

Rolls-Royce Expands India Capabilities Under UK-India Trade Pact

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Rolls-Royce has announced plans to scale up its aerospace and defence operations in India, aligning with the newly implemented India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the bilateral Defence Industrial Roadmap. The British engineering giant will explore the establishment of a Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility for the AE2100 engine, which powers the Indian Air Force's fleet, as part of its strategy to deepen in-country capabilities.

Abhishek Singh, Senior Vice President – Defence (India and South-East Asia) at Rolls-Royce, said the agreement provides a strong framework for future collaboration. “Rolls-Royce has a long-standing legacy in India, and we look forward to strengthening our in-country capabilities alongside the framework set by the CETA and the UK-India Vision 2035 roadmap. We are exploring opportunities to set up an MRO for the AE2100 engine, as well as scaling up assembly and testing for the multi-role transport aircraft (MTA) programme,” he stated.

The move comes at a time of increased bilateral engagement between the UK and India, which Singh believes creates the right environment for closer collaboration on defence, technology, and innovation. “We see India not just as a growth market, but as a strategic partner for co-development, innovation, and capability-building. This next chapter is about deepening a partnership built on trust, talent, and technology,” he added.

Rolls-Royce recently committed to doubling its sourcing from India within five years. The expansion will cover its supply chain across multiple business verticals, including advanced aero engine components, in line with India’s goal of playing a larger role in global manufacturing networks.

By leveraging its global technical expertise, Rolls-Royce aims to bring knowledge and advanced engineering closer to the point of need in India. The company also intends to develop local talent and strengthen its supplier ecosystem. Singh welcomed CETA’s aerospace provisions, noting that they align trade rules with international standards set by the World Trade Organisation. “We see this as a launchpad for future growth with our Indian partners across both defence and civil aerospace,” he said.

Rolls-Royce’s renewed focus builds on its substantial presence in India. The company employs more than 3,000 people nationwide, including 2,000 highly skilled engineers and business services specialists. It operates joint ventures with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Force Motors, and maintains long-standing partnerships with major Indian manufacturers such as HAL, Tata, Godrej & Boyce, and Bharat Forge.

This latest expansion underscores how the UK-India trade deal is opening new opportunities for British industry, with Rolls-Royce positioning itself to play a leading role in strengthening economic and defence ties between the two nations.