

Indian Air Force gets its first Apache Guardian attack helicopter in US



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US aerospace major Boeing has handed over first of the 22 Apache Guardian attack helicopters to the Indian Air Force, nearly three-and-half years after a multi-billion dollar deal for the choppers was sealed. Senior IAF officials said the addition of AH-64E (I) Apache helicopter is a significant step towards modernisation of the force's chopper fleet. The helicopter has been customised to suit IAF's future requirements and would have significant capability in mountainous terrain, they said. "The first AH-64E (I) - Apache Guardian helicopter was formally handed over to the Indian Air Force at Boeing production facility in Mesa, Arizona, the US on May 10," IAF Spokesperson Group

Captain Anupam Banerjee said. The AH-64E Apache is a leading multi-role attack helicopter and is flown by the US Army. The IAF had signed a multi-billion dollar contract with the US government and Boeing Ltd in September 2015 for 22 Apache helicopters. The first batch of these helicopters is scheduled to be shipped to India by Jul this year. "Selected aircrew and ground crew have undergone training at the training facilities at US Army base Fort Rucker, Alabama. These personnel will lead the operationalisation of the Apache fleet in the IAF," the IAF said in a statement. It said the helicopter has been customised to suit the IAF's future requirements and would have significant capability in mountainous terrain. "The helicopter has the

capability to carry out precision attacks at standoff ranges and operate in hostile airspace with threats from ground," the IAF said. It said the ability of these helicopters, to transmit and receive the battlefield picture, to and from the weapon systems through data networking makes it a lethal acquisition. "These attack helicopters will provide significant edge in any future joint operations in support of land forces," the IAF added. Additionally, the Defence Ministry in 2017 approved the procurement of six Apache helicopters along with weapons systems from Boeing at a cost of Rs 4,168 crore for the Army. This will be its first fleet of attack choppers. Fuselages for this Army order will be produced by Tata Boeing Aerospace Limited, a joint venture between Boeing and Tata Advanced Systems in Hyderabad.

Pakistan offers to de-escalate LoC tensions amid pressure

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Islamabad has blinked first in the staring battle along the Line of Control (LoC), the de facto border between India and Pakistan. Under sustained pressure from India, Pakistan has offered to de-escalate tensions along the LoC. The offer to India was made by the Pakistani military "through the institutionalised military channels of communication between the two sides," a senior official in the Indian security establishment said on condition of anonymity.



The Directors General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of the two countries are regularly in touch and HT learns that the offer may have come during such an interaction. Pakistan has offered to remove its Special Service Group (SSG) – the special forces of Pakistan – from the LoC and even suggested a "moratorium on the artillery fire from both sides," a report sent to the Prime Minister's Office said. HT has seen a copy of the report. After the Pulwama suicide car bomb attack by a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist on February 26, which left 40 troops of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) dead and led to the subsequent air strikes by the Indian Air Force on Jaish's training camp at Balakot in Pakistan, Islamabad moved special forces and

troops along the LoC and the border and "maintained a precautionary deployment". India's pressure on Pakistan was not just along the border, but diplomatic as well. With the US, UK, and France backing India, China agreed to remove its so-called "technical hold" on declaring Maulana Masood Azhar, the emir of JeM, a global terrorist by the United Nations Security Council. Simultaneously, India is also pushing the Financial Action Taskforce (FATF), a global body that watches money laundering and terror funding, to blacklist Pakistan. In the report, the Indian Army has said that there have been "no infiltration attempts," and "no attempt to (carry out) cross border tactical action since the Pulwama terror attack." Interestingly, terror launch pads along the LoC, from which terrorists infiltrate

India are empty. "Terror infrastructure in close vicinity of the LoC has been temporarily closed due to overall pressure being maintained on Pakistan," the Indian Army added in the report. The thinning out of terror launch pads were reported "from active areas like Poonch and Rajouri as well," a senior defence ministry official said, asking not to be identified because he is not authorized to speak to the media. "These are clear on-ground signals from Pakistan for de-escalation." Recently, when formations along the LoC also repaired bunkers—an annual feature to prepare for the monsoons—the "Pakistan army didn't interfere," the official added. The government had warned the Indian Army and especially the Corps Commanders to take "adequate precautions" to

prevent cross-border raids by the Pakistani army after the Pulwama suicide attack. And, while the Indian Air Force was planning air strikes, the Indian Army reinforced its positions along the border and adopted an aggressive posture all along the LoC and the international border. "There were over 100 instances when artillery was used," the official said and added that "the use of artillery has considerably reduced now." Pakistan army positions along the border from where Border Action Teams could be launched into India were especially targeted. "In the initial days, several Pakistan Army positions were destroyed, and we have not allowed them to rebuild or these positions," a second senior official in the ministry of defence said on condition of anonymity.

