

Asian upstarts eye global aircraft market

REUTERS, Singapore

Indonesia is about to roll out its first passenger plane, one of several smaller, homegrown aircraft being studied in Asia, designed especially for short hops across the region's emerging markets, where air travel is booming.

State-owned aerospace firm PT Dirgantara Indonesia's 19-seat N219, which cost \$400 million and took just over five years to make, is scheduled to make its first flight in June and start deliveries in 2018.

South Korea is mulling a 100-seat aircraft, and India has considered a 70-90 seater.

Novices in a highly competitive industry, these largely state-owned

Runways at many smaller airports are not always long enough to accommodate larger planes like the A320 and 737.

But while countries see the launch of a commercial aircraft as an important economic milestone, designing an airplane from scratch is also an expensive gamble. Both China and Japan have struggled to create jets that sell.

Asian markets are a testbed for smaller aircraft.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), which represents airlines, expects Indonesia will be one of the five fastest growing markets over the next 20 years. But the country also has many low-density cities where poor airport infrastructure has

PTDI is also studying a 50-passenger plane.

For its part, Korea Aerospace Industries, which develops and license-produces fighter jets and helicopters, has been studying a 100-seat passenger aircraft for more than a year, said an industry executive familiar with KAI's plans.

KAI would prefer to work with established Western aerospace firms if it goes ahead, this person added.

"We will initially start with mid-sized passenger aircrafts or business jets, instead of taking on Boeing directly with large-sized jets," said a KAI spokesman, who added these remain mid-to-long term plans.

Indian state-owned aerospace firm Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) and research agency National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) have both studied separate projects for a 70-90 seat aircraft. HAL and NAL declined to comment.

Industry executives said both are waiting for the Indian government to clarify its aerospace policy, especially on the taxation of aircraft and aircraft parts and the opening of smaller airports in secondary cities.

China and Japan's experience with homegrown craft, however, underlines the costly challenge ahead.

The MA60 turboprop, China's first passenger aircraft - developed by state-owned Aviation Industry Corp of China (AVIC) and delivered from 2000 - has been involved in 11 major incidents. This includes four in which the plane was completely written off and one that resulted in 25 deaths.

In August 2013, the New Zealand government warned tourists not to fly on a Tongan airline's MA60, citing the incidents.

Another Chinese plane, Commercial Aircraft Corp of China's long-delayed ARJ-21 regional jet, has not received U.S. certification after seven years of testing.

In Japan, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' MRJ regional jet has also struggled. The jet's first flight in November 2015 was more than three years behind schedule. Its first deliveries have been delayed by more than four years to mid-2018.

Embraer has since unveiled an upgraded version of its regional jets, giving it an order backlog of 513 planes across its line-up. The MRJ garnered just 233 firm orders.



A visitor tries the PT Dirgantara Indonesia N-219 cockpit simulator at their booth during the Singapore Airshow at Changi Exhibition Centre.

manufacturers are betting on growing passenger numbers and an increase in short flights operated by small, efficient craft. The planned craft would be smaller than the Airbus 320 or Boeing 737, which seat between about 150 and 190 passengers.

Instead, they aim to be cost-effective, nimble alternatives to planes produced by Brazil's Embraer, Canada's Bombardier, and European firm ATR, a joint venture between Airbus and Finmeccanica.

Many of these could suit some markets in Asia, South America and Africa, executives say, where demand for air travel is growing but infrastructure development often lags demand.

been a drag on strong demand for air travel.

Other emerging markets face a similar challenge, Ade Yuyu Wahyuna, vice-president of business development and marketing at PT Dirgantara Indonesia (PTDI), told Reuters.

Powered by two turboprop engines from Pratt & Whitney, a unit of United Technologies, Indonesia's N219 is similar to the Airbus CASA CN212 that PTDI manufactured under license in the 2000s. PTDI says it has 150 commitments from small Indonesian regional carriers.

It is just the start of the company's aerospace ambitions, said Wayhuna.

Kuwait, Saudi agree to resume output at disputed oilfield

AFP, Kuwait City

Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have reached a deal to resume production at the disputed Khafji offshore oilfield, Kuwait's acting oil minister said on Tuesday.

"An agreement has been reached with the Saudi side at Aramco to resume production at Khafji field in small quantities," Anas al-Saleh told parliament during a debate.

Saleh, who is also the finance minister, said the quantities will increase "gradually" after resolving environmental issues over which the field was shut down.

A number of maintenance con-

tracts have been signed in preparation for the resumption of production, the minister said without saying when production will resume or how much oil will be pumped.

Production at Khafji, which pumped over 300,000 barrels per day and was jointly operated by the two countries, was halted in October 2014. Riyadh cited environmental issues for the shutdown.

Khafji is part of the neutral zone which is operated jointly by the two Arab nations and production is divided equally.

The other field is Wafra where production was also halted in May last year. Wafra pumped around 200,000 bpd.

Kuwait had initially said that Saudi Arabia unilaterally stopped production due to pollution concerns even though it was entitled to five years' notice under the joint agreement.

The two Gulf neighbours began talks in June to resolve the dispute.

Khafji is jointly operated by Kuwait Gulf Oil Co. (KGOC) and Saudi Aramco Gulf Operations, while Wafra is operated by KGOC and Saudi Arabian Chevron.

