

The Indian Express, 1 October 2005

196-strong IAF team to leave for Sudan soon

New Delhi, Sept. 30: Armed with the Chapter VII of the UN charter that allows it to use force in face of civilian threats, a 196-strong IAF peace enforcement team leaves for Kadugli, one of Sudan's troubled hotspots, ten days from now. Being deployed as a replacement for the Egyptian team in the conflict-ridden Sector IV of North Sudan, the team will be in the very epicenter of the Sudanese politico-communal crisis.

Force, Vol 3 No 1 September 2005, 1 October 2005

Eyes in the sky: Air force to acquire more aerostat-mounted airspace surveillance systems (Prasun K. Sengupta)

Highly impressed by the operational effectiveness of its newly -acquired aerostat-mounted airspace surveillance systems, the Indian Air Force (IAF) is now poised to acquire a follow-on batch of such systems. Each such system comprises an aerostat balloon built by Israel's RAFAEL Armament Authority within which a three-tonne EL/M-2083 active phased array radar built by Israel Aircraft Industries' ELTA Systems Group is housed. The tethered aerostat can be hoisted up to an altitude of 250m. Data gathered by the radar is transmitted to a central air defence command and control centre where it is used to maintain an extended comprehensive air situation picture.

The Times of India, 2 October 2005

IAF to seek combat aircraft deal soon

The companies vying to bag the lucrative contract are French Dassault (Mirage-2000-V), Russian RAC MiG (MiG-29 M2), Swedish SAAB (JAS-39 Gripen) and, of course, the American Lockheed Martin (F-16) and Boeing (F-18) companies. "The RFPs will be issued (to all the five) any day now," said IAF vice-chief Air Marshal Ajit Bhavnani on Friday, while flagging off a team of 196 personnel and six Mi-17 helicopters headed for the UN peace-enforcing contingent in strife-torn Sudan. The RFPs will be issued (to all the five) any day now," said IAF vice-chief Air Marshal Ajit Bhavnani on Friday, while flagging off a team of 196 personnel and six Mi-17 helicopters headed for the UN peace-enforcing contingent in strife-torn Sudan.

The Pioneer, 2 October 2005

IAF gets set for anniv show

The IAF will celebrate its 73rd anniversary on October 8 with an air display at the Palam Air Force Station with SU-30s performing aerobatics and the Surya Kiran aerobatics team enacting an aerial ballet.

The Hindu, 3 October 2005

Army, Air Force not keen on Prithvi missile

New Delhi: The armed forces appear to have lost interest in the Prithvi ballistic missile - the first success story in the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme - and are in favor of inducting the short-range version of the Agni missile. Apart from reservations over Prithvi's accuracy, the Army is unhappy with the efficacy of its warheads and the cumbersome process of filling them prior to launch. As a result, it wants to go in for the "Agni A-1" missile that was tested successfully over a year ago.

The Indian Express, 3 October 2005

IAF makes history in skydiving (PTI)

Hindon, Up, October 3: Living upto its motto, Indian Air Force today "touched the sky with glory" as Air Chief Marshal S P Tyagi and 73 other parachutists today performed a sky diving exercise rewriting the record books for combined parachute. Celebrating the 73rd anniversary of IAF in an "adventurous" way, Tyagi, the first Chief of Air Staff in history to have jumped solo while in saddle, flew down from a Mi-17 helicopter from a height of 4,000 ft while 73 sky divers from Air Devils and Akash Ganga dived from a height of 8,000 feet from two Antonov-32 aircraft carriers.

The Indian Express, 3 October 2005

IAF plans to buy 80 copters for anti-terror operations

New Delhi, October 2: The Indian Air Force (IAF) plans to buy 80 attack helicopters for counter-insurgency operations, according to Air Marshal A.K. Singh of the Western Air Command (WAC). Along with the acquisition of 126 fighters for our frontline bases, we are also in the market for 80 helicopters, Air Marshal Singh said. The move, senior officials say, confirms IAF chief S.P. Tyagi's suggestion a few months ago that air power was available to the government for use in anti-terrorist operations. As of now, the IAF is used purely in a support role in J-K, for transporting troops and supplies, providing close air support to infantry movements and for surveillance missions with Army formations. Now, the government has decided to experiment with using air power as a pre-

emptive force in the state, following a sudden spurt in infiltration attempts and encounters. The IAF is likely to raise more Helicopter Units (HUs) to house the new choppers.

