

The Hindu, 5 October 2004

**Second phase of joint naval exercise from today** (Anil Sastry)

ON BOARD INS MYSORE, OCT. 4. Malabar 2004 is the sixth of the series. It is being conducted in two phases in the Arabian Sea. The first phase was complete when the two forces had a rendezvous off Cape Comorin on October 1 before arriving in Goa on Sunday. The second phase would be carried on from October 5 to 9 off the Goan coast. It includes contraband control and maritime interdiction operations; sea control operations; joint anti-submarine warfare workup with conventional and nuclear submarines; gunnery shoots; advanced air defence exercises; advanced communication using digital technology; under way replenishment both by day and by night and the war at sea trying to outwit each other.

Maldives Info, 11 October 2004

**NSS Chief of Staff, Major General Mohamed Zahir visited the Indian Naval Ship "INS Theer"**

The NSS Chief of Staff, Major General Mohamed Zahir visited the Indian Naval Ship "INS Theer" which is currently in Male' harbour on a friendly visit. He was welcomed at the ship by the Commanding Officer, Captain Rajiv Girothura and other senior officials. During the visit, he attended a presentation on the Indian Navy Training and expressed his gratitude for the training opportunities received by the Indian Navy. Some officials of NSS also accompanied the Chief of Staff during his visit.

New Indian Express, 12 October 2004

**Bangladesh plans to build defence ships in Kochi**

KOCHI: Endorsing India's maritime presence in the Indian Ocean region, Bangladesh is now eyeing India's ship-building facilities for constructing patrol vessels. A team of the Bangladesh Navy led by Rear Admiral Shah Iqbal Mujtaba is arriving in Kochi this weekend for holding discussions with the Indian Navy officials and the management of Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL). The team will assess the facilities at Cochin Shipyard for building patrol vessels needed for policing Bangladesh's coastal waters. Terming the visit as a facility audit, sources, however, said no immediate results are expected from the visit. "It's a beginning. We can always undertake such works along the sidelines of our main projects like Air Defence Ship (ADS), sources pointed out. The CSL has been getting similar enquiries from other Asian countries also. "We had a visit from Sri Lankan Navy also. We're expecting a word from them. Similarly, the United States and the United Kingdom have also evinced interest in using the mobile ship repair facilities here," sources said. Meanwhile, CSL is all set to cut steel for the ADS next month. "A high-level meeting with the Navy and officials of the Ministry of Defence will be held in last week of this month. This will be followed by a series of visits by high-level delegations. The Steel Authority of India is also ready with the special steel needed for building the ADS," sources said.

The Indian Express, 14 October 2004

**To improve ties, Navy takes South China Sea course**

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 13: In line with the larger objective of carving out a greater role for itself in the strategically important South China Sea, five ships of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet have set sail for the region where they will spend the next 45 days improving interoperability with the navies of Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Philippines and Vietnam. The five ships - two Kashin-class missile destroyers Ranjit and Ranvijay, an indigenous missile frigate Godavari, an offshore patrol vessel Sukanya, an indigenous missile corvette Kirch - left earlier this month. They are accompanied by a fleet tanker Jyoti. The visit will take place around the time when the Chinese navy will conduct joint exercises with the Australian navy in the South China Sea. Official sources explained that this deployment is of great significance given the commercial importance of the South China Sea which has several sea lanes through which there is constant movement of energy resources. A greater cooperation with navies of the region, sources said, is critical to enhance India's maritime security requirements.

Over the past few years, New Delhi has been developing closer defence ties with East Asian countries. The first group of the Indian fleet will reach Pusan (South Korea) on October 15 and then travel to Tokyo, Manila and reach Ho Chi Minh City by November 9. The second group will visit Jakarta, Manila and Ho Chi Minh City between October 21 and November 9. According to the Navy, the deployment has been made to strengthen bilateral cooperation. Apart from interactions between naval personnel, the ships will also carry out basic-level passage exercises with their host navies when they depart from ports. The deployment is also being touted as an exercise in training the Navy to be operationally sustainable while away from its base ports. The ships will also be performing exercises among themselves during the journey. South Block sources said: "The Navy will explore the possibility of working on interoperability between the navies. It will also be an exercise in power projection since these navies of these countries will see two of India's indigenously developed vessels - the Godavari and Kirch - and enhance cooperation." The Indian Navy will also look to offer training in specialisation courses like anti-submarine warfare, electronic warfare and missile warfare.

