

## DRDO on Twitter



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[#DRDOUpdates](#) | Hon'ble Raksha Mantri has approved setting up of 06 new DRDO Industry Academia-Centre of Excellence (DIA-CoE) at IITs (Kanpur, Kharagpur, Roorkee, BHU, Jodhpur & Hyderabad).

[@DefenceMinIndia](#)  
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4:12 pm · 15 Sep 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

*Thu, 15 Sep 2022*

## Another Indigenous Combat UAV Successfully Tested

An indigenously manufactured Combat Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (CUAV) drone has undergone successful testing by a Mumbai based start up Jatayu Unmanned Systems. A field test was carried out in cooperation with the law enforcement agencies in Mumbai and a standard issue assault rifle weapon was live-fired mounted on a UAV platform.

### **About the drone**

Known as “Jatayu Aim-X,” the drone had debuted at the Bharat Drone Mahotsav, earlier this year in New Delhi from May 27-28. Referring to its UCAV as “India’s First Combat-Ready UAV,” an official company statement claims that it has been producing drones for use in the military. Adding that the drone was designed and created locally utilising cutting-edge precision manufacturing methods. The Jatayu drone features a separate ground control station and may also be operated remotely through satellite. Quoting Capt Aman Johri, CEO of Jatayu Unmanned Systems, the statement states: “Jatayu Aim-X is a fully ‘Make in India’ UAV platform and has been built specifically for the Indian scenario.”

Highlighting India’s need to be prepared for the emerging threats in the future, the company CEO says that the UAV platform built locally will help in saving critical lives on the frontlines. In the coming weeks, the company is set to test their platform with other units of the Indian Army. According to the company the UAV has been under development since 2016 and previously it has been live-fired successfully during trials in collaboration with the Indian armed forces. And has obtained an accuracy of 93 percent on target. Besides the military sector, the company statement has said that its all weather and all terrain drones are providing RPAS services in the civil activities like mapping drones, agriculture drones, and Logistics drones.

According to reports by 2030, India has the potential to become a global drone hub. And to achieve this milestone, India needs almost 100,000 drone pilots in the coming years.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/defence/another-indigenous-combat-uav-successfully-tested/2668435>

## **Country's Security can't be Outsourced or be Dependent on Largesse of others, self-sufficiency is Key: Army Chief**

Army chief General Manoj Pande on Thursday said India's dependence on imported technologies for defence has emerged as a "strategic vulnerability", and stressed the need for self-sufficiency in the sector, saying country's security can neither be outsourced nor be dependent on the largesse of others. Hostile and nuclear-armed neighbours and developments on the country's borders with China have reinforced the need to maintain modern, agile and technologically empowered armed forces at all times, he said while highlighting the need to possess modern technological capabilities.

In his video message addressed to the students of Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT) Nagpur on the occasion of its 20th convocation, Gen Pande also said that India's security environment is defined by a combination of legacy challenges of disputed borders and emerging threats in new domains of cyber, space and the electromagnetic spectrum.

"India has hostile, nuclear-armed neighbours and an unstable neighbourhood. Developments on our northern borders with China over the past two years, including the clash at Galwan, have reinforced the need to maintain modern, agile and technologically empowered armed forces at all times. Our dependence on imported technologies for defence and security has emerged as a strategic vulnerability," he said.

Today's security is founded on technological prowess. There is no country willing to share the latest, state of art technologies, he said. The security of the nation can neither be outsourced, nor be dependent on the largesse of others. Self sufficiency in critical technologies is a strategic imperative that can no longer be ignored, the Chief of the Army Staff said.

"Within a short period, an entire ecosystem of start-ups supporting the defence industry has come up in the country. This a very reassuring development, through which the vision of 'atmanirbharta' (self-sufficiency) will soon be a reality. There is a long way to go, but we are moving steadily on the right track," he said.

The spiral of technological cycles and emergence of disruptive technologies is exceedingly fast in today's world. Quantum computing, artificial intelligence, machine learning, nanotechnology, 5G and the internet of things, to name a just a few, are revolutionising all sectors of national endeavour. These technologies are also transforming the 'character' of future wars, he added.

Gen Pande stressed the need to possess modern technological capabilities and cited the example of the lethal power of drones in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict in 2020 and the Israel-Hamas conflict last year which is being termed as the artificial intelligence war and Russia-Ukraine conflict, wherein full power of cutting edge technologies is on display.