Industry sources say Kuwaiti authorities were unhappy with Saudi Arabia for renewing an operating agreement for the Wafra field with Saudi Arabian Chevron for 30 years in 2009 without consulting them.



Sohana Rouf Chowdhury, managing director of Rangs Motors; Pankaj Singh, country manager (international operations) of Mahindra and Mahindra; and Md Asaduzzaman Mia, commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, pose during a programme to hand over two units of Mahindra Bolero Maxi Truck to the police department, as part of corporate social responsibility of Rangs, which is the sole distributor for Mahindra and Mahindra in Bangladesh.

Taiwan's Hon Hai ready to seal deal with Sharp

AFP, Taipei

Taiwan's tech giant Hon Hai applied Tuesday for a halt in share trading, suggesting it is ready to finalise its multi-billion-dollar takeover of Japan's electronics maker Sharp.

The Taiwan Stock Exchange said trading in shares of Hon Hai Precision and its affiliate Foxconn Technology would be suspended due to a "major announcement".

A Hon Hai spokeswoman was not available for comment but local media said the two companies would hold board meetings Wednesday to discuss the huge deal.

Hon Hai was fined early this month after the Taiwan Stock Exchange said it violated trading rules by failing fully to explain the deal it has been negotiating with Sharp.

Local media said Hon Hai was likely to sign an agreement with the Japanese firm Thursday to seal the takeover.

Yahoo sets deadline for buyers to present preliminary bids

AFP, San Francisco

Yahoo Inc. has given prospective buyers until April 11 to present preliminary offers for some of its assets, the Wall Street Journal reported late Monday.

In letters to potential suitors, the troubled Internet company asked them what assets they were interested in, how they would finance such acquisitions and what terms would have to be met on their end, the newspaper said, quoting people familiar with the matter.

The paper said some buyers might be interested in Yahoo's core web business or parts of it, while others might bid for stakes in Alibaba or Yahoo Japan.

Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer, who took over in 2012 with the mission of boosting growth, is in an increasingly difficult position as she has failed to show concrete progress.

Although Yahoo is one of the best-known names on the Internet and is used by around one billion people, it has fallen behind Google in Internet searches and has been steadily losing ground in online advertising.

Ironically, Mayer joined Yahoo as chief

executive from Google a result of a proxy war launched by an activist investor group.

While Mayer has injected some energy and glamour into the company, Yahoo's finances have failed to improve and its core operations are valued in the market as worthless, with the company's valuation propped up by its stakes in Alibaba and Yahoo Japan.

In February, Yahoo said it was cutting 15 percent of its workforce and narrowing its focus as it explores "strategic alternatives."

The announcement, coming with the release of a big quarterly loss, offered the first sign that Yahoo may be open to a sale or merger after years of struggling to regain its former glory.

The California company reported a loss of \$4.43 billion in the final three months of last year, due mostly to lowering the value of its US, Canada, Europe, Latin America and Tumblr units.

The Journal said some 40 companies potentially interested in Yahoo have signed non-disclosure agreements in recent weeks but Yahoo wants to narrow the field.

Yahoo had no immediate comment to the Journal report.



Tawfique Imam, Robi's general manager for loyalty and win-back, and Sayed Ahmed, Pizza Inn's managing director, pose at the signing ceremony of an agreement at the Pizza Inn outlet in Gulshan, Dhaka. Robi customers, under the Dhonnobad programme, will get 15 percent discounts on total bill at the outlet.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Kushtia
email: eekus@rhd.gov.bd

Reference No. 795 Date: 27-03-2016

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following work:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package reference No.	Name of work	Last date & time of submission
01.	51604	e-GP/RW-13/KURD/2015-2016	Extension of room at House No. Gha-24 & Kha-3 of Chourhash RHD Stack Yard under Road Division, Kushtia during the year 2015-2016.	11-04-2016 At 11:00 hours

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for submission of the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any Member of Schedule Banks for e-GP.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@procure.gov.bd).

Mohammed Ziaul Haider, PEng.
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Kushtia

GD-731

India extends wheat import tax by 3 months to June 30

REUTERS, New Delhi

India has extended a 25 percent import tax on wheat by three months to June 30, a government order said on Tuesday.

The move is aimed at shielding domestic farmers from cheap imports particularly as wheat from the new-season harvest will become available by the end of this month, government sources told Reuters last week.

India, the world's biggest wheat producer after China, raised the import tax to 25 percent from 10 percent in October.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
Census of the Undocumented Myanmar Nationals Staying in Bangladesh 2015 Project
Parishankhyan Bhaban (2nd Floor, Block-2)
E-27/A Agargaon, Sher-c-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.bbs.gov.bd

No: 52.01.0000.405.30.006.15.160 Date: 29-Mar-2016

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This is to notify all concern that the following tender has been published through e-GP portal:

Tender ID, Package No. & Date of Publishing	Brief Description of Goods and Related Service	Last Selling and Closing Date & Time
Tender ID : 52823 Package No : e-Tender: GD-43 Publishing : 29-Mar-2016, 09:00 AM	Supply of Stamp Pad. (Detail specifications of the above mentioned items are available on e-GP portal)	Last Selling: 13-Apr-2016 11:00 AM Closing: 13-Apr-2016 12:00 PM

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Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Sd.
Md. Alamgir Hossen
Project Director

GD -737