

International Herald Tribune, 1 February 2007

Reports: India plans aerospace military command to oversee space-based assets

NEW DELHI: India plans to create an aerospace command to control and protect satellites and spacecraft orbiting the Earth, news reports said Monday, quoting the head of the country's air force. Air Chief Marshal Shashi Tyagi said India was an aerospace power with "transoceanic reach" and it was important for it to be able to exploit outer space. "As the reach of the Indian Air Force is expanding it has become extremely important that we exploit space, and for it you need space assets," The Indian Express newspaper quoted Tyagi as saying at an air force conference in the western Indian city of Gandhinagar.

The Financial Express, 3 February 2007

US defence company scouting for Indian partners

NEW DELHI, FEB 2: Branding India a strategic market, US based defence major Raytheon Company is seeking a long-term partnership with Indian public and private sector companies. "With the company's strong relationship spanning more than 60 years, we are looking for a long term relationship with the Indian companies," Walter F Doran, president of Raytheon Asia for Raytheon International, Inc, said, ahead of the Aero-India 2007 in Bangalore. A critical element of the company's integrated air dominance approach for India is Raytheon's family of active electronically scanned array radars.

Business Standard, 6 February 2007

India, Russia plan JV for transport planes

India and Russia plan to set up a joint venture (JV) for research, development and production of MTA transport aircraft, which is expected to be delivered after 2015, a top Russian executive said today. MTA aircraft that could be used in transportation of military and civil cargo and aerial delivery operations would replace the AN-12, AN-32 and C-130, Alexey Fedorov, president, United Aircraft Corporation, said. He said there was a 'preliminary purchase order' for the aircraft from India's ministry of defence. "The technical requirements have been agreed in January 2007 and the protocol of intentions of signing the inter governmental agreement in the nearest future has been signed", he said at an international seminar on aerospace technologies here.

NDTV, 7 February 2007

Boeing, Lockheed vie for India defence contracts

BANGALORE (Reuters) - Leading U.S. defence aircraft makers, Boeing Co. and Lockheed Martin Corp., said on Tuesday they were aiming to get large contracts in India. Boeing and Lockheed Martin are among a slew of companies seeking to step up sales of defence aircraft to India as New Delhi moves to upgrade its air force. Boeing expects the Indian government to call for proposals for an order of 126 fighter jets by the middle of the year and said it was ready to compete strongly for the deal. "We have formed a very competitive team to respond to the proposal and we are ready to compete when it does come out," Mark Kronenberg, vice president for business development in Boeing's arms business, told a news conference. "This is going to be an absolutely critical competition ... it's going to be fierce," he said ahead of Wednesday's opening of the Aero India 2007 industry show in Bangalore. India has said it plans to buy 126 fighter jets, valued at close

to \$10 billion. Boeing's F-18 Super Hornet is competing against U.S. defence contractor Lockheed Martin's F-16 for the contract.

Financial Express, 7 February 2007

Heralding the Next Gen weapons

Echoing these views is Marwan Lahoud, CEO of the guided weapons company, MBDA. A joint venture involving the Franco-German EADS aerospace group, Britain's BAE Systems PLC and Finmeccanica SPA of Italy, MBDA has business links going back some 30 years with India. Most significantly, there has been a very long-standing production cooperation with the Indian company BDL for the Milan anti-tank infantry weapon. Our air-to-air Magic 1/2 and S530D weapons have been in service on the Indian Air Force's Mirage 2000 and the Indian Navy's Sea Harrier for many years as well, says Lahoud. He adds: The historical links are being maintained today with the recent orders for the ATAM air-to-air missile for the Army and Air Force's ALH helicopters, and of course, we will be equipping the Indian Navy's new Scorpene submarines with the SM39 Exocet anti-ship missile. In fact, we consider India as one of the major pillars of our current and future business and marketing strategy beyond our domestic markets in France, Germany, Italy and the UK.

