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INDIAN AIR FORCE



SU-30 Aircraft on patrol

5.1 Ranging from Air Defence of the nation to providing reconnaissance, battle field air strikes and counter air operations during hostilities, the responsibilities of the IAF are multifarious. It also shoulders the peacetime responsibilities like aiding the civil authorities during natural calamities and moving of personnel to maintain law and order. It also meets the requirements of the troops guarding our border outposts in the high ranges of the Himalayas, the deserts of Rajasthan and the inaccessible regions of the North – East. The ‘Operation Safed Sagar’ of 1999 in which the IAF played a decisive role in dislodging the enemy from the daunting and difficult heights of Kargil, provides ample testimony of the predominant role that Air Power will play in any future conflict. The continuously changing strategic and technological environment as a consequence of the revolution in military affairs sweeping the world, and the importance of information exploitation and denial, is nowhere felt more intensely than in Military Aviation.

5.2 In keeping with the challenges of the future in view of and the necessity for optimal utilization of the scarce natural resources, the IAF has embarked upon a course of modernization both through new inductions of aircraft systems and force multipliers and updates of old workhorses and weapon systems like the MiG-21, MiG-27, AN-32, so as to keep pace with the emerging technologies and enhance the fleet life. To ensure most optimal level of training to IAF pilots, the Advanced Jet Trainer is also being acquired in the near future. During the year under review, new weapons were inducted to

achieve a higher state of operational preparedness and emphasis was laid on training in new tasks. These have resulted in heightened operational preparedness and skill levels which will be tried in various operational level exercises. The induction of new equipment such as 40 Mi-17-V-I in the near future and the progress in the SU-30 MK-I and MiG-21 Bis upgrade programmes would further enhance IAF’s operational capabilities.



“Where Eagles Dare”- AN-32 transport Aircraft on logistics supply mission at an Advance Air Base

AIRCRAFT

5.3 **Canberra Aircraft Record:** Capable of Bombing, Photo Reconnaissance, Electronic Warfare and Target Towing, ‘Canberra’ broke the record of ‘Dakota’ this year when it completed 43 years with the IAF to become its oldest aircraft ever. The HAL has also revived its overhaul line.

FIGHTERS

5.4 **Su-30 :** The Su-30 aircraft on IAF strength have been maintained successfully and op-

erationally exploited. Successful local/indigenous repair of prematurely withdrawn Aero engines has helped in saving substantial foreign exchange. Further, within the limited resources of the Air Force, an intermediate repair facility has been set up.

5.5 **Su- 30 MK-I :** Keeping in view the swift progress achieved in the development of Su-30 MK-I and successful integration of all avionics to be fitted on it, delivery of upgraded Su-30 MK-I is expected to commence by the end of 2001.

5.6 **Licensed Manufacture of Su-30 MK-1 :** An Inter Governmental Agreement on licensed manufacture of Su-30 MK-1 was signed in October 2000 during the visit of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Putin. Accordingly, the licensed manufacture of Su-30 MK-I aircraft by HAL, Nasik, has been approved by the Government and a contract for manufacturing these aircraft has been concluded with the Russian authorities.

5.7 **Additional Mirage – 2000 :** Deliveries of 10 Mirage-2000 aircraft have been contracted by the Government for meeting the operational requirements of the Air Force and are likely to commence shortly.

5.8 **Calendar Life Extension of MiG-25 :** The calendar life of the entire MiG-25 fleet expires in 2000-2001. While the foreign vendors had quoted exorbitant costs for suitable changes, a preliminary study carried out by the Maintenance Command, IAF, for its life extension with indigenous effort is showing positive results.

5.9 **MiG-27 Upgrade :** The MiG - 27 ground attack aircraft was inducted into the IAF in 1985. In 1997, it was decided to upgrade the avionics and other systems to convert it in to a formidable weapon platform capable of ground attack by day and night. The development of prototypes is underway at HAL, Nasik Division and modification of the aircraft is likely to be completed in 2005.

