

SARAS aircraft soars in Bengaluru skies in its new avatar

By Express News Service | Published: 25th January 2018 03:44 AM |

Last Updated: 25th January 2018 09:21 AM | **A+ A A-** |



A model of SARAS displayed at Aero India in Bengaluru | Pushkar V

BENGALURU: The SARAS aircraft, developed by National Aeronautics Laboratories, took to the skies on Thursday and completed a 40 minute trip before returning to the HAL airport in the morning. The Saras PT1N, a 14 seater aircraft, made its maiden flight in its new avatar. According to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), it was a textbook flight. The upgraded version of the plane was being developed after the programme was nearly scrapped following a crash in March 2009.

According to a statement by CSIR-NAL, the flight, commanded by Wing Commander U P Singh, Group Captains R V Panicker and K P Bhat from Indian Air Force - Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment (ASTE), took off from HAL airport at 11am. It flew at a maximum height of 8,500 feet at a speed of 145

knots. It was chased by a Kiran aircraft which was piloted by Group Captain Badrish.

The objective of the flight was to evaluate the system performance. Data will be collected from 20 flights in order to freeze the design of production version aircraft. The production version aircraft will be a 19 seater and will undergo civil and military certification.

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New upgraded 14-seater Saras aircraft completes first successful flight

TNN | Jan 24, 2018, 06.42 PM IST



BENGALURU: The National Aeronautics Laboratories (NAL)-developed Saras aircraft on Wednesday completed a successful first flight in its new avatar. The new upgraded version of the plane, development of which was nearly scrapped after its first crash in March 2009, is a 14-seater and was in the skies for 40 minutes.

The SARAS PT1N (14 seater) flight on Wednesday was commanded by Wing Commander UP Singh, Group Captain RV Panicker and Group Captain KP Bhat from the Indian Air Force's Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment (ASTE).

"The aircraft took off at about 11am from HAL airport and flew at the maximum height of 8,500 ft at the speed of 145 knots. The chase aircraft (KIRAN) was piloted by Group Captain Badrish and telemetry was commanded by Group Captain Naraynen, Wing Commander Pandey and Wing Commander R Sridhar (retd)," an official statement read.

All the system parameters were found to be normal and the team claimed a text book flight. NAL, a Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) lab, had a young team of 40 scientists and engineers working on the project for the past nine months.

The primary objective is to evaluate the system performance in about 20 flights and the data collected from this shall be used to freeze the design of production version aircraft.

"The production version aircraft will be of 19 seat capacity and will undergo both civil and military certification," the statement added.

NAL Director Jitendra Jadhav had told TOI that the modified Saras will have a configurable configuration. "While the design is for a 14-seater plane, it can be configured to accommodate 19 people. The final product will be taken care of by the IAF, but we will need this much money for the prototypes," he had said while claiming that manufacturing of two Limited Series Prototypes alone will require Rs 400 crore to Rs 500 crore.

The Saras programme had come crashing down after an accident in 2009. The original design included a maximum take-off weight of 6,100kg and a maximum payload of 1,232kg. The first prototype which completed its maiden flight on May 29, 2004, was overweight at 5,118kg compared to the 4,125kg design specifications.



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Modified Saras takes to skies after nine years

Kalyan Ray, DH News Service, New Delhi, Jan 24 2018, 22:17 IST



Saras debuts at HAL airport.



Almost nine years after a fatal accident, the indigenous Saras aircraft once again took to the skies on Wednesday.

Developed by CSIR's National Aeronautics Laboratories, the 14-seater aircraft took off around 11 am from the HAL airport and flew at an altitude of 8,500 ft with a speed of 145 knots, circling Bengaluru for nearly 40 minutes.

"It was a text book flight," the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - the parent organisation of NAL - said in a statement.

The aircraft was piloted by Wg Cdr U P Singh, Gp Capt R V Panicker and Gp Capt K P Bhat from the Indian Air Force's Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment.

The first flight of Saras-PTN1 comes nearly nine years after Saras-PT2 crashed at Seshagirihalli near Bidadi, killing all the three IAF personnel on board.

An investigation report from the Director General of Civil Aviation identified a number of design flaws as well as human errors behind the tragedy.

"Saras-PTN1 has several improvements from the aircraft that crashed. It has improved avionics, radar, linear flap actuator, environment control system, engine flap actuators and flight control system," NAL director Jitendra J Jadhav told DH.

