Replacement of Cheetah & Chetak helicopters with LUH

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<u>In news-</u> 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-IDDM)" 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.