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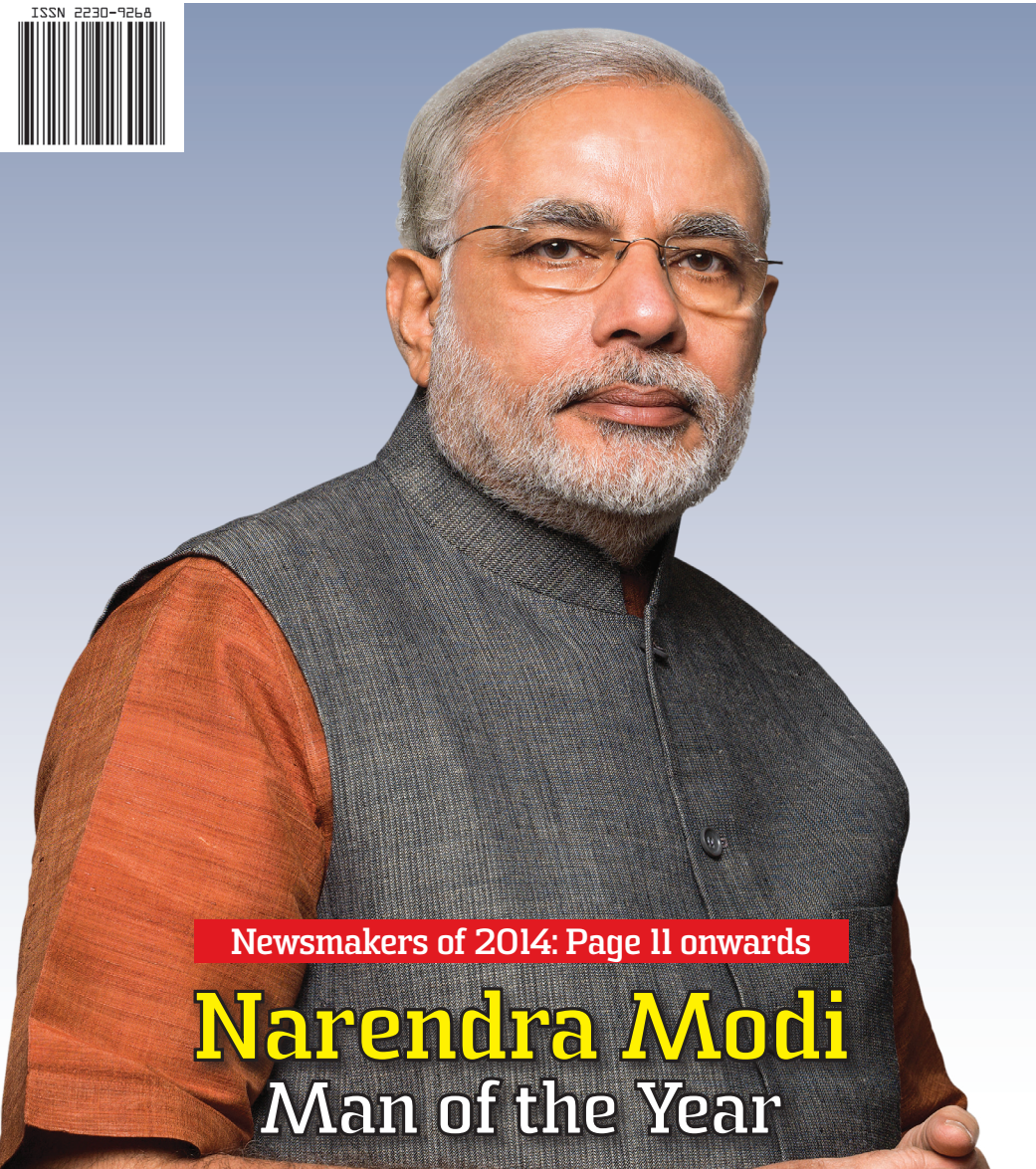
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In a country like India with limited support from the industry and market, initiating 50 years ago (in 1964) publishing magazines relating to Army, Navy and Aviation sectors without any interruption is a commendable job on the part of SP Guide Publications. By this, SP Guide Publications has established the fact that continuing quality work in any field would result in success. ”

Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India



While we at SP's cherish our journey started in 1964, founded by our Founder Editor and Founder Publisher Shri S P Baranwal; we do believe that the entry into 51st year and beyond is just a beginning for us. We therefore look forward to constantly evolving and expanding our qualitative efforts during coming years and coming decades.

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Defence Minister's visit to Hindon Airbase

The Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar familiarised himself at the Air Force Station Hindon recently with the operations being carried out by the C-17 Globemaster III and the C-130J Super Hercules - the two most modern transport aircraft in the inventory of the Indian Air Force. He was accompanied by the Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha and the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Air Command Air Marshal S.S. Soman. On his arrival at Hindon, the Minister was briefed by Air Marshal Soman on the role for which both these aircraft are being employed and their potential for deployment in various contingencies. This was followed by a tour of the flight complex and a visit to the special equipment bay.



The Minister was also provided an onsite familiarisation of both the aircraft followed by a visit to the C-130J simulator wherein he gained first-hand experience of flying the C-130J along with Group Captain Tejbir Singh, Commanding Officer of 77 Squadron. Parrikar also had a 'Windshield Tour' of the C-17 where he was familiarised with the onboard equipment and instrumentation by Group Captain B.S. Reddy, Commanding Officer of 81 Squadron.

77 Squadron specialises in undertaking a gamut of diverse roles including insertion and quick deployment of special forces, airdrop and airlanded operations in hostile areas and other combat support roles. The Super Hercules was used extensively during the flood relief operations in Uttarakhand - the aircraft landed at Dharasu to supply fuel to helicopters involved in rescue and relief operations. The Globemaster is presently used for carrying out routine and special missions to high altitude airfields at Leh and Thoise. 81 Squadron provided succour and relief to the flood affected people of Jammu and Kashmir by transporting relief material and passengers. 



Cover:

The year 2014 truly belonged to Narendra Modi who became India's 15th Prime Minister after a decisive victory in the Lok Sabha elections held in May 2014. He has truly inspired the nation with his plans, campaigns and speeches.

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Acche din ahead

Year 2014 indeed has been a very eventful year in many ways. First and foremost, SP Guide Publications reached a significant milestone in the journey of our company – we touched the Golden mile and are all geared up for the next phase of growth. We see *acche din* ahead.

Yes, we are borrowing the slogan of the inspirational Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has promised *acche din* (good days). India now is on the cusp of an exponential growth, spurred by the move towards good governance, essential reforms and above all a pride of being Indian. The general elections of 2014 were critical for India as the country had gone into a state of slumber. That the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came into power with absolute majority under the dynamic leadership of Narendra Modi augurs well for India. He is indeed the Man of the Moment. We look forward to accelerated pace of reforms, stability and strengthening of national security.

The latest incident of a suspected 'terror boat' intercepted by the Indian Coast Guard is evidence of how neighbouring Pakistan is trying to foment trouble in India, entering through sea and land routes. Although in this latest episode a terrorist attack was foiled through coordinated action between intelligence agencies and the Indian Coast Guard, it is a grim reminder that the threat to national security from across the coastline. Air Marshal B.K. Pandey and Lt General P.C. Katoch analyse the incident.

In this issue while we have captured key events that have grabbed global headlines during the year. We also have an exclusive interview with the Chief of the Army Staff General Dalbir Singh who dwelt at length on force modernisation, among others.

