

Lockheed unveils F-21 that could be tailor-made for IAF

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: US firm Lockheed Martin unveiled on Wednesday the F-21, a multi-role fighter jet, which it claimed will be specifically configured for the IAF.

The announcement comes in the wake of India floating a request for information (RFI) for 114 fighter aircraft. The US firm is eyeing a multi-billion-dollar order. Lockheed said it would partner with Tata Advanced Systems and that it will have make-in-India opportunities that no other firm has offered.

Lockheed is among seven firms that have responded to the IAF's RFI for fighter aircraft. However, it first offered the F-16. The F-21, the firm said, is designed to address IAF's unique requirements.



An F-21 on display in Bengaluru on Wednesday

The firm said the new plane highlights its commitment to delivering an advanced, scalable fighter aircraft to the IAF, while also providing industrial opportunities locally.

It could not be immediately confirmed whether the IAF has already been consulted on the new aircraft. The IAF though is aware of the F-16 fighter that Lockheed has offered as part of the new

RFI. The US firm had offered the F-16 Block 70 as part of the medium multi-role combat aircraft deal which was bagged by Dassault's Rafale.

Lockheed claimed the make-in-India opportunity combines "the strength of the world's largest defence contractor with India's premier industrial house to deliver a win-win situation for India and the US".