

IAF shelves plan to buy 48 Mi-17 V5s helicopters from Russia amid Centre's push for 'Make in India'

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Mi-17 V5 medium-lift helicopters | Photo: ANI/ Representative Image

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Amid a strong push by the government for indigenisation, the Indian Air Force (IAF) has shelved its plan to buy 48 additional Mi-17 V5 medium-lift helicopters from Russia.

India had signed a deal with Russia about 10 years ago for the procurement of 80 Mi-17V5s that have been inducted in batches into the force and these 48 were planned to be inducted into the force and other aviation agencies who don't want it anymore. It has been decided to close the deal.



The decision was taken that the force would support the indigenous medium-lift helicopter programme, government sources told ANI.

The decision to withdraw the tender was taken much before the conflict between Russia and Ukraine had started and was part of the deals foreclosed in view of the government's decision to stop imports and replace them with indigenous 'Made in India' projects, the sources clarified.

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The Mi-17V5 is the workhorse of the force and is used for maintaining Indian positions in the Siachen glacier and Eastern Ladakh on a daily basis along with the high altitude and far-flung areas in Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

The IAF is supporting the indigenous programmes in a big way under the Make in India in Defence programme and has been positively working towards acquiring indigenous missiles, fighter aircraft and choppers including the ALH Dhruv and the Light Combat Helicopter.