



## e-news

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**Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam receiving King Charles II Medal from Lord Martin Rees, President of the British Royal Society, in London - Details under Awards**

### READER'S RESPONSE

**The editorial team invites your views, suggestions, to the News about Members Column and contributions to the e-news.**

### Global consortium for jet project

The National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) will set up an international consortium to execute its Rs 2000-crore regional jet project for India. The consortium will include private players from India and abroad. Mahindra and Mahindra is the most likely Indian player, while the foreign partners may be Embraer of Brazil and Bombardier of Canada. Partnership is expected to happen at two levels: overall manufacture of the aircraft and manufacture of components and tools. The partnership will be one of risk and benefit sharing. What this means is the partners will not only help in research, data and information on the proposed aircraft, but pool in money too. All the risks that come with this investment will be borne by the partners. The benefits of a full regional jet in flight will also be shared - most likely in the form of the jet flying not only in India, but in other markets too.

*Source: Times of India*

### India targets single aviation pact with EU

India and the European Union (EU) are negotiating horizontal civil aviation agreement to treat the EU as a single entity rather than go for individual bilateral aviation pacts with each EU member. As of now, India individually negotiates airline entitlements with each of the 27 EU countries, while on other issues like market access, the EU speaks in one voice. In the case of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) too, the EU acts as a single entity acting on behalf of all members. Landing rights of airlines from each country are decided on the basis of decisions arrived at bilateral aviation pacts. In the case of UK, India has a virtual 'open skies' agreement, but negotiations are held periodically with other EU members to revise airline entitlements.

*Source: Economic Times*

### IAF developing flexi-airspace concept

Indian Air Force is in the process of developing the 'flexi-airspace' concept, in which the IAF facilities are being integrated with that of civil aviation and other defence arms for constant surveillance of airspace, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Southern Air Command (SAC), Air Marshal Y.R.Rane said. Flexi-airspace is being

implemented in the SAC using Naval, Civil and Coast Guard infrastructure. Rane told a press conference in connection with the culmination of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of the IAF. "Flexi-airspace has gained importance with the boom in civil aviation. The network is improving slowly," he said. SAC is poised to play a bigger role in the years ahead with the southern peninsula gaining in strategic importance.

*Source: Indian Express*

### ISRO to expand village Resource Centres

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has decided to expand the Village Resource Centre, the single window mechanism to guide the people of rural areas in planning the development of their villages across the country. The VRCs, launched on a pilot basis in some villages, have been successful. The Agriculture, Health and other departments could reach out to the villages effectively and give timely advice on weather conditions, land and water resources and natural resource management. According to ISRO Chairman G. Madhavan Nair, information about water resources, wasteland, weather information and soil mapping could be provided to village administration through VRCs that would act as helplines.

*Source: The Hindu*

### Environmental Survey Vehicle for Navy

An Environmental Survey Vehicle (ESV) developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was handed over to the Navy. DRDO Chief M. Natarajan handed over the ESV to Vice-Chief of Naval Staff, Vice-Admiral Nirmal Verma, at the DRDO headquarters. Designed and developed by the Defence Laboratory, Jodhpur, the ESV is a radiological laboratory on wheels and equipped with state-of-the-art instruments. It is capable of estimating radioactivity in field conditions in solid, liquid and air. The ESV will help certify the suitability of eatables and water in field conditions from the radiation safety angle for coastal areas.

*Source: The Hindu*

### **National Aerospace Laboratories working on regional jet**

Having already delivered 10 indigenously-developed Hansa two-seater trainer turbo-prop aircraft, the National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) at Bangalore is well on its way to developing the 14-seater Saras light transport aircraft, Dr AR Upadhyya, Director, NAL, told a packed auditorium at Zephyr 2007, the aerospace meet of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) at Powai, Mumbai. Two prototypes of the rear mounted twin-engine Saras are already ready, with the aircraft having made its successful maiden flight, powered by Pratt & Whitney engines, Dr Upadhyya said. He said full flight certification was expected in 2009. The aircraft earlier was about 500kg overweight, which had been reduced by a greater use of light carbon-fibre composites.

