

HAL needs new orders to keep production going after 2021-22

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is betting on the Indian Air Force (IAF) to place a multi-billion dollar order for an advanced version of the indigenously produced Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Tejas, before the financial year ends, said an official

By Rahul Singh

New Delhi: State-run aircraft maker Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) needs fresh orders for fighter jets, trainers and helicopters fast to prevent a complete halt of production at its facilities, two senior government officials said, asking not to be named.

HAL's order books are empty beyond 2021-22 and new orders from the armed forces are critical for continuity in production, the government has told Parliament's standing committee on defence.

The company is betting on the Indian Air Force (IAF) to place a multi-billion dollar order for an advanced version of the indigenously produced Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Tejas, before the financial year ends, said one of the two officials cited above. The air force plans to buy 83 LCA Mk-1A jets, taking the total number of Tejas variants ordered to 123.

Another order that HAL is eyeing is the supply of 70 locally produced basic trainers to the IAF. If it gets the order for the Hindustan Turbo Trainer-40 (HTT-40), HAL could begin production of the trainers by early 2021, the second official said.

As part of its existing orders, HAL has to supply 24 LCA jets and a few Sukhoi-30s to the IAF.

"HAL's production over last several years has been growing with highest turnover of ~19,705 crore recorded in the financial year 2018-19. However, the major part of existing orders for supply of aircraft and helicopters will be liquidated shortly with the major manufacturing order of Su-30MKI being completed in 2019-20," the defence ministry told the standing committee on defence last month.

The ministry stressed that production would be hit for want of new orders. "Considering production/procurement lead time of 18 to 24 months involved in the manufacture of aircraft/helicopters, the existing facilities at HAL face the threat of idling and production will show a declining trend for want of confirmed orders."

In a report tabled in Parliament last month, the committee said "all-out steps" should be taken to ensure that the "order book position" of defence public sector units improves in the coming years and the ministry should extend full cooperation to achieve that.

"As the production in the DPSUs [defence public sector units] is majorly contingent upon the operational needs of the armed forces, the committee recommends that timely intimation and placement of orders by the services, along with necessary financial support from the defence ministry wherever necessitated, must be provided to the DPSUs to arrest the decline in their production," the panel said in its report.

HAL is the only plane maker in the country and it is in everyone's interest that it stays in good health, said Air Vice Marshal Manmohan Bahadur (retd), additional director general, Centre for Air Power Studies.

"The ball is still in HAL's court. A prototype of the Tejas Mk-1A is yet to fly. Only then can the IAF place an order," Bahadur said.

The 40 LCAs already ordered by the IAF, of which 16 have been delivered, are in the initial operational clearance (IOC) and the more advanced final operational clearance (FOC) configurations.

The LCA Mk-1A will come with additional improvements over the FOC aircraft, making it the most advanced Tejas variant so far.

The Mk-1A variant is expected to come with digital radar warning receivers, external self-protection jammer pods, active electronically scanned array radar, advanced beyond-visual-range missiles and significantly improved maintainability.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/hal-needs-new-orders-to-keep-production-going-after-2021-22/story-4TUA9hvTQ0sm7ZoLz0LBgO.html>



Sat, 11 Jan 2020

Arjun Tank Hub comes up at Jaisalmer military station

For providing speedy and focused repair to vital assemblies of the indigenous Arjun main battle tank (MBT), Arjun Hub was inaugurated on Thursday at Jaisalmer Military Station by lieutenant general V S Sreenivas, General Officer Commanding Konark Corps.

Army official sources said, “Arjun Hub at Jaisalmer Military Station was inaugurated on Thursday. There are regiments of Arjun Tank already in Jaisalmer.

This initiative marks a significant step towards Indian Army’s effort to develop an all-encompassing and inclusive ecosystem to provide impetus to public-private partnerships towards enhancing operational availability of Arjun main battle tank.”

Battle Axe Division GOC Major General Rakesh Kapoor, DRDO scientists and many senior Army officers were present on the occasion.

<https://www.defencenews.in/article/Arjun-Tank-Hub-comes-up-at-Jaisalmer-Military-Station-808805>



DRDO laboratory makes lighter bullet-proof army jackets

There was need for a bullet-proof jacket which was skin-friendly and was made of a lighter material, and now they are ready, said DMSRDE officials

By Pearl Maria D'Souza

Bangalore: Following more than 50 trials and four decades after commencing research on bullet-proof jackets, the Defence Materials and Stores R&D Establishment (DMSRDE) laboratory in Kanpur has come up with one which is 10kg lighter than before, and is on display at the Pride of India Exhibition of the 107th Indian Science Congress at University in Agricultural Sciences (UAS) GKVK Campus.

There was need for a bullet-proof jacket which was skin-friendly and was made of a lighter material, and now they are ready, said DMSRDE officials. The bullet-proof jacket as per the General Staff Qualitative Requirement (GSQR) 1438 of the Indian Army was successfully developed and covers the vital body areas of the human body – like the neck, heart, liver, stomach, spleen, intestines and groin, from the collar, throat, front, side, rear and groin – with armour panels.



It provides protection against 9 mm small machine carbine bullets, AK-47, and Self Loading Rifle ammunition, according to officials of the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO), under which DMSRDE functions.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/karnataka/2020/jan/04/laboratory-makes-lighter-bullet-proof-army-jackets-2084834.html>