

Weekly Defence News Update from 27 April to 3 May 2020

Category	Date	Heading	Details
DPSUs and PSUs	29-04-2020	HAL allowed to resume work from Tuesday with fewer employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Home Affairs has allowed HAL to resume manufacturing operations as an essential defence service from Tuesday, 28 April 2020, but with curtailed staff and under strict safety guidelines.
International News	27-04-2020	Elbit Systems awarded \$103 million to supply airborne electronic warfare suites to a country in Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elbit Systems announced on Sunday, 26 April 2020, that it was awarded a contract valued at approximately \$103 million to supply comprehensive Electronic Warfare (EW) suites for an Air Force of an Asian country. The contract will be performed over a three-year period and includes long-term integrated logistic support. Under the contract, Elbit Systems will fit the customer's helicopters with complete EW suites, including countermeasure systems.
	28-04-2020	Saab completes testing of new AESA Radar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saab has successfully completed the first air trials with its new fighter X-band AESA radar, which will be offered as a new addition to Saab's PS-05/A radar family. The trials were flown successfully, collecting data while detecting and tracking objects. The radar is designed for fighter aircrafts and can be adapted to a variety of platforms. As Saab previously announced, a version of the new AESA antenna has been sold to a U.S. Government customer. The host aircraft during the air trial was a Gripen D aircraft, which is currently offered with Saab's latest Mk4 radar. The new version of the radar can be offered to Gripen C/D operators, as an upgrade. The new AESA radar features GaN, a material that gives lower power consumption and improved heat resistance. This enables wider bandwidth and greater reliability, availability and efficiency. The new fighter X-band AESA radar will, for example, have better performance against small targets, enhanced Electronic Counter-Countermeasures (ECCM) capability as well as improved ability to support more advanced weaponry.
	28-04-2020	Australia cancels premier multilateral air combat training exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australia has informed India that their premier multilateral air combat training exercise Pitch Black 2020 scheduled from July 27 to August 14 has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was conveyed by Air Marshal Meg Hupfeld, Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), in a letter to Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria, in mid-April. The next edition of Pitch Black is scheduled in 2022. In the last edition of Pitch Black in 2018, the IAF for the first time deployed fighter aircrafts which it had said would "provide a unique opportunity for exchange of knowledge and experience with these nations in a dynamic warfare environment". The contingent consisted of 145 personnel, four Su-30MKI fighters, one C-130 and one C-17 transport aircraft which went to Australia via Indonesia and during the transit also had constructive engagements with Indonesian and Malaysian Air Forces.
	28-04-2020	Airbus to develop thermal instrument to support French-Indian climate satellite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airbus Defence and Space has entered an agreement with the French Space Agency, Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES), to develop a thermal instrument for the TRISHNA satellite which will monitor climate change. TRISHNA will be the latest satellite in the joint Franco-Indian satellite fleet dedicated to climate monitoring and operational applications. CNES and ISRO have joined forces to develop an observation system with high thermal resolution. Observations from the new satellite are expected to enhance the understanding of the water cycle, improve management of the planet's water resources and better define the impacts of climate change, especially at local levels.
	1/5/2020	Lockheed Martin to provide India with electro-optical fire-control system for AH-64 attack helicopters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lockheed Martin will provide the militaries of India and Taiwan with an electro-optical fire-control system that helps AH-64 Apache attack helicopter crews fire weapons accurately and navigate safely in bad weather and at night. Officials of the U.S. Army Contracting Command at Rock Island Arsenal, Ill., announced a \$67.6 million order to the Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control segment in Orlando, Fla., for the Modernized Target Acquisition Designation Sight/Pilot Night Vision Sensor (M-TADS/PNVS) system and its subcomponents for the Boeing AH-64D/E Apache helicopter.
	28-04-2020	With flights grounded, Navy begins runway maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking advantage of the suspension of flights due to the lockdown, the Indian Navy has commenced maintenance and repairs of the runway at the Goa International Airport at Dabolim. The maintenance activity, being done by the Military Engineer Services (MES), will continue till May 7. The repairs, which began on April 25, have been going on even as the navy and Airports Authority of India coordinate international relief flights which are evacuating foreign nationals who are stranded in Goa due to the lockdown. This is regular pre-monsoon maintenance to ensure the health of the runway and to prevent foreign object damage to the aircraft engines.

Miscellaneous	29-04-2020	India replaces Russia as third largest military spender: SIPRI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India has now become the third largest military spender in the world, behind the United States and China, according to data released by SIPRI. • India's military expenditure stood at \$71.1 billion in 2019, a 6.8% increase compared with 2018, as per SIPRI's annual report data released on Monday (27 April 2020). • Total global military expenditure rose by 3.6 % to \$1.917 trillion in 2019, which was the largest annual growth in spending since 2010. • The world's military spending in 2019 was equivalent to 2.2 % of the global gross domestic product (GDP), which equates to approximately \$249 per person. • Global military expenditure was 7.2 % higher in 2019 than it was in 2010. • The five largest spenders in 2019, which accounted for 62 % of expenditure, were the United States, China, India, Russia and Saudi Arabia. • This was the first time that two Asian states had featured among the top three military spenders. In 2019, China was the second largest military spender in the world, with its expenditure reaching \$261 billion in 2019, a 5.1 % increase compared with 2018. • In addition to China and India, Japan (\$47.6 billion) and South Korea (\$43.9 billion) were the largest military spenders in Asia and Oceania. • Military spending by the United States grew by 5.3 % to \$732 billion in 2019 and accounted for 38 % of global military spending.
	29-04-2020	India Extends \$150 Million Foreign Currency Swap Support to Maldives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2019, Russia increased its military expenditure by 4.5 % to \$65.1 billion. • India extended a \$150 million foreign currency swap support to the Maldives on Tuesday, 28 April 2020, to help the strategically important Indian Ocean island nation mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. • The swap facility was extended under \$400 million currency swap arrangement signed between India and the Maldives last July. • The currency swap facility is part of the \$1.4 billion economic package announced by India for the Maldives during the state visit of President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih in December 2018. <p>• The Maldives is the only country, other than Bhutan, which has been extended the \$400 million currency swap facility.</p>