

Defense Ministry Approves Rs 67,000 Crore in Indigenous Projects



In a major push for the "Make in India" initiative, the Ministry of Defense has cleared capital acquisition projects worth approximately ₹67,000 crore (about \$8 billion) to be sourced from domestic defense manufacturers. The approvals, granted by the Defense Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defense Minister Rajnath Singh, focus on boosting the military's capabilities while strengthening the country's self-reliance in defense production.

The projects are a significant boon for key public sector undertakings, including Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL). While specific contracts have not yet been formally awarded, these companies are expected to play a major role in the new procurements. The move aligns with the government's long-term vision to reduce dependence on foreign imports and foster a robust indigenous defense industrial base.

For the Indian Air Force, the approvals include the procurement of mountain radars, which will enhance air surveillance capabilities in mountainous border regions. The DAC also cleared the upgrade of the Saksham/Spyder weapon system, integrating it with the Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS) to bolster air defense.

The Indian Navy will receive compact autonomous surface craft, designed to detect and neutralize threats in anti-submarine warfare missions. Additionally, approvals were granted for

the procurement of BrahMos fire control systems and launchers and for the upgrade of the BARAK-1 point defense missile system.

Across all three services, the Army, Navy, and Air Force, the DAC has accorded initial approval for the procurement of Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPAs). These drones, capable of carrying multiple payloads and weapons, are intended to provide round-the-clock surveillance and combat capabilities for long-endurance missions. The decision also included provisions for the maintenance of the C-17 and C-130J fleets and a comprehensive annual maintenance contract for the S-400 long-range air defense missile system.

This latest round of approvals underscores India's strategic focus on modernizing its armed forces with advanced, indigenously developed systems. By prioritizing domestic manufacturers, the government aims to not only meet its defense needs but also create jobs and stimulate economic growth within the sector.