



AK 203 deal: Initial batch of 70,000 rifles delivered to armed forces by Russia

ANI



The armed forces have received the first batch of 70,000 rifles from Russia as part of a larger contract to manufacture the AK 203 assault rifles in India. The initial batch has been delivered at a fast pace as requested by India, despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sources said that the first batch is likely to be used by the air force, while the rifles to be manufactured at the Amethi factory will be delivered to the army, which is the main customer with a requirement of over 600,000 AK 203s.

The rifles are being manufactured with a complete technology transfer clause that will also enable their exports to friendly foreign nations in the near future. The manufacturing will be done by the Indo Russian Rifles Private Limited Joint Venture between Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Ltd (erstwhile OFB) and Russian Rosoboronexport.

The '5,124-crore deal was signed between India and Russia in December-the biggest defence deal between the two nations in recent time. The Russian side has given an assurance that the manufacturing with technology transfer will start within two to three years, with technical teams being sent to assist Indian partners.

The Korwa Rifle Factory in Amethi is being upgraded with a modern production line where the latest version of the Kalashnikov rifles are to be manufactured. A small arms range has also been set up at the factory where the acceptance trials can also be conducted by the armed forces before taking delivery.