

Exploring Tejas scope of success with Malaysia



LCA Tejas

The Indian aerospace industry since its inception has generally focused on fulfilling the domestic needs of the nation instead of investing in major scale marketing to promote exports. Since the foundation of state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) on 1 October 1964, the 58 years of journey (and counting) has seen the firm mass-producing an array of products on license from foreign OEMs as well as locally researching and developing indigenous designs. Light aircraft, trainers, UAVs, helicopters, fighter jets, and even engines, HAL managed to acquire decent experience with the development of a

variety of solutions. While major designs in the domains of light aircraft, trainers, and helicopters managed to make it through the phase of designing and entered the production line with successful execution, complex concepts like jet fighters are yet to see major success. The very first jet rolled out in India for combat was introduced in 1961 as HF-24 Marut, a twin-engine attack aircraft deriving its design from IAe 43 “Pulqui III”, one of the earlier concepts produced by chief designer Kurt Tank in 1954 (An year before arriving in India) but originally for Argentine Air Force while he was working at

IAME (State Aeronautical and Mechanical Industries). The cancellation of the aircraft in Argentina led to its employment for Indian requirements, which allowed the authorities to shorten the design timeline as they pitched the continuation of a design from drawing board in Argentina to a proper physical product in India, that served for more than 23 years (1967-1990) in Indian Air Force, scoring excellency both during peacetime and wartime.

While it can be said that New Delhi’s first jet fighter had somewhat a German “DNA” (as Mr. Tank had German origin), the second and latest member of the