"The countries that possess these capabilities, enjoy a distinct technological edge over adversaries. These niche capabilities are both a deterrence against hostile intent as well as battle winning tools, when war is imposed on us. In essence, they are a strategic imperative to ensure the security of the nation," he said.

He urged the young engineers of the institute to play an active role in contributing to the capability development of the army and the nation.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/countrys-security-cant-be-outsourced-or-be-dependent-on-largesse-of-others-self-sufficiency-is-key-army-chief/printarticle/94225040.cms>



*Thu, 15 Sep 2022*

## **Shinde-Fadnavis to Meet PM to get Airbus-Tata Military Aircraft Project: Samant**

Chief minister Eknath Shinde and deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis are likely to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi next week to seek his help to get a big project for Maharashtra, state industries minister Uday Samant said on Thursday.

The Shinde-BJP government has been under sustained opposition fire after losing the USD 20 billion Vedanta-Foxconn project to Gujarat. The state government got into damage control mode as the emotive issue of big- ticket projects moving from Maharashtra to Gujarat, has given the opposition a chance to build an attacking narrative. Samant's announcement comes on the back of his earlier statement that Modi had assured Eknath Shinde that Maharashtra will soon get a big employment-generating project.

On Thursday, Samant hinted that that could be the Airbus and Tata JV to manufacture C-295 medium transport aircrafts as part of the Indian Air Force's modernisation plan. Towards this, the defence ministry had signed a ₹22000 crore contract with the Germany headquartered Airbus Defence and Space in September last year. At present Maharashtra is competing with Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh to set up a manufacturing facility for these C-295s. As per the information that is in the public domain, 40 planes will be manufactured in India by a consortium of the Airbus Defence and Space and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) within 10 years of signing the contract. The remaining 16 aircrafts will be delivered in a flyaway condition by the Airbus Defence and Space within 48 months of signing the contract.

The opposition parties however kept up the pressure on the state government for the third straight day after Vedanta and the Taiwanese conglomerate Foxconn announced the MoU with the Gujarat government. NCP chief Sharad Pawar cautioned the government to work towards employment generation rather than finger-pointing at the opposition. The statements made by the chief minister and the industries minister blaming the previous Uddhav Thackeray government was not a wise move, he said, as the two of them had been ministers in the same government.

“There is no point in discussing the project now that it has moved from Maharashtra. The PM's promise of a new project for Maharashtra is like convincing a child who is unhappy over something,” he told the media.

The Shiv Sena's youth wing started a signature campaign in Pune to pressure the state government to bring the chip-manufacturing project to Maharashtra. The state government responded to all these oppositional tactics by saying it will set up a committee to probe whether

the state lost out on the \$20 billion project because of any wrong doing on the part of the previous MVA government.

BJP's city unit chief Ashish Shelar said a former high court judge should head the probe to see whether MVA leaders had demanded any commission from Vedanta-Foxconn.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/shindefadnavis-will-meet-pm-to-get-airbus-tata-military-aircraft-project-samant-101663259934032.html>



*Thu, 15 Sep 2022*

## **India and SCO: Navigating New Equations**

*By Dr Rajorshi Roy*

The 22nd Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit is scheduled to be held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan during 15-16 September 2022. Comprising 40 per cent of the global population, this Eurasian organisation has expanded in scope and reach since its inception more than two decades ago. Today, in conjunction with its eight full-time members and several dialogue and observer partners, SCO straddles Central, North, South and West Asia. This makes it one of the largest pan-regional organisations, with a stated common goal of “safeguarding regional security and promoting regional development”.

Nevertheless, the ongoing tumultuous geo-political flux could cast a shadow on the upcoming SCO summit. It includes the War in Ukraine which has upended regional equilibrium including the balance of ties between the two key SCO protagonists in Russia and China. Similarly, the prospects of SCO morphing into an anti-Western grouping from a non-Western one could dilute its essence amongst some of its members who put a premium on multi-alignment. Bilateral friction between SCO members and emergence of mini-coalitions in this grouping too present their own set of strategic challenges. These would need to be navigated to maintain SCO's relevance.

With India poised to take over the Presidency of SCO at the culmination of Samarkand summit, the pertinent questions that arise are the salience of this grouping for India, its report card over the years and its future amidst ongoing geo-political churning.

