

## Revamping DRDO and defence PSUs

The need is increasingly felt of involving the private sector and other agencies, i.e.; academic institutions like universities, IITs, Indian Institute of Science etc for a complete revamping and reorientation of Defence Research Development Organisation. These recommendations having come from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence with an aim to reduce dependence on foreign vendors need thorough exercise and planning. These objectives, though not possible to be achieved in the short run, however, can progressively pave way for defence related requirements being met indigenously.

Private and Public sectors needed to work together as less dependence on foreign sellers meant massive research and investments in the country. Dependence on foreign sellers has often proved full of hassles and delays and not enough procurement from our own sources has added to the problems. It shall definitely prove economically and militarily favourable if procurement were made from indigenous available sources besides the same giving a chance to home sector to develop and expand. Collaboration with foreign manufacturers by the Indian private firms would provide a level playing field in manufacturing and providing items required for our defence needs.

A Committee headed by Dr. P. Rama Rao was constituted by the Government for reviewing the functioning of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

**The Organisation has implemented the following recommendations of the Committee within its powers:**

- Nomination of Nodal Officers for structured interaction between DRDO and Services
- Introduction of Integrated Financial Advice (IFA) Scheme for financial decentralisation
- Appointment of a dedicated Chief Controller for Human Resources (HR)
- Creation of Seven Technology Domain based Clusters headed by Director's General, Restructuring of DRDO HQrs, Creation of Directorate of Systems Analysis and Modelling (SAM) and Directorate of Quality, Reliability and Safety (QR&S)
- Efforts have also been made to increase budget for Extramural Research as recommended by the Committee
- Note has been initiated by DRDO for approval of the Cabinet for:
- Creation of empowered Defence Technology Commission (DTC)
- Creation of a Commercial Arm of DRDO
- Renaming of Director General, DRDO as Chairman, DRDO
- Creation of 5 Senior Administrative Grade (SAG) posts along with 162 other posts for full scale implementation of IFA Scheme

At present, there is no proposal to revamp the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) to make them capable for developing advance weapons systems. The DPSUs have a strategy for strengthening their capabilities for producing and supplying various Weapon Systems and Platforms required by Defence Forces within the agreed timeframe. Some of the DPSUs have also collaborated with DRDO and other R&D institutions in this regard. With the objective of achieving self-reliance in defence production, the Ordnance Factories and DPSUs have been continuously modernising and upgrading their capabilities and widening their product range. Adequate resources have been made available by the government to DRDO for carrying out research and development works. Government continuously monitors the capacity utilisation of DPSUs and emphasis is given for augmentation and modernisation of their capacities to meet the growing demand of the Armed Forces.

<http://www.indiandefensenews.in/2019/12/revamping-drdo-and-defence-psus.html>



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## **India's Advanced Towed Artillery Gun achieves milestone with record firing in a minute**

New Delhi: Over the last 18 months, the Indian Army has inducted American M-777 and South Korean K9 Vajra artillery units as well as its domestically-made Dhanush howitzer. The army has plans to modernise its entire artillery system in the next seven years.

India's domestically produced advanced towed artillery gun system (ATAGS) has achieved yet another breakthrough, successfully firing five rounds in 62 seconds.

The 155 mm x 52 calibre ATAGS achieved the milestone during evaluation trials at a firing range in the Pokharan region of India's Rajasthan state. It offered the key parameters for the howitzer to pass the evaluation trials.

The howitzer is being developed by the private firm Tata SED with support from the state-funded Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the country's premier military R&D organisation.

In manned firing, the system surpassed 20 rounds in 12 minutes without reporting any stoppage. The system has a range of over 40 km with advanced features in terms of high mobility, and quick deployability.

The ATAGS towed artillery gun system project is fully made in India, and was presented by the DRDO as part of the Indian Army's artillery modernisation programme.

The Armament system of the ATAGS includes its barrel, breech mechanism, muzzle brake and recoil mechanism, allowing it to fire 155 mm calibre at a longer range, and with accuracy and precision; additionally, it provides greater firepower.

The army had procured Swedish Bofors in the 1990s — a deal which later triggered enormous controversy involving political big-wigs accused of receiving kickbacks from the supplier. The purchase of howitzers was put on hold until earlier this year, when the Indian Army received its first tranche of the American ultralight Howitzer M-777s.

The delay of almost 30 years has been a major stumbling block for the Indian Army's field artillery rationalisation plan (FARP). According to the plan, the army needs over 1,500 155 mm 52 calibre towed Howitzers and an 814 mounted gun system of the same calibre.

<https://sputniknews.com/military/201912301077903088-indias-advanced-towed-artillery-gun-achieves-milestone-with-record-firing-in-a-minute---video-/>

## IAF fighter jet fleet in need of immediate attention

*Centre to push for faster production of Tejas I First lot of Rafale expected early next year*

New Delhi: With the MiG-27 fleet having been phased out of the Indian Air Force (IAF), reducing the fighting fleet further, the Ministry of Defence will now push for faster production of Tejas fighter jets and look for other options.

As of yesterday, the IAF was having 31 squadrons (16-18 planes in each) as against the mandated 42 for simultaneous two-front war with Pakistan and China. Of these are some half a dozen MiG 21 squadrons that are also being phased out gradually. The engine upgrade of the Jaguar jets has been shelved and the fleet of 100-odd jets will start getting phased out from 2025 onwards.

Another squadron of the Sukhoi 30 MKI is being raised at Thanjavur early next year.

The first lot of Rafale jets from France will start arriving early next year. A total of 36 are on order. Separately, a global tender is out in the open, asking foreign companies to come and make 114 jets in India. It is slowly inching forward.

The real issue is with the pace of the domestic production of fighter jets and the IAF has suggested to the government that it needed a speedier “make in India” by public sector giant Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.

Over the next 16-18 years, the IAF would require more than 300 jets made by the HAL. At the present pace of 11-12 planes per annum, the HAL would take 25-26 years to make various versions of Tejas, Tejas Mark II (called medium-weight fighter) and also the advanced medium combat aircraft (AMCA), a fifth generation state-of-the-art plane. All three planes are part of the projected 300 jets.

The IAF wanted the HAL to ramp up to make 16 planes per annum and outsource work, so that the speed could be increased to 20 planes. The HAL reports to the Department of Defence Production in the Ministry of Defence (MoD). The HAL is listed to make 40 Tejas Mark I jets. The order for the remaining 83 for the Tejas Mark 1A, which will come with 43 improvements, needs to be placed immediately.

The IAF has told the MoD that it would need 170 (10 squadrons) Tejas Mark II (known as MWF) planes, the test flight of which is slated for 2022.

### **Squadrons being phased out**

- The IAF has 31 squadrons (16-18 planes in each) as against the mandated 42 for two-front war with Pakistan and China
- Of these are some half a dozen MiG 21 squadrons that are being phased out gradually. The fleet of 100-odd Jaguar jets will start getting phased out from 2025

### **With China's help, Pak rolls out jets**

- Pakistan has rolled out the first batch of its eight indigenous fighter jets, manufactured in collaboration with its all-weather ally China
- Pakistan's Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing and Aviation Industries of China Vice President Hao Zhaoping were present during the rollout near Islamabad PTI

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/iaf-fighter-jet-fleet-in-need-of-immediate-attention-18319>