

### **Shortage of Hawks hits pilots' training**

**The Hindu, 8 February 2009**

BANGALORE: An insufficient number of Hawk Advanced Jet Trainers (AJTs) has forced the Indian Air Force (IAF) to reduce by half the number of personnel who will train on these recently inducted aircraft. The IAF, which has started using the BAE Systems, designed and developed Hawk AJT at the Air Force Station at Bidar for the third and fourth semesters of its fighter pilot training programme...

### **Flawless dress rehearsal for air show Aero India-2009**

**The Hindu, 10 February 2009**

Bangalore: Those magnificent men in their flying machines kicked off their final dress rehearsal at Air Force Station, Yelahanka, on Monday morning in preparation for Wednesday's Aero India 2009 air show. Aircraft from overseas and from India scotched the skies as fighter, transport and helicopter pilots rehearsed, with pin-point accuracy, the manoeuvres that they will perform during the inauguration...

### **India, Russia to work on advanced fighter plane**

**The Hindu, 10 February 2009**

Moscow: India will join Russia in practical work to develop the fifth-generation fighter plane later this year after the two sides sign research and development contracts. "We have made good progress since concluding an inter-government agreement in 2007 for the joint development and production of the fifth-generation fighter aircraft and are ready to sign detailed contracts this year for implementing the programme," said Mikhail Pogosyan, CEO of the Sukhoi aircraft building company, which is the chief contractor of the fighter on the Russian side...

### **Op-Ed: Lay off, politicians, don't scuttle IAF's 126-jet deal**

**The Asian Age, 10 February 2009**

India's annual defence budget can be looked at in two ways — as an extravagant waste in a country where one in three Indians live on less than one dollar a day, or as an annual life insurance premium payment by a country which at present can only talk the walk. But remember 26/11 in Mumbai when you make your choice...

### **Largest-ever air show from today**

**The Hindu, 11 February 2009**

Bangalore: India's largest-ever air show, Aero India-2009, opens here on Wednesday with participation by frontline fighter aircraft from the United States, Europe and Russia, all of whom are in the race for the Union Government's plans to acquire multi-role combat aircraft. The Americans have flown-in the F16 (Lockheed Martin) and have been providing "sorties" to people before it flies Olympian Abhinav Bindra, while Boeing will showcase its F/A18 Hornet...

### **Glitches hit Indian participation at Aero show**

**The Indian Express, 11 February 2009**

Bangalore: A series of delays, production hitches and an air crash have hit Indian

participation at this year's Aero India military air show. While no new Indian products will be on display, even older "in development" products will give the show a miss. For starters, the indigenous effort to develop an Intermediate Jet Trainer (IJT) by HAL received a jolt just days before the air show...

**Tejas LCA stars in flying start to Aero India**  
**The Asian Age, 12 February 2009**

Bengaluru: Speed, style and the rush of pure adrenaline. The world's lightest combat aircraft began Bengaluru's air show party on a steep climb. Then, Indian Navy pilot Capt. Jaideep Maolankar brought the Tejas aircraft down to 300 feet, flew inverted close to the stands, took a hard right turn to show its high angle of attack capability, looped up vertically in the distance, and finally came down to do a low-level, high-speed flypast, as if in a salute; 6,000 on people on the ground, astounded enough to ignore the scorching heat beating down on them...

**IAF needs 42 squadrons: Major**  
**The Indian Express, 13 February 2009**

Bangalore: The Indian Air Force needs 42 squadrons of fighter aircraft to maintain a conventional edge in the region, but the number is likely to be achieved only after 2020, said Air Chief Marshal F H Major. With a large number of fighters being de-inducted in the coming years, the IAF's squadron strength will come down to 30 in the next decade before picking up again, he added...

**'Fighter fleet strength below sanctioned level'**  
**The Asian Age, 13 February 2009**

Bengaluru: The IAF now has fewer fighter squadrons than authorised by the government and it may be able to achieve full sanctioned strength only by 2020, Air Chief Fali Homi Major said on Thursday. "We are at the moment at 34 squadrons. We might come down a bit. And then start picking up and hopefully by 2017, we will have what we want and perhaps a little more by 2020," the Air Chief told reporters when asked how long it would take the Air Force to reach full sanctioned strength...

**Full squadron strength in eight years: Air Chief**  
**The Hindu, 15 February 2009**

Bangalore: Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Fali Homi Major on Thursday said the Indian Air Force would have its full sanctioned strength of 39 squadrons in eight years and asserted that operating at lesser strength did not compromise its fighting edge. "The programme of phasing out, upgrading and induction is being carried out in a concerted manner without losing the combat edge. We should be able to reach 39 squadrons by 2017 and will have what we want and more by 2020," the Air Chief said at a press conference here...

**IAF reluctant to follow on order for Hawk trainer**  
**The Hindu, 16 February 2009**

Bangalore: Worried over shortcomings in product support from BAE systems, the original

equipment manufacturer (OEM), issues over maintenance and a price considered too steep, the Indian Air Force (IAF) appears reluctant to go ahead with the follow-on order for the Hawk trainer. The IAF, through a \$1.75-billion contract signed in March 2004, is receiving 66 Hawk Mk 132 advanced jet trainers...

**Major IAF exercises from tomorrow**

**The Hindu, 17 February 2009**

Bengaluru: The Indian Air Force (IAF) will be conducting from Wednesday major operational exercises for eight days across the southern peninsula, including over key offshore installations on the east coast, and the Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands in the south-west. Called 'Dakshin Prahar 09' (Southern Attack) the exercises are being coordinated by the Thiruvananthapuram-headquartered Southern Air Command (SAC)...

**Major IAF exercise over peninsula, Lakshadweep from Wednesday**

**The Times of India, 17 February 2009**

New Delhi: To maintain its high operational readiness after 26/11, IAF is all set to launch another major exercise, 'Dakshin Prahar', with top-notch fighters like Sukhoi-30MKIs, Mirage-2000s and maritime Jaguars as well as IL-78 mid-air refuellers, AN-32 transport aircraft and Mi-8 helicopters. The high-voltage, week-long exercise over peninsular India as well as Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands will kick off on February 18...

**IAF rapped for misuse of aircraft by officers**

**The Indian Express, 19 February 2009**

New Delhi: A parliamentary committee has come down heavily on the Indian Air Force for the unauthorised use of VIP aircraft by armed forces officers and their spouses. It has also sought a detailed statement from the IAF of the expenses incurred in flying "non-entitled" passengers, including presidents of the Army and Air Force wives welfare associations, over the past decade and directed the Defence Ministry to conduct a probe into the misuse...