### **Jury is still out**

Despite emerging as a prominent Eurasian organisation, the jury is still out on the true efficacy of SCO. This stems from the inherent dynamics amongst its founding members dating back to its origin. Designed as a vehicle to resolve festering boundary issues between China, Russia and the Central Asian Republics (CARs) in 1996, this organisation, driven largely by Moscow and Beijing, evolved into its current avatar in 2001 with the aim of expanding cooperation in the security, economic and cultural arenas in the Eurasian space.

However, this period also coincided with the relative decline of Russia amidst China's meteoric rise leading Moscow to cede strategic space to Beijing, especially in the economic realm. This trend has continued today with China emerging as the region's dominant economic partner while simultaneously expanding its geo-strategic footprints.

Inevitably, SCO has had to deal with the perception of China calling the shots to promote its agenda of a Pax Sinica, with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) forming its vital toolkit. Unsurprisingly, the ambitious SCO goal of creating inclusive economic and connectivity linkages in Eurasia has not taken off amidst China's dominant economic position in the region.

Meanwhile, amidst their ongoing confrontation with the West, Russia and China have sought to insulate their Eurasian neighbourhood from perceived Western machinations. The CARs ruling regimes too have benefited from this safety net of the Russia-China tandem given the potential of their domestic upheavals morphing into another Arab Spring.

Notably, there also exists a trust deficit between a few SCO members. China's unilateralism on the India-China border, Pakistan's denial of land access to India to reach Central Asia and the China-Pakistan nexus in undermining India's interests in Eurasia are all reflective of some members not walking the talk of endorsing the lofty Shanghai Spirit.

This includes "respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, equality, consultation, mutual trust, mutual benefit, and pursuit of common development". Interestingly, even the CARs remain fearful of Russia and suspicious of China. This has incentivised them to diversify their partnerships in order to strengthen their strategic autonomy.

Meanwhile, SCO's robust track-record in tackling its core security priorities – the "three evils" of terrorism, extremism and separatism – has been marred by perceptions of its "double standards". It is reflected in SCO adopting a far tougher posture on threats faced by its founding members in Eurasia vis-à-vis the South Asian region. This compartmentalisation has seen the SCO unable to reach a consensus on Pakistan sponsored terrorism, mostly on account of China shielding its "all weather friend".

### **Salience**

Despite the complexities involved, it would appear that there exists greater merit in India sitting inside the SCO tent, where decisions are taken on the basis of consensus, thereby making India a Eurasian stakeholder, rather than sitting outside. Inevitably, developments in Eurasia, which lies in close proximity to India, have a direct bearing on India's geo-strategic calculus.

In this vein, SCO provides India a viable platform to address a number of its continental interests and concerns. This includes strengthening India's renewed outreach to CARs who themselves have sought to diversify their relations beyond Russia and China. India's positive and benign image, anchored in historical linkages and robust developmental partnerships that eschew mercantilism, hold India in good stead.

Similarly, SCO's ongoing initiatives aimed at stabilising Afghanistan hold relevance. This is notwithstanding the fact that India and SCO have not always been on the same page on engaging the Taliban. Being part of dialogue on Afghanistan would likely provide pointers to the emerging regional dynamics apart from preventing India's regional marginalisation.

SCO's initiatives in tackling the "three evils" too carry resonance. The stationing of India's representative at the organisation's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent provides an opportunity to share intelligence. This is also a platform to track the "evils" in Eurasia, given the potential of their spill over into South Asia thereby creating an arc of regional instability. It even provides India a platform to maintain pressure on SCO to adopt a uniform



position on terrorism. This is part of India's endeavour to sensitise the organisation's member states on India's concerns on terrorism – an issue which affects most of SCO stakeholders.

Meanwhile, India's membership of SCO inherently strengthens multipolarity in Eurasia. India's emphasis on open, inclusive and transparent connectivity projects, anchored in the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC), gives regional countries options beyond BRI. This is looked upon favourably by the key SCO protagonists in Russia and CARs who have shared concerns of a Eurasian order dominated by China. Arguably, multipolarity, which helps moderate unilateralism, is beneficial not just at the global but also the regional level.

In fact, sitting inside the SCO tent also allows India to address the China-Pakistan tandem which has sought to undermine India's outreach to CARs. Paradoxically, SCO provides India with a stage to engage both China and Pakistan bilaterally on the side-lines of SCO summits. These could provide an opening to potential thaw in ties. In the same vein, SCO's military interactions in the form of joint exercises could act as potential confidence building measures (CBMs) apart from providing a window to each other's tactics and doctrines.

