

National News

IAF gets its first batch of 8 US-made Apache attack helicopters

Agency
Pathankot September 3,

Eight US-made Apache AH-64E(I) helicopters were inducted into the Indian Air Force's fleet on Tuesday at the Pathankot airbase to add more teeth to the force as part of India's modernisation plans. Two Apache helicopters flown by Wing Commander Kshitij Avasthi and squadron leader Munish Dogra presented the tactical manoeuvres before a select gathering, including IAF chief Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa. They were assisted by co-pilots AK Shrivastava and Anoop Kumar Singh. Air Chief Marshal Dhanoa congratulated the pilots and performed a pooja during the induction of the new flying machines. They were later given water cannon salutes. "New Induction: Glimpses of AH-64E Apache attack helicopter's maiden flight at AFS Hindan. The helicopter is planned to be inducted into the IAF on 03 Sep 19 at AFS Pathankot," IAF tweeted with a four-minute video of the chopper.

India had signed a \$1.1-billion deal with US defence giant Boeing in September 2015 for 22 Apache choppers to sharpen its attack capabilities. The first Apache squadron is being raised with eight helicopters that have already been supplied by Boeing. Boeing is likely to deliver all the 22 helicopters, tailored for the IAF, through 2020. IAF currently flies Soviet-origin Mi-25 and Mi-35 helicopter gunships. "Since long a need was felt to have the latest attack helicopter in IAF arsenal and hence the choice was Apache AH-64E," Wing Commander Shelly said at the induction ceremony. Its assault capabilities and ability to hit enemy targets with precision is matchless, she added. The Apache choppers arrived at the air force station in Hindan in July this year, in batches of four, over two days, and were then transported to Pathankot in Punjab to await their formal induction. Four of these helicopters are to be stationed at the Pathankot Air Force Station, which is just a few miles from

the border with Pakistan and a prime airbase. At least six soldiers were killed in a terror attack on the airbase in January 2016. IAF officials have said the second Apache squadron will be based in Assam's Jorhat. Each chopper can carry eight fire-and-forget Hellfire missiles and also has a cannon gun that comes with 1,200 rounds of ammunition. These attack choppers can track up to 128 targets in a minute and prioritise threats. The missiles equip the gunships with heavy anti-armour capabilities. The Indian Army is also in the process of buying six Apache attack helicopters from the US at a cost of Rs 4,168 crore. The Apache chopper is the second US-built helicopters to be inducted into the IAF fleet. In March, the IAF had inducted Boeing CH-47F (I) Chinook helicopters. The induction of the Apache on Tuesday and the heavy-weight Chinook helicopters in March this year is a game-changer for the Indian military, which has relied on the Russian Mi-17 medium-lift helicopters for rapid induction of forces

and an obsolete squadron of Russian Mi-26 helicopters. The IAF's attack capacity is limited to two squadrons of Mi-35 helicopters, which were used by the erstwhile Soviet Union during its occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s. "Alongside the capability to shoot fire and forget anti-tank guided missiles, air to air missiles, rockets and other armaments, it also has modern electronic warfare capabilities to provide versatility to helicopters in network-centric aerial warfare," Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa said. Officials have said the Apache attack helicopter has the capability to carry out precision attacks at standoff ranges and can operate in hostile airspace with threats from the ground. The IAF has called the helicopter a "deadly acquisition". It can also transmit and receive battlefield pictures to and from the weapon systems through data networking. It would also provide a "significant edge in any future joint operations in support of land forces," an IAF official said.

Chandrayaan 2 lander put in lower orbit, one manoeuvre left before moon landing

Agency
New Delhi September 3,

India's second mission to moon is one step closer to the landing planned for September 7 at 01:55 am. The orbit of the Vikram lander, which had separated from the main composite module of Chandrayaan 2 yesterday, was lowered today in a 4-second manoeuvre. The propulsion system on-board the indigenously developed lander was fired for the first time today. So far, all the manoeuvres of the Chandrayaan 2 composite module (the orbiter, lander, and rover) were carried out using the propulsion system of the orbiter. The first de-orbiting manoeuvre of the Vikram lander was performed at 08:50



am and the orbit was reduced to 104x128 km. The orbiter continues to move in the 119x127 km orbit, where it will remain for a year collecting data on the lunar terrain, the thin atmosphere around the moon, lunar ionosphere, and minerals on the moon. "Both orbiter and the lander are healthy," the Indian Space Research Organisation said in a statement. The final de-orbiting

