



Delhi Policy Group

# India Defence Digest

Volume 1, Issue 5

JUNE 2019



Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

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# DPG India Defence Digest

## Volume 1, Issue 5

### June 2019

#### ABOUT US

Founded in 1994, the Delhi Policy Group is among India's oldest independent think tanks with its primary focus on international and strategic issues of critical national interest. Over the past decades, the Delhi Policy Group has established itself in both domestic and international circles, particularly in the area of national security.

In keeping with India's increasing global profile as a leading power and the accompanying dynamism of India's foreign and security policy, the Delhi Policy Group has expanded its focus areas to include India's broader regional and global role; India's initiatives to strengthen its strategic periphery; India's political, security and connectivity challenges and policies across the Indo-Pacific; and the strategic partnerships that advance India's rise. To support these goals, the DPG undertakes research, publishes policy reports and organises conferences on strategic and geo-political, geo-economic, and defence and security issues.

#### DPG India Defence Digest

DPG India Defence Digest is compiled by our research team from publicly available information and open source media. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Aashna John at [aashna@dpg.org.in](mailto:aashna@dpg.org.in).

#### Cover Photographs:

*(Photographs top to bottom)*

*INS Sunayna escorting an Ultra Large Crude Carriers (ULCC) in the Gulf of Oman/Persian Gulf, June 20, 2019, Source: @indiannavy/twitter*

*Ex Garuda-2019: Indian contingent participating in the sixth edition of Indo-French air exercise 'Garuda' in France, Source: @IAF\_MCC/Twitter*

*DRDO's ATAGS 155/52 mm Gun Source: IDRW*

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## PART I: INDIA'S DEFENCE SCENE

### *Operational Deployment and Exercises*

1. **Operation Sankalp:** Following attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf region, Indian Navy (IN) deployed INS Chennai and INS Sunayna to conduct maritime security operations in the Gulf of Oman. This was to re-assure safety and security of Indian flag vessels operating/ transiting through Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman. Aerial surveillance by IN aircraft is also being carried out in these areas. The Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region is keeping a close watch on the movement of ships in the Gulf region.<sup>1</sup>



Source: Google Maps

2. **Exercise Garuda VI:** On June 15, 2019, an Indian Air Force contingent comprising four Su-30 MKIs, an IL-78 flight refuelling aircraft and C-17 strategic lift aircraft, along with 120 Air warriors left Bareilly and Agra Air bases to participate in the bilateral India – France exercise GARUDA. This is the sixth edition of the exercise being held at Mont-de-Marsan in Southwestern France from July 1 to July 12, 2019.<sup>2</sup>
3. **Indo-French Cyber Dialogue:** The third Indo-French inter-governmental Cyber dialogue was held at Paris on June 20, 2019. During the dialogue,

<sup>1</sup> "Indian Navy Executes OP Sankalp", PIB, June 20, 2019, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190545>

<sup>2</sup> "IAF Contingent Departs for Exercise Garuda-VI", PIB, June 25, 2019, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/pmreleases.aspx?mincode=33>

both sides shared respective threat analysis, evolution of cyber policies and steps taken for protection of critical national infrastructure. They also exchanged views on the ongoing discussions and initiatives in multilateral forums related to security in cyberspace, and related issues of digital sovereignty and internet governance. Areas for deepening cooperation were also identified. The Indian delegation was led by Joint Secretary e-governance, Information Technology and Cyber diplomacy in MEA.<sup>3</sup>

4. **Maritime Information Sharing Workshop (MISW):** A multilateral Maritime Information Sharing Workshop was hosted by the Indian Navy, at the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), Gurugram, on June 12, 2019. 41 delegates from 29 countries of the Indian Ocean Region participated. MISW was aimed at informing participants about the operational set-up of IFC-IOR and the information sharing mechanisms evolved by the Indian Navy.<sup>4</sup>

### *Capability Development*

5. **Strategic Partnership-P-75(I) Submarine:** Ministry of Defence, on June 20, 2019, issued an Expression of Interest (EoI) for shortlisting potential Indian Strategic Partners (SPs) for Construction of six conventional Submarines, under the P-75(I) programme, approval for which was accorded by the Indian Defence Acquisition Council on January 31, 2019. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 45,000 Crores (\$6.6 Billion). The potential SPs are expected to respond to the EoI within two months.<sup>5</sup>
6. **Indigenous Torpedo- Varunastra:** On June 11, 2019, Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) signed a contract worth Rs 1,187.82 crore (\$172.8 million) for supply of heavy weight Torpedoes 'Varunastra' to the Indian Navy. Varunastra is a ship launched, electrically propelled torpedo equipped with one of the most advanced automatic and remote controlled guidance systems. The contract will be executed over 42 months, and the torpedoes

