

IAF gets 3 Boeings for VVIPs

The Asian Age, 2 April 2009

New Delhi: April 1: The three Boeing Business Jets (BBJs) for VVIP travel were formally inducted into the Indian Air Force's communication squadron on Wednesday after a ceremony at Delhi airport, with President Pratibha Patil undertaking the inaugural flight of the BBJ aircraft named Rajdoot to the Northeast. The white BBJs are equipped with a wide range of security systems and latest communication devices and are India's equivalent of the US Air Force One that transports the US President.

Preparedness hit by chopper delay, have to live with it: Air Chief

The Indian Express, 2 April 2009

New Delhi: The cancellation of a global tender to procure 22 attack helicopters for the Air Force will affect its operational preparedness, Air Chief Marshal F H Major said on Wednesday. Commenting on the cancellation of the tenders last month, almost a year after the procurement process was initiated, Major said it would lead to a delay in the acquisition. "Any such delay affects our operational preparedness. But I suppose we have to live with this," he said, answering questions at the sidelines of a function to induct VVIP transport aircraft in Delhi.

Armed forces say 'cheers' to slump

The Times of India, 3 April 2009

New Delhi: The recession's cascading effect may be spelling doom for others, but it's actually bringing some much-needed cheer to the armed forces. The economic downturn has led to a huge dip in the number of officers willing to shed their uniforms for the corporate world's greener pastures. The Army, Navy and IAF are all gleefully recording that the earlier exodus of officers is turning to a trickle now.

Indo-Israel missile deal: All sides of the story

The Indian Express, 3 April 2009

Why are the missiles needed? DRDO-IAI joint venture will develop and equip Indian Air Force (IAF) with 18 combat management systems with 435 MRSAMs. Missiles will replace obsolete PECHORA missile systems. In December 2008, DRDO chief M Natarajan informed Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) that the nation's air defence was under threat: IAF had reported that 17 out of 60 firing units of PECHORA had already been phased out.

Arms deal: Isaac poser to Antony

The Hindu, 5 April 2009

Alappuzha: Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac said on Saturday that Defence Minister A.K. Antony's statement on invoking the pre-integrity contract in the Israel arms deal if credible evidence of malpractice was produced was, in effect, a partial confession of crime. In a press release issued here, Dr. Isaac said the Defence Minister should also make it clear how investigation into the alleged malpractice would be conducted, because there would be no credibility if the accused himself was to be the judge.

Joint India-Japan-US wargames April-end

The Asian Age, 9 April 2009

New Delhi: Indian Navy chief Admiral Sureesh Mehta will leave shortly on a visit to China, even as the Indian Navy is gearing up for the Malabar naval exercises with the US and Japan to be held at the end of this month. The Malabar exercises — which will be trilateral this year — will be held off the Japanese coast, defence sources confirmed. In another development, Admiral Mehta also met visiting US Chairman of Joint Chiefs of

Staff Admiral Mike Mullen in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Indian Navy chief to undertake maiden visit to China

The Times of India, 13 April 2009

New Delhi: Seeking to engage the Chinese military on a broader level, Indian Navy chief Admiral Sureesh Mehta will undertake his maiden visit to China and attend the International Fleet Review beginning next week, an official said here on Monday. Three Indian warships and a tanker of the Eastern Fleet will be participating in the International Fleet Review, being held to mark the 60th anniversary of the Chinese Navy. "The navy chief will attend the International Fleet Review and will also deliver a lecture at a symposium on the topic of 'Harmonious Seas'," a senior navy official told on condition of anonymity.

Navy top brass discuss challenges in Indian Ocean region

The Times of India, 14 April 2009

New Delhi: With the government finally going in for a major revamp of the country's coastal security architecture after being jolted by 26/11, the entire top brass of Navy came together on Monday to discuss operational challenges from both state as well as non-state actors. The three-day annual naval commanders' conference, being held at the Eastern Naval Command at Visakhapatnam, was inaugurated by Admiral Sureesh Mehta. "The maritime security environment in the Indian Ocean region has become complex, fluid and significantly challenging, with a large presence of extra-regional forces," said an officer

Forces asked to step up security

The Asian Age, 14 April 2009

New Delhi: April 13: Faced with a spurt in Naxal violence ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the Centre on Monday claimed that the "pro-active approach" by paramilitary forces has resulted in the Maoists stepping up their offensive against security forces which has resulted in the death of more than 20 personnel in the last few days. The CRPF and CISF, who have lost 20 of their men in two separate incidents in Chhattisgarh and Orissa this month, have been asked to urgently review their security arrangements in the Naxal-infested regions with reports pointing towards an intelligence failure leading to the fatal attacks by Maoist groups.