The Times of India, 7 October 2005

India to buy 126 jet fighters

New Delhi, October 6: The Indian Air Force plans to seek proposals from some of the world's top combat aircraft manufacturers for the purchase of 126 new jet fighters, the nation's air force chief said on Thursday. Air Chief Marshal SP Tyagi said it would take years for a final decision to be made, but the government was likely to start soliciting formal proposals from suppliers before the end of the year. India is looking at American F-16s and F/A-18 Super Hornets, French Mirages, Swedish Gripens and Russian MiGs, Tyagi said.

The Tribune, 7 October 2005

Air Chief for setting up aerospace command: Denies govt pressure in aircraft purchase deal

New Delhi, October 6: Pointing out that a final decision on buying 126 frontline fighter jets to replace the Indian Air Force's ageing fleet was several years away, the Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal S.P. Tyagi today urged the government to set up a new Aerospace Command for the military use of space.

The Pioneer, 9 October 2005

IAF aerobatics captivate audience (Girja Shankar Kaura)

New Delhi, October 8: Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal S.P. Tyagi today said the Air Force was being modernized to meet future challenges and aircraft were being upgraded to function in testing times. The Air Force has contracted for advanced jet trainers from the UK, is upgrading the MiG series of aircraft and acquiring simulators to train IAF personnel, the Chief of Air Staff said while addressing the 73rd Air Force Day function. Citing advances in technology, The Air Chief called for setting up a space cadre to man the space command in the future. He asked his colleagues to master space technology to meet future challenges.

The Tribune, 18 October 2005

Top commanders' meet begins

New Delhi, October 17: Top commanders of the Army and the IAF commenced their bi-annual meetings here today to work out various strategies to counter not only the insurgency but also to ensure further modernization of the two important arms of the Indian armed forces. The conference will give final touches to an anti-insurgency doctrine which has been on the anvil for some time. It will also focus on modernization of the force and making it "leaner".

The Tribune, 20 October 2005

IAF combat fleet down by nine squadrons (Gulshan Luthra)

New Delhi, October 19: The Indian Air Force (IAF) has phased out about half a dozen of its MiG series of combat squadrons in the past couple of years, forcing it to take unprecedented steps to keep up its fighting capability by technology induction. As predicted in these columns at the beginning of this year, the present strength of the IAF combat force has come down to about 30 squadrons, down from 39 declared by the then Chief of Air Staff a couple of years ago. The loss is due to the large ageing fleet of MiG-21s as well as MiG-23s and MiG-27s, and the inability of the successive governments to timely replace them over the last two decades.

The Indian Express, 25 October 2005

Fleet up gradation in 5 years: IAF vice-chief (Shiv Aroor)

New Delhi, October 24: Keeping in view the uncertainty over arms procurements and the dismal record of the successive governments in taking quick decisions, the IAF has decided to upgrade its almost every single aircraft over the next five years. With the process to buy 126 new fighters likely to start in a month, the Air Headquarters, concerned over the rapidly dwindling force levels, is keen to make do with what it has and depend less on anticipated purchases.

The Hindu, 26 October 2005

IAF plans modernization of its fleet

New Delhi: Faced with a dwindling fleet and the unlikely prospect of new fighter aircraft being inducted in the near future, the Air Force is embarking on a massive up gradation of its entire fleet of frontline fighters and missiles. With the Government asking it to be prepared for operations in neighboring countries, the IAF is also planning to modernize and extend the reach of its medium-lift transport aircraft and large helicopters. The issue was considered at the recently-concluded commander's conference, the Vice-Chief of Air Staff Ajit Bhavnani told newsmen here on Monday.

The Tribune, 27 October 2005

Test pilot dies in MiG-21 crash (PTI)

Bangalore, October 26: Sq Ldr K.R. Murthy, the test pilot of the MiG-21 aircraft which crashed at Bangalore airport today, died in a hospital this evening, an IAF spokesman said. The aircraft crashed following suspected technical snag but a test pilot and a test engineer on board ejected. They were both injured and were admitted to hospital.

The Times of India, 28 October 2005

IAF may follow US Air Force (Rajat Pandit)

New Delhi: The IAF is now thinking big. It wants to evolve into an 'expeditionary force', on the lines of the US Air Force, with 'a strategic reach' far beyond national frontiers. The IAF, though the fourth largest air force in the world after US, Russia and China, knows the concept of an expeditionary force, with the ability to rapidly deploy and operate anywhere in the world, is slightly premature at this juncture.