<sup>3</sup> "Joint Statement on Indo-French Bilateral Cyber Dialogue in Paris (June 20, 2019)", MEA, June 21, 2019, <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/31458/Joint+Statement+on+IndoFrench+Bilateral+Cyber+Dialogue+in+Paris+June+20+2019>

<sup>4</sup> "Maritime Information Sharing Workshop 2019", PIB, June 12, 2019, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190371>

<sup>5</sup> "Expression of Interest For six P 75(i) Submarines for Indian Navy", PIB, June 20, 2019, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190543>

will be manufactured at the BDL facility in Vishakhapatnam in collaboration with the DRDO.<sup>6</sup>

7. **BrahMos- Su-30MKI Integration:** In a joint 'fast track' project between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd (BAPL), a fleet of 40 X Su-30MKI aircraft is being structurally modified for integration of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles.<sup>7</sup>
8. **Acquisition- Air to Air Missiles:** India, placed an order worth \$700 millions on Russia for acquisition of 300 short range (R-73) and 400 medium range (R-77), active, radar homing, air to air missiles for equipping Mig and Sukhoi series of aircraft.<sup>8</sup> India also ordered 'Strum Ataka' anti-tank missiles from Russia under the emergency clause, to be supplied within three months of signing the contract. This deal is worth Rs 200 crores (\$ 29 million) and would give an added capability to the Mi-35 Attack Helicopters in service with the Indian Air Force.<sup>9</sup>
9. **Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS):** DRDO recently announced that the indigenously designed, developed and manufactured ATAGS, 155mm/52-calibre Artillery gun will be ready for user trials by early September 2019. User Assisted Technical Trials (UATT) of the gun have already been carried out successfully at Pokhran earlier this month. This long range medium artillery gun has advanced ammunition handling and burst firing capability and is more advanced than the existing 155mm (Bofors) guns, in service with the Indian Army.<sup>10</sup>
10. **Re-organisation- Indian Army:** As part of ongoing internal reorganisation, the Indian Army is in the process of raising 'Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs)'. These self-contained all-arm and services combat groups will have integral elements of Armour, Infantry, Artillery, Air

<sup>6</sup> "Bharat Dynamics bags Rs 1,188 cr contract from Indian Navy", Business Line, June 13, 2019, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/bharat-dynamics-bags-rs-1188-cr-contract-from-indian-navy/article27898461.ece>

<sup>7</sup> "BrahMos missiles integration with Sukhois expedited", The Asian Age, June 10, 2019, <https://www.asianage.com/india/all-india/100619/brahmos-missiles-integration-with-sukhois-expedited.html>

<sup>8</sup> "Wiser after Balakot, India orders missiles worth \$700 million from Russia", The Print, June 13, 2019, <https://theprint.in/defence/wiser-after-balakot-india-orders-missiles-worth-700-million-from-russia/249553/>

<sup>9</sup> "India signs ₹200 crore anti-tank missile deal with Russia", Live Mint, June 30, 2019, <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/india-signs-rs-200-crore-anti-tank-missile-deal-with-russia-1561902745825.html>

<sup>10</sup> "Advanced artillery gun to be ready for user trial by September", The Times of India, June 14, 2019, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/pune/advanced-artillery-gun-to-be-ready-for-user-trial-by-sept/articleshow/69763049.cms>



Defence and Aviation (including Attack Helicopters). These rapidly deployable IBGs with a strength of approximate 10000-15000 personal will be commanded by Major General rank officers.<sup>11</sup>

11. **Defence Space Research Organisation (DSRO):** The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) cleared the setting up of Defence Space Research Organisation (DSRO) which has been entrusted with the task of creating space warfare weapon systems and technologies. The DSRO will work in close cooperation with the Integrated Defence Staff and provide Research and Development (R&D) support to the Defence Space Agency (DSA).<sup>12</sup>
12. **Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV):** DRDO successfully test-fired HSTDV at its Integrated Test Range (ITR) Abdul Kalam Island in the Bay of Bengal, on June 12, 2019. The HSTDV is an unmanned scramjet demonstration aircraft for hypersonic speed flight, and can cruise at a speed of 6 Mach to an altitude of 32.5 kilometres in 20 seconds. It can also be used for launching satellites at a low cost.<sup>13</sup>

