

The Hindu, 2 May 2006

### **IAF bids emotional adieu to MiG-25s**

Bareilly (U.P.): Highlighting the changing nature of surveillance, Air Chief S. P. Tyagi on Monday said India was now fully equipped to tap satellites for keeping a strategic eye on the ground. "The nature of warfare is changing, with satellites taking over the act of spying," Air Chief Marshal Tyagi said as he, along with top IAF brass, bid adieu to MiG-25, India's secret strategic weapon platform for decades. "MiG-25s no longer have strategic use to India. Also, the planes are no longer cost-effective," the Air Chief said. The spy plane had completed its lifespan and India now has INSAT 2B satellite for the purpose. "The IAF is planning to buy C-130 J planes for its special force," he added.

The Telegraph, 3 May 2006

### **IAF on Naxalite fight radar (Sujan Dutta)**

New Delhi, May 2: The Union home ministry has sought the involvement of the Indian Air Force in anti-Naxalite operations in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand but the defence ministry is sounding a note of caution and has called for a wider consensus in government before it is decided to involve the military directly in dealing with the Maoists. Defence minister Pranab Mukherjee is in favour of the Cabinet Committee on Security discussing the implications of the use of air power against Naxalites before such a step is taken. Officials of the Union home ministry who met defence officials last week pointed out that difficult terrain, the complexities of inter-state borders and landmines deterred rapid deployment of central paramilitary forces. This could be overcome if the Indian Air Force's Mi-17 helicopters could lift security personnel from camps to areas of operations. The Border Security Force, which is also deployed in Naxalite-affected areas, have helicopters that may be used, it has been proposed. A usual Naxalite tactic has been to attack a place and mine the roads leading to it. This often led to casualties for the police and the paramilitary. By taking the aerial route, the forces could be deployed rapidly and effectively, the home ministry officials argued. But defence minister Pranab Mukherjee, who has been told by the air force that it can present scenarios and options for use of air power, was also considering the political implications of using such tactics.

HindustanTimes, 11 May 2006

### **IAF shifts annual parade venue to decongest Delhi airport**

New Delhi, May 11, 2006: The Indian Air Force has decided to shift its annual parade and flypast to an airbase on the outskirts of the capital to add to the grandeur of the event and to decongest the Delhi airport. "This is a suo motu move, keeping in view the public convenience," an IAF officer explained. Therefore, the IAF parade will now move to the Hindon airbase in Uttar Pradesh, 15 kilometres away from the present venue. "The shift will help us display the entire gamut of our capabilities," the officer added. Presently, the parade was being conducted at a portion of the Delhi airport under the direct control of the IAF. That high-security area is where Indian and foreign dignitaries arrive and depart from the Capital.

Hindustan Times, 11 May 2006

### **IAF to procure 66 Hawks from Britain (PTI)**

Coimbatore, May 11, 2006: As part of its mission to train its personnel in modern aircraft, the Indian Air Force is procuring 66 Hawks from the United Kingdom, a senior defence official has said. The aircraft would be delivered in batches from October 2007 and the Advanced Jet Trainers programme would begin from June 2008, senior Air Force official Air Marshal BN Gokhale said. MIG series 21, 23, 27, 29 and HTD 32 and Kiran aircraft were at present used for training the personnel, Gokhale said, adding that over 10,000 personnel were trained by the command. The MIG series would be gradually phased out, he said.

The Hindu, 12 May 2006

### **IAF's airfield in Siachen to stay**

THOISE (LEH): The Indian Air Force, the Army's lifeline in maintaining troops in the world's highest battlefield Siachen, on Thursday ruled out shutting its airfield here in the event of any demilitarisation along the glacier. "There is no question of shutting this airfield. Its importance is not only from the strategic point of view, but also as a lifeline to the civilians," Air Officer-in-Chief of the Western Command, Air Marshal A.K. Singh told reporters at Thoise, IAF's northern most airfield, which is also a gateway to the Glacier. "If de-escalation takes places, like everybody else I hope it does, the role of IAF will remain. Certain role will be played in maintaining the troops. Our role will certainly remain..." he said.