The defence industry of the world is looking at India as noted by Ranjeet Kumar after talking to different players in France. They all seem to be enthused over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' programme and are keen on partnering Indian compa-

nies. To facilitate joint defence production and open imports, the government announced a new policy legalising middlemen in arms purchases. The Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar has said that a more liberalised export regime centred on Prime Minister Modi's 'Make in India' vision, adding that private companies may be allowed to export.

We believe that these initiatives will be taken, if not sooner but later, as there is an express intent. 2015 begins on a good note as India is expecting President Barack Obama here for the January 26th Republic Day celebrations. Vivek Lall, Chief Executive of Commercial Global Strategic Development, General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems Group, says Obama's visit is going to be a defining moment in bilateral relations as this is the first time that an US President will be Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations.

Happy New Year!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jayant Baranwal
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

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Decision taken for creating a Digital Army

In an interview with SP's M.A.I., General Dalbir Singh, Chief of the Army Staff, outlines some of the major modernisation plans being undertaken by the Indian Army.

SP's M.A.I (SP's): The Twelfth Five Year Plan has been approved 'in principle' by the government while the acquisitions of the Eleventh Plan are still underway. Your comments.

COAS: To address envisaged current and futuristic security needs, Indian Army engages in capability development in a prioritised manner based on Long-Term Perspective Plan spread over a period of 15 years. Further prioritisation is based on five-year defence plan approved by the Defence Acquisition Council and Annual Acquisition Plan spread over a two-year period. The five-year defence plans are made to identify areas which need attention, bridge the gaps between existing capabilities and what is required is to arrive at a realistic and implementable allocation of resources.

The Eleventh Plan (2007-12) was focused on developing capabilities to attain military objectives across the entire spectrum of conflicts against a nuclear backdrop. The plan succeeded in making a beginning towards addressing our priority areas.

The Twelfth Plan (2012-17) includes induction of high technology weapons, acquisition of force multipliers and focusing on creation of a lethal, agile and networked force prepared to meet the complex security challenges. The overall equipment profile is a mix of modern, current and equipment approaching obsolescence.

The army's modernisation is an ongoing process based on long-term planning and has been largely progressing as planned. Delays are primarily attributable to procedural issues. Numerous measures have been initiated at the macro as well as micro level to streamline capital procurement procedures to ensure that the capability building of the army is progressed as per laid down priorities and timelines. While doing so, guidelines given in the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2013 are being scrupulously followed and integrity of procurement procedure maintained.

SP's: Coming to the infantry, the largest arm in the army, what modern systems, from the rifle to others, are needed and what is the progress on various fronts including F-INSAS?

COAS: Modernisation of the infantry soldier is being given priority and necessary impetus. It is designed to enhance an individual soldier's capabilities in terms of increasing his weapon lethality and at the same time providing him necessary protection for survivability in the lethal environment. His mobility and connectivity to exploit a network-centric system are also planned. We have moved ahead from concept stage to execution. In this initial phase priority is being accorded to weapon systems and enhancing night vision and battlefield mobility capabilities.

- **Lethality.** The procurement of weapons is simultaneously

addressing both the modernisation and hollowness factors. The requirement to address the existing critical voids in the environment is being accorded maximum impetus. The procurement process of close quarter battle carbine, assault rifle and light machine gun are in advanced stage.

- **Target Acquisition and Situational Awareness.** Commanders and detachment numbers at various levels in the Indian Army need to be effectively night enabled. Due importance is therefore given to equip the weapons with mix of image intensifier and thermal imaging based night sights. The RFP for procurement of image intensifier sight for carbine has been issued on November 7, 2014.
- **Body Armour.** The procurement of ballistic helmet and bullet proof jacket is at an advanced stage wherein both items are at trial stage.

SP's: Considerable current holdings of the Indian Army's equipment are obsolete and needs urgent attention. What is the army doing about it?

COAS: It is a part of the modernisation of the armed forces, which is a continuous process based on threat perception, operational challenges, technological changes and available resources. The outdated equipment is being upgraded accordingly.

Presently, a proposal is under consideration of procuring 100 wheeled APCs for our UN contingents. These wheeled APCs are likely to replace the BMPs. The same will improve deployment capabilities of our contingents. Tangible steps have been taken to fast-track processing of key EW (electronic warfare) and communication projects. A project for procurement of tactical communication system (TCS) for the TBA based on a grid communication network is under way.

One of the major modernisation decisions taken is of creating a Digital Army. Three key areas and nine pillars for Digital Army are being worked upon based on Digital India plan. Some concrete actions have been taken in that direction and some are in the pipeline. 'Integration' and 'inter-operability' have been made key issues in all SW application development. Systems and procedures are also being modified as part of 'business process review' as applicable.

A close interaction with industry is being encouraged wherein requirement of services have been highlighted to the industry. Capability of industry in different domain has also been requested to optimise our interface. Fast-tracking procedures in DPP and Defence Procurement Manual are also being planned for better response. **SP**

For the complete interview, log on to www.spsmai.com



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AIR MARSHAL
B.K. PANDEY (RETD)

Facilitating defence procurement

The move to restructure the existing regulations so as to permit middlemen in the processing of tenders for the procurement of defence equipment for the Indian armed forces is indeed a positive step that would be welcome by the global aerospace and defence industry.

The process of procurement of military hardware by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) directly from the global original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) operating in the open market has often been plagued by serious allegations of misdemeanour. This malaise has been attributed rightly or wrongly in large part to the involvement of “middlemen” or agents employed by the OEMs to facilitate deals and earn their commission. The general view is that not only hefty commissions are paid to the middlemen, these in turn resort to payment of huge sums as kickbacks to those who are in a position to influence the finalisation of contracts in favour of the company engaging the middlemen. All such payments regarded as off the record are substantial and ultimately inflate the cost of the deal.

Middlemen have been associated in defence procurement deals since independence and so have been scams beginning with the jeep scandal of 1948 to the infamous deal for Bofors guns for the Indian Army in the mid-1980s that became the “defining scandal in the history of defence procurement”. A fallout of the Bofors scam was that the Congress-led coalition government of the day decided to prohibit employment of middlemen in contracts for defence equipment. An ‘integrity clause’ was introduced that was mandatory for all contracts for defence equipment to obviate allegations of corruption and introduce transparency. The integrity clause made it incumbent upon the supplier to guarantee that no individual or firm was employed to facilitate the deal. There was also a provision to cancel the contract if at any stage it were discovered that the declaration was flawed.

However, despite the change in the regulations governing the procurement of military hardware, involvement of middlemen continued unabated though in a surreptitious manner. Contenders who failed in their effort to secure a contract invariably resorted to subvert the process by filing formal or anonymous complaints about violation of the regulations on employment of middlemen. This emerged as a major impediment for defence procurement as A.K. Antony, the longest serving Minister of Defence under the UPA Government who being keen to safeguard

his unblemished reputation for honesty and integrity, invariably took cognizance of the complaints and ordered investigations in response to the faintest allegations of wrongdoing. Based on such a course of action, a number of tenders were cancelled before the award of contract, some even in the last minute. Also, even major aerospace and defence companies of global repute were blacklisted and debarred from participating in future defence contracts in India.