### *Other Developments*

13. **Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs):** The government is examining a recommendation of Niti Ayog and National Security Advisory Board to move DPSUs out of the purview of the Ministry of Defence. This is on account of a perceived bias of the Department of Defence Production (DDP) towards these, to the detriment of private sector.<sup>14</sup>
14. **Acquisition-Transport Aircraft for IAF:** Cost negotiations (CNC) have been completed by the Ministry of Defence for acquisition of 56 C-295 Aircraft at an estimated cost of \$2.5 million. This programme is primarily directed at replacing the ageing 748 AVRO transport planes. The aircraft will

<sup>11</sup> "5,000 troops to be part of new Integrated Battle Groups", Defence News, June 20, 2019, <http://defencenews.in/article/5,000-troops-to-be-part-of-new-Integrated-Battle-Groups-585367>

<sup>12</sup> "Modi govt approves new agency to develop space warfare weapon systems", Business Standard, June 11, 2019, [https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/modi-govt-approves-new-agency-to-develop-space-warfare-weapon-systems-119061100627\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/modi-govt-approves-new-agency-to-develop-space-warfare-weapon-systems-119061100627_1.html)

<sup>13</sup> "India tests indigenously-developed HSTDV scramjet demonstrator aircraft; DRDO calls it a success, military doubts", Firstpost, June 13, 2019, <https://www.firstpost.com/india/india-tests-indigenously-developed-hstdv-scramjet-demonstrator-aircraft-drdo-calls-it-a-success-military-doubts-6804061.html>

<sup>14</sup> "Government considering putting PSUs out of Defence Ministry range ", The Economic Times, June 25, 2019, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/government-considering-putting-psus-out-of-defence-ministry-range/articleshow/69935904.cms>

be manufactured in India jointly by Airbus Defence and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL), at the latter's facility in Hyderabad.<sup>15</sup>

15. **NATO Ally like Status for India in NDAA-2020:** US Senate passed a legislation contained in the National Defence Authorisation Act for its fiscal year 2020 that seeks to amend the Arms Control Export Act to bring India at par with America's NATO allies and countries like Israel, Australia, New Zealand and South Korea for enhancing defence cooperation. The amendment will enable increased India-US defence cooperation in the Indian Ocean, in areas of humanitarian assistance, counter terrorism, counter piracy and maritime security. The House of Representatives is likely to take up its version of NDAA-2020 sometime later in July 2019.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> "IAF plans to stop flying AN-32 over mountains and seas after Arunachal crash", Defence News, June 15, 2013, <http://defencenews.in/article/IAF-plans-to-stop-flying-AN-32-over-mountains-and-seas-after-Arunachal-crash-585275>

<sup>16</sup> "US Senate passes legislative provision to give India NATO ally-like status", Business Standard, July 2, 2019, [https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/us-senate-passes-legislative-provision-to-give-india-nato-ally-like-status-119070200361\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/us-senate-passes-legislative-provision-to-give-india-nato-ally-like-status-119070200361_1.html)

## PART II: NEIGHBOURHOOD DEFENCE ISSUES

## China

16. **Disciplinary Action – PLA Senior Officers** - More than 70 serving and retired senior officers of the People's Liberation Army have been demoted for their involvement in a corruption scandal. The officers were punished for their connections to General Fang Fenghui, the former Chief of the Joint Staff. Their demotions were based on confessions given by the purged General, who was sentenced to life imprisonment in February for taking bribes<sup>17</sup>.
17. **Air Defense Exercise**- The Chinese military released photos of an Air-Defence exercise held in the Gobi Desert, conducted by a Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) Brigade. This exercise was conducted jointly with the PLA Air Force under the India centric Western Theatre Command.<sup>18</sup>



Source: Google Maps

18. **JL-3 SLBM Test** – To showcase its underwater strategic capability China conducted a Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) test as part of its military exercise in the Bohai Sea and Bohai Straits, coinciding it with the Shangri-La Dialogue,. The JL-3, China's latest SLBM is equipped with 10

<sup>17</sup> "China's military demotes over 70 senior officers for 'bribing Fang Fenghui', South China Morning Post, June 25, 2019.