'Modi factor isn't what it was in '14, it's a liability in some seats': Digvijaya Singh

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Two-time Madhya Pradesh chief minister Digvijaya Singh is locked in an electoral battle with Pragya Thakur of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Since 1984, Congress hasn't won from Bhopal. Vinod Sharma spoke to Digvijaya Singh in the middle of his campaign. Excerpts: What political point are you trying to make by contesting from Bhopal? There's no question of scoring a political point. As a dedicated soldier of the Congress party, I was asked by my leader to contest. So I'm contesting. It's as simple as that. How confident are you of

wining the seat the BJP has held for three decades? I like challenges. In 1984-85, I contested from Rajgarh, which also was never won by Congress since 1952. I've taken a round of the constituency where BJP won five assembly segments and the Congress three in the state polls in 2018. How would you rate your chances on a scale of ten? Nine point five....

religious fundamentalism to polarise Hindus and Muslims. That's their primary strategy; in fact, the only strategy they have. What's your counter to their strategy in these elections? I don't talk about their agenda. I talk about what ails Bhopal, what I can do for Bhopal, what's my vision for Bhopal, I've incorporated all that in my vision document.

Aryans Institute of Nursing celebrates International Nurses Day

From a correspondent
Imphal, May 11,

Aryans Institute of Nursing (AIN), Rajpura, Near Chandigarh celebrated International Nurses day under the theme "Nursing: The Balance of Mind, Body and Spirit" at Aryans Campus. Dr. Meghna Sharma, NEOSKIN and Laser Clinic, Rajpura; Mrs. Vijayluxmi, Nursing Tutor, Govt. Nursing College, Patiala; Dr. S.J Singh, Anesthesiologist SMO, AP Jain Hospital, Rajpura; Mrs. Satwinder Kaur, Nursing Superintendent, AP Jain hospital Rajpura were the special guests on the occasion. GNM and ANM students of Aryans Institute of Nursing participated in the



various activities organized on the occasion. The function commenced with

the lamp lighting ceremony. Students organized oath ceremony, Rangoli Competition, Poster making Competition, Cultural activities etc on the theme to mark the celebration and exhibit their responsibilities towards society. Nursing students while taking oath pledged to serve the society with their profession during their studies as well as after the completion of their course. The students also took the oath to uphold the values of their Nursing profession. Dr. Meghna Sharma & Mrs. Vijayluxmi emphasized the fact that the nurses have a great responsibility to improve the health of the population. Today nursing has evolved into a profession with a wealth of skills and professional knowledge. She added that nursing is a noble profession and the whole principle of healthcare profession stands on selfless service.

Dr. S.J Singh & Mrs Satwinder Kaur while speaking about the nursing profession said that though it is getting commercialized and corporatized nurses should not forget the novel principle behind the profession. She said that the main motto of the nursing profession should be Service and not Earning. Dr. Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group while congratulating the students and staff said that nurses had a significant role in society and the profession of nursing was the noblest of all as it was entirely serving humanity. It is to be mentioned that International Nurses day is celebrated every year on 12th May to mark the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, who is widely considered the founder of modern nursing. The function was celebrated a day before to mark the importance.

SC refuses to regularise 4 lakh contractual teachers of Bihar

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Supreme Court has refused to regularise the services of nearly four lakh contractual teachers of Bihar and set aside the Patna High Court ruling that they were eligible to get equal pay for equal work. A bench of Justices Abhay Manohar Sapre and U U Lalit allowed the plea of the Bihar

government challenging the October 31, 2017 high court order and declined to treat contractual teachers at par with regular educators. The apex court said, Bihar government is justified in having two different streams or cadres for teachers and there has been no violation of the rights of contractual teachers nor has there been any discrimination against them.

SpiceJet's Bengaluru-Delhi flight makes emergency landing in Nagpur

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A SpiceJet flight from Bengaluru to Delhi with 152 passengers on-board made an emergency landing at Nagpur airport at 1.30 am following a technical snag. Arvind Guglani, a passenger said that the flight was supposed to take off from Bengaluru on

Friday at 10 pm but it took off at 11.30. But at around 12.30 am, the flight was diverted to Nagpur for an emergency landing. SpiceJet authorities said that the flight was made an emergency landing at Nagpur because of fuel tank gate problem. "We were kept inside the flight till 5.30 am and later

we were allowed to go outside the plane at Nagpur. All the passengers were later served with tea and poha (rice puff) in the morning," Guglani said. A SpiceJet spokesperson, confirming the incident, said the passengers were put on an alternate plane, a Jet Airways aircraft that it had acquired at 9.15 am.

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