

# 'New military station in Assam to boost border security, intelligence'

GUWAHATI, Nov 12 (PTI)

AMID apprehensions of increased cross-border crimes, activities by fundamentalist groups and alleged attempts by the Bangladesh caretaker Government to create "pressure" on the 'chicken's neck' corridor that connects the North East with the rest of India, the upcoming Army base in Assam has assumed special significance, experts said.

Such a facility will boost border security and help the authorities concerned enhance intelligence, they said.

Barely 40 km from the IB with Bangladesh, the Lachit Borphukan Military Station is being set up by the Indian Army at Bamunigaon in Assam's Dhubri district – the first one in the western sector of the State.

Lieutenant General RC Tiwari, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, laid the foundation stone for the facility last week during a visit to forward areas. "The decision to set up the camp is a welcome one due to the prevailing situation in Bangladesh," Brigadier (retd) Ranjit Kumar Borthakur told PTI.

The closest military camps were previously in Cooch Behar in West Bengal and Tamulpur in Assam. "The one in Dhubri will help the Army in strengthening its Intelligence network, be it human or signal intelligence," he said. Defence spokesperson Lt Col. Mahendra Rawat under-



**The Lachit Borphukan Military Station is being set up by the Indian Army at Bamunigaon in Assam's Dhubri district**

scored the importance of the camp and said that it will enhance operational capabilities and infrastructure of the Indian Army in the region.

"It will help monitor activities in the area and also lend an additional sense of security to the locals," he said. The new military station under the Tezpur-based 4 Corps will be able to house 1,200-1,500 personnel, and prefabricated huts are being installed for early completion of the facility, another Army official said. "The land was handed over by the Assam Government within one or two months, and work is on to operationalise the facility at the earliest. A para-commando unit will also be stationed there," he added.

"The Lachit Borphukan Military Station stands as a testament to the synergy between

the Armed Forces and the State administration, reflecting the shared vision of national security and regional development," Lt Col. Rawat emphasised.

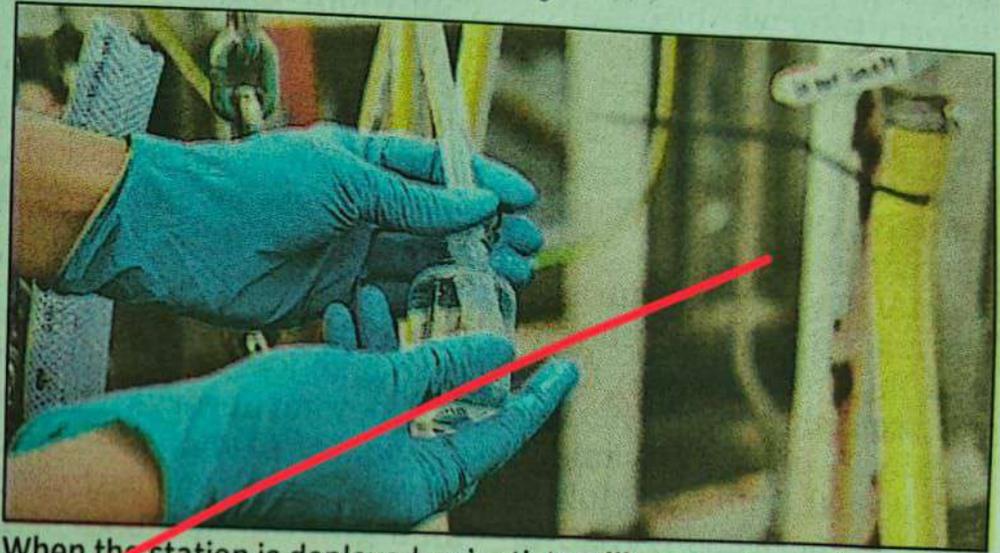
Stressing its significance from a security aspect, Brig. (retd) Borthakur said, "Since the caretaker Government has come into power in Bangladesh, their attitude has tremendously hardened against India. The frequent high-level visits of politicians as well as Defence Ministry personnel from Pakistan are of great concern." He also mentioned statements by Bangladesh caretaker Yunus regarding India, especially his comments on the Siliguri corridor or 'chicken's neck', and allowing China to activate Lalmonirhat airfield, which is close to this 22-km corridor that serves as the link between the North East and the rest of India.

# India aims to build world's deepest sea lab by 2050

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**Chennai:** India is aiming to build the world's deepest underwater research station at a depth of 6 km in the Indian Ocean by 2050, a top scientist has said. Chennai-based National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) will spearhead the technology as part of its Vision 2047 roadmap, and a team has already begun groundwork for the project. When the station is deployed, scientists will conduct experiments, observe marine life through 360-degree transparent walls, and test how humans can endure life underwater.