The Hindu, 7 February 2007

Shop for planes, or just watch them

Bangalore: The sixth edition of the country's biennial air show, Aero India 2007 will take off at Air Force Station, Yelahanka from Wednesday. By far the largest edition, the five-day show will reverberate to the roars of over 50 aircraft ranging from the tiny Hansa to the giant C-130 Hercules, to mean fighting machines like the Su-30MKI, F/A-18F Super Hornet, Gripen, F-16 Fighting Falcon, Light Combat Aircraft, MiG-35 and to sleek business jets like the Falcon and the Bombardier. Impressive flying displays have been slotted for twice every day, with the highlight of the opening day undoubtedly being the flypast and the displays by the colourful Surya Kiran and Sarang aerobatic teams. They will perform on all five days.

International Herald Tribune, 7 February 2007

U.S. ambassador says nuke deal does not oblige India to buy American jets

BANGALORE, India: India is not under pressure to buy fighter jets from U.S. companies, even though some Americans expect New Delhi to reciprocate a recent civilian nuclear deal, U.S. Ambassador David Mulford said. The U.S. Congress cleared the landmark deal late last year giving energy-hungry India access to the global market for nuclear fuel and technologies. The deal has added a new momentum to the rapidly warming relations between India and the United States, and businesses on both sides hope it will help them seize new opportunities that didn't exist earlier.

Reuters, 8 February 2007

India's Hindustan Aeronautics orders 24 GE engines

NEW DELHI, Feb 6 (Reuters) - India's Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) said on Tuesday it has ordered 24 afterburning engines from GE Aviation in a deal valued at more than \$100 million. The order of F404-GE-IN20 engines, for the Indian Air Force's

first operational squadron of Tejas fighter aircraft, follows an earlier purchase of 17 engines in 2004, HAL said. GE Aviation, a manufacturer of jet engines for civil and military aircraft, is a unit of General Electric Co. (GE.N: Quote, Profile , Research). The F404-GE-IN20 engines were trial-installed earlier this year in light combat aircraft as part of a final evaluation exercise for flight testing scheduled for mid-2007, HAL said.

International Herald Tribune, 8 February 2007

What role for emerging India as a U.S. ally'

MUMBAI: A question hovers over the United States' blooming friendship with India: How good a friend will India be should it emerge as a great power. Will it be a Britain a loyal ally, a partner against terrorism, a fellow evangelist for free markets and democracy' Or will it be France sharing Washington's bedrock values but ever willing to pursue its own interests at the expense of American ones' Or will it be China a competitive threat to the U.S. economy, using its influence to thwart American diplomatic pressure on nations like Sudan and Iran'

Reuters, 8 February 2007

Embraer aims to sell nine defence aircraft to India

BANGALORE, Feb 6 (Reuters) - Brazilian aircraft maker Embraer (EMBR3.SA: Quote, Profile , Research) aims to sell nine defence planes to India, a big emerging market for commercial and military equipment, a company official said on Tuesday. "The idea is to get nine jets basically for aerial surveys. They will be used to transport people as well. Currently, the Indian government is analysing our proposal," Sergio Bellato Alves, vice president of Embraer, told a news conference. "If the Indian air force decides that this arrangement is convenient for them then soon we will proceed with the process. We are looking forward to win this contract," he said ahead of Wednesday's opening of the Aero India 2007 industry show in Bangalore.

CNN-IBN, 9 February 2007

IAF to get 40 Russian jets

New Delhi: The Indian Air Force is all set to acquire more wings and ground force. Air Chief Marshal SP Tyagi said on Thursday that the IAF will acquire 40 Sukhoi-30 jet aircraft, six Hercules tankers and a large number of helicopters. Tyagi said the all the procurements will be ordered from Russia and will be finalised by March 2007. The jets will be in addition to 130 Sukhois already ordered. On Wednesday, Defence Minister A K Anotony also announced that India will also buy 126 multi-role fighter jets worth over \$5 billion.

CNN-IBN, 10 February 2007

In Bangalore, India gets air-kissed

If anyone had any doubt about the atmospherics at the Bangalore airshow being decidedly military, he should now shed it. The big announcement on Wednesday was that India will expand its fleet of Sukhoi-30 fighter aircraft. "Forty Sukhois have been cleared," said Air Chief Marshal SP Tyagi. This will push up the number of Sukhois in the Indian Air Force to 230 an indication that the Sukhoi-30 is now well on its way to replacing the MiG-21 as the mainstay of the IAF's fighter operations. The additional

numbers will also bolster its sharply declining fleet levels, which now stand at a low of 30 fighter squadrons. While Russia may have drawn first blood by bagging an Indian order for 40 additional Sukhois, but the real buzz is about the impending sale of an American legend, the Hercules, to the Indian Air Force.

