

L&T Press Release

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L&T-made 91st K9 Vajra-T Gun flagged off by Gujarat CM at Armoured Systems Complex

Hazira (Gujarat), January 11, 2021: Chief Minister of Gujarat, Honourable Shri Vijay Rupani flagged-off the 91st K9 VAJRA-T Gun from L&T's Armoured System Complex (ASC). Maintaining the track record of ahead-of-time deliveries in this Ministry of Defence (MoD) program, the 91st Gun was also dispatched ahead of contractual delivery date - a testimony to the capabilities and complex system integration skills, planning prowess and execution efficiency of L&T.

L&T Defence is currently producing the 'K9 VAJRA-T' 155mm/52 calibre Tracked, Self-Propelled Howitzer Guns under the largest contract awarded to an Indian Private Company by the Ministry of Defence, through global competitive bidding. The 'K9 VAJRA-T' Howitzer Program involves delivery of 100 systems with associated Engineering Support Package (ESP) covering Spares, Documentation & Training and Maintenance Transfer of Technology (MTot) to the Army Base Workshop to support the Howitzer regiments throughout their operational life cycle. As a part of "Make-in-India" mission, the company established a green-field manufacturing cum integration cum testing facility, the 'Armoured Systems Complex' (ASC) at Hazira near Surat, honouring the specific invite by the Gujarat State Administration.

On this occasion, **Mr. J.D. Patil, Whole-time Director & Senior Executive Vice President (Defence & Smart Technologies), L&T**, said, *"The production of Armoured Platforms like the K9 VAJRA contributes to the Indian economy with a large multiplier effect, create new job opportunities and play a significant role in building India's Defence Industrial Base. With the experience, track record, skills, capabilities and infrastructure that L&T has built at the Armoured Systems Complex in the state of Gujarat, we are ready to develop, qualify and build India's future armoured platforms for our Armed Forces. The Complex, set up under the Gujarat State's Aerospace & Defence policy to produce Armoured Systems, is a flagship Defence Production Unit under the progressive policies of the State."*

"With the delivery of 91st Vajra Howitzer, we have created an Industry benchmark by once again delivering the only in-service, 155mm/52 calibre Artillery Gun, ahead of schedule. We hope and believe that under the Atmanirbhar Bharat policies of the Central Government, the Complex will remain fully engaged in providing sustenance to the painstakingly built supply chain for building Armoured Platforms indigenously and the State of Gujarat will continue to encourage and support the high technology Defence and Aerospace Production units in service of the Nation", he added.

The 'K9 VAJRA-T' systems are being delivered with more than 80% indigenous work packages and above 50% indigenisation (by value) at the Program level. This involves local production of over 13,000 types of components per gun system through a supply chain of about 1000 industrial partners, mostly MSMEs, with about 150 of them being from the state of Gujarat.

L&T targeted and took sustained efforts and innovated by indigenising 'K9 VAJRA-T', right from the first prototype developed for user evaluation trials by utilising basic K9 Thunder from the South Korean Partner Hanwha Systems and indigenously developing and producing fourteen critical systems, including the Fire Control System, Direct Fire System, Ammunition Handling System and other environment control and safety systems to suit Indian operating conditions and requirements.

The VAJRA variant developed by L&T with India specific features emerged Fully Compliant to Indian Army's needs during the arduous and extended Field Trials. L&T exceeded the indigenous manufacturing content by grooming a young team of engineers and specialising them in manufacturing automation and integration with the help of its in-house team of weapon system experts as well as by training at Hanwha facilities in South Korea. Subsequently, this team trained the supply chain partners as well as teams from L&T's five Defence production units from the State of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, that served as hubs for the nearly 1000 supply chain partners in a Hub and Spoke supply chain model.

The ASC is a state-of-the-art facility to manufacture and integrate advanced armoured platforms such as Self-Propelled Artillery Howitzers, Future Infantry Combat Vehicles (FICV), Future Ready Combat Vehicles (FRCV) or Future Main Battle Tanks. Spread over 40 acres within L&T's sprawling 755-acre Hazira Manufacturing Complex, the ASC is built with state-of-the-Art facilities for Robotic Armoured Hull and Turret Welding, CNC Machining, System Assembly and Integration, and Test Tracks to conduct mobility tests on the Armoured Vehicles.

Background:

Larsen & Toubro is an Indian multinational engaged in engineering, procurement and construction projects, manufacturing, defence and services with over USD 21 billion in revenue. It operates in over 30 countries worldwide. A strong, customer-focused approach and the constant quest for top-class quality have enabled L&T to attain and sustain leadership in its major lines of business for eight decades.

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