[https://amp.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3016059/chinas-military-demotes-over-70-senior-officers-bribing-fang?\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://amp.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3016059/chinas-military-demotes-over-70-senior-officers-bribing-fang?_twitter_impression=true)

<sup>18</sup> "Air defense training held in Gobi Desert", China Military, June 25, 2019, [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2019-06/25/content\\_9538467\\_6.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2019-06/25/content_9538467_6.htm)

independently guided nuclear warheads (MIRV) capable of hitting targets at ranges beyond 14,000 kilometres with great precision<sup>19</sup>.

19. **Sea Trials – Liaoning** - Sixth sea trial of China's indigenously developed aircraft carrier Type 001A entailing landing and take-off of carrier borne fighter aircraft was successfully completed on May 25, bringing it a step closer to commissioning<sup>20</sup>, which is likely to occur within the next two months.
20. **Trials-Unmanned Helicopters** - On June 14, 2019, China successfully trial evaluated night operations by its unmanned helicopter, the AV500 validating its all-terrain all-weather capability. This 'drone helicopter' locates the landing platform on a vessel using its electro-optical pod and can operate by day and night, and in inclement weather<sup>21</sup>.
21. **Tracking Location of Arms & Equipment** - China's 'Beijing Bailineng Technology' has developed a satellite positioning chip to track the location of weapons and equipment (larger than pistols) with 3 metres accuracy. This technology, is already in use with PLA units in Beijing and Nanjing and is being employed to monitor and detect redeployment or trafficking in arms<sup>22</sup>.
22. **Aircraft Development Programme** - China has initiated a programme to develop an indigenous 'Short Take Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL)' aircraft (akin to F-35B) to meet its requirement of fighters for aircraft-carriers and island territories with short runways. Three options are being explored: developing variants of J-20 or FC-31 or developing a totally new aircraft with STOVL capabilities<sup>23</sup>.
23. **Jordan disposing-off Chinese UAVs** - the Jordanian Air Force has put up for sale six Chinese-made CH-4B drones. It is still unclear why Amman has

<sup>19</sup> "Chinese military gives hints about the true nature of Sunday's UFO sightings across China", Global Times, June 04, 2019. <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1153066.shtml>

<sup>20</sup> "Chinese Aircraft carrier conducts landing, takeoff tests", Defense World, June 03, 2019. [https://www.defenseworld.net/news/24878/Chinese\\_Aircraft\\_Carrier\\_Conducts\\_Landing\\_Takeoff\\_Tests#.XRjmvugza00](https://www.defenseworld.net/news/24878/Chinese_Aircraft_Carrier_Conducts_Landing_Takeoff_Tests#.XRjmvugza00)

<sup>21</sup> "Chinese top unmanned chopper completes night drills, military service eyed", Global Times, June 20, 2019. <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1155012.shtml>

<sup>22</sup> "Gun-tracking chip created by China tech firm to keep nation's weapons under surveillance", South China Morning Post, June 22, 2019. [https://amp.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3015661/beidou-linked-satnav-chip-tracking-guns-china?\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://amp.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3015661/beidou-linked-satnav-chip-tracking-guns-china?_twitter_impression=true)

<sup>23</sup> "PLA Navy needs own 'STOVL stealth fighter' jets to protect territory", Global Times, June 16, 2019. <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1154456.shtml>

initiated this sale of its CH-4s barely three years after acquiring them. A speculated reason is Jordan's ongoing efforts to source Predator-style drones from the United States<sup>24</sup>.

24. **Chinese Reliance on Semiconductors** - The Deputy Director of China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology has warned that the country still lags far behind foreign rivals in producing semiconductors. China, he said, is still importing more than 95 per cent of high-end chips used in computers and servers despite spending billions to catch up. In 2016, China reportedly spent \$227 bn on importing chips, more than what was spent on importing oil, according to the World Bank and Chinese government data<sup>25</sup>.
25. **Exercise "Great Wall 2019"**- The People's Armed Police (PAP) of China conducted Exercise "Great Wall-2019" from June 18-22, 2019 in which over 240 military and police personnel from 31 countries participated. The exercise focused on the theme of "special counter-terrorism sniping doctrine" that includes sniping warfare tactics and equipment orientation<sup>26</sup>.
26. **International Peacekeeping Exercise** - Peacekeepers from 38 countries including India and China participated in the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the 'Khaan Quest 2019', an annual multinational peacekeeping exercise, held in Mongolia from June 15 to 28. The exercise was aimed at enhancing interoperability amongst peacekeepers of different nationalities<sup>27</sup>.
27. **Security Cooperation with Africa** - The Chinese Ministry of National Defence (MND) announced the establishment of the 'China-Africa Peace and Security Forum' under the 'Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)'. The MND will host the inaugural Peace and Security Forum from July 14 to 20 with the theme of "cooperating hand-in-hand to consolidate

