

TEJAS TRAINER MAKES SUCCESSFUL MAIDEN FLIGHT

Two seater (Trainer) version of Tejas (PV-5) made its maiden flight on 26 Nov 09. The flight took off from HAL, Airport at 1300 hrs. The successful maiden flight covered an altitude of 9km and Mach number 0.85. The prototype was flown by Gp Capt Ritu Raj Tyagi of the National Flight Test Centre (NFTC). Air Cmde Rohit Varma, Project Director (Flight Test) flew in the rear cockpit. Wg Cdr (Retd) PK Raveendran, Group Director (Flight Test) was the Test Director. Extensive preparatory work that has gone in resulted in the first flight profile being executed with clock work precision. All the objectives set out for the flight were achieved and all the systems on board the new prototype performed well through out the sortie.

Successful flight of Tejas trainer is a major milestone for Tejas programme and a significant achievement for all the stake holders in the programme, which include ADA, HAL, NAL, ADE, CEMILAC, DGAQA, Indian Air Force and Indian Navy. With the Tejas scheduled to be cleared for Initial Operations with the Indian Air Force by end 2010, successful maiden flight of Tejas trainer has given a fillip to the programme. The trainer when fully developed will have the full operational capability from the rear cockpit as well. As Tejas Trainer has a lot of commonality with Tejas Naval version, even Tejas Navy programme would see accelerated progress as a result of the successful first flight.

As the first flight coincided with the programme review by the Air Force, the historic event was witnessed by Air Mshl NV Tyagi, AVSM, VM, VSM, who was the Chairman of the Review Committee along with Mr Ashok Nayak, Chairman, HAL, Chief Controller, DRDO Dr D Banerjee and Mr PS Subramanyam, Programme Director (Combat Aircraft) & Director, ADA. Incidentally, the Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri, Dr VK Saraswath witnessed the high speed trials of this aircraft yesterday.