Inevitably, SCO's institutionalised dialogue mechanisms at multiple levels, including Head of State, Foreign and Defence Ministers and National Security Advisors, provide an opportunity to discuss regional issues, notwithstanding the bilateral friction between members.

However, this is not a one-way street. India's membership of SCO also provides the organisation with greater legitimacy on account of India's growing global heft amidst Western allegations of SCO's *raison d'être* being an anti-West body.

### **Way ahead**

Ongoing geopolitical flux and existing contradictions in SCO would, inevitably, necessitate deft Indian diplomacy to secure India's national interests.

The template for charting India's own course, acceptable to the majority of SCO members, already exists. This is evident in Prime Minister Modi's articulation of the foundational dimension of Eurasia being "SECURE". The letters in the word SECURE are S for Security of citizens, E for Economic development for all, C for Connecting the region, U for Uniting the people, R for Respect for Sovereignty and Integrity, and E for Environmental protection.

India could leverage the wide acceptance of this proposal to build stronger coalitions within the SCO which would be more sensitive to India's two core concerns involving terrorism and expanding connectivity in the region. As such, India's emphasis on adopting a holistic approach towards terrorism would likely need to be sustained. Optically, it might be difficult for the SCO naysayers to consistently dissent on a topic as sensitive as terrorism. A similar pressure-tactic approach could also be adopted on expanding connectivity by emphasising on openness and inclusivity. This could be anchored to INSTC being not one but a multi-arterial and multi-dimensional project that benefits the majority of its stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the fact remains that the potential of SCO remains untapped. Pooling of strengths in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), climate change and health would benefit the peoples of SCO member states. Theoretically, SCO could help unlock connectivity between Central and South Asia, thereby creating an arc of economic advantage between the two regions.

Consequently, as India assumes the Presidency of this Eurasian organisation, Looking North is now perhaps more imperative than ever before.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/defence/india-and-sco-navigating-new-equations/2667951>



*Thu, 15 Sep 2022*

## **US Defence Secretary Expressed Support for India's Defence Modernisation Programme**

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and his US counterpart Secretary of Defence Mr. Lloyd Austin had a warm and fruitful telephonic conversation today. They reviewed the multi-faceted India-US defence cooperation and reiterated mutual commitment to further strengthen military-to-military ties.

Secretary Austin expressed support for India's defence modernisation programme and looked forward to further strengthening India-US defence industrial and technology collaboration.

The Raksha Mantri and Secretary Austin also discussed regional issues and affirmed their shared desire for maintaining peace and stability in the region and beyond. Shri Rajnath Singh conveyed India's concerns over the US decision to provide a sustenance package for Pakistan's F-16 fleet.

The two Ministers reiterated that both sides would continue their productive engagements with the objective of deepening India-US Strategic Partnership. The Raksha Mantri conveyed that he looked forward to welcoming Secretary Austin in India for the next Ministerial 2+2 Dialogue in 2023.

<https://www.psuconnect.in/news/us-defence-secretary-expressed-support-for-india/34347/>



*Thu, 15 Sep 2022*

## **US Military Aid to Pakistan Raises Alarms in India**

The latest \$450-million assistance approved by the US last week to support the Pakistan Air Force's F-16 fighter fleet has turned the spotlight on how Washington has once again brushed aside New Delhi's concerns over military aid being extended to India's western neighbour on the pretext of fighting terrorism when it is actually being used to buttress capabilities against India, officials said on Thursday. The US is driven by its own geopolitical approach to the region, including Afghanistan, and India's well-known position on such military aid to Pakistan was not factored in while going ahead with the F-16 sustainment programme for Pakistan, said one of the officials cited above. This is the first major military assistance to Pakistan after the previous

Trump administration stopped security aid to the country in 2018, accusing it of not acting against terror safe havens on its soil. Pakistan has a sizeable F-16 fleet and is dependent on the US for supporting it. While the US has said the \$450-million assistance does not cover any F-16 capability upgrade or weapons, India has expressed its displeasure to Washington through diplomatic channels. Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday also conveyed India's concerns to the US. "Conveyed India's concern at the recent US decision to provide sustenance package for Pakistan's F-16 fleet. Look forward to continuing dialogue with Secretary Austin to further consolidating India-US partnership," he tweeted on Wednesday after speaking to his US counterpart on telephone.

