

U.K. PLANS GOVT.-TO-GOVT. FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE DEFENCE DEALS WITH INDIA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - UK

The U.K. government is working on a government-to-government framework for defence deals in future given India's preference for such an arrangement, Brig. Gavin Thompson, U.K. Defence Adviser in India, said on Friday.

"We have worked very hard since April last year to get all departments in U.K. to get this mechanism. We are at a point where we can send this proposal to the Indian government," Brig. Thompson said. The mechanism needs to be agreed to by both sides, he stated.

However, unlike the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) route of the U.S. government, where the government levies a small service charge, Brig. Thompson said there are no overheads built into the contract. "It is a lighter model," he stated, adding U.K. presently does not have such a mechanism.

In the last few years, India had concluded multi-billion dollar deals through the Inter-Governmental route for Rafale jets, S-400 air defence systems and stealth frigates among others.

During Aero India at Bengaluru last year, U.K. made a pitch to India for collaboration in the areas of aircraft carriers and development of 6th generation fighter aircraft technologies. In this regard, he said the Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers are 30% of the cost of the U.S. carriers, provide 60% of the sortie rate, and require only 25% of the manning compared to U.S. aircraft carriers.

There is also interest in the Indian Navy on the U.K.'s progress in integrated electric-propulsion and have exchanged subject matter experts.

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