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India's AMCA Fighter Program Targets Structural Test Milestone by 2027

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India's ambitious fifth-generation stealth fighter initiative, the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) program, is set to reach a major milestone by 2027 with the expected completion of its first Structural Test Specimen (STS).

According to defense sources, the STS will serve as a full-scale prototype of the aircraft, built specifically to undergo rigorous static and fatigue testing. This phase is crucial for

validating the airframe's structural integrity before any prototype can take flight.

The AMCA is being developed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) under the Ministry of Defence, in collaboration with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and other key industry partners. The project aims to produce a cutting-edge stealth fighter that will strengthen the Indian Air Force's combat capabilities and reduce dependence on foreign platforms.

The aircraft's detailed design phase has already been completed, and the program is now moving into the prototype development stage. Five flying prototypes are planned, with the first expected to be ready for rollout by 2028, followed by its maiden flight shortly after.

In 2025, the Indian government approved a new execution model that opens participation to both public and private sector firms. This industry-driven approach is intended to accelerate the pace of development and foster domestic expertise in advanced aerospace technologies.

The AMCA will feature advanced stealth characteristics, supercruise capabilities, and state-of-the-art avionics. Future variants are also expected to incorporate sixth-generation technologies, making the AMCA a strategic asset for India's long-term defense planning.

Officials have stated that the completion of the STS by 2027 will be a critical step in maintaining the program's development timeline, with further milestones planned over the next five years leading up to full production readiness.