Geopolitics is at play here, said Air Vice Marshal Manmohan Bahadur (retd), former additional director general, Centre for Air Power Studies, when asked to comment on the US military assistance. "Pakistan has been getting such aid from the US every now and then. The US has its interests in the region and every country looks after its own interest and will continue to do so. We need to be prepared for this and plan accordingly," said Bahadur.

The Pakistan Air Force operates more than 80 F-16s, including second-hand F-16A/B Block 15 jets bought from the Royal Jordanian Air Force.

A bulk of the Pakistani fleet consists of older F-16A/B fighters, now upgraded to Block 52 standards in Turkey. It also has 18 F-16C/D Block 50/52 planes. Block refers to the F-16 evolution, with a higher number representing technological upgrades.

"F-16 is an air superiority fighter. It's not meant for a counter-terror role," said Air Marshal Anil Chopra (retd), director general, Centre for Air Power Studies.

Pakistan is building its military capability against India, said a second official cited above.

"They had deployed their F-16s against India after the 2019 Balakot air strikes," he said.

Indian Air Force's Mirage-2000s struck targets in Pakistan's Balakot on February 26, 2019, in response to the Pulwama suicide attack in Kashmir in which 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed 12 days earlier. In a dogfight over the Line of Control (LoC) on February 27, 2019, Wing Commander (now group captain) Abhinandan Varthaman shot down a Pakistani F-16. On February 28, 2019, the IAF displayed remnants of an AIM-120 advanced medium range air-to-air missile (AMRAAM) that only the F-16s carry. Parts of the missile were recovered east of Rajouri.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/usmilitary-aid-to-pakistan-raises-alarms-in-india-101663265939480.html>



*Fri, 16 Sep 2022*

## **In the US's F-16 Package to Pakistan, India's Concerns**

*By Nirupama Subramanian*

On Wednesday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Twitter that he had "conveyed concerns" to his American counterpart Lloyd Austin on the US decision to provide Pakistan with a \$450 million package for what the Pentagon has called the "F-16 Case for sustainment and

related equipment”. Singh said the conversation ended warmly with a discussion on “growing convergence of strategic interests and enhanced defence and security co-operation”. The two ministers discussed “ways to strengthen technological and industrial collaboration and also explore co-operation in emerging and critical technologies”.

This was the first public statement by India on the latest US F-16 package to Pakistan. The Ministry of External Affairs has been quiet, though Ministry officials have said they communicated India’s objections to US officials who were in New Delhi for the 2+2 Inter-sessional and Maritime Security Dialogues, and for a Quad Senior Officials Meeting at the time of the announcement on September 7.

This is the first American military assistance package to Pakistan after the Trump Administration ended defence and security co-operation with the country in 2018 after accusing it of giving only “lies and deceit” for the billions of dollars that the US had “foolishly” given it.

The Department of Defense readout on Austin’s call with Singh made no mention of Indian concerns on the F-16 package. As it demonstrates “strategic autonomy” to engage with every side — Quad one week, and Russia and China the next at the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) in Samarkand — India appears determined to swallow its disappointment. After all, if New Delhi can stay away from zero sum games, work around Western sanctions to buy oil from Russia, and keep friends in all camps, what prevents the US from pleasing a non-NATO ally?

### **The package to Pakistan**

According to the September 7 Defense Security Co-operation Agency press release, included in the \$450 million package — the proposed contractor for which is Lockheed Martin — are technical and logistics services for follow-on support of Pakistan’s F-16 fleet. There is participation in several technical coordination groups, aircraft and engine hardware and software modifications and support, equipment support, manuals, precision measurement, and a range of related elements of aircraft maintenance.

In effect, this means a life-time upgrade for Pakistan’s existing fleet of F-16s.

“The proposed sale does not include any new capabilities, weapons, or munitions,” the release stated. “[It]...will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by allowing Pakistan to retain interoperability with US and partner forces in ongoing counter-terrorism efforts and in preparation for future contingency operations”. Also, “the proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region”.

### **Why this step now?**

Among the speculated reasons for the Biden Administration’s reversal of Trump’s policy on Pakistan, one revolves around the killing of Ayman al-Zawahiri in Kabul. Questions have swirled, including in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as to who provided the intelligence for the drone strike that killed the al-Qaeda chief in a posh house that belonged to Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani.

Last year, former Prime Minister Imran Khan had categorically denied American assertions that it was negotiating air space rights for security-/counter-terrorism-related operations in Afghanistan. Has the change of government brought a change in US attitude?

