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Ministry of Defence



Govt is committed to make defence industry export-oriented with India as a global manufacturing hub, says Raksha Mantri at 7th annual session of SIDM

Exhorts the industry to reduce import to export ratio with a target-oriented approach

Shri Rajnath Singh urges SIDM to prepare a roadmap to encourage big companies & foreign OEMs to invest in India or open joint ventures on a firm-to-firm basis

Calls for increased investment in cutting-edge tech, such as AI, cyber defence & autonomous systems to be future ready

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has reaffirmed the Government's commitment to empower India's defence industry by working hand-in-hand with them, and realise Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of making the country a global manufacturing hub. Addressing the seventh annual



session of Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) in New Delhi on October 04, 2024, Raksha Mantri described the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict as a reminder to build a strong defence industrial base, which can be bolstered and expanded with time.

Shri Rajnath Singh asserted that the Government, in its third consecutive term, will provide a renewed thrust to its ongoing efforts towards developing a robust, innovative and self-reliant defence ecosystem. He enumerated the steps taken to attain 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence, including creation of defence industrial corridors in Uttar Pradesh & Tamil Nadu, issuance of positive indigenisation lists (PILs), corporatisation of Ordnance Factory Board, handholding of private industries by DRDO, and unveiling of Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020.

On the 10 PILs notified with over 5,500 items, Raksha Mantri stated that the idea is to equip the Armed Forces with platforms/equipment manufactured on Indian soil. Terming the lists as dynamic & not static, he exhorted the industry to achieve complete self-reliance for these items within the stipulated time, and keep shortening the list. He also urged them to assess and identify products that can be added to the PILs in view of the rapid changes being witnessed in the field of defence across the globe.

Shri Rajnath Singh emphasised that due to the Government's efforts, an environment conducive to ease of doing business in the country has been created, and a target set for making India's defence industry export-oriented. While he lauded the major contribution of the private sector in taking the defence exports to a record high of over Rs 21,000 crore in Financial Year (FY) 2023-24, he called upon the industry to keep in mind the export and import figures, and strive to reduce the ratio between the two with a target-oriented approach.

Raksha Mantri expressed happiness over the fact that the annual defence production touched a record high of Rs 1.27 lakh crore in FY 2023-24. While the share of DPSUs was Rs one lakh crore, private companies contributed with about Rs 27,000 crore. He stated that there is a huge scope for increasing the share of private industries, and the next target should be to bring their participation to at least half of the total defence production. He promised full support of the Government in achieving this target.

Highlighting the Government's focus to encourage foreign companies and Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to invest in India or open joint ventures with the private industry, Shri Rajnath Singh called upon SIDM to prepare a roadmap for collaboration on a firm-to-firm basis. He was of the view that the Indian industry has the potential of bringing niche technologies or processes to India.

Recognising the potential of small & medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups in the defence sector, Raksha Mantri acknowledged the challenges they face in achieving ease of doing business. He urged SIDM to work closely with the government to address ground-level issues & help these enterprises to play a larger role in defence manufacturing. "It is important to ensure that our policies translate into ease of doing business at the ground level. SIDM can help in identifying the practical challenges faced by start-ups and SMEs so that we can address them," he said.



Shri Rajnath Singh urged the industry to invest more in cutting-edge technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), cyber defence, & autonomous systems. "India's defence industry must keep pace with global trends and focus on high-end technology. There is a need to increase investments in areas like AI & autonomous systems, which will define the future of warfare. The government is ready to provide all necessary support," he said.

During the session, Raksha Mantri also presented the SIDM Champion Awards, which recognise outstanding achievements in defence manufacturing. He termed the awards as a reflection to the dedication & excellence of Indian manufacturers, which will serve as a benchmark for best practices in the sector.

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Secretary (Defence Production) Shri Sanjeev Kumar, SIDM President Shri Rajinder Singh Bhatia and captains of the industry were among those present on the occasion. The theme of the session was '*Empowering Indian Defence Industry: Catalysing Exports and Indigenous Innovation*'. It served as a forum for stakeholders to discuss India's growing role as a global defence exporter and innovation hub.



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