Under the shadow of the Bofors scam, effort by the Indian Army to acquire new-generation artillery just could not materialise as for one reason or another, the related tender was cancelled five times. The urgently needed 197 light utility helicopters to replace the obsolescent Cheetah and Chetak helicopters inducted in

the 1970s was cancelled twice and eventually scrapped. But the most frustrating experience the Indian Air Force (IAF) has gone through in the recent past was with the contract for 12 AgustaWestland AW-101 helicopters for VVIP travel. This contract was cancelled halfway through execution and as a result, the IAF was literally “left holding the baby” with three machines already delivered. Besides, substantial sums had been paid in advance to the vendor and Finmeccanica, the parent company, was in disrepute under the shadow of a scam. The party worst affected by the retaliatory action by

the government was the Indian armed forces as their plans for modernisation remained bogged down the quagmire of allegations, investigations, blacklisting of firms and cancellation of contracts. In an effort to deal with the allegations of wrongdoing in the processing of tenders or in the execution of contracts, the MoD actually ended up “shooting itself in the foot”.

Wisdom seems to have finally dawned as the new government has finally understood the ground realities of the stifling environment associated with doing business with the government in India and the compulsions of global firms to employ middlemen in their pursuit of contracts. The move to restructure the existing regulations so as to permit middlemen in the processing of tenders for the procurement of defence equipment for the Indian armed forces is indeed a positive step that would be welcome by the global aerospace and defence industry. **SP**



Allowing middlemen is a good move

[By Lt General P.C. Katoch (Retd)]

On the last day of last year (December 31, 2014) it was reported in media that a new government policy legalising middlemen in arms purchases – a source of massive controversies in the past – will be in place soon. Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar said, “The middlemen have to be declared and their commission cannot be linked to the outcome of negotiations.” Parrikar said that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) will announce a more liberalised export regime centred on Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s ‘Make in India’ vision, adding, “Private companies must be allowed to export defence equipment made in India, and for that rules will be changed.”

Significantly, the Defence Minister also stated that the Ministry of External Affairs would soon come out with a list of countries to which defence equipment made in India cannot be exported. Although currently private companies cannot export weapons, equipment or components without clearance from the government, the list being issued would obviously be applicable to joint ventures (JVs) involving both foreign and Indian firms. The government has also been engaged in implementing nuanced blacklisting norms to replace the earlier indiscriminate ones. Middlemen or defence agents were banned for years after the multimillion-dollar scandal in the 1980s involving alleged kickbacks paid to politicians and officials in purchases. This move is obviously because of poor response to the regulatory role on agents that MoD had acquired for itself in conjunction stringent guidelines issued in year 2001 – that had proved counterproductive.

Interestingly, the government in 2001 had lifted the blanket ban on agents, which had been in force since 1987 after the infamous Bofors gun and HDW submarine scandals. But this bid to inject some transparency did not really work since the stringent norms laid down for agents were considered unrealistic, with the government even declaring it would determine the scale of commission to be paid to them. Consequently, almost no one came forward to be registered as an agent. Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar through his recent statement has now confirmed that the government is planning to legalise representatives of various foreign arms companies in the country, for speedy purchase of military hardware. He said, “We will allow company representatives. They will be middlemen. When I say middlemen it doesn’t mean commission agents or ‘dalals’. He will be a company representative in India. The company representative can work on a fee basis. He will be the information provider. Several times we require feedback and also someone who can get us information. There are some foreign companies which want to come to India...they can’t go on sending their people here.”

The Minister had earlier said middlemen can be permitted to charge expenses from parent companies for representing them in the country. He had also stated earlier that the gov-

ernment should be in a position to have a very clear-cut policy by January 2015 and on blacklisting including a raft of measures to ensure transparency and at the same time speeding up such purchases to modernise the armed forces. This is not a new idea and has come up time and again, with many experts recommending its institutionalisation. The fact is that the absence of this led to high levels of corruption in arms purchases including in the MoD since agents still approached officials anyway. A dispassionate analysis would perhaps bring out that not one single arms deal has taken place without involvement of an agent directly or indirectly. In fact, hordes of shady middlemen including in garb of consultants lurked in the corridors of power to grease the official machinery and swing deals with hefty kickbacks to politicians, bureaucrats and military officers despite all the anti-graft provisions and integrity pacts in place – some shady agreements made in environment of five-star hotels.

For example take the mention of bribes given to politicians and bureaucrats in Haschke’s diary in connection with the Westland VVIP helicopter deal. Take the case of hefty bribes given to Indians in the Eurocopter deal, details of which are known to the Indian Intelligence Bureau. But then these are a drop in the ocean and the tentacles of the arms mafia has managed to put the lid on. India is the world’s largest arms importer, having spent ₹83,458 crore in just the last three years in acquiring weapons from the US, Russia, France, Israel and others. Overall, India has inked arms deals worth well over \$60 billion since the 1999 Kargil conflict. But there are just a handful of legalised defence agents on the rolls of MoD.

The move to legalise agents of arms companies is not only timely but imperative because massive voids in military’s defence needs must be filled up speedily. With call of ‘Make in India’ and relaxations in FDI, many foreign companies are looking at India and JVs must have authorised agents to deal with the official machinery. Defence deals don’t originate only on government-to-government basis especially where private industry – therefore agents are essential. Legalised agents can assist foreign armament companies in replying to arms tenders, trial evaluation of systems, price negotiations, enhancing the quality of after-sales service and in resolving performance and warranty issues and legalised agents will cut down on corruption in defence procurements. Registration of a greater number of legalised agents under a new policy is certainly required. The armament companies should be free to choose anyone they want to act as their agents provided they are not blacklisted.

It should also be left to the company to decide how much commission it wants to pay the agent. The bottom line is: middlemen were always there who are now being legalised. What the government needs to focus is rooting out corruption in the defence sector and defence deals and kill the Goliath of the arms mafia. ■ SP

It should be left to the company to decide how much commission it wants to pay the agent. The bottom line is: middlemen were always there who are now being legalised.



Strengthening bilateral relations

[By **Dr Vivek Lall**]

The invitation to President Barack Obama to visit India in January is a measure of the significance India puts on its strategic partnership with the United States. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has very publicly signaled a re-shaping of India's foreign policy and in particular policy towards the US. It also is a defining moment in bilateral relations as this is the first time that a President of the US will be Chief Guest at India's Republic Day celebrations - convergence of the world's largest democracy and the world's oldest democracy.

On the US side, President Obama's acceptance points to the fact that the US considers India an important partner. It also signals a restoration of US confidence in India that in the years since the path-breaking Civil Nuclear Agreement was signed, had been declining on account of various factors. It also tells us that Prime Minister Modi's visit to Washington in September gave a significant new boost to bilateral relations.

However, moving beyond the symbolism of the invitation and visit, both India and US will need to work closely to strengthen and expand the US-India strategic partnership. India and the United States have much in common: deep-rooted respect for democratic values, multi-cultural societies and free markets. Today there is an extraordinary degree of convergence between the interests of the two countries such as geopolitics, regional security and defence.

It goes without saying that US-India bilateral relations will improve if the business relations improve. Towards this, we hope that the often-cited impediments such as India's Nuclear Liability Law and challenges in the intellectual property rights (IPR) regime are addressed. Since 1991, when India ushered in wide-scale economic reforms, much has been accomplished. However, there is a lot of work ahead for India's policy makers to provide an enabling environment for trade and industry to flourish. Clearly the present government has already taken great strides in that direction.

The US-India Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI), has the potential to transform bilateral relations and needs nurturing. Co-production implies a paradigm shift for both countries and officials on both sides need to work together and ensure that the

DTTI becomes the catalyst of enhanced cooperation between the two countries. The DTTI represents a commitment from the US side to building an indigenous Indian industrial base by pre-screening projects for co-production. This will lead to industrial integration and interdependence which will strengthen the foundation for an enduring US-India security relationship.

Implementation of DTTI is as much a test of the Modi Government directing its bureaucratic processes as it is the US commitment to ensuring the two countries will set up an enduring partnership.

