

Centre orders removal of some Chinese apps



NEW DELHI, July 3 (PTI)

IN A major crackdown, the Government has ordered removal of three Chinese apps -- BAT-BMS, Lossigy, Epoch-i-ion -- that were being misused to remotely disable battery-operated vehicles in the country, sources said on Friday.

The action from the Government came after some videos surfaced showing that some e-rickshaws were being rendered inoperable through a remote shutdown feature linked to the Chinese smartphone application BAT-BMS.

These videos sparked widespread concerns over the cybersecurity risks posed by such Internet-connected vehicle management systems.

Sources said that the Government has ordered removal of BAT-BMS, Lossigy, Epoch-i-ion apps being misused in remotely disabling battery-operated vehicles. Any other such app being misused will also be blocked, Government sources warned.

Earlier on Friday, IT Secretary S Krishnan - speaking on the sidelines of a CII Cybersecurity summit - asserted that app stores must exercise due diligence, and said the Government would take up the matter with them to ensure that potentially harmful apps are not made available.

Trusted old L-70 Anti-Aircraft Gun set to take on new-age threats

- GCF will be enhancing its capability to detect, track and destroy enemy drones as it has already proved its mettle in Operation Sindoor
- The 40mm gun from the 60's is no more an ageing anti-aircraft gun but a state-of-the-art anti-drone weapon
- The detection ability through computer-based fire control systems will further be modernised

■ By Ashish Rajput

JABALPUR, July 3

IN RESPONSE to the evolving nature of modern warfare and the growing threat posed by unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), the Gun Carriage Factory (GCF), Jabalpur, has launched a major upgrade programme for the 40 mm L-70 Anti-Aircraft Gun. The project aims to significantly enhance the weapon's capability to detect, track and destroy drones and other low-flying aerial threats, building on operational lessons learned during Operation Sindoor.

Confirming the development while talking to 'The Hitavada', Rahul Choudhary, General Manager and Public Relations Officer, Gun Carriage Factory, said the project has been taken up as an R&D initiative to make the L-70 suitable for contemporary battlefield requirements. "The gun will undergo technological upgrades in line with modern warfare. The tracking and fire-control systems will be significantly improved and two prototypes will be developed under this project," he said.

The L-70 gun, which has been a reliable component of India's air defence network since the 1960s, has undergone multiple upgrades over the decades. While its internal ballistics have remained unchanged since its original induction, the weapon received major technological



enhancements between 2000 and 2020, including the integration of electronic and computer-based fire control systems and the replacement of hydraulic mechanisms with electric drive systems. Another batch of guns was also upgraded in collaboration with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

GM, Choudhary added that the latest modernisation programme will focus on improving the gun's software and fire-control algorithms to counter the rapidly changing drone threat. The factory's Research and Development (R&D) division has already begun work on the project and plans to develop two advanced prototypes. The upgraded L-70 will feature enhanced tracking and engagement capabilities for both large and small aerial targets. Larger drones will be tracked through radar integration, while

smaller UAVs and low-signature flying objects will be detected using an Electro-Optical Fire Control System (EOFCS). The upgraded software will enable the weapon to automatically identify different categories of aerial targets and generate suitable fire-control solutions.

The L-70 has an effective engagement range of over 12 kilometres and is capable of firing up to 600 rounds per minute, making it one of the Indian Army's most dependable medium-calibre air defence guns. Existing features already include a ballistic computer system, automatic video tracking, optronic pedestal sighting system, man-machine interface, compatibility with Flycatcher and Reporter radars, independent line-of-sight operation for gun and optronic systems, laser range finder, thermal imager, and an integrated fire-control system with daylight camera.

Officials said that while many of these capabilities already exist, the current upgrade will primarily involve changes to the computer programming and target engagement logic to address emerging drone warfare requirements.

At present, GCF is no longer manufacturing new L-70 guns but continues to undertake overhaul and life-extension of the Army's existing fleet. Earlier, the factory had also developed a prototype Twin Gun System, although it did not enter production.