The Tribune, 11 February 2007

India to spend \$35 b on military aircraft

India is set to spend \$ 35 billion on military aviation over the next 20 years as most of its existing fleet needs to be replaced sooner or later. This will put Pakistan at a strategic disadvantage with the country finding it difficult to get sellers to maintain the military balance with India. Two different reports, released at Aero India show, clearly indicate that buyers, may they be Russian, American or European, were flocking to offer the best in military technology to India and there was immense competition for the Indian Air Force's 126 fighter-jet order, besides other aircraft, to replace an ageing Indian fleet.

The Tribune, 15 February 2007

Equip for technology driven war, Kalam tells IAF

Calling upon Air Force squadrons to equip themselves for technology driven warfare, the President and Supreme Commander of the armed forces, Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, said the winner of future warfare would be the force which could visualise the strength of the enemy, not based on the previous war, but based on the current capabilities, and technological advancements in the global scenario. 'You have got greater responsibilities of keeping an eye on the technological advancements in addition to keeping an eye on the borders of our country', Dr Kalam said while addressing IAF officers after presenting the President's Standard to No. 37 squadron, a fighter outfit, and No. 48 Squadron, a transport unit, here today.

The Hindu, 18 February 2007

Display by metal birds draws to a close

BANGALORE: Hardcore aviation buffs sat glued to the tarmac as the flying machines lit up the skies one last time as "Aero-India 2007," the sixth edition of the biennial aerospace exposition drew to a close at the Yelahanka Air Base here on Sunday. What has emerged clearly from the five-day event is the decisive shift towards the U.S. in India's future aviation procurements. Predictably, competitors for the multi-billion dollar Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft contract from the Indian Air Force made most of the noise at the show. From the makers of Gripen with their own exclusive corner structure to the Russians with their MiG-35, the fighter aircraft makers were in full attendance. The Americans had come fully prepared with their F-16 flying falcon and the F/A-18 super hornet to make an impact on the IAF.

The Hindu, 18 February 2007

IAF to acquire 120-km range air-to-air BVR missiles

New Delhi, Feb. 18 (PTI): To maintain its unchallenged dominance in beyond visual range (BVR) combat in the South Asian region, Indian Air Force has embarked upon a major plan to acquire longer range air-to-air missiles. India's dominance in offensive air superiority operations is being dented by the supply of similar BVR missiles to Pakistan

by the US in government-to-government sales. This sudden move has spurred IAF officials to make quick efforts to purchase 120-km range air-to-air missiles. The acquisition of such missiles, which sport ramjet propulsion, will make IAF the lone Air Force in Asia to have such an unparalleled capability, top IAF officials said.

Daily Times, 21 February 2007

Indian firms set to grab aerospace share

BANGALORE: Indian software firms say they are well placed to grab a bigger share of the aerospace market as airplane makers and defence companies look to control costs by outsourcing design and management systems. Asia's fourth-largest economy is already a hub for global corporations to outsource software services from application development and system integration to supply chain management. Global spending on engineering services was \$750 billion in 2004, with aerospace accounting for 8 percent, and could rise to \$1.1 trillion by 2020, according to the National Association of Software and Service Companies, India's IT industry lobby group.

Business Standard, 21 February 2007

IT firms target \$8bn aviation engg market

Big and small domestic IT firms are busy positioning themselves to snap up the \$8 billion market opportunity that the aerospace sector has created. A recent Booz Allen Hamilton report states India's aerospace offshore engineering services market, excluding the defence offset opportunities, has the potential to reach about \$4 billion by 2020. This could bring an additional \$4 billion opportunities in the form of offset requirements, during the same period.

