Combat Aircraft concerns

Why in news?

\n\n

The dysfunctional procurement of light combat aircraft is hindering the growth of indigenous defence sector.

\n\n

What are the recent aircraft deals?

\n\n

\n
- **Gripen E -** Swedish company Saab and the Adani Group agreed to build the Gripen E single-engine fighter in India.
\n
- **F-16 -** US-major Lockheed Martin and Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL) to build the F-16 Block 70.
\n
- **Mirage 2000 -**With the support of Dassault Aviation (French) and Thales teams as per the contract, these aircrafts are upgraded.
\n
- French vendor Dassault proposed shifting the Mirage 2000 production line to India.
\n
- **MiG29 M -** Deal have been initiated between Russia and IAF for procurement of MiG-29M.
\n
- Super Hornet- Boeing had made a deal to manufacture with F/A-18E/F Super Hornet in India.
\n
- **Typhoon -**Eurofighter GmbH consortium had offered the Typhoon deal to India.
\n

\n\n

What are the issues with combat aircraft procurement?

\n\n

\n
- From 1999 Indian Air Force demanded 126 combat aircraft to replace its ageing fleet of MiG-21 and MiG-27 light fighters.
\n
- It was originally hoped that the Tejas light combat aircraft would replace the MiGs.
\n
- But IAF decided to supplement its three-squadron fleet of Mirage 2000 multi-role fighters, which had performed well during Kargil.
\n
- The IAF immediate requirement was 126 fighters, the Tejas production was not able to meet that target.
\n
- The original plan to build an affordable, single-engine, light fighter was officially dead.
\n
- IAF finally picked the Rafael, the most expensive heavy fighter in the list.
\n
- It has ordered 36 Raffles for a mind-boggling ^7.87 billion, which is one-and-a-half times what was budgeted for 126medium range combat aircraft.
\n

\n\n

What are the characteristics of Tejas aircraft?

\n\n

\n
- The Tejas is an Indian single-seat, single-jet engine, multirole light fighter.
\n
- It is the smallest and lightest in its class of contemporary supersonic combat aircraft.
\n
- It is designed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Indian Air Force and Navy
\n
- As of 2016 the Tejas MK1 Only 21 aircrafts has been produced for the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the naval version was undergoing flight tests for Indian Navy (IN).
\n
- This indigenously produced will reduce the monetary constrains, and provide more efficiency of Indian Defence.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Business Standard

\n