

F-35B fighter jet ready for combat: US Marines

01/08/2015 20:20 by admin

Washington: The US Marine Corps said that a squadron of 10 F-35B Lightning II aircraft is ready for worldwide deployment, a media report said.

In a statement on Friday, Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Frank Kendall said the F-35B fighter jet achieved initial operational capability within the US Marine Corps, hailing it as "a significant milestone in the continued evolution of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program", Xinhua news agency reported.

"The decision was made following a thorough operational readiness inspection, which assessed the Marine Corps' ability to employ this complex weapon system in an operational environment," Kendall said.

"This achievement is a testament to the efforts of the F-35 Joint Program Office and industry team, as well as the hard work and support from the Marine Corps," Kendall added.

The Pentagon said in a press release that Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 121, or VMFA-121, based in Yuma, Arizona, is the first squadron to become operational with an F-35 variant, adding that the F-35 will eventually replace three existing platforms, including the AV-8B Harrier, the F/A-18 Hornet, and the EA-6B Prowler.

- IANS