# Indigenous Defence Production - Tejas Case

## What is the issue?

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- The polarising debate in recent times over defence acquisitions has raised questions about indigenous defence production.
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- A key proposal in this regard, is Tejas, the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft, which is getting delayed due to procedural challenges.
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## How is Tejas developed?

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- The Tejas, or ‘radiance’, is an indigenous fighter aircraft.
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- It is the smallest lightweight, multi-role, single-engine tactical fighter aircraft in the world.
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- It is designed jointly by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) in partnership with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
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- This works as per the Air Staff Requirement (ASR) issued by the Indian Air Force (IAF) in 1985.
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- At all stages, the IAF has wholeheartedly participated and supported in this vital indigenous design and development project.
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## Why is the delay in production?

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- The ADA, the design authority for Tejas, incorporates design changes based on observations made during test flights.
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- The ADA makes all such changes in consultation with HAL and other agencies.
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- These changes are issued as “change notices” with requisite documentation and manufacturing technology.
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- While the IAF participates in all these consultations, it is not authorised to issue “change notices”.
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- But Tejas production is getting delayed due to the IAF changing specifications.
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- HAL blames the IAF for changing specifications as the IAF is a customer and it can only issue the ASR.
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- It is the HAL, as the original equipment manufacturer, which has to issue the specifications of the aircraft and its components.
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- [The IAF has not changed the 1985 ASR, except for granting concessions after limitations were encountered during the design and development of the aircraft.
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- So, many design changes were incorporated in the Tejas to bridge the shortfall from ASR.
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- Other changes were incorporated to enhance the safety of flight, based on lessons learnt from recent accidents and incidents.]
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## What are the challenges?

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- The production of Tejas aircraft is very different and complex because the aircraft is still at the design and development stage.
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- The standard of preparation of an aircraft defines its capability, which is just evolving for Tejas.
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- This requires a production capability with a robust supply chain supported by competent sub-vendors to help HAL production line to quickly adapt to such changes.
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- So HAL needs to bring in institutional flexibility to quickly adapt its production line to such evolving changes during the design and development phase of Tejas or any subsequent aircraft.
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- In all, the IAF and HAL have to work together for indigenous aircraft production process to be smooth.
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**Source: Indian Express**

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