5.10 **Modification MiG-23/27 for Electronic Warfare:** The complete fleet of MiG - 27 and some MiG - 23 aircraft are planned to be suitably modified with facilities for Electronic Warfare during 2001.

5.11 **Jaguar Upgrade:** The Jaguar is a dedicated ground attack aircraft of British origin. The Navigation and Weapon Aiming Sub System of the Jaguar has become outdated and needs to be updated. The upgrade consists of replacing/integrating Head Up Display, auto pilot, digital map generator, Ring Laser Gyro (RLG) based on Inertial Global Positioning System (INGPS), mission computer etc. A new Electronic Warfare (EW) suite has been envisaged for meeting the upgradation requirements of the Jaguar aircraft.

5.12 **MiG - 21 :** Due to delay in the production of Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) and acquisition of Advanced Jet Trainer (AJT), MiG-21 aircraft inducted in the IAF during 1963 still continue to be deployed for operation/ training. The shortage of R-11 engines, which are used on MiG-21 variants, was posing a serious problem. IAF has commenced modification of Type 96 MiG-21

fleet with R-13 engines. The spare engines are proposed to be used for continuation of Type 77 fleet for another 5 years, by which time the AJT is expected to be available in full strength. An upgrade programme for the MiG-21, which includes advanced avionics, Electronic Warfare Systems and integration of new weapons and is on the anvil is scheduled to be completed by 2004.

TRAINER AIRCRAFT

5.13 **Advanced Jet Trainer (AJT) :** Negotiations with M/s BAE Systems for acquisition of the Hawk aircraft are presently in progress.

TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT

5.14 **Dornier :** HAL had been carrying out major servicing (1200/2400 line, 3600 hrs) of Dornier aircraft. This year, the task has been entrusted to a unit of the IAF which has already completed the task on one aircraft.

HELICOPTERS

5.15 **Mi-35 Upgrade :** The Mi-35 helicopter is being upgraded to enhance its capability for night operations. The upgrade consists of the incorporation of 'Night Vision Goggles' (NVG), compatible lighting, advanced avionics systems such as "Forward Looking Infra Red (FLIR)", TV Camera, Laser Range Finder, Helmet Mounted Display (day and night) and Doppler Interfaced Global Positioning Navigation System (GPS). The project has reached an advanced stage. Flight demonstration trials have been conducted and fleet modification is expected to commence soon.

5.16 **Mi-17 V-1 :** The IAF is in the process of acquiring Mi - 17 heavy lift helicopters for strengthening its support in the Siachen and other mountain zones. The first batch of the latest Mi - 17 V - 1 multirole helicopters has started arriving. The new helicopters will have better avionics, all weather radar, Global Positioning System and more payload capability. These helicopters will augment the existing fleet to meet the higher commitments in the Siachen Glacier Zone.

5.17 **Advanced Light Helicopters:** The IAF intends to procure Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) as utility helicopters from HAL to replace Chetak. The ALH flight test programme is in an advanced phase, with over 1200 hours having been logged on the four ALH prototypes. The HAL has obtained Government clearance for Limited Series Production (LSP) which would be provisionally certified for the conduct of operational trials by the three Services. The IAF would receive its LSP helicopters in March 2001.

5.18 **Induction of Microlights :** To combat bird strikes at IAF airfields, Streak Shadow Microlights manufactured by CFM LTD, UK, are being inducted in a phased manner. The Microlights will be used for survey of bird activity in local flying, airfield and extended low flying tactical areas, as well as for communications.

5.19 **Induction of Motor Gliders :** The National Defence Academy at Khadakvasla, Pune, flies gliders for training Air Force cadets. As wooden gliders and winches are no longer available, motorgliders have been pro-



OSA-AK-M Air Defence Missile on display at Rajpath during Republic Day Parade- 2001

cured. This is expected to improve the quality of training as well as provide an exposure on powered flying to the Air Force cadets at NDA. Motor Gliders (Super Dimona) have been acquired from Austria.

