

Nigeria, Philippines, Argentina showing interest in procuring Tejas jets: HAL chief

NEW DELHI, Dec 7 (PTI)

NIGERIA, Philippines, Argentina and Egypt have shown interest in procuring indigenously-developed Tejas Light Combat aircraft, CB Ananthakrishnan, the Chairman and Managing Director of the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, said on Thursday.

Ananthakrishnan said talks are on with these countries for the possible procurement.

"Nigeria, Philippines and Egypt are keen to procure Tejas Light Combat aircraft,"

Ananthakrishnan told PTI on the sidelines of an event.

On how India will proceed with the supply of the Tejas jets to Argentina if the procurement fructifies as the aircraft has some components sourced from the United Kingdom, the Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) said a way would be found out in such a scenario.

After the 1982 Falklands War, the UK imposed an embargo on military sales to Argentina and especially prevented sup-

ply of hardware manufactured by it.

In view of the British restrictions, it is perceived that supply of military hardware comprising components sourced from the UK may not be easy for India.

In July, the Argentine defence minister visited India with a focus on enhancing defence industrial partnership.

The HAL had inked an agreement with the Argentinian Air Force to provide spares and services its two-tonne class helicopters.

The defence ties between India and the Philippines have been on an upswing in the last few years.



C B Ananthakrishnan

India conducts training launch of short-range ballistic missile Agni-1

Performance was validated using data obtained by many tracking systems, including radar, telemetry and electro-optical systems

BALASORE, Dec 7 (PTI)

INDIA on Thursday successfully conducted the training launch of short-range ballistic missile 'Agni-1 from APJ Abdul Kalam Island, off the Odisha coast, a defence official said.

"Agni-1 is a proven very high precision missile system. The user training launch, carried out under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command, successfully validated all operational and technical parameters," said the official.

Thursday's performance was validated using data obtained by many tracking systems, including radar, telemetry and electro-optical systems, the official said.

These systems were deployed at different locations along the flight path, including two down-range ships at the terminal point, and covered the entire trajectory.

The missile was successfully test-fired last time on June 1 from the same base. In October last year, India successfully test-fired 'Agni Prime' - a new generation of ballistic missiles - from off the coast of Odisha.

Cash-strapped Pakistan

Gets \$655 mn ADB package

■ By Sajjad Hussain

ISLAMABAD, Dec 7 (PTI)

CASH-STRAPPED Pakistan has secured a USD 655 million financing package, including an expensive USD 300 million loan at market rates, from the Asian Development Bank, days after Finance Minister Shamshad Akhtar declared the country's public debt as "unsustainable".

The ADB approved a financing package for Pakistan under three different loans. Among other components, these



include USD 300 million for improving domestic resource mobilisation; USD 275 million for rehabilitating schools damaged by the devastating August 2022 floods; and USD 80 million for enhancing agricultural productivity to improve food security, ADB said on Wednesday.