

# Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flags off 51st K9 VAJRA-T Gun from L&T Armoured System Complex in Gujarat

## Reaffirms Government's commitment to make India an arms manufacturing hub and net defence exporter

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged off 51<sup>st</sup> K9 VAJRA-T Gun from Larsen & Toubro (L&T Armoured System Complex at Hazira in Gujarat today. Addressing a gathering on the occasion, Raksha Mantri called for active participation of the private sector in defence manufacturing, reaffirming the Government's commitment to make India an arms manufacturing hub and net defence exporter. While Shri Rajnath Singh acknowledged the increasing participation of the private industry in defence production, he stressed that a lot still needs to be done to make India a global defence manufacturing hub.

“Our Government is open to new ideas and is determined to use the energy, entrepreneurship spirit and enterprise of the private industry in the defence sector,” Raksha Mantri said. He assured that the Government will make all efforts to remove any roadblocks and work together to achieve the goal of indigenisation and self-reliance in defence sector.

Shri Rajnath Singh also listed out various far reaching reforms introduced by the Government under the ‘Make in India’ initiative to achieve \$26 billion defence industry by 2025 and provide employment to 2-3 million people. “We wish to create an ecosystem that provides a platform to both public sector and private sector to work together and contribute to nation building through their strengths and experiences,” he added.

Some of the reforms highlighted by Raksha Mantri include setting up of Defence corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu; simplification of industry licensing process; increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) cap; steps to promote defence exports; streamlining of Defence offsets policy; establishing Defence Investor Cell; providing Government-owned trial and testing facility to the private sector and schemes for startups and small & medium enterprises to promote innovation. He also mentioned that the Strategic Partnership (SP) model has been introduced in the Defence Production Policy under which private sector will be able to manufacture fighter aircraft, helicopters, submarines and armoured vehicles and emerge as global giants. Shri Rajnath Singh commended L&T for ensuring their participation under the SP model.

Raksha Mantri expressed satisfaction on his visit to the Armoured System Complex, saying that the facility is a strong example of ‘Naye Bharat ki Nayi Soch’. He added that the goal of modernisation and indigenisation in defence under 'Make in India', conceptualised by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has started to take shape. Shri Rajnath Singh termed K9 VAJRA-T Gun as the best example of ‘Make in India’ in Defence. “I have been told that more than 75 per cent of K9 Vajra has been manufactured in India. Over 5,000 people have got direct employment

and more than 12,500 indirect employment through this complex. It is a matter of great pride,” he said. Raksha Mantri congratulated L&T for delivering 51 of the 100 orders it received for K9 Vajra ahead of schedule.

L&T Defence is currently executing the ‘K9 VAJRA-T’ Tracked, Self-Propelled Howitzer Guns program - the contract awarded to the company by Ministry of Defence through global competitive bidding.

L&T Group Chairman Shri AM Naik and officials of L&T and Ministry of Defence were present on the occasion.

**ABB/SS/Nampi/Savvy/MTJ**

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