

Defence Acquisition Council OK's procurement of 10 lakh grenades

New Delhi: In a move to modernise the infantry, the most crucial fighting arm of the army, the Defence Acquisition Council on Wednesday approved the procurement of ten lakh hand grenades worth over Rs 500 crore. The grenades will be procured through the Make in India route wherein an Indian company will manufacture the grenades here.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation(DRDO) has developed the prototype of the new grenade and an Indian company most probably in the private sector will manufacture the bombs, sources said here.

The grenades are an important part of the infantry soldier's kit comprising rifles also and the grenades are used to take out enemy bunkers and enemy in close combat. At present, the Indian army uses HE grenades and they will be replaced by the new grenades, officials said.

The nod for the grenades closely on the heels of opening of a factory to manufacture seven lakh AK-203 rifles within the country to replace the currently used INSAS rifles by the soldiers. The new factory in Amethi is a joint venture between India and Russia and the total value of the deal is more than Rs 12,000 crores. A Major General rank officer will head the factory rifles which will later manufacture the AK series rifles for the para-military forces and the state police organizations.

Similarly, the government recently gave the nod for buying more than 12,000 Sig Sauer rifles for the infantry on a fast track basis. These rifles will be used by the soldiers guarding the Line of Control with Pakistan and the Line of Actual Control with China besides those engaged in counter insurgency operations in the North-East and Jammu and Kashmir.

Since the infantry does the fighting on the ground, it's modernisation is now top priority and the government is also likely to approve procurement of sniper rifles apart from light machine guns and medium machine guns to guard the frontiers.

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