

# IT Ministry, Army forge strategic partnership

NEW DELHI, June 23 (IANS)

THE Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Indian Army and Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research (SAMEER) have forged a strategic partnership to strengthen the technological capabilities of the Indian Army.

The MoU plans to establish an 'Advanced Military Research and Incubation Centre' at MCTE, to focus on advanced wireless technologies for the Army, according to the Ministry of Electronics & IT.

SAMEER is an autonomous R&D laboratory under the IT Ministry. The key objectives include joint research and development towards leverag-

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ing combined expertise in 5G, 6G, advanced cellular technologies, software-defined radios and cognitive radios, satellite communications, antenna design, free space optics, and tropo-scatter communications, as well as AI, Quantum, and military-specific chip design.

The MoU was signed by Lt Gen KH Gawas, Commandant, MCTE; Dr P H Rao, Director General, SAMEER, in the presence of senior officials.

"This initiative marks a significant milestone in strengthening the Indian Army's technological capabilities which

are aligned towards the declared vision for 2024 as 'Year of Technological Absorption for Indian Army' by the Chief of Army Staff," the IT Ministry said on Saturday.

The partnership between SAMEER and MCTE represents a shared commitment to exploring new technological frontiers and addressing modern battlefield challenges.

As part of the MoU, an incubation centre will support the development of military-specific innovative solutions from conceptualisation to large-scale production, involving MSMEs and start-ups. In addi-

tion, the MoU also aims at knowledge exchange, training and development aspects.

"The collaboration between SAMEER and MCTE aims to enhance national security and technological infrastructure, with potential benefits that will not only be limited to the military but will go much beyond," said the IT Ministry.

During the MoU signing ceremony, Maj Gen C S Mann, AVSM, VSM, Additional Director General of Army Design Bureau elaborated the Indian Army perspective on the absorption of niche technologies. He explained the efforts taken towards creating an ecosystem for the development of various emerging technology-based solutions for military applications.

# CBI Files FIR to probe irregularities in NEET

NEW DELHI, June 23 (PTI)

**THE** CBI has filed an FIR in connection with alleged irregularities in the conduct of the medical entrance exam NEET-UG held on May 5, officials said on Sunday.

They said the agency is also taking steps to bring under its ambit cases registered in various States by police.

This comes a day after the Centre announced that the probe into the alleged irregularities in the test would be handed over to the CBI.

The officials said the agency registered a fresh case against unidentified persons under IPC sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and 420 (cheating) among others on a reference from the Union Education Ministry. The examination was held across 4,750 centres and

## NTA website secure: Officials

NEW DELHI, June 23 (PTI)

**THE** National Testing Agency (NTA) website and all its other web portals are fully secure, and reports that these have been compromised and hacked are wrong and misleading, officials said on Sunday.

The clarification comes amid a raging row over alleged irregularities in competitive exams, including the NEET-UG and the UGC-NET. The Education Ministry on Saturday set up a panel to review the NTA's functioning, recommend exam reforms and ensure data security.

"NTA website and all its web portals are fully secure. Any information that they have been compromised and hacked is wrong and misleading, a senior official said.

around 24 lakh candidates took it. The Ministry on Saturday handed over the probe to the CBI, giving in to demands of students protesting in several cities for an investigation into alleged malpractices in the conduct of the examination.

"Certain cases of alleged irregularities, cheating, impersonation and malpractice have

been reported in NEET-UG which was conducted on May 5," a senior Education Ministry official said.

"For transparency in the conduct of the examination process, it was decided after a review that the matter be handed over to the CBI for a comprehensive investigation," the official added.



# Indian Navy to order four Tapas drones from DRDO

NEW DELHI, June 23 (ANI)

IN A boost for made-in-India weapon systems, the Indian Navy is set to place an order for four Tapas drones built in India by the DRDO. The Indian Navy intends to use the drones developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation for surveillance over the maritime zone.

“The Indian Navy is going to order four Tapas drones and it is going to use them for maritime surveillance operations,” defence officials told ANI.

The drones would be manufactured by a consortium of Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

“The deliveries would be

made faster by the consortium as the first bird would be ready for delivery within 24 months of signing the contract. The existing birds or drones would be used for carrying out trials and improving their capabilities,” they added. The Tapas drones have not been able to meet the requirements of the defence forces in trials but the DRDO is continuing with the project to further develop the Tapas medium-altitude, long-endurance (MALE).

The Tapas drones being developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment Laboratory have not been able to fully meet the Joint Services Qualitative Requirements of flying at 30,000 feet for over 24 hours at a stretch.

# Manipur CM in Assam to discuss security issues Along Jiribam-Cachar boundary with Himanta

IMPHAL, June 23 (PTI)

MANIPUR Chief Minister N Biren Singh is in Guwahati to discuss security issues along the Jiribam-Cachar inter-state boundary with his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma, an official said on Sunday.

Following incidents of ethnic violence in Manipur's Jiribam in the first week of June, many people from the State have taken refuge in adjoining Cachar district in southern Assam. To discuss the security situation along the inter-state boundary, Singh, along with senior Minister L

Susindro Singh, left for Guwahati on Saturday evening, the official said. The two CMs are also likely to discuss coordination among police forces to effectively deal with militants active along the inter-state boundary, he said. Singh is likely to return to Manipur on Sunday, another official said.

Sarma had on Saturday asked officials concerned to ensure there is no spillover of Manipur's ethnic violence into Assam and that all humanitarian aid is provided to the people seeking refuge from the neighbouring state.

ight vigil is being maintained along the Assam-Manipur inter-state boundary and patrolling and area domination is being conducted, a police officer said.