The Hindu, 13 May 2006

### **Sea version of Lakshya tested successfully (PTI)**

Berhampur (Orissa): The sea version of the pilotless target aircraft Lakshya was successfully tested over the Bay of Bengal from a range at Gopalpur near here on Friday. The Lakshya was launched at 9.33 a.m. by the target support unit of the Army Air Defence College. This was the second test of the aircraft from the range. It was earlier flown on May 10, a defence release said. Lakshya, indigenously developed by the Bangalore-based Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), flew for 35 minutes. It is used as a target for firing by air defence weapon systems.

The Hindu, 14 May 2006

### **Tejas prototype makes supersonic flight**

Bangalore: Clocking another milestone, the operational version of the indigenously designed and developed Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Prototype Version-2 (PV2) was test flown on Saturday for supersonic speed in a "weaponised" state. The PV2 aircraft had completed its maiden supersonic flight on Friday. The weaponised flight on Saturday lasted 24 minutes. The aircraft was armed with two state-of-the-art air-to-air missiles. The flight indicates LCA's entry into operation flight test pace, according to the Aeronautical Development Agency. Saturday's flight was piloted by Wing Commander Vikram Singh. Designed as a replacement to Indian Air Force (IAF)'s ageing fleet of Russian-made MiG jets, Tejas is scheduled to be inducted in batches with a 2010 time frame.

The Hindu, 17 May 2006

### **Foreign observers to witness war-game**

NEW DELHI: Defence attaches from several countries will witness one of the largest Army exercises in recent times to test its new war doctrine of launching swift attacks. As many as 20,000 troops will enact the war-game codenamed "Sanghe Shakti" in the plains of Punjab, being conducted by one of the Army's three offensive formations, the Ambala-headquartered 2 Corps. Significantly, the 2 Corps contains almost half of the country's strike capabilities comprising the latest Russian-origin T-90 tanks, artillery guns and backed by fighter aircraft and helicopters from the Air Force. The task allocated to this corps in the event of a war with Pakistan is to conduct a rapid strike into the country to "find, fix, fight and finish" the enemy's combat capability. The troops had been practising in Rajasthan for short duration battles of high tempo and intensity at short notice.

The Indian Express , 25 May 2006

### **Panel wants IAF squadrons made combat-worthy (Sandeep Dikshit)**

New Delhi: Painting a dismal picture of the combat strength of the Indian Air Force, a Parliamentary committee has urged the Government to take steps to make the squadrons vibrant, responsive and combat worthy. In its report tabled before Parliament on Tuesday, the panel made one of its strongest criticisms of the project to indigenously develop a fighter aircraft (Tejas) and asked the Government to explore the option of importing alternates on transfer of technology (ToT) as the project appeared to be getting interminably delayed. It noted that most of the aircraft in the IAF inventory, including the MiG series, Jaguar and early version of the Sukhoi, required immediate upgradation or replacement. Though the efforts were in the "right direction," Defence Ministry needed to intensify its bid to achieve the authorised squadron strength during the Eleventh (2007-12) and Twelfth (2012-2017) Plan periods.

The Hindu, 26 May 2006

### **India to swap 18 Sukhois for new versions (Vladimir Radyuhin)**

Moscow: India will exchange 18 Sukhoi-30MK aircraft it had earlier purchased from Russia for a more sophisticated version of this long-range fighter jet, Su-30MKI. Russia's Irkut manufacturer of Sukhoi warplanes said it planned to sign the deal next week. Under an earlier agreement, the SU-30MK planes were to be upgraded to the SU-30MKI version in India. Irkut head Oleg Demchenko said 12 of the 18 planes were already assembled in the company's factory in Irkutsk. The remaining six would be delivered in December.