<sup>24</sup> "One Nation is selling off its Chinese Combat Drones", National Interest, June 05, 2019. <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/one-nation-selling-its-chinese-combat-drones-61092>

<sup>25</sup> "China raises alarm over its dependency on imported chips", Financial Times, June 19, 2019. <https://www.ft.com/content/410306d8-8ae0-11e8-bf9e-8771d5404543>

<sup>26</sup> "Defense Ministry's Regular Press Conference on June 27", Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China, June 27, 2019. [http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2019-06/27/content\\_4844628.htm](http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2019-06/27/content_4844628.htm)

<sup>27</sup> "Khaan Quest international peacekeeping exercise kicks off in Mongolia", Xinhua, June 15, 2019. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-06/15/c\\_138145899.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-06/15/c_138145899.htm)



security". Issues related to regional flashpoints, capacity building, and China-Africa peace and security cooperation are likely to be discussed<sup>28</sup>.

28. **Security Cooperation with Latin America** - China's Ministry of National Defence hosted a symposium for members of the International Military Cooperation Departments of Latin American countries from June 12 to 27, 2019. About 20 participants from 10 Latin American countries participated in the two weeklong event<sup>29</sup>.
29. **Illegal Chinese Fishing along Maharashtra Coast** - Ten Chinese fishing vessels owned by Dongxinglong Ocean Fishing Company Ltd sought, "emergency shelter" in Ratnagiri (Maharashtra) during Cyclone Vayu on June 07, 2019. It has been reported that these vessels were carrying out illegal fishing in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) when they were caught in the Cyclone<sup>30</sup>.
30. **PLA Actions in Djibouti** - The US has accused the Chinese military of "irresponsible actions" towards American forces in Djibouti. Rear Adm. Heidi Berg, the head of intelligence for U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), has revealed that the Chinese personnel in Djibouti continue using ground-based laser devices to target American military aircraft pilots to prevent flying in international airspace, as also, they are deploying drones to obstruct American air operations. The Pentagon made a formal complaint to China after two C-130 pilots suffered laser injuries<sup>31</sup>. China's Foreign Ministry has denied any such inappropriate action on their part.

## Bangladesh

31. **Submarine Base** - In a government to government negotiated agreement between the two countries, the Chinese state owned company PTI, will construct a submarine base in Bangladesh's Cox Bazar. The base will have

<sup>28</sup> "Defense Ministry's Regular Press Conference on June 27", Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China, June 27, 2019. [http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2019-06/27/content\\_4844628.htm](http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2019-06/27/content_4844628.htm)

<sup>29</sup> "Defense Ministry's Regular Press Conference on June 27", Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China, June 27, 2019. [http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2019-06/27/content\\_4844628.htm](http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2019-06/27/content_4844628.htm)

<sup>30</sup> "In troubled waters: 10 Chinese vessels found fishing illegally in Maharashtra", Hindustan Times, June 20, 2019. [https://m.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/in-troubled-waters-10-chinese-vessels-found-fishing-illegally-in-maharashtra/story-FigOPCnmT3o0xuSDeqFjvN\\_amp.html?\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://m.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/in-troubled-waters-10-chinese-vessels-found-fishing-illegally-in-maharashtra/story-FigOPCnmT3o0xuSDeqFjvN_amp.html?_twitter_impression=true)

<sup>31</sup> "Chinese military taking 'irresponsible actions' towards U.S. forces in Djibouti, intel chief says", Washington Times, June 16, 2019. <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/jun/16/china-us-military-clash-over-djibouti-airspace/>

facilities like wharfs, barracks, ammunition depot, repair and overhaul facilities and training infrastructure. The project is to be completed in 10 years<sup>32</sup>.

