

Pakistan to China's JF-17 fighters

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan - Pakistani Air Force Chief Tanvir Ahmed says his country plans to acquire up to 250 JF-17 Thunder fighters from China.

The disclosure, made in an interview with Jane's Defense Weekly, is far more than the 150 fighters originally planned, reports India's Press Trust of India news agency.

Ahmed was quoted as saying there were "no issues" over using Russian engines in JF-17s, although there have been questions regarding Russia's objections to re-exporting RRD-93 engines it had supplied only to China.

"We have no issues related to this, although there have been efforts to impede progress by creating some road blocks in this particular path," Ahmed was quoted as saying.

The PTI report said the reference was to India's lobbying against the deal.

Jane's said Russian President Vladimir Putin had "assured" India during his earlier visit that Russian engines would not power the Pakistani fighters. However, it quoted Pakistani sources saying they have been assured by China that Russia will not block the supply of engines.

Pakistan's News reported Ahmed said his country is negotiating with China to acquire up to 40 of China's advanced J-10 fighters. China also has offered Pakistan an airborne warning and control system aircraft, Ahmed said.

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