

Aircraft Carrier to Get Indian Jets by 2032

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The Navy is expected to start receiving new **twin-engine aircraft carrier-based fighter aircraft being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) by 2032 and it will be a replacement for the Russian MiG-29K carrier jets** in service which are scheduled to start going out by 2034. The aircraft carrier jets would be **built by HAL**.

Indian Jets by 2032

The Navy currently operates **Russian-origin carrier INS Vikramaditya and expects to have the first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-I) Vikrant operational by 2022**. With a second carrier to come in, the Navy is already evaluating a global tender for 57 carrier-based twin-engine fighter aircraft.

With the new jet under development and also factoring in budgetary constraints, the Navy is looking to revise the tender for 57 carrier-based jets downwards. The revised numbers have not been finalised yet. Recently, the **naval Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) successfully completed arrested landing and take-off** on board Vikramaditya and has since undertaken several trials.

Based on the experience of the carrier landing, the DRDO has offered to develop a twin-engine deck-based fighter for the Navy. With the successful deck-landing, they decided to drop the naval LCA Mk2 and move on to the twin-engine jet. The Navy currently has 45 Russian MiG-29K aircraft and it stated that there will not be enough aircraft to operate from both carriers.

The Navy is currently evaluating the responses to the Request For Information (RFI) from **Boeing with its F-18 Super Hornet**

and Dassault Aviation with its Rafale jets. Both companies had stated that their jets can operate off the ski-jump of Vikramaditya and in future the Vikrant.