*Source: domain-B*

### **Bangalore ALH pilots fly high**

If the Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) is doing wonders at the newly opened and high altitude airbase at Manasbal (Srinagar) to the Siachen area, it is all credit Bangalore. Three of its pilots were the first to take the ALH to heights higher than Manasbal, which was also the first time an Indian helicopter was taken to that height. C D Upadhyay, Unni Pillai and M U

Khan flew the ALH at an incredible altitude of 27,500 feet in the Siachen area braving icy winds. Upadhyay describes that flight: "We started climbing stage by stage ... 20,000 feet, 23,24, 25,26 and then 27,500. It had never been done before. We were hovering and watching a Cheetal (another helicopter) land just below us at 25,100 feet. Landing at that height isn't easy. We were ready to pick up the pilot if something went wrong.

*Source: Times of India*

### **New version of Agni I tested**

India testfired an upgraded version of Agni I from the Integrated Test Range on Wheeler's Island off the Orissa coast. The nuclear-capable surface-to-surface short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) was fired from a mobile launcher. "Friday's flight was made for user's trial and it has met all the objectives. The test was to reconfirm the technical parameters set for the user-associated launch," said a defence official. "The test was conducted by the Indian Army that has manufactured a missile group (334) for Agni-I and another group (335) for Prithvi," he said. Sources said it was the first user's trial after its induction into the Army in 2004.

*Source: Times of India*

### **Indian-made UAV To Become A Cruise Missile**

Indian and Israeli companies have teamed up to convert India's Lakshya pilotless aircraft into a cruise missile, sources in the Indian Defence Ministry confirmed. The proposed Lakshya cruise missile would carry a payload of 350 kilograms up to 600 kilometers, and the project is already under way. The Indian government has sanctioned \$150 million for the project, sources said. India's Aeronautical Developmental Establishment (ADE) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) are now working on three prototype cruise missiles that could be reused 10 times.

*Source: DefenseNews.com*

### **ISRO to increase transponder capacity to 500 by 2012**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will increase the transponder capacity of Insat, Gsat systems from the 190

transponders at present to 500 by 2012. Delivering the 39th Bhabha memorial lecture instituted by the Institute of Electronics and Telecommunications Engineers (IETE) after being conferred the honorary fellowship, ISRO Chairman, G.Madhavan Nair said that to meet the growing demand for the transponders and to maintain on-orbit spares, the organisation was planning 'satcom missions' comprising small, medium and large satellites.

*Source: Indian Express*

### **Think big about nanotechnology**

Nanotechnology is an interdisciplinary subject that educates an individual on the development and modification of devices with atomic precision where the dimension of particles are less than 100 nanometers. It is widely applied in nano-electronics and nano devices, converging physics, biology, engineering, chemistry and computer science. Breakthroughs

have been achieved in the fields of gene chip designing, application of fat soluble vitamins in aqueous beverage, designing of stain repellent textiles, automobile industry, space research organisations, nano crystal installation in bumps, designing of electrically conductive nanopolymers, nanostructured materials in photographic films and devising biomimetic paints.

*Source: Indian Express*

### **Tejas crosses milestone, test-fires combat missile**

The programme to weaponise the indigenous fly-by-wire Light Combat Aircraft Tejas crossed a major milestone with a close air combat missile being flawlessly test-fired from the aircraft. Taking off from INS Hansa, the Naval air station in Vasco (Goa), Prototype Vehicle 1 piloted by the Chief Test Pilot of the National Flight Test Centre Group Captain N Harish, reached an altitude of 6.5 km and a speed of 0.6 mach before the R73 E Russian made missile was fired in "the autonomous mode" from the aircraft's left wing tip.

*Source: The Hindu*

### **Home-made choppers take flight in Nigeria**

Mubatak Muhammad Abdullahi, a 24-year-old physics undergraduate in northern Nigeria, takes old cars and motorbikes to

pieces in the back yard at home and builds his own helicopters from the parts. "It took me eight months to build this one," he said, sweat pouring from his forehead as he filled the radiator of the banana yellow four-seater which he now parks in the grounds of his university. The chopper, which has flown briefly on six occasions, is made from scrap aluminium that Abdullahi bought with the money he makes from computer and mobile phone repairs, and a donation from his father, who teaches at Kano's Bayero University.