2027 to be celebrated as India-Japan Year of Shared Horizons: MEA

NEW DELHI, July 3 (PTI)

AS JAPANESE Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi concluded her official visit to India on Friday, the Ministry of External Affairs said it reaffirmed the commitment of the two sides to nurture a partnership pivotal to the shared growth and prosperity of both countries.

The India-Japan partnership is also an anchor for promoting peace, prosperity and stability in the Indo-Pacific and beyond, the MEA said, and asserted that the 16th India-Japan annual summit here was "highly successful". "A memorable visit concludes, advancing India-Japan partnership towards shared horizons. PM @takaichi_sanae of Japan departs from India following the highly successful 16th India-Japan Annual Summit. She was seen off by Minister of State @DrJitendraSingh," External

next year, adding that 2027 will be commemorated as the India-Japan Year of Shared Horizons.

He also shared some photos of the send-off in Delhi.

Takaichi visited the country at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, from July 1 to 3 for the 16th India-Japan annual summit. The two leaders held talks at the Hyderabad House here on Thursday to strengthen bilateral cooperation.

India and Japan unveiled a raft of landmark initiatives, including an economic partnership framework, a defence pact to co-develop military hardware and steps to enhance energy ties to tackle oil shocks, as Prime Minister Modi held summit talks with his Japanese counterpart Takaichi, focusing on enhancing mutual trust to effectively navigate global uncertainties.

"The visit reaffirmed the commitment of both sides to nurture



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi interact with exhibitors during a visit to an exhibition at the India-Japan Business Forum, in New Delhi. (PTI)

Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal posted on X. He also said the two leaders talked about the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries

a partnership pivotal to the shared growth and prosperity of both countries and an anchor for promoting peace, prosperity and stability in the Indo-Pacific and beyond," Jaiswal posted.

Sitharaman invites French firms to partner in Viksit Bharat 2047

NEW DELHI, July 3 (PTI)

FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman invited French businesses and investors to partner with India in its journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047, emphasising the need to strengthen the India-France Strategic Partnership and work towards shared prosperity for both countries.

Addressing an India-France Business Roundtable in Paris on Thursday, she urged French

investors to explore partnerships in healthcare, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology by leveraging the two countries' complementary strengths in lifesciences, vaccines, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), clinical research, precision medicine and digital health to build resilient healthcare value chains.



The Minister also highlighted India's clean energy transition, including the target of achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030, the National Green Hydrogen Mission and Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes, saying these initiatives offer significant investment opportunities in renewable energy,

green hydrogen, battery storage, offshore wind and smart grids, the Finance Ministry said in a post on X.

Pitching India's financial ecosystem, Sitharaman said the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has emerged as a leading global financial hub, with over 1,200 registered entities as of June 2026, banking assets of USD 111 billion and cumulative banking transactions worth USD 176 billion.

PM Modi to visit Indonesia, Aus, New Zealand

NEW DELHI, July 3 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a three-nation visit to Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand from July 6-11 to deepen India's engagement with the three countries, the MEA said on Friday.

The first leg of his visit will be to Indonesia, after which he will travel to Australia, where his main engagements will be held in Melbourne. He will conclude the tour with a visit to New Zealand.

Talking to reporters, Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Rudrendra Tandon, said Modi's visit to New Zealand would be special as it would be the first by an Indian Prime Minister in nearly 40 years.

Modi will make his first
(Contd on page 5)

Iran prepares for Supreme Leader Khamenei's funeral

■ By Nasser Karimi and Jon Gambrell
TEHRAN, July 3 (AP)

IRAN prepared on Friday for the dayslong funeral of the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, with banners across Tehran urging the public to rise up in support of the Islamic Republic after the devastating war that killed the 86-year-old cleric.

The country's theocracy plans to see millions flood the streets of the capital beginning Saturday in scenes reminiscent to the burial of the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989. That could provide a boost for Iran's Government, particularly as it tries to leverage its hold on the Strait of Hormuz in negotiations with the United States over a permanent end to the war, and as concern still lingers that Israel could attack yet again.

