

Russian warplanes detected flying near Alaska for ninth time this year: US military

WASHINGTON, Sept. 25 (AP)

US FIGHTER jets scrambled to identify and intercept four Russian warplanes flying near Alaska, the North American Aerospace Defence Command said on Thursday.

It's the third time in about a month and the ninth time this year that NORAD has reported such an incident involving Russian aircraft flying near Alaska. This latest incident happened on Wednesday.

NORAD said in a statement issued early Thursday that it detected and tracked two Tu-95s and two Su-35s operating in the Alaskan Air Defence Identification Zone, or the ADIZ.

Nine US aircraft — an E-3 Sentry command and control aircraft, four F-16s and four KC-135 tankers — scrambled to positively identify and intercept the Russian jets, NORAD said.

The Russian aircraft remained in international airspace and did not enter American or Canadian sovereign airspace, it said. Such Russian activity near Alaska occurs regularly and is not seen as a threat, it added in its statement. The incident comes after President Donald Trump said Tuesday that he believed Ukraine could win back all territory lost to Russia, a dramatic shift from the Republican's repeated calls for Kyiv to make concessions to end Russia's war in Ukraine.

NATO warned Russia on Tuesday that it would use all means to defend against any further breaches of its airspace after the downing this month of Russian drones over Poland and Estonia's report of an intrusion by Russian fighter jets last week.

Trump on Tuesday said NATO countries should shoot down Russian aircraft if they enter their airspace. Asked if the US would back up NATO allies in such a situation, Trump said "it depends on the circumstance."

Following a summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska last month, Trump said he was arranging for direct talks between Putin and Zelenskyy.

Air Force use would've slowed Chinese offensive in 1962 war: CDS Chauhan

PUNE, Sept 25 (PTI)

CHIEF of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan has said the use of Air Force would have slowed the Chinese offensive considerably during the 1962 Sino-Indian war, and it may have been termed as "escalatory" then, but that is not the case now as seen in Operation Sindoor.

Speaking about the war with China 63 years ago, he noted the forward policy should not have been applied uniformly to Ladakh and NEFA (North-East Frontier Agency) or present-day Arunachal Pradesh, arguing the two regions had different histories of dispute and entirely different terrain, and following identical policies was flawed.

Over the years, the security situation has changed and the face of warfare itself has got trans-

formed, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) maintained.

General Chauhan made the remarks in a recorded video message played on Wednesday during the release of the revised autobiography of the late Lieutenant General S P P Thorat - 'Reveille to Retreat' - in Pune. Lt Gen Thorat was the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, in the lead-up to the Sino-Indian war.

General Chauhan said the autobiography of Lt Gen Thorat was more than a soldier's memoir, and it offered valuable insights into leadership, strategy and India's military history.

The CDS said he was requested to speak about forward policy and about not using the Indian Air Force (IAF) during the 1962 war.

"To comment on the adequacy



or inadequacy of the forward policy at this time is slightly difficult. Our views will be coloured due to many reasons, like geography has changed entirely and so has geopolitics," he noted.

Over the years, the security situation has changed and force levels, too, have changed, said General Chauhan.

"All I can say is that the forward policy should not have been applied uniformly to Ladakh and NEFA. The two regions had very

different histories of the dispute, a different security context and entirely different terrain.

"In Ladakh, China had already occupied much of Indian territory, whereas in NEFA, the legitimacy of India's claim was stronger. To equate the two and pursue identical policies was, in my view, a bit flawed," he said.

The CDS suggested Lt Gen Thorat did think about using the IAF, but the then-Government did not permit such a move.

"They would have had a significant advantage during the 1962 conflict. Shorter turnaround times, a favourable geography and the ability to bring maximum payloads to bear with maximum weight on the enemy. Use of air power would have slowed the Chinese offensive considerably, if not stymied it completely.

"This would have given the

Army much more time to prepare. In those days, I think, the use of the Air Force was considered escalatory. This, I think, is no longer true, and Operation Sindoor is an apt example of this," he maintained.

Notably, Operation Sindoor in May this year involved India employing its air power to dismantle terror hubs in Pakistan and PoK following the Pahalgam massacre in April.

