

Hindu, 1 June 2008

IAF reopens base after 43 years

Leh: The Indian Air Force (IAF) on Saturday operationalised the Daulatbeg Oldi (DBO) airbase in the Ladakh region after a gap of 43 years. An AN-32 transport aircraft carrying Air Officer-in-Chief Western Air Command Air Marshal P.K. Barbora landed at the unpaved runway at 8.50 a.m. after flying from Chandigarh. The airbase could give India the capability to have an eye on the strategic Karakoram highway that links China and Pakistan

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Indian Express, 6 June 2008

LCA needs new engine to be worthy of combat

New Delhi, June 5: The home-grown Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), which is set to be inducted in 2011, will not be able to fly with a full-weapon load and will also need a new engine-instead of the Kaveri engine-to meet the minimum requirements for fighter aircraft drawn up by the Indian Air Force (IAF). To accommodate these modifications, the planes will also need to be redesigned. In what could be a deathblow to the indigenous fighter programme, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has conceded that the first lot of planes to enter service will not only carry a limited load of weapons but will also have a restricted 'angle of attack', making them unsuitable for aerial combat

Indian Express, 6 June 2008

Israel outsources \$100-mn composites for UAVs to India

New Delhi, June 5: In its first major defence export to the country, India has inked a \$100-million deal to sell composite materials to Israel for its future generation of mini Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). Under the recently signed contract, Indian aviation giant Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) will export lightweight composite materials, manufactured from carbon fibers, to Israel. While the composites are primarily intended for a new Israeli mini UAV project, they will also be used for space applications, Government sources said

Indian Express, 7 June 2008

Hot weather trials over, LCA readies for ground attack test

New Delhi, June 6: After firing its first air-to-air missile in October last year, the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) is heading for a crucial test of its ground attack capabilities in Rajasthan. The trial, which is the next step in the weaponisation of the home grown fighter, will see the LCA delivering precision guided bombs in the Pokhran firing ranges later this year. The weaponisation of the aircraft started last year with the test firing of a Russian R-73 close combat missile from the fighter off the Goa coast

Hindu, 9 June 2008

Delay in Hawk delivery schedules

BANGALORE: Delivery schedules of the Hawk Mk 132 Advanced Jet Trainer are being

delayed by a month or two owing to technical hitches in some of the British manufactured aircraft supplied to the Indian Air Force. As per the latest reworked schedule, all 24 Hawks that are to be built by the BAE Systems were to be delivered before June end

Times of India, 19 June 2008

'Pilot error' caused Hawk crash in April: IAF probe

NEW DELHI: 'Pilot error', not mechanical failure, was primarily responsible for the crash of a spanking new Hawk AJT (advanced jet trainer) at Bidar airbase in Karnataka on April 29. The IAF court of inquiry has held that the crash of the two-seater Hawk - the two pilots, fortunately, escaped alive - was mainly due to 'pilot error' and 'miscommunication' between the two AJTs which were taking off together during the episode

Hindu, 20 June 2008

IAF wants DRDL to refine Akash

BANGALORE: Three months ago an order from the Air Force for a substantial number of the Akash medium range, surface-to-air missile (SAM) system seemed just a few bureaucratic signatures away. However, with the Air Force communicating to the Defence Ministry that the missile does not, in its present version, meet some critical operating requirements, the acquisition process could be longer than expected

Hindu, 23 June 2008

HAL's Intermediate Jet Trainer programme gets a timely boost

BANGALORE: The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's floundering Intermediate Jet Trainer (IJT) programme just got a shot in the arm. A prototype of the long-delayed Russian engine that will power the trainer has arrived here. Developed by the Russian aero engine house NPO Saturn and christened AL-55I (I for Indian), the custom-made engine which was to have arrived last November has a higher thrust rating than the French-made Snecma Larzac 04H20 engine, currently flying the two IJT prototypes.