Nuclear-capable Prithvi-II clears user trial test

The Times of India, 16 April 2009

New Delhi: India tested an advanced version of the nuclear-capable Prithvi-II ballistic missile, with a strike range of 350 km, from the Chandipur integrated test range off the Orissa coast on Wednesday. "The launch of the surface-to-surface missile from a mobile launcher was successful but it will take some time to analyse the entire telemetry data before it can be called a complete success or not," said a senior defence ministry official.

French Rafale out of race for IAF fighters

The Indian Express, 17 April 2009

New Delhi: The French Rafale twin-engine multi-role fighter has been knocked off a \$10-billion contract for 126 combat aircraft for the Indian Air Force. One of six contenders, Rafale was officially rejected by the Ministry of Defence for what an official called the failure to meet qualitative requirements of the contract. The IAF has been maintaining that all six contenders — American F-18 and F-16, Eurofighter Typhoon, Russian MiG-35, Swedish Gripen NG and the Rafale — for the Medium Multi Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) contract have met technical requirements.

Army, IAF review meetings begin today

The Hindu, 20 April 2009

New Delhi: Defence Minister A.K. Antony will inaugurate meetings of the top brass of the Army and the Air Force here on Monday. The meetings are part of the bi-annual meetings of the Army and Air Force Commanders that are held separately. The Monday meetings come in the backdrop of an increasing threat from Taliban in Pakistan, signs of rise in attempts to infiltration from across the border and the military offensive in Sri Lanka against the LTTE. The meetings come after the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks.

Navy responds to SOS from Seychelles

The Indian Express, 20 April 2009

New Delhi: After cracking down on pirates in the Gulf of Aden, the Navy will carry out anti-piracy patrols near the island nation of Seychelles following a request from the country. An Indian warship and survey vessel, the INS Nirdeshak, is currently in the area and will patrol the area after several incidents of Somali pirates operating near the nation were reported earlier this month. The Seychelles Armed Forces today said it had requested the Indian Navy to patrol the exclusive economic zone of the country. The Navy confirmed that INS Nirdeshak has already been sent to the region.

India joins China's naval parade

The Hindu, 21 April 2009

Qingdao: China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) kicked off a grand ceremony to mark the 60th anniversary of its Navy on Monday off the coast of the eastern city of Qingdao. PLA Navy Commander Admiral Wu Shengli announced the start of the four-day festivities. It would include seminars, a sampan race and a fleet parade. A total of 21 naval vessels from 14 countries including India and delegations from 29 countries will join the parade.

Forces opt for grenade simulator

The Asian Age, 21 April 2009

New Delhi: April 20: Indian security forces are planning to introduce "hand grenade simulator" system to enhance accuracy and to avoid their own casualties during operation against militants. An in-house study, conducted by a para-military force, revealed that a large number of security personnel face casualties while throwing grenades on militants or on their targets due to lack of accuracy.

Military surveillance gets a boost with RISAT-2

The Times of India, 21 April 2009

New Delhi: India's launch of the military spy satellite RISAT-2 is not just about the synthetic aperture radar (SAR), which will give such high-resolution images that you could read licence plates on a car. It's about taking a quantum leap in its defence surveillance capabilities, specially as India strengthens its defences in the post-26/11 world. It gives India an eye (through clouds and other weather vagaries) on its restive borders with Pakistan, China and Bangladesh.

China wants to join Navy initiative on Indian Ocean, MEA says no need

The Indian Express, 21 April 2009

New Delhi: Pushing for a greater say in the Indian Ocean region, China has sounded out the Indian Navy that it wants to be inducted in some form into the 33-member Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) initiative started by India last year. But the Ministry of External Affairs has turned down the request. It's learnt that the Navy conveyed the Chinese interest to the MEA which promptly rebuffed the move, saying there was no justification to involve China in the Indian Ocean.