Imran's allegations of a US hand in his ouster did not prevent the Shehbaz Sharif government from repairing ties with the Biden administration. Both Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and ISI head Lt Gen Nadeem Anjum have been in active touch with their US interlocutors. Anjum visited the US in May, and Bajwa reportedly asked for help secure an IMF package for Pakistan, which has been granted.

Imran's recent comments in an interview to a Pakistani TV channel that he is, in fact, not anti-US, and that he has been in touch with various US officials, suggest that the new turn in US-Pakistan relations was inevitable. All players — Pakistan's military, its ruling and opposition politicians, and the US — know they need one another, and that the rest is rhetoric.

Some observers believe there could be another reason: in the geopolitical churn arising from the Russia-Ukraine war, the US is trying to break China's hold on Pakistan with sweeteners of its own. The Pakistan Air Force now has more Chinese JF-17 Thunder fighter jets than F-16s — but it continues to rely on the ageing American aircraft, as the India-Pakistan 2019 skirmish demonstrated.

The JF-17s are now manufactured at the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex in Kamra jointly with China's Chengdu Aircraft Corporation, and its Klimov engines are Russian-built. Significantly, on March 23, Pakistan's National Day, PAF chief Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu led the flypast in an F-16.

### **India, Pakistan, the aircraft**

According to Brig. Rahul Bhonsle (retd), who runs the online portal Security Risks Asia, the sustainment programme for Pakistan's F-16 fleet would enhance conventional deterrence versus India. He says that the last aerial skirmish between Pakistan and India on February 29, 2019 — during which the PAF brought down a MiG-21 flown by IAF pilot Abhinandan Varthaman — showed that the F-16 is the aircraft that Pakistan will use in any future encounter with India.

“India will have to effectively enhance conventional combat capability of the IAF to continue to meet the challenge of a resurgent PAF,” he says in an article on his site.

Sliced another way, the package could also be a US signal to both Islamabad and New Delhi that it is time to break the long impasse in relations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message of commiseration with Pakistan over the floods did not lead to any further steps, especially after Prime Minister Sharif ruled out the tentative suggestion of trade with India by his Finance Minister Miftah Ismail. At the time of writing, no meeting was scheduled between the two PMs in Samarkand. But it had not been ruled out either.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-global/us-pakistan-f-16-package-8153865/>

## **US Expects “Action Against Terrorist Groups” as it Extends Aid to Pak’s F-16 Fleet**

Even as it has approved a USD 450 million F-16 fighter jet sustainment programme for Pakistan, the United States still expects Islamabad to “take sustained action against all terrorist groups,” local media outlet Dawn reported.

With this, it becomes increasingly clear that Pakistan cannot duck the questions posed by the key issue of terrorism under any circumstances. This comes as reversing the decision taken by the previous Donald Trump government, the United States had approved a USD 450 million F-16 fighter jet sustainment programme for Pakistan.

In 2018, Donald Trump stopped all defence and security assistance to Pakistan alleging that Islamabad was not a partner in its fight against terrorism. The US Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) had said that the Pakistan government had requested support for its F-16 fleet.

Over the sustenance package for Pakistan’s F-16 fleet by the US, the State Department said that though it views Pakistan as an important counterterrorism partner still the country expects it to take sustained action against terrorist groups, reported Dawn.

During a press briefing, US State Department Spokesperson Ned Price expressed concerns over the ban on the transmission of Pakistan’s local media outlet ARY News.

“We continue to be concerned by significant restrictions on media outlets and civil society in Pakistan... We routinely raise our concerns about press freedom to all stakeholders around the world, including to our partners and our counterparts in Pakistan,” Price said.

He added that Washington was “concerned that media and content restrictions, as well as a lack of accountability for attacks against journalists, undermine the exercise of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.”

Underscoring its support to Pakistan amid the devastating floods that has gripped the South Asian Nation, Price said a total of nine US Central Command flights had delivered more than half of the 630 metric tons of relief supplies from USAID’s Dubai warehouse as a response, reported Dawn.

“In total, CENTCOM will airlift more than 41,000 kitchen sets, 1,500 rolls of plastic sheeting, tens of thousands of plastic tarps, 8,700 shelter fixing kits – all in support of USAID’s flood relief.”

Price added that in this fiscal year alone, the US had provided more than USD 53 million in humanitarian assistance, including urgently needed support for food, nutrition, multipurpose cash, safe drinking water, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene, as well as shelter assistance.

