



### Current Affairs - October to December 2018

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#### Defence

- ▶ 4th Edition of India-USA Joint Air Force Exercise *Cope India-18* conducted at Kalaikunda and Panagarh Air Force bases in West Bengal.
- ▶ 10th Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) held in Kochi (Kerela), to discuss maritime issues pertaining to cooperative capacity-building to deal with common security concerns in region. The theme for this year's seminar was "IONS as Catalyst for SAGAR". SAGAR stands for 'Security and Growth for All in Region.
- ▶ 10th edition of Russia and India Joint Navy Exercise INDRA NAVY 2018 conducted off Visakhapatnam coast.
- ▶ 11 Days Joint India Russia Army Exercise *Indra 2018* began at Babina Field Firing Ranges in Uttar Pradesh.
- ▶ 1st India-United States tri-services exercise will take place in 2019 in India, including all services of both countries (also talks are on to include special forces).
- ▶ 25th edition of SIMBEX (Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise) held in Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
- ▶ 2nd India-Indonesia coordinated patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) Joint Naval Exercise held in Belawan (Indonesia). Ships and aircraft from both countries undertook patrolling on respective sides of 236 nautical miles long International Maritime Boundary Line.
- ▶ 3rd Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX) held in Indian Ocean, after a gap of 5 years.
- ▶ 6th edition IBSAMAR (joint Navy Exercise between Indian, Brazilian and South African Navies) began at Simons Town (South Africa).
- ▶ About Rafale Fighter Jets Deal -
  - ▶ India in September 2016 signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with France to procure 36 Rafale fighter jets (Manufactured by Dassault Aviation), for €7.8 billion. Under the deal, it was decided that India will pay 15 per cent in advance.
  - ▶ Earlier deal -
    - ▶ In June 2001, Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved procurement of 126 medium multi-role combat aircraft. In January 2012, IAF announced Rafale as preferred bidder and contract negotiations began.
    - ▶ It was proposed that 18 Rafales would be supplied to the IAF by 2015, while remaining 108 would be manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in India under transfer of technology agreements.
    - ▶ Deal stalled due to a lack of agreement on various terms of RFP compliance and cost-related issues.
    - ▶ Current Controversy is that India's main opposition party raised an issue over Dassault partnering with Anil Ambani's Reliance Defence, a private company instead of state-owned HAL. However, Both French government and Dassault stated that it was Dassault's decision to choose Reliance Defence instead of HAL.
- ▶ Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (DTR) and Sashastra Seema Bal partnered to provide security to Dudhwa forests and its rich wildlife.
- ▶ Fast patrol vessels of Indian Coast guard, Amrit Kaur and Kamla Devi (named after freedom fighters) have been launched.
- ▶ First indigenously overhauled Sukhoi Su-30MKI fighter jet to Indian Air Force, by 11 Base Repair Depot (BRD) in Nashik (Maharashtra). Sukhoi Su-30MKI is a twin-jet multi-role air superiority aircraft developed by Russia's Sukhoi.
- ▶ Government reconstituted Security Policy Group (SPG) to assist National Security Council (NSC) in Nation's security Operations. SPG will be 16-member body chaired by National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval.
- ▶ ICGS Varuna (Indigenously-designed training vessel built by Reliance Naval and Engineering Limited) launched for service in Indian Coast Guard.
- ▶ IN LCU L55 has been commissioned into Indian Navy, as 5th ship of Landing Craft Utility (LCU) Mk-IV class. It is indigenously built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Kolkata.
- ▶ India - UK Joint Naval Exercise KONKAN 18 began in Goa, to last till Dec 06, 2018.