The Times of India, 21 February 2007

Dhruv clears trials to fly high in Siachen

UDHAMPUR: Inducted into the Indian Air Force (IAF) in 1998, Dhruv, India's first advanced light helicopter (ALH) has come out with flying colours clearing all trials for regular high-altitude operations in the Siachen skyline of Jammu and Kashmir. Dhruv has cleared "all test trials" for flying over Siachen glacier without "any error" and joined the category of Chetak and Cheetah helicopters, which fly daily to the icy heights to maintain support services for troops based there, IAF sources said.

The Times of India, 24 February 2007

Pak test-fires its long range Hatf VI missile

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday "successfully" test fired its 2000 km long range nuclear capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile Hatf VI also called Shaheen II. "The missile test was part of the continuous process of validation and technical improvement which Pakistan follows to consolidate and verify its various land based strategic missile systems," a Defence statement here said. Hatf VI is Pakistan's longest range ballistic missile system with a range of 2000 kilometres. It is a two stage solid fuel missile which can carry nuclear and conventional warheads with high accuracy, the Defence statement said.

Financial Express, 24 February 2007

RFP for combat aircraft getting finishing touches

NEW DELHI, FEB 23: The ministry of defence is understood to have given finishing touches to the offset clause in the request for proposal (RFP) for 126 multi-role combat aircraft (MRCA) worth \$11 billion. It now seems to be racing against time to fulfil the commitment, publicly made by defence minister AK Antony. According to highly placed sources, top brass in the Indian air Force headquarters and ministry of defence are frantically trying to tie up loose ends to enable the release of the RFP for 126 MRCA before March 31. At the recently concluded Aero-India 2007 in Bangalore, the defence minister had said that the RFP for the 126 MRCA will be issued shortly.

People's Daily, 24 February 2007

Indian Air Force clears tests of chopper flight into Siachen

India's first advanced light helicopter Dhruv, inducted into the Indian Air Force in 1998, has cleared all trials for regular high-altitude operations in the Siachen skyline of the India-controlled Jammu and Kashmir, an official of the force said on Tuesday. The official said that "Dhruv has cleared all test trials for flying over the Siachen glacier without any error and joined the category of Chetak and Cheetah helicopters, which fly daily to the icy heights to maintain support services for troops based there". In fact, the chopper has been validated for high-altitude, low temperature flying, required to maintain the supply lines for the Siachen region, the official said. The trials of the chopper, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bangalore, were carried out by Commanding Officer of Chandigarh-based Dhruv squadron for over a six-month- period under various weather conditions. "Dhruv will now be able to fly in the glacier sector in all conditions and conduct all types of operations that are required there," said the official.

CNN-IBN, 24 February 2007

IAF to take part in Red Flag exercises

New York: The India Air Force is likely to participate in joint exercises with the US Air Force within the next year or two. According to reports, India has accepted the invitation to take part in these exercises. The American Air Force chief General T Michael Moseley emphasised that ties with the Indian Air Force would scale new heights with the invitation to the IAF to participate in the USAF's Red Flag exercises. This operation consists of realistic aerial war games in combat situations to train Air Force pilots from the US, NATO and allied countries. This will be the first time the IAF will take part in a Red Flag exercise.

Indian Express, 25 February 2007

Tajik air base is ready, gives India its first footprint in strategic Central Asia

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 24: India's first ever air base in Central Asia at Ayni in Tajikistan is now ready and the Defence Ministry has sought a mandate from the Cabinet Committee on Security to begin operations. India refurbished the Ayni air base, 10 km north-east of Dushanbe, at the cost of over Rs 80 crore under a trilateral defence agreement with Tajikistan and Russia. With its runway extended, perimeter fencing secured and aircraft hangars built, the Ayni airbase is ready after a delay of nearly two years. Lying dilapidated since 1985, this airbase was used by the former Soviet Union

during its Afghan campaign.

