

Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit to be next Chief of Air Staff

NEW DELHI, Oct 6 (PTI)

AIR Marshal Ashutosh Dixit will be the next Chief of Air Staff succeeding incumbent Air Chief



Marshal AP Singh, the Defence Ministry announced on Tuesday.

Dixit, known for his strategic planning, is currently serving as the Vice Chief of the force.

The Government has appointed Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit as the 29th Chief of the Air Staff, in the rank of Air Chief Marshal, with effect from the afternoon of October 31, the Ministry said.

Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh will superannuate on October 31.

Voting held for by-polls in five Assembly seats

Assam recorded 76 pc voter turnout

79 pc voting in Nandigram, Rejinagar

85.99, 80.31% in TN's constituencies

80.81% in Puducherry's Thattanchavady

GUWAHATI, Oct 6 (PTI)

VOTING for the by-election to the Nagaon Lok Sabha seat in Assam, Assembly seats in West Bengal's Nandigram and Rejinagar and two Assembly Constituencies in Tamil Nadu plus one in Puducherry concluded peacefully at 5 pm on Tuesday.

Assam's Nagaon recorded 76 per cent of 19.05 lakh electors exercised their franchise, an official said. The final poll percentage, however, is expected to rise as electors who entered the polling stations before the closure of the gates would be allowed to cast their votes, he said.

The by-election was necessitated as Congress MP Pradyut Bordoloi resigned and successfully contested the Assembly elections from Dispur on a BJP ticket earlier this year.

"Voting, which commenced at 7 am, was peaceful as no untoward incident was reported from any polling station in the eight assembly segments under the Lok Sabha constituency," the official said.

Minor EVM glitches were reported from a few polling booths but the machines were immediately replaced and polling continued.

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Rajnath launches Fleet Support Ship-1, 'Surya' at HSL in Vizag

VISAKHAPATNAM, Oct 6 (PTI)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday launched the Fleet Support Ship-1 (FSS-1) here, calling it a symbol of

achievement and an important step towards strengthening the Navy's operational reach and endurance.

Singh launched the first fleet support ship, laid the keel of the

fifth fleet support ship and inaugurated the upgraded Slipway-4 and a 300-tonne Goliath Crane at Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) here.

Christened as 'Surya', FSS-1 entered the waters of the Bay of Bengal amid cheers.

"The launch of FSS-1 is a symbol of achievement, keel laying of FSS-5 a symbol of resolve and the new Slipway is a symbol of our growing capability," said Singh, addressing a meeting in the port city.

He noted that a Navy operating for extended periods in distant maritime areas requires not only warships but also logistics, maintenance, sustained support and operational endurance.

Fleet Support Ships provide this essential capability through at-sea replenishment and sustained support to naval operations, he added.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during the launch of the first Fleet Support Ship (FSS-1) 'Surya', and inauguration of the upgraded Slipway-4 and 300-tonne Goliath Crane, in Visakhapatnam. (PTI)

German A400M aircraft takes part in Tarang Shakti



German Air Force A400M aircraft

JODHPUR, Oct 6 (ANI)

AMID the vast, sun-drenched expanses of Rajasthan, the skies over the Jodhpur Air Force Station have transformed into a bustling aerial theatre. Setting a striking tone for international military cooperation, the German Air Force is participating in the ongoing multinational air combat Exercise Tarang Shakti 2026, featuring the prominent deployment of an advanced Airbus A400M military aircraft.

Speaking to ANI, German Air Force Captain Maurice Berns said, "I'm a First Officer on the A400M, and I am participating in this year's edition of Tarang

Shakti. It's been a great experience so far. Tarang Shakti teaches us, as transport aircraft crew, a lot of new things, and especially working with Indian people and the Indian Air Force is a great new experience."

Captain Berns further noted, "This time the exercise is a little bit bigger than the last edition. This time Germany is participating with the A400M, and we are participating in large force engagements, which means that we, as a transport aircraft, are being involved in big fighter jet exercises."

Highlighting the capabilities of the aircraft and the value of the drills, he added, "This time, the A400M is participating, the transport aircraft, the backbone of the German Air Force National Fleet, and it's a heavy cargo airplane capable of doing a lot of tactical missions and also logistics missions."

MoD inks **Rs 661 cr** contract

To procure BrahMos fire control system, launchers for Navy ships

NEW DELHI, Oct 6 (PTI)

THE Ministry of Defence on Tuesday signed a nearly Rs 661 crore contract for the procurement of BrahMos fire control system and launchers for Indian Navy ships, aiming to boost its maritime strike capabilities.

The BrahMos weapon system, fitted onboard various frontline warships, is the Navy's primary surface-to-surface missile system for maritime strike operations. It is capable of targeting land and sea targets from extended ranges with pinpoint accuracy at supersonic speed.

The Ministry, in a statement, said it has signed a contract with BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited (BAPL) for procurement of BrahMos fire control system and launchers for Indian Navy

ships under the 'Buy (Indian-IDDMM)' category.

IDDMM stands for Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured.

Valued at Rs 661.50 crore, the contract was inked in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh.

"With a minimum of 68 per cent indigenous content, the project encourages active participation of various Indian industries, including MSMEs. The project will generate employment over a period of three years," the ministry said.

