

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:277

ANSWERED ON:10.02.2014

INTERMEDIATE JET TRAINER

Bishnoi Shri Kuldeep;Singh Alias Pappu Singh Shri Uday

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a substantial delay by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in handing over Intermediate Jet Trainer (IJT) Sitara to Indian Air Force (IAF);

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons for missing several deadlines by HAL since 2007;

(c) whether any new target date has been fixed for handing over IJT Sitara by HAL to IAF; and

(d) if so, the time by which IJT Sitara is likely to have the initial operational clearance and is handed over to IAF for intermediate training of pilots?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 277 FOR ANSWER ON 10.02.2014

(a) & (b): The project was sanctioned in 1999 and the first and second prototypes flew in March 2003 and in March, 2004 respectively.

The prototypes were initially flight tested with the LARZAC engines from SNECMA. To meet the technical parameters, a higher powered engine, AL-55I from Russia, was selected based on a global tender. Due to developmental issues in Russia, flight-worthy engines were supplied to HAL in January, 2009 against the contractual schedule of January, 2007. Flights with these Engines commenced in May, 2009 after resolution of Engine-Aircraft Interface issues with the Russians.

The Progress of project was affected due to loss of prototype during flight testing which necessitated major changes like total redesign of flight control system and associated increased number of design iteration for recovery and resolution.

(c) & (d): Presently, the development of IJT is in the advanced stages of certification with more than 800 test flights completed so far. The activities are progressing well with completion of Sea-level trials, Night flying trials, High altitude trials as well as weapon and drop tank trials. The activities left for obtaining Final Operational Clearance (FOC) are the refinement of stall characteristics and thereafter spin testing.

All efforts are being made for achieving FOC by December 2014. Production of the aircraft will commence immediately thereafter.