

ARMY'S 4TH ROUND OF EMERGENCY PROCUREMENT TO BE FROM INDIA

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Indian pavilion:Visitors viewing exhibits at the Defence Expo 2022 in Gandhinagar.VIJAY SONEJIVIJAY SONEJI

The Army, which has made three tranches of Emergency Procurements (EP) in the last few years, is preparing for a fourth round of EP which will be entirely from the domestic industry, Army Chief Gen. Manoj Pande said on October 20. He also said that in the next seven to eight years, orders worth Rs. 8 lakh crore could be placed with Indian industry.

“Emergency Procurements are done to address critical operational requirements. Three tranches of EPs were executed under which 68 contracts worth Rs. 6000 crores were placed. We are now in the 4th EP for indigenous equipment. Our industry has risen to the challenge,” Gen. Pande said speaking on the sidelines of the DefExpo-2022. “We also need to indigenise to modernise. It should not be seen as an impediment, but as an opportunity.”

Emergency financial powers were granted to the armed forces by the Defence Ministry in the past under which they could procure weapons systems up to Rs. 300 crores on an “urgent basis without any further clearances to cut short the procurement cycle.” Gen. Pande said the EP also gives them an opportunity to test various systems in the field before going in for larger acquisition through the capital budget route.

The Russia-Ukraine war taught us lot of lessons, the Army Chief said on becoming self-reliant. Not just maintenance and spares but also in terms of new acquisitions. He said they are working on indigenisation of ammunition while looking for alternate sources with regard to spares.

Elaborating on efforts in this direction, Gen. Pande said in the last three to four years indigenous contracts have grown almost three times. Last year, Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for various contracts to the tune of Rs. 40,000 crores were issued from domestic industry.

“Similarly, last year Army signed contracts with indigenous industry to the tune of Rs. 47,000 crores. In the next 7-8 years about Rs. 7-8 lakh crore potential contracts could place with the Indian industry. So in terms of a viable market, there is great potential in the industry....” Gen Pande said.

Gen. Pande said priority areas for indigenisation are intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, mobility solutions in forward areas especially the mountains, special armaments like loitering munitions and artificial intelligence and encrypted communication.

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