manoeuvre of the lander is scheduled between 03:30 and 04:30 am tomorrow. The lander would be brought close to a 110x35 orbit in preparation for landing near the South Pole. "Till the landing is complete, it will be terrifying. Till now, we have not operated the systems on-board the lander, especially the propulsion system. This is the phase, including the powered

descent, that we will be doing for the first time. That is why it is critical," ISRO chairperson K Sivan said after the spacecraft entered the lunar orbit. The lander technology was indigenously developed by India when the Russian space agency Roscosmos pulled out of the project after their own mission to the Martian moon Phobos failed. This was one of the major reasons for the delay of Chandrayaan 2 mission, which comes eleven years after its predecessor. A successful mission would make India the fourth country after the USA, erstwhile USSR, and China to land on the moon. It would be the first mission to land at a site 70 degrees South latitude close to the lunar South Pole.

India, Russia set to diversify & bolster bi-lateral ties, says PM Modi ahead of his visit to Vladivostok

Agency
New Delhi September 3,

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a three-day visit to Vladivostok in Russia this evening to take part in the 5th Eastern Economic Forum - EEF summit. Prime Minister will be the Chief Guest at the 5th Eastern Economic Forum. The Prime Minister will also attend the 20th annual summit between Russia and India during the visit. Ahead of his visit, in his departure statement, Prime Minister said his visit to Vladivostok is the first-ever by an Indian Prime Minister to the Far East Region of Russia and it underlines the desire on the both sides to strengthen the bonds of robust bilateral relations. He said the EEF summit presents enormous potential for developing close and mutually beneficial cooperation between Russia and India in this region.

He said India and Russia enjoy excellent relations, based on the strong foundation of special strategic partnership and also have robust and growing trade and investment opportunities. The Prime Minister said, "Our strong partnership is complemented by a desire to promote a multipolar world and the two countries closely cooperate towards this end in regional and multilateral fora. In Russia, Prime Minister would also visit to the Zvezda ship-building complex. In a tweet, Prime Minister said, it would present a great opportunity to learn about Russia's exemplary capabilities in the ship-building sector as well as explore possibilities of cooperation in this area. Prime Minister said, "As a part of efforts to boost cultural cooperation, a special stamp to commemorate Gandhi Ji's 150th Jayanti would be released. An innovative App to

popularise Yoga would also be inaugurated. Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale said, a gamut of issues related to enhancing cooperation in several areas are expected to figure during Prime Minister's bilateral talks with Russian leadership. Mr Gokhale said India and Russia will chalk out a five-year road map 2020-24 to enhance cooperation in exploration and exploitation of oil and gas during the Prime Minister's visit. PSUs like the Coal India Limited and Steel Authority of India Limited are expected to sign Letters of Intent and MoUs with Russian entities in this regard. Several other MoUs are also expected to be signed on the occasion. Apart from firming up some agreements in several issues, the Prime Minister is expected to discuss a number of regional issues during summit talks. AIR Correspondent reported that the visit of the Prime Minister to Vladivostok is

expected to break new ground in trade and investment cooperation between both the countries in Russia's Far East region. The meeting between Modi and Putin which will be third this year, may facilitate to extend bilateral cooperation to new areas including oil and gas, mining, farming, railways, agriculture. India may announce investment in new oil fields in Russia and on import of LNG from Russia. The possibility of oil and gas supply from the Arctic will also be explored during the bilateral talks. In addition, both countries will explore ways to enhance cooperation while working in multilateral organisations like Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and BRICS. During summit talks, both Modi and Putin are expected to discuss a number of key regional issues, including the Afghan peace process and situation in the Gulf region.

North east News

Assam educator honoured for innovative method of education

Courtesy --NN
Guwahati Sept. 3,

Assam educator Parmita Sarma has recently been awarded with the prestigious Devi award for her innovative way of providing education for underprivileged children at her school Akshar located at Pamohi area in Guwahati. The award was presented to Sarma by woman and child development minister Smriti Irani at a function in Kolkata recently. The school which had only 20 kids in 2016 now has eight bamboo huts to run their classes and two digital classrooms donated by some donors. Apart from traditional

educational courses, Akshar has vocational courses like singing, dancing, solar paneling, embroidery, cosmetology, carpentry, gardening, organic farming, electronics and recycling. Akshar school, also known as Akshar Forum, also does not have any age specific admission system like other traditional schools. Students of different age group attend same classes sitting in open spaces together. The levels of education are decided based on the knowledge of the students and they are continually tested to ensure that the quality of their education is increasing.