*Source: Bangalore Mirror*

### **India sets up tsunami warning center**

Learning lessons from the tsunami of December 2004, India unveiled an early tsunami warning system, the first of its kind in the world, which will sound an alert 13 minutes after an undersea earthquake in two potential source regions. Set up at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) at Jeedimetla on the city outskirts, the centre is equipped to warn in real-time if subduction zone related earthquakes in Andaman-Nicobar-Sumatra island arc and the Makran subduction zone north of the Arabian Sea can trigger tsunamis. Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Minister Kapil Sibal inaugurated the centre, built indigenously in two years at a cost of Rs.1.25 billion with the involvement of 14 different organisations and 150 scientists.

*Source: andhracafe.com*

### **EADS bids for 126 fighter planes contract from IAF**

European Aerospace and Defence Company (EADS), which manufactures Eurofighter Typhoon combat aircraft, is all set to enter the race for a contract of 126 fighter planes of Indian Air Force. "We have received the Request For Proposals (RPF) of the IAF and we will be bidding by the end of the year," EADS Senior Vice-President for South-Asia, Mr Allain Letanoux, said. The EADS manufactures Eurofighter Typhoon, a multi-role and swing-role combat aircraft, under a joint programme of France, UK, Italy and Germany. Projecting Eurofighter as the "most capable frontline fighter available," Mr Letanoux said EADS would offer transfer of technology as part of the package to get the deal.

*Source: Business Line*

### **AP targets fivefold increase in space segment business**

Andhra Pradesh expects a fivefold increase in its share in the defence and space business by 2012. At present, around Rs 1,500 crore of business is generated from this segment and this is expected to top Rs 7,500 more over the next five years, according to VLN Reddy, President of Federation of Andhra Pradesh Industries Associations (FAPSIA). According to him, several European companies are in talks with domestic manufacturing companies in the state for technology tie-ups in this space. The availability of skilled manpower and the lower cost of operations are a huge draw for these firms. Secunderabad-based Tecsol, for instance, plans to set up a power supply manufacturing facility along



with a UK-based company to service the aerospace sector. Right now, the company has marketing rights to supply a France-based company's equipment to Indian military and space agencies.

*Source: Economic Times*

### **Nod for fighter aircraft project with Russia**

Concerned over Indian Air Force's (IAF) depleting force levels, the government has accelerated a plan to jointly develop the next generation fighter aircraft with Russia. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has cleared, the Fifth Generation Aircraft (FGA), along with the price for an additional order for 40 Sukhoi-30 MKI, said sources in the government. It also approved an aircraft-related joint venture between a Russian company and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). The original intention was to clear the proposal around the time of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Russia.

*Source: The Hindu*

### **Kingfisher's MRO to come up at BIAL**

Vijay Mallya's Kingfisher Airlines is close to signing a deal with BIAL (Bangalore International Airport Ltd) for setting up an MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) facility. Sources said Mallya will invest a huge sum of money for the development of the MRO as well as various other facilities at the BIAL airport. A senior UB official also confirmed the same. "Kingfisher plans to establish a hangar facility at the new Bangalore airport to service its aircraft stationed in Bangalore.

*Source: Times of India*

### **India's Jet orders 20 737s from Boeing**

Boeing Co. said it received an order for 20 of its 737-800 aircraft from India's Jet Airways. The Chicago-based aerospace company said the list price for the short to medium-range twin-jet aircraft ordered by the Mumbai totals "nearly \$1.5 billion." Like its rival Airbus, however, Boeing often offers price discounts to purchasers of major orders often receive discounts. Boeing's release said the two companies had "finalized" the order. Earlier this month, Jet Airways had disclosed the purchase accord in a statement to the Bombay Stock Exchange; while Boeing didn't provide delivery details of the contract, Jet Airways' recent statement said the aircraft will be delivered between late 2012 and the end of 2014.

