

## India Partners with Safran to Build 5th-Generation Fighter Jets

August 22, 2025

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India is taking a major step to strengthen its indigenous air defence capabilities by announcing plans to manufacture fifth-generation fighter jets in partnership with French aerospace company Safran. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh confirmed on Friday that India is advancing its efforts to develop homegrown fifth-generation combat aircraft, including engines produced domestically.

In a post on X, Singh said India has already initiated key measures for the fighter aircraft program. “We have resolved to overcome every hurdle and will establish full capacity to build fighter aircraft in India,” he stated. Singh emphasized that engine manufacturing will begin in India through collaboration with Safran, highlighting the project as a significant milestone in advancing India’s defense capabilities.

The Defence Ministry also noted that a new order has been placed with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to manufacture 97 Tejas fighter planes at a cost of approximately ₹66,000 crore. This follows a previous order of 83 aircraft valued at ₹48,000 crore. Singh described the Tejas as a “splendid example of India’s indigenous defence capabilities,” stressing that the government is committed to addressing challenges in the program to achieve full operational capacity.

The minister highlighted that India is moving forward with the next stage of aviation development, including the fifth-generation fighter aircraft program. He stated that India’s growing economic strength allows the nation to act as a stabilizing force in uncertain times while pursuing advanced defence projects.

Safran, headquartered in Paris, is a global leader in aerospace, defence, and security. The company develops and manufactures commercial and military aircraft engines, missile propulsion systems, launch vehicles, and various aerospace equipment. Established in 2005 from the merger of SNECMA and SAGEM, Safran expanded its aeronautical operations further with the acquisition of Zodiac Aerospace in 2018. The company employs over 92,000 people and reported revenues of €27.31 billion in 2024. Safran is listed on the Euronext stock exchange and forms part of both the CAC 40 and Euro Stoxx 50 indices.

India’s partnership with Safran marks a critical step toward self-reliance in advanced military aviation, complementing the Tejas program’s ongoing production. By building both aircraft and engines domestically, India aims to reduce dependence on foreign suppliers while showcasing its technological and manufacturing capabilities on a global scale.

This initiative aligns with broader defense modernization efforts, reinforcing India’s strategic position in the region. The government’s proactive investment in fighter jet production, combined with international collaboration, signals India’s long-term commitment to strengthening its air defence systems and expanding indigenous aerospace capabilities.