There is a need to galvanise DTTI and both governments need to make sure that officials and corporates working at the ground



Prime Minister Modi meeting President Obama at the White House, Washington DC, on September 30, 2014

level take forward the vision articulated by the respective leaderships. It is hoped that President Obama's visit to India will result in the two leaders strongly endorsing very specific timeline and actions to implement DTTI projects which will send a strong message to bureaucracies and corporate board rooms in each country that the DTTI remains a top priority. **SP**

The writer is Chief Executive of Commercial Global Strategic Development, General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems Group.

PHOTOGRAPHS: narendramodi.in, PIB



Newsmakers of 2014

Narendra Modi: Man of the Year

The year 2014 truly belonged to Narendra Modi who became India's 15th Prime Minister after a decisive victory in the Lok Sabha elections held in May 2014. A four-time Gujarat Chief Minister, Modi steered his party to its best-ever performance on the national scale, winning 281 of 543 seats. He has truly inspired the nation with his plans, campaigns and speeches.



Manohar Parrikar: At the helm of Indian defence

From being Goa Chief Minister to India's Defence Minister, Manohar Parrikar has been one of the headline-grabbers of 2014. Handpicked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his Delhi assignment, Parrikar is tasked with modernisation of the armed forces. He is a graduate from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay, in Metallurgical Engineering. He was awarded by the institute with Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2001.



Arup Raha takes over as Chairman, COSC

The Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha took over as the Chairman, Chief of the Staff Committee (COSC). He received the baton of Chairman, COSC from the outgoing Chief of Army Staff, General Bikram Singh. Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha graduated from the National Defence Academy, Pune, with the President's Gold Medal in 1973 and was commissioned in the flying Branch of Indian Air Force in December 1974.



Dalbir Singh, the new Army Chief

The government appointed Lt General Dalbir Singh, Vice Chief of the Army Staff, as the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) on the retirement of General Bikram Singh, on July 31, 2014. General Dalbir Singh was commissioned in the Army on June 16, 1974. During a career spanning nearly 40 years, he has held various Command and Staff appointments.



R.K. Dhowan, Chief of the Naval Staff

The government appointed Admiral R.K. Dhowan PVSM AVSM YSM ADC as the Chief of the Naval Staff. Admiral R.K. Dhowan was commissioned in the Navy on January 1, 1975. He is a Navigation and Direction specialist who has served with distinction in an array of Command, Staff and Instructional appointments through his exemplary career spanning 40 years. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Defence Services Staff College and Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, USA.



Submarine on fire

INS Sindhuratna mishap (February 26, 2014). Two sailors died and seven members of the 94-strong crew were evacuated after inhaling smoke aboard the diesel-powered submarine following a fire. A board of inquiry in its preliminary report said that fire in some cables led to the smoke in the third compartment.



Admiral D.K. Joshi's resignation causes flutter

Admiral D.K. Joshi resigned from the post of Chief of the Naval Staff in February taking moral responsibility over a series of accidents, including a fire that was reported on the Navy submarine INS Sindhuratna. Two officers were killed and seven sailors were taken seriously ill after the incident.



Ukraine crisis continues

The crisis began earlier this year after Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula, which was a part of Ukraine following a revolution in the erstwhile Soviet Republic. Russia's move was widely condemned by world powers who termed Russia's military intervention and support to rebels in Ukraine as an attack on the country's sovereignty. As a result, Russia was suspended from the G-8 group of countries.

Another Malaysian Airliner goes down

As if the disappearance of MH-370 was not worse, came the shocking news of another Malaysia Airlines plane that was shot down over Ukraine during the height of the former Soviet republic's ongoing internal crisis. All 298 people on board a Malaysia Airlines plane died after the airliner crashed in eastern Ukraine, close to the border with Russia.



MOM mission puts India on top

India became only the fourth nation to execute a successful mission to Mars, a success made even sweeter by the fact that it was the first ever country to succeed in its maiden attempt. Prime Minister Narendra Modi pointed out that the mission cost (just \$74 million) much less than that of Hollywood space film *Gravity*. Mangalyaan has been described as a technological feat that will allow India to flex its 'interplanetary muscles.' On September 24, Indian space scientists once again made India proud. Mangalyaan is among the 25 'Best Inventions of 2014' listed by *Time* magazine that are 'making the world better, smarter and—in some cases—a little more fun.'



Mysterious disappearance of MH-370

The disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight MH-370—over the southern Indian Ocean on March 7, 2014, remains a mystery. The search continues for the wreck of the plane, with no success yet. The aircraft, a Boeing 777-200ER, was carrying 12 Malaysian crew members and 227 passengers from 15 nations. The aircraft disappeared from air traffic controllers' radar screens at 0121 MYT. Malaysian military radar continued to track Flight 370 as it deviated from its planned flight path and crossed the Malay Peninsula; Flight 370 left the range of Malaysian military radar at 0215 MYT while over the Andaman Sea, 200 nautical miles (370 km) north-west of Penang in north-western Malaysia. Neither the crew nor the aircraft's communication systems relayed a distress signal, indications of bad weather, or technical problems before the aircraft vanished.

PHOTOGRAPHS: PIB, Wikipedia

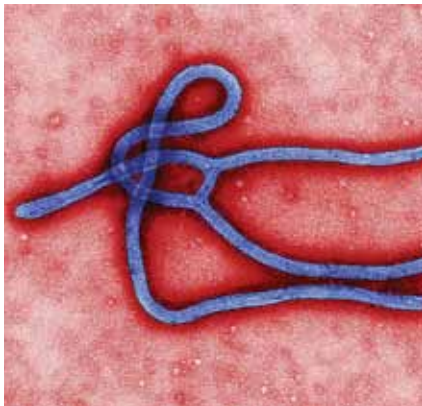


Taliban kill 132 school-children

The Taliban attacked an army-run school in Peshawar on December 16, killing 132 students and 16 teachers, staff members and soldiers. This is said to be the bloodiest massacre the country has seen for years. More than eight hours after militants slipped into the heavily guarded compound through a back entrance, the army declared the operation to flush them out over, and said that all nine insurgents had been killed.

Ebola sends airports in lockdown

A horror virus thought to be permanently resigned to the annals of history, Ebola made an alarming return in the age of modern medicine. Ill-equipped and caught entirely off guard, many were sent into panic as images of West Africa filtered through the global news. Airports were sent into lockdown as the death toll reached far into the thousands.



PHOTOGRAPHS: Anoop Kamath, Indian Coast Guard, Wikipedia, cdc.gov

'Terror' boat intercepted by Indian Coast Guard

A suspicious fishing boat carrying explosives from Pakistan was intercepted by Indian Coast Guard in the Arabian Sea near Indo-Pak maritime boundary but it sank after the crew on board set it on fire. An intelligence-based midnight operation was conducted by the Coast Guard ships and aircraft to intercept the suspect fishing boat, approximately 365 km off Porbander in Gujarat, on the intervening night of December 31 and January 1 after a hot pursuit. Four persons were seen on the boat who disregarded all warnings by the Coast Guard ship to stop and cooperate with investigation. Soon thereafter the crew hid themselves in below deck compartment and set the boat on fire, which resulted in an explosion and major fire on the boat. Due to darkness, bad weather and strong winds, the boat and persons on board could not be saved or recovered. The boat burnt and sank in the same position, in early hours of January 1, 2015.



