CHINA-DEVELOPED C929 PASSENGER AIRCRAFT AIMS TO REPLACE BOEING 777: REPORTS

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A China-made large passenger aircraft expected to give the Boeing 777 a tough competition is set to take off commercially, a media report said on Monday.

The passenger aircraft C919 that made its debut at an exhibition in November 2010 will begin to roll off the production line from November 2, the China Daily reported.

Its maiden flight is expected to be in the third quarter of the next year, according to Wang Jian, chairman of the AVIC Electromechanical Company.

The C919 has been developed by the Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China (COMAC), which develops home-grown passenger aircraft, including the short-range jet ARJ21. The single-aisle narrow-body aircraft has been marketed over the past years aimed at competing with the Boeing 737 and Airbus A320.

Wang said that as of now, a total of 514 China-made C919 aircraft have been ordered by 21 customers around the world.

He said that according to the current plan, the C919 will make its maiden flight in the third quarter next year, or possibly in 2017.

The C919's "successor" -- the wide-body aircraft C929 -- has also entered the research stage in terms of key technologies. According to Wang, the C929 will use a domestically-manufactured engine and have a capacity of more than 300 passengers, aiming to replace the Boeing 777 in the future.

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