

Tejas clears maiden mid-air refuelling trial

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The first ever mid-air refuelling of the indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas was successfully carried out Monday, placing India in an elite group of countries which have developed the air-to-air refuelling system for military aircraft.

With this first trial, the aircraft gets much closer to the important battle-ready tag, called the FOC or the final operational clearance.

Production partner Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. and LCA's designer and developer Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) gave the thumbs-up as an Air Force transport plane IL-78 refuelled the light fighter as it



The indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft Tejas.

flew at a height of 20,000 feet over Gwalior, an HAL statement said.

Landmark flight

HAL Chairman and Managing Director R.Madhavan said the landmark flight would quicken the final certification of the LCA.

“The Light Combat Air-

craft ‘Tejas’ (LSP8) has successfully completed the ‘wet’ or actual engagement today[Monday] by transferring 1,900 kg of fuel from an IAF IL-78’s mid-air refuelling tanker. All internal tanks and drop tanks were refuelled. The aircraft was [flying at a speed of] 270 knots. On September 4 and 6, a dry docking of the aerial refuelling probe with mother tanker was done,” the release said. (LSP stands for limited series production.)

The flight was piloted by Wing Commander Siddharth Singh of the National Flight Test Centre, Bengaluru, with designers from HAL and ADA closely monitoring the system parameters from the ground station.