The Hindu, 14 October 2004

**Russia building nuclear submarines for India** (Vladimir Radyuhin)

MOSCOW, OCT. 13. Russia is building two nuclear submarines for the Indian Navy, a leading business daily here reported. The construction of two unfinished nuclear submarines of Project 971 resumed this month at the Amur Shipyards in Komsomolsk-on-the-Amur, the Kommersant newspaper said. The building of the submarines was suspended several years ago due to lack of funds. Under an agreement with Russia, India will lease the two submarines and will provide money to enable the Amur Shipyards to complete their construction. According to the report, India has already made an advance payment of \$100 million on the contract worth \$1.6 billion to \$1.7 billion. Even though there are no international restrictions on the sale of nuclear submarines to India, the Defence Ministers emphatically denied they had as much as discussed the deal during their meeting in Delhi in January.

The Project 971 improved version of Akula-II class submarine is a far more formidable man of war than a Charlie-class nuclear submarine India leased from Russia in 1988-1991. Akula-II is the most advanced Russian nuclear attack submarine that is comparable to the U.S. Sea Wolf and modernised Los Angeles-class submarines. It features an Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) which enables the 12,770-tonne vessel to remain underwater for three months. The Russian Navy's Project 971 submarines are equipped with 28 cruise missiles each armed with nuclear or conventional warheads with a striking range of 3,000 km. However, the Indian version is expected to be armed with the 300-km Club nuclear-capable missiles already installed on the Krivak-class frigates and Kilo-class diesel submarines Russia has built for India. Experts said the two submarines would strengthen India's naval might and advance India's indigenous nuclear submarine programme.

The Hindu, 17 October 2004

#### **Protect maritime interests in Indian Ocean: Naval Chief**

KOZHIKODE OCT. 16. The Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Arun Prakash, today emphasised the significance of evolving proper strategies to protect and promote Indian interests in the Indian Ocean. He was inaugurating the first University Chair in the country for Maritime Studies set up at the University of Calicut. The Admiral announced that the Indian Navy intended to set up a Naval Institute of Maritime Affairs, to promote research on maritime issues. It would be opened in New Delhi in December. Pointing out the increasing need for the nation to emerge as a maritime power, he said the imperatives of globalisation and growth of sea trade would ensure that "the 21st century would be a maritime century." Emphasising the importance of the recently released Indian Maritime Doctrine, which, he said, was the Indian Navy's attempt to provide the country with a common language and understanding of marine concepts, the Naval Chief remarked: "the 21st century is going to be a maritime century." Admiral Arun Prakash added that "while we have no wish to dominate anyone, we need to ensure that nobody else is in a position to dictate terms to us." He, however, pointed out that a capable Navy was only one element of a maritime power. A large merchant fleet, modern ports with good infrastructure, a vibrant, efficient and self-reliant shipbuilding industry along with its supporting technical staff were vital ingredients needed for the emergence of the nation as a maritime power.

The Indian Express, 22 October 2004

#### **Russia to lease nuclear sub to India for 10 yrs (REUTERS)**

MOSCOW, OCTOBER 21: Russia will lease to India a nuclear-powered submarine capable of firing nuclear and conventional missiles, Russian news agencies reported on Thursday. "Moscow and New Delhi have signed a contract under which the Indian Navy will get a multi-purpose submarine Project 971 on a 10-year lease," Interfax news agency quoted an unnamed senior Russian military industry source as saying. The official said the contract was signed earlier this year, but gave no further details. Interfax said the submarine will be ready by 2007. Last month, Russian media reported that Amur Shipyards in the Russian city of Komsomolsk-na-Amure had resumed construction of two Project 971 submarines stalled for several years because of lack of funds. Itar-Tass news agency said the submarine, which belongs to Russia's most advanced Akula-II class and is comparable to the US Sea Wolf and modernised Los Angeles-class submarines, costs \$1.7 billion. Interfax quoted experts as saying the price of the lease could run up to "tens of millions of dollars". Project 971 submarines can be equipped with nearly 30 cruise missiles capable of delivering nuclear or conventional warheads as far as 3,000 km. But according to Russian media reports, the submarine leased to India will be armed with nuclear-capable missiles of shorter range not exceeding several hundred kilometres.

BBC News, 22 October 2004

#### **Indian navy denies submarine deal**

The Indian navy has denied reports that a deal has been finalised with Russia for the lease of an Akula-class nuclear-powered submarine. Navy spokesman, Commander Vinay Garg, told the BBC talks were continuing between the two countries but no agreement was completed. He said more details could be expected by Monday. Earlier reports from Moscow claimed India had reached agreement to lease the submarine for 10 years. The reports said the deal was worth tens of millions of dollars. The Akula is a sophisticated nuclear-powered submarine that would significantly increase India's naval reach.

