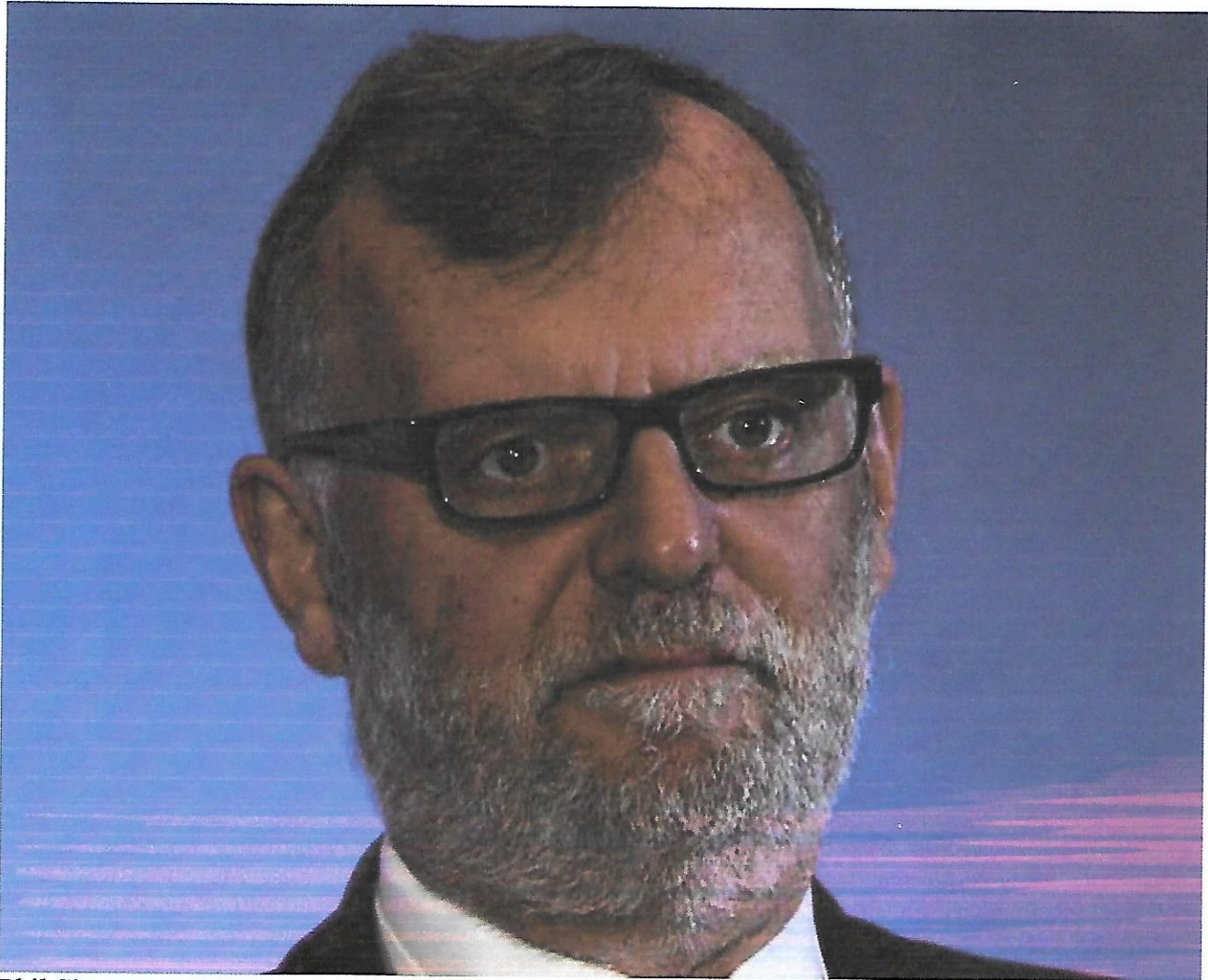


We are excited about making F-16 aircraft in India: Lockheed Martin Official

Ch.R.S Sarma



Phil Shaw

"It would be a tremendous boost to the make-in-India initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and we are partnering with the Tata group for the purpose."

Visakhapatnam, Dec 14:

Lockheed Martin is excited about the prospect of making F-16 fighter aircraft in India and making India a global manufacturing and supply base for the aircraft, according to Phil Shaw, the Chief Executive of Lockheed Martin India Pvt. Limited. He was speaking here on Wednesday after

participating in a programme - Girls in aviation sector - jointly organised by the company and the Airports Authority of India.

He said F-16 aircraft was the proven and the most advanced fighter aircraft in the world and "it would be a tremendous boost to the make-in-India initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. We are partnering with the Tata group for the purpose."

In response to a query, he said there would be constant improvements to the aircraft and India would be the beneficiary of the technological advancements. He said the company had already supplied 12 numbers of C 130 cargo plane to the Indian Airforce, the aircraft being placed six apiece at two air bases in the country, and the components are manufactured in Hyderabad.

He said the company was also promoting innovators in India for the past 11 years in a programme jointly taken up with the Department of Science and Technology, and in association with Tata Trust. "We have chosen 50 promising innovators and given them an opportunity to study in MIT in the USA. During the period, it is estimated that they may have come up with 450 business arrangements, with an estimated value of \$ 1 billion. From this year, we are also taking up seed funding of promising start-ups," he added.

Referring to the role of women in aviation sector, he said there were great prospects opening up for them in civil aviation sector in India and the world and "therefore girls should grab the opportunity with both hands. We are conducting such programmes to enthuse them to take to aviation."