*Source: Chicago Tribune*

### **IAF may opt for Russian choppers**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is to soon examine a quotation it has received from Russia for the supply of 80 Mi-17-1V multi-utility helicopters to add to the 140-odd machines currently in its fleet. The quotation has been received and will soon be examined, hopefully before the year is out, an official source said. News of the deal emerged as Defence Minister A.K. Antony ended a visit to Moscow, his first to Russia after assuming office. The government had earlier cleared the IAF proposal for the \$900-million deal and allocated \$700 million to upgrade the existing choppers in the fleet. "We had the option of looking at other machines that might be technically more advanced but opted for the repeat order route to speed up the process," the source said.

*Source: Indian Express*

### **Sreenidhi Institute of Science & Technology and Vaughn College of Aeronautics & Technology, New York, Join Hands to establish the First Dedicated College for Aero Industry in India**

Hyderabad based Sreenidhi Institute of Science and Technology (SNSIT), the first institution to be accredited by AICTE in JNTU system, and the Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology (V-CAT), an accredited institution, established 75 years ago in New York, USA have entered into an MoU to offer 4 year B.S. Degree programmes in Electronics Engineering Technology (Avionics), Airline and Airport Management for the first time in India. This is first of its kind in Technical Education system of India which has approval from AICTE for Technical Education for collaborating with a foreign Institution. The new institute is located in Sreenidhi campus in Hyderabad of Andhra Pradesh.

*Source: IndiaPRwire.com*



## Honour to Dr Kalam

The former President, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, was awarded the British Royal Society's prestigious King Charles II medal on Monday for his contribution to the practice and promotion of science. He is only the second head of state to receive the honour, instituted in 1997 to recognise excellence in science. Emperor Akihito of Japan received it in 1998. The award, comprising a medal and a scroll, was Presented to Dr. Kalam by Martin Rees, president of the Royal Society, at a ceremony attended, among others, by industrialist Swaraj Paul, economist Meghnad Desai and India's Acting High Commissioner in London Asoke Mukerjee.

Source: *The Hindu*

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## **REPOSITIONING ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS**

1. These days when knowledge has become common currency the world over, the students are opting for technical courses in increasing numbers. No doubt there are large number of technical colleges affiliated to the universities under the AICTE regime; non- formal courses offered by professional institutes have been fulfilling an important role for a very long time & would continue to remain an attractive option.

2. However lot of difficulty & discrimination is being experienced by those with AM qualifications in getting admission for higher studies, in employment etc. It is primarily due to lack of awareness about the recognition of these AM courses by HRD in being equivalent to an engineering degree and to an extent on account of inadequate liaison / PR with the universities, industry and others by the apex professional bodies.

3. It is suggested that a national level committee of all stake-holders be formed to promote AMIEI, AMIETE, AMAeSI etc as viable programmes & take such measures that would dispel misgivings about the richness & depth of these courses. One good idea mooted was to take overlap degree cover from a university for the AM qualification.

4. It is suggested that a national level committee of all stakeholders with representation from IEI, IETE, AeSI, IME & others be constituted to deliberate & take time bound measures on the following-

(a) To improve liaison & acceptability of the AM programmes for higher education in India & abroad. This would need liaison with the universities where there are problems for admissions.

(b) Making students with AM qualifications attractive for the industry by providing additional training/practical capsules if needed so that they can be better than the raw inputs.

(c) Enhancing visibility of the AM courses by good PR & ad campaign if thought fit.

(d) Suggesting improvement in training programmes to overcome lacunae in our syllabi if any & having periodical reviews to make these contemporary.

(e) Seeking University affiliation for the AM courses if thought desirable.

(f) The certificates issued after qualifying in Sections A&B should be presentable & comprehensive enough to mention equivalence in clear term

5. Engineering Council of India has already been seized of the problem & they have taken some initiative in this regard. But it is the time concerted effort is made by all concerned to position AM courses correctly in the present scheme of things.

**Air Cmde Raghbir Singh (Retd)**

MSc(Def),BSc(Enng)Mech,ME(Aero)

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