Initially, NAL made two aircraft - Saras-PT1 and Saras-PT2. While one met with the accident, the modifications were carried out on the remaining one after the Union Science Ministry gave its green signal.

The primary objective is to evaluate the system performance in about 20 flights and the data collected from this shall be used to freeze the design of production version aircraft. The production version aircraft will be of 19-seat capacity and will undergo civil or military certification depending on the end user.

"Once we have the data, we will freeze the design and seek the Cabinet's approval to make two production-version of the aircraft that would serve as the prototype. Also weight and drag reduction issues could be addressed at the prototype stage," Jadhav said.

Fund crunch

The development on Saras was stalled first by the accident and subsequently due to a financial crunch. The project was practically shelved between 2013 and 2016 for want of money and revived only towards the end of 2016, sources said.

Weeks before the accident, Saras flew in the biennial Aero-India, but without any DGCA approval. "Aircraft was used for flying demonstration in Aero India 2009 from February 11-15, 2009 in Bengaluru. But no DGCA permission was taken by the NAL," says the DGCA probe report on the fatal crash.

The DGCA report pointed out the lack of effective and continuous monitoring of Saras test programme by the management committee comprising NAL and ASTE.

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The CSIR statement on the Saras PTN-1 flight now claimed involvement of NAL, ASTE, Hindustan Aeronautics and the two regulatory agencies, DGCA and CEMILAC in making the modified aircraft's maiden flight successful.



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Upgraded Version Of Saras Completes Successful Maiden Flight

The aircraft took off at about 11 am from HAL airport and flew for about 40 minutes at the maximum height of 8500 feet at the speed of 145 knots.

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The new upgraded version of SARAS made its maiden flight in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

Bengaluru: The new upgraded version of SARAS, the indigenous transport aircraft developed by National Aeronautics Laboratory, "successfully" made its maiden flight in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

SARAS PT1N, a 14-seater passenger aircraft, is an upgraded version of the plane, after the second prototype of SARAS had crashed during a test flight killing all the three crew members on board, on the outskirts of the city near Bidadi in March 2009.

The aircraft took off at about 11 am from HAL airport and flew for about 40 minutes at the maximum height of 8500 feet at the speed of 145 knots.

"All the system parameters are found normal," an official release said, describing it as a "text book flight."

Designed and developed by CSIR-NAL, a frontline aerospace research laboratory, the flight 'SARAS PT1N' was commanded by Wg Cdr U P Singh, Group Captain R V Panicker and Group Capt K P Bhat from IAF-Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment (ASTE), the release said.

The 'chase aircraft' (KIRAN) was piloted by Gp Captain Badrish and telemetry commanded by Gp Captain Naraynen, Wg Cdr Pandey and Wg Cdr R Sridhar (Retd), it said.

The aircraft is seen as culmination of the efforts of team CSIR-NAL, IAF-ASTE, Center for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC), HAL and Directorate General of Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DGAQA).

The primary objective is to evaluate the system performance in about 20 flights and the data collected from this would be used to freeze the design of production version aircraft, the release said.

India's first civil plane Saras takes to the skies after nearly a decade

The 14-seater civil aircraft programme, named after the Indian crane Saras, was conceived in the 1990's as a joint project between India and Russia.

Raghu Krishnan | Bengaluru January 24, 2018 Last Updated at 13:11 IST



Saras

took it on its own when Myasischev Design Bureau, the Russian state agency for civilian planes backed out due to the financial crisis that emerged after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

It took nearly two decades for scientists at NAL to fly the plane first in May 2004.

In 2009, the second prototype of Saras on a test flight crashed on Bengaluru outskirts killing three Indian Air Force pilots.

A prototype of Saras, India's first civil aeroplane, flew on Wednesday for nearly 40 minutes over the Bengaluru skies for the first time in nearly a decade, kindling hopes of a revival of a homegrown civil aircraft programme in the country.

The Saras (PT-1N) plane was piloted by Wg Cdr U P Singh and Group Captain B Panicker, pilots of the Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment (ASTE), the Indian Air Force's elite school for test pilots, people familiar with the development said.

The 14-seater civil aircraft programme, named after the Indian crane Saras, was conceived in the 1990's as a joint project between India and Russia. NAL