Sarma and Mazin are also the owners of a NGO named Akshar Foundation working on spreading quality education among poor children. Sarma did her Masters from the Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) Guwahati centre. Apart from Sarma, other women from the northeast who had been honoured with the Devi Awards include designers Laldinsangi, Lalsangzeli and Lalrinpui from Mizoram and environmental activist Temsutula Imsong from Nagaland. The award is given to honour unique achievements of working women who display innovation and dynamism.

Mizoram not to issue temporary ILP to those excluded from Assam NRC

Courtesy TNT
Aizawl September 3,

With over 19 lakh people excluded from the final NRC in Assam, the government of neighbouring Mizoram has asked its officials not to issue temporary Inner Line Permits (ILP) to those whose names did not figure in the citizens register. Mizoram home minister Lalchamliana said on Monday that the measure was taken so that suspected foreigners from Assam do not enter the state. Security has been beefed up along the 123 km-long interstate border with Assam, DIG (Northern Range) Lalbiakthanga Kiangte said. Police stations and outposts have been alerted to ensure that people from Assam are not allowed in without valid permits, he said. "Additional police personnel were deployed to ensure maintenance of law and order in the border areas with Assam," the DIG said. The border areas were completely peaceful and there was no report of any untoward incident from any

part of Mizoram in the wake of the publication of the final NRC, he added. In the final NRC list published on Saturday 19,06,657 people out of the total 3,30,27,661 who had applied for inclusion in the NRC, did not find their names in it, as per a statement from the Assam NRC coordinator's office. Inner Line Permit is an official travel document issued by the Government of India to

allow a citizen of the country traced to protected areas located near the country's international border for a limited period. It is obligatory for citizens from outside the protected areas to obtain a permit for entering into those areas. There are different kinds of ILPs for tourists and for people who intend to stay for long-term periods, often for employment purposes.

Tripura: BJP fields new face for upcoming bye-polls

Courtesy TNT
Agartala September 3,

In Tripura, all the major political parties have announced their candidates for the bye-election to Badharghat assembly constituency in state. While the two parties- Congress and CPI(M) retained old faces, BJP has fielded a new face for the upcoming elections. BJP party's national working president J P Nadda on Monday, announced Mimi

Majumder as the candidate for the upcoming elections. Majumder, is a teacher by profession and will be contesting as BJP's candidate in Badharghat along with candidates' for a by-election to three different state assemblies and two Rajyasabha seats. BJP spokesperson Nabendu Bhattacharjee said that Mimi Majumder is a highly qualified and dedicated worker of the party and she was chosen by the democratic process within the party.

Sports News

Mithali Raj announces retirement from T20 Internationals

Agency
New Delhi Sept.3,

Former India T20I captain Mithali Raj on Tuesday announced retirement from T20 internationals. The BCCI in a mail confirmed the news of the stalwart bidding cricket's shortest format adieu at the international stage. Mithali, who continues to be India's ODI captain, last played a T20 international against England Women in Guwahati in March this year. There was a lot of speculation on whether the veteran batsman will be considered by the selectors for the upcoming home series against South Africa, with the focus on youngsters ahead of next year's T20 World Cup in Australia. Mithali though had earlier made herself available for the series. The selectors are scheduled to meet in Mumbai on September 5 to pick the squad for the first

three T20 Internationals against South Africa. Mithali led India in 32 T20Is including the three Women's WT20 World Cups in 2012 (Sri Lanka), 2014 (Bangladesh) and 2016 (India). She was also the captain in India Women's first-ever T20I played in Derby back in 2006. Since that win against England Women, Mithali played another 88 games in which she scored 2364 runs, the most by an Indian woman in T20Is. Mithali is also the first Indian to reach the landmark of 2000 T20I runs. "After representing India in T20 internationals since 2006, I wish to retire from T20Is to focus my energies on readying myself for the 2021 One Day World Cup. It remains my dream to win a World Cup for my country and I want to give it my best. I thank the BCCI for their continuous support and wish the Indian T20 team good luck as they prepare for the home

series against South Africa Women," Mithali was quoted as saying in the BCCI press release. India reached their second over ICC World Cup (50 over) final under Mithali's captaincy in 2017. The women's team under Harmanpreet Kaur's captaincy lost in the semi-final of the 2018 ICC WT20 in West Indies. Speculation has been rife over Mithali's future in T20s ever since she was controversially left out of the playing eleven for the World T20 semi-finals against England last year. It was followed by a controversy in which Mithali accused then head coach Ramesh Powar of plotting against her. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur and vice-captain Smriti Mandhana though had made a public statement back Powar and stating that the decision to leave Mithali out of the playing XI was taken together as a team.