## Pakistan

32. **Pakistan Defense Budget** - Despite a modest 4% increase in Pakistan's overall budget allocation, the defence budget has remained unchanged at (Pakistani) Rs. 1,150 billion in real terms. This is being stated as a voluntary cut by the Pakistani armed forces, motivated by the nation's critical economy<sup>33</sup>.
33. **Army Role in National Development Council** - Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa has been made a member of the newly formed National Development Council (NDC) headed by Prime Minister Imran Khan. A notification issued by the Cabinet Division, reported that the 13-member council set up by Prime Minister would also include the foreign minister and advisor on finance.<sup>34</sup>
34. **New ISI Chief** - The Pakistan Army has appointed Lt Gen Faiz Hameed as the chief of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Agency, replacing current Chief Lt General Asim Munir. The new incumbent has served earlier in the ISI as the head of internal security and is believed to be a close aide of Army Chief Gen Qamar Bajwa. Lt Gen Asim Munir whom he replaced has been appointed as Commander of the Corps at Gujranwala<sup>35</sup>.
35. **United States Sanctions Balochistan Liberation Army as Terror Group** - The United States has imposed economic sanctions on Balouchistan 'Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)' for its terror bombings, in separatist attempts to break away from Pakistan<sup>36</sup>. This is being seen as a concession

<sup>32</sup> "Chinese submarine base in Bangladesh's Cox Bazar", Northeast Now, June 01, 2019. [https://nenow.in/neighbour/chinese-submarine-base-in-bangladeshs-coxs-bazar.html/amp?\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://nenow.in/neighbour/chinese-submarine-base-in-bangladeshs-coxs-bazar.html/amp?_twitter_impression=true)

<sup>33</sup> "No change in Pakistan's defence budget amid government's austerity drive", Business Today, June 11, 2019. <https://www.businesstoday.in/current/world/no-change-in-pakistan-defence-budget-amid-govt-austerity-drive/story/355329.html>

<sup>34</sup> "Pakistani Army Chief becomes member of National Development Council Headed by Imran Khan", News 18, June 18, 2019. <https://www.news18.com/news/world/pakistan-army-chief-becomes-member-of-national-development-council-headed-by-imran-khan-2192709.html>

<sup>35</sup> "Pakistan army appoints Lt Gen Faiz Hameed as new ISI chief", India Today, June 17, 2019. <https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/pak-army-appoints-lt-gen-faiz-hameed-new-isi-chief-1550718-2019-06-17>

<sup>36</sup> "US sanctions Pakistan's Balochistan Liberation Army as Terrorist Group", Sputnik News, July 02, 2019. [https://sputniknews.com/amp/asia/201907021076126434-us-sanctions-pakistans-balochistan-liberation-army-as-terrorist-group/?\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://sputniknews.com/amp/asia/201907021076126434-us-sanctions-pakistans-balochistan-liberation-army-as-terrorist-group/?_twitter_impression=true)

to Paksitan, which has been complaining about BLA being the front of Indian intelligence in the restive province.

36. **SCO Exercise** - India and Pakistan will participate in an eight nation joint counter-terrorism exercise to be hosted by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The SCO's Regional Anti-Terror Structure (RATS), is in the process of finalizing the dates for the exercise in consultation with all other member states. The military exercise is expected to take place in Kazakhstan's Sary Arka region in September, 2019<sup>37</sup>.

### *Sri Lanka*

37. **India-Sri Lanka Army Staff Talks** - A five-member Indian Army delegation visited Sri Lanka to participate in the 8th 'Army-to-Army Staff Talks'. The Sri Lankan side appreciated Indian Army for providing a number of training slots at military institutions. Additional vacancies were sought on mutually identified courses<sup>38</sup>.
38. **Chinese Ship for Sri Lankan Navy** - The official taking over ceremony of the Jiangwei class P 625 ship by the Sri Lankan Navy from China was held at the Shanghai Dockyard on June 08. The ship was taken over by the Chief of Staff of the Sri Lankan Navy. This ship, built in 1994 and decommissioned from the PLA Navy in 2015, is 112m long and 12.4m wide and has a displacement of 2300 tons. It will be utilized by the Sri Lankan Navy for patrol and surveillance missions in the deep seas and for search and rescue operations<sup>39</sup>. It is learnt that the missile armament has been removed from the ship being presented.
39. **Sri Lanka-US Defence Cooperation** - According to a recent US Department of Defense report, US-Sri Lanka Defense Cooperation and in particular, cooperation with the Sri Lankan Navy has increased substantially since 2015. 2017 saw the first port call in 30 years by the USS NIMITZ led Carrier Strike Group. The two countries are now engaged in 'Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT)' exercise. A logistics