"Reveille to Retreat is not simply an autobiography. It's a reflection on leadership, strategy and service. It sheds light on the decisions of power, critiques them with honesty and draws lessons that largely remain relevant today," General Chauhan stated. The CDS recalled Lt Gen Thorat, during his distinguished career that spanned pre and post independent India, had served

in conflict zones which remain troubled even now, including Waziristan and Peshawar (Pakistan).

He commanded his battalion in Burma's Arakan (now Rakhine) state, where his leadership earned him the Distinguished Service Order, and later fought in the historic battles of Kohima and Imphal, said General Chauhan.

Lt Gen Thorat also commanded the Custodian Force in Korea after the Armistice and was awarded the Ashoka Chakra Class II (later renamed the Kirti Chakra) as well as the Padma Bhushan, he said.

"Korea remains divided along the 38th parallel, one of the world's most volatile fault lines, showing the continuity of conflict he had once helped manage," the CDS said.

At UNGA, Jaishankar holds bilateral talks with counterparts from Mexico, Cyprus, Pacific nations

NEW YORK, Sept 25 (PTI)

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held a series of bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Mexico, Cyprus, and several Pacific Island nations on the sidelines of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, reaffirming India's commitment to strengthening global partnerships.

Sharing about the meetings in a series of social media posts, Jaishankar said he met Juan Ramon de la Fuente, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, on Wednesday here, and both sides agreed to "build on our recent exchanges and create a fresh



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a meeting with Cyprus Foreign Minister Constantinos Kombos and Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico Juan Ramon de la Fuente, in New York. (PTI)

roadmap" to enhance bilateral ties. He also held talks with Cypriot Foreign Minister Constantinos Kombos during which the two leaders reviewed progress in bilateral relations since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the island nation earlier this year.

"Appreciate his insights on developments in Europe. Reaffirmed support for a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Cyprus Question in accordance with the agreed UN framework and relevant UNSC resolutions," Jaishankar said, adding that

he looked forward to welcoming Kombos to India soon.

The EAM also met leaders from several Pacific nations on the sidelines of the FIPIC (Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation) Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on Wednesday.

China announces new climate goal to cut emissions

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 25 (AP)

India's infantry combat vehicle to make global mark

NEW DELHI, Sept 25 (IANS)

THE Wheeled Armoured Platform (WhAP 8x8) -- a next-generation modular combat vehicle jointly designed by India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and developed by Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL), is ready to get exported.

Engineered for high mobility, survivability, and mission versatility, WhAP 8x8 represents a significant leap in India's indigenous defence capabilities and is now poised to make its mark on the global stage.

WhAP 8x8 is India's first amphibious wheeled infantry



combat vehicle.

It features a survivable monocoque hull with scalable ballistic and mine protection, independent suspension, and a central tyre inflation system—making it highly adaptable to rugged terrains and combat zones.

The vehicle is powered by a high-performance engine and

supports both manned and unmanned weapon stations, including anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) systems. Cleared for production and export in October 2019, the DRDO-designed WhAP 8x8 combat vehicle marked a turning point in India's defence innovation.

That same year, the Army sought 198 such platforms to replace ageing BRDM-2s and support mechanised infantry across diverse terrains.

Showcased during the 2023 Republic Day parade, the Armoured Personnel Carrier variant featured composite armour, a 30 mm BMP-2 turret, and advanced blast protection.

Curfew imposed in Ladakh, 50 detained

Situation in curfew-bound areas under control, no untoward incidents reported

LEH, Sept 25 (PTI)

AT LEAST 50 people were detained as police and paramilitary forces strictly implemented curfew on Thursday in the violence-hit Leh, where four people were killed and over 80 others were injured when widespread clashes broke out a day before.

A shutdown called by the Leh Apex Body (LAB) -- to advance talks with the Centre on demand for statehood and extension of Sixth Schedule to Ladakh -- had descended into violence, arson and street clashes on Wednesday.

Strict prohibitory restrictions, banning Assembly of five or more persons have been placed in other major towns as well, including Kargil where a shutdown was called by the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) in support of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, who was leading a hunger strike.

"The situation in the curfew-bound areas is well under control. There are no untoward incidents reported from anywhere," a police official told PTI.

