

India's first Super Hercules airlifter dons Indian Air Force colours

The first of India's six C-130J Super Hercules airlifters, considered the world's most advanced transport aircraft, has emerged from the paint shop in Indian Air Force colours, roughly six months before its scheduled delivery.

Purchased from the U.S. in a \$1 billion deal, the tactical transport "aircraft now enters flight test in preparation for delivery at the end of the year", its manufacturer Lockheed Martin said while releasing an image of the plane in IAF colours at its Marietta plant in Georgia.

Lockheed last month released an image of India's first three of six stretched-fuselage C-130J-30s in final assembly and said the first example would arrive in India next February.

The plane, it said would provide the Indian Army and Air Force "new special operations capabilities using the world's most advanced airlifter".

The programme for India includes six C-130Js, training of aircrew and maintenance technicians, spare parts, and ground support and test equipment, it said. Also included is India-unique operational equipment designed to increase Special Operations capabilities.

Equipped with an infrared detection set (IDS), the aircraft for the first time will provide the IAF an ability to conduct precision low-level flying operations, airdrops and landings in blackout conditions.

To ensure 80 percent availability of the aircraft at any given time, Lockheed Martin has offered a long-term maintenance contract to the IAF on the lines

of the ones it has with the U.S. Air Force and the air forces of Australia, Britain and Canada. The C-130J primarily performs the tactical portion of an air-lift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from rough, dirt strips and is the prime transport for air dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas.

The flexible design of the Super Hercules enables it to be configured for many different missions, allowing for one aircraft to perform the role of many. Much of the special mission equipment added to the Super Hercules is removable, allowing the aircraft to quickly switch between roles.

The C-130J "Super" Hercules is a four-engine turboprop military transport aircraft. The C-130J is a comprehensive update of the venerable Lockheed C-130 Hercules, with new engines, flight deck, and other systems.

The Hercules family has the longest continuous production run of any military aircraft in history. During more than 50 years of service, the family has participated in military, civilian and humanitarian aid operations.

The Hercules has also outlived several planned successor designs, most notably the Advanced Medium STOL Transport contestants.

The C-130J is the newest version of the Hercules and the only model still in production. Externally similar to the classic Hercules in general appearance, the J model sports considerably updated technology.

The aircraft can also be configured with the "enhanced cargo handling system". The system consists of a computerised load masters station from



The first of India's six C-130J Super Hercules airlifters painted in Indian Air Force colours at Lockheed Martin's Marietta plant in Georgia.

where the user can remotely control the under floor winch and also configure the flip floor system to palletised roller or flat floor cargo handling.

The cargo compartment is approximately 41 feet long, 9 feet high, and 10 feet wide, and loading is from the rear of the fuselage. Initially developed for the USAF, this system enables rapid role

changes to be carried out and so extends the C-130J's time available to complete tasks.

These combined changes have improved performance over its C-130E/H siblings, such as 40 percent greater range, 21 percent higher maximum speed, and 41 percent shorter take-off distance.

Scottish film students work with Indian movie team

Students from Edinburgh Napier University's Screen Academy in Scotland are currently working with an Indian film crew for the shooting of *Mausam*, which stars actor Shahid Kapoor and is directed by his father, Pankaj Kapoor.

The shooting of the movie, in which Pankaj Kapoor debuts as a director, was delayed for over a month in May because of the ash clouds following a volcanic eruption in Iceland.

The Edinburgh City Chambers threw a reception for the team and the Napier students to celebrate the collaboration, according to the *New Scotsman* newspaper. Councillor Steve Cardownie said on the occasion: "It's very fitting that Scotland's capital should be at the centre of new and better connections between our filmmakers and those from other nations."

The Scottish government recently launched its India plan to encourage links between India and Scotland. As part of an exchange programme, a group of Napier students have already visited Kolkata to work on a

script they had written under the programme.

The exchange with the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI) was designed to reflect the different working traditions of the two countries.

During a first trip last November, two staff and four students worked with students at the SRFTI to make the short film *Tuki*, which was written by Napier student Gayle Baird and featured Bengali actors.

Four SRFTI students are now in Edinburgh to help work on *Mausam*, about an Indian boy who leaves his life — and girlfriend — in Scotland to fight in the Indian Air Force during the Kargil war with Pakistan. Filming is currently taking place at various locations across Edinburgh, including Portobello Cemetery and Colinton.

Robin MacPherson, director of Screen Academy Scotland, said: "The connection we established on our first visit to Kolkata in November 2008 has blossomed into an exciting creative collaboration between Scotland and West Bengal where we are able to share ideas."

Grandfather Sikh wins British athletics award

A grandfather from Punjab and a popular athlete of the Midlands in England has won two medals at the annual event of the British Masters Athletic Federation in Leicester.

Jhalman Singh, 72, won a silver medal in the long jump and a bronze medal in the shot putt. This is on top of the pentathlon gold he won in the 70-75-year-old category at a Masters event in Oxford last month.

A retired engineer, he lives in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, and is currently training for another county competition in August, reports the Birmingham Mail.

Jhalman, who has represented the Royal Sutton Coldfield Athletics Club, started athletics in 1952 and has won a host of medals during his career.

He has won awards off the sports field too, for his social and community activities. He has also received a Parliamentary Award in 2007 at the House of Commons for promoting Punjabi culture in Britain. Last year, he was crowned the first Midlands Sikh Sports Personality of the Year.