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## **‘World Class’ Memorial at Rameshwaram, Govt picks themes for Kalam memorial**

The memorial for commemorating the life and work of late President A P J Abdul Kalam at Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu will be based on three different themes to showcase his contribution in motivating the youth apart from his scientific acumen and eventful life. Responding to an RTI application filed The Indian Express, the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) stated that the government will construct the memorial in Rameshwaram through the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Also, the “world class” memorial will take inspiration from top memorials and museums of the country, including Mahatma Gandhi’s Dandi-Kutir in Ahmedabad and Rajiv Gandhi’s memorial in Sriperumbudur. Pursuant to an announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the former President’s birth anniversary on October 16, 2015, a meeting was held in November last year under the chairmanship of Urban Development Minister M Venkaiah Naidu to give a concrete shape to the government’s resolution. According to the RTI reply, it was decided that the memorial will be based on three broad themes: “Journey through the life of Dr Kalam”, his “contribution to science” and his “contribution in motivating the youth.” The minutes of the meeting added that “the memorial will have audio-visuals in minimum three languages, namely Tamil, Hindi and English”. In the meeting, which was also attended by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar, Union Minister P Radhakrishnan, former chief election commissioner N Gopalaswamy and Culture Secretary Narendra Kumar Sinha, the DRDO Secretary and other officials were asked to visit top memorials in the country “for taking inspiration for the world class memorial”. The RTI reply said a “trust/society may be formed by DRDO officials for the upkeep and maintenance of the memorial” with inclusion of bureaucrats from MoUD and Ministry of Culture. The culture ministry has been asked to provide inputs on the cultural aspects of the memorial to the DRDO. The minutes said the Tamil Nadu government will be requested to provide 2.5 acre additional land adjacent to the plot already earmarked for the purpose. A hall in DRDO headquarter in Delhi will also be refurbished and thrown open to public to depict contributions of Kalam, added the reply. The DRDO will also obtain consent of Kalam’s family at his ancestral house in Rameshwaram to provide support, if required, for the maintenance of the house. When contacted, Kalam’s grand nephew A P J Sheik Dawood, said the family met Naidu recently in Bengaluru. “We have been assured that the government is committed to build a world class memorial. It is taking some time since the Centre has sought additional land from the Tamil Nadu government.”

## **Defense Procurement Procedure finalized: Manohar Parrikar**

Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar on Monday said that the Defense Procurement Procedure has been finalized and will be notified soon. Talking to media in the sidelines of Make in India week, he said that it may come into effect from April. Parrikar said that indigenously designed products have been given first priority in the procedure. The Defence Minister said that the production of Akash missile will be doubled and permission has given to export ten per cent of it.

*NDTV*

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## **Transparent Defence Procurement Will Save Money: Manohar Parrikar**

MUMBAI: If the defence procurement system is open and transparent, it can bring down the purchase cost by at least 20-25 per cent without compromising on quality parameters, Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar said today.

He also said the new Defence Procurement Policy (DPP) will come into effect from April 2.

"If we keep the defence procurement system open and transparent, it can bring down the cost by at least 20-25 per cent without compromising on quality," Mr Parrikar told reporters on the sidelines of the Make in India Week in Mumbai.

But stressing his point the Minister without naming companies, said, recently he cleared three procurement proposals out of which one company offered 50 per cent discount while the other offered 20 per cent without compromising on quality and safety parameters.

When asked how the Make in India drive will help localisation of defence production as large MNCs normally do not share their technologies, he said the forthcoming offset policy will have mandatory local production with tech transfer and if not, local production with mandatory local sourcing.

Mr Parrikar, however, admitted that defence procurement is a different animal as most of the terms of manufacturing contracts depend on volume which we alone cannot order. Therefore all the items cannot be produced here.

Projecting a 1 lakh employment generation potential from the defence sector alone in the manufacturing space over the next five to seven years, the minister said the sector will need to have to skill around one lakh people if we were to improve local production.

When asked how the ministry will ensure quality of defence production as most of the defence forces turn down locally made items, like by the PSUs, he said this is a challenge but he is working out how to improve the after sales from the PSUs.

Most of the PSU made products have had issues about safety and longevity, and defence forces have not been forthcoming in commissioning them.

Mr Parrikar was quick to point out that the issues with the Arjun brand main battle tanks will soon be resolved. He also said the Air Force has ordered as many as 100 Tejas LCAs recently, which shows that all the locally made models are not lacking in quality.

The minister also said since he took over, as many 370 manufacturing license have been issued apart from around 50 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with multinationals.

He said the defence exports has been growing at two per cent, mostly from private sector, but off late even PSUs are doing so and the government is keen to push this up further.