NIOT Director Balaji Ramakrishnan said they first plan to build a station at a 500-metre depth to demonstrate the technology, allowing three scientists to stay underwater for a day or more with advanced life-support systems. "It will have a docking facility for a vehicle that will carry the scientists and bring them back. There will be multiple levels of safety for both the vehicle and the fixed station. The station will be a habitat much like the International Space Station in the



When the station is deployed, scientists will conduct experiments, observe marine life through 360-degree transparent walls, and test how humans can endure life underwater

sky where scientists can observe the life around them in the water," he said on the sidelines of NIOT's 32nd Foundation Day.

For comparison, Florida International University's Aquarius Reef Base, the world's only existing undersea lab, lies at just 19 metres of depth near Florida.

China is developing a deep-water "space station" in the South China Sea, expected to be ready by 2030.

Ramakrishnan said a team is already working on the conceptual design.

The underwater habitat will draw on technologies being developed for Matsya 6000, India's manned sub-

mersible capable of carrying three people to depths of 6,000 metres.

Similar to the submersible, the habitat will require complex engineering to withstand immense pressure and enable docking with a vehicle ferrying researchers from the surface.

"It is a very complex design involving an ability to rise to the surface for maintenance. When redeployed, it should be able to easily sit on the seafloor," said Ramakrishnan. While the 500-metre station may be deployed within the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone, a future 6,000-metre station may operate in the Indian Ocean.

## Pakistan, terror groups out to disrupt progress in J&K, says LG

**Srinagar:** In his first statement after the Faridabad-Delhi terror module was busted, J&K LG **Manoj Sinha** Wednesday said terrorism has been the biggest enemy of the youth in the state for more than three decades and it destroyed their dreams and aspirations, reports **Naseer Ganai**.



"Now that our youth and young professionals are fulfilling their dreams and achieving their aspirations, our neighbouring country and some of their terrorist elements sitting here are trying to disrupt this progress," Sinha said while addressing the valedictory session of foundation day celebrations of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) at Awantipora.

"We must be vigilant against such ecosystems and work together to foil their efforts," he said, adding that J&K has created its new destiny, a new identity and woven new dreams. "This must be protected at all costs and those trying to shatter the dreams of our youth must be strictly dealt with," the LG said.

"We have created massive infrastructure in five years and now young professionals must focus on development strategies to change J&K's fortunes," Sinha said.

Meanwhile, former CM Mehbooba Mufti said those involved in the Faridabad-Delhi terror case should be dealt with strictly but urged authorities to treat the relatives of the accused fairly. "Those directly involved should face strict action, but their relatives and family members should not be treated as accused," she said.

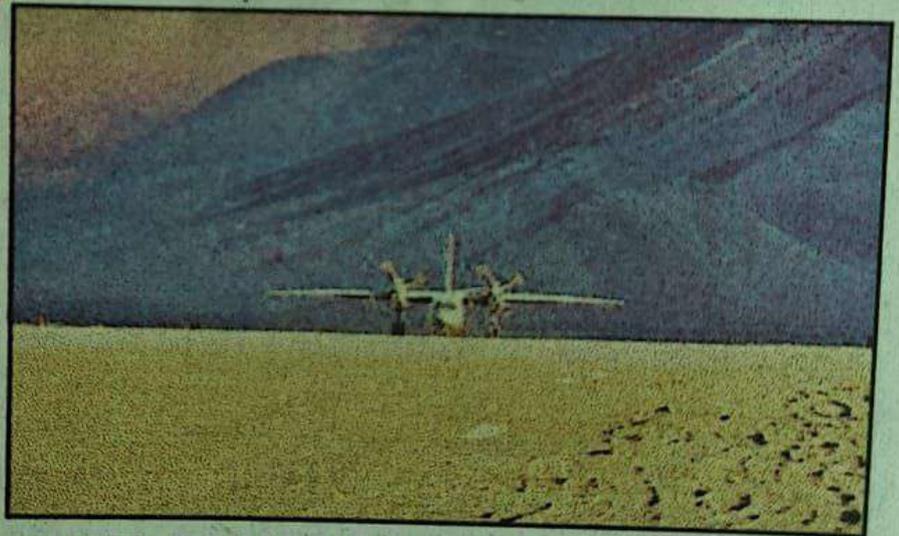
# Ladakh airbase close to China border activated

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**New Delhi:** In a major booster shot for military capabilities in eastern Ladakh, India on Wednesday operationalised its new Nyoma airbase close to the frontier with China, even as a large Army exercise called 'Poorvi Prachand Prahar' is now under way in Arunachal Pradesh on the eastern front.

The developments at the opposite ends of the 3,488-km LAC underscore the high military readiness being maintained along the China frontier. "There is ongoing reset in bilateral diplomatic ties. Military CBMs are also being progressively strengthened

but the trust deficit on the ground remains high," a senior officer told TOI. "With no de-escalation along LAC, troops



IAF chief ACM A P Singh flew a Super Hercules from Hindon to Nyoma airbase

will continue to be forward deployed for 6th successive winter since multiple Chinese incursions into eastern Ladakh in April-May 2020," he said.

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