

Replacement of Cheetah & Chetak helicopters with LUH

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In news- Recently, the Ministry of Defence has proposed to replace Cheetah and Chetak helicopters with Naval Utility Helicopters, indigenous Light Utility Helicopters (LUH).

Key updates-

- Naval Utility Helicopter, indigenous Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) will be **manufactured by HAL under the “Buy (Indian-IDD)” project and Russian built Ka-226T as “Buy & Make (Indian)”**.
- Four Limited Series Production (LSP) LUHs (02 for Indian Army and 02 for Indian Air Force) **would be manufactured by 2022-23**.
- Eight (LSP) LUHs (04 for Indian Army and 04 for Indian Air Force) by 2023-24.

About Light Utility Helicopter (LUH)-

- **LUH is a new generation helicopter in the 3-Ton class** incorporating the state of the art technology **features like Glass cockpit with Multi-Function Displays (MFD)** and powered by single Turbo Shaft engine with sufficient power margin to cater to demanding high altitude missions.
- The helicopter is **capable of flying at 220 Kmph; service ceiling of 6.5 Km and a range of 350 Km with 500 kg payload**.
- LUH along with its derivative Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) **was designed and developed by Rotary Wing Research and Design Center (RWR&DC)**, one of the R&D sections of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for civilian and military applications.

- LUH will be capable of performing multiple missions such as surveillance, reconnaissance, rescue, medical evacuations, and cargo / troop transport.



Cheetah helicopter-

- The Cheetah Helicopter (**identical to LAMA SA 315B Helicopter of Eurocopter, France**) is a high performance helicopter **designed for operation over a very wide range of weight, centre of gravity and altitude conditions.**
- The **five seater Cheetah helicopter is** versatile, multi role, multi purpose, highly maneuverable and rugged in construction.
- It holds the world record in high altitude flying among all categories of Helicopters.
- The helicopter is **powered by Artouste – III B turbo shaft engine.**
- It is **suitable for commuting, observation, surveillance, logistics support, rescue operations** and high altitude missions.
- HAL had signed a license agreement for Cheetah with M/s SNIAS in 1970.
- **First Cheetah manufactured from raw materials was delivered in 1976-77.**

Chetak helicopter-

- It is a two ton class helicopter.
- The seven seater Chetak helicopter is versatile, multi role, multi purpose, and spacious.
- It is **powered by Artouste – III B turbo shaft engine.**
- It is **suitable for commuting, cargo / material transport, casualty evacuation, Search & Rescue (SAR),** Aerial Survey & Patrolling, Emergency Medical Services, Off-shore operations and Underslung operations.
- HAL started manufacturing helicopters in 1962, by entering an agreement with M/s SUD-AVIATION (Presently M/s AIRBUS (Former EUROCOPTER), France) for production of **Aloutte III helicopters (Chetak).**
- The first Chetak (Aloutte III) in 'Fly Away' condition was delivered in 1965.