It is worthy to note that Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh conveyed India’s concerns related to the American sustenance package for Pakistan’s F-16 fleet to US Secretary of Defence

Lloyd Austin in a telephonic conversation in which the two leaders discussed the growing convergence of strategic interests and enhanced cooperation.

Notably, India is considered the centrepiece of the US President Joe Biden administration's Indo-Pacific strategy and Indian Foreign and Defence Ministers recently held the '2+2' meeting with their American counterparts.

India-US bilateral partnership today encompasses a whole host of issues including the response to Covid-19, economic recovery post-pandemic, the climate crisis and sustainable development, critical and emerging technologies, supply chain resilience, education, the diaspora and defence and security.

<https://theprint.in/world/us-expects-action-against-terrorist-groups-as-it-extends-aid-to-paks-f-16-fleet/1130424/>

## Science & Technology News



**Press Information Bureau**  
**Government of India**

**Ministry of Science and Technology**

*Thu, 15 Sep 2022 5:24PM*

### **Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launches Dashboard of Department of Science & Technology for Countrywide Monitoring and Feedback to Ensure Effective Implementation of Projects, Schemes, Scholarships and Fellowships Funded by DST**

**The Minister says, the Dashboard contains every single minute detail of over Rs 20,000 crore disbursed by DST to 2,768 Agencies in 35 States/UTs in the last five years**

**Terming the DST Dashboard as a good beginning, Dr Jitendra Singh calls for a Common Dashboard for all Science Ministries and Departments in near future**

**Impact analysis of the schemes and scholarships both age wise and gender wise for SC/ST/OBCs and General Castes is embedded in the Dashboard for suggesting reformative measures to states: Dr Jitendra Singh**

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today launched Dashboard of Department of

Science & Technology (DST), Govt of India, for countrywide monitoring and feedback to ensure effective implementation of projects, schemes, scholarships and fellowships funded by DST.

The Minister said, through the Dashboard, details of each of the schemes and programmes for any group in every State can be accessed on a real time basis and remedial measures, if any, can be taken promptly. He said, impact analysis of the schemes and scholarships both age wise and gender wise for SC/ST/OBCs and General Castes is embedded in the Dashboard for suggesting reformative measures to states, if any.

Harping on the idea of greater integration, Dr Jitendra Singh said, DST Dashboard is a good beginning and efforts would be made in future for a Common Dashboard for all Science Ministries and Departments. The Minister informed that in the last five years, over Rs 20,000 crore were disbursed by DST to 2,768 Agencies in 35 States/UTs and every single minute detail is available on the Dashboard.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Dashboard is an institutional mechanism of the DST to drive the process of building, harnessing as well as augmenting and monitoring the statistical and data analytical capabilities of the Department. He said, this is in compliance to the directives of NITI Aayog issued in February 2021. The Minister, however, pointed out that DST had established a similar setup - Data Management Cell with the same objectives in January, 2019.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Data & Strategy Units (DSUs) creates different dashboards for different target groups and these dashboards have helped DST in taking evidence-based decisions. Many special calls have been taken on programmes seeing the gaps in the outreach of the programmes and in many programmes mid-course corrections have been prompted based on the data analysis done through dashboards, the Minister added.

The most important outcome of these dashboards is that the Department is made aware of the outputs and outcomes of the decisions taken, projects funded or scholarship/fellowship awarded on a regular basis and in a user-friendly manner.

Secretary, DST, Shri S. Chandrasekhar said, Data & Strategy Unit (DSU) is assisted by an Expert Advisory Group consisting of eminent data scientists from academia, public and private sector institutions. DSU also provides opportunity to budding data scientists by engaging them as interns. Ministries/Departments were advised to set up a Data & Strategy Unit (DSU) as a central unit to steer the development and implementation of an action plan or data strategy to improve their data preparedness levels in general and reach DGQI 5.0 scores by December, 2022 in specific.

Apart from data analysis and creating dashboards, Data & Strategy Unit of DST is also engaged in creating awareness on data by organising training programmes and workshops. DSU also invites eminent data scientists and data champions for lectures and interactions with the scientists, data officers and other officials of DST. A weekly thematic poster on the schemes/programmes of DST and on S&T topics in general with a QR code of the related dashboard is placed on important sites of Technology Bhawan to keep the Scientists and other officials aware of the schemes in an interactive way.

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