

The Asian Age, 6 January 2009

### **IAF copters armed with guns to patrol on R-Day**

New Delhi: Indian Air Force MI-17 helicopters armed with guns will patrol the skies over the capital from the crack of dawn this Republic Day, well-placed defence sources have confirmed. The armed multi-role helicopters will ensure security from any aerial threat for this year's Republic Day parade, sources said. The helicopters are being deployed following intelligence inputs last month that terrorists could attempt an aerial attack through rogue aircraft or attempt to hijack aircraft...

The Times of India, 6 January 2009

### **MiG-27 fleet upgraded to modern standards**

New Delhi: The upgrade of MiG-27 fighter jets to "modern avionics standards" has finally been completed by the Defence Avionics Research Establishment. "The upgrade has transformed the MiG-27 into a potent weapon delivery platform," said a DRDO official on Tuesday...

The Hindu, 12 January 2009

### **Air Force places order with BEL for Akash missile**

Bangalore: In a boost to the country's missile development effort, the Indian Air Force has finally placed an order with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) for two squadrons of medium range, surface-to-air missile Akash. The Rs. 1,200-crore order comes 14 months after field trials at Pokhran in Rajasthan. Earlier, the IAF had reservations about placing the order as the missile, in its present version, does not meet a few of its operating requirements...

The Times of India, 17 January 2009

### **Indian Air Force to modernise, launch satellite in 2010**

Bangalore: The Indian Air Force is embarking on a modernisation programme to enhance its capability, including putting in place an integrated air command and control system this year and launching its own satellite next year, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal F H Major said here on Saturday...

The Indian Express, 18 January 2009

### **IAF cites religion to ban beard for Muslims**

New Delhi: Defending an Indian Air Force policy that forbids Muslim personnel recruited after 2002 from keeping a beard, the Union Government has told the Supreme Court that its policies are "secular in nature" and that only those Air Force personnel are permitted to grow hair or keep a beard, "whose religion specifically prohibits" cutting hair. In Islam, it added, keeping a beard is not compulsory...

The Asian Age, 18 January 2009

### **IAF 'always ready' to strike, say Homi**

Bengaluru: The Indian Air Force is an always-ready force, able to act rapidly from where it is, whenever it is, to strike the enemy, Air Chief Fali H. Major said on Saturday. He was replying to journalists' questions after he delivered the L.M. Khatre memorial lecture at Air Force Association, Karnataka...

The Hindu, 19 January 2009

### **IAF curbs on beard don't infringe rights: Centre**

New Delhi: The Indian Air Force policy prohibiting Muslim personnel from sporting a beard does not infringe on their fundamental rights, the Centre said in the Supreme Court. In its response to a petition assailing the policy, the Centre said: "The order was issued in the interest of cohesiveness in a combatant force like the IAF and also

keeping in view the security implications. These policies are secular in character and have not been framed to govern the conduct of Air Force personnel belonging to any particular religion"...

The Indian Express, 19 January 2009

### **High-stake chatter over IAF fighters**

With the \$10 billion tender to purchase new fighters for the Air Force progressing to the next stage of flight evaluations, rumours and reports are doing the rounds. Given the high stakes involved - the contract is the largest international military tender in the world right now - each report sends jitters down the ranks of the six participating contenders...

The Asian Age, 20 January 2009

### **IAF gets first woman navigator**

New Delhi: Seventy-five years after its formation, the Indian Air Force (IAF) has finally broken the gender barrier with a young woman reaching out to the skies as its first woman flying officer. Ms Kavita Barala logs in another first this January 26 when, in a moment for posterity, she salutes India's first woman President Pratibha Patil...

The Indian Express, 22 January 2009

### **IAF aerobatics team pilot killed in crash**

New Delhi/Patiala: A pilot of the Indian Air Force's elite Surya Kiran Aerobatics Team (SKAT), Wing Commander Rajpal Singh Dhaliwal (34), died after his Kiran II aircraft crashed 12 minutes after take-off near the Bidar Airbase in Karnataka on Wednesday morning. However, the first crash for the Air Force this year did not cause any casualties on the ground as it crashed in a vacant plot of defence land during a training sortie...