Abduction of schoolgirls in Nigeria sends shockwaves

The abduction of 276 innocent schoolgirls in Nigeria took a while to sink in across the rest of the world. Threats from Boko Haram, the militant group responsible for the kidnappings to rape, marry or sell the young women prompted the world to kick into action. Michelle Obama shared a photo of herself holding a sign proclaiming 'Bring Back Our Girls' and other prominent figures followed suit. Some of them managed to escape but, eight months later, around 200 of them remain in the clutches of militants who claim they have married them and made them convert to Islam. Worse still, Boko Haram kidnapped a further 185 people on December 19, including women and children.



South Korean ferry sinks

Overloaded and with questionable seaworthiness, South Korean passenger and freight ferry the MV Sewol made an unusually sharp turn, causing it to sink into the waters of the East China Sea with astounding speed. With it went all 476 people on board – only 172 made it out alive. The captain in particular was lambasted for his decision to abandon his ship and the hundreds of passengers on board, prioritising his own safety before theirs. Captain Lee Jun-seok and three other crew members were later charged with murder.

French defence industry wants a share in Make in India programme



MDL is producing six SSK Scorpene submarines (P-75) under transfer of technology from DCNS

[By **Ranjeet Kumar**]

The French defence industry is enthused over the prospects of participating in India's 'Make in India' programme and is interested in making India one of its production centres. As India plans to acquire defence equipments worth \$100 billion during the next decade, the French defence industry has entered into dialogues with Indian private sector companies for setting up joint ventures on Indian soil.

The French defence companies believe that on the back of their successful engagement with India over the last five decades, they can establish fruitful ventures worth multibillion dollars here in India. Whether it is submarines or landing platform decks for the Indian Navy or the short-range surface-to-air missile (SRSAM) for the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force (IAF); or the Howitzer guns for the Indian Army, the French are ready to participate in these programmes.

Under the 'light utility' contract, Airbus Helicopters has initiated search for a reliable partner, while the world's leading missile manufacturer MBDA is looking for partnership with Indian company for short-range surface-to-air missile.

A top MBDA official said that the SRSAMs made in India can be exported worldwide. "We already have a joint partnership going on with Indian firms and are looking forward to deepening it," the official added. MBDA is already working with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the SRSAM design named Maitri. MBDA has also proposed to DRDO for design and development of Akash Mark-II surface-to-air missile with a range of 40 km. The Akash missile, which is already under induction in the IAF, has a range of 25 km.

The head of the battlefield and new cooperation division of MBDA, Jean Paul Faye said that he is expecting a decision on the programme soon. The SRSAMs will have two versions—ship-launched and land-based. The project is under government-to-government

deal and is under the supervision of the two governments. Faye said, “MBDA has over 90 customers worldwide and we will support in its export as we can.” These SRSAMs are meant for the Indian Army, Air Force and Navy.

Another MBDA official said, “We have contract prepared with the DRDO as we have been negotiating over six to seven years. The Indian production agency will be Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL). There will also be work packages for private industry under this programme.”

Yet another official stated that “the SRSAM is part of the strategic dialogue between the French and Indian governments. We understand the Make in India strategy of the new Narendra Modi Government. In fact we want to build on 50 years of partnership with India as we have helped BDL produce Milan missiles in India. We are also ready to help produce the fifth-generation anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) in India. We can develop the missile in two years with DRDO as design authority and can produce 8,000 missiles in three years. We have proposed these missiles to continue the cooperation.” It is worth noting that the Indian Ministry of Defence has already decided to acquire the ATGM Spike from Israel which has a range of only 2.5 km whereas India can develop beyond 4 km range ATGM in India.

A senior official of Nexter, the leading manufacturers of the howitzer gun systems, said that the company will respond to the Indian request for information (RFI) for making Caesar guns in India in partnership with Ashok Leyland and Larsen and Toubro. It is known that the Defence Acquisition Council has decided to issue RFP for guns to be made in India under the ‘Make In India’ policy. The Indian Army has proposed to the MoD for acquiring 814 artillery guns worth ₹15,570 crore. The Indian MoD has also proposed that 100 such guns will be acquired off the shelf, 714 would be made in India in partnership with the Indian private sector company winning the tender.

According to Jian Michel Domitrovic, Executive Vice President of Nexter, “It is one of the major deals that we can have around the world. You can imagine that for Nexter and our partner L&T, it is an important project.” Domitrovic has high expectations from the Narendra Modi Government as it takes faster decisions and they can have better appreciation of the acquisition process. The Indian Army is facing serious shortage of howitzer guns, as these could

not be acquired over the last two-and-a-half decades. Six tenders issued till date have been cancelled due to various reasons.

A top official of the world’s leading submarine and warships manufacturing company DCNS said that they have responded to the RFI for six new submarines under the P-75(I) project of the Indian Navy. This project could be worth ₹50,000 crore. The DCNS has also proposed to the MoD the manufacture of a landing platform deck (LPDs) similar to French Mistral which has a displacement of 21,000 tonnes. India has issued RFI for acquiring additional LPDs. The US Ship Trenton (INS Jalashwa) was acquired from the US Navy second hand.

However, the French companies want clarity and assurance from the Indian Government that their investment proposal will be facilitated with eased governmental norms as in developed countries. A senior official of DCNS Jerome Penicaud told the visiting Indian media in Paris that if his company had options they would rather have preferred to build in their country but we have to adapt to the context. Though DCNS is already assisting Indian MDL in manufacturing the Scorpene submarines in India, they are eyeing the next big tenders of the Indian Navy the Project 75(I) and the ₹16,000-crore amphibious warships and the LPDs. DCNS may engage with MDL for the next six submarines as it is already transferring its know-how to MDL for first six submarines, the first of which will roll out next year.

DCNS has entered into a contract with Pipavav, the Indian private sector shipyard, for manufacturing the LPD. Jerome Penicaud said, “For the LPD project, the idea is that the ships are to be built by one of the Indian shipyards that has been selected. We are partners. We are here to bring the design and necessary technical assistance. That is the way we are addressing Make in India.”

The Modi Government had taken a major decision to increase the FDI limit from 26 to 49 per cent in the defence sector which Xavier Hay, Managing Director of Airbus Helicopters in India, described as positive and said, “We are looking forward to any order on further evolution on that.” When asked about his views on the ‘Make In India’ policy of the Modi Government, Hay said, “Let us see how it is structured.” He pointed out that Airbus Helicopters already have partnership with Indian aviation giant the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. **SP**

(Left) Caesar self-propelled howitzer; (Right) MBDA’s Milan portable medium-range anti-tank missile system



PHOTOGRAPHS: Nexter, MBDA

Small step for LCA (Navy), a giant leap for Indian naval aviation

It was a defining moment when LCA (Navy) Prototype 1 (NP1), the first indigenously designed and developed fourth-plus generation combat aircraft designed to operate from the decks of aircraft carriers, took-off majestically from ski-jump facility of shore-based test facility at INS Hansa in Goa recently.

Piloted by Commodore Jaideep Maolankar, the Chief Test Pilot of National Flight Test Centre, the aircraft had a perfect flight with results matching the predicted ones to the letter. The launch was orchestrated by the Test Director Cdr J.D. Raturi and Safety Pilot Capt Shivnath Dahiya supported by Group Capt Anoop Kabadwal, Group Capt R.R. Tyagi and Lt Cdr Vivek Pandey. The readiness and availability of aircraft for the event was made possible through the relentless effort of HAL, ARDC under the aegis of P.S. Roy, the Executive Director.

