

IAF TO ADOPT ASRAAM MISSILE FOR FIGHTER FLEET

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The Indian Air Force is looking to adopt a new European visual range air to air missile across its fighter fleet.

The Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile of European missile-maker MBDA has been approved for fitting on Jaguar jets. The IAF was looking to integrating it on the Su-30MKIs and the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft as well, defence sources said.

“The ASRAAM has been chosen for the Jaguar and is currently undergoing integration. First firing is expected by year-end,” a defence source said.

It would be the first over-the-wing launched missile in the IAF inventory. All missiles are now fired from under the wing.

The missile was shortlisted through a tender and MBDA is working with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited on the integration. After the initial trials, further modifications would be done by HAL. “HAL is in talks with MDBA for integrating the missile on the LCA and the Su-30MKI as well. It will be taken up after the Jaguar integration,” the source added.

ASRAAM is widely used as a Within Visual Range (WVR) air dominance missile with a range of over 25km.

HAL had built about 145 Jaguars for the IAF, of which around 120 are in service, and 80 jets will continue till 2025 to 2030. A plan to get a more powerful engine has been long delayed.

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