<sup>37</sup> "India & Pakistan to be part of joint counter terrorism exercise", The Economic Times, June 16, 2019. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-pak-to-be-part-of-joint-counter-terrorism-exercise/articleshow/69796655.cms>

<sup>38</sup> "Sri Lankan army thanks Indian military for training", Tamil Guardian, June 13, 2019. <https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/sri-lankan-army-thanks-indian-military-training>

<sup>39</sup> "Sri Lankan navy takes over missile frigate gifted by China", Colombo Gazette, June 08, 2019. <https://colombogazette.com/2019/06/08/sri-lanka-navy-takes-over-missile-frigate-gifted-by-china/>



arrangement has also been arrived at recently for cooperation in the Indian Ocean region<sup>40</sup>.

- 40. New Intelligence Chief** - Major General Ruwan Kulatunga has been appointed as the new Chief of National Intelligence. This appointment has been made to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of DIG Sisira Mendis. The former National Intelligence Chief Mendis' resignation came after testifying in front of the Parliamentary Select Committee that the April 21 attacks could have been averted<sup>41</sup>.

## Nepal

- 41. Army Chief Visits China** - The Nepal Army Chief General Purna Chandra Thapa was on a weeklong visit to China commencing June 16, 2019. He met the Chinese Defense Minister General Wei Fenghe and discussed plans to upgrade military ties between the two countries. An agreement was signed under which the PLA would provide heavy mechanical bridges, explosive ordnance disposal equipment and rescue kits, worth 150 million Yuan, to Nepal for humanitarian assistance and disaster management<sup>42</sup>.
- 42. Import of US Rifles** - The Nepali government has cleared legal hurdles to importing assault rifles from the US, which had stalled this acquisition for over a year, on account of differences over modalities of payment. The plan to buy over 6,000 rifles (M4, M-16, and A4 rifles) had been delayed after the US demanded that the entire payment be made in a single transaction. This is in contravention to the procurement procedure followed in Nepal which mandates payments to be made in at least three tranches. The issue was also discussed during Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali's visit to Washington DC in December last year. With the Nepali Cabinet clearing the procurement, the imports will now be made on a government-to-government basis without competitive bidding<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> "US sees "significant" increase in military engagement with Lanka", NewsInAsia, June 04, 2019. <https://newsin.asia/us-sees-significant-increase-in-military-engagement-with-lanka/>

<sup>41</sup> "New National Intelligence Chief appointed", Adaderana.lk, June 13, 2019. <https://www.adaderana.lk/news/55723/new-national-intelligence-chief-appointed>

<sup>42</sup> "Nepal Army Chief meets China's Defence Ministry; discusses plans to upgrade military ties", The Economic Times, June 21, 2019. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/nepal-army-chief-meets-chinas-defence-ministry-discusses-plans-to-upgrade-military-ties/articleshow/69885746.cms>

<sup>43</sup> "Nepal government clears legal hurdles to buy lethal arms from the US", The Kathmandu Post, June 13, 2019. <https://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2019-06-13/nepal-government-clears-legal-hurdles-to-buy-lethal-arms-from-the-us.html>

## Maldives

43. **Tri-Nation Security Dialogue** - India, the Maldives and Sri Lanka are planning to revive their tri-nation National Security Adviser (NSA) -level security dialogue. The talks had been suspended five years ago because of the approach of the then Yameen regime. Revival of the dialogue is being contemplated in the backdrop of recent Colombo terror strike. Mauritius and the Seychelles might also be included in this dialogue at a subsequent stage<sup>44</sup>.
44. **Maldives-Japan Defense Cooperation** - The Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) signed a financial aid agreement worth USD 4.5 million with the Japanese government on June 16, 2019. The agreement was signed under Japan's 'Economic and Social Development' programme by Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdulla Shahid and Japan's Ambassador to Maldives Keiko Yanai. As per the agreement, MNDF will utilize the financial aid to acquire a fire and rescue watercraft as well as a landing craft which would enable local security forces to respond to emergencies swiftly<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> "India, Maldives, Lanka to restart NSA-level talks", The Economic Times, June 12, 2019.  
<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-maldives-lanka-to-restart-nsa-level-talks/articleshow/69750676.cms>

<sup>45</sup> "MNDF receives USD 4.5 million from Japan", The Edition, June 18, 2019.  
<https://edition.mv/news/11101>



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