Jiribam, which has a diverse ethnic composition of Meiteis, Muslims, Nagas, Kukis and non-Manipuris, had so far remained unaffected by the ethnic strife that has been raging in Manipur since May last year. The ethnic conflict between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and hills-based Kukis has led to the deaths of over 200 people.

## Fresh gunfight in Manipur, none injured

IMPHAL, June 23 (PTI)

A FRESH gunfight broke out between armed men belonging to two warring communities in Manipur, police said.

The incident took place after some armed persons opened fire towards Thamnepokpi and Lamlai areas in Imphal East district from hilltop positions in adjoining Kangpokpi district

around 10.30 pm on Saturday, a police officer said.

Local village volunteers returned fire and security forces rushed to the area to bring the situation under control, he said.

The gunfight stopped after an hour and no casualties were reported, the officer said. More than 200 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless.



# ISRO achieves success in Reusable Launch Vehicle Landing Experiment

BENGALURU, June 23 (PTI)

**SPACE** agency ISRO on Sunday said it has achieved a third consecutive success in the Reusable Launch Vehicle Landing Experiment by demonstrating the autonomous landing capability of the launch vehicle under more challenging conditions.

This mission simulated the approach and landing interface and high-speed landing conditions for a vehicle returning from space, reaffirming the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) expertise in acquiring the most critical technolo-

gies required for the development of a Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV), the space agency said. The third and final test in the series of Landing Experiment (LEX-03) was conducted at 07:10 IST at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR) in Chitradurga, Karnataka.

Following the success of the RLV LEX-01 and LEX-02 missions, ISRO in a release said, RLV LEX-03 re-demonstrated the autonomous landing capability of the RLV under more challenging release conditions (cross range of 500 m against 150 m for LEX-02) and more severe wind conditions.

The winged vehicle, named

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'Pushpak' being carried by a Chinook helicopter of the IAF. (PTI)



ISRO's Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) 'Pushpak'

# Taiwan detects 15 Chinese military aircraft, 6 naval vessels around nation

TAIPEI, June 23 (ANI)

THE Ministry of National Defence said it has detected 15 Chinese military aircraft and six naval vessels around Taiwan between Saturday and Sunday, Taiwan News reported.

According to MND, of the 15 People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft, eight crossed the Taiwan Strait median line in the northern and south-western portions of the country's air defence identification zone (ADIZ). According to Taiwan News, in response, Taiwan sent aircraft and naval ships and deployed coastal-based missile systems to monitor the PLA activity.

On June 22, Taiwan's Defence Ministry tracked 41 Chinese military aircraft and seven navy ships around the nation.

According to the Ministry, a total of 32 aircraft crossed the Taiwan Strait median line and entered the northern, south-western, and eastern Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ). So far this month, Taiwan has tracked Chinese military aircraft 301 times and naval/coast guard vessels 183 times. Since September 2020, China has ramped up its use of gray zone tactics by incrementally increasing the number of military aircraft and naval ships operating around Taiwan.

## Philippines says, it won't back down, after clash with Chinese Coast Guard

MANILA, June 23 (AP)

THE President of the Philippines said on Sunday his country would not yield to "any foreign power" after Chinese forces injured Filipino Navy personnel and damaged at least two military boats with machetes, axes and hammers in a clash in the disputed South China Sea, but added the Philippines would never instigate a war.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. flew with his top generals and defence chief to the western island province

of Palawan, which faces the South China Sea, to meet and award medals to Navy personnel who came under assault by the Chinese coast guard Monday as they attempted to deliver food and other supplies to an outpost on the hotly contested Second Thomas Shoal. Videos and pictures of the chaotic face-off made public by the military showed Chinese coast guard personnel hitting a Philippine navy boat with a wooden bar and seizing a bag while blaring sirens and using blinding strobe lights.



# LS session from today

Election of Speaker on 26th  
President's address on 27th

NEW DELHI, June 23 (PTI)

**THE** first session of the 18th Lok Sabha beginning from Monday will see oath-taking by newly-elected members followed by election of the Lok Sabha Speaker on June 26 and President Droupadi Murmu's address to joint sitting of both the Houses on June 27. The row over appointment of BJP leader and seven-term member Bhartruhari Mahtab as the pro-tem Speaker is likely to cast shadow over the session. The move has drawn flak from the Opposition, which alleged that the claim of Congress member K Suresh to the post was overlooked by the Government.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju asserted that Mahtab has had seven uninterrupted terms as Lok Sabha member, making him eligible for the post, while Suresh lost elections in 1998 and 2004 which makes his current term as the fourth straight one in the Lower House. Earlier, he was elected to the Lok Sabha in 1989, 1991, 1996 and 1999.

On Monday, President Droupadi Murmu will administer the oath to Mahtab as the pro-tem Speaker of the LS at the Rashtrapati Bhawan. Mahtab will then reach Parliament House and



call the Lok Sabha to order at 11 am.

The proceedings will begin with members observing a moment of silence on the occasion of the first sitting of the 18th Lok Sabha. This will be followed by Lok Sabha Secretary General Utpal Kumar Singh placing on the table of the House the list of the members elected to the Lower House. Mahtab will then call upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Leader of the Lok Sabha, to take oath as member of the House.

The pro-tem Speaker will then administer oath to the panel of chairpersons appointed by the President to assist him in carrying out the proceedings of the House till the election of the Speaker. The President has appointed Kodikunnil Suresh (Congress), T R Baalu (DMK), Radha Mohan Singh and Faggan Singh Kulaste (both BJP) and Sudip Bandyopadhyay (TMC) to assist Mahtab in administering the oath.