

Saab to build Carl-Gustaf M4 rocket launcher in India

Swedish weapons giant says legacy supply chain can switch to new product

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Since 1976, Indian infantry platoons have been equipped with the 84-millimetre (mm) Carl-Gustaf M3 rocket launcher, developed by Swedish weapons giant, Saab, and manufactured by India's Ordnance Factory Board (OFB).

This has proved to be a lethal infantry weapon against enemy tanks, blowing up enemy bunkers, or outhouses where militants took shelter.

Now, Saab believes the Carl-Gustaf M3, which is still in service with numerous militaries worldwide, is ready to be replaced by a new-generation M4 version of the rocket launcher. With the Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD) promoting the "Make in India" policy, Saab has applied to set up a manufacturing facility in India to build the new Carl-



The 84-mm Carl Gusaf M3 rocket launchers have proven their utility in counter-insurgency operations, by bringing down buildings in which militants had taken shelter

Gustaf M4 rocket launcher.

The new M4 version, which is carried and fired by a two-man crew, has a longer range of 1,500 metres, a sophisticated new sighting system that makes it difficult to miss the target and weighs 7.5 kg against the 11 kg of the M3 version. Production in the new facility is planned to start in 2024.

January, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had raised the slogan: "Make in India; Make for the world".

"The new company, Saab FFV India, currently under registration, will make the latest generation of the state-of-the-art [rocket launcher] in India. Saab will partner Indian sub-suppliers and the systems manufactured in the facility will fully meet the requirements of 'Make in India'," a Saab press release stated on Tuesday.

Saab has applied for a manufacturing licence for a 100 per cent Saab subsidiary. There is a 74 per cent cap on foreign ownership of defence firms, and 100 per cent foreign ownership is permitted only when there is going to be an inflow of high technology. Saab says it will cross that bar, with the latest technologies going into the 84 mm Carl-Gustaf M4.

Neither the MoD, nor the Army, has shown interest yet in buying the new rocket launcher, but Saab believes they will someday. Until then, India will be the manufacturing and supply hub from which Saab can supply the M4 Carl-Gustaf to militaries around the world.

Addressing the World Economic Forum in Davos last

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