Despite that, a powerful general who leads Iran's paramilitary



Mourners gather around the coffin of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as it lies in a mourning hall adjacent to the Imam Khomeini Hussainiya within the Supreme Leader's compound before his funeral in Tehran, Iran, on Thursday. (AP/PTI)

Revolutionary Guard emerged publicly for the first time in months for the funeral. Other top Government officials will also likely be on hand alongside foreign dignitaries in a show of strength of Iran.

"As long as these people, who are chosen (by God), are on the field, we will definitely continue the same 'no to humiliation' policy that was founded by the Islamic Republic," said Mohammad Hossein Rezaei, a

volunteer preparing for the funeral on Friday.

Caskets displayed in Tehran Khamenei's flag-draped coffin sat at Tehran's Grand Mosalla alongside family members killed in the Israeli airstrike that came in the first moments of the war on February 28.

The dead being honoured include a son-in-law, his eldest daughter, a 14-month-old granddaughter and the wife of Iran's new Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, the son of the previous leader who remains in hiding after reportedly being wounded in the attack.

Religious leaders and foreign dignitaries walked up to Khamenei's casket as a military band played or a man sang prayers. Iran's Parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and President Masoud Pezeshkian, key leaders in the country's civilian government, all paid their respects.

Indian delegation pays tributes

TEHRAN, July 3 (PTI)

A HIGH-LEVEL Indian delegation on Friday paid tributes to Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was assassinated in US-Israeli strikes in February, in Tehran.

The delegation, comprising Bihar Governor Lt General (Retd) Syed Ata Hasnain and Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita paid their respects to the Iranian leader in Tehran.

"Represented India at the funeral ceremony of His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in Tehran today, along with MoS External Affairs @PmargheritaBJE. Also extended deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in the recent conflict," Hasnain said in a social media post.

In a separate post, Margherita said he and the Bihar Governor "represented India at the funeral ceremony" and "conveyed our respects on behalf of the Government and the people of India".

Separately, Congress leader Salman Khurshid, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, Sikh, Hindu, Muslim and Christian religious leaders from India also paid homage to the late Iranian leader.



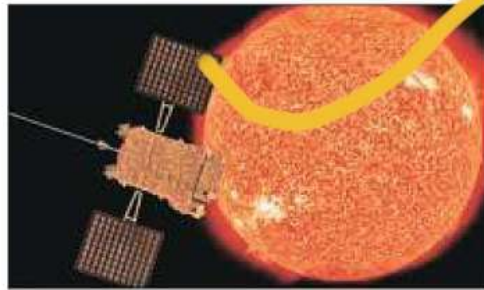
Aditya-L1 observes 'iron fluorescence' on Sun during massive solar flares: ISRO

NEW DELHI, July 3 (PTI)

INDIA'S first space-based mission to observe the Sun, Aditya-L1, has observed "iron fluorescence" on the Sun during massive solar flares, according to a new study.

The iron fluorescence phenomenon occurs due to the eruption of a huge solar flare, which heats the Sun's upper atmosphere (the corona) to extreme temperatures, releasing massive bursts of high-energy X-rays, the ISRO said in a statement on Friday.

While most of these X-rays are emitted outward into space, a fraction travels downward, interacting with the Sun's cooler, denser surface layer called the photosphere, where they interact with abundant neutral



Iron fluorescence phenomenon occurs due to the eruption of a huge solar flare. (ISRO)

iron atoms, which then emit their own characteristic X-ray glow or fluorescence.

Aditya-L1's Solar Low Energy X-ray

Spectrometer (SoLEXS) has the capability to detect this phenomenon.

The study, published in the "Solar Physics" journal, revealed that the observed brightness of the iron fluorescence depends heavily on where the flare occurs on the Sun's disk. "Flares occurring near the centre of the Sun's disk, as viewed by the observer, showed a strong fluorescence signal, while the signal was heavily suppressed for flares occurring near the Sun's edge," the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said.

The findings will now help researchers use the iron fluorescence as a potential diagnostic tool to probe the altitude of the coronal X-ray source high up in the solar atmosphere and study the unique viewing geometries of these explosive events.