

# F-16 Block 70 – Lockheed's "Exclusive" Offer to India



We plan to introduce two new words into the lexicon of international fighter aircraft manufacturing: "India" and "exclusive." F-16 production in India will be exclusive—something that has never been presented by any other fighter aircraft manufacturer, past or present, says Vivek Lall, Vice President, Strategy and Business Development, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. He speaks with Aeromag about Lockheed's plan for India.

**Vivek Lall**

Vice President, Strategy & Business Development,  
Lockheed Martin Aeronautics

Lockheed Martin has offered to relocate its entire production line of F-16 fighter jet exclusively to India. Could you talk more about this? How will F-16 meet the requirements of IAF?

We intend to create far more than an F-16 "assembly line" in India. We plan to introduce two new words into the lexicon of international fighter aircraft manufacturing: "India" and "exclusive." F-16 production in India will be exclusive—something that has never before been presented by any other fighter aircraft manufacturer, past or present. The F-16 gives Indian industry a unique opportunity to become a part of the world's largest fighter aircraft ecosystem.

The F-16 is the only aircraft program in this competition with the proven performance and industrial scale to meet India's operational needs and Make in India priorities. No competing aircraft comes close to matching the F-16's operational effectiveness and industrial success. The success of the F-16—3,000 F-16s flying today with 25 leading air forces—is a testament to the cost-effective, combat-proven capabilities the F-16 delivers. That combination of cost and capabilities is why F-16 production opportunities today total more than 400 aircraft, including India.

Could you share with us the latest initiatives and programmes of Lockheed Martin to expand its defence and aerospace business in India?

Lockheed Martin is committed to strengthening and expanding our relationship with India. We have partnered with India for more than 25 years and remain committed to fostering technology development, manufacturing and strategic collaboration.

Our partnership with India is reflected in our successful joint venture company with Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL), which manufactures major airframe components for the C-130J airlifter and S-92 helicopter in Hyderabad. We hope to build on that success with the F-16, the world's most successful, combat-proven fighter.

India is largely focusing on its defence cooperation with US. What prospects do you see for Lockheed Martin in this respect?

Hundreds of Lockheed Martin products and technologies have been successfully transferred and co-produced in India through enduring international partnerships. We look forward to building on the success of our partnerships with Tata on premiere programs like the C-130J airlifter and S-92 helicopter, and developing new relationships with India.

Could you talk about the latest updates on the C-130 J Super Hercules deal with India?

Lockheed Martin reached a major milestone with the delivery of its 400th C-130J Super Hercules aircraft on Feb. 9. The C-130J Super Hercules is the current production model of the legendary C-130 Hercules aircraft, with operators in 17 nations, including India. The C-130 program represents a strong legacy of partnership between the U.S. and India. All C-130Js delivered to customers around the world have major aerostructure components from India included in their build through partnership with Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) in Hyderabad, India.

How does Lockheed Martin support Make in India programme? Please talk about Lockheed's various partnerships in India in

this respect.

The C-130 represents a legacy of partnership between the U.S., India and Lockheed Martin. All C-130Js delivered to customers around the world have major aerostructure components from India included in their build through partnership with TASL in Hyderabad, India.

A decade ago, Sikorsky selected TASL as the manufacturing base for its global supply of cabin aero structures for the S-92 helicopter. Since production began in 2010, TASL has delivered 120 cabins to Sikorsky's S-92 assembly plant in the United States. Today, production of more than 5,000 precision components that compose each S-92 cabin is 100 percent indigenous to India — supplied by joint venture company Tata Sikorsky Aerospace Ltd., also located in Hyderabad.

The F-16 strengthens India's strategic relationship with the U.S. and other leading nations, and provides a path for future Indo-U.S. cooperation on advanced technology. F-16 production in India builds trust, new partnerships and capabilities that strengthen India's economy, national defence and Indo-U.S. relations for the next half century and beyond. We look forward to expanding our supplier base as we continue to strengthen and grow our relationships with India.

Could you talk about Lockheed's participation in DefExpo 2018? What are the highlights at this year's expo?

We are excited to participate in DefExpo 2018. At this year's DefExpo, we plan to highlight our current programs and proposed partnerships with India, including the F-16 Block 70, MH-60R and S-92 helicopter, C-130J, and Javelin Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM), just to name a few.