

Lockheed Martin Teams Up With Tata to Make F-16 Fighters in India

Deal comes days ahead of PM's US visit; jets meant for IAF as well as exports

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New Delhi: The defence arm of the Tata Group has signed an agreement with American firm Lockheed Martin to produce and export new generation F-16 fighter aircraft, potentially kick-starting a mega 'Make in India' project days ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first meeting with US President Donald Trump.

The deal, signed at the Paris Air Show, is subject to the condition that the F-16 Block 70 fighter jet emerges as the winner of an Indian Air Force competition to procure more than 100 single-engine fighters.

The Tata Advanced Systems Limited-Lockheed Martin combine will compete with Sweden's Saab, which

Charting Flight Path

THE AGREEMENT

Tata to integrate Indian sensors, provide full service support in India

Will also carry out future upgrades, integration of new weapons and systems

Lockheed to shift F-16 production line from Texas to India

INDIAN REQUIREMENT

India to shortly float tender to locally produce 100 single-engine fighters for IAF

These will replace the ageing MiG-21s, and supplement IAF's fleet along with Rafale and Tejas fighters



THE COMPETITION

Tata-Lockheed combine will compete with Sweden's Saab, which is offering the Gripen fighter

Saab has not picked an Indian partner yet; is in talks with Mahindra & Adani

will offer its Gripen fighter aircraft for the requirement.

Lockheed Martin will move its only operational line producing the F-16s from Texas to India if it wins the contract, as per exclusive details of

the agreement available with ET. The American company also sees a \$15 billion export potential for the jet to other customers in the region.

Tata to Offer Service Support ►► 12