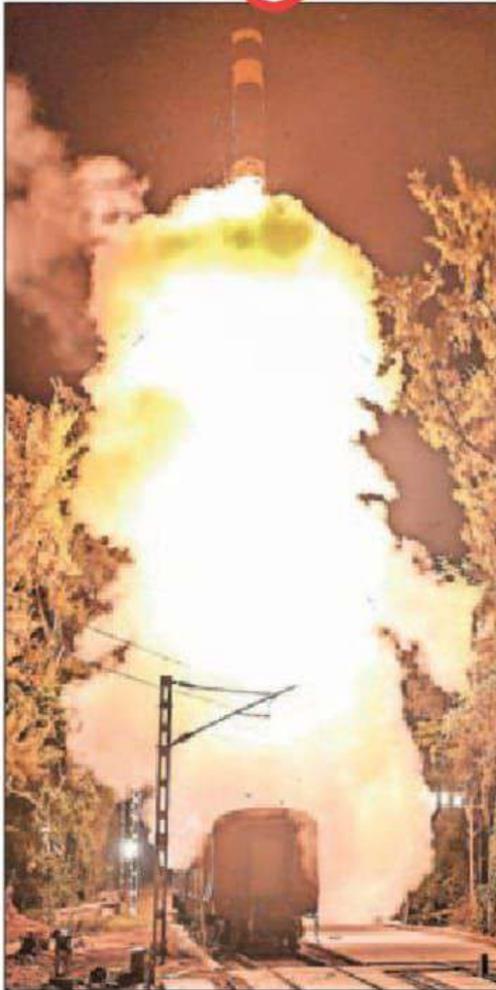
He said around 50 people were detained overnight for their involvement in the violence.

(Contd on page 5)



Police personnel stand guard a day after violence erupted over statehood and other demands, in Leh, Ladakh on Thursday. (PTI)

India test-fires 'Agni Prime' missile



The 'Agni-Prime' missile with a range of 2,000 km is being test-fired from a rail-based mobile launcher system. (PTI)

Rail-based mobile launcher system demonstrates capability to deploy missile across country

NEW DELHI, Sept 25 (PTI)

INDIA has successfully test-fired the Agni-Prime missile with a range of 2,000 km from a rail-based mobile launcher system, demonstrating its capability to deploy the missile across the country.

A day after the next-generation missile was tested, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday that it put India in the group of select nations having capability to launch such a weapon system from the rail network.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), in collaboration with the Strategic Forces Command (SFC), carried out the "successful" launch of intermediate range Agni-Prime missile under a full operational scenario on Wednesday, the Defence Ministry said.

It has not disclosed the location of test-firing of the weapon system. The "first-of-its-kind" launch carried out from specially designed rail-based mobile launcher, has the capability to move on rail network without any pre-conditions and it allows users to have a cross country mobility and launch within a short reaction time, Singh said. "This successful flight test has put India in the group of select nations having capabilities that have developed canisterised launch system from on the move rail network," he said on X. The Ministry said the missile is equipped with all independent launch capability features, including the

(Contd on page 5)

IAF to get 97 Tejas jets

Govt inks 62,370 crore contract with HAL for procurement

NEW DELHI, Sept 25 (PTI)

THE Defence Ministry on Thursday sealed a Rs 62,370 crore deal with the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) to procure 97 Tejas MK-1A light combat aircraft for the Indian Air Force.

The signing of the contract came over a month after the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) headed by Prime Minister



Narendra Modi green-lighted the mega procurement.

The delivery of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) would commence in 2027-28 and the

supplies will have to be completed over a period of six years, officials said.

"The Ministry of Defence signed a contract with Hindustan

Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for procurement of 97 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk1A, including 68 fighters and 29 twin seaters, along with associated equipment, for the Indian Air Force, at a cost of over Rs. 62,370 crore (excluding taxes)," according to an official readout.

It is the second such contract awarded to the state-run aerospace behemoth. In February 2021, the Defence Ministry sealed a Rs 48,000 crore deal with HAL for procurement of 83 Tejas MK-1A jets for the IAF.

"The aircraft will have an indigenous content of over 64 per cent, with 67 additional items incorporated, over and above the previous LCA Mk1A contract

(Contd on page 5)