HAL Defence Capability

What is the issue?

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- The union government is pessimistic about India’s defence production capability.
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- HAL need to demonstrate technological and production competence in this regard.
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What are the concerns over HAL?

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- In recent times Rafale controversy is playing out and the biggest fall guy from this is undoubtedly the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), whose very credentials and existence are being questioned, even by government figures.
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- This is problematic and worrisome, as it will denote disastrous consequences for HAL.
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- In order to have a more nuanced perspective on the changing military industrial dynamics in India in current times, three fundamental issues are examined
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1. Dassault’s non-selection of HAL as the prime point of share of manufacturing responsibilities (either as a nominated government entity or as an offsets partner).
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2. Dassault’s reported position on HAL’s refusal for a guarantee.
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3. Last but not the least, the Centre’s own pessimistic position on capabilities of HAL in fulfilling manufacturing requirements.
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- All three inter-related issues, taken together, point to the assumption that HAL appears unfit to undertake the desired responsibilities for the state.
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What is HAL’s stand on the allegations?

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- HAL appears helpless at the moment, and it is a silent spectator in this political slugfest, where it cannot intervene on its own.
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- HAL’s own management is pessimistic and it can’t even defend its position publicly as it is a government-owned enterprise.
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- HAL is precariously positioned to carry out regular orders from higher-ups for responsibilities beyond its jurisdictions, which it is too weak to refuse.
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What are the actual capabilities of HAL?

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- HAL possesses requisite resources to undertake complex programmes across eras, managing from MiGs, LCA Mark I and IA, Su 30 MKI, LCH, UAVs, all licence productions and mid-life upgrades of types like Mirage, Jaguar, and HAWK AJT.
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- Reasonable amount of expertise available within HAL to undertake complex programmes.
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- HAL has already made impressive gains in terms of revenue and profits for the current financial year.
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- HAL also enhanced capacity will be doubled with dedicated LCA division within Bengaluru complex and the new assembly line will soon increase

production of aircraft to 16 from 8 per annum.
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- Apart from everything HAL top leadership is confident of its future performance, only if the state allows.
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Source: Financial Express

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