18. ▶ India Russia Joint Airforce Exercise Avaiandra held in Jodhpur (Rajasthan), as 2nd edition of this exercise.
19. ▶ India and China will resume their annual bilateral military exercise 'Hand-in-Hand' in December 2018, which has been upheld since 2016.
20. ▶ India and Indonesia Joint Bilateral Exercise 'Samudra Shakti' Held in Indonesia, participated by INS Rana on India's Behalf.
21. ▶ India and Japan Conducted Joint First Air Force exercise called SHINYUU Maitri-18, at Air Force Station Agra.
22. ▶ India and Japan held their first ever joint military exercise 'DHARMA GUARDIAN-2018', in Vairengte (Mizoram).
23. ▶ India and Japan will hold first ever joint military exercise 'DHARMA GUARDIAN-2018' at in Vairengte (Mizoram), During November 1 - 14, 2018. Indian contingent will be represented by 6/1 GORKHA RIFLES while Japanese contingent will be represented by 32 Infantry Regiment.
24. ▶ India and Russia signed a USD 500 million deal for construction of two Talvar-class missile frigates in Goa for Indian Navy. MOU was signed between defence PSU Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL) and Russia's state-run defence major Rosoboron.
25. ▶ India and US Army Joint Exercise named Vajra Prahar 2018 began at Mahajan Field Firing Range (MFFR) in Bikaner (Rajasthan).
26. ▶ India and US agreed to elevate their bilateral 'Cope India' air exercise to trilateral format by including Japan. Next edition of this exercise is scheduled to be held in December 2018. The three countries already are conducting trilateral naval war games under expanded Malabar naval exercise.
27. ▶ India signed \$950 million contract with Russia for two upgraded Krivak III-class stealth frigates. The 4,000-ton Krivak III vessels will also accommodate two multirole helicopters and will be used for anti-submarine and airborne early warning missions.
28. ▶ Indian Air Force (IAF) concluded exercise codenamed CROSS BOW 18 at Suryalanka in Andhra Pradesh.
29. ▶ Indian Air Force's ASTE (Aircraft & Systems Testing Establishment) flew India's first military flight using blended bio-jet fuel on the An-32 transport aircraft. This fuel is made from Jatropa oil sourced from Chattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA) and then processed at CSIR-IIP Dehradun. IAF intends to fly An-32 transport aircraft using biojet fuel on 26 January 2019, in Republic Day flypast.
30. ▶ Indian Army completed indigenously developed nuclear capable Prithvi-II missile's First night trial. Its a surface-to-surface missile, with strike range of 350 km.
31. ▶ Indian Army has dedicated 2018 to welfare of Disabled Soldiers who have been disabled in line of duty.
32. ▶ Indian Army inducted three major globally combat proven artillery gun system - M777 A2 ultra light howitzers (ULH), K-9 Vajra-tracked self-propelled guns (South Korea) and Composite Gun Towing Vehicle (Ashok Leyland -India) at Deolali Field Firing Range in Maharashtra, as first artillery gun systems to be inducted by Indian Army in three decades.
  - ▶ Last inducted was Bofors artillery gun system procured from Sweden in early 1980s.
33. ▶ Indian Army picked Russia's Igla-S missile system as choice for its multibillion dollar contract for man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS).
  - ▶ Russia's Rosoboronexport, with bid Around \$1.47 billion, emerged lowest bidder for Indian Army's Very Short Range Air Defence (VSHORAD) deal. Other bidders were MBDA of France (bid of \$3.68 billion) and SAAB of Sweden (bid of \$2.6 billion).
  - ▶ It is designed for use against visible aerial targets at short range such as tactical aircraft, helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAVs), cruise missile, head-on or receding, in presence of natural (background) clutter and countermeasures. As per requirements of Indian Army, it will have maximum range of 6km, altitude of 3km along with all-weather capability.
34. ▶ Indian Coast Guard (ICG) conducted Regional Level Marine Oil Pollution Response Exercise titled 'Clean Sea- 2018' at sea off Port Blair (Andaman & Nicobar (A&B) Islands).
35. ▶ Indian Coast Guard (ICG) launched new Offshore patrol vessel (OPV) ICGS Varaha, as 4th in series of 98 MOPVs designed and built indigenously by Larsen & Toubro (L&T).
36. ▶ Indian Coast Guard launched an exercise along serene sea waters of Gahirmatha marine sanctuary in Odisha to protect endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles, named 'Operation Oliva'.
37. ▶ Indian Coast Guards deployed two new hovercrafts to enhance its surveillance capabilities and to protect against any filtration bids from Pakistan Side in contentious area around Sir Creek in Gujarat. Sir Creek (Kutch district) is a disputed area between India and Pakistan.
38. ▶ Indian Navy commissioned naval hospital ship INHS Sandhani at Naval station Karanja in Raigad district of Maharashtra.
39. ▶ Indian Navy completed refitting of Maldivian Coast Guard Ship (MCGS) Huravee at Naval Dockyard Visakhapatnam and formally handed it over to Maldives. It was originally commissioned as INS Tillanchang in March 2001, and was subsequently gifted to Maldives by India in April 2006.
40. ▶ Indian Navy inducted its first Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) which is deployed to rescue downed or disaster-struck submarines at high sea. It will be based in Mumbai and will enhance Navy's operational capabilities.
  - ▶ With this, India joined select list of international navies (United States, China, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Singapore UK, Sweden and Australia) with ability to search, locate and provide assistance to downed or disaster-struck or distressed submarines at high sea.

