

Defence Ministry to discuss proposal on acquiring torpedoes for INS Arihant and Scorpene-class submarines

The Navy had issued a Request for Information more than a year ago and has been in discussion on the formalities with the vendors and the Defence Ministry acquisition wing

New Delhi: Already delayed by many years, the Defence Ministry is expected to discuss a proposal for acquiring heavyweight torpedoes for the nuclear submarine INS Arihant and the six Scorpene-class submarines being built for the Indian Navy.

"A high-level meeting of the Defence Ministry is expected to discuss the proposal to acquire heavy-weight torpedoes for the INS Arihant nuclear submarine and the submarines of the Kalvari-class of the Indian Navy. The Kalvari class are originally the Scorpene submarines of France built in India at the Mazagon Dockyards Limited (MDL)," sources in the Navy told ANI.

The Defence Ministry is also likely to take a call on the tender to be issued by the Navy for the heavyweight torpedoes and also on the number to be acquired. The Navy had issued a Request for Information more than a year ago and has been in discussion on the formalities with the vendors and the Defence Ministry acquisition wing.

The DRDO is also developing a heavyweight torpedo as the next version of its light torpedoes for submarines and surface ships.

The proposal for acquisition of the torpedoes has been going on for more than 10 years now as an earlier proposal to acquire it from an Italian firm WASS was scrapped due to its alleged links with the scam-tainted AgustaWestland and Finmeccanica group of companies allegedly involved in the chopper scam.

The heavyweight torpedoes are the main weapons of any submarine operating underwater against both enemy submarines and surface warships.

At the moment, the Kalvari class and the INS Arihant are relying on the old torpedoes in the naval inventory for operations.

INS Arihant is the first indigenously-built and developed nuclear submarine of the Indian Navy, and the vessel completed its maiden operational deployment in the Indian Ocean Region a few months ago.

The strategic submarines are operated by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) and as per plans, the Navy will have a fleet of at least five nuclear submarines which can carry long-range ballistic missiles.

The Navy has already inducted one of the Kalvari class boats and is expected to induct the remaining five in the next four years.

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2019/jan/31/defence-ministry-to-discuss-proposal-on-acquiring-torpedoes-for-ins-arihant-and-scorpene-class-subma-1932357.html>