Indian Express, 25 February 2007

Breathtaking stunts by Air Force lends befitting conclusion to Techkriti

Kanpur, February 25: Four paratroopers jumped from a Dornier flying at the height of 6000 feet. They came down with great speed upto height of 4000 feet and then they opened their colourful parachutes to float down to the sports ground of the Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur (IIT-K). Hundreds of visitors were eagerly waiting on the grounds to see the daring Indian Air Force personnel and members of the world renowned Akash Ganga group on Sunday. Leading the group, Wing Commander Arun Marwah told Express Newsline that the team had arrived at Chakeri Airport from Delhi exclusively to perform for IIT-K on the occasion of the biggest science and technology festival of the institute, Techkriti 2007. It was informed that cloudy weather led to shortening the programme, which otherwise included human formations in mid-air and sky diving.

The Hindu, 26 February 2007

"No immediate phasing out of MiG-21s"

KOLKATA: Indian Air Force Chief-designate Air Marshal F.H. Major on Sunday ruled out immediate phasing out of the MiG-21s. Talking to presspersons here on the occasion of the IAF's platinum jubilee celebrations, he said there was a need for mid-life up-gradation of aircraft as induction of new combat jets, which was prohibitively expensive, might take eight to nine years. "It is not that we have only old planes. We also have third and fourth generation aircraft like Sukhois and Mirages" Air Marshal Major said. The IAF was buying 80 medium life helicopters, a dozen VVIP helicopters even as the process of inducting at least 126 new fighters was on. The IAF would induct the first of three Phalcon airborne warning and control aircraft [AWACS] by the end of the year or early 2008, while the first batch of indigenously built Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) was expected to be part of the force by 2009.

Financial Express, 26 February 2007

Raising technology-driven troopers

Technology will now come to the defence of Indian armed forces. Indian Army, Navy and Air Force are scouting for arsenal to prepare for a network-centric warfare. And they are being wooed by the likes of Boeing, Lockheed Martin, GE, Rolls Royce, Northrop Grumman, MDDA, Snecma and Pratt & Whitney, for the supply of defence equipment and materials. Conflicts since the first Gulf War have demonstrated that a networked force improves information sharing that enhances situational awareness; enables speed of command (decision making); thereby increasing mission effectiveness.

The Tribune, 26 February 2007

Those Magnificent Flying Machines

WE have a surfeit to choose from. The American technology barrier is finally behind us. We will continue to maintain ties with old friends ' the Russians' who will supply us next-generation fighters and know how. Our military cooperation with the Israelis is set to enter the next level with the country offering the best of its Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

(UAVs) and air defence systems to India. Civil aviation is in for a boom with the jet set even queuing up for personal planes. All this and more was seen at Aero India, 2007 held at the Air Force base in Bangalore.

People's Daily, 28 February 2007

Tajikistan denies deployment of foreign military forces

Tajikistan will not allow the deployment of a foreign military force on its soil, except for the existing Russian troops, Tajik Defense Ministry Spokesman Faridun Makhmadaliyev said on Tuesday. Makhmadaliyev was referring to recent reports that India would start operating at Ayni air base, 10 km north-east of the Tajik capital of Dushanbe, under a trilateral defence agreement with Tajikistan and Russia. He said president Imomali Rakhmonov has repeatedly stated that other than the military base currently operated by Russian forces, there are no plans for the construction or operation of another foreign military base in his country.

The Hindu, 28 February 2007

Kalam to witness Canberra's final flight

Once a formidable workhorse of the Indian Air Force, the Canberra bomber will soon become a relic of history. But before the air force phases out its longest-serving aircraft, the bomber will take to the skies for the last time from Chandigarh on March 7 as part of a 102-aircraft flypast planned for the President's fleet review. The Canberra's "final appearance" comes half a century after its induction in the IAF in 1957. The IAF plans to phase out the English bomber by the end of next month. The Canberra has a proven record of versatility in IAF service. Group Captain RD Mathur, who is involved in organising the fleet review, told HT: "It's been used for strategic reconnaissance, target towing, photo reconnaissance and interdiction."

The Hindu, 28 February 2007

President to `review' IAF on March 7

NEW DELHI : After a gap of over 30 years, the President would `review' the Indian Air Force at Chandigarh on March 7. "Presidential Reviews" are occasions when the President, who is also the supreme commander of armed forces, ceremoniously marks his "appreciation," said official sources. Only three "Presidential Reviews" had taken place so far, with the last one taking place in 1976. For the IAF, the occasion coincides with its platinum jubilee celebrations.