

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
DEFENCE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2885

ANSWERED ON:12.12.2011

CAPABILITIES OF AIR FORCE

Chacko Shri P.C.;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin;Singh Shri Dhananjay ;Tewari Shri Manish

**Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:**

- (a) the total amount earmarked for current purchase of 126 Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) for Indian Air Force and whether this amount will have to be revised upwards and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of offset opportunities offered by all interested bidders in this regard;
- (c) the total number of MMRCA, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) compared to Pakistan's Air Force fleet and Chinese Air Force fleet;
- (d) the current squadron strength of Indian Air Force (IAF) and the trends in this regard for the last ten years and whether the squadron strength will reach 42 by the end of 2022 as envisaged and the steps needed to be taken to achieve this goal;
- (e) whether LCA Tejas is planned to be cleared for operational service by late 2012 and if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether a substantial part of the helicopter fleet including the attack helicopters has completed their prescribed life and IAF has been unable to induct even a single helicopter to its fleet during the past several years as reported recently and if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) whether the acquisitions are due to be made to modernize and upgrade IAF's transport and helicopter fleets and if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

- (a) The Defence Acquisitions Council had accorded Acceptance of Necessity for the procurement of 126 Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) at an estimated cost of 42,000 crore on 29th June 2007. The proposal is now at the contract negotiations stage and the final cost of the procurement would be known only after completion of the negotiations and finalization of the contract.
- (b) The offset proposals have been evaluated in accordance with the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2006 and they relate to direct purchase of defence products or services or direct investments with Indian offset partners as per the offset guidelines stipulated in the DPP.
- (c) & (d): The operational capabilities of the Indian Air Force (IAF) are periodically reviewed to ensure that they are adequate to meet the security challenges. It would not be in the interest of national security to divulge the details.
- (e) The Light Combat Air craft (LCA) is expected to achieve Initial Operational Clearance (IOC) for induction into the IAF in 2012.
- (f) The major part of the helicopter fleet have useful residual life which is being gainfully utilized. Steps have been taken to both upgrade the existing fleet as well as to induct new helicopters for various tasks. Contracts have been signed for procurement of Medium Lift Helicopters from M/s Rosobornexport, Russia and Advanced Light Helicopter from M/s Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.
- (g) The IAF is in the process of modernization of its transport and helicopter fleet. This includes induction of C-130J-30 Transport Aircraft, C-17 Heavy Transport Aircraft, Medium Transport Aircraft as well as helicopters for various transport, recce and surveillance and operational tasks.