PILOT-LESS TARGET AIRCRAFT

- 5.20 **Lakshya Induction :** Pilotless Target Aircraft (PTA) Lakshya, developed by DRDO (ADE Bangalore), was procured by IAF for realistic target simulation for Aircraft and Guided Weapon Systems. Successful launches were done at Intermediate Test Range, Chandipur, Orissa on November 2, 2000. Lakshya is a surface/ship launched high sub – sonic aerial target system. It is designed for training land or ship based crew and Air Defence pilots in weapon engagement. The PTA will shortly be in service.

FORCE MULTIPLIERS

- 5.21 **In – Flight Refueller / Flight Refuelling Aircraft:** IAF had mooted a proposal for the purchase of IL-78 as an In - Flight refuelling aircraft to fulfill the long felt need for this force multiplier. The aircraft selected is IL-78, manufactured in Uzbekistan. The aircraft will be fitted with state-of-the-art refuelling pods and avionics. The contract for aircraft delivery is likely to be finalised in the current financial year.
- 5.22 **Unmanned Air Vehicles:** Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAV) are being used all over the world nowadays for surveillance and limited combat roles. With miniaturised electronics,

it has become possible to develop small and light sensors, which can be carried on small size UAVs. Their small size along with their capacity to loiter for very long duration makes the UAV especially suitable for multiple tasks. The UAV systems contain all the elements necessary to achieve the relevant mission, either as standalone system or as an integral part of a total intelligence and weapon delivery system. A contract for an UAV system has been signed and delivery of the UAVs is likely to be completed in 2001.

- 5.23 **Laser Designator Pods:** The ability to deliver the required firepower at the designated time and place is the most decisive factor which determines the outcome of any air operation. Due to non-availability of airborne night vision and designation devices, enemy operations have increasingly been taking recourse to the cover of darkness, with the armour breakout planned mainly at night, in order that they could advance unhindered from the air. The use of Laser Designator Pods (LDP) with thermal imagery has opened up an entirely new range of possibilities for exploiting the cover of darkness to the advantage of strike aircraft, enabling round-the-clock air operations. Some Pods have already been received and are now operational on Jaguar and Mirage fleets. Following their effectiveness in the Kargil conflict, it is now proposed to integrate similar Pods with the MiG-27 and Su-30 fleets as well.

- 5.24 **Night Vision Goggles for Mi-17 and Chee-**

tah: To enhance the capability for special heliborne operations at night, IAF is in the process of modifying the Mi-17s and Cheetahs for flying with Night Vision Goggles (NVG).

AIR DEFENCE AND GROUND ENVIRONMENT SYSTEM

- 5.25 In order to keep pace with the advancement of technology and also to replace the obsolete equipment, digitisation for original analog communication system is in progress. Indigenously developed INDRA - II radar have been inducted in the Air Force. By March 31, 2001, a few more such radars are likely to be inducted.

GROUND WEAPONS

- 5.26 It is proposed to continue using 'Pechora' Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) missile system till 2015. To enhance operational capability and overcome spare crunch, it has been decided to upgrade the existing equipment by digitising.

SURVEILLANCE AND WARNING

- 5.27 In order to enhance IAF's surveillance capability from the current levels, a long-term acquisition plan to attain an integrated multi-sensor surveillance capability at an affordable and credible level, over selected sectors, is considered most critical. The plan to attain a composite and comprehensive enhanced surveillance capability includes acquisition of the following: -

- (a) Airborne Warning And Control System (AWACS)
- (b) Aerostat based surveillance systems
- (c) Low level transportable radars (LLTRs)
- (d) Integrated air command and control systems (IACCS)

5.28 In addition to the above, the IAF has a plan to procure lightweight radars, having the capability to detect objects flying even at low-level, for deployment in the mountainous terrain.