China to show new submarines, says no threat to region

The Times of India, 21 April 2009

Beijing: China plans to display its nuclear submarines this week in the first known public appearance of some of its most potent warships, a sign of growing confidence in its rapid upgrade to new vessels and weapons systems. The vessels will appear at Thursday's international fleet review in the northern port city of Qingdao, deputy navy commander Ding Yiping was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua News Agency on Tuesday. He did not give the specific types of vessels to be displayed.

India-U.S.-Japan naval exercises

The Hindu, 22 April 2009

Singapore: Japan will join India and the United States in trilateral naval exercises from April 26 to May 3. The exercise, named Malabar 2009, will be conducted east of Okinawa islands. Diplomatic sources told The Hindu on Monday that the professional objective was to "deepen mutual understanding and trust" among the navies of the three countries. The political aim was to "enhance friendly ties."

Lt Col rank officers in armed forces placed in higher pay band

The Times of India, 22 April 2009

New Delhi: More than 15,000 officers of the armed forces in the rank of lieutenant colonels, wing commanders and commanders in the Navy have been placed under Pay Band-4 of the sixth pay commission, making substantial difference in their salary packages. The seven-month-long fight of the armed forces demanding pay parity with their civilian counterparts bore fruit with the forces headquarters on Tuesday notifying amended orders to place lieutenant colonel rank officers in the upper pay band.

China will unveil new N-sub, denies threat

The Asian Age, 22 April 2009

Qingdao, China: China plans to show off its nuclear submarines at a major international naval gathering this week, state media reported on Tuesday, the first known public appearance of some of its most potent seaborne weaponry. Vice Adm. Ding Yiping, the Navy's deputy commander, said the submarines would appear at Thursday's international fleet review in the northern port city of Qingdao, but did not specify the types of vessels.

Editorial: India launches radar satellite

The Hindu, 23 April 2009

On Monday, the trusty Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle carried into orbit what is widely perceived as an Israeli-built radar satellite intended for India's defence and security services. Earth-viewing satellites built and launched hitherto by India have depended on picking up light coming from the ground below. These satellites cannot work at night or when clouds block visibility. Putting a radar on a satellite overcomes these problems and enables it to capture images irrespective of weather and lighting conditions.

India to get Phalcon AWACS on May 18

The Times of India, 23 April 2009

Jerusalem: India will get its first 'eye in the sky', the Phalcon Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS), aircraft on May 18, which will provide the IAF means to track incoming missiles and look deep into the neighbouring countries without violating any air space. The first Phalcon was inspected by top Indian Defence officials who came here to check the specially modified Russian IL-76 aircraft and set May 18 as the delivery date. "The other two aircraft would be delivered by Mid or late 2010, if everything goes on schedule," Defence sources said here today.

Govt gives in on higher pay band for Lt Gens

The Indian Express, 25 April 2009

New Delhi: Giving in to a long-standing demand of the Armed Forces, the Government on Friday approved placing of Lt Gen and equivalent officers to the highest pay band of HAG-plus (Higher Administrative Grade). Acting on a demand of the Armed Forces, the Government passed orders placing 33 per cent of Lt Gen equivalent officers in the highest pay band, thus making them equivalent to Director General-level IPS officers.

BSF ready to help in reshaping BDR

The Hindu, 27 April 2009

New Delhi: The Border Security Force has said it is ready to help in the total reorganisation of the Bangladesh Rifles after the savage February mutiny in that force. When asked about the issue, BSF Director General M.L. Kumawat said his force would offer all help and cooperation to reorganise the border guarding force of Bangladesh under a new name and uniform to clear the blot it got after the mutiny in which 58 army officers, including the then BDR chief Major General, Shakeel Ahmed, were killed.

Smooth sailing for Navy

The Indian Express, 27 April 2009

The Navy, which had come under a bit of flak for conducting too many 'pro-Western' exercises over the last few years, has struck a fine balancing act. It has expanded the Malabar series of exercises with the US by inviting Japan, and has sent warships to the International Fleet Review in China. The Malabar series of exercises, which in 2007 were a five-nation affair, had been cut down last year after concerns about an 'anti-China' pact. However, by engaging the Chinese this time, which included a visit by the Navy Chief, the Navy has once again increased the size of Malabar, which will include warships from the US and Japan.