

Astra Mk-1

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In news— The Ministry of Defence recently signed a contract with the Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) for supply of the [Astra Mark-1](#), for deployment on fighter jets of the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy.

About Astra Mk-1 missile-

- It is a beyond visual range (BVR), air-to-air missile (AAM), designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for deployment on fighter jets like Sukhoi-30 MKI and Tejas of the IAF and the Mig-29K of the Navy.
- BVRs are capable of engaging beyond the range of 20 nautical miles or 37 kilometers.
- They are fired from an airborne asset to destroy an airborne target.
- The Astra project was tested for the first time in May 2003.
- Since then, it has been test-fired multiple times and integrated with Su-30 MKI fighters.
- The missile will also be integrated with Tejas Mark-1A and upgraded MiG-29s over the next few years.
- While the range for Astra Mk-1 is around 110 km, the Mk-2 with a range over 150 km is under development and Mk-3 version with a longer range is being envisaged.
- One more version of Astra, with a range smaller than Mk-1 is also under development.
- The purchase will be under the **Buy (Indian- indigenously designed, developed and manufactured (IDDM)) category of defence acquisition**, procurement of products from an Indian vendor that have a minimum of 50 per cent indigenous content calculated on the basis of cost of the total contract value.
- Until now, the technology to manufacture missiles of this class indigenously was not available.

- Around 50 private and public industries, including the IAF and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), have contributed in building the Astra systems.