41. ▶ Indian Navy will conduct its flagship annual Western Seaboard coastal defence exercise Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX) from January to March 2019. As part of TROPEX, Navy will conduct coastal defence exercise 'Exercise Sea Vigil'.
42. ▶ Indian Navy's first flyaway Deep Sea Submarine Rescue System inducted at Naval Dockyard Mumbai.
  - ▶ New Submarine rescue system was needed as traditional methods of search and rescue at sea are ineffective for a disabled submarine.
  - ▶ Indian Navy's Deep Sea Submarine Rescue System considered to be the most advanced system currently in operation globally, which is capable of undertaking rescue from a disabled Submarine upto 650 m depth.
43. ▶ India's first indigenous nuclear submarine INS Arihant completed its first deterrence patrol, completing its first long-range mission with live nuclear-tipped missiles.
  - ▶ During deterrence patrol, a nuclear submarine carries nuclear missiles on board, where command and control protocols for its operations are fully tested by its crew.
  - ▶ With this, India completed its survivable nuclear triad by adding maritime strike capability to land and air-based delivery platforms for nuclear weapons. It makes India sixth country — after US, Russia, UK, France and China — to have fully operational nuclear triad.
  - ▶ INS Arihant is India's first indigenously developed nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine. It was launched in 2009 and its nuclear reactor went critical in 2013 and it was commissioned in 2016.
44. ▶ Indo China Joint Military Exercise Hand-in-Hand held at Chengdu (China), as 7th edition of this exercise.
45. ▶ Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) received additional \$777 million contract to supply LRSAM air and missile defence systems to seven ships in Indian navy, in a contract with Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL). LRSAM is part of Barak 8 family, and is an air and missile defence system.
46. ▶ Joint exercise of India and Vietnam, named *Sahyog-Hop Tac 2018* began off Chennai coast.
47. ▶ Long range surface-to-surface Nuclear Capable Ballistic missile Agni V successfully test fired.
  - ▶ It has strike range of 5000 km.
  - ▶ It was 7th successful trial of Agni V. It is capable of carrying 1.5 tonnes of nuclear warheads.
48. ▶ Maharashtra cabinet approved conversion of Indian Navy's longest-serving aircraft carrier INS Viraat, into India's first-ever moored maritime museum-cum-marine adventure centre. It was decommissioned in 2017.
49. ▶ Ministry of Defence awarded contract for construction of 4 Survey Vessels for Indian Navy to Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) Limited Kolkata, with order value of 2435 crores.
  - ▶ First ship is to be delivered within 36 months and remaining within an interval of six months for each vessel.
  - ▶ These Survey Vessels (Large) shall be 110 metre long with deep displacement of 3,300 tonnes.
50. ▶ PSU BEML bagged contract for INR 3015 crores for Mumbai Metro Corridor, including manufacturing of 378 Metro cars (63 Metro trains of 6 cars each) for Mumbai Metro Corridor 2A, 2B & 7.
51. ▶ Raksha Mantri Nirmala Sitharaman formally launched 'Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti', which aims to provide a boost Intellectual Property Rights culture in indigenous defence industry and inculcate IP culture in Indian defence manufacturing ecosystem.
52. ▶ Supreme Court gave clean chit to Central government for purchase of 36 Rafale fighter Jets from Dassault Aviation (France), stating nothing wrong found in purchase of 36 fighter jet instead of 126 from France.
  - ▶ Dassault Rafale won MMRCA competition in January 2012 to supply 126 Jet aircraft with additional 63 aircraft to Indian Air Force. First 18 aircrafts were to be supplied by Dassault and remaining were to be manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.
  - ▶ Dassault refused to ensure quality of aircraft produced by HAL. In 2014, price of deal increased to \$30 billion. This created price issue and deal couldn't be signed.
  - ▶ Thereafter, New central government confirmed the deal for 36 multirole fighter aircraft of 58000 crores from France's Dassault Aviation.
53. ▶ Tri-service exercise 'Madad 2018' conducted at sea off Goa and Karwar coasts in a move aimed at fine-tuning joint war-fighting capabilities and enhancing operational synergy.

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