

In a first, IAF uses blended bio-jet fuel to fly aircraft

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NEW DELHI: The IAF flew a military aircraft with blended bio-jet fuel for the very first time in India on Monday morning. A Russian-origin AN-32 transport plane was flight-tested, with the 10 per cent bio-jet blended ATF (aviation turbine fuel) made from Jatropha oil, in a sortie flown from the Chandigarh airbase.

"The project to flight-test the bio-jet fuel, with experimental test pilots and engineers from IAF's premier testing establishment ASTE, is a combined effort of IAF, DRDO, directorate general aeronautical quality assurance (DGAQA) and CSIR-Indian institute of petroleum," said IAF spokesperson Wing Commander Anupam Banerjee.



"The IAF had earlier carried out extensive engine tests on the ground. This is now being followed by flight trials using the 10 per cent bio-jet blended ATF. The Jatropha oil has been sourced from the Chhattisgarh biodiesel development authority (CBDA) and then processed at CSIR-IIP, Dehradun," he added.

The IAF intends to fly the AN-32 transport aircraft using the bio-jet fuel during the Republic Day fly-past on January 26. If the project succeeds, the IAF will gradually start using this fuel blend for even fighter jets like Su-30MKIs and MiG-29s. "Regular use of such bio-fuels can help the IAF cut down some costs in buying huge quantities of ATF every year," said another officer.

