

Plan is nothing, planning is Everything
NATIONAL
NEW HELICOPTERS TO ENABLE TECH TRANSFER

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister accorded approval for procurement for the Services amounting to approximately Rs. 46,000 crores.

The Defence Ministry is expected to release project-specific implementation guidelines for the 111 naval utility helicopters to be procured under the Strategic Partnership (SP) model.

However, foreign companies say there is still some clarity required on crucial legal, liability and technology transfer issues.

This is the first project under the MoD's prestigious Strategic Partnership (SP) Model that aims at providing significant fillip to the Government's 'Make in India' programme.

SP Model envisages indigenous manufacturing of major defence platforms by an Indian Strategic Partner, who will collaborate with foreign OEM, acquire niche technologies and set up production facilities in the Country.

The model has a long-term vision of promoting India as a manufacturing hub for defence equipment thus enhancing self-sufficiency and establishing an industrial and R&D ecosystem, capable of meeting the future requirements of the Armed Forces.

The contract when finalised, would result in a vibrant and wide-spread Defence industrial eco-system in the Indian Aviation Sector with the Private Industry and MSMEs as major stakeholders.

There are two important issues that need clarity. One is legal, as the companies can't sell a submarine or fighter jet to a private company. Global regulations do not allow that.

So, there has to be a government-to-government component in the end.

The other issue was about the liability of the end product.

This liability issue was one of the major reasons the earlier medium multi-role combat aircraft (MMRCA) deal for 126 jets got derailed at the contract negotiation stage.

Hence the Dassault Aviation refused to stand guarantee to the aircraft manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL).

For the first time, under the SP model, Indian private companies will get to tie up with global original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and build major defence platforms in India under technology transfer.



So far, it was defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs) which played the lead role.

There is large infrastructure already present in the country with DPSUs and this must be utilized for the benefit of both the country as well as form a business sense.

All procurement under the SP model would be executed by specially constituted empowered project committees (EPC) to ensure timely execution.

There is need for some clarity from the MoD on production transfer and technology transfer as well, the executive added.

Earlier the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) cleared the general as well as project-specific implementation guidelines for the naval helicopters that would lay emphasis on transfer of technology and high absorption of indigenous content.

The guidelines and the qualification guidelines are yet to be communicated to the industry.

MP SEEKS REVIVAL OF CHEETAH REINTRODUCTION PROJECT

The Madhya Pradesh forest department has written to the National Tiger Conservation Authority to revive the plan to reintroduce cheetahs in the State's Nauradehi sanctuary.

The ambitious project, conceived in 2009, had hit a roadblock for want of funds.

The proposal was to put the felines in the enclosure with huge boundary walls before being released in the wild, he said.

Nauradehi was found to be the most suitable area for the cheetahs as its forests are not very dense to restrict the fast movement of the spotted cat.

The country's last spotted cheetah died in Chhattisgarh in 1947.

Later, the cheetah which is the fastest land animal was declared extinct in India in 1952.

According to the earlier action plan, around 20 cheetahs were to be translocated to Nauradehi from Namibia in Africa.

The Namibia Cheetah Conservation Fund had then showed its willingness to donate the felines to India, Mr. Dubey said.

However, the State was not ready to finance the plan contending that it was the Centre's project.

The M.P. forest department needs finances from the Centre for the project.

It was estimated that an amount of Rs.25 crore to Rs.30 crore would be needed to build an enclosure in an area of 150 sq km for the cheetahs in Nauradehi.

ODISHA TO GET LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Odisha is all set to get a Legislative Council like seven other States in the country.

The proposed Council will have 49 members, which is one-third of the 147-member State Assembly.

The State will have to spend Rs.35 crore annually for the Council, the members of which will get salary and allowance as given to the members of the Legislative Assembly.

The Odisha government had set up a committee in 2015 to study the Legislative Councils in other States and recommend for establishment of one in the State.

Article 169 of the Constitution of India provides for the establishment of a Vidhan Parishad.

The Vidhan Parishad or Legislative Council is the upper house in those states of India that have a bicameral legislature.

As of 2017, seven (7) (out of twenty-nine) states have a Legislative Council viz.

Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh.

Each Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) serves for a six-year term, with terms staggered so that the terms of one third of a council's membership expire every two years.

This arrangement parallels that for the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Parliament of India.

The size of the Vidhan Parishad cannot be more than one third of the membership of the Vidhan Sabha.

However, its size cannot be less than 40 members (except in Jammu and Kashmir, where there are 36 by an Act of Parliament.)

The purpose of having a bicameral legislature is to re-check the decisions taken by the lower house.

Even though the upper house has no power to totally reject the bill (even if it rejects, the state assembly can go ahead with the bill after governor's approval), it can delay the bill for some time.

It can delay the passage of the bill maximum for a period of four months.