5.29 **Airborne Warning and Control Systems:** The IAF plans to acquire Airborne Warning and Control Systems aircraft equipped with state-of-the-art active-aperture phased-array radars. Two alternative platforms have been identified to install the radar system. In the first alternative, the radar would be mounted on a new modified IL-76 aircraft; in the second, conformal



"GAJRAJ WITH WINGS"- IL76- transport Aircraft ready to take off, in Advance Air Base

arrays would be mounted on the body (fuselage sides) of a new Airbus A-321 aircraft.

5.30 **Aerostat Surveillance Systems:** Aerostat surveillance system is a balloon based radar lofted to a great height, providing round the clock air defence coverage by down linking the data to a ground station. A few aerostat based surveillance systems are required to provide gap-free low - level radar coverage in selected sectors. It is proposed to procure some systems initially, with an option of additional systems to be procured subsequently.

GROUND RADARS

5.31 **Low Level Transportable Radars:** An urgent requirement for positioning three low-level lightweight ground radars in hilly sectors has been accepted. Three radars namely, EDR-140 of Daimler Chrysler, Germany, ELM 2106 of ELTA, Israel and PAGE of SIGNAAL, Holland, have been short-listed for site-evaluation.

5.32 **Repair of Air Defence Radars (ST-68):** Medium repair line for ST-68 Radar has been established at an Air Force Base Repair Depot. The first radar has passed out, while two more are being progressed.

COMMUNICATION AND NAVIGATION AIDS

5.33 **TAC Vehicle :** The project for Radio Vehicles with HF communication sets (MHM 30) for Tactical Air Centres (TAC) was taken up and adequate number of vehicles produced and handed over to operational units.

5.34 **Twin Channel Radio Relay :** Units have already collected containerised vehicles housing Twin Channel Radio Relay Equipment from M/s ECIL for link up of radars. A few more vehicles are under containerisation. All the vehicles are expected in mid 2001.

5.35 **ICS/FAX Modem :** Repair facilities for Integrated Cypher System (ICS) Cards is now available at an Air Force Repair Depot.

5.36 **Multi Channel Radio Relay :** Indigenous one Ton vehicles housing Multi Channel Radio Relays needed for transportable radar units are being procured from Tatas.

AIR MAINTENANCE MATERIAL TRANSPORT

5.37 The planned/achieved tonnage of Air Maintenance Material transported for the years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 is as under:

Year	Fixed Wing Aircraft (Tonnes)		Helicopters (Tonnes)	
	Planned	Achieved Dec 2000	Planned	Achieved Dec 2000
1999- 2000	22563	26064	16883	15395
2000- 2001	24969	14892	13631	9025

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ WARFARE

5.38 **Data Management :** The IAF is working on a philosophy of "Data Warehousing" of information. Standardised software using the

same data fields would be used at the Field Command and Air HQ, for access by all users. The query formats would be tailor-made to the requirement of the user. With the existing connectivity between the users, the operational information could be updated online. The IAF is working with IIT Kanpur for the development of an algorithm for the encryption system. The 128-bit algorithm once approved would be used for bulk encryption as well as for online encryption. The IAF is planning to interact with IIT Kanpur and other IT centres, in order to keep abreast with the latest technology and develop effective Information Warfare weapons.

- 5.39 **Systems / Space Applications :** There has been extensive interaction between the IAF, DRDO and ISRO on Space Based Electronic Intelligence.



*"TOUCH THE SKY WITH GLORY"
"Surya Kiran" - Making the Tri-Colour in the Sky*

- 5.40 **Electronic Warfare:** Steps were taken to enhance the Electronic Warfare (EW) capability by training, developing Electronic Counter Measure (ECM) tactics and equipping our aircraft fleet with state-of-the-art capability. Aircraft are being suitably modified to this end. The EW range is being extensively used for developing ECM tactics and for EW training.