ABC News, 22 October 2004

#### **Navy's goodwill visit sparks false fire alarm (AFP)**

An Indian military vessel has surprised Japan as it arrived for a goodwill visit billowing columns of white smoke, alarming firefighters who rushed to the ship's aid. But the 3,950 ton Indian Navy destroyer Ranvijay was only using its engines, a spokesman for the Japan Coast Guard says. "Apparently, the ship does that all the time," the spokesman said. "But for a moment we thought the ship was possibly experiencing a major fire. People called fire departments about the case." Major media, including the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) and Kyodo News wire service, dispatched helicopters to cover the incident. The coastguard spokesman says no one has been injured and no oil leak has been detected. Indian navy chief Admiral Arun Prakash said in August that the force urgently needed to replace its aging fleet.

The Times of India, 23 October 2004

#### **Navy desperate for more ships (Rajat Pandit)**

NEW DELHI: The Navy plans to induct 120 warships and 12 submarines over the next 13 years to protect India's "extensive maritime interests" and expand its influence in the Indian Ocean Region. But the bad news is that the government is yet to finalise definite budgetary allocation for this long-term ship-building perspective plan. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has not even cleared the long-pending \$ 2-billion French "Scorpene" project, which envisages construction of six submarines at Mazagaon Docks, so far. "The Navy needs to induct a major warship every two years to retain its operational

profile but this did not happen over the last two decades," said an officer. The total absence of strategic planning in the defence ministry is evident from the fact that the 10th five-year defence plan (2002-2007) itself is yet to be finalised despite half of the plan period having already elapsed. The concrete allocation for the Navy's ship-building plan can be taken up only after that.

The Indian Express, 28 October 2004

**France seeks to seal submarine deal with India** (Reuters)

New Delhi, October 27: France sought on Wednesday to speedily conclude a multi-billion dollar defence deal to sell submarines to the Indian navy saying it had been under negotiations for many years now. The deal, estimated to be worth about \$1.8 billion, involves the manufacture of six Scorpene SSK-class submarines at a naval dockyard in Mumbai. Though the Indian navy has approved the submarine and the two countries agreed in 2001 to go in for joint production, New Delhi is yet to give its final clearance and sign the contract. The talks (with India) have been going on for quite some time," French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier told reporters at the start of a two-day visit to India.

The News Indian Express, 28 October 2004

**Prithvi-III test fired near Balasore** (IANS)

BALASORE: India, on Wednesday, test fired the indigenously developed medium range missile, Prithvi-III, from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, about 15 km from here. The missile was the naval version of Prithvi, which has a range of 250 to 300 km, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) sources said. The surface-to-surface single stage ballistic missile could be launched from either a ship or a submarine and was capable of destroying land targets. The missile, about 8.5 metres high and one metre in diameter, with latest on-board computer and internal navigation system, could use both solid and liquid propellant. The entire trajectory of the missile, which took off vertically, was tracked through an integrated system of sophisticated radar, electro-optical tracking instruments, a chain of telemetry stations and a naval vessel stationed close to the impact point inside the Bay of Bengal. Prithvi-III has virtually acquired the status of a fast track project as Prithvi-I, with a striking range of 150 kms, has already been inducted into the army and the development of Prithvi-II for the Indian Air Force had been completed, the sources said.

The New Indian Express, 29 October 2004

**Navy to buy French submarines soon**

New Delhi, October 28: Despite allegations of middlemen being involved in the earlier deal of Mirage fighter aircraft, the Indian Navy is to be given the clearance to ink the multi-billion dollar deal for the purchase of Scorpene submarines from French firm DCN international. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Arun Prakash today said the \$ 1.5 billion deal to acquire six French Scorpene submarines was "under very close examination at the highest level of the government" Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the ongoing Naval Commanders conference, he said, "We have received assurance that the deal will see the light of the day soon". However, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee refused to go into specifics of individual deals and in his interaction with the visiting French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier said the issue of overall defence cooperation between the two countries had figured prominently.

The Hindu, 29 October 2004

**Navy faces staff crunch**

NEW DELHI, OCT. 28. The ongoing meeting of the naval commanders here has expressed concern over the severe shortage of staff that could even result in nil recruitment for two major projects to be commissioned next year. Addressing the commanders, the Defence Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, today acknowledged the problem and said the Government was examining ways of finalising manpower recruitment for the Naval Academy and the new naval base at Karwar. The Navy said that 10 priority cases had been lined up for recruitment of uniformed personnel. Besides, there was a 24 per cent shortage in the civilian technical and non-technical staff for operational tasks in the repair yards. "I do realise it would not be possible to man the new stations," said Mr. Mukherjee. At a meeting with the Union Finance Minister, P. Chidambaram, the Chief of the Naval Staff, Arun Prakash, had pointed out that the guidelines for manpower approval were 'opaque' and requested the Finance Ministry were to issue detailed clarifications. Taking note of the seriousness of the situation, Mr. Mukherjee has directed Defence Ministry officials to process and send the proposed draft to the Finance Ministry within one month.