

TEJAS AT LEH

Tejas programme reached a major milestone when the prototype vehicle PV-3 landed at Leh on 13 Dec 08 at 1326 hrs. The event is significant on many counts. Leh airfield in Ladakh region situated at an altitude of 10,600 ft is one of the highest airfields in the world. The prevailing temperature ranges from plus 5 to minus 20 deg Celsius. The objective of the current phase of flight trials at Leh is to expose the onboard systems to the extreme low temperatures while making an assessment of the aircraft performance in the rarified atmospheric conditions. Two Tejas prototypes PV-3 and LSP-2 are involved in this important environmental test. LSP-2 powered by the latest IN-20 engine with FADEC is in the Standard of Preparation (SOP) that will be cleared for induction into Service. As per reports received from the trial location, the current phase of flight trial is progressing well with aircraft and systems performing well as expected. The aircrafts were soaked overnight in cold weather, with temperature around Minus 20 deg and powered up next day for operation. The operation of the aircraft were satisfactory. Real time telemetry through a satellite link between Pathankot, the base camp and NFTC of Bangalore is also made operational during the trial.

The success of the trial is the result of team effort of professionals from different organizations involved in the programme such as ADA, HAL, CEMILAC, DG-AQA, ADE, NAL and IAF. The flight trials are being conducted by the Test Pilots and Flight Test Engineers of the National Flight Test Centre (NFTC) under the direction of Air Cmde Rohit Varma Project Director (Flight Test). Senior officers from ADA, HAL and ADE Mr PS Subramanyam, Director, ADA; Mr Ashok Naik, Managing Director (BC), HAL and Mr PS Krishnan, Director, ADE were present at Leh on this historic occasion.