FLIGHT SAFETY

- 5.41 **Prevention of Bird Hits on Aircraft :** An Inter-Ministerial Joint Sub-Committee (IMJSC) has been formed to ensure reduction in the aircraft accidents as a result of bird hits. Projects to ensure prevention of slaughtering the animals in open, which attracts birds, are being progressed by the Ministry of Agriculture.
- 5.42 **Study on Human Error:** An extensive study has been carried out by a panel of experts to identify the areas of concern to reduce aircraft accidents resulting from human error, both on the part of the aircrew and the servicing personnel. The recommendations of this study have been approved by the CAS and are under implementation.
- 5.43 **Interaction with Foreign Air Forces :** A major initiative has been taken by the IAF to increase interaction with foreign Air Forces so as to benefit from their experience and knowledge in reducing aircraft accidents. A French AF team visited India this year.
- 5.44 **Institute of Flight Safety :** The training facilities at the Institute of Flight Safety are also being utilised by the other arms of the Defence Services for training their person-

nel. There is a plan to admit civilian pilots and foreign pilots to the training programmes. A training workshop for the Flight, Maintenance and Administration safety officers was conducted at AF Station, Hindon, during the year under review.

INDIGENISATION

- 5.45 In pursuance of the national aim of self-reliance, the IAF has collaborated with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to forge synergetic relationship with industry on a long-term basis. The indigenisation drive of the IAF, being pursued through the Base Repair Depots, has greatly benefited from the continuous interactions with the CII. In the recent past, two expositions-cum-seminars were held at Ahmedabad and New Delhi in association with CII, to attract medium and small-scale entrepreneurs for establishing indigenous sources of supply and also assist the Base Repair Depots (BRDs) in their developmental activities for import substitution of spares. As on date, over 1100 vendors have been registered with various BRDs and the figure is likely to grow further. The number of items indigenised has also gone up from about 1800 in 1995-96 to 36000 in 1999- 2000.

TRAINING

- 5.46 **Armament Technicians :** Regular courses of one week and four weeks duration have been started at the Armament Training School. Ten such courses have been conducted in which personnel from field units were given a chance to improve their skills.

5.47 **New Training Pattern - Pechora System :** Deputation of technical officers on training for maintenance of Surface to Air Missile (Pechora System) resulted in non-availability of officers for at least nine months in their parent units. As a consequence, adequate expertise for maintaining and sustaining the fleet was not available. With a view to overcome this difficulty, a modified training pattern, reducing the length of training period has been evolved. Cross training in these specialties will ensure availability of requisite manpower.

PROMOTION OF HINDI IN IAF: 2000-2001

5.48 The IAF took adequate steps for promotion of Hindi as an official language.

5.49 **Hindi Workshops :** To overcome the hesitation of the staff to work in Hindi, a workshop was organised during 2000. Three such workshops are planned for the year 2001.

5.50 **Hindi Fortnight (September 14-28, 2000) :** On September 18, 2000, prizes were awarded by Air Officer in-Charge Personnel, to all those who attained positions in various Hindi competitions. This year's Hindi Fortnight saw an increased number of participants. Competitions were also held at Command and Unit levels with enthusiasm. Shields were presented to winners. Competitions in noting and drafting in Hindi were also organised.

5.51 **Hindi Instructions:** Certificates and cash awards were presented to the staff who took part in the Hindi typing/shorthand instructions. A few personnel were taught type writ-

ing, shorthand and computer operations in Hindi. Hindi examinations were held at 21 centers of Indian Air Force for imparting Hindi training.

5.52 **Translation work :**

- (a) Orders and instructions of Air HQ were issued in bilingual form.
- (b) Fourteen instructional manuals of Air Headquarters were translated into Hindi.
- (c) Four personnel qualified as Hindi Translators.

TRAINING OF IAF PERSONNEL ABROAD

5.53 Details of reciprocal programmes with friendly foreign countries are as follows:

(a) **France :** Qualified Flying Instructor (QFI) exchange programme and helicopter / transport pilots exchange programme are under consideration of the two Air Forces. A training delegation from the French Air Force, comprising 85 cadets and 15 Staff officers, visited the Air Force Academy in July 2000.

