



HLFT-42, The 'Marut' is reborn!

Aero India 2023 witnessed the first arrival of any fifth generation fighter jet on Indian soil as the Lockheed Martin F-35A stunned the audience by its jaw dropping maneuvers. If it was the best highlight of the grandeur, second best position definitely can be claimed by a newly unveiled single-engine trainer platform. Conceived by the state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), the Hindustan Lead in Fighter Trainer-42 (HLFT-42) proved to be a crowd puller at the stall. The scaled model can remind one of the HF-24 'Marut', the first fighter jet developed in India. Hence many exclaimed, if 'Marut' is reborn!

Claimed to be the next generation supersonic lead-in fighter trainer will be designed to train pilots for the ever evolving fifth generation combat environment! According to HAL, it incorporates an ultra-modern training suite enabling hyperreal combat situations to train fighter pilots in a perfectly standardised safe and efficient flying environment. Thus it offers unique operational capabilities to meet unforeseen future threats. The HLFT-42 is a purely HAL product which is being designed and developed by their own without prior requirements from the Indian Air Force (IAF). Once fully developed, will open the

doors to multiple opportunities not just at home but abroad as well.

The physical dimensions are not revealed yet. It will have an all up weight (AUW) of 16.5T and payload capacity of more than 4.5T! According to the representative it will be powered by a General Electric F414 engine! One can expect this will be the same F414-GE-INS6 variant which will be used to power LCA Mk-II, AMCA Mk-I and TEDBF as well. Though, alternatively

GE F404 engine is offered as potential requirement by the customer. The ultra-modern avionics will incorporate an Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar, an Infrared Search and Track (IRST), advanced Electronic Warfare (EW) suite and will feature Fly by Wire (FBW) control as well. It will carry ten beyond visual range air-to-air missile (BVRAAM) and two short range one. Thus for air-to-air operations it will have a solid punch.

