

# Dominating Indian Skies



## Sukhoi Su-30MKIs with the IAF

The Sukhoi Su-30MKI is arguably the most significant combat aircraft with the Indian Air Force extant, the Service having received near 250 of these heavy fighters over the past two decades, with more to come.

Genesis and progression of the programme has been studiously recorded in issues of the *Vayu Aerospace Review* since the first tranche of aircraft (Su-30Ks) were received at Pune to equip No.24 Squadron in March 1997. Thereafter, in a complex development programme, involving both the OEM in Irkut and the Indian licensee HAL, the Su-30K evolved over several stages into becoming the Su-30MKI Mk.3, incorporating systems from Russia, France, Israel and India.

In 2019, the Indian Air Force operates twelve squadrons of the Su-30MKI and is to receive a last batch of some 21 aircraft to make it some 14 squadrons flying the Type including those with the TACDE. Following the first 50 aircraft received from Russia, HAL were contracted to build 222 aircraft at their Nasik Division and there

have been reports that another 18 aircraft would be ordered on HAL to make up for attrition and add to the TACDE. According to other sources, the figure could well be higher as the IAF faces serious depletion of its combat aircraft strength.

### Contemporary Systems

As per public domain, cockpit of the IAF's Su-30MKI incorporates a customised version of the Israeli Elbit Su 967 head-up display (HUD) consisting of bi-cubic phase conjugated holographic displays and seven



*Su-30MKI at Yelahanka during Aero India Show*