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Navy expands scope of Exercise Milan



MATTERS MILITARY

Away in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Indian Navy and 16 other nations were involved in the six-day "Exercise Milan" that concluded on February 9. The scope of the exercise and its participants is slowly increasing. For the first time since its inception in 1995, the Navy had invited countries on the western rim of the Indian Ocean and also island nations in the region. This time two African nations – Kenya and Tanzania – were invited, besides the island nations of Mauritius, Maldives and Seychelles, all of which are crucial to India's reach in the Indian Ocean. It was also the first time that Philippines and Cambodia – both important for India in the contentious South China Sea – were invited.

Indigenous artillery guns

As the much needed modernisation of the Regiment of Artillery continues to hang fire, an Indian conglomerate has developed two artillery guns that



The 155 mm Bharat-52 gun developed by Kalyani Group.

could offer an alternate to imports that often get bogged down in red-tapism and unsavory controversies. Pune-based Kalyani Group has come up with a 155 mm gun, Christen Bharat-52 and a 105 mm gun called Garuda 105 that were show-cased at the recently concluded DefExpo-1024 at New Delhi.

The guns are however yet to be tested by the Army, for which the company has approached the Ministry of Defence. The Indian army has not procured a new artillery gun since 410 Bofors 155mm howitzers were procured from Sweden in the 1980s. Many of these guns, which performed commendably during the Kargil conflict, are said to be unserviceable due to want of spares.

Remembering a war hero
The martyrdom day of Naik

Jadu Nath Singh, one of the earliest recipients of the Param Vir Chakra, falls this month. Enrolled in 1 Rajput (now 4 Guards) in November 1941, Nath had died fighting Pakistani infiltrators at Naoshera in Jammu and Kashmir on February 6, 1948. He was in command of a forward section post which bore the full brunt of the enemy attack. Nine men had stood against overwhelming odds against successive enemy attacks. With complete disregard for his personal safety, he encouraged his men to fight, warding off two attacks. The enemy launched a massive third attack to capture the post and a wounded Jadu Nath charged out of the bunker with a Sten gun taking the enemy by surprise. In the battle, two bullets hit him in the head and chest.

*(Vijay Mohan and
Ajay Banerjee)*