Dr Avinash Chander, Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri and Secretary DDR&D, DG DRDO, congratulated the LCA (Navy) programme team and said, "With today's copybook flight of LCA (Navy), from the land-based ski-jump facility we see our own indigenous



combat aircrafts soon flying from the decks of our aircraft carriers." Congratulating the team Dr Tamilmani, DS & DG Aeronautics, said: "A complex task of ski-jump of NP1 executed beautifully." **SP**

Textron AirLand Scorpion milestone



Textron AirLand has completed the Scorpion's 266th flight test hour, one year after its first flight on December 12, 2013. "Today's anniversary flight was a fitting tribute to our teams who have worked tirelessly to meet a very demanding flight test schedule," said Textron AirLand president Bill Anderson.

"In the past year, Scorpion has flown to many US states and across the Atlantic—demonstrating that a highly affordable, relevant, multi-mission tactical aircraft can also be highly reliable," he added.

Scorpion's first-year availability rating was greater than 95 per cent, an extremely high mission capability score for a prototype tactical jet aircraft. It has demonstrated below \$3,000 per flight hour. Scorpion crossed the Atlantic for its international debut at the Royal International Air Tattoo and Farnborough International Airshow.

The trip was completed one day ahead of schedule, covering over 9,200 nautical miles in a total of 38 hours flight time. **SP**

First US Army missile-fighting radar blimp airborne to defend Washington DC

For the first time, the US Army lofted a blimp equipped with a new cruise-missile and drone-fighting radar system high above rural Maryland. The system, made by Raytheon Company and known as JLENS, consists of two helium-filled aerostats, or tethered blimps, that float 10,000 feet above the ground and carry powerful radars.

"JLENS is strategically emplaced to help defend Washington DC and a Texas-sized portion of the East Coast from cruise missiles, drones and hostile aircraft," said Dave Gulla, Vice President of Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems' Global Integrated Sen-

sors business. "JLENS can detect potential threats at extremely long ranges, giving North American Aerospace Defense Command more time to make decisions and more space to react appropriately."

As part of the deployment, Raytheon engineers raised one of the football-field sized aerostats thousands of feet in the air and conducted a series of tests to ensure it was operating as designed. The company will continue to test and integrate the radar for several more days, then turn the first JLENS balloon over to Soldiers of the US Army's A Battery, 3rd Air Defense Artillery. **SP**

DRDO tests 1,000-kg class guided glide bomb

A 1,000-kg glide bomb designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was successfully tested recently in the Bay of Bengal off the coast of Odisha. The bomb was dropped by an Indian Air Force aircraft. The bomb, guided by its 'onboard navigation system' glided for nearly 100 km before hitting the target with great precision.

The flight of the glide bomb was monitored by radars and electro-optic systems stationed at the integrated test range (ITR). Multiple DRDO laboratories namely, DARE, Bengaluru, ARDE, Pune and TBRL, Chandigarh, with RCI, Hyderabad as the nodal laboratory have contributed towards development of the glide bomb. The complete avionics package and navigation system has been designed and developed by RCI. **SP**



Terror by the sea

[By Lt General P.C. Katoch (Retd)]

On the last day of last year, December 31, 2014, a boat from Pakistan blew itself up off the Gujarat coast after being chased by an Indian Coast Guard vessel. No survivors have been found. The speed boat had been deemed suspicious and then intercepted and chased by the Coast Guard for nearly an hour off the coast of Porbandar. After the Coast Guard fired at the boat to warn it to stop, the vessel blew up.

On New Year's eve, intelligence agencies reportedly had inputs that a boat had sailed from near Karachi to carry out what sources described as "an illicit transaction" in the Arabian Sea, about 365 km south-west of Porbandar in Gujarat. A midnight operation was launched using ships and a Dornier aircraft to locate the fishing boat. After a three-hour search, the unlit boat was located, and a Coast Guard ship that was patrolling the area was diverted. The Coast Guard ship warned the fishing boat to stop for further investigation of the crew and cargo; however, the boat increased speed and tried to escape away from the Indian side of maritime boundary.

The hot pursuit continued for nearly one hour and the Coast Guard ship managed to stop the boat after firing warning shots. The boat did not have a name. Four persons were seen on the boat who disregarded all warnings by the Coast Guard ship to stop and cooperate with investigation. Soon thereafter, the crew hid themselves in below deck compartment and set the boat on fire, which resulted in explosion and major fire on the boat. Due to darkness, bad weather and strong winds, the boat and persons onboard could not be saved or recovered. The boat burnt and sank in the same position, in early hours of January 1. Coast Guard ships and aircraft continued operations in area to search for any possible survivor. Till last reports, Coast Guard and other security agencies are maintaining high vigil in maritime and coastal areas since last couple of months due to several inputs on threat from the sea.

It may be recalled that in 26/11, a Pakistani boat sailed into Mumbai with 10 terrorists onboard who then split into pairs and struck the city's landmarks; 166 people were killed in India's worst-ever terror attack. The instant case of the Pakistani boat that blew itself up unfortunately became a subject of infructuous heated debate and political mudslinging whether the boat was undertaking smuggling or had terrorists on board. This despite the fact that Coast Guard briefing had brought out the fact that the four occupants of the boat were dressed in T-shirts and shorts and did not look like fishermen. Besides, intelligence agencies had reportedly intercepted radio conversation between the boat's occupants with Pakistani army and with Thailand.

The insinuation by Opposition parties, mainly Congress Party in India that the whole incident was rigged up was not only in poor taste it showcased to the world disunity in India's political fabric to face terror. Pakistan gleefully rejected that the boat had anything to do with it. Foreign office spokes-

person Tasneem Aslam told media that no boat from Karachi had gone to the open seas on the night that the Indian Coast Guard had intercepted the explosive-laden vessel. Given the propensity with which Pakistani authorities lie, this was but expected. But this time their media mocked that why should Pakistan be accused in the first place when some of India's own political parties were insinuating that the incident was fabricated.

What we need to remember is that in the heydays of the LTTE, Al Qaeda had sent their cadres to train with LTTE's Sea Tigers, one of the fallout of which was the terror attack on USS Cole. Intelligence have been warning of seaborne terror attacks in South India by Pakistani terrorists off the coast of northern Sri Lanka; ISI is linked with some 12 major terrorist groups including Al Qaeda, Haqqanis and official patronage of organisations like the LeT and LeJ; Pakistan's 'Karachi Project', launchpad for 26/11 has not been shut down; Pakistan's radical mascots like Musharraf and Hafiz Saeed have been openly alleging India orchestrated the Peshawar massacre on December 16 last year, warning of terror attacks; Pakistan would like to divert attention from the Peshawar massacre of school-child which was actually an invitation to Taliban to do so since Pakistani military has been killing hundreds of civilians including women and children through indiscriminate aerial bombings of civilian areas; despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi's extended hand of friendship. Pakistan has shown it will keep upping the ante, as indicated through continuous border violations, and would the ISI not like to undertake some spectacular terror attack before President Barack Obama visits India later this month? It is equally important to understand that in upping her proxy war, Pakistan has and will continue to synergise all activities that can contribute to terrorise India, to include narcotics.

If the Pakistani boat was only carrying narcotics, which is reportedly routine affair, where was the need to blow up themselves? They could have got rid of the narcotics in the water and feigned they were fishermen who had lost their way. So, the boat could have been on any mission like ramming an Indian vessel, as was the case with USS Cole; target an oil refinery, petroleum installation; dump explosives at an agreed location on the Indian coast; smuggle in weapon(s) or equipment for terror attacks; infiltrate a special emissary/terrorist leader for an important mission, etc.