(b) **USA :** One Indian QFI is in USA and one US QFI is in India under the QFI exchange programme. At present, the following IAF officers are undergoing one - year course of instruction in USA since June 2000:

- (i) Group Captain D Kukreja at the National Defence University at Washington DC for International Fellows Programme.

(ii) Group Captain AS Karnik at Montgomery, Alabama; for Air War College Course.

(iii) Squadron Leader KB Karumbaya at Montgomery, Alabama; for Air Command and Staff College Course.

(c) **United Kingdom :** Presently, three IAF Officers are undergoing RCDS, UK Advance Command and Staff Course and Aircraft Accident and Investigation Courses. Deputation of one IAF officer for Advanced Command and Staff College Course during the year 2000-2001 has been approved. Exchanges approved for the year 2000-2001 are: -

(i) Three officers from each country to DSSC/JS Command and Staff Course.

(ii) One officer from each country to NDC/Royal College of Defence Studies.

(d) **Russia :** A general agreement has been signed between the Government of India and the Department of International Military Cooperation of the Russian Federation for reciprocal training programmes.

5.54 **Training of Foreign Students in IAF Training Establishments :** Foreign students are availing training facilities in IAF training establishments. Projections of all friendly countries are received each year. The facilities extended in IAF establishments are detailed below:

- (a) **Sri Lanka** : Training of Sri Lankan Air Force personnel is undertaken at IAF training establishments under the 'Special Aid to Sri Lanka' and under self-financing schemes.
- (b) **Other Countries** : Officers and airmen from Bangladesh, Ghana, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria and Zambia are undergoing training at various training establishments in India. In addition the Ministry of External Affairs has offered slots to Namibia, Kenya and Uganda. The requirements of Cambodia, Nepal and Tanzania are presently under consideration.

RECRUITMENT

- 5.55 There are 13 selection centres spread all over India and they make necessary arrangement for the conduct of selection test and final enrolment. After inviting applications through advertisement in national and regional dailies and through the mass media, a written test on All India basis is held and an All India Merit List drawn up for the purpose of recruitment. Enrolment is done in order of merit. Allocation of trade is made on the basis of Trade Allocation Test. The number of candidates recruited from April 1 to September 30, 2000 is as follows: -

MTD (drivers)	Non- Tech.	Tech.		Edn. Inst.	Total
		Inter.	Matric.		
53	241	58	245	14	611

DISCHARGE

- 5.56 **Diploma/Trade Certificate/Apprenticeship on Discharge** : To enhance rehabilitation avenues and for resettlement in civil life, it has been decided to issue trade equivalent Diploma/National Trade Certificate/ National Apprenticeship Certificate to Airmen on discharge.

CEREMONIAL FUNCTIONS

- 5.57 **Kargil Diwas** : Air Force Fighters flew past the India Gate during the wreath laying ceremony by the President on the Kargil Diwas celebrated on July 26, 2000. The invisible fourth, in the three aircraft 'Missing Man' formation, depicted the sacrifice made by those brave soldiers who were no more in our midst. The aircraft armaments displayed during the Defence Exhibition included fighter aircraft, namely, MiG-21, Mirage, Jaguar and Mig-27; Helicopters, namely, Mi-17, Mi-8, and Cheetah; Armament Trailers; ancillary equipment; and a P -18 Radar.

- 5.58 **Colour Presentation** : The President of India presented Colours to Air Force Administrative College and Presidential Standard to 35 Sqn on October 24, 2000 at Air Force Station, Bareilly. A Photo Exhibition was organized depicting the pictorial history of both the recipient units. The President also released a First Day Cover to commemorate the historic occasion.