ANALYSIS OF MENTAL HEALTHCARE ACT

For the first time in India, universal mental health care is now a justifiable right following the enforcement of the Mental Healthcare Act (MHCA), 2017

It is for the first time that the law has recognized the right to access health care for citizens — and specifically for mental health

In India, an estimated 150 million people need mental health care and treatment

Up to 92% of them (no less than 105 million persons) do not have access to any form of mental health care

According to the National Mental Health Survey (NHMS) of India, 2016, India spends less than 1% of its entire health budget on mental health

Stigmatization and discrimination are serious causes of concern

There are numerous documented cases of human rights violations as a result of poor quality of mental health care, forced admissions in mental health hospitals, and a denial of socio-economic rights

It mandates the government to provide accessible, affordable, acceptable and high-quality mental health care by

- integrating mental health-care services at each level of the public health system
- establishing mental health facilities in proportion to the population in each State
- providing free mental health-care to socio-economically deprived sections of the population

The government is duty-bound to design and implement mental health promotion and preventive programmes to create awareness about the MHCA using public media

Steps that can be taken for implementation

The government will have to make appropriate budgetary provisions to plug existing infrastructure gaps

This will require mapping existing mental health systems in the States for prevailing demand-supply factors for services,

identifying shortages in mental health professionals and operational barriers to effective implementation

At the same time, promoting innovative models of community mental health care can support the MHCA using existing community resources

State governments will have to immediately set up and ensure the functioning of State mental health authorities and mental health review boards

The State authorities are legally mandated to establish regulations for registering mental health establishments and professionals, conducting social audits and defining quality standards for mental health services and facilities

The mental health review boards, as quasi-judicial bodies, will play a crucial role in ensuring the day-to-day implementation of the MHCA such as monitoring long-stay admissions, registering advance directives, appointing nominated representatives and adjudicating complaints about human rights violations and deficiencies in care/services

Implementation of the MHCA will be impossible without coordinated efforts on the part of all stakeholders with an interest in mental health care

Law enforcement officials, judges, mental health professionals and government officials need to be trained as a matter of priority to develop the necessary attitudes and skills for implementing the MHCA

Most importantly, civil society will have to pursue coordinated advocacy efforts with the government in setting up of the necessary infrastructure

Way Forward

At a time when the global health discourse has been advocating universal health coverage and the right to health, India has already made this a reality for mental health care

If well implemented, it will be a pioneering model for universal mental health care across the world and will go a long way to in

addressing the mental health concerns of 150 million people.

ESA SATELLITE TO IMPROVE WEATHER FORECAST LAUNCHED

The European Space Agency (ESA) has successfully launched a satellite that will measure winds around the globe and help improve weather forecasting.

The Earth Explorer Aeolus satellite was launched into polar orbit on a Vega rocket from Europe's Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.

Using laser technology, it will play a key role in our quest to better understand the workings of our atmosphere.

Named after Aeolus, who in Greek mythology was appointed 'keeper of the winds', the mission is the fifth in the family of ESA's Earth Explorers, which address the most urgent Earth-science questions of our time.

Aeolus carries the first instrument of its kind and uses a completely new approach to measuring the wind from space.

As highlighted by the World Meteorological Organization, the lack of direct global wind measurements is one of the major deficits in the Global Observing System.

By filling this gap, Aeolus will give scientists the information they need to understand how wind, pressure, temperature and humidity are interlinked.

This new mission will provide insight into how the wind influences the exchange of heat and moisture between Earth's surface and the atmosphere, the important aspects for understanding climate change.

The sophisticated instrument it carries is a revolutionary laser technology to generate pulses of ultraviolet light that are beamed down into the atmosphere to profile the world's winds.

This is a first of its kind technology for measuring the wind from space.

In addition, its data will be used in air-quality models to improve forecasts of dust and other airborne particles that affect public health.

20 YEARS SINCE SLAVE TRADE WAS ABOLISHED

August 23 is United Nations' International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition observed every year on to remind people of the tragedy of the transatlantic slave trade, the largest deportation in history.

The day is commemorated to pay tribute to all those who fought for freedom and worked hard to abolish the slave trade and slavery throughout the world.

Haitian Revolution

The Haitian Revolution was a successful anti-slavery and anti-colonial insurrection by self-liberated slaves against French colonial rule in Saint-Domingue, now the sovereign nation of Haiti.

The large and well-organized uprising, better known as the Haitian Revolution, lasted 13 years and ended with the independent nation of Haiti.

Impact of the Revolution

Its effects on the institution of slavery were felt throughout the Americas.

The end of French rule and the abolition of slavery in the former colony was followed by a successful defense of the freedoms they won, and, with the collaboration of free persons of color, their independence from white Europeans.

It represents the largest slave uprising since Spartacus's unsuccessful revolt against the Roman Republic nearly 1,900 years earlier.

It challenged long-held European beliefs about alleged black inferiority and about enslaved persons' capacity to achieve and maintain their own freedom.

The success of the rebellion, led by the slaves is a deep source of inspiration today for the fight against all forms of servitude, racism, prejudice, racial discrimination and social injustice that are a legacy of slavery.
