



Reading In–Between The Lines

Commentary by Prof. Prodyut Das on

The PAC's LCA Report

With a copy of the 114th Report on 'Design, Development, Manufacture and Induction of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)' from the Public Accounts Committee in hand, these are my candid reactions. The report is based on the CAG report of 2015 and seeks to establish the status of this programme which has the somewhat doubtful distinction of being the most lengthy development of any such programme in aviation history. It is unlikely this record will ever be broken.

A group of Lok and Rajya Sabha members reviewed the LCA situation in late 2018 with some very senior officials of the MoD, DRDO and HAL

arraigned in their midst. The responses of the officials had the quality, in part reminiscent of a group of schoolboys up before the Rector in his study, with erstwhile rivals providing

lame alibis for each other and in part pure "Yes Minister"! The Parliamentarians also sensed this and observed that some of the replies were "baseless".