- 5.59 **Honours and Awards** : The following awards were conferred by the President of India during the period under report :

Rank	Name	Award
Squadron Leader	Santosh Kumar Ebenezer	Shaurya Chakra
Squadron Leader	Prashant Eknath Patange	Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry)
Flight Lieutenant	Rajat Saha	Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry)
Corporal	Pawan Kumar Gupta	Jeevan Raksha Padak

- 5.60 **Grant of Honorary Commission/Promotions**: The total number of Honorary Commission/Promotion to Hon. Flt Lts granted on August 15, 2000 and on January 26, 2001 are as follows:-

	15 Aug 2000	26 Jan 2001
(i) Hon. Commission to the rank of Fg Offr	108	222
(ii) Hon. Fg Offrs promoted to Hon. Flt Lt	21	56

MEDICAL

- 5.61 **AIDS Control Programme** : A strategy to implement this National programme has been devised and Information, Education and Communication(IEC) nodes have been set up to facilitate AIDS control. A study revealed that the incidence of HIV is lowest in the Air Force.
- 5.62 **Waste Management Project** : Command Hospital, Air Force Bangalore (CHAFFB) was chosen by the World Health Organisation

for Hospital Waste Management Project. The project module developed at CHAFB will be replicated in other hospitals of Armed Forces and health care institutions of the country.

WELFARE INFORMATION TO PERSONNEL

- 5.63 **Touch Screen** : The first of its kind, a touch screen query processing cell, providing valuable information and services to the Air Force personnel was set up at Air Force Central Accounts Office on March 24, 2000 and has been duplicated at Vayu Bhavan. The touch screen information kiosk provides information on Pay, Allowances, Provident Fund, Income Tax, and Retirement Benefits to all IAF personnel.
- 5.64 **Group Insurance Society** : Air Force Group Insurance Society (AFGIS) provides insurance, loans and other related services to Air Force personnel, serving as well as retired, and the widows of the deceased Air Force personnel. The society has a membership of more than 3 lakh individuals (serving, retired Air Force personnel and widows of deceased personnel). All the activities of the society are computerised to provide efficient,

prompt and effective services to the members of the Society. In its silver jubilee year, AFGIS has taken one more step in the direction of improving the services to its members by installing automated on-line interactive touch screen query system with voice assistance.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE SCHEME

- 5.65 Family assistance scheme under the aegis of IAF Benevolent Association provided long term financial security to 5013 bereaved families and disbursed Rs 7 crores towards rehabilitation grant during 1999-2000. Welfare loan at affordable rates of interest were provided to IAF personnel for improvement in quality of life. Educational scholarships were awarded to the wards of 1384 Air Force personnel and Rs 42,84,500 were disbursed during 1999-2000. Interest-free advance to meet expenditure on specialised medical treatment was provided to 240 personnel and Rs 189.31 lakhs were disbursed as loan for this purpose. New schemes for house building, conveyance and computers advance for retired personnel has been introduced from June 1, 2000 under Retired Pensioners Investment Scheme.

SPORTS AND ADVENTURE

- 5.66 The Indian Air Force - Sri Lankan Air Force Weightlifting Meet 2000 was held at AF Chandigarh on October 22-23, 2000. Weightlifters from Sri Lankan Air Force and Indian Air Force competed in this meet to promote goodwill and friendly relations between the two countries. The IAF lifters won in all the weight categories.
- 5.67 The Air Force added new dimensions to aerospots with the introduction of Tandem Skydiving, Paragliding, Paramotors, X- Air Microlight Flying and Skydiving from Microlights. Two officers are now competent to carry out Tandem Skydiving with passengers and novices.
- 5.68 **First Couple to Skydive** : Two Helicopter Pilots of the Air force, Sqdn Ldr Vasant Raj and Flt Lt (Mrs) Bhavna became the first husband and wife combination to do skydiving together during the passing out parade of the 98th NDA course on May 30, 2000.
- 5.69 **'Sky Dive' at the South Pole** : Flt Lt Kamal Oberh para-jumped at the South Pole on January 1, 2000, becoming the first Indian to do so. With this, the IAF personnel have successfully para-jumped over both the poles.