What is relevant for India is that while the Pakistani society may want peace, what matters in Pakistan is not civil society, but the army and the ISI and their band of so-called 'good' terrorists. Besides, the landlord politicians in the ruling class including Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shahbaz Sharif, who is the Governor of Punjab, need to remain on the right side of the army and the radicals. Nawaz Sharif neither has the power to order his army to stop cross-border violations nor stop the radical mullah Hafiz Saeed running amok on Pakistani army posts along the Samba border. What India needs is constant vigil and more importantly, credible deterrence to Pakistan's proxy war. **SP**



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AIR MARSHAL
B.K. PANDEY (RETD)

Need to revamp coastal security

As the New Year dawned, the nation was greeted with the news that a 26/11 type of attack by terrorists once again using the sea route on the western seaboard had been averted during the night by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).

Apparently, the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO), a recently created intelligence agency of the Central Government responsible for technical intelligence, for a period of 15 days, had been monitoring mobile phone conversation amongst different agencies in Pakistan that were indicative of plans to launch a boat from Ketī Bunder, a small port near Karachi on its southern coast, on a clandestine mission suspected to be somewhere along the Indian coastline. After the boat set sail, while continuing to monitor cell phone traffic, the NTRO alerted the ICG that immediately launched their Dornier 228 maritime surveillance aircraft to locate and track the boat which it did. The ICG had also diverted a patrol vessel to intercept the boat. In a coordinated search and based on inputs from the Dornier aircraft, at around midnight of December 31, 2014, the ICG patrol vessel intercepted a powered boat some 365 km southwest off Porbandar on the coast of Gujarat. The boat was about eight km on the Indian side of the maritime boundary with Pakistan.

Illuminating the boat by powerful searchlights, the crew of the ICG patrol vessel spotted four men on deck. As per reports from the ICG, the boat increased speed and tried to get away from the Indian side of maritime boundary and the hot pursuit continued for nearly an hour. The boat did eventually stop after warning shots were fired but the four-man crew disappeared below deck and probably set the boat on fire which triggered a massive explosion blowing the boat to smithereens. No bodies or parts of the wrecked boat have yet been recovered.

This episode has uncanny similarity with the one on November 26, 2008, sponsored by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan. On this fateful day, a band of 10 terrorists from Karachi came sailing across the Arabian Sea to launch their attack on Mumbai and held the financial capital of India hostage for 60 hours and left 166 people dead. This time too, the Pakistani boat followed

the same route and whether the four men in the ill-fated boat were tasked to repeat 26/11 in Mumbai or cause mayhem in any other coastal city or were merely on a mission to deliver bombs, explosives and automatic weapons to their comrades in India, would have to be established through further investigation and intelligence operations. But the fact that the occupants of the boat were in constant communication with the maritime security agency of Pakistan is proof enough that this was an operation sponsored by the government of our hostile neighbour. One possibility is that the mission was to launch an attack on Porbandar during the inauguration of a major base of the Indian Navy scheduled for January 12 or to embarrass the government by disrupting the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas annual fest commencing January 7 where there would be a congregation of a large number of Indians from the affluent business community living abroad.

What is of particular significance is that this mission was launched by the ISI at a time when there is heavy shelling going on across not only the line of control but also across the international border with Pakistan. The mission of the explosive-laden boat in the Arabian Sea could thus be part of a larger game plan. But what is most intriguing is that despite accurate, reliable and actionable intelligence being available, there was no action taken by the Indian Navy. Hopefully, the government will address this issue to further strengthen coastal security.

India has a coastline of over 7,500 km, the ninth largest in the world which spreads across nine states and four Union territories. Among the coastal states, Gujarat has the largest coastline of over 1,200 km. Providing foolproof security for such a large coastline that is under the control of different state governments and administered by different political parties has been proving to be a formidable task. Although in this latest episode, a terrorist attack has possibly been foiled through well coordinated action between the intelligence agencies and the ICG, it is a grim reminder that the threat to national security from across the vast coastline is real. The lessons learnt after the 26/11 attack reinforced by those in this latest episode need to be implemented with seriousness and without further delay. **SP**

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MHA proposes investigative units on crimes against women

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) proposes to set up Investigative Units on Crimes against Women (IUCAW), in 20 per cent of the districts of each state on a 50:50 cost sharing basis with the states.

The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh has written to the Chief Minister of the States that there is a need to strengthen various elements of the criminal justice system, namely, investigation, prosecution and trials by courts to deal with the issue of rise of crimes against women.

The MHA has proposed to set up 150 such IUCAW units initially on pilot basis in most crime prone districts of each state. Elaborating the IUCAW, the Home Minister mentioned that these units may consist of 15 personnel, preferably five of them women. The states will have full flexibility on whether to create new posts or to designate from the existing strength. Each IUCAW will be headed by an officer of the rank of Additional Superintendent of Police assisted by two Deputy Superintendents of Police. Out of the total 2,250 personnel required for the 150 IUCAWs, 750 will be women. This will

involve a total expenditure of ₹84 crore annually, out of which half will be provided by the Centre.

Rajnath Singh mentioned that the objective of these units will be to investigate cases referred to them, augment the investigative machinery of the states in relation to the heinous crimes against women, especially rape, dowry death, acid attack and human trafficking, and also instil confidence and encourage women to come forward and lodge their complaint and improve the gender ratio in the state police forces which is adversely impacting effective implementation of the legislations relating to women. Besides, these units will have the additional functionality of proactive policing, intelligence gathering, tackling organised crime, monitoring proper implementation of the legislative provisions, helping awareness generation and promotion of social participation in checking crimes against women.

The Home Minister mentioned that these measures will help in ensuring higher conviction rate in different states to check crimes against women and human trafficking.

Rajnath Singh has also advised the states to set up separate fast track courts to deal with these cases expeditiously. He has also assured all possible assistance to the states in taming the menace of crimes against women. **SP**

Himmat app launched



The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh has launched 'Himmat', an application for women's safety. Lauding the Delhi Police for launching the emergency call application for women in distress, Rajnath Singh said the force has been training women of all ages in self-defence techniques and so far over 15,000 women have been imparted training. He said such self-defence training inculcates a sense of self-confidence in women.

The Union Home Minister said the Indian people have been traditionally more sensitive to women's safety issues as women have been worshipped and respected through ancient times in our society.

Rajnath Singh said that the representation of women in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) will rise significantly in the next few years. He said the Ministry of Home Affairs has targeted that women's representation in the CAPFs will go up from the lowly 1.5 per cent to five per cent in the next two to three years. The Union

Home Minister said MHA has also sent an advisory to all State Governments to provide 33 per cent representation to women in the state police forces.

On the occasion, Rajnath Singh unveiled an advertisement of the Delhi Police on the launch of Helpline No.1064 and What'sApp number where complaints against harassment can be registered with photos and videos. He said, Delhi being the National Capital, the Delhi Police has added responsibility to turn itself into a model police force and set an example in model policing. **SP**

Appointment of Special Secretary

The competent authority has approved the appointment of Ashok Prasad, IPS, presently working as Special Director, Intelligence Bureau (IB), as Special Secretary (Internal Security), MHA with effect from the date of his joining the post and up to the date of his superannuation i.e. 31.01.2016 or until further orders, whichever is earlier. **SP**

Tracking illegal immigrant families, US approach

The US Homeland Security Department is experimenting with a new way to track immigrant families caught crossing the border illegally and then released into the U.S.: GPS-enabled ankle bracelets.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has launched a programme to give GPS devices to some parents caught crossing the Mexican border illegally with their children in Texas' Rio Grande Valley. In September, the Homeland Security Department confided to a group of immigrant advocates during a confidential meeting that about 70 per cent of immigrants travelling as families failed to report back to ICE as ordered after they were released at the border.

