

Adani, Italian firm to set up chopper making ecosystem

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Adani Defence & Aerospace and Italian aerospace company Leonardo on Tuesday signed an agreement to set up an integrated helicopter manufacturing ecosystem in India.

The two sides will jointly “develop, manufacture and sustain” military helicopters to meet the requirements of the Indian armed forces, according to the agreement.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech on Sunday removed the Customs duty on components and parts required for the manufacture of civilian, training and other aircraft.

The agreement will give India the manufacturing capability for Leonardo’s advanced AW169M and AW109 TrekkerM helicopters.

Focusing on maintenance, repair and overhaul capabilities and pilot training, the deal between the two companies is part of India’s indigenisation efforts in defence manufacturing.

According to Leonardo’s website, AW169M is a modern, multi-role military helicopter designed for utility, sur-



Taking wings

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- Pact to give India the manufacturing capability for Leonardo’s advanced AW169M and AW109 TrekkerM
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veillance and special operations. It is fitted with advanced avionics, high payload capacity and all-weather day and night operability.

AW109 TrekkerM is a lighter, highly versatile platform known for its speed, agility and cost-effective operations. It is best suited for reconnaissance, training, medical evacuation and light transport.

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Ashish Rajvanshi, chief executive officer of Adani Defence & Aerospace, said that India’s armed forces are projected to demand more than 1,000 helicopters in a decade.

The country has fewer than 250 operational helicopters. With projected demand for over 1,000 helicopters in the coming years, the partnership is expected to play a key role in bridging this gap.

Gian Piero Cutillo, managing director of Leonardo Helicopters, said India is a big market and the country’s armed forces have a growing requirement for helicopters.

The announcement comes a week after Adani Defence and Embraer announced a collaboration to set up a regional aircraft manufacturing facility in India.