RUSSIA SUKHOI PLANS TO TRIPLE JETS OUTPUT BY 2020 ON MIDEAST DEMAND

News / Manufacturer

Russia's **Sukhoi** Civil Aircraft Company, a maker of regional jets, plans to lift production more than three-fold by **2020**, banking on demand from at least five **Middle East** customers, a senior executive said on Sunday.

Sukhoi is in talks with Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman for sales of its Sukhoi Superjet 100 (SSJ 100), Evgeny Andrachnikov, senior vice president, told Reuters at the Dubai Airshow.

"By 2020, we will have critical mass of 200 aircraft (produced annually). We are in serious talks with many clients including in the Middle East with Egypt a big ticket game," he said. Currently, Sukhoi's production capacity is 60 jets annually.

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He said Egypt Air is a potential client after Egyptian president Sisi visited Moscow and held discussions, among other things, about Sukhoi with his counterpart, Putin.

“There is clear indication of interest,” he said. If the order is firmed up, it would be Sukhoi’s first in the Middle East, he said, adding that Iran, a big market is also a potential customer for a big order.

Sukhoi is aggressively pushing exports, in part, due to a mandate from the government to sell 30 planes annually. Domestic demand is incapable of consuming that, compelling Sukhoi to look beyond Russia.

Sukhoi is targeting the Pacific Rim, Africa, Latin America and Australia for sales of its jets, Andrachnikov said.

Sukhoi is also working on a 120-seater model as well as business jets to cater for Middle East markets. Its business jets operate currently only in Russia bit with three sold to Thailand and one to Kazakhstan.

Production is in Russia, although plans are afoot to start some parts production in India, a long time ally of Russia, under India’s offset program.

“We are in advanced talks with Indian manufacturers for industrial cooperation in India. It could happen in 2016,” he said, declining to name the companies.

SSJ 100 is a 100-seat new-generation plane designed and manufactured by the company jointly with Alenia Aermacchi, a Finmeccanica company.

Irish European regional airline CityJet last month signed a deal with Sukhoi to purchase 15 SSJ-100 jets worth over $1 billion

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