The high no-show rate and a lack of jail space for immigrant family members prompted the US administration to open a temporary family jail at the border patrol's training academy in rural New Mexico and convert a men's jail in Texas to one that could house families. **SP**

HAL Chairman calls for stepping up indigenous helicopter production

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has called for concerted efforts to intensify indigenous production of helicopters during the national seminar on Make in India - Civil and Military Helicopters: Emerging Opportunities and Challenges organised by Rotary Wing Society of India, in Bengaluru.

Delivering the keynote address, HAL Chairman Dr R.K. Tyagi said, "In the wake of emerging civil and military requirement of helicopters in India especially in the areas of disaster management, air surveillance, offshore operations and law enforcement, there is a tremendous opportunity for indigenous development. Developing global partnerships and collaboration in rotary-wing technologies will provide a solid foundation in the global aeronautics space." He added that development

of risk sharing partners, vendor base of Tier-I & II and outsourcing of MRO activities offers huge business opportunities to Indian private industry.

Dr Tyagi highlighted HAL's success in developing helicopters that has played a key role in search and rescue operations for the Indian defence forces and thus paved the way for achieving self-reliance. "With the government's thrust on Make in India, we now look forward to a well-defined strategy on helicopters, modernisation of production facilities, collaboration with Indian research labs and aggressively pursue technology to increase production."

Wg Cdr Unnikrishna Pillai, Chief Test Pilot, HAL, spoke about the various challenges faced in the design and development of medium- and heavy-lift helicopters in India. He said that with the expertise gained in earlier projects, Rotary Wing Research & Design Centre is now confident and well poised to develop medium-lift helicopters. **SP**

Lockheed Martin's Exoskeleton wins awards



Lockheed Martin's Fortis Exoskeleton received several accolades in 2014 highlighting its innovative technology design and its benefit to users in an industrial setting. This year, Fortis was recognised with a Gold Spark Award from Spark Design & Architecture Awards, named Product Design of the Year by *Icon Magazine* and also named one of CNN Money's 36 coolest gadgets of 2014.

The Fortis Exoskeleton is an unpowered, lightweight Exoskeleton that increases an operator's strength and endurance by transferring the weight of heavy loads from the operator's body directly to the ground. Lockheed Martin recently delivered two Fortis Exoskeletons to the US Navy for testing and evaluation in industrial shipyard environments. **SP**

Krauss-MaffeiWegmann takes over vehicle business of Diehl Defence

On December 17, 2014, Diehl Defence and Krauss-MaffeiWegmann (KMW) concluded a contract on the acquisition of Diehl Defence Land System's GmbH (DLS) operative busi-

ness by a subsidiary of KMW. The contract is subject to approval by the anti-trust authorities.

Diehl Defence Land Systems is a market leader in the fields of tank tracks and suspensions equipping all the Bundeswehr's tracked vehicles. Latest innovations include lightweight tracks for the German infantry combat vehicle PUMA as well as segmented rubber band tracks. In the past decades, the company has acquired an international reputation as a service provider regarding maintenance, repair and modernisation of military vehicles. The company achieves sales of 56 million euros with approximately 370 employees.

With the transferral of its vehicle business, Diehl is contributing to the consolidation of the German land systems industry. The company will increasingly focus on its core business comprising guided weapons, intelligent ammunition as well as impact and protection. **SP**

Meggitt acquires PECC from United Tech

Meggitt plc, the leading international engineering group specialising in aerospace, defence and energy markets, has acquired Precision Engine Controls Corporation (PECC) from United Technologies Corporation for a cash consideration of \$44.2 million, funded from existing resources.

The purchase price equates to a multiple of approximately 8.5x adjusted earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) for the year ended December 31, 2014, and is expected to be immediately accretive to underlying earnings per share (EPS).

PECC is a leading supplier of actuation systems and fuel metering valves to manufacturers of small-frame gas turbines used predominantly in the oil and gas and power generation industries. PECC's products are complementary to Meggitt's existing valve technology in the aero-derivative gas turbine market and expand our range of actuation capabilities.

PECC's substantial level of intellectual property and sole-source market positions conform to Meggitt's strategy of investing in highly-engineered components and sub-systems for use in extreme environments in its core aerospace, defence and energy markets.

Stephen Young, Chief Executive of Meggitt, commented: "The acquisition of PECC is a key step in broadening our industrial valve capability. The very strong product and customer portfolio and the exceptional calibre of the employee base make the business a great fit with Meggitt." **SP**

Gunmen kill 12 French satirical magazine journalists

Two hooded Islamist gunmen have attacked the Paris office of French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, killing ten journalists and editors and two policemen and injuring seven, several of them in critical condition.

The assailants entered the editorial offices of the magazine and opened fire with assault rifles, before escaping the building and engaging the police on the street outside in a heavy fire exchange, killing two of the police officers. They managed to get into their car and fleets with police in the street outside before escaping by car.

President Francois Hollande described the event as a terrorist attack “of exceptional barbarity.” *Charlie Hebdo*, a no-holds-barred satirical weekly, has made a name for itself for its irreverence when reporting – and mocking – the news. The offices of the magazine were fire-bombed in November 2011 a day after it carried a caricature which hurt Islamic sentiments.

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has condemned the attack in Paris. “Condemnable and despicable attack in Paris. Our solidarity with people of France. My thoughts are with the families of those who lost their lives,” the Prime Minister said. **SP**



Security shortcomings at diplomatic posts

The top watchdog for the US State Department warned that US personnel overseas remain at “increased risk” due to security shortcomings at diplomatic posts, including the “egregious” use of warehouses that don’t meet security standards for office space.

Steve Linick, Inspector General for the Department, testified during the second public hearing of the special House Committee reviewing the 2012 terror attack in Benghazi, Libya.

Reviewing the findings of his office’s audits since that attack, he cited several areas of concern. Chief among them were concerns about the physical security standards at overseas posts, including how the department was using “warehouse space” and other remote facilities for offices that did not comply with standards. This, he said, “places personnel at great risk.” **SP**

Smuggling drugs inside prison

A US union representing correctional officers calls the discovery of hundreds of pills inside a prison a “major security breach.” AFSCME Iowa Council 61 President Danny Homan called on the Iowa Department of Corrections to release more information about the breach, accusing administrators of keeping key details from the public.

State officials said 300 to 400 capsules containing an unknown substance were discovered inside the North Central Correctional Facility in Rockwell City.

Homan said that cell phones and chargers were also discovered – a fact that department spokesman Fred Scaletta refused to con-

firm or deny. Homan said that phones were the “worst kind of contraband” because they allow inmates to communicate with people outside the prison.

Homan said he believes one or more members of the public were able to smuggle in the contraband “because of the lack of staffing and appropriate staff training.” **SP**

Atlanta airport tightens security after gun-smuggling

Atlanta’s airport said it was tightening security following allegations that two men with ties to Delta Air Lines smuggled more than 130 firearms from Georgia to New York over the course of eight months last year.

The Atlanta International Airport said it has expanded “random inspections” and increased its police presence. Six new officers recently started work at the airport, though their positions were budgeted before last month’s gun-smuggling bust.

Revelations about the gun-smuggling investigation in Atlanta have drawn sharp reactions from US Senator Charles Schumer of New York and Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson. Schumer called on the Transportation Security Administration to require airports nationwide to physically screen airline and airport employees before they enter secured areas.

“When guns, drugs, and even explosives are as easy to carry on board a plane as a neck pillow, then we have to seriously — and immediately — overhaul our airport security practices,” Schumer said in a statement. “In this day and age of terrorism, rampant drug dealing and gun smuggling, we just can’t be too careful.” **SP**



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