

Times of India, 3 December 2007

India plans to buy 6 new subs, says Navy chief

With both Pakistan and China progressively adding muscle to their underwater arms, India too has begun the hunt for six more submarines to add to the six being built at Mazagon Docks under the mammoth Rs 18,798-crore Scorpene project. "We are now actively looking at the second line of submarines after the Scorpenes. I think the global tender for the six new submarines should be floated in the next financial year (2008-2009)," navy chief Admiral Sureesh Mehta told TOI. The contenders for the six new submarines could include the German HDW and Russian Amur submarines, with the French Scorpenes also being in the reckoning for a repeat order.

Press Trust of India, 3 December 2007

Need to see where our ties are going with Moscow: Navy Chief

Adopting a tough posture on dilly dallying by Russia on handing over of aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, Naval Chief Admiral Sureesh Mehta today said such a delay would make India "ponder where our defence relations are going to" with Moscow. He made it clear that there could be no renegotiation on the price of the aircraft carrier for which India has already made advance payment. "We have paid more than 400 million dollars for the carrier and we own it now," Admiral Mehta told a press conference here on the eve of Navy Day. "I have told the government that the Navy's line is that we should not talk on renegotiating the price for the carrier," he said but ruled out any possibility of opting out of the 1.5 billion dollar deal signed in 2004.

Hindustan Times, 4 December 2007

Gorshkov deal at sea

Indian Navy Chief Admiral Sureesh Mehta said on Monday that the government should neither pay more money to the Russians for refurbishing aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, nor pull out of the deal. He said that the contract signed by Russia quotes a fixed price and it should be honoured. Russia has asked for \$1.2 billion over and above the contracted price of \$1.5 billion, almost doubling the agreed cost. "It is a fixed price contract and they should honour it, Admiral Mehta said, while ruling out pulling out of the deal. "The ship is our property. We have paid them almost \$500 million already. There is no question of pulling out, he said.

Times Now, 6 December 2007

Navy's elite fleet lost to accidents

At a time when the Indian armed forces are struggling to maintain technical supremacy in the subcontinent, half of the elite fleet of Sea Harrier naval aircrafts of the Indian Navy has been lost to accidents in the last 20 years. What is even more disturbing is the fact that the depletion of the fleet has occurred without the fleet ever having seen combat situations since its induction into the Indian Navy. 16 of the 30 aircrafts bought back in 1983 by India have been lost to accidents on routine sorties. Seven pilots, among the most elite flyers of the navy have lost their lives in these crashes. The Sea Harrier, which is mainly used by the air forces of USA, Britain and Australia and known for its ability to take off vertically or with very short runs, was commissioned in 1983 from manufacturer BAE Systems.

IBNLIVE.com, 8 December 2007

Russia hikes aircraft price, India refuses to buy it

India will not give in to the Russian demand for a \$1.2 billion price hike for the aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov, Navy Chief Admiral Sureesh Mehta has said in an exclusive interview to CNN-IBN. Indicating a hardening of stance against the traditional arms supplier, Mehta said India will instead extend the life of its own ageing carrier, Viraat. Excerpts from the interview. On the Gorshkov: I don't think there is any question of taking any advantage because then we can also put our feet down and say "well it is a government to government contract and get on with it". To me it should be that there is no escalation at all. Virat is doing quite well and we will be easily be able to run her for at least another seven-eight years.

Domain B News, 11 December 2007

French navy chief leads high level delegation to Indianews

Admiral Alain Oudot de Dainville, chief of the French Navy, held wide-ranging discussions with his Indian counterpart, Admiral Sureesh Mehta, on Monday. He is leading a high level naval delegation to India. Besides meeting the naval chief, Admiral Oudot De Danville also met the army chief, General Deepak Kapoor, and the air chief, Air Chief Marshal Fali Homi Major, as well as defence secretary, Vijay Singh. Admiral Dainville's visit to New Delhi assumes significance in the wake of fresh speculation that India planned to tender for a second line of submarines shortly.

The Hindu, 13 December 2007

Efforts on for launch of BrahMos from submarines, air platforms

Efforts were on to develop systems which could be used to launch BrahMos cruise missiles from submarines and air platforms, A Sivathanu Pillai, Chief Executive Officer of BrahMos Aerospace Ltd, said on Wednesday. "We are working with the Indian Navy in this regard", Pillai told reporters on the sidelines of an International Symposium on 'Ocean Electronics' here. Sukhoi-30 would be a platform for air launch of BrahMos missiles, he said adding the technology for launching the missile from an air platform would be completed by 2009. Indian army was the only one in the world having land attack missiles, he said.

Times of India, 17 December 2007

Indian Navy showcases its defence capabilities in Chennai

The Indian Navy on Sunday displayed its defence capabilities here at the Marina Beach to commemorate the daring attack of the Karachi Harbour by the Indian Navy during the Indo-Pak conflict in 1971. The colourful display was part of the Indian Navy's Navy Week with a series of events and activities, to give the civilians an insight into the need for a stronger Navy to defend the country's territorial integrity and protect the maritime interest.

Ceylon Times, 18 December 2007

India readies to counter LTTE

Against the backdrop of enhanced threat perception emanating to India's security from its

vast southern coastline and sea borne intrusions, the Indian Armed Forces are planning a series of joint exercises next year in the southern peninsula. "This is for the first time that the country's military planners are focusing on threats to the country from the southern peninsula," defence sources told the Times of India. Frontline fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force, along with warships from the Navy and coastguard, and Army formations dedicated to sea borne assaults would be engaged in these exercises designed to ensure safety of vital sea lanes.

The Tribune, 19 December 2007

Naval chief's remarks stir global curiosity

A remark by Naval Chief Admiral Suresh Mehta about the Indian navy shopping for the Russian SSN Akula Class nuclear submarine has virtually shone the spotlight on India's efforts to build such a vessel. Globalsecurity.org, a website dedicated to international security issues says India has been trying to obtain the expertise to build a nuclear submarine since 1985 though the project was first mooted ten years earlier. India is said to be building such capacities in order to protect its geo-strategic interests in the face of China asserting its might on the sea lanes from South Africa to the Malacca Straits.

Rediff News, 24 December 2007

Navy's sea harrier crashes at Goa airport

A single-seater sea harrier fighter aircraft of the Indian navy crashed at Dabolim airport in Panaji on Monday, but the pilot managed to bail out safely. The aircraft, on a routine sortie, crashed at 11.15 am, an initial report said, adding that the crash had forced suspension of operations from the airport till 2 pm. The pilot of the aircraft commander Janak Bevli ejected safely, according to a navy spokesman. He said there has been no loss of property in the crash or any casualties on the ground.

India Today, 28 December 2007

Hover and out (editorial)

It was past 11 on a warm Monday morning when Commander Janak Bevli's Sea Harrier came to land on the tarmac on the naval air station at Goa's picturesque Dabolim airport. It was not an ordinary fighter aircraft landing, Commander Bevli gently rotated the Sea Harrier's Vertical/Short Take Off and Landing (V/STOL) thrust nozzles down towards the runway, bringing the aircraft to a gentle hover. Just then, the aircraft began yawing out of control. In a flash the experienced pilot yanked the twin handles of the Martin Baker ejection seat between his thighs. His seat rocketed out of the cockpit into the sky...