

## **DCNS threatens legal action against 'The Australian' to prevent further publication on Scorpene leak**

29/08/2016 22:49 by admin

**Nice (France):** French naval contractor DCNS has threatened an injunction against Australian daily "The Australian" for further publishing the leaked documents of India's confidential Scorpene submarine project.

The DCNS has also sought a court order to the newspaper to hand over the documents in its possession and removal of the contents from its website.

"The publication of this highly valuable document causes a direct harm to DCNS and its customer in terms of spread of sensitive and restricted information, image and reputation," The Australian quoted an affidavit by DCNS lawyer Justine Munsie.

The newspaper had said that it will publish the documents regarding the weapons system of the submarine on Monday.

Over 22,000 pages of top secret data on the capabilities of six highly advanced submarines being built for the Indian Navy in Mumbai in collaboration with a French company have been leaked.

The move by DCNS comes after a former commander of US Pacific fleet Submarine Force warned that the leaks would undermine the confidence in the ability of French companies to protect classified information.

Rear Admiral (Retd) John Padgett, who is also the president of the US Naval Submarine League, has said that aggressive action needed to be taken to probe the leak and that France should share the outcome with Australia.

The secret data included details of the capabilities of SM39 anti-ship missile expected to be used on the Scorpene and classified information about the number of targets the missile was capable of processing.

Explaining the implications of the leak, Admiral Padgett said "It is never good for an opponent to have your playbook."

"As a member of NATO, the French government and French military demonstrate that they enforce effective security controls and have a solid reputation with their allies," he said.

He said the investigation had to determine exactly how the breach occurred and what "aggressive action" would be taken to correct deficient security controls.

His comments came as a French public prosecutor opened a preliminary investigation into the data leak, with DCNS filing a complaint for breach of trust.

"We filed a complaint against unknown persons for breach of trust with the Paris prosecutor," said a DCNS spokesman.

The DCNS has won a contract to design Australia's new \$50 billion submarine fleet.

- (With inputs from PTI)