It also bolsters India's maritime security architecture and defence capabilities and marks a "critical milestone" in the ongoing efforts to indigenise advanced military technology, it said on Tuesday.

'Hope to have Made-in-India civilian aircraft in 2 years'

NEW DELHI, Oct 6 (PTI)

CIVIL Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu on Tuesday expressed hope that India will have the first indigenous civilian aircraft within two years through a joint venture.

Highlighting the growth potential of the country's civil aviation sector, the Minister said airlines have more than 1,600 aircraft on order that are estimated to be worth about USD 100 billion and more than 100 new airports are expected in the next 10 years.

Currently, there are 165 airports and the current fleet of planes with domestic airlines is around 850. "Within two years, we will be able to have Made-In-India civilian aircraft" through a joint venture, Naidu said and emphasised that the ecosystem is growing. He did not disclose



K Rammohan Naidu

specific details.

"We can create the best policy," the Minister said as he also mentioned about the need to focus on the quality of materials as well as skilling of people for high end manufacturing activities in the aviation space.

Currently, aircraft makers Boeing and Airbus source components and services worth around USD 4 billion from India

and the amount is expected to touch USD 10 billion by the end of the decade, the Minister said.

India is one of the world's fastest growing domestic civil aviation markets.

Speaking at the symposium of the Indian Foundation for Quality Management (IFQM) in the national capital, Naidu also said the Government would also look at the possibility of manufacturing jet engines in the country but that would be a time-consuming process. He was participating in a session with Tata Steel MD and CEO TV Narendran.

About sustainability efforts, the minister said India has the potential to become an exporter of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) and also that the Government would work on having a carbon credit mechanism that would help industries.

57th GST Council meeting rescheduled to Oct 8

NEW DELHI, Oct 6 (IANS)

THE 57th GST Council meeting has been rescheduled to October 8 from October 7 due to unavoidable circumstances, the GST Council Secretariat said in an office memorandum.

The meeting to be chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising representatives from the Centre and States is expected to discuss a series of process reforms aimed at making GST compliance easier for businesses and Taxpayers. Reports claim that the Council is likely to consider changes to the registration, returns and refunds mechanisms as well as reforms to resolve GST disputes and improve the flow of input tax credit with the aim of reducing the time and cost

of compliance.

Moreover, the proposals are part of broader recommendations of the GST Council's Law Committee which has examined ways to simplify GST laws and distinguish between deliberate tax evasion and cases where failure to pay tax was not intentional.

Under the current GST framework, the Commissioner can authorise an arrest under Section 69 of the Central GST Act where there are reasons to believe that a person has committed specified offences under Section 132, including certain cases involving tax evasion and fraudulent input tax credit. The Council is also expected to discuss measures aimed at making compliance easier for businesses, including e-commerce suppliers.

DRDO successfully tests indigenous High-Altitude Airship at 21 km

NEW DELHI, Oct 6 (IANS)

THE Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Tuesday announced that it has successfully conducted the flight trial of its indigenously-developed High-Altitude Platform System (HAPS), achieving an altitude of 21 km and demonstrating long-endurance stratospheric flight capabilities.

The milestone is expected to strengthen India's surveillance and aerospace capabilities under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The experimental flight reached an altitude of 21 km above mean sea level and remained at around 20 km altitude for more than 30 minutes before being commanded to descend. The platform was subsequently recovered safely, and data collected during the mission was analysed to assess its performance.

"The experimental flight attained an altitude of 21 km above mean sea level (AMSL) and remained at an altitude of 20 km AMSL for more than 30 minutes, before it was com-



High Altitude Platform System (HAPS), a long-endurance stratospheric aerial surveillance platform tested.

(PTI)

manded to descend back to ground. The system was successfully recovered and flight performance data was analysed," the Ministry stated. The trial demonstrated the platform's ability to operate in the stratosphere, a region that offers advantages for persistent surveillance, communications and monitoring missions. During the flight, real-time video and vehicle performance data were transmitted continuously from the airborne platform to the ground control station.

Officials said the system carried a range of instrumentation and control packages, including an inertial measurement unit, GPS receiver, onboard cameras and altitude control mechanisms, along with several other subsystems that functioned as intended throughout the mission.

The flight trial was conducted in coordination with multiple agencies, including the Indian Air Force, the Centre for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC), the DGCA, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and other civil authorities.

DRDO conducts maiden live jump of Advanced High-Altitude Parachute system

NEW DELHI, Oct 6 (PTI)

THE Defence Research and Development Organisation has conducted the maiden live jump of the Advanced High-Altitude Parachute (AHAP), a static line parachute system for mass drop of paratroopers, at one of the highest-altitude drop zones, Nyoma (Mudh DZ) in Ladakh, officials said on Tuesday.

The jump was executed at 16,000 ft above mean sea level (AMSL). The parachute was deployed at 15,500 feet AMSL and landing was undertaken at Nyoma (Mudh DZ), which is at 13,700 feet, the defence ministry said in a statement.

The jump proved the efficacy and tactical employability of the AHAP parachute at extremely high-altitude terrains, it said.